

## **Tradition and History Help Keep VA Holstein Strong Over the 100 Years!**

*This is a collection of stories gathered for the 100th Anniversary of the Virginia Holstein Association.*



### **Introduction to Burnley Farm**

*Taken from the 1967 Field Day Brochure*

Burnley Farm is located in the Green Springs Valley of Louisa County in the central part of Virginia along US Highway 15. It is here that Lafayette camped during the Revolutionary War. Burnley is also reported to be one of the spots that Stonewall Jackson camped during the War Between the States. One of the oldest trees on the corner of the property is supposed to have been used to hang several Yankee spies.

Burnley received its name from the owner Mr. Joe Morris who was engaged to a young lady whose last name was Burnley and he named the farm for her. At the last minute, the lady changed her mind but Mr. Morris did not change the name and never married. Burnley was purchased by Mr. G.E. Fisher (Mr. R.J. Fisher's father) in 1919. In 1967, the farm consisted of 884 acres of crops and woodland. The original dairy herd was started in 1925 of grade Holsteins, Guernseys and Jerseys. The first registered Holsteins were purchased in 1925 from Mr. W.O. Perkins of Buckner, Va. At one time, about 20% of the herd traced back to one cow Lady Snowflake Buttermaid 522044 purchased from Mr. Perkins. The real nucleus of the herd was purchased at the State Holstein Consignment Sale in Orange, Va. in 1926.

Early sires used at Burnley came from Rosni Farm and Meadow Farm in Orange, Va. A few home sires were used from time to time. Burnley was one of the early users of artificial breeding.

The herd started using DHIA in 1925 and continued until 1952. They returned to testing in 1957 and went to DHIR in 1960. During those times they were recognized by the National Dairy Association with high herd production.

The original barn was built in 1920 and was converted to a stanchion in 1925. It was extended in 1928 to be able to milk more cows. This barn was used until 1953 when a 4 stall parlor and a tramp shed was built. Four more stalls were added on the opposite side in 1963. The automatic silage feeder was built in 1960. The tramp shed was converted to a free stall barn in 1964. On January 19, 1966 a fire destroyed everything except the parlor and automatic feeder. New facilities were built the same year.

Burnley Farm has earned the Progressive Breeder Award, developed Gold Medal Dams, and a Silver Medal Sire. Many cows have been consigned to State Holstein Consignment Sales.

### **The Fisher Family & Burnley Farm Now**

My grandfather R.J. Fisher, my uncle Jennings, and my father, George, operated Burnley Farm, Inc. when we hosted the Holstein Field Day back in 1967. I remember the day that the picture was taken. It was no small feat to have gotten all seven cousins, along with the calves, cleaned up and posed long enough to get a cover picture!

George (G.E.) Fisher, my father, was known for having a superb eye for dairy cattle. He was part of a group of breeders in the state who selected Round Oak Rag Apple Elevation, and brought this great bull into stud at Select Sires. We used Elevation with much success; we bred a few Excellent and Very Good daughters that went on to do very well for other Holstein breeders. We used Select Sires for most of our semen purchases.

As all dairy producers know, the dairy industry moves boldly on. From the 1970's through the present, we enjoyed good times,

along with dealing with many changes and tough decisions. My uncle Jennings, and his family, left the farm in 1970. The loss of my grandparents (R.J. Fisher in 1981 & Ophelia in 1991), as well as the difficult nature of the business, weighed heavily on us at times. My parents, Jane and G.E. Fisher, were hard working and supportive the entire time as their 3 sons—Terry, David, and Rusty—transitioned into running the farming operation. With time, as on most farms, Burnley Farm saw many changes. Our families grew, and in the late 1980's, Terry and his wife Susan left the farm to pursue other interests and raise their family. They have two daughters, and reside in Pennsylvania. David and Mary Scott assumed the responsibilities of running the dairy and milking cows. They also have two children, a daughter, Laura, and a son, Randy, who both grew up on the farm, helped with farm chores, and showed their own dairy cattle in 4-H. After Laura completed her degree in Dairy Science at Virginia Tech, she returned to Burnley Farm to help manage the herd. Rusty, along with his wife, Katie, was responsible for the cropping, and the maintenance of the equipment. They have four children -- three daughters and a son.

