



History of the Association

In 2003, the Arabian Horse Association incorporated as a 501(c)(5) organization through a merger of the Arabian Horse Registry of America (founded 1908) and the International Arabian Horse Association (founded 1950).

Both the Arabian Horse Registry of America and the International Arabian Horse Association have long histories flavored by the strong individuals who had a passion for Arabian horses and the wherewithal to launch the breed's presence in North America in the 20th century to large numbers of people. You may read about any of the topics related to either organization's history below.

Origin of the Arabian Horse Registry of America

The Arabian Horse Registry of America, Inc. is the oldest organization in North America serving owners of purebred Arabian horses. The Registry was founded in 1908 by a group of individuals who shared a passion for the past, present and future of the purebred Arabian horse. Since its inception, the Registry has been the central governing authority in the U.S. and Mexico for the breed and closed out the year 2002 with 27,500 associate members.

It should be noted that for all the breeds of light horses which exist today, it was necessary to establish a registry prior to the development of the breed. The Arabian, however, was an exception to this, for here was a breed that had been recognized for thousands of years. In other words, the Arabian horse was not the result of selective breeding, as were the Quarter Horse, Paint Horse, Appaloosa, Thoroughbred and all other light breeds, but it was a breed of horse that had been maintained and cherished in its purity for centuries.



It is difficult to discuss the history of the Arabian Horse Registry without including a brief background of the introduction of the Arabian horse to America.

In 1873, while on a trip to the Middle East, General Grant was presented the two purebred Arabian stallions, LEOPARD and LINDENTREE, by the Sultan, Abdul Hamid II, of Turkey. LEOPARD was later given to Randolph Huntington who subsequently imported two mares and two stallions in 1888 from England. This program, limited as it was, must be considered as the first purebred Arabian breeding program in the United States.

The second important influence upon the Arabian horse in America was the Turkish exhibition of 45 Arabian horses at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. Among the imported Arabians shown were the mare, NEJDME and the stallion, OBEYRAN. These two horses subsequently became foundation animals No. 1 and No. 2 in the Arabian Horse Stud Book of America.

The third greatest influence in the development of the Arabian Horse Registry came from the Homer Davenport importation of Arabian horses in 1906.

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According to Albert Harris' book on the history of the Registry: "This expedition was a remarkable one in many respects. It was sponsored by our President, 'Teddy' Roosevelt, financed by Peter B. Bradley, and executed by Homer Davenport, all three outstanding horsemen, and it resulted in the importation of the largest number of authentic Arabian horses in one shipment ever made to this country. It was in 1906 that Mr. Davenport, accompanied by Charles Arthur Moore, Jr., and John Henry Thompson, Jr., had the exciting and strenuous experience which he tells about in his book, 'My Quest of the Arabian Horse.' Twenty-seven splendid horses were secured in Arabia and transported safely to Boston."

Harris went on to write: "Davenport's importation of Arabian horses directly from the desert so aroused the enthusiasm of the few Arab breeders in this country that they decided to form a club and registry of their own to promote the interest of their horses and to offer encouragement for importation of new blood to America. The only place Arabian horses could be registered at the time was in the (Thoroughbred) Jockey Club, and the interests of the Jockey Club lay solely in promoting the Thoroughbred."

On September 2, 1908, the Arabian Horse Club of America, Inc. was founded in New York state. The first meeting was held at the Hotel Belmont and was attended by the incorporators: Henry K. Bush-Brown, Homer Davenport, Charles A. Voetsch, Francis A. Huck, and James B. Kilburn.

The name and location of the organization changed two more times until it finally settled in Colorado under the name, "Arabian Horse Registry of America, Inc."

Important Dates in the History of the Arabian Horse Registry of America

1908	Registry founded under the name, the "Arabian Horse Club of America" to maintain the official registration and ownership records for purebred Arabian horses, as well as to aid, foster and promote the preservation and improvement of purebred Arabian horses and the Arabian breed.
1909	The Department of Agriculture recognizes the Registry Stud Book as the only official Registry for purebred Arabian horses. There were 71 horses registered and 11 owners listed in the Stud Book of the Arabian Horse Club of America. This publication created "Volume I" published in 1913.
1939	The Registry moved from New York to Chicago.
1950	The name of the organization was changed to "The Arabian Horse Club Registry of America."
1950	Members of the Arabian Horse Registry passed a resolution recommending the establishment of the International Arabian Horse Association to promote and coordinate all Arabian horse show activities and to develop horse show rules.
1958	Horse number 14,000 is registered during this silver anniversary year.
1965	Horse number 35,000 is registered.
1968	Written records are converted to a computer system. Horse number 50,000 is registered.

