

until I gave



# The Harold West Family

BY MARY JANE PARKINSON

Today, I remember the story of the Green Acres Star which I took off the farm



Top: Here's a show barn photo of Dr. West and daughters Margaret and Liz with Green Acres Star (Karonek x Maarseynna), from the 1965 Scottsdale Show.

Bottom: Dr. West was the spark plug of the Whittier Lions Club Show, the first show held in 1962. Here's the 1958 mare Bint Saadi (Alia Amarward x Saadi), who competed in western pleasure with Betty West.

In 1957, Dr. Harold and Betty West purchased an alfalfa farm near Indio, in California's desert country. There, for starters, the Wests had two factors common to the Arabian horse — the desert scene as a romantic element and, more practically, alfalfa as horse feed.

The Wests realized the Arabian was the only horse for an extremely dry climate, and they made trips to the Pomona, California, area to talk to two of the most informed persons on Arabian horses of that time: Herbert Reese, former manager of the Kellogg Ranch, and Gladys Brown Edwards, former secretary at the ranch. The Wests wanted to get Mr. Reese's and GBE's thoughts about the best horses to start a breeding program.

Soon, the Wests bought Saadi (Rifnas x Schilan by Antez) and Zahara (El Nahas x Halawa by Ziki), both of Crabbet and Davenport lines. Saadi was bred to Alla Amarward (Stambul x Makina by Letan), all Davenport in bloodlines, who sported the chestnut-and-flaxen coloring then in vogue. Saadi foaled Bint Saadi in 1958, and the Wests had their first homebred foal.

In 1959, the Wests bred mares (including Saadi) to the Kellogg-bred stallion Abu Farwa, a popular sire of those years with his brilliant copper chestnut coat color and his extravagant way of going. GBE described him as a "stallion of



*Above: Dr. Harold and Betty West bought an alfalfa farm near Indio, California, in 1957. There, they raised Hereford cattle and, of course, lots of alfalfa. The desert setting led them to thinking about Arabian horses, their study of the breed, and their first Arabian.*

*The Wests were so impressed by the 1940 chestnut stallion Abu Farwa (Rabiyas x \*Rissletta by Naseem), top right, that they bred their first Arabian mare Saadi (Rifnas x Schilan by Antez) to him in 1959. The mating produced Galan, who was to become the centerpiece of their program, winning show horse and top sire. The Wests ended up purchasing Abu Farwa in 1960 when the stallion was 20.*

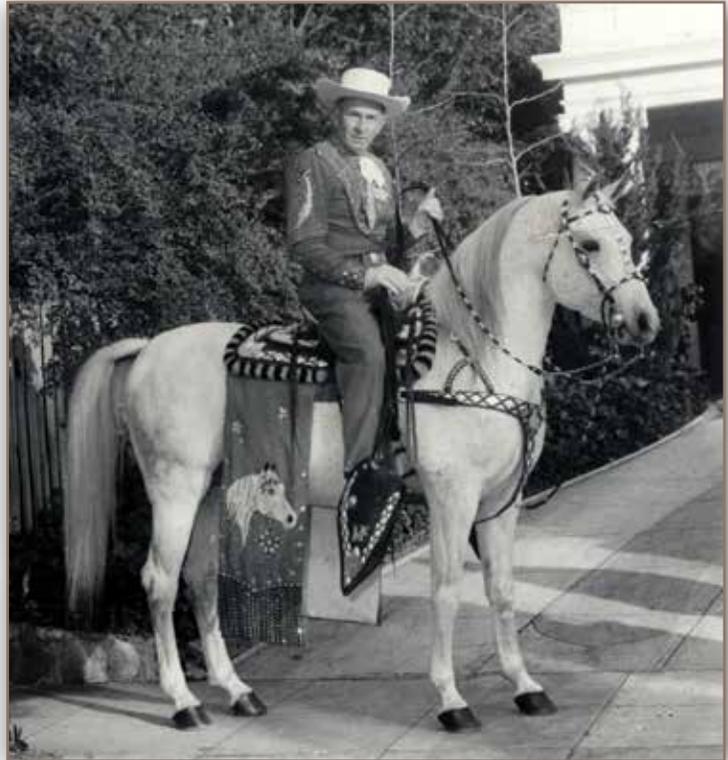


magnificent presence and classic beauty.” In 1960, Saadi foaled Galan, a stallion that was to become the centerpiece of the West program. He sired 85 foals for the family, 1964 to 1986.

