

National Dairy Shrine to showcase historic Brown Swiss bells

The National Dairy Shrine Museum and the Hoard Historical Museum in Fort Atkinson, Wis. are pleased to feature an exhibit on Brown Swiss dairy cattle. Opening the week of Tuesday, September 20, 2011, the exhibit will run through the end of October, during a six-to-eight-week period centered around World Dairy Expo.

The exhibit will feature historic Brown Swiss bells and many other unique items.

Brown Swiss were first imported into the United States in 1869, from the Burgi herd in Switzerland. The initial import included one bull, William Tell, and seven females. On display from these historic imports will be seven bells labeled with the Burgi Farm name.

Eleven years after those first imports, the Brown Swiss Cattle Breeder's Association (BSCBA) was formed in Massachusetts. In 1936, the first permanent office was purchased in Beloit, Wis., while Ira Inman served as secretary. Photos of that building, constructed in 1856, will be on display, along with photos of Inman and his staff from the 1930s.

Also on display will be several model cows depicting the many conformation changes that have taken place due to progressive breeding decisions. Nearly all dairy cattle breeding enthusiasts agree that Jane of Vernon's impact on the Brown Swiss breed is unmatched in the dairy industry. Photos and other pertinent information on the Queen Mother of the Brown Swiss breed, Jane of Vernon, will be available. BSCBA celebrated its 100th Anniversary in 1980 with a Centennial Edition of the Brown Swiss Bulletin. In 1990, a 110th issue was published, and both will be available for review. Additionally, past covers of Hoard's Dairyman featuring Brown Swiss from 1941, 1960, and 1985 will be on display, as well.

The Brown Swiss group established its own Brown Swiss Historical Society (BSHS) in 2005. Individuals interested in joining BSHS or donating items to its museum housed at the national office should make contact through the association's website:

www.brownswissusa.com.

The Brown Swiss exhibit follows other successful one-time exhibits, including 2009's 60th Dairy Shrine Timeline Panels and last year's 125th Anniversary display of Hoard's Dairyman Magazine. A decision has been made to continue with special exhibits in the Historical Museum's Mary Hoard Gallery each year during the time of World Dairy Expo to showcase the dairy industry.

The National Dairy Shrine Museum and the Hoard Historical Museum are located at 401 Whitewater Avenue in Fort Atkinson. They are open Tuesdays through Saturdays between 9:30 and 4:30 and on Sunday, October 2, and Monday, October 3, during World Dairy Expo week. There is no admission fee; cash donations are gratefully accepted. For more information, call 920-563-7769 or send email to info@hoardmuseum.org.