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1969	Official name of the organization changes to "Arabian Horse Registry of America, Inc." and the Registry moved from Chicago to Colorado.
1972	Artificial insemination test program started.
1973	The Registry marks its 65th anniversary. Horse number 100,000 is registered.
1976	Permanent record blood typing program for breeding stallions is implemented.
1977	Artificial insemination adopted as regular rule. On-line computer programs substantially enhanced.
1980	Horse number 200,000 is registered.
1980	Embryo transfer developmental program is implemented.
1981	Stud book produced on microfiche and offered to owners as alternative to the printed edition of stud books.
1983	Registry converts computer records to a new, in-house computer system. The Registry celebrates 75 years of service.
1984	Horse number 300,000 is registered.
1984	Registry moves to the new Arabian Horse Center in Westminster, Colorado.
1986	Embryo transfer adopted in regular rule book.
1988	Horse number 400,000 is registered.
1991	Full parentage qualification by blood typing requirement implemented for 1991 foals.
1991	Transported semen developmental program begins.
1991	Computer services provided by the Registry to the Canadian Arabian Horse Registry.
1991	Arabian Jockey Club, Inc. moves to the Arabian Horse Center and becomes an affiliate of the Registry.
1992	The Registry assumes responsibility for Arabian racehorse identification.
1994	Horse number 500,000 is registered.
1995	Use of transported and stored semen is adopted as a regular rule.
1997	The Registry implements a new one-page racing certificate.
1997	The Registry releases the Bookshelf CD-ROM containing registration records of over 890,000 horses registered worldwide..
1997	TheRegistry.org and ArabianRacing.org web sites developed for the Registry and Arabian Jockey Club to provide additional access to information and services.
1998	Arabian Horse America launched to offer market development services and support to Arabian community.

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1998	Arabian Horse America starts Discovery Farms program, the first national farm referral, non-sales program designed to introduce non-owners to Arabian horses.
1999	Arabian Horse America establishes a Mentor Network of knowledgeable Arabian owners to provide basic information about Arabian horse ownership, plus guidance on buying, breeding, training and local activities.
1999	Arabian Horse Classifieds hosts the largest online marketplace for Arabian horses.
2000	Arabian Farm Directory established as the industry's first national online directory for Arabian horse farms.
2000	DataSource CD-Rom brings over 890,000 horse records, show records, race records and owner records to the desktop.
2000	Permanent record DNA typing program started.
2000	DNA parentage qualification made available for foal registration.
2001	DataSource Online creates access to information for over 900,000 horses from any PC or Mac with an Internet connection.
2002	Arabian Horse America launches new Incentive Programs to provide recognition and awards to those riding & competing outside the traditional Arabian horse associations.
2002	The Registry begins accepting Oocyte Transfer foal registrations. The restriction of one horse registration per calendar year per mare is lifted.

Origin of the International Arabian Horse Association

Founded in 1950 by a group of Arabian horse clubs, the International Arabian Horse Association's (IAHA) mission was to provide organized outlets for group activity for many owners who shared an interest in Arabian horses. IAHA began as a small group of Arabian horse enthusiasts and grew to a membership of 32,000 in the 1980's. Most members traditionally joined through one of 270 affiliate Arabian horse clubs across the United States and Canada. IAHA provided a network of horse owners and breeders throughout 18 geographic regions. Youth membership in the International Arabian Horse Youth Association (IAHYA) numbered close to 6,000 and comprised 16 percent of IAHA total membership. In 2002, IAHA closed the year with 27,500 members.



IAHA administered the Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian Horse Registries, approved more than 400 show and distance riding competitions annually, produced five national championship events and paid \$4 million in prize money to eligible competitors each year through the International Arabian Breeders Sweepstakes and National Halter Futurities programs. IAHA was the focal point of Arabian horse competitive activities in North America and offered a wide range of programs for both competitive and recreational Arabian horse owners and riders. IAHA was headquartered at the site of the new AHA.

