



Ray Flannery
OWNER/OPERATOR
RED ROSE DAIRY
1930-1950

12

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Harold Ellington
Red Rose Dairy Milkman
in the early 1940's
stands beside
the Red Panelled Milk Truck

First Job Harold Ellington
had after graduating from
High School was with the
Red Rose Dairy.

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PASTEURIZED
PRODUCTS

Red Rose
DAIRY
GRADE "A" MILK

Phone
217
Morehead Ky.





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Red Rose Dairy Building as it
appears today 7-7-98

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Site of the

RED ROSE DAIRY
CONSTRUCTED ON EAST
Sto SECOND ST IN 1930. Sto
IT CLOSED IN 1955 AND
IS THE PRESENT SITE OF by
A DAIRY CARE CENTER.

III ①

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Morehead Memories (People and Places)

Red Rose Dairy (Phone 217) 1930-1955

"You can whip our cream but you can't beat our milk."
(Red Rose Dairy Slogan)

By Dr. Jack Ellis

(Editor's Note: This is the first in a series of articles about local history entitled Morehead Memories: People and Places. The articles will deal with those business and professional people that helped Morehead grow and prosper.)

In the 1930s many Morehead residents were awakened around daybreak each morning by the sound of glass as it rubs against steel. It was the sounds of the Red Rose Dairy milkman as he delivered fresh pasteurized milk on their doorstep.

The milk was bottled in glass



Ray Flannery was the owner and operator of the Red Rose Dairy from 1930 to 1950.

bottles and hauled in heavy wire cases in the back of a red and white paneled truck.

But no matter how quiet the delivery man would try to be, the sleeping residents could still hear the noise. This was especially true in warm weather, because their screened windows and doors were kept open to capture the natural air conditioning — which was a cool breeze blowing down Evans Branch (where the college lake is now located) or Oxley Branch (now North Wilson Ave.)

But no one ever complained, because they were thankful to get the fresh pasteurized milk delivered to their door.

You will notice that I am emphasizing "pasteurized"

luxury and a welcome and familiar sight in town.

Morehead's dominant dairy in the 1930s and 1940s was the Red Rose Dairy. It was located in a low stone building on East Second Street that currently houses a child care center. The dairy's proud motto was:

"You can whip our cream but you can't beat our milk."

How It All Began

The dairy originated in the late 1920s, on the Flannery family farm near Bluestone, now owned by Rufus Flannery. Ray and Delmer Flannery were attending old Morehead High School and when they came to school each day, they began bringing jugs of raw milk and selling them to homes and businesses.

The business grew and Ray and Delmer continued to bottle and deliver raw milk into Morehead after graduating from high school.

Ray Flannery's Vision

It was then that Ray Flannery saw great potential in the dairy business, and about 1930, he bought Delmer's share of the business, and built a stone building with concrete floors and many drains on East Second Street.

Here he built a modern dairy where raw milk was pasteurized, bottled in glass bottles and stored. There was a walk-in cooler where the temperature was kept a constant 40 degrees and the milk was stored in preparation for delivery the next day. (The room was cooled in the early days with 100 pound blocks of ice.)

Ray Flannery usually had four or five employees. The men that worked inside the dairy wore rubber boots and aprons and the inside was kept spotless. One employee would drive a truck and pick up the raw milk from area farmers. It would be picked up in 5 gallon or 10 gallon cans and brought into the dairy.

The milk was poured directly into the pasteurizer, heated to a temperature of 180 degrees for 30 minutes and then bottled in one-half pint and quart glass bottles and sealed with paraffin coated caps that customers could pull off and lick the cream from under the cap.

Then the bottles would be placed in cases and stored in the

to think what a waste this must be. But few people in those days would drink skim milk.

Lon Ellis (this writer's father) was a milkman and at various times others included: Harold Ellington, Woodrow Hall and several members of the Flannery family. Many times I would help my dad as he ran his route. He had to be at work at 5 a.m., seven days a week and help load the red and white paneled milk truck. After loading he began home delivery.

Each customer on the milk route received daily delivery of milk at their front door. You would also pick up the glass bottles from the previous delivery. The empty milk bottles also served as a means of communication. Many times notes would be placed inside the empty bottles requesting extra milk or a bottle of buttermilk, or whipped cream. Also at the end of the month, the bills would be left with the milk, and the checks would be placed inside the empty bottles the next day.

Recycling in the Truest Form

The empty bottles would be taken back to the dairy to be washed on rotating brushes and then sterilized. This was true recycling in its purest form. The milk that was delivered was pasteurized but not homogenized. This meant that the cream would come to the top and was clearly visible in the glass bottles. You could shake the cream up in the bottle before drinking it, or you could pour cream off and use it for coffee cream.

While there were people in Morehead that milked their own cows, most people in town were on the milk delivery route. In the summer heat the milk had to be left in the coolest part of the porch, in the cool of the day.

In winter, the milk would sometimes freeze before being taken into the house, and cream on top would pop up 2 or 3 inches above the top of the milk bottle. But it was still good to eat like ice cream.

After the home delivery was finished usually by 7 a.m. the driver would eat breakfast and go back to the dairy and re-load for commercial deliveries. First would be the college deliveries, which would include three or four hundred one-half pint glass

cooking. This was heavy work.

