

Honour Roll 2015 Duncan Lees



The Canadian Hereford Association congratulates Mr. Duncan Lees, for his induction into the 2015 Honour Roll.

Duncan was born September 26th, 1948, at Arcola, Saskatchewan, where he and his family still live on the quarter his great grandfather Thomas Lees homesteaded Blair Athol in 1882. Their first Herefords were registered in 1910 by Thomas, who passed away in 1929. Duncan's grandfather continued to ranch and register calves until his death in 1936. Duncan's father Thomas and his brother Harold continued breeding Hereford cattle separately and later under the partnership name Lees Brothers until 1964, when the partnership was dissolved. Tom continued to operate under the name Blair Athol until his death in 1974. From 1974 to 1984, Blair Athol continued as a partnership between Duncan and his brother Chris. In 1985 Duncan took over sole ownership of Blair Athol with his wife, Val and their family. Blair Athol continues to this day operated as Blair Athol Farms, owned by Duncan and Val, and Jeff and his wife, Grace. There have been 5 generations of family who have continuously registered Herefords for 105 years on this farm.

Duncan attended grade one through eight at Percy School then completed grades 9 through 12 at Arcola High School. In 1968, he attended the American Herdsman Institute in Blue Springs Missouri and in 1972 completed his Certified Artificial Insemination Technology Course in Alameda, Saskatchewan.

Duncan married Valerie Mamchur on August 9th, 1971 and they had four children; Lynne, Arden, Jeff and Jarrett. They are the proud grandparents of Christin and Kylee Dixon, Callie and Aidan Senger, Matthew, Jade, and Andrew Charlton, and Jackson and Hannah Lees.

Showing is an integral part of the operation. Blair Athol has been an exhibitor at Canadian Western Agribition 41 out of 43 years and their children showed at 13

Bonanzas! Duncan is always happy to support the Juniors. His grandchildren, along with other Juniors, have been loaned cattle in six shows and they attended four other shows to support Juniors showing Blair Athol cattle. The family showed cattle at two American Junior National Shows and has shown at the National Western Stock Show in Denver four times. Duncan was instrumental in starting two sales the farm holds with other breeders. Their annual production sale, "Blair Athol, Haroldsons' and Friends" started in 1998 and has been running for 17 years; and the "Wilson/Lees Value Added Bull Sale" was first held in 2005 and run for 10 consecutive years. Two Blair Athol Herd sires have been used across North America through semen sales: Blair Athol 20 The Rock ET 19M and Blair Athol 13K Major 101N.

Duncan has been an active Hereford supporter at both local and national levels. He was a Director for the Canadian Hereford Association from 2000-2007, served as President in 2005-2006; was Director and President of the Saskatchewan Hereford Association; Director and President of the Eastern Saskatchewan Mainline Hereford Association; Director for the South East Saskatchewan Hereford Breeders Association; Director and President for the Sale of Distinction; Director and President of the South East Saskatchewan Hereford Zone; Director and Vice President for the Regina Bull Sale; President for the Percy Clare, Saskatchewan Stockgrowers Association; and Adult Adviser to the Saskatchewan Juniors from 1980-1982 and again from 1990-1998.

Duncan has been invited to Judge shows in Heming, Denmark; the World Beef Expo in Milwaukee, Wisconsin; Farmfair in Edmonton; Canadian Western Agribition in Regina; Expo-Boeuf in Victoriaville, Quebec; the Royal Agricultural Winter Fair in Toronto; the Lindsay Fair All-Breeds, in Lindsay, Ontario; the Hardisty Field Day in Hardisty, Alberta; and numerous small fairs and regional and local 4H shows.

Herefords are a major part of life for the Lees family who have all been involved on various governing boards at many different levels. Val was a member of the Southeast Hereford Ladies, Secretary for the Eastern Saskatchewan Mainline Hereford Association and ran the Hereford booth at Agribition from 1985-1991. Lynne served as Treasurer and Secretary for the SJHA, and Arden served as President for both the SJHA and the CJHA. Jeff has been

President for the Southeast Zone Hereford Association, a SHA Board member, a Redcoat CHA Chair, and was Oral Reasons Judge at Agribition. He was also on both the Dodge City Livestock Judging Team and Oklahoma PanHandle State College Livestock Judging Team. He was awarded a Canadian Western Agribition Scholarship, and a Keith Gilmore Scholarship. Jarrett was on the Nebraska College of Technical Agriculture Livestock Judging Team, was Canadian Ambassador to Oregon State University Livestock Judging Team, won the Overall Grand Aggregate at Bonanza in '98 in Lloydminster and was also awarded a Canadian Western Agribition Scholarship. Duncan and his family hosted the Southeast Hereford Zone Field days in 2004 and 2014 and hosted many judging demonstrations for the Arcola Kisbey 4-H club over the years. He has donated semen to the CJHA Semen Donation Program numerous times, and the leading sire BBSF 101N Wrangler 29W was a result of Blair Athol semen donation.

Internationally, Duncan has promoted Herefords in Argentina at the Palermo Show, and throughout Europe in Finland, Sweden, Denmark and Norway. He has also attended many of the major American shows including Denver, Sioux Falls, South Dakota, Kansas City, Missouri, and Billings, Montana. The Lees have exported live cattle to Kazakhstan, Russia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Japan, and the USA, with embryos and semen being exported to Finland, Germany, Australia, and the USA. The family also hosted bus tours from Australia and New Zealand.

In addition to his many years of involvement in the Hereford industry, Duncan has been an active volunteer for other communities. He has been leader and assistant leader for the Arcola Kisbey 4-H Club, Member of the Arcola Curling Club, served as President and Treasurer on the Arcola Optimist Club, and was an Arcola School Board member. He was a Steward at St. Andrew's United Church for 25 years, Member of Session for 10 years, and since 2012 has been serving as Chairman of the Board. Duncan is a CWA beef Committee member and is a volunteer at the Arcola Fair and Rodeo.

Over the years, Duncan has had many mentors whom he respects and was able to learn from, the main being his father, Tom Lees.