

## **MURRAY FARM – A Centennial Farm**

Chevalier Pinkney Murray was born in Morgan County, Missouri and moved to Colorado in the early 1900's. Pinkney Murray married Kathryn Lehi in 1915; and together they acquired 120 acres of farmland near 110<sup>th</sup> & Havana Street in unincorporated Adams County from Mr. Malone in 1917. They later bought another 40 acres and added 80 more acres on 111<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

They had a small dairy, raised beef cattle, chickens and grew sugar beets, potatoes, corn, alfalfa, and wheat on the land. Kathryn had a family garden and canned fruits and vegetables for the winter. They had two boys Benton and Jack. Jack died in 1928 from pneumonia at the age of 10.

Kathryn worked as a Practical nurse at the Denver Poor Farm which is now the site of the Adams County Fair Grounds.

Pinkney Murray served on the local school board and even hauled bricks to build the Hazeltine School. The Murray's got electricity in the late 1930's.

In 1934 Pinkney Murray met Roswell Garst of Garst and Thomas Pioneer Seed. Pinkney began selling hybrid seed to local farmers; this sales relationship continued thru different Murray generations until 2015.

During the mid-1940's the Murray's leased land from the Army for growing crops on the Rocky Mountain Arsenal. During the late 50's the Rocky Mountain Arsenal contaminated the groundwater. This caused major crop damage and contamination on the farm at 110th & Havana. All canned fruits and vegetables had to be destroyed. A lawsuit was filed against the Army and the RMA and a settlement was reached. During WWII Pinkney and Benton grew hemp for the Army.

Benton joined the Army and received a medical discharge. He married Louise (Sally) Windler and they had two boys Glen and Lyle. Pinkney died in 1949 leaving Benton to farm alone. Benton not only sold Pioneer seed he also sold Lundell and other shortline farm equipment. Benton served on several local boards including Union Rural Electric (now United Power), Farmers Marketing and the Burlington and Wellington ditch boards. Benton died in 1964 from brain cancer. Kathryn leased out the farm until her passing in 1973. Louise took over the Pioneer sales and served as President of the local PTA board, was a cooking 4-H leader for many years and was a member of a local Home Demonstration Club. She did all this while raising 2 children. Glen and Lyle went to school in 27J, and were both 4-H members until 18 years of age.

Glen (Pink) Murray married Patricia Badding in 1969 while in college at C.S.U. Glen received a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Agronomy while at C.S.U. Glen and Patty had two boys Byron & Harvey who were also 4-H members for 10 years. Glen began farming in 1976 and began selling shortline farm equipment, irrigation equipment and took over the Pioneer sales when Sally retired. Glen served on the Adams County FHA committee, the Burlington and Wellington Ditch Boards, Colorado Corn Growers and was President of the Colorado Corn Administration Committee. He received the Governor's appointment to the Colorado Ag Commission where he served for 14 years. Glen also served on the South Adams Water & Sanitation Board for 8 years. Patty had her own CPA practice in Brighton for over 31 years. Her community service included being on the Brighton Chamber Board, Brighton Economic Development Board, a 4-H leader for over 15 years, served many years on the Adams County Fair Board and as President in 1985, over 30 years on the Platte Valley Foundation Board and appointed to the Platte Valley Hospital Board in 2016.

Patty was also appointed by the Governor to the Ag Development Authority for 13 years and to the Colorado State Fair Board for 4 years.

Lyle attended College at NJC, Laramie and graduated from C.S.U. He began farming with Glen in 1980. Lyle served on the Adams County Weed Advisory Board. Lyle married Carmen Paneitz and they have two children Benton and Nicole. Lyle and Carmen were 4-H leaders and Benton and Nicole participate in 4-H. Benton will graduate from Brighton High School in May and will join the Army in August. Nicole is graduating from Zion Lutheran School in Brighton and will attend Prospect Ridge Academy for high school.

From 2001-2007 the Murray's engaged in Agri-Tourism on the farm by having a corn maze and a haunted house. During these years a percentage of each year's profits were donated to several charities including Platte Valley Medical Center Foundation, Bonfils Blood Center, Boys & Girls Club and others.

Glen and Lyle now farm in excess of 1,000 acres growing corn, wheat and alfalfa. In 2009 the farm was forced annexed to Commerce City. The Murray Farm will receive the Centennial Farm award at the Colorado State Fair on August 25, 2017.

It is our honor to give this 100 year business award to Murray Farms.