

A Quarter Century +

The technology changes, but the purpose stays the same.

Commentary by **John Crouch**

One quarter of a century — that's how long the *Angus Journal* has been a part of the American Angus Association. Those of us who were a part of the staff of the Association at the time it was purchased from Murray Fretz remember so well the excitement that prevailed at the prospect of owning the publication.

The *Angus Journal* was founded as *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal* in 1919 by Fred Hahne, who stated in the first issue, "... it will be our aim at all times to give the breeders of Aberdeen-Angus cattle the most loyal and honest support in every way that may come to our attention ... we want to see more and better Aberdeen-Angus cattle grown, and will do our share to find and create a ready market for the right sort of animals ..."

In 2004 the breed is now called Angus, the magazine covers are different, the faces are different, but the message remains virtually the same. The *Angus Journal* has been an integral part of the Angus business for more than three-quarters of a century. As a youngster I remember so vividly awaiting the arrival of the *Angus Journal* by mail, in hopes that I might somehow be included with a picture of my FFA heifer. Throughout the years, that excitement has not diminished. Rather, it has intensified.

The acquisition of the *Angus Journal* in 1978 and formation of Angus Productions Inc. (API) were accompanied by the normal growing pains experienced by those engaged in any new effort. It was a departure from tradition, so adjustments had to be made. The first editor, the late Mike Sweet, served the organization admirably and



remained in that capacity until 1980. Upon his resignation, our friend Dale Runnion was recruited and asked to serve as a consultant in the formative years.

After another period of adjustment, Terry Cotton, then a regional manager, was named general manager. Cotton teamed up with Cheryl Oxley, along with a professional editorial and production crew, and the result is our flagship publication — the modern *Angus Journal*.

Many changes have taken place since 1978. Initially, for example, it was the decision of the Board that regional managers would not solicit advertisements from the membership. After a short period, it became obvious that having regional managers occupy a dual role as advertising and merchandising specialists in addition to acting as field representatives for the Association was good business. The success of the *Angus Journal* and the Association attests to the wisdom of the Board members' decision.

Throughout time the dynamics of our industry have dictated new approaches in merchandising. API embraces a variety of options, ranging from the capability of producing promotional brochures and flyers to sale books and communicating via the Internet.

It gives me great pleasure to salute the entire API staff for 25 years of dauntless service to the Angus and beef industries.

I am sure that the next 25 years will be even more successful.