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IAHA® produced three national horse shows each year: Youth Nationals in July, Canadian Nationals in August and U.S. Nationals in October. Only the most committed competitors attend these national events and must qualify in order to compete. IAHA also produced the National Competitive Trail Ride and Endurance Ride Championships in early summer and fall. IAHA instituted a Judges and Stewards Commissioner in 1990 with a staff to assist in overseeing the education and ethical conduct of judges and stewards.

Most former IAHA programs have rolled over into the new AHA.

Important Dates in IAHA History

If a comprehensive list were developed of all the programs created since the inception of IAHA, it would be twice as long. It's a tribute to IAHA members that their unbridled enthusiasm has generated such a rich and diverse selection of programs.

- 1950--IAHA Incorporated
- 1951--First IAHA Annual Convention
- 1951--IAHA Purchases Half-Arabian and Anglo-Arabian Registries
- 1957--First Canadian Nationals
- 1958--First U.S. National Championship Classes held with Estes Park show
- 1964--Regional Championship Rules Adopted and Regions Established
- 1965--Legion of Merit+ Achievement Awards Initiated
- 1965--First Halter Futurities
- 1967--First stand-alone U.S. Nationals
- 1970--First Arabian Horse Youth Judging Contest
- 1971--Ethical Practice Review Board established
- 1971--IAHA Starts Show Recognition for All-Arabian Divisions
- 1973--Regional (Representative Democracy) Governing Structure Established
- 1975--First National Competitive Trail & Endurance Rides Held
- 1975--IAHA starts International Arabian Horse Foundation
- 1977--Dressage Rider Awards started
- 1978--Drugs and Medication Rules implemented
- 1979--Inside International started
- 1980--Legion of Honor++, Legion of Supreme Honor+/ and Legion of Supreme Merit+++ Achievement Awards Added
- 1981--Fight Off Arabian Lethals (F.O.A.L.) program begins
- 1983--Arabian Breeders Sweepstakes started
- 1983--Youth Team Tournament,
- 1983--Youth Achievement Awards
- 1983--Youth Essay Contest
- 1993--Youth Promotional Extravaganza started
- 1984--IAHA Moves to Arabian Horse Center
- 1985-- Inside International wins American Horse Publications General Excellence Award

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- 1986-- Inside International wins Livestock Publications Council "Most Improved Publication" award
- 1988--First Foundation Scholarships awarded
- 1989--MBNA Credit Card launched
- 1990--Judges & Stewards Commissioner Office Established
- 1991--IAHA Equitation Manual published in the Handbook
- 1991--Arabian Horse Type Judging Manual & Video produced
- 1991--"Arabian Fever-A Family Affair" video launched
- 1992--Legion of Masters+++ and Legion of Excellence+// Achievement Awards Added
- 1993--"Recipes For Success" Fairs, Mini-Conventions and Seminar How to Manual released
- 1993--Volunteer Service Award
- 1993--First Youth Nationals
- 1993--Distance Riding Program started
- 1993--Dressage Rider Awards started
- 1993-IAHA National Endurance Championship special produced by IAHA airs to 27 million viewers on Prime Sports Networks around the country
- 1994--International Arabian Horse Youth Association started
- 1994-IAHA receives AHSA Broadcast Media Award for Youth Nationals TV special
- 1995-IAHA receives AHSA Broadcast Media Award for U.S. Nationals TV special
- 1995--Youth of the Year Award started
- 1995--Horse Show Hotline Started
- 1996--Non Arabian Nominated Sire Category added
- 1996--IAHA purchases headquarters in Aurora
- 1996--Recreational Riding Program started
- 1996--Members Receive \$1 Million Excess Personal Liability Insurance
- 1997--First National Yearling Jackpot Classes
- 1997--First IAHYA Convention
- 1998--National Performance Futurity Program Established
- 1998--First Club Summit
- 1998--Youth Creative Contest started
- 1999--Club Excellence Program Started
- 1999 --"Arabian Horse Fun Show Kit" Manual released
- 1999--"To Finish Is To Win" Manual released
- 1999--First National Horseman's Symposium
- 2000--Poof You have a Booth Booklet released
- 2000--Sundowner High-Point Horse Award Started
- 2002--Amateur Achievement Awards Started
- 2002--IAHA Enters Merger talks with the Arabian Horse Registry of America
- 2003--First Sport Horse Nationals

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