

Myrtle does maintain, however, that horses should be shown in open divisions: "Classes should not be based on breed category alone. Rather, the best of all breeds should compete with the best."

*"Horses are my life, and whatever glory they've given me, they did it."*

During the 30s though, Appaloosa competitions, practically non-existent, were very localized affairs. The outcome was all too predictable, as neighbor was pitted against neighbor and competitors knew each other's horses almost as well as they knew their own. To eliminate the monotony

and also promote the breed, Myrtle and Ed worked all over the state establishing Appaloosa stock horse events at California county fairs.

At one time, Myrtle's breeding operation encompassed 119 horses, consisting of Thoroughbreds, Quarter Horses, Palominos, and Appaloosas. She has, for the most part, left foaling up to Mother Nature; the majority of babies have been born in a pasture, and she has never had a problem with Appaloosas. Thoroughbreds were occasionally a different story, some mares requiring constant watch.

About 40 years ago, she began raising Appaloosas exclusively. When asked why, she replied, "Because they are my first love." Her foundation stock were all descendants of her original spotted horses, Dolly, Cricket, and El

Capitan, in addition to her grandfather's stallion, St. Louis.

Myrtle suffered a severe heart attack in 1950. Her doctor prescribed no heavy riding, but to this day she still pleasure rides. Myrtle showed her horses to many trainers and instructors who were in search of mounts for their clients. They would often tell her, "That's a lot of horse—far too difficult for my clients to handle." So much for the "no-heavy-riding" prescription!

"I will have horses as long as I live," she told me. "My grandfather taught me how to ride, and as soon as I learned, he said that if I was old enough to ride, I was old enough to know how to take care of them, including shoeing. I've passed my knowledge on to many children."

Even though she is a rather large person, Myrtle prefers a horse no taller than 15.2 hands and between 1,050 and 1,250 pounds. She's also very particular about the back. "No sagging or mutton withers," she insists.

All of Myrtle's hobbies relate to the wonders of nature, whether it be plants, birds, or animals. She still manages her kennel of McNab Shepards, a breed of Scottish origin and known for their excellent herding capabilities, which she began raising in 1915.

Myrtle feels there are tremendous pressures on people today, that we've become a generation of automobiles and machinery, not pioneers. She advocates that being your own person, doing what you think is worthwhile—not following the dictates of others—contributes the most to a long and full existence.

"Life consists of determination and enjoyment," she asserted, as her dark, green eyes gazed directly into mine. "So ask yourself what you like, and then get right into it. When joining with another person, marry someone with the same interests. Then, even if you're fighting, you'll be arguing over your common goal, not about whether you should even have this interest in the first place."

"Horses are my life, and whatever glory they've given me, they did it. I just went for the ride. I don't care very much about how tidy my house is, but I do care about how clean my barn is. My horses are for enjoyment, for me to love. They're not for me to abuse. I could have chosen to take the millionaire route and probably succeeded, but there are many more important things in life."

*Right: Miz Truckle Gobar (left) by Quintas Mr Gobar out of Truly Flyin Suzy Q and Quintas Gobar Miz by Quintas Mr Gobar out of Quintas Miz Betty, were 1982 additions to Myrtle's herd.*

*Below: Casey Doolin, by Kelly Doolin out of Quintas Flyin Imp. These youngsters are representative of the type of foals Myrtle has strived to breed. (Photos by Arlis Groves)*

