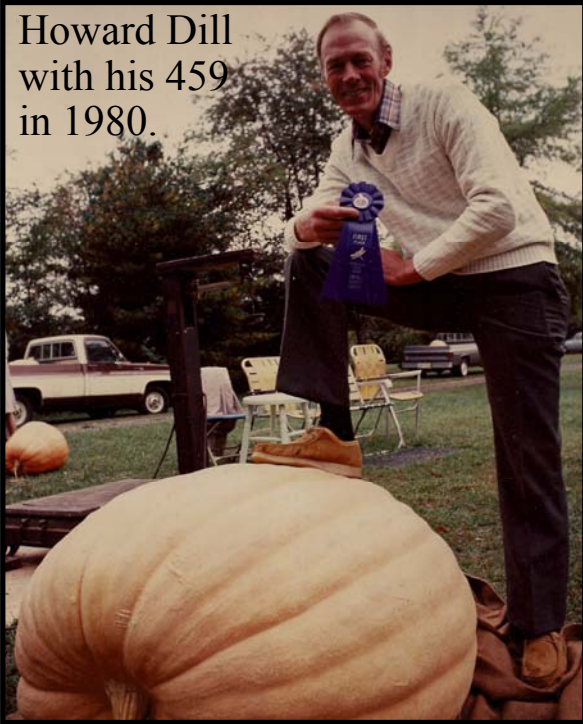


*What were you doing in the 1980's. What was hot and what was not. Well here are a few reminders... Mike Tyson won the World Heavyweight Boxing Title in 1985. Wayne Gretsky "The Great One" scored 92 goals for Edmonton. Joe Montana won 3 Superbowls for San Francisco, Mary Lou Retton won Gold for Gymnastics at the Olympics, Michael Jackson won 8 Grammys in 1986. Ronald Reagan was President for most of the 1980's. The US Men's Hockey Team beat Russia at the Olympics and won Gold in 1980. Dick Wallace entered his first weigh-off with a 125 lb entry in Collins, New York in 1989.*

Howard Dill with his 459 in 1980.



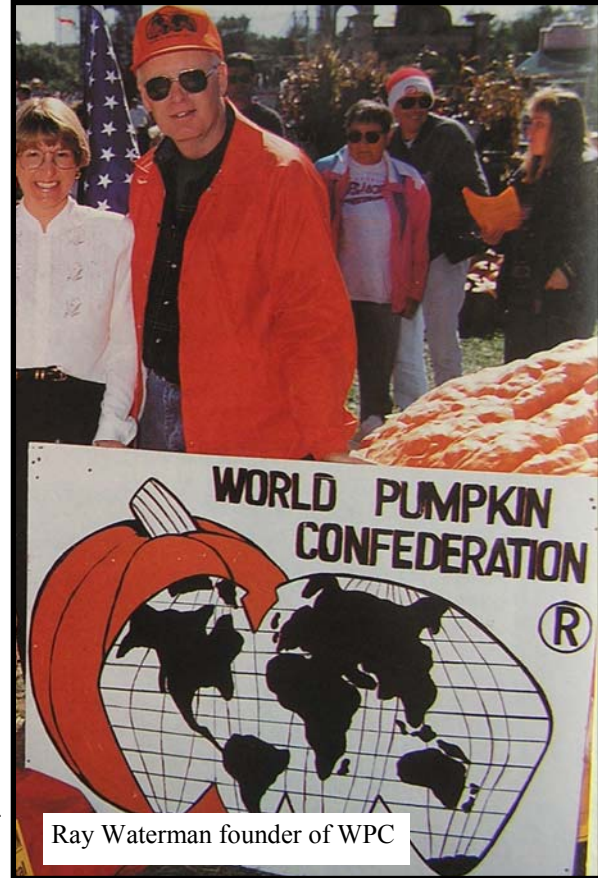
I remember the 1980's as a great era for pumpkin growers. It started out in a fine fashion and ended with a blast. Five World Records for large pumpkins were set in this decade. The 1980's began with **Howard Dill** taking top honors by growing a 459 pound Atlantic Giant. Previously he had won his first world championship in 1979 with a 438 pound pumpkin. Mr. Dill was just getting warmed up with his two consecutive wins. In 1981 he set another world record of 493.5 pounds. Howard won again in 1982, taking the bow for four World Championships in a row. The quarter ton mark was on everybody's mind for the next year. Who would grow the first 500 pounder?

