

HELEN MICHAELIS

Growing up with brothers made Helen Michaelis tough and able to hold her own. These traits would come in handy later in life.

Michaelis grew up with horses and supported herself through college by owning a riding stable. She was introduced to quarter-type horses in the early 1930s and a few years later, she started doing research on the breed's origins.

She visited with different ranchers about their horses and recorded the information. Michaelis went to match races and kept records of the placings and other information. She started writing articles concerning everything she had learned.

After reading an article Robert Denhardt had



written on the "Billy" horses in South Texas, Michaelis wrote him a letter concerning Ott Adams' horse, Little Joe. Denhardt was impressed by her knowledge of Quarter Horse bloodlines and the two became friends.

When AQHA was established in 1940, Michaelis was elected as a director and took over as secretary in 1942 when Denhardt stepped down. She ran AQHA from her ranch in Eagle Pass, Texas.

As secretary and authority on bloodlines, Michaelis could spot fabricated pedigrees. More than one rancher's horse or horses passed inspection, but did not pass Michaelis on bloodlines.

She organized her information on horses and bloodlines into dozens of three-ring notebooks. In the notebooks, each horse's page listed the pertinent information for that horse.

Michaelis stepped down in 1946 and handed the reins to John Burns. Her influence on AQHA extended beyond her knowledge of bloodlines, as she had an effect on the role of women in AQHA and the Quarter Horse industry.

She died in 1965, and was inducted into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1985. She was the first woman inducted into the Hall of Fame.

INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1985