As he matured, Galan continued to please the Wests, and Harold and Betty asked Gladys Brown Edwards to evaluate him in terms of a show career. GBE encouraged the effort and by age three Galan became a National statistic — 1963 United States Top Ten Stallion — the youngest entry to win a Top Ten to that time. The following year, as a four-year-old, Galan won his Legion of Merit, again the youngest horse to win that award to that time. The West family bred to him for 24 foals, 1963 to 1972.

The Wests liked Abu Farwa and his progeny so much that they purchased him in 1960 when the stallion was 20, and gave him excellent promotion.

*Saadi (Rifnas x Schilan by Antez), middle right, the Wests’ foundation mare, is pictured here with Galan as a weanling. Galan grew up to be a top show horse for the family and a valued sire in the Arabian horse community, bottom right.*



*Top left: The Wests purchased Ghazali (Gezan x Wud-Ali by Ghazi) at an auction in 1959, when the mare was 11. They bred her for nine foals, 1961-1972, sired by the Wests' own stallions, Abu Farwa, Mercury, and Galan. Here she is with her 1963 colt Green Acres Zeus by Mercury.*

*Top right and at left: The Wests promoted their Green Acres Arabians at every opportunity. Here's Dr. West with the stallion Mercury (Rafferty x Gazya by \*Zarife) as they appeared in a Tournament of Roses parade, and Mercury's son GA Tempest (x Bonnie Lee by Hamdan) as he carried Margaret Rich over rough terrain at the Tevis Cup ride.*

In 1959, Dr. and Mrs. West purchased the mare Ghazali (Gezan x Wud-Ali by Ghazi) at an auction in California's Bay Area. (Another breeder was there too. Sheila Varian purchased Bay-Abi at the same auction.) Ghazali was bred for nine foals, 1961-1972, sired by the Wests' stallions Abu Farwa, Mercury, and Galan. In the 1970s, the Wests purchased Aurtama (Aurab x Antama by Tamarlane, he a son of Abu Farwa), a 1973 chestnut mare. She produced five foals by Galan, 1978 to 1983.

A \*Raffles grandson was added to the mix, this acquisition again at the recommendation of GBE. Mercury

(Rafferty x Gazya by \*Zarife), a grey stallion of Alice Payne, Crabbet, Egyptian, and early East Coast bloodlines. Mercury sired 24 foals for the West family.

With the Arabian population growing nationally and the Arabian population growing at the West ranch, it was time for the Wests to enter show competition. West horses went to Scottsdale in 1960, their first time there. They're still competing there, nowadays shown by third-generation Wests.

The West breeding and showing programs were under way, and it was time to sell the alfalfa farm.

The Wests and their Arabians moved to Whittier, California, home of several other Arabian breeders. There, Dr. West was vital to the founding of the Whittier Lions Club Horse Show. The first show, held in 1962, became one of the early major Southern California shows. Over the years and with Dr. West's direction, the show grew in size and quality and prestige, and a win there became a valuable entry in a show record. The show was held in late January, so exhibitors put the show on the path to Scottsdale. In January 2010, the show, after 48 years, closed down; its place on the show calendar was taken by the Sierra Empire Arabian Show.



*Top left: One of Dr. West's most pleasant tasks as a breeder was that of close inspection of each year's foals. He carefully noted their pluses and minuses and their growth patterns. The subject of inspection here is Green Acres Galaxy, a 1964 Galan foal out of Maarseynna.*

*Top right: Amman (Abu Farwa x Saadi), Galan's full brother, was foaled in 1961. Here, he and Dr. West are decked out in parade gear.*

*Left: Margaret Rich showed Nakoma (Abu Kabir x Tamrifa by Tamarlane, an Abu Farwa son) in both halter and performance in shows in Southern California and in Las Vegas and Santa Barbara.*

In 1969, the Wests purchased 50 acres near Temecula, a growing community of Arabian breeders in the then wide-open spaces to the southeast of Los Angeles. They named their new home Green Acres Ranch, built the requisite facilities and a home, and continued their breeding program and showing.

