

Mrs. Rhelda Royer, Involved in Dairy Farming

by Mrs. Charles McSparran
Farm Feature Writer

Mrs. Herbert (Rhelda E.) Royer, 2025 Oregon Pike, in Manheim Township, is the founder of one of the top Holstein dairy and breeding herds of Lancaster County, serves as secretary-treasurer of two dairy herd breeding syndicates of which Royers are part owners, keeps herd and farm books, acts as a part time tour guide, is a 4-H leader besides being an efficient homemaker.

It all started when Rhelda, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Witmer Eshelman of Donegal, had Angus 4-H steers. She had two and each time she had to part with one she was broken hearted County agent, M. M. Smith, suggested she get a dairy animal so she could keep it. Thus she gives him credit for the incentive that eventually developed into the business Royers have today. She also gives credit to Earl Grcff for interesting her in Holsteins.

Her original 4-H animal was Caernarvon Ragapple Creamelle Rhelda gave her the nickname "Blossom." Mr. Smith selected her from the Naaman Stoltzfus herd at Elverson. Rhelda's father had a mixed grade herd of about 18 cows. His herd not being certified Rhelda could not take Blossom to shows. Rhelda loved the cows and helped with the milking at home.

Rhelda married Herbert Royer who farmed for his father, E. R. Royer, on the farm they now own and operate. Herbert's father bought the farm in 1914. He raised about 30 steers a year. Herbert also kept 1,500 laying chickens. In 1952 Newcastle disease hit the chickens and the steer market broke.

Rhelda says "I always loved animals. It was this love that got this thing going. I always wanted to have a dairy herd and wanted the best herd as equity." Because of her keen interest in animal breeding she studied pedigrees and genetics.

Royers named the farm Blossomelle and use this name as their herd name. It came from the name and nickname of Rhelda's 4-H cow. Rhelda bought Caernarvon Rose Elaine, a two year old milking cow bred to Ivanhoe, at a Keystone Classic Sale at Mount Joy in 1957. Elaine came from the Stoltzfus herd also but was not related to Blossom. This and two of Blossom's daughters were the nucleus that started this fine breeding herd. A



Mrs. Royer holds an antique teapot, one of several prized old dishes she keeps in her beautiful walnut corner cupboard.

fourth of their present herd stems back to old Blossom. Royers are really concerned with cow families. Mrs. Royer says "You have to develop them." She plans pedigrees five years ahead of time.

Mrs. Royer says she thinks dairy farmers should give some of their best animals to their children to get them interested. Royers have a daughter Averrill and a son Lynn to whom they gave some of their best stock. They gave Averrill one of Caernarvon Rose Elaine's daughters, Blossomelle Zsa Zsa 91-2E, for her 4-H project. She is an Ivanhoe cow. She is listed in the National Holstein Newsletter with 150,000 pounds record. She won reserve Junior All-American in 1964. She will be 13 years old in August. She has four 1,000 pound butterfat records. In DHIA and DHIR she was on the class leader roll for butterfat two years. Averrill had this cow all through

4-H plus a couple others. Mrs. Royer says "She is the queen bee of the herd."

Averrill received county awards for keeping records in the lamb, dairy and baby beef 4-H clubs and was also in flowers, sewing, cooking and photography 4-H clubs. She was awards winner in Veterinary Science at the National 4-H Club Congress in Chicago in 1969. She was grand champion winner in the Holstein fitting and showing contest at the state Junior Dairy Show in 1969 and reserve champion in 1971. She was Outstanding 4-H Club Girl in Pennsylvania one year. In this she had to fill out a blue form. They are judged on all their accomplishments in this contest. She also won on a demonstration at Club Days at Penn State in which she showed how to give a demonstration. She was on a judging team at P.S.U. Dairy Expo in 1968 which placed first. Averrill graduated at Millersville State College in Elementary Education last week and has accepted a teaching position in the kindergarten of Glen Rock, York County. She works part time at Gimbels, Park City.

Lynn is taking a real interest in the herd. Mr. and Mrs. Royer bred "Blossomelle Easter Bambi" and gave her to Lynn. Now he has 22 registered animals and most are from his original Bambi. He has six cows and the rest are heifers and calves. He helps with the dairy when he is home. Lynn won fitting and showing awards many times. He was reserve grand champion showman and fitter last September at the Pennsylvania Junior Dairy Show and placed first with Lovee Dove in the 4-H Holstein Show.

He was president of the County 4-H Tractor Club and received an award for his record books for three years. Lynn, Marlene Harbold and Robbie Hess placed first as a judging team at P.S.U. Dairy Expo in May. He will be a senior at Manheim Township High School next year. He is taking a college prep course and wants to take Industrial Arts at

Millersville State College after graduation from high school. He plans to make a grandfather's clock in wood shop at school next year. He took metal shop this year. He panelled the kitchen and made some closets for his mother this year. He also helps his father do wiring and welding.

