

75 Years in Denver

Story & photo by **Corinne Blender**

He may not dress like today's cowman, but Clinton Tomson is at home around any stock show or livestock exhibition. Buried under his olive-green Scottish cape and hat are 75 years of some of history's finest memories of the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo. The 2002 show marks the 75th consecutive year that the 93-year-old Tomson has been in attendance.

He recalls the second time he was at the NWSS. At that time, the show was in a tent. A tremendous snowstorm blanketed the stockyard grounds, causing the show to shut down, he says. His many memories of the famed event were shared with the scores of people who stopped by his seat in today's covered coliseum to say hello and to reminisce about old times.

"People flock to be around him. They are drawn by Clint's authenticity," Julie McMahon French, Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Ark., says. "He is just who he is — bright-witted, has a good sense of humor — and he carried that throughout his business."

He is proof that there are all types of cattlemen and people

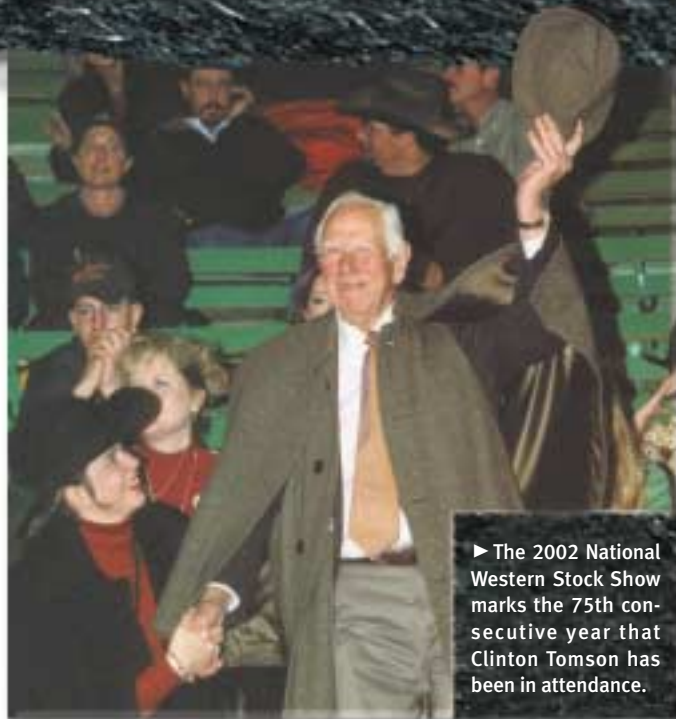
who work in the industry.

Tomson grew up in the small town of Wakarusa, Kan., and was the third generation of his family to show cattle. He says he is most proud of his first grand champion 4-H steer at the Topeka free fair.

Tomson's love of cattle and his skill at judging them opened the door for him to travel the world. He has judged many national and international contests, including the Palermo in Argentina. He says the first class he judged there had 82 head and circled the entire ring. He remembered his father's advice to go with his first instinct and get the class placed quickly. This he did, and the crowd applauded him.

He is also known for importing Angus, Hereford and Shorthorn cattle into North America from Perth, Scotland. He says he did so in part to keep new blood throughout the breeds, especially Shorthorn and Angus.

People knew to trust Tomson, McMahon French says. That trustworthiness would play a role throughout Tomson's partnership in the livestock insurance business with Frank



Harding, who passed away in January 2002. He teamed up with Harding to run Harding & Harding Inc., and in 1952 they created the American Live Stock Insurance Co., which is still prominent today.

Not only has his presence at the NWSS been noted, his insurance company also has a big following in Denver. Tomson says the NWSS is one of the biggest livestock events that he and Harding insured.

"As a judge of livestock it is

pretty easy to see the faults of any animal, but he is able to pick out the good attributes," McMahon French says. She says it is that same attitude applied to the rest of his life that has made him so successful.

Tomson says, "I've judged cattle all over the world, and I think cattle people are the most wonderful group of people in the world."



Wisconsin juniors raise funds for NJAS

The Wisconsin Junior Angus Association auctioned several items at the Angus Reception Jan. 17, during the National Western Stock Show (NWSS) in Denver, Colo. More than \$21,000 was raised to host the 2002 National Junior Angus Show (NJAS) July 8-13, in Milwaukee, Wis.

George Lemm, Whitestone Farm, Aldie, Va., purchased a custom Angus portrait donated by junior Angus member Amanda Giles, Toms Brook, Va. Giles also donated a picture she'd already created, "Angus Cows in Pasture." It was purchased by Angel and LeRoy Lane, Waynesboro, Ga.

Kahn Cattle Co. LLC, Rydal, Ga., purchased an Amish quilt that depicted logos of the 22 national junior Angus shows.

Dave McMahon, Belle Point Ranch, Lavaca, Ark., purchased another piece of artwork, "Bringing Home tha Stray." Contending

bidder Kahn Cattle Co. donated an equal amount to the Angus Foundation.

Denise Duffell of Whitestone Farm, Aldie, Va., purchased a framed, stained-glass picture of an Angus bull.

Two separate race-car packages were sold. They included two pit passes, two tickets and one-night hotel accommodations. Charles and Charlotte Crochet, Camp Cooley Ranch, Franklin, Texas, purchased one package; Michael Graveman, manager of Shady Brook Angus Farm, Leoma, Tenn., bought the other.

The 2001 NJAS planning committee from the Western states donated \$5,000 to the 2002 NJAS host state.

For more information about this year's NJAS, logon to www.angusjournal.com/2002njass or contact the Activities and Junior Activities Department at the American Angus Association at (816) 383-5100.