

LHT

The Man Behind the Name... The History Behind the Man

When Loren Trauernicht, my father, was just a little boy Grandma told us all he wanted to do was be outside. He was an animal fanatic and always jumped at the opportunity to go outside and help his Dad, my grandfather. As a small boy he had a flock of colored chickens (Bantams). He loved those chickens and took care of them all on his own. With typical Loren fashion he was never satisfied and wanted to improve the quality and color of those chickens! As he got older he kept his love of chickens, but it grew to hogs and cattle as well. He milked cows for grandpa and raised hogs with him, but Dad knew his goal in life was to raise cattle, just not dairy cattle. As he got older he rushed home from school to do chores, always nagging at his Dad that they could raise better stock.

After he graduated from high school Dad had to make a tough decision. He had no option of staying home as the "Dirty Thirties" had totally devastated the Trauernicht family. Grandpa used to tell about having to graze the cows under trees where they would cut tree limbs down to feed them. Needless to say that had made everybody in the Trauernicht Family very conservative. So, with no financial backing possible Dad went to Fairbury Junior College to major in English Education. Tragedy struck when Dad's roommate was killed in an accident. This was very hard on Dad. It was at this point he decided life was too short and he really didn't want to be a teacher. He wanted to be a farmer/rancher. He quit school and started working at Cominco, followed by the South Booster Station and Lentz Motors in order to hopefully save to start his own operation.

It was during this time Cupid's arrow hit Dad and he fell in love with Maxine Meints. On June 30th, 1968 Loren and Maxine were united in marriage and his life was about to change again. They lived in a trailer house in Beatrice trying to save money to purchase a farm to grow Dad's dreams. Finally with Mom working full time at Norris Public Power they got their opportunity to jump in and get their feet wet. They found a farmstead for rent east of Blue Springs from Duane Allington. Dad finally had a chance to get some livestock of his own. With no other ground to rent he decided the logical choice was to start in the hog business. In just a few short years and with a little help from Uncle Elmer, he put together a set of 70 sows. He farrowed in several small buildings doing what ever it took to get started on his life mission. Times were good back in 1969, but Loren was still looking for a way to bring in more income and expand his livestock operation. This is where he and Dr. Melvin U. Pettit, Doc, met. Doc needed help working large animals and Dad was young and eager. Doc offered him a part-time job. Nobody knew this was the start of something big. Dad didn't know at the time that Doc would become one of his best friends, mentor, and eventually partner. You see Doc had already started in the Simmental business right after Travers Smith introduced them into North America. Doc was a founding member of the ASA having member number 127. Doc was AIing cows for local dairies and breeding them to true Foundation bulls like Parsien, Signal, Galant, Abricot, and Extra. Doc would buy the heifer calves back, but being a full time vet, he didn't have time to raise all the calves. This is where Dad began his start in the cattle business. He partnered up with Doc and raised calves for him. Trauernicht Simmentals started in the spring of 1970. Dad helped Doc with his First Production Sale in November 1970. After the sale Dad was hooked on the benefits of a bigger framed, faster growing, higher fertility, super maternal breed, "Simmental". Dad began buying cows of his own, but the two never parted ways. . In late 1973 after I was born Dad had out grown his facility and needed a place to keep his growing herd of Simmentals. Dad and Mom found a place 2 1/2 miles west of Wymore with a big white two story home on it, along with some lots and a barn. They scraped up enough money for the down payment on the 44 acres. This is the place I call home and where they have resided for the last 37 years.

Dad also dabbled in the rabbit business along the way. Then, in the summer of 1992, he finally got rid of all the hogs, when Cindy and I were both graduated?! Dad went from 20-30 cows up to the 300 mature cows and 75-100 bred heifers we currently run. At one we strictly wanted more growth and frame and had nothing but 8 frame cattle that were all painted up. Even with the demands for painted up reds and yellows Dad and I both were partial to our black and “black factored” cattle. Coming into the late 80’s and early 90’s, this put us in the driver’s seat. Trauernicht Simmentals had one of the biggest and some of the most prestige Black Simmentals in the nation. You see when you really like Black cattle and no one else does you sell the bad ones but just can’t bring yourself to sell the good ones. This couldn’t of came at a better time as coming out of the 80’s in farming you realized anything on a financial statement in the black is good. After a few good years, Dad cut back on his farming acres and kept enough for feed for his cattle. He had finally met his goal to be solely dependent on his cows. This is when he told me if I can just get to 100 cows I will be happy...and you guessed it; he wasn’t. It was then that he and his partner of almost 20 years came to a spot in the road where Doc was ready to retire. Doc had a Dispersal Sale the spring of 1986. Dad purchased several lots and made the Trauernicht –Pettit sale his own. Although it was a Dispersal Sale Doc just couldn’t give up so he continued on with a half dozen cows that weren’t fit for sale. Over the next six years Dad still had his good friend along side with only 3-4 lots selling annually but still active. In 1996 Doc was ready for complete retirement and we leased his last 15-20 cows that he built back up. Then, we lost one of our dearest friends in the spring of 2005. This spring we finally had to sell our last Doc Pettit cow. It was a sad day to see 61G go. We will forever be indebted to this man who brought us into the Simmental world and helped mold us into who we are today. On a side note, we also thank Doc for the gorgeous background in all the pictures. They were taken at his farm south of Wymore that we still operate today.

Another big year was 1995. This is when we purchased our first Angus cows from Black Rose Angus Ranch (Rob Spencer) in McCook. We bought a potload of Fink bred foundation line Angus cows with strictly calving ease in mind to help diversify for our customers. Dad bred these to calving ease/maternal bulls and Angus herd began. With the emphasis on half bloods now, we struggle to breed many back straight Angus. We feel strongly Sim/Angus is the best animal to be put out to grass, breed back and wean a big calf every year.

Trauernicht Simmentals is a business of over 40 years of cattle. It is a business built by cattle, sustained by cattle. It is a business that still needs nothing but a handshake for a contract (Been doing this for over 40 years not about to change now). It has no investor backing. It has true solid genetics backing it. It was built by a man who has dedicated his life to the betterment of a breed and enhancing his customer’s bottom line. The cows selling have no political background. Most will only say LHT in the pedigree. They are good hard working cows that have paid Dad’s salary every year since he began. With that being said, I challenge you to find a more time tested cow herd in the Simmental industry.

As for the future...business as usual:

“Performance Cattle with a Touch of Style”.