A computer milking and feeding system was installed in the late 1980's. As with all aspects of farming operations, the system was upgraded several times to keep up with constantly evolving technology. During the 80's – the milking herd made the list of Top 100 in The Virginia Dairyman a number of times.

At one point, our herd size increased to an all-time high of 180 milk cows. We hosted many farm tours and seminars for elementary school children and 4-H groups, and were instrumental in organizing the annual Louisa Dairy Day for over 30 years. We produced a State Fair Champion from one of our foundation cow families. And David and Mary Scott were chosen as Young Dairywomen Ambassadors for Dairywomen, Inc. in 1990.

As time went on, and as the margins in dairy farming continued to shrink, we struggled to find ways to become more efficient, as have most dairies. Eventually, we were faced with a very difficult and emotional decision of whether to make further sacrifices to continue dairying, or switch to another source of livelihood within the agricultural industry. During 2013-2014, the choice was made to switch to beef cattle production, and cropping. The core of the milking herd was sold to a grazing dairy in Florida. And the rest of the cattle went to a registered dairy herd in PA. Rusty took on full-time employment at a local nursery as shop foreman. David now has the primary responsibility of the operation and management of Burnley Farm, after the recent restructuring. Jane and G.E. still help out around the farm and are doing well.

We have managed to continue farming without selling off any of the original 880 acres of farmland. David manages the 100 head beef cow-calf operation. The cattle are rotationally grazed on approximately 330 acres, including 170 acres of Max Q Fescue. The rest of the pastures consist of K-31 fescue, and several good stands of orchard grass and clover. Currently, the herd primarily calves in the fall, but we are working to expand our numbers until we can manage a sizable spring calving group, too. We have acquired several registered Angus cows, and hope to merchandize from them eventually. We also raise 260 acres of soybeans as a cash crop to be sold in the fall. Additional acreage is in hay land and pine trees.

We thank you for allowing us the opportunity to give you an update on how things are going at Burnley Farm, Inc. Although we are no longer dairying, we are thankful that we have ultimately been able to continue doing what we love—farming.

We wish those of you who still milk cows and breed quality Holstein cattle the best of luck and prosperity on your farms.

*Submitted by David L. Fisher  
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**Pictured left to right, back row, Brandon Moyer, Jeremy Moyer, Larkin Moyer, Front Row,, Damon Moyer, Charles Moyer. This includes the members of the family that work at Oakmulgee Dairy.**

## **The Story of Oakmulgee Dairy**

Oakmulgee Dairy Farm is located on the Appomattox River in northern Amelia County, Virginia. In 1895, Oliver Moyer moved to Oakmulgee Farm from the sand hills of Wood Lake, Nebraska. He left where he homesteaded because of drought and cold winters, and picked Virginia because of the land price and warmer climate. The original house, built in 1896 by Oliver Moyer, is still in the center of the farm today.

Oliver originally planted orchards and tobacco. Tobacco was the main crop from 1897 to 1903 while the orchards matured. In 1903, a cannery was built so vegetables and fruit from the orchards could be sold in nearby stores. In 1908, Oliver bought several grade Guernsey cows to feed the leftovers from the cannery.

In 1914, a dairy barn was built and Oakmulgee started shipping milk in cans. The cans were first taken 12 miles by horse drawn wagon to the nearest railroad stop and then shipped by rail to Richmond. Grade A raw milk, butter and cream were also sold in nearby stores around Richmond under the Oakmulgee name in glass bottles.

In 1919, Oliver's sons, Jake and Charles Sr., became owners and were interested in growing a registered herd. The first registered Holsteins were bought in 1920, and the entire herd was registered by 1928. In 1923, Oakmulgee started DHIA testing, which is still done today.

Oliver Moyer died in 1931, Jake left the dairy to be a DHIA tester and Charles Sr. left an extension job to run the farm full time. In 1951, Charles Jr., the youngest of 3 brothers, became a partner with his father at the dairy. In 1956, Oakmulgee was one of the first dairies in Virginia to buy a bulk tank. A few years later, Oakmulgee had a cow make the state butterfat record of 1000 lbs.

