

Hereford Friends Recognized with Hall of Fame, Merit Honors

Bob Schafer and Upstream Ranch were inducted into the Hereford Hall of Fame on Oct. 23 at the American Hereford Association (AHA) Annual Meeting. The Hall of Fame honor recognizes Hereford breeders who've dynamically influenced the direction and advancement of the Hereford breed.

Also honored were Hereford Hall of Merit inductees, the late Guy Shull and Michael "Mike" MacNeil. Hall of Merit recipients aren't necessarily Hereford breeders, but have in their own ways greatly influenced the Hereford breed and cattle industry.

Bob Schafer

Bob Schafer, Mahanomen, Minn., got his start in the Hereford business at a young age on the farm owned and operated by his mother, uncle and grandparents at Buffalo Lake, Minn. Little did folks know the influence Bob would later have on the breed.

After graduating from the University of Minnesota with a degree in animal husbandry and working for the agricultural

Extension service, Bob became manager of Schermerhorn Farms of Mahanomen, Minn., in 1956.

Under his management, the operation became a cooperator in the AHA's dwarfism research, and in 1963, was one of the first to enroll in the new Total Performance Records (TPR) program.

"Nearly 15,000 head would be performance tested over the next 40 years and 1,500 head would have ultrasound carcass data collected," says Beth Carlson, Minnesota Hereford Breeders president.

In 1965, John Oxley purchased Schermerhorn Farms and combined it with his Oklahoma-based Hereford ranch. Extensive use of artificial insemination ensued. The Oklahoma herd was dispersed in 1976, and the rest of the herd in 2003.

Bob served as manager of Oxley Hereford Ranch for 48 years. Beth says he was most astute at purchasing herd bulls, as well as semen from top sires. The effect of Bob's careful genetic selection, she explains, is that the OXH prefix is found in many of the breed's most influential cattle. The list of famed OXH sires is long, and the OXH females are reputed for structural soundness, heavy milk, moderate birth weight, growth and muscle — generally problem-free cows.

Oxley cattle were sold throughout the U.S., as well as in Canada and Australia. Semen made

its way to Canada, Australia, Europe, Africa and South America. Oxley cattle were also exhibited various times at regional shows, state fairs and the National Western Stock Show (NWSS). Carloads of bulls were shown for several years at the NWSS.

Bob's contributions to the breed didn't stop at Oxley. "Bob has spent his entire life contributing to the respect and growth of the breed through his involvement in local, state and national organizations, including both industry and breed organizations," says Mark Frederickson, Frederickson Hereford Farm, Starbuck, Minn.

Among his contributions were many years served as president of the Minnesota Hereford Association and on the Red River Valley Winter Show committee. He also represented northwest Minnesota on the Minnesota Beef Council for nine years. During this time Beth notes that he was a driving force behind the development of a hamburger and wild rice beef patty that grew to be very popular.

Oxley Hereford Ranch served as a place of education and entertainment to young and old alike through the many field days, tours, judging team practices and informational seminars held on the ranch over the years. As a respected breeder, Bob was often asked to judge state and county fairs, as well as Register of Merit shows.

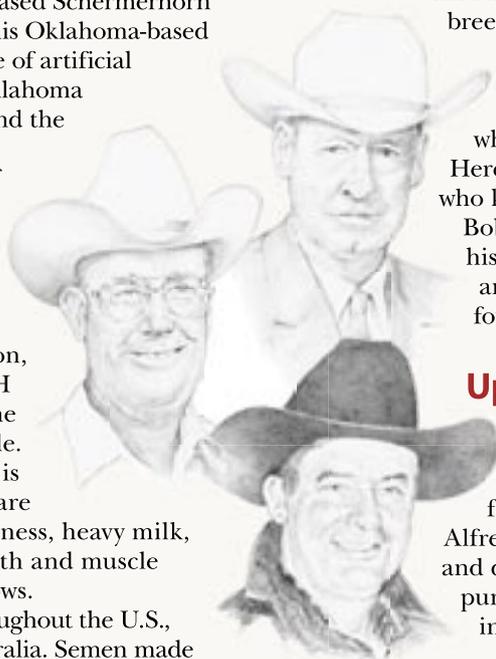
"Bob Schafer is an individual whose enthusiasm and dedication to the Hereford breed is undisputed by anyone who knows him," Mark says.

