

York Holstein Club Celebrates Half-Century Mark

JOYCE BUPP

York Co. Correspondent

YORK (York Co.) — Annual dues were one dollar, and 23 members joined that first year.

The year was 1946. World War II had passed into a sad chapter of history, tractors were becoming more commonplace on farms, and artificial insemination of cattle was still the stuff of science fiction and university researchers.

But the breeding of purebred Holstein cattle was alive and well, even thriving, in York County. So, in order to better educate themselves and promote their black-and-white cows, a handful of forward-looking agriculture leaders met on November 26, 1946, at the York Post Office building, and organized the York County Holstein Breeders Association.

A salute to its first 50 years was part of the recent 1996 annual York Holstein Association's annual meeting, January 18. Speakers included national Holstein president John Cope, Grantham, and Pennsylvania Holstein Association executive secretary Bill Nichol, who shared some of their memories of past years of involvement with the black and white cow.

Jonas Gruver was elected the first president of the club, serving in that capacity for several consecutive years. Vice-president was Herman Stebbins and William Raab was named the secretary-treasurer. Other directors included John Murphy, Newton Bair, Michael Whiteford and William Brown, the state director. Committees appointed were for membership, show and sale, and junior project.

According to the minutes of that formation meeting, Norman Rishel turned over a small treas-

ury balance from the "old association." No records have been found detailing what organization may have been the forerunner to the present York County club. Income during the first year included a \$60, third-place prize won by the York County herd at the Pennsylvania Farm Show, while total expense for the year was a \$6.95 charge for membership cards.

Club size grew rapidly, with an additional nine members joining during 1947. The first club calf was awarded in 1948, to David Miller, Jr., after he was named the 4-H Club Winner. A field-day held in 1948 included the still-popular cattle judging contest, including a division for the ladies.

A 1950 banquet meeting offered a bit of *deja vu* to many of today's dairy meetings. Featured speaker Joe Taylor discussed a "trend toward commercialization on dairy farms," as well as offered tips on operating more efficiently. Later that year, the Holstein club sponsored a float in a local agriculture parade.

Minutes of a directors meeting in 1952 report a "lively discussion on the much debated question of color restrictions." Plans were also underway for a Holstein tour, to be held the following summer. And, in 1953, another meeting discussion centered on the appointment of a committee to act on a project of getting grade cattle owners to change to purebreds.

More than a quarter-century later, in 1979, the York County Holstein Association held its first Calfarama Sale. The 49 head in the sale averaged \$1009.49. High average for the several years of calf sales came in 1982, when 41 head averaged \$1082.19.

A York County Holstein Hall of Fame was initiated in 1982, hon-



Reviewing 50 years of growth and making plans for the next one are York County Holstein leaders, from left, seated, Bridgette Bortner, secretary-treasurer, Tom Taylor, president and April Cooper, vice-president; second row, directors Darla Doll, Norma Lucabaugh and Phil Laughman; third row, state director Frank Feeser, directors Leroy Walker and Ed Calhoun.

oring two of the pioneering women from the early years of the club, Mabel Rishel and Margie Gruver. Subsequent inductees into the county's Hall of Fame include Herman Stebbins, 1983; David Miller, 1986; John T. Smith, 1988; Paul King, 1991; E. Wayne Beshore, 1992; and Ira L. Boyer, 1993.

Many of the projects and programs started in those early years of Holstein Association work continue today in York County. At its recent reorganization meeting, the board of directors elected Tom Taylor, Delta, as president. April

Cooper, Delta, is vice-president and Bridgette Bortner, Seven Valleys, was elected secretary-treasurer. State director is Frank Feeser, Hanover. Committee chairs are Frank Feeser, tour; Leroy Walker, barn meeting; Tom Taylor, county show; Bridgette Bortner, banquet; and Darla Doll, picnic. Other directors include Norma Lucabaugh, Phil Laughman and Ed Calhoun.

A two-day tour to Holstein herds in northern Pennsylvania is tentatively scheduled for March 27-28. Cost of the overnight tour is \$80 per person or \$115 per two,

and includes bus and lodging. No meals are included in the cost. Reservations are on a first-come, first-serve basis and are open to members from York and other counties. For additional information or reservations, contact tour chairman Frank Feeser, phone 717-637-7458.

The York County Holstein Show is scheduled for Wednesday, July 31, at the York Fairgrounds. Other events planned by the county club, but not yet scheduled, include a barn meeting, picnic and annual banquet.

York Chamber Names Ag Winners

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YORK (York Co.)—"I learned to spell 'no' in about second grade. But I never learned to say it," Bill Buser says.

Buser, his wife, Pat, and their children have been selected the 1996 Farm Family of the Year by the York Chamber of Commerce. The recognition was presented as

a highlight of the Chamber's annual agriculture recognition banquet, held January 23 at Wisheaven Hall.

Bill Buser suspects his inability to say "no" to agriculture and community involvement played a large role in the family's selection for the honor. The York farmer has served as president of the county's Farm Bureau organiza-



Ken Potter, left, Martin Potato Chips, Inc., is the York Chamber of Commerce Agribusiness winner for 1996. Presenting his award is Chamber executive director Tom Donley.



Honored as the York Chamber of Commerce's Farm Family of the year is the Bill Buser family. Surrounding Bill and Pat Buser, seated, are from left, Michele and Rich Buser, Rick and Deb Leiphart, and Bob and Diane Buser.

tion for several years, hosted and helped organize the Chamber's 1995 farm tour in November and frequently hosts school groups to the family farm to teach them about growing food. He serves on the agriculture advisory committee at Eastern High School as well.

The Buser family crops 1,000 acres to wheat, soybeans, corn and hay, and raises beef and hogs. Bill and Pat began farming in 1957 at his parents' farm, then later moved to a rented dairy farm at Zion's View for six years. In

1971, they purchased and returned to the Buser home farm, adding a new 80-cow dairy stall barn.

After Bill suffered a serious injury in a tree accident in 1981, the dairy herd was sold to concentrate instead on crops and livestock. Son Rich now runs the 3,300 head hog herd, while son Bob is a partner on the crops farm. Pat works along with her husband and sons on the crops operation and is a skilled operator of all the field equipment.

Sharing the Chamber award

spotlight as Agribusiness of the Year was Ken Potter, owner of Martin's Potato Chips, Inc. Potter stepped into the snack food business in 1971, when he purchased a single delivery truck. The firm now processes a half-million pounds of potatoes per week.

Now, Martin's Chips keeps a fleet of more than 75 trucks on the road hauling chips and related snack foods to five states. Ultimately, Potter hopes to serve snack lovers up and down the