

J. ERNEST BROWNING

J. Ernest Browning was known as the “usin’ horse” rancher from Arizona, and this title stuck with him throughout his life.

In the 1930s, Browning was running Hereford cattle and Steeldust horses on his 2,000 acre ranch in Wilcox, Arizona. Wanting to improve the quality of his horses, Browning bought a stallion from Dan Casement. The stallion was Billy Byrne, a son of Balleymooney.

Browning’s reputation for being a horseman spread and caught the attention of Robert Denhardt. At Browning’s Arizona ranch one day, Denhardt invited Browning to a meeting in Fort Worth, Texas. Denhardt explained that a group of horsemen was trying to organize a registry for the Steeldust and Billy horses.

Browning went to the meeting and became a director for AQHA. Almost 20 years later, in 1958, Browning was elected president of the Association, and initiated judging clinics. The number of Quarter Horses had grown rapidly, and the supply of qualified judges was exhausted. The solution to this problem was a series of judging clinics. However, Browning did not let quality be sacrificed at the expense of numbers. An estimated one out of 30 applicants was accepted as a judge.

At the time of Browning’s presidency, the battle between the “bulldog men” and the Thoroughbred-QuarterHorse-crosssupporters was not completely over. Although grouped

with the bulldog men, Browning preferred lighter, longer-muscled horses. However, he thought breeders should be careful when breeding to Thoroughbred stallions because certain Thoroughbreds benefited the breed, but others did not.

He was inducted, along with Denhardt, into the American Quarter Horse Hall of Fame in 1982. He and Denhardt were the only surviving founders of the Association at the time of induction. Browning died November 19, 1984.



INDUCTED INTO THE AMERICAN QUARTER HORSE

*Hall of
Fame*

1982