

Pass It On®...

The Taming of the West Featuring Diamond Kitty.

It's time to give cowgirls their due. Kitty Canutt was a bronc rider in the early 1900s who wore a diamond in her tooth that she occasionally removed and pawned when she needed contest entry money.

Imagine growing up in New York City, dreaming of open ranges and taming wild horses. That's exactly what Kitty Canutt did.

At 17 years old, young Kitty competed in the Wild West Celebration Rodeo in Miles City, Montana. The year was 1916. The Western states were still populated with mavericks, roustabouts, gamblers and cowboys ... and, of course, the brave women who also came West.

Kitty came to compete. She was a petite, fiery young woman who was determined to prove herself on the rodeo circuit. Not only did she ride broncs, but she also rode in relays where contestants rode at breakneck speeds, unsaddled one horse and saddled up another. Kitty often finished these races perched wildly, legs flailing as they searched for the stirrups. The crowds were thrilled.

Kitty rode the circuit from summer to fall, and when she wasn't competing, she was breaking wild horses for local ranches. It's said that she always wanted the orneriest horses because she took pride in being the one to tame them. An outlaw horse would be blindfolded and led into the middle of the ring. Kitty would throw herself aboard, and off they'd go until either the horse or Kitty gave up. The horse always quit first.

In everything she did, Kitty was determined to be the best. At times when she ran short of money, she'd pawn the diamond mounted in her front tooth, win another contest and buy back the diamond. It wasn't long before Kitty became the women's world champion bronc rider.

After winning All-Around Champion Cowgirl at the Pendleton Round-Up in Pendleton, Oregon, in 1916, she soon fell in love with Enos "Yakima" Canutt, the all-around winning cowboy at the same event. They married in 1917 while at a show in Kalispell, Montana. After a move to Los Angeles,

Yakima became one of Hollywood's leading stuntmen.

At a time when it seemed refinement and manners were the only path, Diamond Kitty went her own direction, proving that with enough determination and courage, you can ride your way into the middle of your childhood dreams — an open range of possibilities with short bursts of teeth-clenching adrenaline.

Grit...[PassItOn.com](https://www.passiton.com)

By The Foundation for a Better Life®

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