Research Efforts Coordinated

Dr. T. H. Fenske, superintendent of the West Central School and Experiment Station, Morris, Minnesota, was promoted to Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture, Forestry, and Home Economics with responsibility for all the Schools of Agriculture and outstate Experiment Stations in the State of Minnesota in 1948.

The research effort for agriculture across the state needed more coordination as the efforts of research staff from the St. Paul Campus and the branch stations increased in scope and complexity after WWII. Education and training requirements for research and administrative personnel at the branch stations were upgraded generally to include a Ph.D. degree.

A popular commencement speaker at high schools and colleges across Minnesota, T.H. Fenske, died enroute to deliver the commencement address to the last senior class graduating from the West Central School of Agriculture, Morris, March, 1963.

‘Andrew’ and ‘Zephyr’ oats and ‘Moore’ barley were released to approved growers in 1949. The small grain elevator built in 1913 was still turning out tons of pure seed to certified growers. Martin Rud, elevator and cleaner operator for many years, was still on duty into the nights when seed was flowing.

In 1949, Herman Skyberg of Fisher, a 1916 graduate of NWSA, was elected as a University of Minnesota Regent. Skyberg had won distinction as a certified seed grower and as a leader in the Minnesota Crop Improvement Association where he had served as president for two years. He was a director of the Red River Valley Co-op Power Association, Farmers Cooperative Marketing Association of East Grand Forks, and the Crookston Production Credit Association, among others. With his relation to farming, Skyberg’s support for agricultural research on the Station was strong and appropriate.

1950 Floods

The area floods of 1950 were a historic event. May precipitation amounted to 7.24 inches, the greatest amount for any one month since records had begun to be kept 50 years before. Boats were utilized on campus to get people to work. Damage to farm land came from the long duration of the flood (four to seven weeks), which delayed all crops and prevented the seeding of many.

Leaders in the Red River Valley Livestock Association in the early 1950’s.

Seated left to right are: Lloyd Spielman, Eddie Gronseth, Rex Haugen, J.L. Delmore, James Muzzy, Bernard Ward, and (unable to identify).

Standing left to right are: Ron Baker, Sam Strand, William Strickler, (unable to identify), Bennie Strickler, Benton Rindahl, Delmar Hagen, Paul Billberg, Dennis Forsell, and Odin Hanson.