Forty-four years after Green Acres Ranch was established, the acres now have a different look and direction. Dr. West, a pediatrician, found Green Acres an ideal place to raise children and animals, and its current use reflects his thinking. The land is still called Green Acres Ranch, but has expanded in usefulness and activity. The Wests' daughter Margaret Rich, breeder, horse trainer, exhibitor, and licensed judge, heads up the Green Acres operation. Now a public facility, as of 2000, members of the Rich family offer a variety of experiences for horse people: trail rides, horse training, horse camps, riding lessons, birthday parties, scouting, horse boarding, facility rental, and GAIT (Green Acres Interactive Therapy), a therapy

program for special-needs children who benefit by hands-on experiences with small and large animals and by therapeutic riding. Trail rides often end at one of the local wineries, so clients enjoy one more pleasurable aspect of the Valle de los Caballos (Valley of the Horses).

Third-generation Wests are prominent in the new Green Acres. Margaret West Rich's daughter Katherine Rich Elzig has her training stable, KRE Show Horses, at the ranch. Katherine specializes in training Arabians and Half-Arabians in English pleasure, country English pleasure, hunter pleasure, show hack, sidesaddle, native costume, equitation, dressage, and sport horse competition. Katherine and her clients have won more than 35 National Championships and Reserves, along with more than 100 top tens. In dressage competition, Katherine has collected four U.S. Dressage Federation National Championships and Reserves, along with 15 certificates of award recognition for outstanding dressage scores. Katherine



Here are two Galan sons that did themselves proud. Green Acres Galaxy (x Maarseynna by Maarleyma), bred and owned by the Wests, sired five foals for the Wests, and is pictured here with their daughter Margaret Rich, top left. Green Acres Sage (x Green Acres Agena by Mercury), top right, was a Galan look-alike, and the Wests bred him for three foals.

Left: Green Acres Star (Karonek x Maarseynna by Maarleyma) was the product of the Wests' breeding to a stallion of the Skowronek sire line. Green Acres Star was foaled in 1963, owned by the Wests for ten years, and then sold. The Wests bred him for four foals.

won her first Youth National Championship in 1996 in Hunt Seat Equitation. Now she's coaching youngsters for the Youth Nationals. In 2012, two of Katherine's students came home with National Youth Championships. Current stars at KRE Show Horses are two Half-Arabians, Judita Amore BPA (sired by Afire Bey V) and Green Acres Acclaim, out of the West's GA Sheera by Firelord. Judita Amore BPA has three National Championships (all in breeding classes), plus Regional Championships and Reserves in breeding classes.

Margaret's son Roy grew up riding every discipline on the Arabian circuit. When he rode his first reining horse at age 13, he was hooked on working horses. Roy and his co-workers (sometimes known as "The Rich Group"), operate out of Green Acres where the \*Muscat granddaughter Passionell (Mmusket x MHR Port Anada by Port Bask) decorated the tack room with important ribbons and trophies: U.S. National Champion Working Cow Horse AAOTR, Regional

Championships in Reining AOTR, Working Cow Horse AOTR, Reining AOTR, along with 2002 Champion Working Cow Horse AOTR. Roy went professional in 2004; "Now I get paid to have fun all day long," he says. "My greatest joy is making any horse a little better than it is — seeing progress."

Dr. West and Betty West are no longer with us, but daughter Margaret carries on at Green Acres, heading up the family tradition of fine horses, expert riders, and knowledge and understanding of horses.

The West family — three generations of them — have contributed well to the Arabian horse community for 56 years, this through recognition and promotion of *Arabian Horse World* Sire of Significance Abu Farwa, through getting young people involved with Arabian horses, through demonstrating the usability and versatility of the breed, and through their understanding of the human-horse bond and its ability to improve the quality of life.