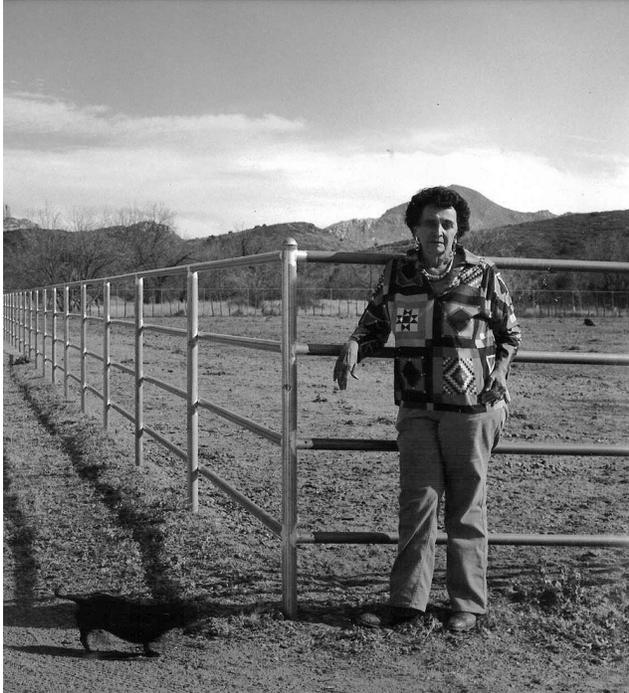


Meet the Yavapai Cowbelles

Sissie Walker



Sissie Minotto was born in the Chicago area, and moved with her parents, James and Idamay Minotto to the Z Triangle Ranch in Walnut Grove in the early 1920's. James, an Italian Count, and Idamay from the famed Swift meat packing family loved the West and everything cowboy. Sissie learned to rope and ride from some of the best cowboys of the day, actually performing as a specialty "Girl Team Roping" act during the 1938 Prescott Frontier Days Rodeo. At the age of eighteen she teamed up with Cherrie Osborn from the neighboring Diamond 2 ranch to best their fathers in a match roping over two performances.

Sonny Walker and Sissie probably met through their love of horses, one day at the then thriving Biltmore Stables in Phoenix. They were married in 1943 in Quantico, VA while Sonny was still serving the Marine Corp. After the war, they both wanted to return to the West and preferably Yavapai County. In 1945 the Walker's purchased The Bar U Bar ranch which contributed its part to the early day history of Yavapai County, at one time being one of the largest ranches in Arizona. When Sonny and Sissie Walker acquired the ranch, the range still ran from Yava to Skull Valley, to the west side of Granite Mountain, eighty-four sections in all. In its heyday the Bar U Bar ran a cow/calf operation of 650 head of Herefords. Soon after moving to the Bar U Bar, Sonny and Sissie also became active in the newly formed American Quarter Horse Association and began breeding Quarter Horses. Their two daughters, Carol and Laurel, were born in the saddle and have made horses their lives. Sissie was a charter member of the Yavapai Cowbelles. She passed away on July 26, 1997, leaving a legacy in the Bar U Bar Ranch