Charles Jr. began running the farm at the age of 37, after Charles Sr. passed away due to a farm accident. Oakmulgee has not purchased cows since the 1950's, all expansion has come from internal herd growth. Throughout the years, Oakmulgee participated in both state and national sales and has sold several excellent cows to California. Charles Jr. had four children, Larkin, Charlene, Damon and Darrell. Larkin and Damon returned to the farm after earning Dairy Science degrees from Virginia Tech. At that time, the parlor was upgraded to a double 8 herringbone and several years later land become available for purchase to double the crop acreage.

Larkin is the current herd manager and has grown the herd to 300 registered Holsteins. The parlor was updated to a double 12 parallel in 2004, and freestall barns have been added four times since then. Larkin's two sons, Jeremy and Brandon, both returned to the dairy after graduating from Virginia Tech in 2004 and 2011. Oakmulgee added pedometers and sort gates four years ago which has increased heat detection and made AI easier. The farm is now operated by three generations of Moyers: Charles, Larkin, Damon,

Jeremy and Brandon.

Oakmulgee Dairy is one of the oldest continuously operating dairies in Virginia and has been producing milk for over 100 years. As Charles Sr. often said, "If you take care of the cows, they will take care of you." Although there have been many changes over the years, much about the core of Oakmulgee Dairy has stayed the same. Some of the highlights of these years have been sharing ideas and friendships with other Holstein breeders. It is a great honor to be a part of a community of fellow dairy producers.

## **Richdale Dairy has Rich Tradition & History**

by Dr. Andrew Overbay, Senior Extension Agent, Smyth County, Va.

I took the opportunity to write this article to go back in time a bit myself. As a young Extension Agent housed in Wythe County, I journeyed out to Richdale Dairy Farm many times over the course of my early start as the dairy agent for southwestern Virginia. Going back down Richdale Road, I was struck with how a few years can make a huge difference in the physical features of a farm. I was thrilled to see new houses (owned by young farmers!) and new barns had been erected over the 11 years since I served the county.

When I was dairy agent, one of my favorite things to do was to write human interest pieces on the dairy producers of the area, so when I was contacted to do an article on the Crowgey family, it was a blessed return to a time gone by.... on many levels. When I arrived at the farm, I was greeted by Eric and his son Aaron who were busy picking fresh sweet corn for the Farmer's Market. After explaining why I was there, I ran across another sign that times had changed; Aaron told me that most of the information I was seeking was neatly packaged on their farm's Facebook page. Yep, the modern age was staring an old Extension Agent in the face (or Facebook in this instance!)

The following is the Richdale story taken from Facebook and the personal story of Leonard Joe Crowgey Sr. that he penned to be included in the booklet serving as the program for the Virginia Holstein Field Day held at the farm on Saturday, August 8, 1953.

Richdale Farm is located in Wytheville, VA and was founded by Henry John Crowgey from Cornwall England, in November 1876, when he purchased 253 acres. It was operated as a general livestock and home to 9 brothers. In the fall of 1929, Leonard J. Crowgey, one of the nine brothers, purchased Mr. Harold Searles herd of 21 registered Holstein cows from Wisconsin. According to L. Joe Crowgey Sr., in the summer of 1920, he was working as a milk tester during summer vacation at Grahamholm Farm in Rochester, Minnesota where Mr. Searles was the manager. Mr. Searles had developed his herd from the Grahamholm stock. Among the animals purchased was a bull, Grahamholm Piebe Charmette King.

Beginning as a seller of manufactured grade milk, Joe Sr. soon began shipping grade A milk into the West Virginia market, a market he continued to service at the time of the 1953 Field Day. At the time he leased the farm from his parents and continued in that pathway until his parents' death. The estate was settled and Joe, Sr. bought the farm at public auction in 1942. The herd was sold down in 1942 to put a down payment on the farm and again in 1947 to purchase additional land. This began a trend of annual sales of animals and each year a considerable number of animals, both bulls and females were sold, many to Virginia State Sales. Joe Sr. wrote, "these cattle have gone to Pennsylvania, Maryland, West Virginia, North Carolina, Ohio, Georgia and Tennessee as well as into most every section of Virginia. Our bulls have been used in artificial breeding associations in Pennsylvania, Virginia, Tennessee, and North Carolina."

