

3 In memory of Ben Rasmusen Remembered xxx – July 13, 2009

Benjamin Arthur Rasmusen 82, died on 13 July 2009. Ben was an Emeritus Professor of Animal Genetics at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign, USA, and President of ISAG 1973–1984. His research interests centred in particular, around genetic variation in the blood of sheep and pigs, fields to which he made a significant contribution over many years and published many papers. He participated in many international conferences and was an enthusiastic protagonist of the aims of ISAG.

During his time at Clyde Stormont's laboratory at the University of California, Davis he published an extensive series of papers on the blood group systems of sheep which have stood the test of time to this day.

He spent sabbatical years at the Agricultural Research Council Institutes at Edinburgh and Cambridge UK and it was from Edinburgh that he and John Hall produced their paper showing a relationship between the M blood group system and potassium types in sheep. This finding led to important physiological studies on red cell cation transport. In 1981 he co-authored 'Animal Genetics' with F.B. Hutt of Cornell University, a text book of major interest to veterinary students.

For the last 25 years Ben and his wife Marilyn lived at Marilyn's ancestral farm in rural Leland, Illinois where they contributed much to the local community and were regarded with much affection.



Ben was a great character, interested in genealogy, gardening and politics on which he held strong views and greatly enjoyed friendly arguments and discussions on these subjects. He will be sadly missed by so many.

Ben and Marilyn, together with Elizabeth their grandchild were tragically killed when their car was struck by a train near their home in Leland. Two other grandchildren in the car escaped serious injury.