

"The Spanish had the best system in the world for breaking and training," she emphasized. "They used patience. We never started training until the horse was well into its third or fourth year, and we took our time. We didn't stress them, like they're stressed today. We usually took about three years and moved our horses slowly up into the hackamore, then used the hackamore and bridle together, and when the horse was ready—not

Myrtle relayed that her friends call it "The Funny Farm," and added, "It does help to be crazy."

After she married Ed Brown in 1925, the couple lived in the surrounding counties of Lake, Sonoma, and Mendocino, where Ed was a deputy sheriff. "He loved cattle, horses, and dogs," she told me, reminiscently.

In 1942, they moved back to the Arbuckle farm, which is nestled right on the eastern edge of the Coast Range

and located to the west of Interstate 5 between Williams and Woodland. Open range land still exists from the farm to the Pacific Ocean.

Currently, Myrtle has 16 Appaloosas, including seven broodmares all in foal, and three stallions, Quinta's Flyin String, Kelly Doolin, and Quintas Mr Gobar. Myrtle, her sister, Melba Strong, and a friend now run the farm, where only horses belonging to friends are now accepted for

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before—we used only the bridle. Our horses lasted.

"Nowadays, they're broken and trained or raced as young 2-year-olds. The horses may win some big event, but then you never hear of them again, because their young, undeveloped bones break down. Most can't take the mental stress either."

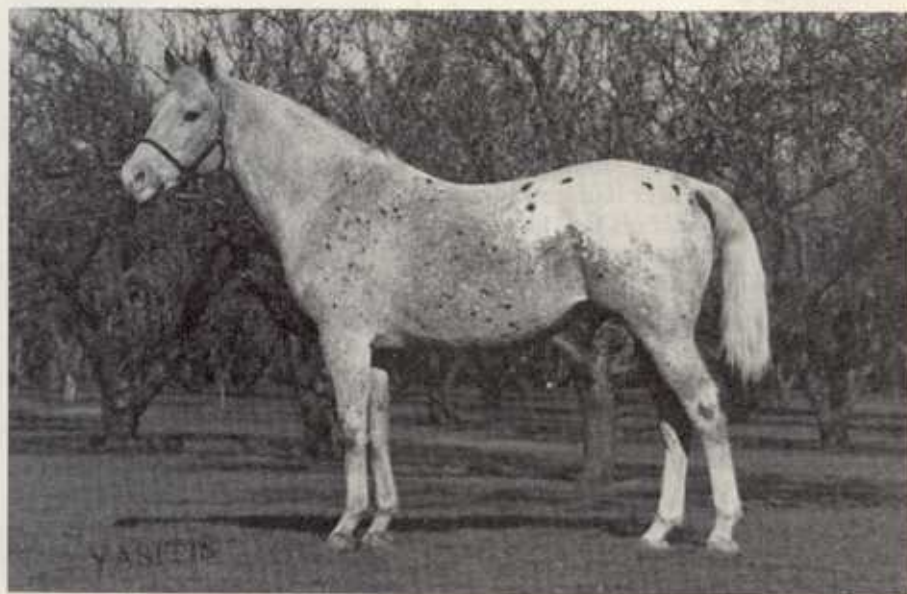
Twenty-five to 30 competitors frequently entered the stock horse division. Of that number, Myrtle and Barbara Worth, also a native Californian, were often the only women competing.

After hearing of Myrtle's experience at the Cow Palace and unsure whether that judge had been prejudiced against Appaloosas, women, or both, I asked Myrtle if there had been any sex discrimination during her earlier days of showing.

"Well, it was like fighting with the wolves, a dog-eat-dog world, very much like job discrimination still is today. But the main thing that usually counted the most," she stated firmly, "was having the best horse. You were judged mainly on your horse's way of going, and that was it."

Myrtle then turned to the subject of tails. "I don't understand why they're so long; now you see stock horses with tails that belong on an American Saddlebred, not a bridle horse." With a glint in her eye, she cited the art of James and Remington. "Their work shows the tail as it should be—hock length—not long and flowing."

In the early '20s, Myrtle's family purchased and moved to the 40-acre Arbuckle farm. The horse operation has never been formally entitled, but



*Above: Quinta's Flyin String, a stallion Myrtle purchased as a yearling in 1964, had a marked influence on her breeding program. He is pictured here at 15 years of age, and now at 20, is still a part of Myrtle's herd. Below: Part of Myrtle's broodmare band some years ago with foals at their sides by Quinta's Flyin String.*