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## Virginia Tech Dairy Breeding Registered Holsteins Since 1895

By Chuck Miller, retired Dairy Center Superintendent

"In the early development of the herd," Joe, Sr. continued, "our first bull Grahamholm Piebe Charmette King was developed into one of the early DHIA proved bulls in the state to have daughters average above 400 pounds of fat. In 1936, the herd was composed mostly of his daughters and granddaughters. We sold him to Curles Neck Farm in Richmond. Later we bought him back and used him again in the herd."

Other bulls soon followed. Ormsby Sensation Lad Colantha, a son of Ormsby Sensation 54th out of a daughter of "Old Piebe." Joe, Sr. noted that while this bull's daughters did not average as high, he sired some of the "best cows we had" including the state record cow for milk and fat, Lady Segis Colantha Sensation. She was a cow far ahead of her time as she made 25, 633 pounds of milk and 923 pounds of fat! Joe, Sr. noted that a Beltsville bull was also used and while his daughters averaged 419 pounds of fat, they were not as well made and thus were not as desired as daughters of other bulls.

Richdale was also breeding and using some of their own bulls including one from the "Wisconsin Pinky" family. Joe, Sr. had been looking for a herd sire when he was advised by Mr. Glen Householder to get a son of Wisconsin Admiral Burke Lad. He purchased Weber Admiral Burke Fobes from Utah Industrial School, in Ogden Utah as a calf. This calf was out of Weber Pinky Rosalind, a good producing cow with "quite a show record. She had an exceptionally good udder," recalled Joe, Sr.

Burke proved to be a gold strike...literally. The bull fit into the herd perfectly and by 1953, all but three animals traced their roots back to him. The bull met the requirements for a Gold Medal Sire of the Holstein-Friesian Association of America and one of his sons that was used at VPI (now Virginia Tech) was a Silver Medal Production Sire. "Unfortunately," Joe Sr. wrote, "we sold many daughters of the Burke bull before we knew how great a bull he was!"

Ancestors of the bull and the females of Richdale Farm found their way around the state, three of which were owned jointly by Hollins College and Mr. Harold Craun. One of those bulls was a son of the top selling animal at the 1953 National Holstein Sale.

Back at the home farm, in 1952, thirty-two cows were in the milking herd averaging 13,349 pounds of milk and 527 pounds of fat. Thirteen cows in the herd were Excellent or Very Good. In 1956, L. Joe Crowgey, Jr. returned to the farm after 4 years in the United States Air Force and 4 years at Virginia Polytechnic Institute. He saw to the steady expansion of the herd with the introduction of TMR in the mid 1970's. He also served as one of the founding members of Virginia Genetics.

In 1969, L. Joe Jr. and his wife Jane acquired the farm from Joe Sr.'s estate. At that point, the farm reached its 500-acre present size. In June of 1982, Eric returned to the farm after graduating from four years at Virginia Tech, where he met his wife Lisa. The registered herd continued to grow to 150 dairy cows and added 60 acres of additional rented land. With the conventional dairy business in a gradual decline, they added pumpkins in 1999, a flock of Katahdin Hair Sheep in 2004, and sweet corn in 2008.

More "super cows" followed in the 1980s. LJC Noble Conductor Mars, bred by the Crowgeys and owned by Cardinal Holsteins was purchased by Bayville Holsteins. Noble is listed among Virginia Holsteins "Cows of the Century."

The Crowgeys continued in the registered Holstein business until 2006, when the herd was sold to a registered breeder in Florida. The Seasonal Grazing Dairy was hatched when Aaron wanted to return to the farm after graduating from The University of Tennessee in 2009. Ideas became reality when they purchased 80 Jersey Holstein Crossbred heifers in the spring of 2009 and a new dairy barn was completed in April 2010. Currently the Crowgeys milk 112 Jersey cross cows and have 400 Katahdin Ewes plus lambs, 15 head of beef cows, 12 acres of pumpkins, fall produce and 1 acre of sweet corn.

