



Up Front

► by **John Crouch**, executive vice president

Back to the homeland

The temperature was a steamy 95° F in northwest Missouri as I carefully packed woolen clothes, sweaters, rain gear and other necessities for a week in Scotland. I was on my way to the Northeast Scotland Aberdeen-Angus Breeders' Club's 30th Anniversary Celebration and tour. The club's long-suffering, energetic and charming secretary Eddie Gillanders and club chairman Hamish Sclater had things organized perfectly and were ready for our arrival.

Little did they expect the turnout would be some 250 people from 15 countries. First to arrive were the Canadians, the Americans and the New Zealanders. The activity began with a series of interviews by news media relative to the influence of the Angus breed in the beef cattle industry worldwide. I was proud to share with the press a story of solid growth for our just-completed fiscal year.

Prior to the three-and-a-half-day tour, an informal meeting of representatives of the World Angus Secretariat convened to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern about the advancement of the Angus breed throughout the world. It was also officially announced that the Aberdeen-Angus Society of Denmark will host a technical meeting of the World Angus Secretariat in summer 2003 in Copenhagen. Topics such as DNA

profiling for parent verification, genetic predictions for embryo transplants and the use of gene markers in genetic evaluation will be discussed. The desire to have an international system of Angus identification was also voiced.

The success of Certified Angus Beef LLC (CAB) has fueled tremendous interest from other members of the World Angus Secretariat, who are interested in organizing and implementing branded programs of their own. While this has always been encouraged by the American Angus Association, the use of the words "Certified Angus Beef®" (CAB®) in other brand names is strongly discouraged and is not permitted in market areas where the CAB trademark has been registered and is legally protected.

It is accepted that the word "Angus" is probably the most universally recognized name in the world with respect to high-quality beef and beef products. The impact that the CAB brand has had on the Angus industry worldwide is absolutely extraordinary.

Billed as the "Meril Thousand-Cow Tour," the group gathered in historic Aberdeen, Scotland, which is currently referred to as the petroleum center of Western Europe. According to historians, the

origin of the breed was unclear. Some said it was Aberdeenshire, while others recorded the presence of black polled cattle in Angushire; thus the name Aberdeen-Angus was adopted. Those rolling hills, lush meadows and rugged highlands splashed with heather provided an excellent incubator for a breed destined to become the most popular one in the world.

Tour offers insight

As we toured the various farms, some 14 in number, one could sense the aesthetic importance of this area, steeped in tradition. One could almost feel the presence of the early developers of the breed, such as William McCombie of Tillyfour, whose descendants still own and operate an Angus herd.

Apart from tradition, a keen awareness of the marketplace and a progressive spirit are evident throughout the country. A desire to be more competitive with Continental breeds in the commercial sector has resulted in the virtual elimination of extremely small-frame cattle. These animals have been replaced by much larger-framed, growthier seedstock, which retain much of the quality and fleshing ability of the smaller cattle.

As further testimony to changing conditions in the United Kingdom, discussion was offered on all fronts regarding measuring, weighing and developing uniform genetic evaluation procedures to evaluate traits not measurable by the human eye. The global nature of our economy also points to the necessity to one day have all Angus genetics measured with the same yardstick and evaluated in the same manner. Dollars and cents, or pounds and pence, will demand we do this.

It was gratifying and heartwarming to travel to the motherland of the breed and experience a singleness of purpose that has

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President—Nancy Jo Sullivan, Marietta, OH
For a complete listing of officers, refer to page 54.

REGIONAL MANAGERS—Refer to page 43.

CERTIFIED ANGUS BEEF LLC

President—Jim Riemann, Wooster, Ohio
For a CAB staff listing, refer to page 114.

become the mindset of Angus breeders worldwide. And that purpose is to produce and market the most delicious and healthful beef in the world. This theme will be explored in the technical meeting in Copenhagen next summer. The accompanying Scandinavian tour will be equally rewarding. Watch upcoming issues of the *Angus Journal* for details.

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► John Crouch, executive vice president of the American Angus Association, visits with Angus leaders from across the world after a news conference with the British Broadcasting Corp. while visiting Aberdeen, Scotland. Pictured are (from left) Ron McHattie, CEO, Aberdeen-Angus Cattle Breeders' Society, Scotland; Doug Fee, CEO, Canadian Angus Association; Doug Allen, president, Canadian Angus Association; Eddie Gillanders, secretary, Northeast Scotland Aberdeen Angus Breeders' Club; Dyce Bolduc, director, Canadian Angus Association; Crouch; and Peter Gardiner, president, New Zealand Angus Association.