

NIXON's/NIXON'S HILMAR FARMS - A HISTORIC HERD NAME

This document is an abbreviated version of a Historic Herd nomination submitted by Kristina Bozzo-Baldenegro in October, 2014,

Overview

The Nixon herd of dairy goats began 1949. The registered herd was started in 1952 in California and consisted of from 100 to more than 300 adult animals. With few exceptions, it was a purebred herd (early La Manchas excepted). The family consisted of Amos & Ellen and the three children Walda, Sheila, and John. The following graphic shows the timelines for the various family members, active for 65+ years

Years	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	2020
Amos		1957 LaMancha, Toggenburqs, Alpines		1980				
Ellen		1957 Milker, Kid Feeder, 4-H Project Leader				1988		
Walda		1952 1955 Nubians, Alpines, Saanens						
Sheila	1949	1952 Registered Nubians, Saanens, Toggenburqs, Alpines			1998 Alpines		2014	
John		1956 Alpines, Toggenburqs		1977		2004 2009 Export Hauler		
Hilmar Farms Breeding Partnership		1965					2014	
Nixon's Goat Dairy Grade "A" Commercial Dairy		1957 Pomona, CA	1965 Nixon's Hilmar Farms Grade "A" Dairy Hilmar, CA		2000			

The Nixon's bred and milked somewhere between 150 and 250 milking does in their Grade-A Dairy for a period of 40+ years. The herd was primarily a purebred herd but had a few Americans in the early days. They produced fluid milk for Laurelwood Acres, the California Goat Dairyman's Association, and Jackson-Mitchell, producer of Meyenberg Products. The herd was and is an active show and breeding herd since its inception. Their breeds included Alpine, La Mancha, Nubian, Saanen, Toggenburg and Experimental.

Nixon animals participated with the best of the best during their heyday of participation at local, regional and National events. Below is a brief listing of their contemporaries and competitors; *Laurelwood Acres*, *Del-Laine*, *Clovertop*, *Yar-Vade*, *Raymar*, *Longden Acres*, *La Honda Springs*, *Rio Linda*, *Shahena'Ko*, *Sodium Oaks*, *Law-Zel*, *Rancho Amistad*, *Rocking M*, *Y-Knot*, *K-Lou*, *Sartyr*, and *Redwood Hills* among others. The italicized names are all ADGA Historic Herd Names.

The Nixon's animals were active in the performance programs, providing a foundation and data for a number of our current ADGA Performance Programs. There were 837 animals listed with the Nixon herd name in the ADGA database from May 9, 1955, through 2013 (which is when the information for the Historic Herd Name nomination was pulled). Nixons registered 5 different breeds, and a handful of Experimental animals. Of those 837 animals there were 590 females and only 247 males. Three hundred and fourteen animals had either evaluations and/or production records on file. Nixon's had 34 animals with either DNA typing or semen collections on file at the ADGA office and an outstanding 51 animals earned their SGCH, SG, GCH, and/or CH designation at that time. There are 230 different Nixon animals with official appraisal/classification scores in the current ADGA database with scores ranging from 93 to 85.

The Herd Story

Amos and Ellen Nixon were both born in rural Arkansas and migrated to Southern California to escape the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl to find work. Ellen came with her older sister and brother-in-law at 17 and went to work as a caregiver to an elderly woman in Redlands. Amos and his father Oscar came by way of Texas to Lemon Cove to work as a migrant worker in the orchards. They were reacquainted in the small community of former Arkansans in Covina. Amos went to work as a molder at General Metals making metal parts out of ore. They married at the Mission Inn, Riverside, and moved to East Los Angeles where Amos continued to work at the foundry and Ellen as a homemaker.

Within a year Ellen was pregnant with daughter Walda and she and Amos had purchased a one-acre lot on Nubia St., in Baldwin Park, California. Walda was born in October 1938. Shortly thereafter they moved to Baldwin Park and started to put together a small farm. Money was very tight. They literally lived in a "tar paper" shack with no indoor bathroom. They had a long shed along the North side of the property that they turned into shelter for their livestock and set about to be as self-sufficient as possible. And of course, the outhouse was built and put into use. They truly knew the value of work and "sweat equity".

Amos commuted to East LA to work and on evenings and weekends they cleared the rocks off the property, planted trees and a garden, purchased a milk cow, some pigs and chickens to feed the family and started to build a proper house. In

August 1941, Sheila was born and the family was complete except that both Amos and Ellen still wanted a son. Sheila had to play that role until Ellen became pregnant 15 years later. John was born 15 years later in November 1956.

