

"The Duke of Gansevoort"

Alfred Zins Solomon earned his local nickname after presiding for decades over Madcaps Farm on the west bank of the Hudson River. He and his wife, Nancy, purchased the 283 acre farm in 1942 so they could enjoy some time in the country, away from the hustle and bustle of New York City and to be near the Saratoga Race Course. She raised chickens (thousands of them!), shipping eggs to New York and Boston on the milk trains. He came up for racing season and weekends, boarding the night train for New York City in Fort Edward on Sunday evenings.

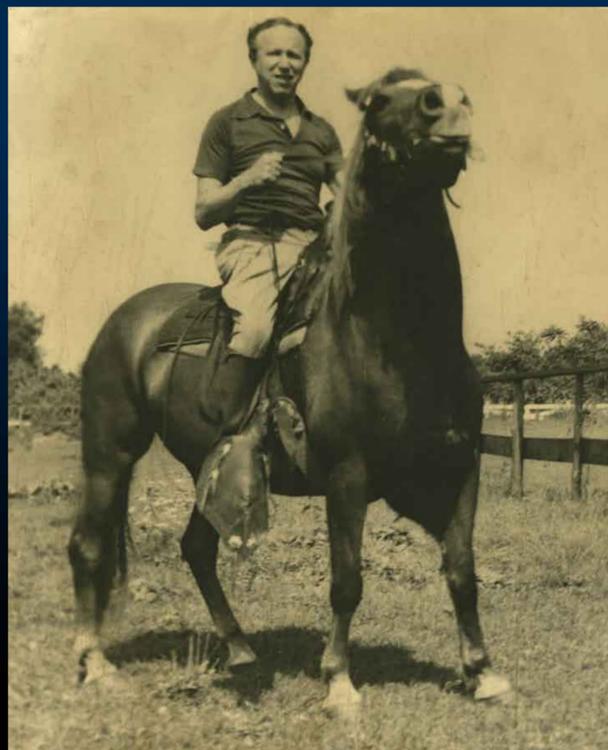
Alfred Solomon put fashionable hats on the heads of thousands of American women. From modest beginnings as an importer of hat trims, he built a successful millinery business he named "Madcaps." In addition to the Madcaps label, Mr. Solomon arranged with famous European designers to manufacture and market their couture designs in America.

Hats are an integral part of the fashion scene at the Saratoga Race Course. The tradition lives on, in part thanks to Alfred Solomon, who occupied Clubhouse Box E 33 near the finish line where he kept track of the most popular hat styles for more than sixty years.

Alfred Solomon and his sister Janet A. Sloane established the Madcaps millinery business in New York City in 1935. Mr. Solomon sold the company in 1995 at age 96. He continued to enjoy life on his farm, attend the races and support numerous charities until he died in 2004, three weeks before his 105th birthday. *Photograph courtesy of New York Alive Magazine, 1984.*



▲ Alfred Solomon kept company with famous horses as well as famous people. He handicapped the horses every day of the New York racing season. His friends remember him at the races with a cigar, a glass of bourbon, a big smile, and an occasional winning ticket. *Photograph c. 1990 courtesy of Victoria J. Garlanda.*



◀ From the beginning of their relationship, Alfred and Nancy Solomon went riding together in Central Park, New York City. In this photograph, Alfred rides one of his horses, "Cherry," at the farm. He marked the farm's fenceposts with retired wooden hat blocks. *Photograph c. 1960 courtesy of Alfred Z. Solomon Trust*



▲ Mr. Solomon traveled to Europe twice a year to attend the couture designer collection shows. Upon his return to the United States, he would make personal appearances at major department stores to promote his own label line – Madcaps. LIFE magazine illustrated an article, "A Hectic Week of Paris Showings" with this photograph of a model carrying a poodle dyed purple to match her Balmain costume. *Photograph for LIFE Magazine by N. R. Farbman, 1951. Courtesy of Alfred Z. Solomon Trust.*



NATURAL FORCES & NATIVE PEOPLES



CONFLICT AND SETTLEMENT



CORRIDOR OF COMMERCE



MAGNET FOR TOURISM