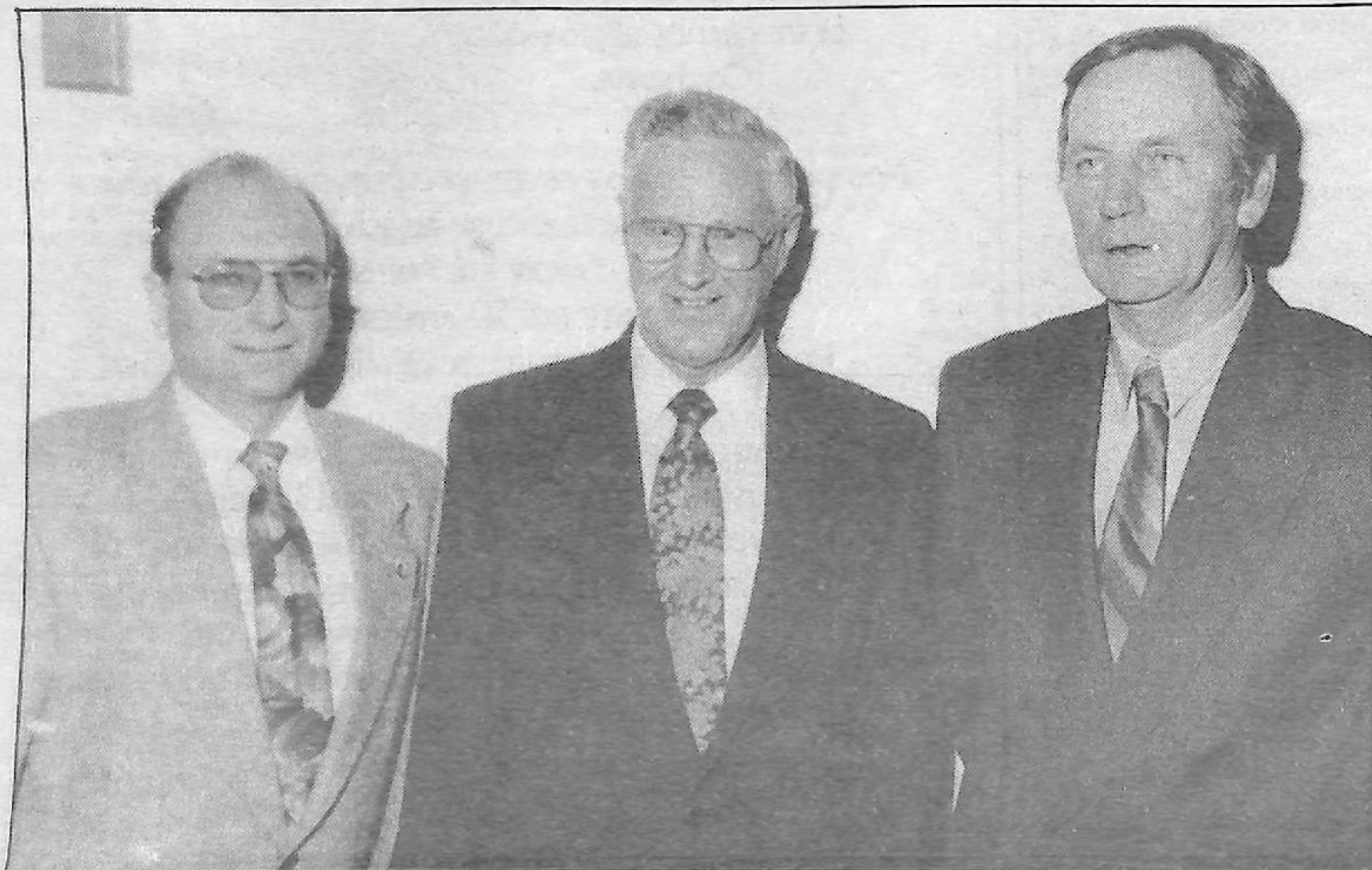


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50 years 1944-1994

Cochrane Farmers Co-operative celebrates 50 years in business



Ray Palmer photo

Raymond Genier, left, general manager of the Farmer's Co-op, Stanley Young, president of Prime Time Concepts Inc. and guest speaker, and Dennis Douma, President of the Cochrane Farmer's Co-operative chat after the festivities at the anniversary banquet.

