

EVENTS

Northumberland's farms host 1st annual Rural Ramble

by NANCY POWERS
The Independent

Come on.... Get out of town in Northumberland County later this month for the inaugural Rural Ramble, hosted by area farmers. This is a very busy time of year on most farms, but 31 hosts have agreed to bring both education and entertainment to the forefront.

Special activities, demonstrations, food and rides are planned for August 28 and 29. (Events run between 10 am and 4 pm, unless otherwise noted.)

Farming has changed dramatically since the first settlers broke ground in Ontario - from the equipment and techniques used, to genetic advances in crops and animals. Northumberland farmers have adapted with remarkable success, and Rural Ramble is a great opportunity to learn firsthand "where the food comes from".

"We also want to foster a broader understanding of the importance of agriculture today," said Howard McCann, one of the organizers.

Many Ontario children are now more than two generations removed from agriculture, and have few opportunities to see farming activities up close. At the same time, many non-farmers are becoming more interested in their "rural roots."

At the turn of the century, one farmer produced enough food to feed 12 people. Today, an average farmer produces enough food for

120 people. By the year 2,000, there will be six billion mouths to feed world-wide.

According to Stats Canada, \$6.8 billion worth of farm products are produced on 14 million acres of Ontario farmland yearly.

Overall, Northumberland County farmers are much like most farmers across Ontario - highly skilled, efficient, innovative, dedicated, diverse, as well as responsible stewards of natural resources.

The size of farms in the county vary from less than 100 acres to over 3,000, with most farms being under 400 acres. In order to produce efficiently, these farms require a large investment in land, labour, livestock and machinery. Northumberland farmers own 3,400 tractors, 2,000 farm trucks, 1,000 balers, and 400 combines.

There are 31 stops along the Rural Ramble route. Passports, which act as your tickets, are \$8 for anyone over 13 (children 12 & under are free) and are available at any CIBC bank between Kingston and Toronto. For more information call 1-888-220-7799.

Each host farm will focus on a different aspect of farming. There are five non-farming stops included on the tour, in order to encompass the other highlights of Northumberland County.

Everything from mixed farming to the raising of Llamas can be experienced during this scenic tour across Northumberland County.

Farms specializing in grains, dairy, beef, vegetables, as well as more unusual products including bison and elk, are all featured during Rural Ramble '99.

In the Brighton area, participating farmers include Joe Banbury; Bev, Bruce, Rosemary and Peter Stewart; the Clitherow family; Jayne Atkinson & Lorenzo Cimetta; Marion McComb; Peter & Elizabeth Hughes; and Cathy & Howard McCann.

In the Campbellford/Warkworth area, host farmers include Dennis & Janice Laver; Ivan & Leona Sawitsky; Ted & Judy DeJong; Rob Potter; Hugh & Lorene Campbell; and Dan & Tammy Ferguson.

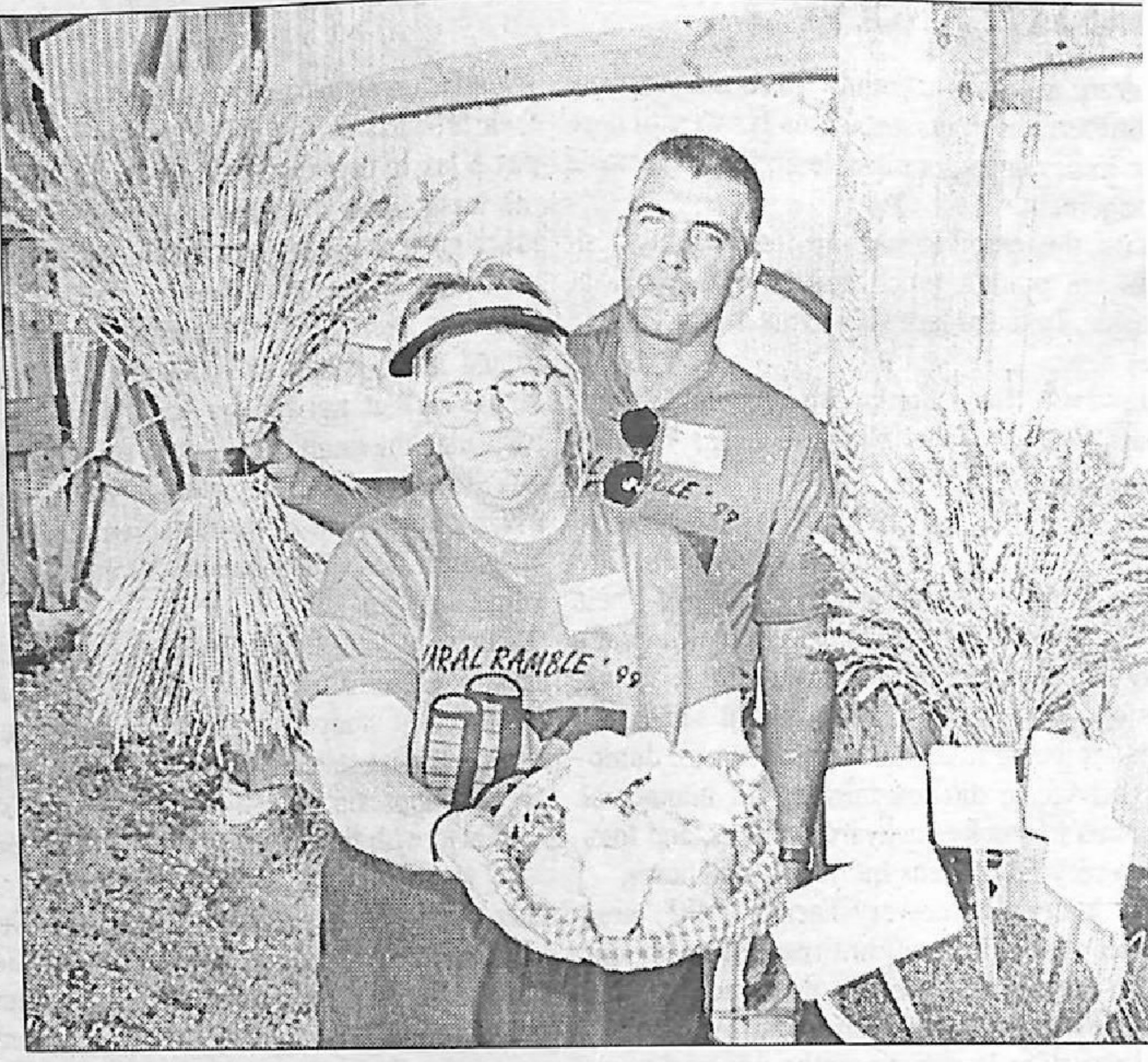
Non-farming stops include: Alderville Indian Crafts, Roseneath Carousel, Hoselton Studio, Warkworth Town Hall and Kokimo Candleland.