The dairy goat herd started when daughter, Sheila, was given a pet Nubian goat when she was age 8. She was black with silver ears and nose and was named "Silver". Two years later the Nixon girls wanted to join 4-H and Walda wanted a goat for her project. She and Amos went to a neighbor to see if they could buy a Nubian kid. They reached agreement and Walda ordered a Nubian kid from Marion Mell of Mell's Nubians. In the meantime, the Nixons were trying to get Silver bred, to no avail. When Walda's kid was born, the Nixons took Silver to the Mell's to see if they could leave her to get her bred. Mr. Mell took one look at her rear end and told them that Silver was a hermaphrodite and would never breed. Mrs. Mell came out of the house and said, "Oh, good! Goat Chops!!" and Sheila started to cry. Mr. Mell said he thought he might be able to do something to fix this as he had a doe that might work for her project as he would like her to go to a good home...perhaps she would be able to be shown. And the rest is history...as they say.

Little did they know that their neighbor, Mr. Mell was Marion Mell, President of the American Goat Society, and one of the leaders in the breakup of the American Milk Goat Record Association and AGS over the 10-generation rule that turned Americans into purebreds in AMGRA. He was intimately involved in this split and he and his beautiful Nubians lived right around the corner from the Nixons. He was their first dairy goat mentor. And boy, did he and his wife Eva, have experiences and stories to share. It had to be more than a coincidence that the Nixons, who bought property on Nubia Street, were to buy their first registered goat from the President of a National Goat Registry, AGS.

The two-year old animal he sold to Sheila became GCH Mell's Agnes. She was the star of the very competitive open Nubian Shows in Southern California for about 3 years. She was GCH in more than 13 shows. As a two-year old, she was too old to compete in most 4-H Shows that were limited to milking yearlings and younger. Agnes competed with the likes of Alice Tracy, Hurricane Acres; Effie Evans, Evania; Myrtle Hill and others. Shortly thereafter, they purchased a Saanen doe, Wagner's Susie from Mr. Wagner, a local Saanen breeder.

Showing

The Nixon Family was a very competitive group of people. Their animals were shown from the early 50's through the middle 80's on a regular show circuit that included premium money paying shows, club shows-Jr Doe, Open Doe, Specialty Shows and Buck Shows. In the early days, while Walda and Sheila were in 4-H club work, they participated in Official 4-H Shows that numbered from 75 to over 400 animals during Sheila's last club years in the early 60's. Four breeds were recognized by AMGRA and the 4-H Club Program in California and AMGRA required a minimum of 75 animals with at least 10 per breed in order for the show to be official. The breeds recognized by AMGRA were Alpines, Nubians, Saanens and Toggenburgs and Sheila showed all of them.

Walda left the family in the spring of 1955 to be married, and while she maintained an interest in the dairy goats and the other farm projects, she led a city life the remainder of her days.

When 4-H Classes were unavailable, Sheila's 4-H animals competed in the Open Classes at fairs and shows. They were regularly shown at the following fairs and goat shows: Los Angeles County Fair, Orange County Fair, Southern California Exposition-Del Mar, Devonshire Downs, Fresno District Fair, San Joaquin County Fair, California State Fair, Arizona State Fair, Santa Clara County Fair and as many club shows as possible. While living in Southern California, they competed in shows at Chevonshire Farms, Puente; Delta Dairy, Pomona; Costa Mesa, Laguna Beach, Kruse Milling, El Monte; Specialty Shows at Laurelwood Acres, Chatsworth, and other locations.

Amos purchased six La Mancha does and one buck from Eula Faye Fry in 1957. Up until that time, he and Ellen were the 4-H Project Leaders and helpers with Sheila's herd. Faye Fry had bred and promoted the breed in Southern California and Amos had developed a friendship with her and much admired her goals and her animals. Once AMGRA opened the La Mancha herd book, Amos approached her about adding some of them to their herd when they opened the dairy in Pomona in 1958. They, along with a few Toggenburgs, sired by their bucks and the remainder of the Melody herd of Alpines became the basis of Amos' herd. He, Harvey Considine and Robert Soens were the first dairymen to add registered La Manchas to their herds. Amos purchased another 20 does from Mrs. Fry when she moved her herd to Glide, Oregon. Mrs. Fry was the force behind the La Mancha breed being recognized by ADGA and the opening of the LaMancha herd book. She was another family mentor.

