



## Centennial Award

Ellen Johnson Herr ~ Born Oct 13, 1916  
(As reported by Bud Harmon, Hall of Fame Class of 1994)

Ellen Johnson Herr has been part of farm operations for 100 years, born Oct 13, 1916.

Ellen grew up on a farm just west Deer Creek, in eastern Carroll County, the daughter of Ora and Anna Johnson. That farm is still in the Johnson family.

Ellen recalls that one of her first jobs was working for a neighbor at sweet corn harvest time. She was involved in cutting the grain from the cob, filling the cans, and sealing the tin cans. She recalls, that to heat and sterilize the sealed cans of corn, they used a very large scalding tank

that had been made for butchering hogs to sterilize the sealed cans. It worked. I didn't realize we had such a canning business near Deer Creek. Ellen was already an economist as she was making \$1 per day for her work.

Ellen has lived all 100 years in Washington Township.

Ellen and Bob Herr were married in March 1939. They have 2 sons, Emmett and Harold. We lost Bob in 2005. The Herr Family Farm is located 1.5 mile further west and north of where Ellen grew up. The original 80 acre Herr Farm, has been in that family since 1893.

Ellen and Bob Herr have incrementally grown the size of that farm to the current 320 acres. Today 4 generations of Herr's live on the farm with Ellen living in the original homestead which also contains the farm business office. Most of that acquired land is contiguous with the original farm. They rent an additional 195 acres. Bob and Ellen Herr received the "Hoosier Homestead Award" from the State of Indiana for the family owning and operating the Herr's farmstead for 100 years.

The Herr's produce the typical Indiana multiple farm crops and animals and Ellen has managed the chicken and egg production, as Emmett described it: "we raised chickens all over the farm." I appreciate the opportunity to present this award because Ellen and her family have been so important to me.

The first farm I worked on as a kid was the Herr's. Ellen and I think I was 10 or 11 at the time. One of the first jobs was riding the 2 row corn planter designed truly for using horsepower. This was the period in in the early 1940's when farming in Indiana was shifting from horse power to tractor power. To use the tractor meant that someone had to ride the old planter to lift the planter shoes at the end of the row and then let them down after turning around. That was me riding the planter and Bob Herr driving the tractor. Only problem was I didn't have enough weight in the seat of my pants or arm strength to lift the shoes. The solution was simply to wire a piece of railroad iron to the bottom of the stirrups. With that additional weight, I could lift the planter shoes.

I spent much of the summers at the Herr's, and often stayed with them during the week. Ellen made a great breakfast of toast covered with peanut butter and topped off with a fried egg. That is still a great combination.

During WWII, kids my age had much opportunity to work on farms, as so many young men were in the military.

Over the years Ellen has been quite active in the Deer Creek and Mt Pisgah Lutheran Churches and similarly Ellen was involved in the North Central (Washington Township) Grade School Lunch program in which mothers provided much of the work and planning for the meals.

One last story on the graciousness by the Herr family to me was on a particular Monday when I arrived Bob and Ellen asked me to go out to the barn with them, something they wanted me to see.

Over the week end they had purchased 3 Duroc gilts in my name for enrolling in 4H that year. I shall never forget that.

To me that best describes Bob and Ellen Herr.

Thank You Ellen.