

## Richmond's Bovine Beauty Contest

For 92 continuous years, Richmond City and a troupe of dedicated volunteers have hosted the annual Richmond Black and White Days. Pessimists have predicted the events demise for many years. However, plans are already being fashioned for the 100 year celebration in 2015.

I have in my possession a short history of Richmond Black and White Days, written by Amos Bair. Bair reports that Clarence L. Funk, who ran a dairy southwest of Richmond, read about the Parrish Dairy Show in an issue of the Hoard's Dairyman magazine. A meeting was held on March 17, 1913 in the room above the Richmond bank to discuss the possibilities of organizing a dairy show in Richmond. Twelve men attended the meeting.

J. L. McCarree suggested that everyone bring their cattle into town and drive them, as a herd, down Main Street where everyone could see them. His motion did not carry, but it was decided to put the animals into a corral by the Tithing Yard west of town, where the Harris farm stands today. As such, in the spring of 1913 the dairy farmers ran their cattle into one large corral, and the judges rode through them on horseback pointing out the better animals. The show was not held for the next two years because of the flu. Foot and mouth disease was also prevalent at that time.

The show began in earnest in 1915 and for the next three years was held in an open field west and north of the present library building. In 1916, an auctioneer by the name of Colonel Walters, stood on a flat rock at noon and announced they were going to hold an auction sale. It turned out no one wanted to sell their cattle, so the auction was a total bust.

In 1918 the show was moved to a public square located between First and Second West on Main Street, just below where the old Tabernacle used to stand. The area had a six-foot board fence on three sides and served as an excellent place to exhibit dairy cattle.

A 1923 publication titled, "The Milk Pail", printed by the Segoe Milk Products Company, was perhaps the first premium list for the show. Included in this publication is an excellent photo titled "Only a bird's eye view", showing the Richmond Black and White show being held on the public square. The periodical reports "it was a beautiful day, the crowd was large, and it was an interesting one. Exhibitors were jubilant, whether they lost or won. The cattle were contented, perfect harmony prevailed. If one complained, no one heard him.... It was a great day for Cache Valley."

The publication continues; "Richmond, Utah is the Holstein-Fresian center of the intermountain country. It is the home of a very large number of well-bred and

good producing animals. Some day, Richmond will furnish the farmers of Utah and surrounding states, herds of registered and well-bred animals and, in addition, will furnish thousands of pounds of milk to the Sego Milk Products Company. ...It is home of Marathon Best Burkes the 25<sup>th</sup>, the greatest bull in the world.”

Today, the Richmond Black and White Dairy Show has become one of the premier dairy shows in the entire world. This highly competitive bovine beauty contest, now known as the Western National Spring Show, has been designated national status by the Holstein-Friesian Association. As such, we attract some of the finest Holstein dairy cattle from multiple states, and always host international visitors, too. Each animal is individually identified with a certified pedigree and washed, clipped and handled, often by professional fitters. Official placings are immediately available worldwide at [www.holsteinworld.com](http://www.holsteinworld.com). Judges for this year’s event come from California, Idaho and Ontario, Canada. Anyone who has an appreciation for quality dairy cattle is awe struck as near perfect, high producing, dairy animals are methodically exhibited in the show ring and valuable consignments are sold at the annual Heritage Sale.

For years we have been able to hold the show with the support of class sponsors, donors, and entry fees from the exhibitors. In addition to paying premiums to class winners, we also provide feed and bedding for all cattle. This has become necessary because of the distance traveled by many of our exhibitors. We also provide an exceptional meal for dairy producers and contestants, compliments of Western Ag Credit, IFA, Monsanto and Pfizer Animal Health. The City of Richmond continues to be a great supporter of this annual event giving attention to a multitude of details essential for success.

The Junior Dairy Show (4-H and FFA) starts at 2 p.m. on Tuesday. The Western National Spring Judging Contest begins at 10 a.m. on Wednesday. Bulls, heifers, and dry cows will be judged on Thursday with milking cows showing on Friday. The annual Heritage Sale is scheduled for 7 p.m. Thursday evening. The Horse Show and Horse Pulls will be on Saturday. County residents will enjoy participating in any and all of these events.