John was born in 1956 and the dairy goats were his birthright. He went in his baby basket with his parents to feed and milk, and as soon as he could walk, he was a part of the family goat project. His first goat was Delta Teena Marie "Teena Re", a beautiful cou blanc doe kid from Marvin and Gladys Maxwell of the famous Delta Herd. She is best remembered for being the dam of the famous buck, GCH Nixon's Tomboy, known for uniformly producing strong, correct progeny. John

accompanied Amos and Ellen or Sheila to fairs and exhibitions throughout the state. His animals were a part of the herd and dairy and became his 4-H dairy goat project when he came of age. He was their official sweeper, bucket filler, grain and hay feeder when the family showed their goats. He started showing at a very young age and was and is an excellent showman. He had his own Toggenburg and Alpine herd and was the breeder of two of the most famous Nixon animals: GCH Nixon's Tomboy and GCH Nixon's Luminary, 4 consecutive times National Champion and 4-time National Alpine Best Udder. When John joined the Air Force and then married, his herd was absorbed into the Nixon Herd. John and Amos' animals are registered as the Hilmar Farms animals; Walda and Sheila's animals are registered as the Sheila Nixon animals. They can be traced back to their original breeder and owner by their current ownership.

Their competitors were numerous and very skilled. For the most part they were commercial dairymen with Purebred/registered herds who were making their living producing milk and selling breeding seed stock. There were a few dairy goat fanciers among the group. Their competitors were made up of a "Who's Who" in dairy goats: AMGRA (now ADGA) the California Dairymen's Association and ADGA's list of Mary Farley Award recipients and Historic Herd Names. This was an incredible environment in which to learn and grow and also acquire high quality starter animals. The Nixons took full advantage of this opportunity. Since Walda and Sheila were children (ages 11 and 13) Amos and Ellen stepped up to learn as much as they could in order to teach the girls. They had wonderful teachers and examples: Wes and Betty Nordfelt, Ira Peel, Ted Johnston, Marvin Maxwell, Harold Foote, Donovan Beal, Marion Mell, Alice Tracy, Effie Evans, Myrtle Hill, among many. And they did learn. Sheila was winning dairy goat showmanship classes against 19- and 20-year-olds as a 12-year-old. She was helping these mentors show their goats and learning to feed and prepare her animals...all with the help of her parents. There was no way a child her age could make the progress she did without the help and supervision of the adults in her life. Her mentors were her competitors and examples and they, for the most part, were very generous with their expertise.

The herd grew to the point where the family had to decide how to properly manage it. In 1957, arrangements were made to rent a commercial dairy in Pomona in order to market the milk. The Nixons moved Pomona, Sheila started school at a new high school, and the family started to ship milk as producers for Laurelwood Acres, Chatsworth, CA. They rented that dairy and expanded the herd until Laurelwood Acres built a new "state of the art dairy" in Ripon, California. The Nixons had to decide whether to go out of business or move north to keep their milk market. Following Sheila's graduation from Fresno State University in 1964, they went looking in the San Joaquin Valley of California for a dairy to purchase. They found an empty poultry ranch in Hilmar, California, figured out how they could turn it into a dairy and purchased it. Amos and John built a milking parlor and retrofitted the rest of the ranch into a licensed dairy and the herd was moved to Hilmar in the fall of 1965. John started school in the 5th grade in Hilmar.

Once the Nixon children were adults, the herd petitioned the state for a breeding partnership and the herd was combined into a unit where all animals in the breeding partnership could be shown in one herd.

Amos, Ellen and John operated the dairy, with Sheila as summer and vacation help until Amos' death in December of 1980. Sheila found help for the dairy until she finished the 1980-81 school year, then quit her job to come north to be a full-time dairyman. After five years, Sheila went back to work as a teacher and doubled up on the dairy. During that time Ellen's Alzheimer's disease became more advanced and in 1988 entered a skilled nursing facility. Sheila continued on.

Ellen died in 1994. Sheila made the decision to lease the dairy and part of the goats and just to continue with a breeding herd. The lease was unsuccessful, the goats came home and all but the Alpines were sold. By 2014, the Alpine breeding herd consisted of 30 beautiful Alpine does and 6 Alpine bucks...all purebreds. Sheila did do limited showing and continued to breed and care for her herd.

"We were taught to work hard and to make the most out of our opportunities." The family loved dairy goats and loved working with them. They lived by a philosophy of making the best better and that it was just as easy to feed a good animal as a mediocre one.

The Nixon goals for breeding dairy goats have been consistent for the 65 years (up to 2014) they had been breeding dairy goats. They were able to field test their goals by working the herd in a Grade-A commercial dairy. They had to work, be productive, be correct, reproduce easily and consistently, be competitive in the show ring, and be able to do their jobs well in a variety of different management systems. No "Hot house roses" here. They also had to be beautiful to look at and a joy to work with. They sold very few does as they were used for replacements in the dairy and used to prove the herd sires that they were using in the herd.

