

BIO ON WILLIAM SANDERS, D.V.M.

**AQRA inducts
Longtime Arizona Horseman
and
Veterarian
William “Doc” Sanders
Into the
AQRA Quarter Racing
Hall of Fame**



Bill Sanders was born into a ranching family in eastern Arizona along the New Mexico border in a small town called Duncan. His grandfather came to that country in 1886 and originally settled in the Virden Valley before moving to Duncan where he had a large cattle ranch and also farmed the land along the Gila River. Bill spent a lot of his early years living with his grandparents, helping with the ranch work and even milking a cow twice a day which was one of his least liked chores.

He also spent many of his early years hanging around the racetrack in Duncan. He has a long line of family members who were involved in racing, including Otho Cox who was a fixture on the county fair circuit, and now his nephew, Jim Crofts, who has been racing horses here at Rillito for several years.

Bill was valedictorian of his graduating class from Duncan High School in 1953 and then went on to the University of Arizona for two years before being accepted into veterinarian school at Colorado State University. He graduated from CSU in 1959 with High Distinction and then came to Tucson where he's practiced veterinarian medicine ever since. Some of his classmates at CSU were names you might be familiar with including Bob Betts, another racetrack veterinarian; Jim Savoini from Prescott; Tad Pfister and Phil Blair.

He began his practice in Tucson with Dr. Walt Condon who he remained a partner with for over 16 years before going out on his own. While partners they both treated large animals, including cattle, horses and even some zoo animals. They also built the hospital on North First Avenue which was then called Coronado Heights Animal Hospital.

Bill is past president of the Arizona Veterinary Medical Association; past president of the Mountain Oyster Club, a long time member of the American Association of Equine Practitioners and a life-time Honorary board member of the Los Charros Del Desiertos where he was their ride-veterinarian for over 42 years, having just retired this past year. Of interest was the fact that he always rode a mule on the ride. He named his mule after his grandfather, Muss, and he was a faithful companion for many years.

During his early years of practicing he treated some of the great quarter horses raised in the Tucson area. His clients included the Gill Cattle Company who raced Tonto Gal, Barbara B and many other great quarter horses. He also took care of horses for Rulon Goodman and Vern Goodman, as well as for Art Pollard who had the Lightning A Ranch and the great horse Lightning Bar as well as Queenie. He also treated horses for Mike Leavis who had many good horses including Old Pueblo. He also traveled to Dragoon to take care of Rose Fulton's horses where she had the stallions Ben-Hur, Skipper's Prince and many other QH greats. The Fulton Ranch is now known as the Amerind Foundation Museum which is a world class museum of Native American archeology, art, culture and history.

Bill also had many race horses himself, racing here at Rillito, San Juan Downs, Sunland Park, Prescott, Flagstaff and Juarez. One of his partners was his friend and trainer, Jerry Kinney, who recently passed away, and for a while Pete Dominguez trained his horses. Pete was the jockey on the great horse "Shue-fly". He had many good times and lots of winners during those years.

He became full time track veterinarian here at Rillito after Dr. Chuck Allen retired which was some 10-12 years ago. His main concern has always been for the safety and well-being of the horses and he has enjoyed his many

years working around the race tracks in southern Arizona as well as having a successful equine practice over the last 50 years.