

ANGUS JOURNAL

Back in Time

Angus Journal alumni marvel at changes, reflect on past.

Story & photos by **Brooke Byrd**

Travel back 40 years to the 1960s. Dick Hahne owned *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*, and it and the American Angus Association each had their own fieldmen. The magazine was published in Webster City, Iowa, with a circulation of about 17,000.

Several alumni of *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal* made the journey forward 40 years to the current face of the *Angus Journal* in September. Each year, a group of past employees from *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal* and several friends with whom they worked in the 1960s gather to share memories and friendship. This year, they gathered in Saint Joseph, Mo., to tour the offices of the Association and Angus Productions Inc (API).

The "oldtimers' party" began seven years ago with a Christmas card saying, "It's time to get the gang together." Dale Runnion, Longmont, Colo., says, "The 'gang' meant all of my old sale crew. We just get together to reminisce and have fun."

Dale, who was advertising manager, then general manager during the 1960s, and his wife, June, who was assistant advertising manager, say much has changed.

"You would never have seen a magazine like the one just put out," he says, referring to the September 2005 *Angus Journal*. "It's strange how you can, through computers, get so much information so fast."

He also reflects on traveling with country

PHOTO BY CRYSTAL ALBERS



► "The Gang"

► **Right:** Darrell Overholt (left) and Ray Roth were among alumni from *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal* who met in Saint Joseph, Mo., to tour the offices and look back on the past.



► Dale Runnion (left), former general manager of *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal*, looks at pictures with Cheryl Oxley (center), current API advertising/production manager, and his wife, June, former assistant advertising manager.



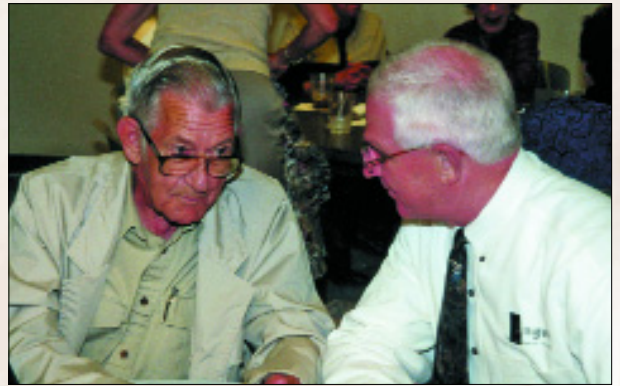
► Jim Rentz (right) and his wife, Judy (left), visit with Special Services Coordinator Sharon Mayes. Jim worked as a fieldman for 15 years and currently works on printing API sale books.



► Anita Houston (left) and June Runnion examine API's collection of pictures from before the American Angus Association owned the *Angus Journal*.



► Tour guides were on hand to explain and demonstrate changes made in the publishing process since the 1960s. Dale Runnion (left) and Jim Rentz listen to Rich Masoner, API Web manager and sales coordinator, detail the advertising process.



► Former fieldman Ray Roth (left) and Terry Cotton, API general manager, discuss the enormous changes in publishing technology since the 1960s.

singer Leroy Van Dyke. “I was traveling Illinois for the *Journal*, and he was with the *Drover’s Journal*,” he says. “I heard ‘Walk On By’ and ‘The Auctioneer’ song for a year before they were released.”

June also marvels at the technological advances. “The biggest change is everything being done by computer. When we were working, we were lucky to have an electric typewriter,” she says. “I can’t imagine being able to do the things they do now by computer — they took us days to accomplish.”

She remembers receiving ad copy on cocktail napkins, matchbook covers and any other spare slips of paper. Referring to the fieldmen, she says, “Their job was to sell the advertising and get the copy. Sometimes it took quite a few phone calls to get it straightened out.”

While Dale and June both came back on board after the Association bought the magazine and changed the title to the *Angus Journal*, most attendees hadn’t been back to the offices in more than 40 years.

Back to the present

Ray Roth, Marblehead, Ohio, was a fieldman with *The Aberdeen-Angus Journal* from 1958-1979. “I traveled 55,000 miles a year,” he says, covering the eastern part of the United States.

Speaking of the current *Angus Journal*, he says, “There’s no comparison. Years ago, I made up three-fourths of my own ads.” However, the biggest change, he says, is “there aren’t as many parties as there used to be.”

Jim Rentz, Coldwater, Ohio, was also a fieldman from 1958 to 1973. “When I first started with the *Journal*, they were still setting type with hot type, and then we went to offset, so it was all paste-up,” Rentz says. “Now, with computers, it’s 10 times easier today than it used to be.”

Another change, he notes, is in the variety of fieldmen. “We were strictly *Angus Journal*,” he says. “The Association had their own fieldmen, so when I went to a sale there was



an Association man, there was a *Journal* man, there would be a *Drovers Journal* man working the ring, a *Prairie Farmer* man, and then the auctioneer.”

He has also seen the Angus breed take off in numbers. “In the early days that I traveled, some of us knew the pedigrees very well,” he says. “Today it’s very complex. They opened up AI (artificial insemination), and that changed the breed quite a bit.” Noting that one bull sired more than 10,000 registered progeny in 2004, he says, “We didn’t have that many registered in the whole year!”

► Each cattle publication had its own fieldmen attending sales, including country singer Leroy Van Dyke (left) and Jim Rentz. Several fieldmen in the same area traveled together, attending sales and telling stories.

► Below: Dale Runnion (left) returned to the *Angus Journal* in the 1980s. He hired Cheryl Oxley as advertising/production manager.



Rentz has made a full circle and returned to his *Angus Journal* roots, now working for Post Printing, which prints sale books produced by API’s Special Services Department. Taking a look at the present, the thing that excites him the most about the future, he says, “is that we’ve got a breed of cattle that are in demand.”



► Each year, a group of *Angus Journal* alumni gather for fun and friendship. Most attendees had not been back to the *Angus Journal* since it relocated to Saint Joseph.