Even today Nixon genetics are being used throughout the United States and in Mexico. Their primary market for bucks was as purebred breeding bucks but they had a large secondary market providing purebred bucks to commercial dairymen. They used these bucks to improve mammary systems, productivity and overall function of their herds.

National Shows

While showing is covered in another area, it should be mentioned that the Nixon herd made eight long road trips to compete with out-of-state animals and to learn about breeding programs in other areas.

1970: Sheila, John and good friend Audrey Evans traveled to the mid-west and showed at the Illinois, Missouri and Iowa State Fairs. They had a wonderful time, contacted other breeders, and exhibited their animals. Many lifelong friends were made on the trip. They also learned how to travel long distances with milking animals. Nixon's Negra Linda was Grand Champion at the Iowa State Fair.

1974: Sheila caravanned with Carl and Louise Erbe and Ron Maahs to the ADGA National Show in Grayslake, Illinois. Nixon's Erica was Reserve National Champion LaMancha. Sheila stayed in the area and exhibited at the McHenry County Fair, Illinois; Illinois State Fair; Missouri State Fair, and the Iowa State Fair. Sheila stayed in the area and spent an eventful week with Daniel and Stephen Considine at their farm in Wisconsin. She received her best birthday present while there...a trailer load of beautiful alfalfa hay to make the trip home.

1977: Sheila, Karen Erbe and Craig Freitas drove to Columbus, Ohio, to show at the ADGA National Show in Columbus, Ohio. It was a trying trip, but the does did well. GCH Nixon's Eris was National Champion Alpine; GCH Nixon's Elexis was National Champion Saanen.

1981: Sheila, Diane Young and Randy Hoach drove to Albuquerque, New Mexico for the ADGA National Show: Nixon's Luminary was National Champion Alpine.

1982: Sheila, Eric Jermain and Randy Hoach drove to Salem, Oregon, to show at the 1982 ADGA National Show: GCH Nixon's Luminary was National Champion Alpine; Nixon's Papyeta was Reserve National Champion LaMancha.

1983: Sheila caravanned with Steve and Frankie Richter to Louisville, Kentucky to the 1983 National Show: GCH Luminary was National Champion Alpine.

1984: Sheila and Eric Jermain drove to Pomona, California to the 1984 ADGA National Show: GCH Luminary was the National Champion Alpine; Nixon's Papyeta was National Champion LaMancha.

Nixon National Show Champion or Reserve Champion Wins

Nixon's Princess Madeline 1963 Reserve Grand Champion and Best Udder Alpine (California)

Black Magic Aristocrat Sheryl (Sired by a Nixon Buck) Reserve Grand Champion Toggenburg

Nixon's Buttercup Lass 1960's Reserve Grand Champion LaMancha

Nixon's Negra Linda 1960's National Grand Champion LaMancha

Nixon's Erica 1974 Reserve Grand Champion LaMancha (Illinois)

Nixon's Eris 1977 Grand Champion Alpine (Ohio)

Nixon's Elexis 1977 Grand Champion and Best Udder Saanen (Ohio)

Nixon's Luminary 1981,'82,'83,'84 Grand Champion & Best Udder Alpine (New Mexico, Oregon, Kentucky, California)

Nixon's Papyeta 1982 & 1984 Grand Champion & Reserve Best Udder La Mancha (Oregon & California)

Premier Sire – National Show

Nixon's Tomboy - 1976

Nixon's Joi Huckster

Nixon's Ranchman

Canadian National Champion

Nixon's Amaranth Canadian National Champion Western

Nixon's Amaranth Canadian National Champion Eastern

Mexican Nationals

Nixon's Swazie - Mexican National Champion Ceyala, GTO

Production Testing

The herd was on Official Test since very early in its existence, at least up through 2014. Their first Breed Leader was a Toggenburg doe, GCH Chevonshire Princess Annah, the 1957 Toggenburg Breed Leader. Several animals within Sheila's 4-H Project including a Nubian, Delta Charmaine; a Saanen, Nixon's Starteena; and Amos' LaMancha, Faye's Spider, who held the All-time LaMancha record for 13 years. There were many Top Ten animals in the early years, but unfortunately when they opened the commercial dairy in 1957, they were unable to continue on test because of the cost and the fact that they milked by hand for many years. The herd went back on test, but with the distraction of Ellen's illness and the time required with Sheila working full-time as a teacher and part-time as an appraiser and judge, they simply could not make a go of it.

