

Elsie and Beauregard Entertain in Wellsboro

WELLSBORO — Elsie, the best-loved Jersey cow in America came to Wellsboro, Tioga County, to celebrate her 50th birthday and the 45th annual Laurel Festival.

Joining Elsie, the Borden Cow, in her trip to Pennsylvania was her 3-week-old son, Beauregard, sired by that infamous bull "Elmer."

Making the trip possible was the Wellsboro Plant of Borden, Inc. who reportedly went "whole cow" and spent over \$3,000 to bring Elsie and Beauregard to the Festival for four days.

Thursday, June 17, Elsie, Beauregard and two human attendants arrived at the Festival in Elsie's "Cowdillac" — a special white and yellow tractor trailer rig containing a fully equipped barn boudoir.

This 950-pounds, fawn-colored Jersey cow entertained visitors at her homey boudoir which featured two stalls, one for Elsie that looks like a canopied double bed, and the other an oversized crib for Beauregard.

Next to each sleeping accommodations was hoofware for the bovines. Beauregard had four sneakers attached to roller skates, while Elsie had just stepped out of four plush bedroom slippers.

The Elsie which visitors to the Laurel Festival were privileged to meet, alias KEK Guess Marie Lois, is the 23rd Jersey to represent the Borden Dairy Division and Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk.

Originally conceived as a cartoon personality in the 1930's; Elsie appeared in medical journals and newspaper ads telling folks about the nutritional value of milk.

Unlike most cartoon characters, Elsie became a live personality during the 1939 World's Fair in New York City. When the fair opened, the focal point of the elaborate Borden exhibit was a modern automatic milking machine, the "Rotolactor," where 150 cows were milked each day.

But the question fair visitors

asked most often was which of those 150 cows was Elsie. In order to avoid disappointing the crowds, a 7-year-old blueblooded Jersey cow named "You'll Do's Lobelia," was dressed in a lavishly embroidered green blanket and milked separately twice a day.

The live Elsie was such a hit at the 1939 World's Fair that Borden became convinced she could be the company's super sales lady and a star, of the milky way, was born.

In 1940, the live Elsie made a movie, "Little Men" with Jack Oakie and Kay Francis. She, ironically, played the part of a cow. During World War II, Elsie sold war bonds, \$10 million worth.

An attempt in the sixties was made to retire Elsie and develop a new trademark, but a survey showed the friendly cow was the best known and loved trademark in the country.

In 1971, an animation film house began developing a new cartoon Elsie for television commercials. The live Elsie, Nor Lea Chiefs Golden Etta Kriket, was reactivated for the official opening of the Borden Ice Cream Parlor at



Beauregard, a 3-week-old Jersey bull calf sired by "Elmer", peers at visitors to the 45th annual Laurel Festival in Wellsboro from his oversized crib.

Walt Disney World in Florida in 1972, and to greet the governor of Ohio and mayor of Columbus when Borden transferred its corporate headquarters to Ohio's capital city.

Elsie's popularity with a new generation of customers has taken her to the Kentucky Derby, Indianapolis 500, Rose Bowl Parade

and even to television for guest appearances.

Now, Elsie spends 11 months each year in her "Cowdillac" covering thousands of miles coast-to-coast across the continental United States as well as Hawaii, Puerto Rico and Canada. Not a bad schedule for a "50-year-old" cow!



Between naps in her canopied-double bed and keeping a watchful eye on her son, Beauregard, Elsie was the cordial hostess at her boudoir to visitors of the Laurel Festival.

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