Mrs. Royer was in charge of the County Dairy Princess contest from 1964 to 1969. It was in 1965 that one of Royers' top heifers was born and they named her for the then county Dairy Princess, Linda Welk.

Royer's bred four animals which are classified excellent: Zsa Zsa, Princess, Black Gold and Bambi. Bambi is in the Kepler herd in Maryland. She topped Royal Ragapple Sale in Earlville Invitational Sale in New York in 1962. Dairy Princess got the All-Pennsylvania award for aged Holstein cows last October. She is the fifth generation granddaughter of old Blossom. Dairy Prince, son of Dairy Princess, was sold in Brazil and has just won his class at a show there.

Mrs. Royer is secretary-treasurer of two Holstein breeding syndicates. They, as well as Royers, have liquid mercury filled tanks to keep the semen in at Royers' farm. They also store some at Atlantic Breeders. Royers have young bulls and heifers for sale also at their farm.

There are 15 members in the "Model Holstein Syndicate." They have members in Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Rhode Island, and Florida. They bought Briar Kill Admiral Model in New York and have him at Royers. He was sire of All-New England Junior Get in 1971. They have meetings in July and December.

There are eight members in

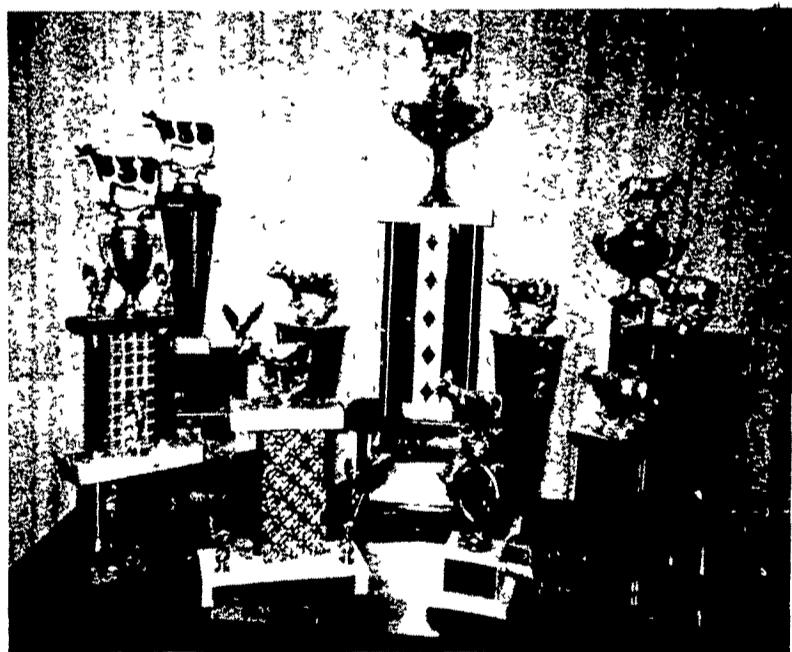
"Marathon Ormsby Breeders Syndicate." They own four bulls. The most famous is Sills Dale Marathon Model. All the bulls are sons or grandsons of Amcana Dictator Model. This is the bull Royers combined with Ivanhoe to make some special matings. Mrs. Royer tried to find the owner of Amcana from 1960 to 1967 when she found the owner of this semen and bought half interest. It is for sale now. Black Dove, Lovee Dove and High Hat are offspring of Amcana. Lynn has Lovee Dove cow. Black Dove is a full brother and is leased to Tri-State Breeders of Westby, Wisc. High Hat was sold and is in the Dominican Republic. These syndicates and Royers advertise in Holstein World. They have frozen semen from all the top bulls in the country. It started as a hobby with Mrs. Royer.

Blossomelle Zsa Zsa 91-2E had Flying Streak which Atlantic Breeders purchased, Prince Charming which is at American Breeders and Zip Code which is at a private herd in Wisconsin where they are proving him. Prince Charming was top selling bull at the National Convention Sale in Minneapolis in 1967.

Zsa Zsa had three daughters: Powder Puff, Sweet Dream and Lady Luck. They were kept in Royers' herd. Powder Puff died since. Two of Zsa Zsa's brothers were Black Watch and Black Gold. Black Gold was at Atlantic Breeders and Black Watch was at Sire Power, Tunkhannock. Blossomelle Black Watch was top selling animal at the Pennsylvania Golden Harvest Sale in 1964. A third brother Black Secret is in the Dominican Republic.

Royers received the Progressive Breeder award, which is top award for herd, from the National Holstein-Friesian

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Averrill and Lynn Royer's trophies won with animals at Junior Dairy Show and State Black and White Shows.



"Blossomelle Dairy Princess," seven-year-old registered-Holstein who won All-Pennsylvania award last year.



Mrs. Royer holds a pewter pitcher won in 1962 at the Pennsylvania Black and White Show in the daughter-dam class for Zsa Zsa and her mother Caernarvon Rose Elaine. Several other awards are displayed. In background is her prized wooden collection.