Bob, too, is a family man. He and Carol, his wife of 54 years, raised five children and now enjoy 12 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Upstream Ranch

Alfred Meeks and Sons originated in 1937 in Dalhart, Texas, when Alfred Meeks bought some heifers from his father, JD Meeks. In 1955 Alfred and his wife, Mildred, and their son and daughter-in-law, Ferrall and Gloria, purchased Upstream Ranch near Taylor in the Sandhills of Nebraska.

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Today the ranch is managed by Alfred's grandson, Brent, and his wife, Robin, and owned with Mildred, who still lives on the ranch. Brent and Robin have two children — Marshall and Carlee. Alfred succumbed to cancer in 1991 and Ferrall and Gloria were killed in a car accident in 1994.

The Upstream herd includes 600 registered cows. About 500 cows and heifers are AI-bred annually and about 50 embryos transferred.

Upstream Ranch hosted its first production sale at the ranch in 1978, which has continued annually on the first Saturday of February. The ranch's main focus is the production of bulls for commercial cattlemen.

"Alfred and Mildred laid a solid foundation for one of the best ranches in the nation," say Ronny and Kay Morgan, Morgan Ranch Inc., Burwell, Neb. "Alfred knew his customers and knew how to market his cattle to them. Everyone was a friend to Alfred and Mildred and they returned that friendship. Ferrall and Gloria, the second generation, were no different. They worked hard at producing top Herefords and staying up with the trends of the industry. They are greatly missed, not only in the community, but throughout the Hereford families across the U.S. Brent and Robin had to step into the management role at the untimely death of Ferrall and Gloria, and have risen to the challenge. They have continued the high-quality cattle at Upstream Ranch and have shown successes in marketing their cattle that are second to no one."

Genetically, Upstream Ranch is trying to produce cattle with balanced-trait selection. They are constantly striving for the proper balance of calving ease, growth, maternal, fertility and carcass traits. They are advocates of using expected progeny differences (EPDs) and ultrasound, but also make sure their cattle excel phenotypically and in temperament. Structural soundness and docility are critical.

In 2006 Upstream ranked third in number of Dams of Distinction, an honor bestowed on outstanding Hereford females.

"Upstream Ranch has a long-standing tradition of breeding quality, reputation Hereford cattle, both in and out of the showing," says Valerie Simonson, Nebraska Hereford Association secretary/manager.

The family has exhibited four champion carloads at the NWSS, the 1971 NWSS champion Hereford bull, the 1972 reserve champion Hereford bull, and supreme Hereford and champion Hereford bull at the 100th NWSS in 2006, as well as the reserve champion horned Hereford bull.

"They deserve this award because they have been true to the Hereford breed for more than 50 years," Ronny and Kay say. "They have been successful because they are dedicated cattle people who know how to raise quality Herefords, know how to market them, know how to take care of their customers, know how to utilize technology to improve their Herefords and know how to be good stewards of the land."

Guy Shull

The late Guy Shull graduated from Oklahoma A&M College in 1949 and began his career in the purebred livestock industry as a fieldman for the Oklahoma Farmer-Stockman. He also operated Shull Hereford Farm, a family enterprise in Elgin, Okla.

"He incorporated the top genetics into his breeding program and strived to raise cattle that fit the livestock industry, avoiding extremes, while concentrating on birth weight, fertility, udder quality, fleshing ability and disposition," says Warren Sidwell, president of the Oklahoma Hereford Association. "He was practicing 40-plus years ago what we as an industry are focusing on today."

Guy held several successful production sales and promoted his cattle at state and national Hereford shows. Among the highlights was exhibiting several class winners at the NWSS.

He not only promoted his Herefords, but others as well, serving as secretary-fieldman for the Oklahoma Hereford Association for 27 years. Through his leadership and marketing efforts Oklahoma Herefords became recognized as a seedstock source on the national level, and Oklahoma breeders during his tenure exhibited several national champion bulls and females. Guy also continuously demonstrated his support for Hereford youth.

For the Oklahoma Cattlemen's Association (OCA), he served as a committee chairman and helped to organize and conduct the annual OCA summer ranch tours.

After his purebred dispersion in the late '60s, Guy continued to run a commercial operation until his retirement.

Later in his career, Guy diversified and became a purebred livestock auctioneer. Colleague A.J. Smith of the *Oklahoma Cowman* tells that Guy had a "seventh sense," knowing exactly what a bidder was willing to pay for an animal. He utilized this sense while crying sales from the early 1960s to the mid-'80s.

"Guy not only strived to breed and market the right kind of Hereford cattle that would positively impact the Hereford breed, but constantly promoted these values to anyone who would listen," Warren says.

