

Hall of Fame—Inductees

Ward Fenton

ApHC Hall of Fame



It was a family connection that brought Ward Fenton into the Appaloosa breed in the '60s. His brother, Del, purchased an Appaloosa stallion that they bred to one of Ward's Quarter Horse mares.

The result was an Appaloosa colt that was the start of Ward's distinguished program of Appaloosas that excelled in everything—racing, performance and ranch work.

Born in Wyoming and raised on ranches in Montana, Ward grew up on horseback. That innate ability with horses led to his various activities with Appaloosas. His horses were bred to be all-around individuals, and he and his family took them to the track, halter pen and performance arena as suited.

His breeding program grew to include Hall of Fame stallion Peavy Bimbo, bred by Mavis Peavy, and race stallion Bold Society, that Ward and his wife, Alice, bred. "We had a mare, Miss Apache, that was really outstanding," Ward says. "We won about everything. High-point halter horse, high-point cutting... Then we bred her to The Executive and had five medallion-winning colts." Miss Apache was one of the first mares inducted into the Hall of Fame for production.

The Fenton family had as many as 100 horses at one time, always managing several stallions, showing and racing their stock, and raising foals. They traveled across the northwest, from Colorado to California and Washington, and then

made the journey to the National and World shows.

"We just liked the versatility of [Appaloosas]," Ward says. "That's what we were trying to breed for. Horses that had eye appeal, but could do a broad range of events."

Ward served on the ApHC Board of Directors from 1976 to 1979, and during that time was part of the racing and youth committees. He oversaw the introduction of non-pari-mutuel racing for Appaloosas, tattooed horses and supervised the first races run under the new non-pari-mutuel rules. He also served as an inspector for several years and was a carded ApHC judge for over 40 years.

"From the time we started showing and I first started judging, I could see tremendous growth," Ward says. "The quality and improvement of the horses over the years was phenomenal. It was sure good to see that happen." Ward participated in some of the first judge clinics and tests, which later grew into the Color Breed Council.

Ward resides in Worden, Montana, and still has between 12–15 horses on the property. He stays busy managing the Northern International Livestock Exposition, held yearly in Billings, Montana.

"We really enjoyed the Appaloosa horse and association with the club," Ward says. "It's been a big part of our life. We made friends all over the world... We still have friends from all over that we communicate with."