Bruce Stewart, along with his wife Bev, his brother Peter, and Peter's wife Rosemary, operate Stirlane Farms in Brighton Township. They will feature wheat production in the tour.

"We hope to educate, as well as entertain those who visit our farm," said Bruce Stewart.

Host families can be identified by the red "Rural Ramble" T-shirts they will be wearing.

Rural Ramble is being sponsored in part by the Northumberland Federation of Agriculture, the host families, and the CIBC.



Nancy Powers photo

Bev and Bruce Stewart of Stirlane Farms on Carman Road show samples of their wheat crop, and sweet rolls made from their own flour.

LACAC leading restoration efforts

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due to be returned to Castleton. Cramahé LACAC wants to see the Castleton Municipal building restored and "fully used by all groups", LACAC member Chris Campbell told the Transition Board. LACAC is willing to obtain cost estimates for a refurbishment as a first-step for any further action. At last week's meeting, representatives of Cramahé Public Library, and the Seniors group listened in.

Cost estimates for the restoration of Castleton Municipal Building are to be obtained by the Cramahé Local Architectural Conservation Advisory Committee (LACAC). Seize the moment, a delegation from Cramahé LACAC urged the Transition Board of Colborne and Cramahé councils July 29.

"I'm intrigued by the idea, the concept," Colborne Reeve George Boycott said of the proposal to restore the Castleton Municipal Building. "Who has the building (Colborne or Cramahé) is relevant come January 2001 when we'll all be together. I think this is a decision that needs to be made jointly."

"We need your endorsement of the concept to proceed with applications for grant monies," Haeferkorn explained to council. "We need your approval to apply for grants, to see if we can get any money."

"It's a marvellous old building and it probably should be restored. I suggest LACAC take the lead role and gather the information, costings and bring it back (to the Transition Board)."

The top floor of the Castleton Municipal Building has a balcony, currently closed off, and high ceilings hidden by dropped ceiling and a stage area. The lower floor space is currently shared by Cramahé Township municipal offices and Cramahé Public Library. The lower floor still has an original jail cell, now used for storage.

"It's a shame they covered it with paneling and ceiling panels, but I guess they did that everywhere in the 1950s and 1960s."

The Castleton hall, designated for its historical and architectural significance, will cease to be used for municipal offices with the upcoming amalgamation of Colborne Village and Cramahé Township January 1, 2001. The Colborne Municipal Building is being renovated as the new municipal administration centre.

"I concur with what George has said," Colborne Deputy Reeve Pat Westrope said. "It is not restored in total, maybe it could be done in stages."

Cramahé Township Reeve Stu Oliver and Colborne Councillor Tim Post moved the Transition Board support in principle the restoration of the Castleton Municipal Building.

Before the vote was taken, Cramahé Township Councillor Ernie Stoneman asked, "Where does that leave us with regards to money?"

Transition Board co-chair and Cramahé Township Deputy Reeve Jim Williams said, "If it is too expensive to restore, then we'll look at alternatives."

"It is a designated building, so any work done has to be done according to the way it was originally."

There's increased pressure for additional space coming from the pending arrival of additional archival records. Two years ago, the provincial government cut funding for storage of archives, a move which threatened to result in the destruction of thousands of historical documents. A provincial committee was formed, of which Laura Haeferkorn of Cramahé LACAC was a member, to negotiate retrieval and allocation of the old records to home municipalities. Castleton records are now in Cobourg, but

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