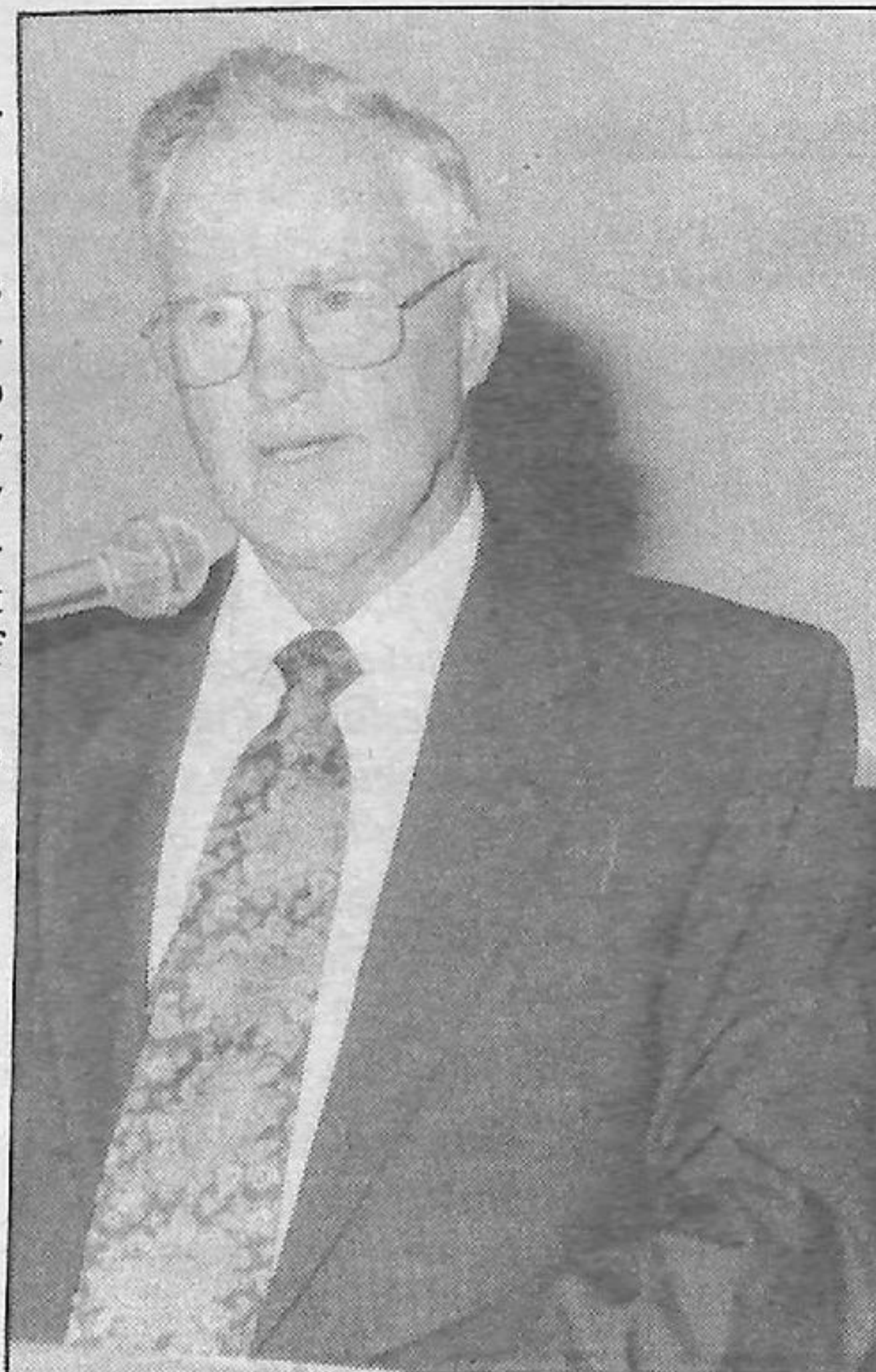
by Ray Palmer

Fifty years, a half century, of anything today is a reason to mark the occasion.

