Harvester Farms
Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument 645
Designated March 5, 1997

Harvester Farms includes the 1923 Barn and surrounding buildings as the cultural monument. The main house is a California Ranch style structure. The rear California basilica-type barn still retains a high degree of remaining historic fabric. (Virginia Watson 1997)

• Headquarters of the Palomino Horse Association of America
• Harvester was the father of Mr. Ed – the talking horse, a 1961-66 TV Series
• Located on Devonshire west of Topanga
• The Harvester was foaled in 1938, bred by James Fagan.

• Jim was a trainer for William Randolph Hearst at the Hearst Ranch in Hidden Valley, Camarillo / Thousand Oaks. Jim and Edna married around 1939 and moved to their own ranch in Agoura.

• Harvester was a golden Palomino that sired over 100 registered Palominos. These horses were most successful in Trick, Reined, Western Pleasure and Parade competitions.

• The Fagans moved to Reseda in 1943, and bred and trained Golden Palominos.

• In 1952 Jim died at the age of 70 in a horse accident in San Fernando.
• Edna moved to Harvester Farms in Chatsworth around 1953. In 1963 Harvester died in the barn.

• In 1971 Edna rode her horse Highland Harvest in the Rose Parade, her 28th year of participation. (LA Times)

• Alex Madonna, a good friend of Edna and owner of the Madonna Inn, told Dan Huffman that Edna road in 36 consecutive Rose Parades.

• She died in 1988, 93 years old.

Edna Fagan shown with one of their many Harvester sired horses.
• This picture of Harvester was labeled “Edna’s favorite photo”, and was taken at Harvester Farms.

• Three Hollywood Movie Horses were registered with the Palomino Horse Association:
  • Trigger
  • Trigger Jr.
  • Mr. Ed
• Right: Edna and Jim Fagan presenting Roy Rogers and Trigger Jr. a certificate of registration in the Palomino Horse Association.

• Below: Trigger and Trigger Jr. with Roy and Jim
Roy Rogers had three horses named Trigger: Trigger, Little Trigger and Trigger Jr.

- Golden Cloud, born 1932, was purchased from Hollywood Studios in 1938 and renamed "Trigger". Trigger retired in 1957 and died in 1964.
- "Little Trigger" was purchased a few years after Golden Cloud, was smaller than Trigger, and was the "personal appearance" horse. He knew more than a hundred cues for tricks and dances, and was housebroken, a quality that allowed him to accompany Roy on his many appearances in hospitals to visit sick children.
- "Trigger Jr.", born 1941 as Allen’s Gold Zephyr, took over for Little Trigger in the 1950’s.

Trigger and Trigger Jr. were registered with the Palomino Horse Association.
Harvester Farms Property History

• In April 1937 a permit was issued to Ronald J. Houlihan for construction of a new $3,700 residence. Source Van Nuys News, 1937 April 29.
• The Houlihans resided there in the 1940 census.
• Around 1948/49 Monroe B. Luthacker lived there.
• In 1950, the Erlandson Family (Mrs. Flora Erlandson) lived there. Source LA Times, 1950 Feb. 2.
• Alex Madonna, of Madonna Inn in San Luis Obispo, told Dan Huffman that he loaned Edna the money to purchase Harvester Farms.
• Edna Fagan moved to Chatsworth around 1953. In 1963 Harvester died in the barn at Harvester Farms.
• In 1964 as a co-developer, Edna Fagan subdivided the property to its rear.
Mr. Ed - The talking Horse, a 1961-1966 Television Series

- Bamboo Harvester was foaled in 1949, sired by The Harvester. He was a parade and show horse.
- His trainer was Les Hilton, who had apprenticed under Will Rogers and worked with the mules in the Francis the Talking Mule movies.
- The show ran for 143 episodes
- Allan Lane was the talking voice of Mr. Ed

Allan "Rocky" Lane
1904-1973

Connie Hines, Bamboo Harvester, Alan Young
Mr. Ed - The talking Horse, a 1961-1966 Television Series

- Guest Stars included Clint Eastwood, George Burns, Leo Durocher and Mae West
- To create the impression that Ed was talking, it was initially done by putting a piece of nylon thread in his mouth attached to the halter. Ed was trained to stop talking when the trainer touched his hoof with a crop. In fact, according to Alan Young, Ed eventually learned to start talking whenever he (Alan Young) stopped talking during a scene!

   Ed was very smart....
In 1968, Mr. Ed was 19 years old and began to suffer from a variety of problems, including a broken leg. He was put quietly to sleep with no publicity.
Sources/Acknowledgements

• Scrapbook and Photographs from Edna Parsons Fagan, donated by great-niece Cecilia Parsons

• Notes and documents supporting the Los Angeles Historical Cultural Monument designation, provided by Dan Huffman and Virginia Watson, Chatsworth Historical Society.


• Alan Young on how "Mister Ed" really talked – emmytvlegends.org YouTube video

• Facebook site “West San Fernando Valley Then and Now”, and associated researchers and contributors

• Many thanks to many Chatsworth residents, past and present, for their contributions to this presentation.

• A special thanks to Bea Berman for donating the Mr. Ed episodes that inspired this program.

• Prepared by Ann and Ray Vincent, Chatsworth Historical Society, January 2015
Mr. Ed - The talking Horse, a 1961-1966 Television Series

• Showing Next:
  • the now famous Dodger baseball episode with Leo Durocher was filmed in 1963.
  • “Leo Durocher Meets Mister Ed”, 25 minutes
  • In all, there were a total of 143 episodes over 6 seasons, from 1961-1966
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