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Ivy and Warren Lederhos feed the German Shepherds at Weston Dog Ranch. The ornamental ironwork was made by their father, A.A. Lederhos. The house was located at 248 North Avenue until its demolition in the mid 1990s.

A. A. Lederhos and the Weston Dog Ranch

The following article is based on an interview with Ivy Lederhos Carlson, daughter of A.A. Lederhos. The Weston Historical Society would like to thank Ivy and Roy Carlson and their daughter-in-law Hella for sharing photographs and the catalogue of E. T. Ryan Iron Works, Inc, of Allston.

Born into a German farm family, Adolf Alexander Lederhos (1883 - 1933) was about six years old when his parents died and he went to live with an uncle. He learned ornamental ironwork as an apprentice and, while still in his teens, emigrated to Switzerland and thence to the United States. Arriving in America in 1914 at age 20, he settled first in Pittsburgh, which was known as

a center for the iron industry. He later moved to Boston and there he met his future wife, Susan Chapman, daughter of a Canadian immigrant family.

With several associates, Lederhos (right) established E.T. Ryan Inc. Because of anti-German sentiment during the World War I years, the ornamental ironwork company took the name Ryan rather than using a German-sounding surname. But it was Lederhos and his design ability and craftsmanship that brought success. His dedication to his craft is reflected in this statement from the catalogue preface: “We are old-fashioned enough to get more satisfaction out of beautiful designs and their execution into Wrought Iron than in the dollars and cents they may bring us.”



E.T. Ryan Inc. operated a workshop in Allston and downtown store on Boylston Street where they sold their own handmade products as well as high quality domestic and imported ironwork. The catalogue illustrates fire screens, fireplace tools, andirons, lamps, candlesticks, lighting fixtures, gates, doorstops, letterboxes, art plaques and many other objects both useful and ornamental.

Lederhos and his wife, Susan (left), had two children, Warren and Ivy. In 1924 the family moved to 248 North Avenue at the corner of Viles Street, where they bought an existing one-story house and jacked it up to create a first floor with a large room for entertaining. Ivy attended the one-room North Avenue School for second and third grade and, beginning in fourth grade, rode the open jitney to the grammar school on School Street. She and her future husband, Roy Carlson, went to Weston High School together, graduating in the Class of 1936.

Sometime after World War I, Lederhos began raising purebred German Shepherds as a hobby. At the time, the breed inspired fear because of their use by police and prison guards. Lederhos brought his first dogs from Germany and set a goal of raising champions. He employed a trainer and shipped fine animals all over the country. He also served as president of the German Shepherd Club of America.

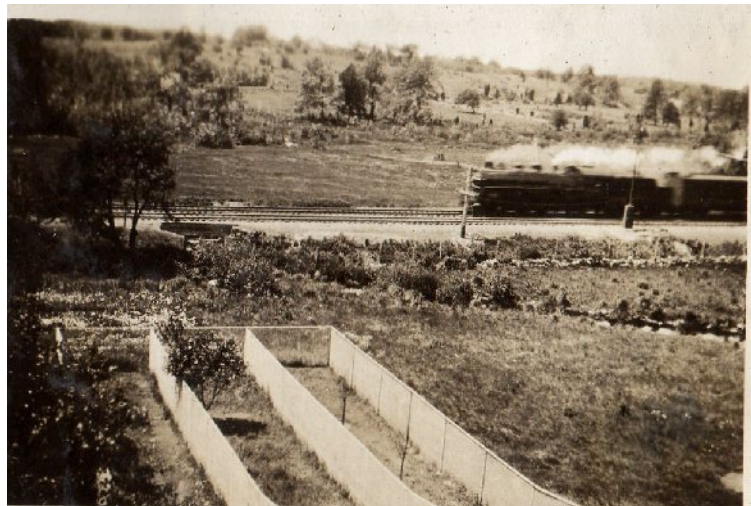


His daughter Ivy recalls as many as 27 dogs, assorted goats and one pig. A hired man lived over the garage and helped take care of the animals. During the Depression, Lederhos began boarding dogs to earn extra income.

Pictures on this page show the house and barn, as well as the dog runs in the rear

next to the Boston & Maine railroad tracks. Workers at E.T. Ryan used a Lederhos design to create an iron archway into the property from North Avenue, with the words *Weston Dog Ranch* and cutouts of dogs and birds. One other similar arch, probably copied from the Weston example, exists in Yarmouth Port on Cape Cod and dates from 1928.

A.A. Lederhos died in 1933. His widow continued to run the Dog Ranch into the 1940s, followed by veterinarian Terrance Burke. He





continued working there after the property was purchased in 1950 by Leonard and Edith Shulmann. Leonard operated a dog training and veterinary facility until his death in 1970, after which his widow kept it going for another two decades. In 1994, Wellesley Homes purchased the 8.6-acre property and subdivided it into 10 lots. The Colonial houses built along the new Hastings Road were criticized as being too large for their lot size and out of keeping with the neighborhood. After more than half a century as the “Weston Dog Ranch,” it is not surprising that many Weston residents still use that name for the subdivision rather than the more genteel “Weston Farms.” The Lederhos arch on North Avenue, pictured at left in 1994, was removed and sold at Skinner auctioneers.

by Pamela W. Fox

The Scrapbooks of Edith May West

The Society would like to thank John Sallay for his gift of three scrapbooks compiled by Edith May West (right) and used as the primary source for this article.

Turning the pages of Edith May West’s three oversize scrapbooks, we enter the world of early 20th century Weston. From her teenage years until 1940, Edith pasted in photographs and memorabilia that provide a window into the life of an ordinary young woman as she graduates from high school, gets a job, marries, loses a first baby, and raises a daughter.

Edith was born in Weston in July, 1895. Her father, Robert West, died when she was only a few years old. Her mother, Nova Scotia-born Hannah Eliza (Morton) West, was remarried in 1901 to