In 1872, the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI) was founded in Blacksburg, VA. The Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 had provided for the funding to establish schools in each state to teach agriculture, military tactics, the mechanical arts, and classical studies. Known at its founding as the Virginia Agricultural and Mechanical College (VAMC), it was located on the 5 acre site of the former Preston and Olin Institute. The Board of Visitors (BOV) purchased from Colonel Robert T. Preston, a portion of his estate known as "Solitude" for \$85 an acre, for use as the college farm. Located a ¼ mile from the Institute, it included the mansion, principal farm buildings, and 250 acres of land. Today, the mansion located near the Duck Pond is the oldest structure still standing on the Virginia Tech (VT) campus. Known as "Solitude" it was restored in 2011, having served as faculty housing, a student infirmary, offices, and classroom space.

Some of the 132 young men enrolled in the first session at VAMC began working on the college farm in the late spring of 1873. In the first annual report of the VAMC to the General Assembly, manual labor in the stables, dairy, orchards, and gardens provided practical work experience for the students to support themselves. Among the stock donated to the college farm were a thorough-bred Durham bull, 3 thorough-bred Durham heifers, and one Alderney bull. Durham cattle, also known as Shorthorns, were the breed of choice in the mid-1800s since they were good producers of both milk and beef. The Alderney breed had developed from the Guernsey breed.

The annual report of the fifth collegiate year of 1876-77 included a Report of Farmer and a Committee of the Board of Visitors on the Farm. Students provided a large part of the labor on the farm gaining experience in horticulture, animal husbandry, and crops. Receipts for the farm showed \$264.00 received for milk and pasturage. The farm had sheep, swine, horses, and a herd of 21 Shorthorn cattle including 9 purebred head – 2 bulls, 4 cows, and 3 heifers. These were the early years of the Virginia Tech dairy.

The Virginia Agricultural Experiment Station (VAES) was established by the state on the VAMC campus in 1886 to conduct research in agricultural science. The VAES reported its findings to Virginia farmers and consumers as useful information in printed bulletins and demonstration exhibits at fairs. This work was later done by the Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) begun in 1914. The college, VAES, and VCE have shared the campus agricultural buildings and the barns, animals, and cropland of the college farm to teach students, to do research, and to inform Virginians about agriculture.

The first registered Holstein-Friesian bred by the dairy was Neva Artis Clothilde (40635). Born on October 16, 1895, her sire was Raeburn (22602), owned by VPI and bred by H. W. Austin of Woodstown, New Jersey, and her dam was Eva Artis Clothilde (33679) owned by VPI and bred by H. W. Austin of Woodstown, New Jersey as recorded in H-F Herd Book Volume XII and XV. Her six daughters owned and bred by VPI were Artis Kaska (47726) born March 2, 1898, Sinfi Artis Clothilde (49876) born April 20, 1899, Gretel Artis (62950) born November 3, 1901, Iberia (68778) born December 26, 1903, Rowena Artis (76688) born November 27, 1904, and Caltha De Kol (86842) born December 10, 1905. This first purebred breeding by VPI was the beginning of the dairy's registered Holstein herd that has been continuous for 121 years.

The foundation stock of the VPI herd began with the purchase of Eva Artis Clothilde (33679), the dam of the first registered Holstein bred by VPI. She was prolific at producing quality heifer calves. Individual lactation records for 1904-1906, show four daughters

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averaging 6245.6 lbs of milk, six granddaughters averaging 6102.3 lbs of milk, and two great-granddaughters averaging 5236.2 lbs of milk. She, herself averaged 6041.1 lbs of milk. In July 1907, VAES Bulletin No. 170 Studies in Milk and Butter Production, stated, "these figures are an evidence of hereditary prepotency of the milk giving instinct which can be transmitted from generation to generation. A cow of this type is invaluable to dairymen." The value of good record keeping and careful selection were also stressed in this report to Virginia dairy farmers just beginning to build herds with purebred bloodlines.

In 1908, Hygeia Veeman Butter Boy (43697) a new herd sire was bought from the well known Hygeia Herd owned by Dr. W. F. Carter of Crozet, VA. Born October 6, 1908, he had been bred by Stevens Brothers-Hastings Co. in Lacona, NY. His dam, Jessie Veeman A (36579), was never beaten in the show ring, and was championship aged cow at the New York State Fair in 1904. This bull's sire was De Kol 2d's Butter Boy 3d (23260), a Century Sire, and son of De Kol 2d (734), foundation cow of the De Kol family. As herd sire, he had 12 daughters – five 2 year olds, one 3 year old, and three 4 year olds – that had records averaging 668 lbs butter in a year. In 1920, his granddaughter VPI Veeman Korndyke De Kol (60633) bred, developed, and owned by VPI, set a Virginia State record for both milk and butter in her class as a senior 2 year old, of 844.2 lbs butter from 20696 lbs milk.

