

Bryant planning ahead for next 100 years

Written by Deb Egenberger
Thursday, 21 July 2011 17:17 -



Name will change for fifth generation.

Cedric Bryant was born in the back bedroom of the house that he still lives in about 4 miles south of Gothenburg near the intersection of U.S. Highway 47 and Road 762.

He remembers his grandparents, Clyde and Lorena Bryant, living across the way north in “the big house” which was built when great-grandparents Charles and Hannah Bryant first were homesteaders on the section in the early 1900s.

Cedric said he knows very little about his great-grandparents, whose original deed on the land was dated Feb. 25, 1905.

“There’s still a lot of family history to be found,” he said.



The smaller, newer home on the section came after hard times forced Charles to sell three quarters of the section in 1934.

“That was a really rough time,” Cedric said.

Clyde and Lorena maintained the northwest quarter and it has remained in the family ever since as their son and Cedric’s father, Glenn, and his wife Mary, continued to farm it.

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Glenn was the only one of Clyde and Lorena's seven children to remain on the farm. Glenn lived there his whole life.

Cedric has basically done the same.

After graduating from high school in 1968 and finishing mechanic training at college in Hastings, Cedric came back to the home place.

"I've always had dirty hands," he said. "There's nothing like the smell of fresh, clean soil."

Father Glenn was at an age then that he couldn't maintain both the shorthorn milk cow herd and the farm ground.

Glenn asked Cedric which part he wanted to take over.

"I actually chose neither," Cedric said.

He put his mechanical knowledge to work at Simon Motor Company (now Pony Express Chevrolet) and worked for other farmers.

When Glenn died in 1994, he left half of the farm to wife Mary and the other half to Cedric and his siblings Loretta and Roger.

That's when Cedric began the process of purchasing the entire quarter.

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“In 2014, if everything goes as planned, it will all be mine,” he said.

A lot has changed on the land over the years.

The smaller, newer house was expanded in 1955 when running water and a bathroom were also added.

Other farm buildings have come and gone such as the farrowing house and chicken coop but the original barn still stands.

Even the outhouse can still be found out back.

“I’ve moved it a couple of times but it’s still out there,” Cedric said.

Farming practices have changed as well.

Cedric said he never planted corn with a single-row planter but he did use a two-row planter in the early years.

This spring, corn went in the ground with a 16-row planter and a tractor that can navigate itself.

“It’s a different world,” Cedric said. “You can push this button and push that button and the tractor drives itself.”

Mostly corn and alfalfa are planted on the quarter these days by son-in-law Matt Feik, who married Bryant’s daughter Alison.

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Because the Bryants kept the land for more than a century, Cedric Bryant will be honored with a Pioneer Farm Family award during the Dawson County Fair this week.

He is proud to have kept the land in the family and he credits a bit of the longevity to a family interest in 4-H.

Cedric participated in 4-H as a boy and both daughters, Amanda and Alison, were 4-H'ers as well.

"I think it just teaches you so many things," he said of the county program.

A bit of that may be a love of the land and Cedric plans to pass on that love with the land.

The name will change in the next generation, though, as both of his children are daughters with married names.

"But it will still be in the family," he said.

And with four grandchildren, there's a chance the land will be passed to a sixth generation some day.

"That would make me very happy."