After delivering to the college, milk was delivered to the local restaurants, such as "The Amos and Andy," "The Welcome Inn" and the "Eagles Nest." Stores such as Allen's Meat Market on Main Street and Sam Allen's on First Street, Clint Jones' Store on West Main and Regal Store on South Wilson Avenue. The Midland Trail Hotel and the Morehead Camp (East U.S. 60) were other places on the milk route.

No School Lunchrooms

There were no schools on the milk route because all students at Breckinridge and the Morehead Public, either brought their lunch to school, went home for lunch or went to a restaurant for lunch. Schools had no lunchrooms.

Milk Delivery Service Expanded

Two days a week milk delivery was extended to Clearfield, Farmers, Haldeman and Soldier. These deliveries were

mostly to the businesses of these towns. To look at these communities now one cannot realize how busy and alive they were in the 1930s and 1940s.

At both Haldeman and Soldier you could park the milk truck in one spot and deliver many cases of glass half-pints of milk to eight separate restaurants and stores without moving your truck. Business was good in those quiet days in Morehead.

The red and white paneled milk truck, with a bottle of milk painted on the side and a red rose on the bottle was a familiar sight to all of the people of Morehead for 25 years. Yes - "you could whip their cream but you couldn't beat their milk."

Ray Flannery, owner of the Red Rose Dairy, died about 1950 and the business was sold to R.C. Pennington and William McClain. They operated the business as the Red Rose Dairy until 1955 when it was sold to Aubrey Kautz, owner of the new Modern Spring Grove Dairy.

The Red Rose Dairy remains a Morehead memory in the minds of those who lived here at that time.



About the author

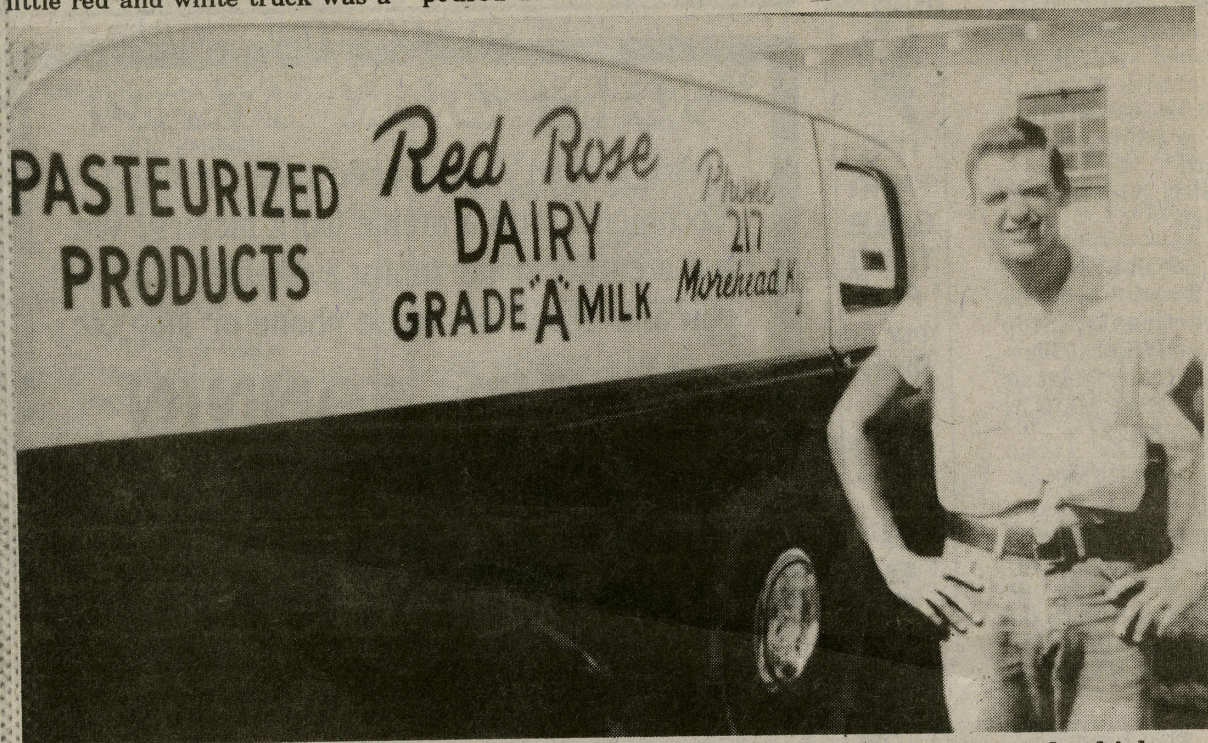
Dr. Jack D. Ellis is a retired Morehead State University Library director and a retired minister.

because in those days there were people in Rowan County who would deliver raw unpasteurized milk to your door. Indeed, many Morehead residents kept cows in their back yard, or in a small field adjoining their home. So home delivery of pasteurized milk in the little red and white truck was a

cooler for delivery the next day. Coffee cream and whipping cream was made by separating the cream from the whole milk thus leaving skim milk.

In those days, the skim milk was given away to anyone who came to the dairy with their own container, or the skim milk was poured down the sewer. I used

The college cafeteria was then located in the basement of what is now Allie Young Hall and delivery was made from the rear of the building (Ward Oates Drive) and taken down on an elevator. Also there would be several dozen quart bottles of whole milk and buttermilk for



Thomas Flannery, the owner's son, stands beside this red and white milk truck which was a familiar sight on Morehead streets in the 1930s and 1940s.



The Red Rose Dairy was located on East Second Street in Morehead from 1930 to 1955. It is now a child care center but originally built for a dairy.