

History of the NYSMHS Breeders Futurity (written in 2009)

The NYSMHS breeders futurity is designed to recognize and reward breeders who strive to set the highest standard of excellence in their breeding program. It's for those that believe in their ability to produce the finest Morgans of quality, type, soundness and structure, always with an eye toward adherence to the breed standard. Participation in the Futurity symbolizes a breeder's dedication to ensuring the future excellence of the breed. The Futurity also recognizes the significant role of the owner in developing and showcasing the potential of young stock.

The New York State Morgan Horse Society first considered a futurity program in 1956 (Mrs. Robert Clyne was tasked with finding out more about possible Rules and Regulations.)

Illinois had the first Morgan futurity in 1955 and was followed by Michigan, the Mid-Atlantic Club, and then Ohio. With a growing number of Morgan breeders in New York, our founders recognized the importance of encouraging breeders to be conscious of the need to select the best pairings of stock so that they had high quality offspring.

As a result a group of committed individuals (Mary Arnold, Fritz Eisenhard, Ayelien Richards and D. Willey) came up with our New York Futurity, which was officially started in 1959.



The first event - a weanling futurity - was held October 5th, 1959 (pictured above), and was combined with a Fall Club Meeting and held at Fritz Eisenhard's O-AT-KA farm. Dr. C. D. Parks of Honesdale judged, and he lectured briefly on Morgan points and characteristics, then applied them to three Morgans brought to the meeting by President Bill Hoefen, expressly for that purpose. Questions were welcomed and answered, so that everyone knew what to look for when the actual judging of the foals took place. And as Dr. Parks made his selections, he explained why, in detail.

With the introduction of the annual New York Morgan Show, the futurity classes were to be held there, and the first show in 1960 offered both the Weanling class as well as a Yearling class. It was at that time that a Championship for each age group was also added.

Then, in 1962 our Society first introduced a High Score Futurity 3 Year old Champion Award, and the winner was determined by the points accumulated in showing (New York Show only) since showing as a weanling. Points were scored for halter and performance.

In 1965 alumni classes were introduced initially for pleasure and performance, and then to evolve to the present day five classes; English, Western, Classic & Hunter Pleasure and Pleasure Driving. In 1980 performance classes (saddle and driving) were added for the two and three year old futurity participants.

It was in 1982 that the “nominators payback” plan was added that awarded the original nominator of the class winner an \$100 payout in each Futurity Alumni class irrespective of the horse’s present owner.

The year 2000 saw the establishment of the Mary Arnold Memorial Fund. The monies donated to this fund are distributed to the second, third & fourth place winners in each of the alumni classes. Quoting from an article written by Mary Arnold at the time of our futurity’s 25th anniversary she writes “As anyone who’s ever tried competing in the New York State Breeder’s Futurity knows, some very fine farms have been steady supporters of the Futurity throughout the years. Farms and breeders such as Fiddler’s Green Farm, Suzanne Venier Steele, Big-Little Farm, Pat & Donald Long, Petalbrook Farm, and Arnona Farm lead the list of frequent nominators over the last twenty five years. In the early years solid supporters included Nancy Kipp’s Wildewood Farm, O-AT-KA Farm, Marilyn Childs, and Shadylane Farm. The middle years saw support from Citadel Acres, Mad River Morgans, Isaill-Mor Farm, Andalea Farm, Long View Farm, Knollcrest and Springervale.

In the past decade the Futurity has been sustained by steady support from Fox-Run Farm, Big-Little Farm, Hartland Morgans, Suzanne Steele, Acoma Farm, Early Bird Stables, Rum Brook Farm, Homespun Morgans, Homeward Farm and Fiddler’s Green Farm.” Talk about a “who’s - who” list....

Just the Facts...

There are four New York members that are worth noting for their longevity (they’re still active with their Morgans) and they are:

- Dick and Ellen Stanton with O-AT-KA Don Moro in our first Futurity contest in 1959
- Fiddler’s Green and the Murphy family - first showing up with Fiddler’s First in 1962
- Pat Long - with Majorette Hawk also in 1962
- Sandra Wooding - showing the Futurity Weanling Champion: Acadia’s Bossman in 1966 and then winning the Western Pleasure Alumni class with Acadia’s Odyssey in 2005 - it’s been 39 years that Sandy has participated in the program.

As of 2009, the Morgan prefixes that have the most wins (counting first , Champion and High Score ribbons) are in high to low order: Sunny Acres, Rum Brook, Fiddler's Green, Seaway, QUA-Lity, Acadia, Hartland and Cum Laude. All have won over 20 times with Sunny Acres and Rum Brook over 40 wins to their credit.

The horses that have won the most (again counting first , Champion and High Score ribbons) are in high to low order: Aquarian Estacy (11 wins), Seal of QUA-lity (9 wins), Rum Brook Viceroy (8 wins) and tied with 7 wins each; Sunny Acres Sneek-A-Peek, Acadia's Bossman and RBS Skywatch. And who else might you recognize?...allow me to drop a few other names ; Mad River Sailor (yearling colt winner in 1966), Fiddler's Curtain Call (Alumni Park winner in 1971 and 1972), Saddleback Supreme (Alumni Park winner in 1973, 1974 and 1975), Capes Northern Flair (Alumni Park winner in 1976, 1977 and 1978), and Deer Run Command (weanling colt winner in 1978) participated...and the list goes on.

As of this date, there are over 329 different Morgans to win at least one Futurity blue ribbon...

A pat on the back goes to...

Like our other NYSMHS activities, there are many hands involved in running a successful program, but in the case of the Futurity there are two people that have been responsible for administering the program over most of it's duration. Mary Arnold, who was there from the start with both ideas on how to setup the program and a vision for it's future, ran the Futurity (with the exception of the brief period during which time she was our NYSMHS President) until passing over the reins to Jo Ann Celecki in 1991. That's about 34 years under Mary's guidance, and then 15 with Jo Ann. That the program has been as successful as it is, and attracts the participants is a credit to them both.