In 1913, Buckeye De Kol Pauline 2D (94346) bred and owned by VPI, had a yearly record at 6 years 2 months of 1159.5 lbs butter from 20784 lbs milk, a world record for cows owned by experiment stations and colleges, and a world record for cows, all breeds, developed south of the Mason Dixon Line. Her lineage is also from the grand cow De Kol 2d (734). Her sire, Homestead Crown Prince De Kol (25865) was the grandson of De Kol 2d's Paul De Kol, the son of De Kol 2d (734). The line continued when her son VPI Buckeye Pauline Korndyke (193742) became herd sire in 1919. As the commercial dairy industry expanded due to increased demand for milk in cities, the Holstein-Friesian with its ability to produce a large quantity of milk became the breed desired by Virginia dairymen.

Two later milestones in dairy cattle breeding occurred at the VPI dairy. The first Holstein calf born in Virginia from artificial insemination was a Holstein, Virginia Test Tube 2165078, born October 17, 1939 at VPI. Then, in 1954, Professor Paul Reaves' class in A. I. did research on frozen semen using dry ice and alcohol. The first registered Holstein calf born in Virginia from the use of frozen semen was VPI Jessie Katrinka Defrost 4098698, born August 13, 1955. In addition to Holsteins, over the years the VPI dairy has had herds of Guernseys, Jerseys, Ayrshires, and Brown Swiss. The dairy herd today has 250 milking cows for teaching and research, with 60% Holsteins and 40% Jerseys. Students continue to provide a large portion of the labor at the dairy.

### History of Barn Locations

When the college farm began in 1873, all of the animals, live-stock, and dairy herd were housed in the old barns and pastures of the "Solitude" estate. Built before the Civil War, they were located in the area where Price Hall stands today. Repairs and additions were made as the farm operation expanded.

In the summer of 1893 a creamery and cheese factory were built. It stood on what is today the Drill Field, directly in front of Price Hall. The creamery processed milk and cream from the dairy into dairy products for the mess hall. Experiments were done in how to ship milk and cream long distances and how to improve dairy products. The results of these and other studies helped expand the milk market of the Virginia dairy farmer.

In 1899, a new modern two story hillside barn was completed. With room for 128 animals, it housed all of the cows, bulls, steers,

young stock, work horses and mules of the college farm. This large facility had a hay and grain barn, two wings for cattle, an open court between the wings, a milk room, two 200 ton silos, and four manure carriers. A hog house, a sheep barn, and large stock feeding barn for 120 head of beef cattle were built over the next few years. By 1905, all of the college farm animals had moved to these model barns located in the area where Ambler Johnston Hall stands today. Students milking at the dairy were paid 2 ½ cents per cow per milking in 1916. Later improvements to the dairy barn included: a shed with concrete floor, new silos, reconfiguring stalls for research, and a milking parlor with a pipeline milker built in the 1930's. The dairy herd remained at this location until 1960. By 1906, the old barns of the "Solitude" estate had been torn down and the foundations laid for a new Agricultural Hall on the site. Later named Price Hall, it opened in January 1907. The creamery moved into the first floor with state of the art operations – a commercial creamery plant, a testing room, a room for pasteurization and sterilizing, and a refrigeration plant with cold storage. The dairy and local dairy farms sold milk to the creamery where students learned how to manufacture dairy products. The creamery furnished the dining halls with milk, butter, cheese, and ice cream into the late 1960's. Its dairy products were also marketed in Blacksburg, Roanoke, Norfolk, and Bluefield, WV. The creamery moved to the new Dairy Husbandry building, later known as Saunders Hall, in 1931.

In 1950, a new dairy barn was built ¾ mile south of the old barns. It was a two-story, 60 cow tie-stall/stanchion barn with a mow on the second floor for hay storage, and silos. This was the first building on the site of the VT Dairy Center located on Southgate Drive.

