

## TO PROMOTE BY ISSUING INFORMATION

At the first Annual Meeting of April 5, 1869, members of the newly organized American Jersey Cattle Club authorized the Secretary to create an essay on the merits of the cattle from Jersey Island, then "to make any use of the Essay that in his opinion may tend to advance the interests of the breeders of Jersey Cattle."

More than a century later, that first essay is easily appreciated as a masterstroke of externally focused promotion and internally directed persuasion. In it, Col. George E. Waring, Jr. constructed a market identity for the "Registered Jersey" by pointing to its unequalled superiority as a producer of rich milk and golden butter, while simultaneously exhorting seedstock producers to remain faithful to the centuries-old standard of excellence established on Jersey Island:

*"The sole office of the Jersey cow, broadly speaking, is to produce the largest possible amount of rich and highly-colored cream from a given amount of food. Everything else in connection with the breeding of the race is, or should be, incidental. Beauty of form and beauty of color are, of course, desirable, but no wise breeder will give these features more than a secondary position. If they can be secured without detracting from economic value, they are most desirable; but if, in seeking them, we lose sight of the chief aim, we not only do injury to our own interests, but permanently detract from the average value of the whole race."*

The "first piece of promotive literature," Waring's essay set a benchmark for the essayists, advertising writers, and editorial staffs to come. Booklets, leaflets, press articles, and advertising have done as much to sell the Jersey breed to

potential buyers as they have to encourage stringent selection for the qualities giving Jerseys a competitive advantage in the U.S. dairy industry.

In part, Jersey promotional literature displays a two-audience focus because of limited financial resources. R. M. Gow noted in 1936 that promotion budgets depended upon "the Club gradually accumulat(ing) capital from the registration and transfer fees over and above what was required to run its office . . ." Yet, even when faced with modest budgets that require "doing more with less," the Jersey organizations have produced an effective publicity program for 130 years.

### Breed Literature

Without a staff to write promotional articles, the membership authorized a number of essay contests between 1874 and 1892. Open to all interested writers, these events held out a lure of cash prizes for purchasing the best articles. The 1874 contest offered \$600 for three essays, with two being accepted and published

not only in the *Herd Register* (Volume 3) but also distributed until 1880 in pamphlet form. In 1892, more than 200 entries were submitted for a contest that earned 50 writers a prize of \$25 each. These articles were distributed to agricultural publications as "press articles."

Intermittent though these efforts were,

they were effective enough to prompt the hiring of Valancey E. Fuller in 1893. Fuller had supervised the Jersey herd at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago which won the dairy tests for "economy of production" by a large margin, with firsts also in amount of milk, butter and cheese produced, manufacturing efficiency, and product quality. Fuller produced 16 articles on the Chicago triumph, the first of many written in his five-year tenure.

### Press Advertising

Budgets for advertising have expanded and contracted over the association's 130-year history. "The card" of the AJCC was the first ad published in nine ag papers in 1887, followed by a national campaign promoting AJCC registration, transfer, and testing in 1889 and 1890.

As budgets grew (ranging between \$7,000 to \$10,000 per year by the early 1900s), the association retained N. W. Ayer & Son Advertising Agency of New York City to create ads stressing production efficiency, product quality, and Jersey vigor. These were so successful that \$21,000 was budgeted in 1919 for advertising. Budget cutbacks followed in 1921 and since then, generic breed advertising in the U.S. ag press has not been carried out on an equivalent scale.

### Moving Pictures

The novelty of moving pictures was wearing off by the end of World War I, and the association embraced the new medium for publicizing Jerseys. The first promotional film was produced in 1917, with 10 more following in the next 12 years. Films like "More Profit Per Acre" (1953) were scripted and professionally acted, rather than shot as dairy farmer testimonials. Films could be purchased ("More Profit" sold for \$125) or borrowed for screenings from the association office. Films were produced less often, then not at all until the emergence

**Would you raise the butter-making efficiency of your herd one-third?**

Jersey blood will do it. Keep tab for a year on some of those "dead-head" cows that are now eating your feed and aren't making good. Find out how much butter each cow is really making. There are revelations right in your herd. Be an "intensive farmer." Get

**A Jersey Bull**

You can raise the butter-making efficiency of your herd nearly one-third—let us tell you how. Write for the doings of the Jersey.

AMERICAN JERSEY CATTLE CLUB,  
8 W. 17th St., New York.

