

Fantastic 75th Anniversary Gathering

by Cindy Weideman

If you did not attend the 75th Anniversary Gathering you missed an exceptionally good one!

This convention had the largest trade show display and sponsors of all the conventions I have attended over the past 40 years. There were so many wonderful items to purchase and regional association displays to visit. Ginnah and Lindsey had a great selection from the AHCA office for purchase. They did a fantastic job decorating the facility too.

The location was beautiful! We were right on the bank of the Missouri River looking at Chamberlain across the water. The hotel had an outdoor bar and patio with live music during the evening. The weather was made to order.

We did not see any live Highlands at this convention but this one was about the history of our American Highland Cattle Association.

Friday began with a presentation by Angus Mackay from Scotland. Angus has been to the U.S. many times to judge Highland shows and was a speaker at one of our other AHCA conventions. He gave us information about the history of Highlands in Great Britain and how the first shipments of Highlands to the U.S. came about.

Wally Congdon then carried on the history of these first animals in the U.S. and their journey to South Dakota and the Berry family. He provided us with lots of reading material about these early endeavors.

Amanda Radke was our motivational speaker after lunch. Her message was the importance of educating our future generations about the need for crop and animal production. Amanda has written many children's books about agriculture and had them for sale there.



AHCA President, Josh Krenz, thanks Tom McConnell for chairing the committee that organized the 75th AHCA Gathering.

Steve Campbell ended our day with a talk about mineral requirements for our animals.

Tom McConnell spent an abundance of time collecting history of the Berry family who brought these animals and AHCA into our lives. He, with the help of the South Dakota Hall of Fame, assembled a very thorough display of the Berry family history and some Highland information. This display will be available for viewing for the next three years.



Attendees gather for educational sessions.



Angus Mackay shared the history of Highlands in Scotland and their importation into the US.

Saturday was a day of roundtable workshops. This was an opportunity to gain new information and share experiences and knowledge.

There were many new members attending the convention and this gave them a great opportunity to learn what they need to be successful. Topics were Breed History, General Health, Minerals, Reproduction, Beef Marketing, Beef Quality Assurance Information, General Nutrition & Feeding and Heifer Development.

Saturday afternoon we were on our own to visit the South Dakota Hall of Fame and other attractions in the area.

A cocktail reception and banquet were held Saturday evening. Five large tables were filled with donated silent auction items. The banquet was followed by a lively, robust live auction. The auctions were fantastic fundraisers for the Juniors, AHCA and the Highland Cattle Foundation.

The night was topped off with a live band, Tris Munsink and The Innocents. Many breeders danced the night away.

Fantastic job Gathering Committee!



Keynote speaker, Amanda Radke, encouraged us to tell our story.



Wally Congdon spoke about the early years of Highland cattle in the US.



Speakers Wally Congdon and Angus Mackay share a moment of fun at the banquet.



John Ligo and Eddie Mackay gave the invocation and toast.



Auctioneer Dick LeClair sells a chainsaw carving to raise money for AHCAj.



Participants gathered for a group photo taken by a drone.

