



## A.G. Ollree

Champion Rodeo Cowboy

Director Texas Rodeo Cowboy Hall of Fame 1999

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By El Deano



A. G. Ollree was born in the Houston area around 1930 to A. G. and Anna Elizabeth Ollree-he is actually A. G. Ollree the third. His father held several jobs to provide a living for their family as that was in the days of the Depression. A. G. had one sister and brother in the family; his brother was killed

in 1965 in a car-train accident when about 29 years of age.

When A. G. was very young, he and a close relative (almost like a brother to him) were spinning tops when the relative spun the top toward him and inadvertently hit him over the eye causing much bleeding. They both thought he would bleed to death and were very scared for a few minutes until the bleeding subsided some and were very relieved when it did. They both learned a lesson from that incident-be careful where you spin your top!

There was a horse barn near the Ollree's home and at a very young age he began to go to the horse barn because he was "fasci-



nated by the horses and what was going on over there.” At age 12, he had a bicycle and some paper routes in Houston and he saved up \$29.50 in a Prince Albert tobacco can, went down to Dude Davis’ horse barn and bought a horse for that amount and they threw in a bridle. His dad had already told A. G. that if he bought a horse he couldn’t bring him home. He had a dilemma, so he hid the horse out for a while riding him bareback. Before long his dad asked him when was he going to bring the horse home? That broke the ice and soon the horse was in a small pasture behind the Ollree’s home! “I rode that horse to school, delivered papers on him and finally hooked him up to a buckboard; he kicked up a little but did pretty good.” Mr. Ollree didn’t play organized sports in high school because he was too small and only weighed about 130 pounds all through his school days so he worked at the horse barn close to his home for no pay while his friend got paid even though A.G. worked harder than he did. “ I started breaking some colts for other people and started riding at a small arena near our home where they had some calves for the younger boys to ride. I guess that is probably where you could say that I first started actually riding rough stock and really got the desire to want to rodeo.”

O. B. Lynam was around there most of the time and showed and helped the younger boys how to ride (O. B. Lynam is also in the Belton Hall of Fame). Along in this time frame was when A. G. started going to some of the local rodeos around the area for ‘mount money’ and was more or less paying his way with the winnings.

“I watched some of the big name cowboys such as Todd Whately compete at the Houston show as I helped there and I was able to see up close ‘how they did it’. This was circa 1946. We went to Eagle Lake where Thomas and Clifton had some good bulls that were used at lots of the major rodeos.”

He got his diploma from high school and caught the bus for Wichita Falls, Texas and went on over to Petrolia, Texas to Goat Mayo’s and Bill Lyons, rodeo producers and went to work for them.

“They gave me the same room that Billy Weeks had in Bill’s house as Weeks had gone on out on the RCA circuit.”

Billy had been there the year before as they had offered him a job when he finished school. When A. G. was twenty he went into the Navy for almost four years during the Korean conflict. He was a radioman on a destroyer that fired shells to the shore several times and picked up some wounded soldiers. “The North Koreans

wouldn't shoot at us because it would have exposed their positions and the bigger ships were waiting for just that, so they could destroy them."

After Mr. Ollree got out of the Navy he met a horse dentist at Philadelphia who taught him how to file a horse's teeth. He went to work for the dentist and after some time the doctor moved him to Houston for work there.

The doctor wanted him to go to A&M, so he enrolled at A&M in February of 1955 and graduated in 6 years. "I had sort of gotten away from the rodeo for awhile but started back when I went to A&M." He was on the NIRA college team for three years and Director for the Southern Region for one year. "I won the All-Around at Sam Houston one year beating out Sonny Sikes which was quite a chore and I'm proud of that." He also had won the All-Around at Archer City several years before that. He's also proud of the fact that he won the bullriding at Brownsville in 1950. "I quit rodeoing in 1959 as it was costing so much for college and the studies were so hard."

Most memorable wreck: "I got bucked off and hit on the back of my neck and head and for a while it seemed like my neck was an accordian!"

Most memorable ride: "I borrowed \$5.00 from a friend, went to Mineral Wells (in '46), got in Goat Mayo's rodeo, won the first go-round on a bad bull, drew a dink for the second round and fell off him. Rode the worst and dinked off an easy ride." Eddie Akridge remarked, "I wish I could ride that bull (the bad one) but A. G. didn't know he was bad and rode him handily." Ollree admitted, "When I was 39 I tried to get back in shape to start rodeoing again but just couldn't get it done."

Mr. Ollree graduated from Texas A&M in 1961 with a veterinarian degree and about a month later had a 'youngun'. It was at college that he met Net as she worked at the college and they were married in 1960. They had dated for a couple of years before they got married. They ended up with three sons in their family. He had a private practice at Dayton, Texas for 7 1/2 years before starting to work for the Texas Department of Corrections and worked there until his retirement. He said he enjoyed the work but that they had several attempted breakouts and it always shut everything down when the attempted breakouts would occur.

A. G. likes to study the Bible and would like to start a Cowboy Bible study. He listens to a gifted teacher on television and it helps

him understand the Word better. He is involved with a church in Chalk Bluff and also helped build it.

Advice for young aspiring cowboys: “Go ahead and get started while fairly young. If you have the ability, study under men of integrity who will help them in the right way.”