

Butter Cow Lady Creates Bronze Jersey

The latest work of sculptor Norma “Duffy” Lyon, Toledo, Iowa, was unveiled in a ceremony at her alma mater, Iowa State University, on December 16, 2006.

Lyon, who is known for sculpting the butter cow at the Iowa State Fair for 46 years, created a full-size bronze of a Jersey cow that will be permanently displayed at the entrance of the university’s new milking facilities, scheduled for completion this fall.

“Jersey Jewel” is a full-size, 1,600-pound replica of a Jersey cow in the sixth week of her third lactation. She was commissioned by Iowa State University to honor Lyons’ contributions to the industry and add a valuable landmark piece to the university’s art collection.

Lyon has extensive, first-hand knowledge of the Jersey cow as she also is wife of G. Joe Lyon, former NAJ president. The couple operates Lyon Jerseys with son, Eric, who is an AJCA Director, and nephew, Stuart, and their families.

The “Butter Cow Lady” built “Jersey Jewel’s” frame in January 2006 and began sculpting her in February with 600 pounds of clay. In mid-July, the sculpted cow headed to Polich Art Foundry, in Rock Tavern, N.Y., to be cast in bronze. She returned to the campus at Ames, Iowa, in mid-December.

The unveiling ceremony, held at Kildee Hall, was attended by more than 100 dairy industry representatives, university personnel and family and friends. The official dedication of Lyons’ bronze sculpture will be held when the new milking facility is opened.

Fortunately, dairy enthusiasts will be able to enjoy this Duffy creation longer than the two-week life of her butter sculptures.



Duffy Lyon with her latest creation, “Jersey Jewel,” which will greet visitors to the new state-of-the-art milking parlor at Iowa State University.