

Saddle & Sirloin Club Honors Dave Hawkins

by **CARRIE HEITMAN**, *American Angus Association*

The Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery is one of the most unique art collections in the world, and the largest portrait gallery of its kind devoted to a single industry. It began in 1903, shortly after the founding of the International Livestock Exposition in Chicago. Industry leaders believed it was important to recognize individuals who had made significant contributions to the livestock business, and display their achievements to inspire the future generations to greater things.

Today, nearly 350 portraits are displayed in the West Wing of the Kentucky Fair and Exposition Center. In this collection hangs a wide representation of animal agriculture,

including educators, publishers, editors, judges and breeders.

Dave Hawkins' first trip to the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery was in 1956. His parents took him to the Chicago International, and together they made a tour around the famous portraits hanging on the walls, each depicting a lifetime of service to the livestock industry.

More than a half a century later, Hawkins is now among those given the ultimate recognition for his efforts.

"Seeing the gallery really made an impression on me that day," Hawkins says.

"To think that I have been able to put together a career to be eligible for not only for consideration, but also selection is an unimaginable honor."

On Nov. 17, the industry celebrated Hawkins' career during a special presentation of the 2013 Saddle and Sirloin Portrait Award, hosted in conjunction with the North American International Livestock Exposition (NAILE) in Louisville, Ky.

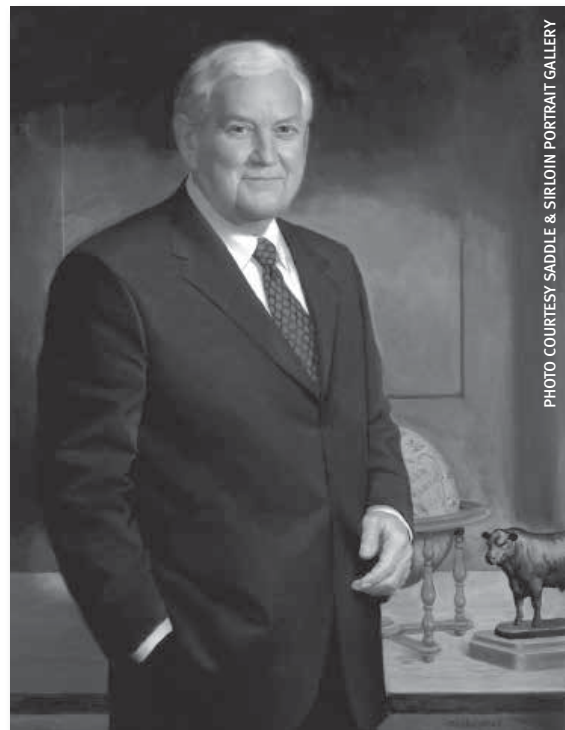


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Man of impact

Hawkins began his 40-plus year career in 1969 at Michigan State University (MSU). While there, he served in many capacities, including teacher, mentor, livestock judging team coach and purebred livestock show judge. He also contributed largely to the worldwide livestock industry, traveling abroad to many countries, often with students by his side.

"From the standpoint of the careers that we have had, from the type changes in cattle that have occurred and the increased use of technology, I have been a part of some really exciting times," Hawkins says. "With technology only increasing, there will be even more exciting times in the future."

Being involved in the cattle business came naturally for Hawkins. When he purchased his first bred Angus heifer in 1953, he began his family's fifth generation to raise cattle. His passion for breeding and raising cattle grew throughout the years.

He also passed on the love of cattle to his family. Hawkins and his wife, Kathleen, have two daughters, Lisa Moser and Jennifer Hawkins. Moser, and her husband, Dan, have three children: Justin, Ryan and Allison.

With a keen eye for genetics, Hawkins' influence shaped the MSU herd, producing cattle that were excellent classroom models and highly sought after by the industry for genetic excellence. His talents spread well across the United States and globally throughout his tenure at MSU.

Perhaps his most significant contribution to the beef cattle industry lies within the students he has mentored and inspired through the years. Hawkins' colleagues, friends and family say he has always been truly interested in helping students succeed, and encouraged their interests in animal science and the beef business.

Hawkins says if he could be remembered by one thing it would be this: "A teacher who impacted students, provided mentorship, and had a love for the livestock industry and its people."

"That's all I can hope for," Hawkins says.

For more information on the Saddle & Sirloin Portrait Gallery, visit www.livestockexpo.org/ssclub.aspx.