You must remember when reading about these past accomplishments how incredible they are. The records of the past are early stepping stones towards today's Title Holders. And

if fruit weights keep going up, a 2000 pound effort, although Herculean, would not be competitive. Keep in mind that the records of the past may not be as impressive as those of today, yet they were just as phenomenal, in their time., as every ounce of genetic capability was squeezed out of those seeds. Of the 1980's.

In 1983 the World Pumpkin Confederation was formed by **Ray Waterman** and his family. A contest was organized to locate the largest Pumpkins and Squash in the world. The first year was a success for the WPC, with **Owen Woodman** of Nova Scotia, Canada winning with his 486 pound Pumpkin. In 1984 a \$10,000 check was offered to the first person to grow a 500 pound pumpkin. You are not a pumpkin grower if you don't know what happened that year. Four growers were able to top 500 pounds and one made it over the 600 pound mark. Six hundred pounds? No way! Could it be true? At 118.5 pounds above the previous record, **Norman Gallagher** turned into the Superman of pumpkin growing. His 612 pound Giant Pumpkin was grown in Washington State, and

became one of the great milestones of the decade. It was quite a site at the Half Moon Bay weigh-off, that year. At the time he was like the great Vassily Alexiev from Russia; the first weightlifter to clean and jerk 500 pounds? Soon after that many other Olympic class athletes were able to surmount that barrier, and the record quickly jumped to almost 600 pounds. Man has not grown much stronger, just smarter and more confident due to the achievements of those who pioneered the trail. By 1989, a mere 5 years later the sport was skyrocketing and many, many more pumpkin growers started growing, and believed they too could achieve 600 pounds. Since Norman shook the horticultural world with his impressive accomplishment. Thirteen pumpkins, in the following five years, entered the 600 pound realm. Norman Gallagher had set in motion the 700 pound goal.



Ray Waterman founder of WPC



Norman Gallagher's WR 612 in 1984.

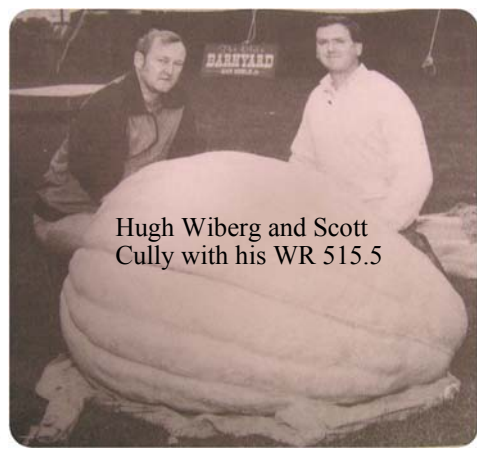


Owen Woodman with his 486 pounder.

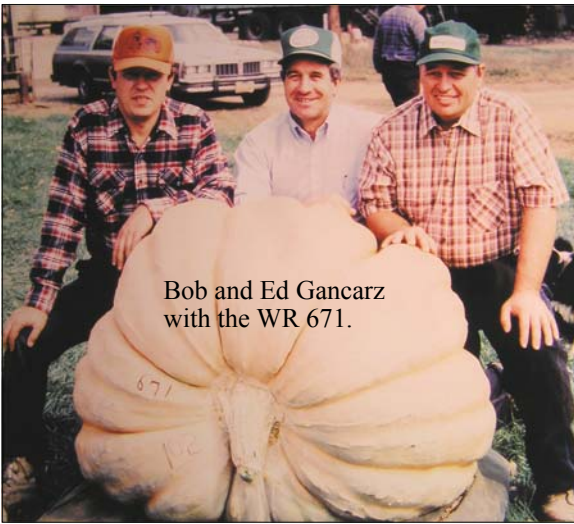


**In 1985, Scott Cully** took first place at the Topsfield, Massachusetts Weigh-off with his 515.5 pound pumpkin. Then; invited to be a guest on the “Tonight Show”, he brought much need national publicity to the WPC.

