

## ANIMAL GENETICIST FILLS **JAY LUSH** ENDOWED CHAIR

By Susan Thompson

**A** NATIVE OF NEW ZEALAND IS the first person to hold the Jay Lush Endowed Chair in Animal Breeding and Genetics at Iowa State.

Dorian Garrick arrived in the Department of Animal Science in August, after five years as professor of animal breeding and genetics at Colorado State University.

Lush, a Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor in Agriculture and faculty member from 1930 to 1966, is considered the father of modern animal breeding and was one of the first to teach the importance of selective breeding. The Lush Endowed Chair was established in 2004. Tom and Jean Sutherland, Fort Collins, Colo., took the lead in establishing the Chair with a \$1 million commitment. Lush was Tom Sutherland's major professor during graduate school. Other former students, friends and family of Lush also have contributed to the endowment.

Garrick earned a bachelor's degree at Massey University in New Zealand in 1982 and a doctorate at Cornell University in 1988. He returned to Massey the same year and began work as a teacher and researcher.

In 1994, Garrick was named the A.L. Rae Chair at Massey University, a title he continues to hold. Rae, also a New Zealand native, earned a doctorate at Iowa State in 1950, where he was a graduate student under Lush.

Garrick's past research exposed him to the genetic improvement of a range of animal species and a variety of traits. "Animal breeding is using knowledge of genetics to improve populations," he says. "There is a tremendous amount of work being done in animal genomics, and knowledge being generated,



*Dorian Garrick has more than Jay Lush's name as part of his new title at Iowa State – he also has Lush's desk. The ornate desk, which was originally a piano, was rescued by Richard Willham, Charles F. Curtiss Distinguished Professor in Agriculture and Life Sciences and emeritus professor of animal science, from a leaky garage as the Lush home in Ames was being sold. The Willhams used it in their home for many years before donating it to the animal science department when the Lush Endowed Chair was established.*

that needs to be transferred into animal breeding."

At Iowa State, Garrick sees the greatest opportunity in beef cattle. He is a director of the National Beef Cattle Evaluation Consortium, which is responsible for the development of selection tools.

"The critical mass of universities working on beef cattle has declined," Garrick says. "That's sad, given the value of the beef industry. I feel an obligation for Iowa State to pick up the reins and assist with beef cattle improvements."

In particular, Garrick says he hopes to establish a closer relationship with the American Angus Association. "Iowa State has a long history of research and collaboration with Angus breeders," he says. "We have a herd of 450 registered Angus cows and I

look forward to making use of these animals in my research."

Garrick has found Ames to be "very much a college town," he says. "I'm impressed with the academic environment. There isn't a day without an interesting seminar somewhere on campus or interesting visitors from elsewhere in the world."

He's also impressed with Iowa, a state he visited briefly in the 1980s on a pheasant hunting trip. "There is a recognition of the importance and relevance of agriculture to the state, by people both within and outside the agriculture industry," he says.

The Department of Animal Science will hold a symposium honoring Lush on April 25, 2008, at which time Garrick will be formally installed as the Lush Endowed Chair. 