

Sept 20 1989

Local

Sept 18, 1989

Homemade pie a tradition at Wiarthon fair

By CATHY TRUCHON
Sun Times staff

WIARTON — Oh my, my, can't get enough of that homemade pie. The women of the Wiarthon and District Agriculture Society had the most popular booth in the entire community centre at the town's annual fall fair Saturday.

Crowds were packed 16-deep at the counter, craning their necks around a partition to see what delectable indulgences awaited them.

Not your simple slap-together-in-30-minute pies, these pastries were culinary masterpieces, food of the gods, extraterrestrial delights.

Pies oozing with cherries, cinnamon apples and thick butterscotch cream chanted in unison: "try me."

Tart lemon chiffon, thick apple custard topped with grated cheese, and blueberry slices of I-miss-my-mom. All fresh, at least 12 different flavors, and they were selling faster than the kitchen hands could slice them.

"We've all been going like this since 9:30," Laura McNeil, the pie boss, said about noon Saturday.

Working feverishly alongside her were five other volunteers and master bakers: Betty Weir, Jean Crow, Edith Arnold, Laura Barfoot and Sheila McNeil.

Earlier in the morning Audrey Hepburn, Bea Nixon and Marjory Atkinson put in their time on rotating two-hour shifts. "But somebody's late I don't dock 'em," McNeil joked.

Hot beef and ham and cheese on a bun were also on the menu along with homemade chocolate squares, popular with the youngsters.

Each year, since the fair started 127 years ago, members of the agricultural society have been baking pies for the annual event, said McNeil.

This year the pie boss asked each member of the womens division to supply two pies each.

A total of 40 pies were stockpiled in boxes beneath the counter Saturday. But not for long. "I've got about 10 back behind me," McNeil said about noon. "When they run out, they run out."



Sun Times photo by James Masters

Sheila McNeil of Wiarthon dishes up a slice of apple pie to Gerry Walker of Allenford

An hour later, area resident David McGregor was one of the latecomers and didn't get the pie of his choice.

"I would've preferred the raisin custard but it's sold out," said McGregor who came to the fair with his wife Donna and children Lisa and Scott.

But he wasn't complaining. His second choice, cherry pie, was "quite good," he said.

"It's delicious," Donna added, raising a fork-full of blueberries to her mouth.

"Always get good pie at the

Wiarthon fair," said Gerry Walker, of Allenford, digging into his apple pastry. "It's excellent."

McNeil and her cohorts cater to weddings and parties during the year to raise funds for the fair. But they're not sure they should expand into commercial operations. "I don't know if we'd be hurting the local business or not," said McNeil.

A wide range of exhibits were on display in the arena during the day while livestock shows took place behind the building

and horse competitions happened at the fairgrounds across the street.

Some of the winners included: Grand champion beef bull at the fair went to owner Garry Smart of RR 1 Meaford. Grand champion female was awarded to Mike Patchell of RR 3 Tara. Grand champion herd went to Garry Smart.

In the Holstein show, grand champion female went to Ken Barfoot of RR 3 Hepworth.

In the 4-H show, Gerald D. Velde of Kemble was chosen champion showman. Champion 4-H calf went to Leanne Arnold of RR 3 Hepworth.

In the heavy horse, winner of the

Percheron class was Russ Lambe of RR 1 Meaford. Gregg Farms of Paisley took the Clydesdales and the Belgian horse class went to Eldon Barfoot of RR 4 Tara.

The commercial horse class was awarded to Keith Snyder Construction of RR 1 Port Elgin. Registered ponies went to Morgan Nixon of Wiarthon who also won in the hackney pony class and in the fine harnesses.

In non-registered ponies, there was a tie between Jennifer Pruder of RR 4 Wiarthon and Mike Thomas of RR 1 Wiarthon.

Gerald D. Velde and Susan Fisher of Alvanley were chosen the 4-H king and queen in the Wiarthon Arena on Friday night.