For the Cochrane Farmers Co-operative, fifty years in business is truly not only a reason to celebrate but a reason to be very proud of the service the company has offered not only to the farmers and rural folk of the area, but everyone in the Town of Cochrane.

The 50 years of excellence was marked by a 50th Anniversary Banquet held Tuesday night at the Transfiguration Parish Hall. The evening with cocktails and a roast beef supper, catered by Berry Licious Catering of Cochrane, was enjoyed by 175 guests including directors and staff, past and present, and their families, members of the Co-op, local politicians, suppliers, sponsors, and the media.

"Fifty years has been a long time," said Dennis Douma, president of the Cochrane Farmers Co-operative. "They are all behind us now and we've got to look forward to the next 50. You've seen the Co-op start from humble beginnings. You've seen it grow. You've



Stanley Young

Ray Palmer photo

Stanley Young, a native of Cochrane, was guest speaker at the 50th anniversary banquet of the Cochrane Farmer's Co-operative.

seen it change. We hope that this change will continue so that we can serve you, the members, to the utmost of our ability. May the next 50 years be as good to us as the last ones were."

Cindy Jansen, the only woman on the board of directors was asked to present a toast to the co-operative.

"Cochrane Co-op has underwent very many changes the last 50 years," Jansen said. "It's gone from potato storage to cattle shipping, the selling of feed, building materials, household supplies. Even after 50 years, a woman on the board. It's kept up with the times which is probably why they are still surviving along with all the support from their members. To all the directors and managers, present and of the past 50 years, congratulations for a job well done and may the next 50 years be just as fruitful. I toast the Co-op, past, present and future."

Rev. Fernand Villeneuve offered grace in French while Douglas McKay said grace in English.

Raymond Genier, general manager of the Co-op for the past eight years, was extremely

proud of the changes and accomplishments of the co-operative over the half century. Genier was the so-called architect of a 10 page book called Cochrane Farmers Co-operative, 50 Years of Excellence. He was also the MC at the banquet.

"This co-op started as potato storage," said Genier. "We are all very proud of the changes over the years. It has played an important role that has changed to meet the challenges of our modern society."

Cliff Wilson introduced the guest speaker, Stanley Young, P.Ag. who spoke on "some of the things that happened a few years ago, some of the things that are happening today and maybe even about things that will be happening in the future."

Stanley Young was born and raised in Cochrane, attended Ontario Agricultural College and Cornell University. After a long career in teaching, lecturing, consulting, editing and writing, he retired from OAC, University of Guelph and incorporated Prime Time Concepts Inc. in 1993 to provide management services for agricultural courses, conferences, meetings, organizations, projects, and newsletters.

"If you yearn for the old days, just turn off the air conditioning, turn off the central heating, turn off the TV, turn off the car heater, shift out of automatic transmission, and shut down the skidoos, and reduce the salaries, and all these kind of things," explained Young. "Forget about those things and you'll remember what the old days were. They were good old days but there were also good old days that weren't very good, plenty of them."

He recalled having to have a licence to play the radio in Canada. It cost two bucks. He remembered having no phone or electricity at the farm, the struggles of the old days.

Stanley Young continued to tell stories of the past and the beginnings of the Co-operative, the many changes of the past and present and of the challenges of the future.

"From all of this, we have to always remember that all of us can do more than any of us," concluded Young.

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