By 1960, a new freestall barn, a loose housing barn, two milking parlors, a calf barn, bull barn, and heifer barn had been built. The pavilion, later named the Etgen Pavilion was built in 1963. All dairy animals were now housed at the Dairy Center. The old barns were torn down to make way for the construction of Ambler Johnston Hall, Cassell Coliseum, and other campus buildings. Construction of Route 460 around Blacksburg in 1968, placed the Dairy Center barns inside the bypass and on the Southgate exit to campus.

From 1970 to 1990 facilities were added to improve research methods, data collection, and farm operations. Added to the milking parlor were two stalls, a larger bulk tank, automatic cow ID, and computerized milk recording. Freestalls were added to the loose housing barn. The 26 calan doors were installed to measure individual feed intake of cows housed in freestalls. A Data Ranger Feed Cart was added, equipped with computer that weighed feed ingredients, mixed the ration, and recorded the amount fed each animal, feed refused, and net intake per day. A 20 stall bull barn to do extensive research in artificial insemination and a heifer barn equipped to measure feed intake by computer were built. The use of 40 calf hutches improved calf health and growth.

In 2002, the tie-stall/stanchion barn and silos built in 1950 were demolished. Finally able to replace the dairy's outdated 1960's era milking parlor and free stall barns, a new facility was built. In July 2004, the milking herd moved into a modern, state of the art, 232 freestall barn with 48 calan doors to measure individual feed intake and a double eight rapid exit milking parlor with milk production and milk component data collection. A commodity barn, manure solids separation, and liquid waste storage facilities were also built.

In 2006, the university administration announced plans to move the Dairy Center to Kentland Farm, acquired in 1987, and located 9 miles from campus. This move was necessary due to the proposed new Route 460 interchange entrance to campus, continued

expansion of the VT Corporate Research Center, and expansion of the VT Montgomery Executive Airport.

In August 2015, the dairy herd moved to the new VT Dairy Science Complex at Kentland Farm. Facilities designed with the latest dairy science technology include a double 12 parallel milking parlor, a 232 freestall barn, a special needs barn, and a calf barn. A 24 stall barn for intensive metabolism research has been funded with construction expected to begin in late 2016.

The long history of the dairy at Virginia Tech has shown that while the needs of a growing dynamic university have prompted the relocation of the barns and animals, the benefit of each move has been the upgrading of the dairy facilities to better serve the mission of the dairy science department.



**Walkup Holsteins family: (L-R) Teresa Callender, Dan Myers, Charlotte Myers, Donnie Callender, Kristina Callender, Kelly Callender, Anna Myers, D.J. Myers. The cow is Walkup Blitz Trisha 2E 92.**

## Introduction to Walkup Holsteins

*Taken from Field Day programs 1940 and 1980  
Foundations from the Past, Building for Tomorrow*

The decade following the Civil War was one of reconstruction for the battle-scarred South. It was a time of mending bodies, spirits and fences. In the spring of 1877, Jackson Showalter, great, great grandfather of Daniel J. Myers registered his purchase of a farm in the Lick Skillet settlement of Rockingham County, Virginia. This original parcel was the beginning of East View Farm and Walkup Holsteins.

Like many farmers of the period cows were kept for family use. The surplus was sold at local markets. Isadora Showalter, Jackson's granddaughter married I.D. Myers and they assumed responsibilities of the farm. It is noted that Isadora could drive a four horse team better than any hired man. Besides the field work she had to milk 3 times a day. Her son, Victor, noted that she was "one of the best hand milkers around."

The lower barn on the farm was built in 1912 and the house was added in 1918. In 1920 the first registered Holsteins were purchased at the Halderman Dispersal in Winchester, Va. In 1921 the first Holstein bull was added to the herd. The herd was put on test in 1926 with averages of 14,409 pounds of milk and 486.6 pounds of fat, the highest in the state.

I.D.'s son, Victor became involved with 4-H dairy projects. His interest included showing and participating in fairs all over the east coast.

In 1939, a new dairy barn, all stone, was built. It was a tie-stall barn for the use of electric milkers. Victor's wife Margaret noted that they were a definite improvement from hand milking.

