

1957

Opening of New Centennial Gates at Fair Marks History of Agricultural Society

The Brighton Fall Fair, which was staged yesterday, was given an added highlight with the opening of the Centennial Gates which mark 100 years of agricultural service by the Brighton Agricultural Society.

The gates were officially opened at 2 p.m., and among the speakers were Ben Thompson, MP, Northumberland, Alex Taggart, fieldman for the Farm Fair Association, Ross Phillips, president of the Brighton Fall Fair, and F. E. Goodrick, Reeve of Brighton.

Brighton Agricultural Society celebrated its 100th anniversary four years ago.

According to information compiled by Mr. Maxwell Tobey of Ottawa, formerly of Brighton, the society was organized in 1852, principally through the efforts of a Mr. Garbutt. A county agricultural society had been in existence since 1828 and it is possible that this society may have staged an exhibition before the Brighton Society was formed.

According to old records, the Northumberland Agricultural Society was organized at S. S. Kent's Tavern in Cramahe on May 17, 1828. Its first annual meeting was held at John Grove's Inn, on May 18, 1829. The following officers were elected at this meeting: President, B. Whitney; treasurer, J. Keeler; directors, H. Ruttan,

B. Ewing, and Isaac Proctor.

The first county fair was held on October 19, 1829, but the site is not mentioned. This was a four day fair, comprising agricultural discussions, plowing matches, horse racing, and all were followed by dinners, dancing and sing-songs.

The directors of Brighton Agricultural Society met at Ira Hodge's Inn in August, 1853, to plan for Brighton's First Fall Fair. The fair was held on October 21, of that year. One of the original bills advertising this event is still in Brighton. It was printed by the Sentinel, the forerunner of the Brighton Ensign. The entire prize list is printed on the poster, and the prizes were payable in pound, shillings, and pence, the prevailing currency at that time.

Met in 1854

Records show that the directors of the Brighton Agricultural Society met on January 28, 1854, to hear reports, but there are no further records of its activities until 1873, when the Union Agricultural Joint Stock Company was organized at Clark's Hotel. The following officers were officiating at this meeting: president, W. Gibbard; secretary, P. Begg; directors, M. Morden, Hugh McQuoid, M. K. Lockwood, John Eyre, W. C. Proctor, Robert Mack-

len, Gilbert Jones, W. J. Bidwell, A. A. Becker, and M. P. Ketchum.

Land was obtained for a driving park, and a new agricultural hall erected. This achievement was celebrated with a monster picnic when the grounds and hall were formally opened. The new hall was used for exhibition purposes for the first time in 1874.

On March 21, 1903, the property of the Union Agricultural Joint Stock Co. was offered for sale. The same year there is a record of the public school in Brighton exhibiting their map drawing at the Brighton Agricultural Exhibition.

Records Lost

On May 9, 1910, the King Edward Park Association was formed and arrangements were made to purchase 15 acres for the purpose of laying out a race track. In 1922, the records state that a "New Grandstand" proved useful and ornamental.

Most of the records of the activities of the Brighton Agricultural Society during the early part of its long history have been lost.

The poster still in existence, advertising the organization's 1st exhibition, proved conclusively the Brighton fall fair has been in existence for more than 100 years, enabling the present Society to claim the 100th Anniversary Grant, which helped to build the new Centennial Gates, and add improvements to the arena.

Community WI Has Booth At Fair

The Community Women's Institute, Mrs. Harold Morgan, president, held a successful booth at the Brighton Fair, last week. Among the projects sponsored by the WI exhibited, were those made by the 4-H Club girls. Mrs. T. Fritz, convener of historical research, displayed the Tweedsmuir Book, in which is recorded historical events relating to this district. The layette which recently won first prize in the East Northumberland area was also shown. Tea was served and an opportunity to rest provided.

This year's Fall Fair at Brighton drew the largest attendance since the Brighton Centennial of four years ago, according to Mr. Fred Meyers, secretary for the event. Mr. Meyers estimates more than 4,000 people attended the Fair this year.

On the following pages are the names of those who visited our Booth for tea, and a rest. Also the names of W. I. members who assisted. An (X) marks the names of members