

# Portrait of Determination

Minnie Lou Bradley inducted into the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery.

by *Shauna Rose Hermel*, editor

**F**riends, family and fellow cattlemen gathered in Louisville, Ky., Nov. 16, 2014, to honor Minnie Lou Bradley as she was inducted into the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery. The former president of the American Angus Association, who hails from Childress, Texas, was recognized for her service and impact on the livestock industry during a banquet at the 41st annual North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE).

Featured at the banquet was the unveiling of Bradley's official portrait, painted by artist Richard Stewart Halstead of Evanston, Ill. It will be hung with portraits of others who have been similarly recognized in the gallery housed at the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville.

Clint Rusk, Oklahoma State University, and Julie McMahon French, Beaverton, Mich., hosted the program honoring Bradley, which included a dinner featuring *Certified Angus Beef® Natural*, the brand extension she helped launch.

During the program, which featured a video tribute and several testimonials from peers and friends, Bradley was described as a trailblazer and praised for her tenacity, foresight and vision. Though one not afraid to speak her mind, she was described as practically devoid of ego. A great teacher and a great communicator, she serves as a role model for all, but especially the young ladies in the beef industry.

Bradley is a rancher, a progressive land steward, a master breeder of purebred-Angus cattle, and a renowned livestock industry leader. She and her husband, Bill, purchased 3,300 acres in the Texas Panhandle in 1955 and began the Bradley 3 Ranch. Today the



PHOTO COURTESY SADDLE & SIRLOIN PORTRAIT GALLERY

► Featured at the banquet was the unveiling of Bradley's official portrait, painted by artist Richard Stewart Halstead of Evanston, Ill. For more comments on Minnie Lou, view this segment on *The Angus Report*: <http://bit.ly/16f3Tsn>.

expanded 10,000-acre Bradley 3 Ranch continues under the management of daughter Mary Lou and son-in-law James Henderson.

Beginning in 1997, Bradley embarked on a land improvement program that began with brush and weed control and water management. Eventually, analysis of herd grazing habits using GPS information was implemented.

The program of adding water sources, rotational grazing, and brush and weed reduction has resulted in significant ranch resiliency in the face of recent record droughts. Her ranch has been recognized as a model of stewardship by Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and by Dow AgroSciences, among others.

Bradley has been honored as a Master Breeder by Oklahoma State University (OSU) and is one the nation's Top 50 U.S. Beef Industry Leaders, according to *BEEF* magazine. Her Bradley 3 Ranch's DNA identification program, started in 1994, has increased demand for their Angus bulls among commercial producers looking for superior genetics with proven carcass merit. In 2013 the ranch was recognized by the Beef Improvement Federation (BIF) as its Seedstock Producer of the Year.

Her lifelong habit of leadership began at an early age. In 1949, she was the first woman to major in animal husbandry at Oklahoma A&M, and she earned her degree. She was the first woman to win high individual at the National Collegiate Livestock Judging Contest.

Bradley served as a board member of the American Angus Association from 1997 to 2003. She was

elected vice president in November 2003 and became the first female president of the Association in November 2004.

The Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery is curated by the Kentucky State Fair Board and is displayed throughout the Kentucky Exposition Center in Louisville. The collection includes 350-plus oil paintings and dates back to the turn of the last century.

The nominating committee is still accepting donations to the Minnie Lou Bradley Endowment Fund to provide scholarships for students to attend OSU. For information on how to donate, contact Clint Rusk, OSU Department of Animal Science, 101B Animal Science Building, Stillwater, OK 74078; [clint.rusk@okstate.edu](mailto:clint.rusk@okstate.edu); or 405-744-6062.