

'People You Meet Are The Good Part Of Showing'

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WINDHAM CENTER (Bradford Co.) — Neither sleet nor snow nor falling rain can keep the Powell family from the Pennsylvania Farm Show.

Traveling to Harrisburg for the week, which is often marked by fierce Northeast winter storms, is a family tradition that started in the 1930s.

"Last year they let us out early because they were calling for a huge storm," remarked Doris Powell, of Powell Rambouillets. "We got to within an hour of home and the roads turned to a sheet of ice. We were stuck there for over an hour."

Doris is carrying on a legacy that was begun by her father, Kenneth Moore, of Twin Pine Farm.

"I showed there about 50 years," said Moore about the Pennsylvania Farm Show. "The first show I showed at was in 1936."

And in his many years of showing and in the years since, he has seen numerous changes. The biggest, perhaps is the ease with which the trip is made.

"We had no heater in the truck. I'd wrap my legs in blankets. You could only go about 35 miles per hour with the truck," Moore recalled. "It would take us about a half a day to get there. At the show we'd sleep in the barn."

Today with improvements in roadways and transportation in general, the family, who lives only one mile from the New York border, can zip to Harrisburg in only three and a half hours.

But they also make it a point to

travel to other shows as well. This year they took in the Maryland Sheep and Wool Festival, the Troy Fair, the Harford Fair, Keystone International Livestock Exposition, Eastern States Exposition, North American International Livestock Exposition, and the Midwest Stud Ram Sale.

At the peak of his showmanship, Moore traveled to as many as 16 fairs each year exhibiting 50 to 60 head in four breeds. In 1991 he had the National Champion Shropshire ewe.

"It's been a way of life around here as long as I can remember," said Doris.

Moore passed his love of shepherding on to each of his three children. Kenneth Jr. has his own flock about two miles from the home farm. Sister Kathy helps with the flock whenever she's needed. Sister Doris manages Powell Rambouillets with the help of Greg Strausbaugh and sons Rich and Geoff.

Even though Moore no longer shows his sheep, he still keeps a flock of his own. Powell Rambouillets are also housed on his farm.

Currently the Powell flock numbers about 100 including about 50 brood ewes. Not too long ago, their flock numbered more than 250 head, including three breeds.

"We had Shropshires and Dorsets and Rambouillets," said Doris. "Last year we sold the Dorsets and the Shropshires. When I was a 4-H member, I showed Shropshires because my mother and father had Shropshires and Hampshires and Rambouil-



This spring ewe lamb and fall ram lamb are both destined to be shown at the 1998 Pennsylvania Farm Show. Here, Doris and Geoff Powell stand by as Rich Powell holds the ewe and Greg Strausbaugh holds Powell 9660.

lets. I got elected to have Shropshires."

The decision to focus on only one breed came mainly because of time limits. Greg works full time as a grain buyer for Cooperative Feed Dealers in Binghamton, N.Y. and both Rich and Geoff, both out of 4-H, have full time jobs. That left Doris to care for the entire flock mostly by herself, so the numbers were cut back.

Rambouillets became the breed of choice.

Much of the flock stems from Cunningham bloodlines.

"We found this group of Rambouillet ewes up country. When we went to look at the ewes, we weren't going to buy any sheep. We had the Dorsets and a few Rambouillets and the Shropshires at the time and we didn't need any more sheep around here. We went

to look at the sheep and about 10 minutes later, we decided to bring them home," said Greg with a laugh.

"He looked at me and I looked at him and we said, we'll take them," said Doris. "They were that good."

This group came to Pennsylvania in the spring of 1994.

"The Cunningham sheep themselves are from Oregon. They're

(Turn to Page B19)

70 Years Of Farm Shows

(Continued from Page B17)

within one building, the atmosphere was not always the most friendly among competitive salesmen.

Today most major manufacturers take their equipment to Ag Progress Days and other events where they can actually demonstrate equipment instead of simply talking about it.

While Brubaker misses seeing all the farm equipment representatives, he recognizes that some things need to change.

"Today the Farm Show is geared more as a place to show consumers the variety and quality of Pennsylvania farm products instead of a place mostly for farmers.

"I guess that's good," said Brubaker. "They need to know that it is possible for about three percent of the work force to produce more than enough food for our expanding population. Agriculture is still the most important industry in the state."

The Brubakers have attended all but one or two of the shows held during the last 70 years. During the war years, the Farm Show building was not available to hold the event.

"First, I went with my parents, then as part of my employment, and later we took our children and grandchildren," he said.

Although the incentive to attend changed, Brubaker can't stay away. He said, "I'll probably be there to check out new technologies along with tens of thousands of other consumers, and enjoy the fresh, nutritious, delicious produce in the food court."

After all these years, Brubaker probably knows his way around the complex better than most; however, he said, "Like the other 50 years, I'll take the map along from *Lancaster Farming* to find my way around."

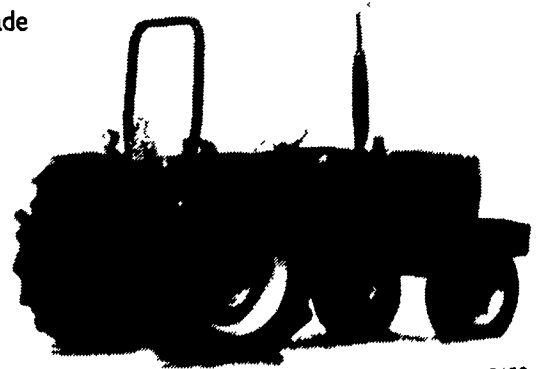
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