

# Sports

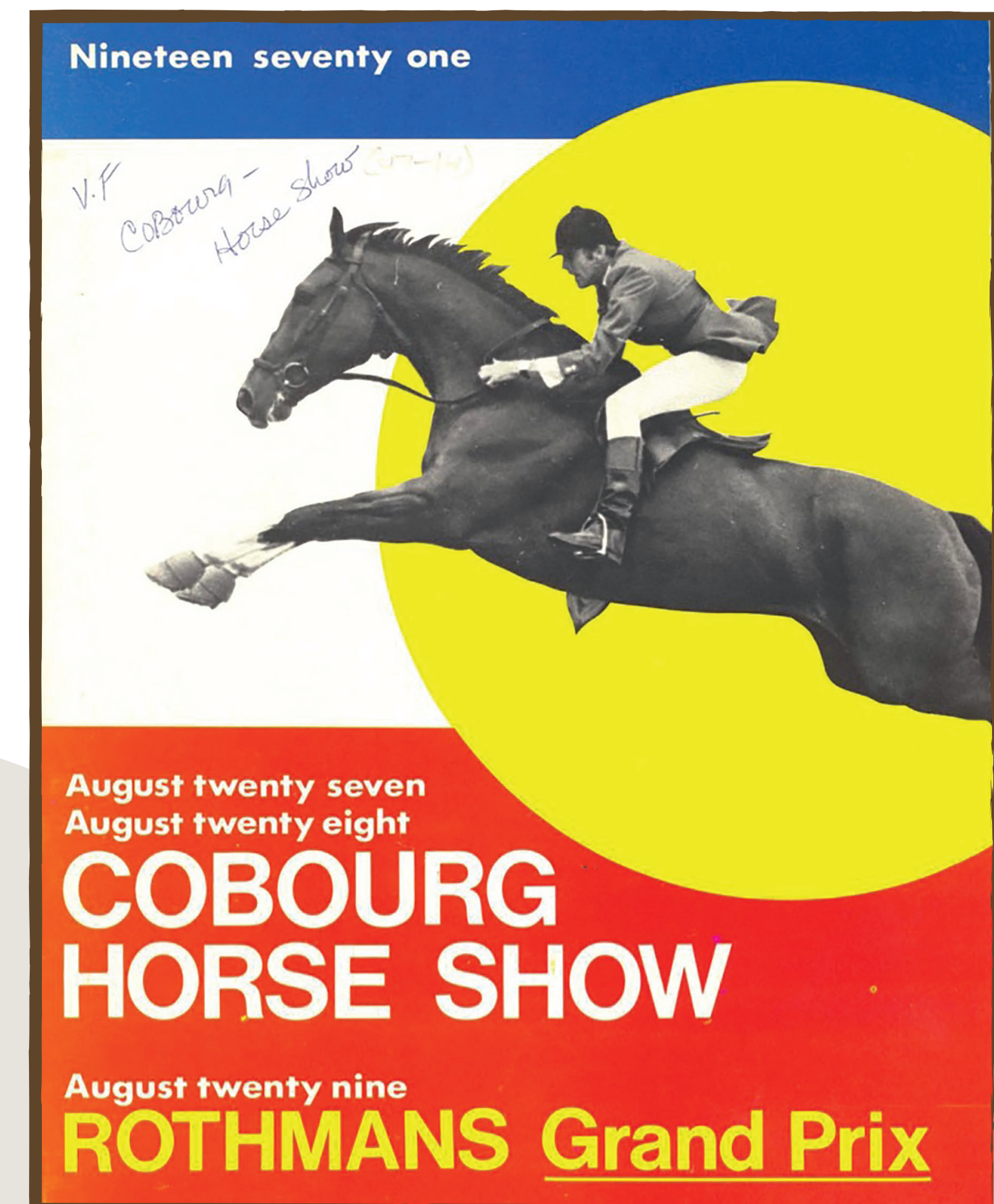
## Cobourg Horse Shows

From its humble beginnings, the event developed into much more than a horse show. "Horse Show Week" became **an opportunity for socializing on a grand scale**, with balls and garden parties, picnics, excursions and band concerts rivalling the show itself.

However, in 1915, with the Great War underway, the Show was put on hold and remained so until 1919. But by then the world was again a different place with the role of the horse very much in decline. The Great War had done much to discourage the high living of just a few years earlier. Many of the American socialites would not return. Nevertheless, the show did resume in 1919 but with much less fanfare.

By 1922 the Show warranted a full page report with pictures in the Evening Telegram of Toronto. But by 1926, according to the 1971 program, "**a small group of horsemen exhibited before a handful of spectators. The show could only be held in the evening after the now very popular polo matches. The Cobourg Horse Show years were over.**" Well, if not exactly over, then certainly in mothballs again- this time for forty-three years!

Under the leadership of Gordon Wright of Grafton's Wyvern Farms, and with the support of the Chamber of Commerce, the **Cobourg Horse Show was reborn on September 28, 1969.**



The last Cobourg Horse Show was held in 1976. **Cobourg was gradually losing its connection with its agricultural and social past**, and even the Shows as sporting events were unable to last. On the other hand, in 2016 **neighbouring Port Hope will be holding its 165th Agricultural Fair.**

**1969** - 5,000 attend a one day show with both English and Western divisions

**1970** - an Arabian division is added, the 33 acre grounds at the Army Depot are made available, and the show expands to three days including the Eastern Ontario Grand Prix highlighted by the Canadian Equestrian Team.

**1971** - the 26-page program lists **254 horses entered in the three divisions**, some competing in as many as nine classes

**1972** - 2,000 attend. "There is no doubt about the future of the show... Everyone is enthusiastic about next year." Bill Gadd, Director.

**1973** - "Hundreds of horse lovers were in attendance" but the *Cobourg Star* concentrates on the visit of the Baltimore Hills Riding Club and the St. John's Ambulance Corps.



Buggies Ready and Waiting



Photos courtesy of the Cobourg Public Library