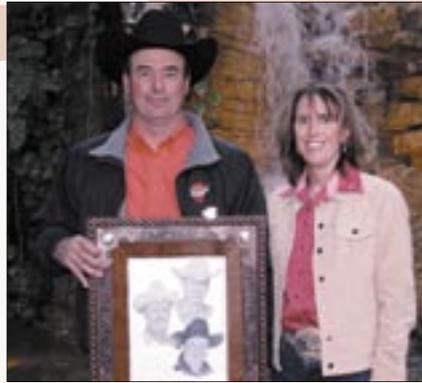
Long before the merger of the horned and polled national Hereford associations, Guy made it known that his pet peeve was the separate promotion of horned and polled animals. He emphasized the need for a unified breed. He also encouraged Hereford breeders to focus on maintaining Hereford purity to provide the most genetic kick in a crossbreeding program.

Warren says, "Although I only became acquainted with Guy late in his career, he gained my respect as he was an individual who may have been very direct with his answers and advice, but was always accurate and to the point." Warren credits Guy's knowledge of





Pictured are Bob Schafer, Mahanomen, Minn., 2006 Hereford Hall of Fame inductee, and his wife, Carol.



Pictured are Brent and Robin Meeks, Taylor, Neb., of Upstream Ranch, 2006 Hereford Hall of Fame inductee.



Pictured are Betty and Mike MacNeil, Miles City, Mont. Mike is a 2006 Hereford Hall of Merit inductee.

Hereford cattle and the livestock business, as well his many friends and business associates, as the reasons for his success.



Mike MacNeil

Mike MacNeil, native of New York State, graduated from Cornell University with a bachelor's degree from the College of Agriculture in 1974. He then went to work for Dutchman Hereford Co. in Lauxmont, Pa., until returning to school at Montana State University, where he received a master's degree in animal science in 1978. He then moved to South Dakota State University (SDSU) to begin work on his doctorate's degree. In 1980

Mike left SDSU to join the University of Nebraska staff at the U.S. Meat Animal Research Center (MARC), Clay Center, Neb., as the experiment station statistician.

Mike was awarded his doctorate's degree from SDSU in 1982 for his work on genetic antagonisms between sex-limited traits. In 1983 he joined the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service at Clay Center. In 1989, Mike transferred from MARC to Ft. Keogh Livestock and Range Research Laboratory in Miles City, Mont. Here he assumed responsibility for the Line 1 Hereford program.

Aspects of Mike's research that have directly benefited the AHA include: 1) comprehensively and objectively characterizing Line 1 Hereford cattle; 2) facilitating dominate use of Line 1 Hereford cattle in bovine genomics; 3) developing profit indexes for the AHA; 4) estimating the economic value of heterosis; 5) developing guidelines for implementing crossbreeding systems; 6) identifying genetic antagonisms for carcass and maternal traits; 7) evaluating importance of cow families in performance of Hereford cattle; 8) identifying and evaluating new phenotypes for estimation of EPDs (including calving date, metabolizable energy intake of cows and ovulatory follicle size); 9) identifying



Accepting the late Guy Shull's Hereford Hall of Merit honor (l to r) were Jodi Shull, Little Rock, Ark., daughter-in-law, and Ann Shull, Elgin, Okla., daughter.

quantitative trait loci for phenotypes of economic relevance to the beef industry and especially to Hereford breeders; 10) experimentally evaluating the genetic antagonism between birth weight and subsequent growth in Line 1 Hereford cattle; and 11) characterizing consequences of selection to reduce birth weight and increase yearling weight in increasing calving ease, production efficiency and carcass value.

"Dr. MacNeil has been a good friend and inspiration to me as well as many other livestock producers across America," says Mark Cooper, Cooper Hereford Ranch, Willow Creek, Mont. "He has been a very influential voice for the American producer and is much deserving of this prestigious award."

John Hough, vice president of Benyshek and Hough Consulting Services, adds, "Mike is one of only a few researchers who truly understands both research theory and its application in the livestock industry."

Mike has authored, co-authored or edited more than 260 scientific and technical publications. These publications are frequently cited, and resulting technologies have been adopted by government agencies, livestock producers and beef cattle breed associations.

Mike somehow still has time to be active in his church and in the American Society of Animal Science, as well as other professional and civic organizations. He and his wife, Betty, make their home outside Miles City and are the parents of two children, Megan and Brendan. **HW**