In 1940, I.D. Myers and his son Victor, hosted the eighth annual Virginia Holstein Field Day. In 1941, Victor and his wife Marga-

ret assumed operation of the farm. Margaret, also from a dairy farm, was active in the daily operations of the farm. She was on the Board of Directors for the Virginia Holstein Association and later was a DHIA supervisor in Rockingham County.

A small set back occurred when the dairy barn was damaged by flames in 1950. The barn was repaired and the farm continued to grow. Both son Dan, and daughter Leann became involved in the farm and projects for their 4-H Work.

Following college Dan married Charlotte Dove. Dan became a school teacher and later an assistant principal but it seemed his heart was at home on the farm. In 1968, Dan and Charlotte assumed full ownership of the farm. They had a philosophy of "getting better before we got bigger".

With two small children, Teresa and D.J., they were determined to remain a family farm. Charlotte fed the calves and helped with the milking. As the children got older they were expected to help with the chores. Just like his grandfather, I.D. Myers, Dan states that the feeding programs were as important as the breeding to the productivity of the herd. Two 20'X60' silos were added to the feeding system and a milking parlor was added to the dairy barn with free stalls for the cows. The most recent addition in 1980 was the counter slope heifer barn.

In 1980 the Myers Family once again hosted the Annual Virginia Holstein Field Day.

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*\*\*\*Margaret Myers Adams, Dan's mother, was a pioneer for all women in the Virginia Holstein Association. She was the first woman to serve on the Board of Directors, first woman President of the Shenandoah Valley Holstein Club, first woman to receive the Virginia Holstein Association Meritorious Award and was honored with a lifetime membership in the Virginia Holstein Association. She was always a lady and was a role model for me!  
Barbara Wagner, Rilara Holsteins*

## Walkup Holsteins

By Dan Myers

During my years at Bridgewater College I majored in Mathematics and avoided most of the classes in communications. After resigning from teaching and the job as Assistant Principal at Broadway High School following four years as an employee of Rockingham County Schools, Charlotte and I purchased the home farm. In almost 50 years I have forgotten most of the mathematical theory and am now struggling with the fine art of communication. The following paragraphs are a short history of Walkup Holsteins, LLC.

Jackson and Catherine Showalter purchased the farm in the spring of 1877 with the seven subsequent generations living on the farm.

Our prefix "Walkup" was reserved in 1927 as the "East View" prefix was not available. Our farm was known as East View Farm until Charlotte and I purchased the farm in 1968. At that time we changed the farm name to "Walkup Holsteins" and Walkup has served us well.

I need to share the fact that my mother, Margaret Myers Adams, held the farm together as a single parent until I was able and willing to receive the love of the Holstein cattle and handle the work and management of the operation at that time. We began the process of upgrading the facilities and raising two children, Teresa Callender and D.J. Myers.

With the sale of Shenandoah's Pride in 2000 our family decided to reinvest those proceeds to modernize and allow us to remain a viable part of the dairy industry. In 1992 Teresa and her husband, Donald Callender and our son D.J. Myers joined us in forming a limited liability partnership under which we operate today.

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In 1942 my dad, Victor, extensively showed “Firestone Lyona Boy Louise” and she was selected Honorable Mention All American that year. In 1976, I had the honor, to show “Walkup Charm Iva Judy” and she was selected High Honorable Mention All American that year. In 1978-1982, Teresa was blessed to show the most influential cow ever bred at Walkup Holsteins “Walkup Astronaut Lou Ann”. She was selected Junior All American three times, twice Reserve Junior All American, Once High Honorable Mention Junior All American and twice nominated All American. After 16 years of astronomical achievements, Lou Ann is buried in the yard at Walkup Holsteins.

One of our goals is to breed an All American with the Walkup prefix. We understand the chances are very slim; however the love of quality animals makes the journey almost as rewarding as the destination of an All American. Our present herd average of 23,013 lbs. milk at 4.5%, 1031 lbs. of butterfat, and protein at 3.0%, or 683 lbs. is a work in progress. Our goal is not production, but enough efficient production to maintain a quality of life for our cows and our families. The challenge of economic pressures is making all dairy farms, including ours, prediction of the future impossible.

In conclusion, I want to thank the dairy industry and the Holstein Association of Virginia for allowing Walkup Holsteins to be a part of each of them. And, as I wrote 35 years ago: I will be content if what I have done will be of service to my God, my family, and my country.