Interviewed by Television celebrity **Johnny Carson**, Scott’s subtle humor and dignified manner was a credit to us all. Scott Cully’s heroic success became my inspiration. I wrote to him and he quickly responded with three seeds from his champion. Thanks to Scott, one of those seeds produced my 579.5 **Alan Nesbitt** pumpkin in 1986.

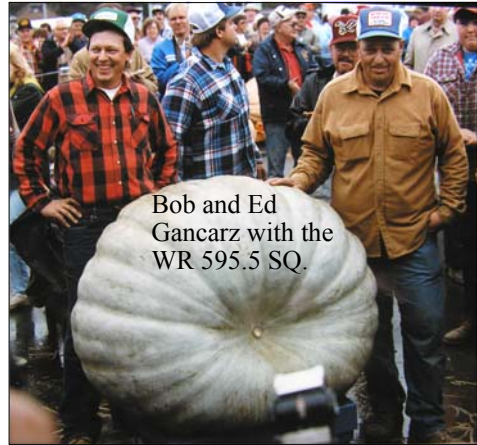


Hugh Wiberg and Scott Cully with his WR 515.5

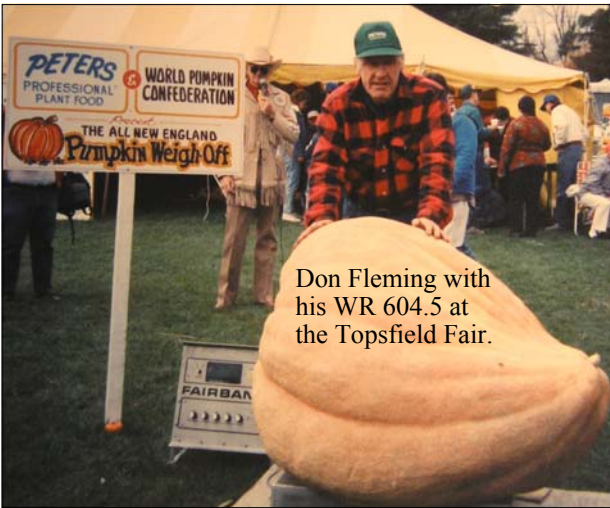


Bob and Ed Gancarz with the WR 671.

**Bob and Ed Gancarz** became the champion growers in 1986. Of the four specimens they brought to the WPC weigh-off in Collins New York that year, all broke the previous records for their class. Their biggest pumpkin weighed 671 pounds and their largest Squash weighed 595.5 pounds. That same season they picked a total of eleven pumpkins and squash with each one weighing in excess of 500 pounds. The Gancarz brothers consistently displayed pumpkins and squash over 500 pounds for the last 5 years of the decade. In world wide competitions for Squash and Pumpkins, Bob and Ed placed in the top three position eight times from 1986-1990.



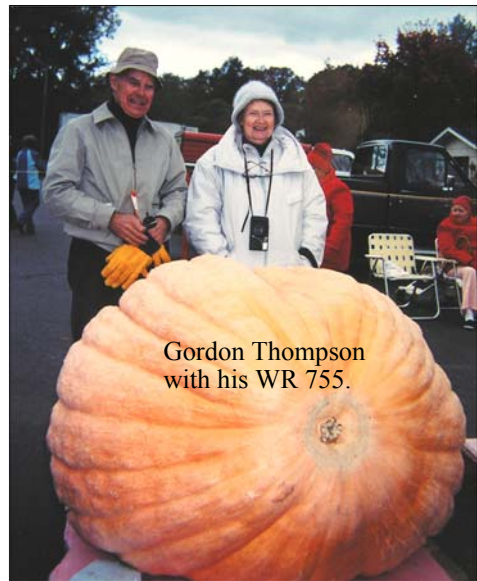
Bob and Ed Gancarz with the WR 595.5 SQ.