They had to rely on the amount of the milk in the bulk tank to verify the productivity. Sheila strongly believed the use of milk testing in management systems was extremely helpful in breeding goats. The Nixon's bucks used in tested herds proved that they can positively influence the productivity of the herds in which they are used. Nixon bucks used in other herds had secured 24 Top Ten Alpine Spots from 2011-2014. Nixon-bred does had secured 4 Top Ten Alpine Spots in 2013.

Nixon's also owned several breed leaders and top 10 does in all of the breeds owned by them, including one All-time production leader, the following is a listing of animals from the ADGA database up until 2014. This is by no means the entire list of Nixon animals with top ten records.

Breed Leaders and Top Ten Does

- 1957 Chevonshire Princess Annah - Toggenburg Breed Leader
- 1960's Fay's Spider - LaMancha Breed Leader - Held all time record for 13 years
- Delta Charmaine - Nubian Breed Leader
- Nixon's Starteena - Saanen Breed Leader - 2nd the following year
- 2013 Nixon's Showy Zheila #8 milk #5 Protein
- Nixon's Yankee Atlanta #4 Butterfat #2 Protein

Top Ten Does Sired by Nixon Bucks

- 2013 SGCH Chairein Van Brie: #3M, #6P
- 2012 SG Chairein Van Shirley: #2M, #8F, #3P
- SGCH Chairein Van Brie: #3M, #2P
- SG Citheria NVXenith Fulcrum #1F, #4M, #8P
- SG Citheria NVXenith Opera #6M
- Chairein Yankee Hazel, #10F, #4P
- Chairein Showman's Pearl, #7P
- 2011 SGCH Chairein Van Brie #6M, #8P
- Chairein Showman's Pearl, #7M, #4P
- SG Chairein Van Shirley, #10M, #7M
- Chairein Enduring Hana, #9P

Nixon's Showy Vanguard was the only Alpine buck, and perhaps the only buck of any breed, who was the sire of an EX94 & an EX93 doe who each have at least one 5000+# lactations. He is also the sire of a 93 Excellent son who was Number 8 in the ADGA Elite Sires List by 2014: Nixon's Wizard Yankee.

Spotlight Sale

The Nixon's bought and sold several SS Animals. The first one was a Toggenburg buck out of Breed Leader GCH Chevonshire Princess Annah in 1956 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Nixon's Herald. The last one was an Alpine doe kid, Nixon's Wizard ZaZu Pitts in 2009 in Buffalo, NY. One extra special one was an Alpine buck kid partnership nomination in 2006, Sweet Dreams Nixon's Affirmed. This was In partnership with Kristina & Alison Bozzo. He was sired by Nixon's Showy Vanguard, a Jeannine EX93, son, out of SGCH Sweet Dreams Silver Charm EX93.

Classification/Linear Appraisal

The Nixon herd participated in both the Classification and Linear Appraisal Type Evaluation Programs since their inception. They felt that these programs were the most valuable methods of determining the correctness and functionality of dairy goat structure. When coupled with Production Testing, they felt one could determine the true value and functionality of an animal and that using LA to select sires or to recommend sires for the improvement of functionality could rapidly improve the overall quality of a herd.

The Nixon herd was scored on an irregular/regular basis in an attempt to have their opinion of animals either verified or criticized by a well-trained objective individual. The herd received a moderate range of scores through the years. Only two or three were under VG85, most between VG85 and VG87 with a very high percentage of animals EX90 and above. Up through 2014, there were 5 Nixon animals carrying an EX93 score.

Recognizable and Contributed Foundation Animals to Other Herds

The Nixon herd had Superior Genetics animals, including SG and SGCH animals. There are also star bucks, ++bucks, *** bucks and star or AR does in the current ADGA Data Base. However, the 2014 database did not list a large number of records for the Nixon herd. The lack of readily available data at that time did not allow access to some data needed to submit records on all the Nixon animal's accomplishments. According to Sheila Nixon, "In 1977, ADGA was undergoing computerization and a decision was made to include only animals 10 years old or less...in our data base. We neither had the time nor money to go all the way back to 1904 with our data." The Nixon herd is one of those herds with much of their documentation occurring prior to 1977 and thus appears on the "infamous white index cards" at the National Agriculture Library. The Nixons had a number of animals that impacted many other herds throughout the United States. A list of just a sampling of the most recognizable males and females with the Nixon herd name included 112 names in the 2014 ADGA database. Nixon animals impacted not one, not two, but multiple breeds in ADGA and well deserved the recognition and designation as Historic for their contributions across the board to the American Dairy Goat Association.