1910 Advertisement

# HISTORICAL REVIEW

of video technology. The first VHS video, "Today's Jersey: She's The Best Ever," was completed and distributed in 1989.

## Periodicals

The most important medium for "issuing information" about the Jersey breed has been its magazine.

In July of 1877, the first issue of *The Monthly Bulletin of The American Jersey Cattle Club* was published. The *Monthly Bulletin* was both a record of registration activity as well a conduit for "articles and communications on many matters of interest to Club members and Jersey breeders." Its publication was "suspended" in 1880, but Gow reports, "The idea of a Club organ survived the discontinuance of the *Bulletin*, and suggestions that such an organ should be started came from time to time before the Directors (in 1889, 1906, 1912, 1914 and 1915), but no action was taken."

Into this void came *The Jersey Bulletin*, established in 1883 by Dennis H. Jenkins, a railway clerk in Indianapolis, Ind. "To it belongs the credit of being the first magazine published exclusively as a dairy breed paper," writes Gow. Its 16-page premier issue was dated October 1 and in the "Salutory," Jenkins wrote:

*"The mission of the BULLETIN will be to give promptly all the Jersey news of interest, publish the transfers and movements of Jersey cattle, the experience and views of practical breeders, collect all items of value or interest, employ able writers on the subject, and to make it, in fact, perfectly indispensable to every one who has an interest in this great (breed) of butter makers."*

Availability of the *Bulletin* notwithstanding, the idea of an association-owned magazine continued to be debated. The official minutes of May 4, 1915 note the receipt of "a letter from Dr. R. Wedekind suggesting the publication by the Club of an official organ.

The consensus of opinion was that this was very desirable." A committee was appointed, but reported to the Board that "on account of the expense, it did not seem wise to start it at the present time." The alternative was to purchase pages in the *Jersey Bulletin* and to fund a Publicity Department, but this expense, too, was surprising. Eventually, however, that course was taken, with the AJCC publishing a one-page regular feature, "Comments From The National Office," and a page ad in each issue, costing \$2,000 annually by 1953.

In March of 1953, President Frank B. Astroth and the Directors had information which led them to believe that the



Exhibits and displays promoting the Jersey breed have been produced since 1893, when the AJCC organized a demonstration herd for the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. Displays on a smaller scale, like this one from 1945, were also common. Today, the AJCA exhibits at conventions and trade shows such as the World Dairy Expo, the California Farm Equipment Show, and the Midwest Dairy Management Conference.

*Bulletin* could be purchased at a reasonable price. The Board adopted a resolution calling for the appointment of a special committee to "negotiate with the present owners for the possible purchase." The resolution also directed the Executive Secretary, Floyd Johnston, to "formulate plans for a Club publication devoted to the fullest promotion of the Jersey breed and to present plans to the board for its further consideration."

When the *Bulletin's* owners sought an exorbitant price around \$250,000, the Board of Directors proceeded to the alternative plan, which produced one of the most contentious Annual Meetings

in history at Chattanooga, Tenn. Judge J. G. Adams of Biltmore Farms led the vocal supporters of the *Bulletin* and its owners, to which Paul Harber, chair of the Promotion and Publicity Committee, replied with this plea:

*"People down in the grass roots of the country have sent in letters, they have sent in resolutions and recommendations to the Club that we investigate the possibility of our own breed publication . . . I think that it is time, with all fairness to our larger breeders, to begin to consider the wishes of the smaller breeder, the man who doesn't come to these meetings, the man who is at home milking his cows, the man who depends on the sale of this milk, and the sale of a little livestock for his livelihood and, if, through a better publication, we can help him do a better job and make this cow more valuable, then I think if we don't do it, then we are derelict in our duty."*

The matter was not settled in Chattanooga, but rather at the meeting of the Board several months later. By roll call vote, the Directors voted unanimously to found the *Jersey Journal*, and instructed that its first issue appear October 5, 1953.

"The *Jersey Journal*," wrote President Astroth in the first issue, "will give better news coverage, more helpful articles to breeders, lower rates to advertisers, larger circulation, and more promotion to the Jersey cow. With this message to you I want to share with you the pride of ownership. We own a magazine. Those of us who milk Jerseys for a living, and no one else, own this magazine."

The publication of the *Journal* accelerated negotiations with the *Bulletin* owners, who in a few weeks agreed to sell that magazine to the AJCC for \$75,000.

Since then, the *Jersey Journal* has been the voice of the Association, publishing "news and ads" under the Policy set forth in the first year of its publication by the Board of Directors.