

## CHATSWORTH PAST & PRESENT

By Ann & Ray Vincent

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Harvester Farms, located on the north east corner of Glade and Devonshire, is Los Angeles Historic Cultural Monument #645.

Chatsworth Historian Virginia Watson wrote “The main house is a California Ranch style structure. The rear 1923 California basilica-type barn still retains a high degree of remaining historic fabric.” Through her efforts representing the Chatsworth Historical Society, the Huffman family, and strong community support, the Barn and surrounding buildings were declared a Historic Cultural Monument on March 5, 1997.

It all started with the breeding endeavors of William Randolph Hearst and a trainer by the name of Jim Fagan on the Hearst Ranch in Hidden Valley, Camarillo. THE HARVESTER, a golden Palomino, was foaled on April 28, 1938 and was purchased and trained by Jim Fagan. Starting as a yearling, The Harvester was undefeated in

breeding classes as a trick and reined horse. As a four year old, The Harvester was retired from competition, and went on to sire more than 100 Palominos registered in The Palomino Horse Association, Inc.

Jim and Edna Fagan owned and or trained a selection of 30 golden Palomino horses sired by The Harvester, all trained



as trick, reined and parade horses. Jim Fagan is shown above on The Harvester in the 1950 Rose Parade.

In 1950, The Harvester starred in the movie “The Palomino” filmed in the rugged hills above Chatsworth Lake.

The Harvester’s most famous offspring was Bamboo Harvester, who was later known as MR. ED – the talking horse, in the 1961-66 TV Series. Mr. Ed was born in 1949 in El Monte and was purchased and trained by Les Hilton. Les Hilton had apprenticed under Will Rogers and worked with the mules in the Francis the Talking Mule movies.



Jim Fagan was president of the Palomino Horse Association and his wife Edna was secretary. There

were three famous Movie and TV horses registered in the Association - Trigger, Trigger Jr. and Mr. Ed.

The photo below shows Edna and Jim Fagan presenting an official Palomino Horse Association Registration Certificate to Trigger Jr. and Roy Rogers.



Jim Fagan died in a tragic horse accident, when a horse he was training slipped in gravel and fell on him in 1952. Following that, Edna continued as secretary and registrar for the Palomino Association along with training horses.

In 1953 Edna purchased the Chatsworth property that became Harvester Farms. The Harvester lived in the big red barn on Devonshire, and continued to be available for stud service “to approved mares” until his death in 1963.

In 1971 Edna, riding Highland Harvest, was recognized as having ridden in her 28<sup>th</sup> Rose Parade, and would eventually participate in 36 Rose Parades. In 1980, Edna sold Harvester Farms, and moved up to Ducor, California to be with her family.

The Harvester is buried in the driveway in front of the barn that he made famous as a Champion Golden Palomino.

### THE HARVESTER



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