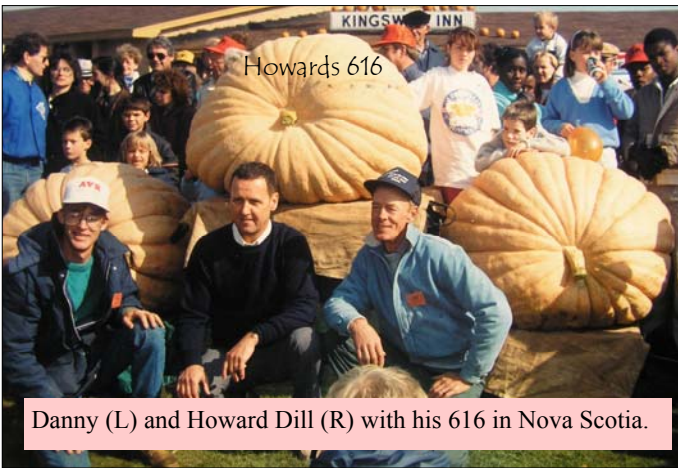
Don Fleming with his WR 604.5 at the Topsfield Fair.

The competitive years of 1987 to 1988 showed promise for the first 700 pound pumpkin.

Growers like **Don Fleming** winning Topsfield in 1987 with a 604.5 pounder, **Larry Harbord** (627 in NJ in 1988), and **Howard Dill** with 616 pounder in 1988 in the pumpkin classification, and **Leonard Stellpflug** with 653 pounds in the Squash classification began knocking on the 700 pound door. All succeeded in going over 600 pounds. 1989 heralded three specimens over 700. **Gordon Thompson**, (755 lb pumpkin) **Leonard Stellpflug** WR 743 lb Squash, and **Bernard Lavery’s** 710 lb pumpkin from the United Kingdom,



Gordon Thompson with his WR 755.



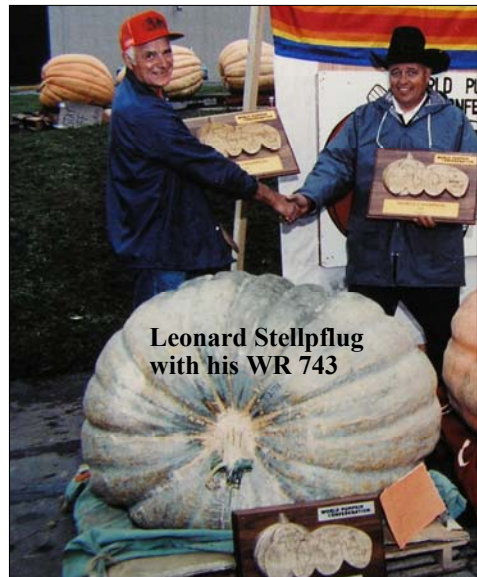
Howards 616

Danny (L) and Howard Dill (R) with his 616 in Nova Scotia.

shared a piece of history, in the record books.

We must applaud these growers who made the dream of growing a 700 pound giant a reality. Amazingly the growth ratio per decade keeps increasing. See chart. If we were near to maxing out the growth rate per decade should be getting smaller. So we must be on the cusp of some unbelievable weight gains.

Decade	Record at beginning and end of decade	Weight Gain per decade (lbs)
1980-1989	459 Dill - 759 Thompson	296
1990-1999	759 - 1131 Checkon	376
2000-2009	1131-1725 Harp	594
2010-2014	1725 - 2323 Meier	598 in 3 years



Leonard Stellpflug with his WR 743

Watch out 2500 pounds here we come!