

81 Exhibitors at Craft Fair sponsored by area Institutes

The Bruce Centre District Women's Institute held another successful annual craft and hobby fair at the Port Elgin arena Thursday.

Eighty-one exhibitors from as far away as Niagara Falls, Sarnia, London and St. Thomas drew literally thousands of tourists and local people.

Thursday's rain helped the fair as holidayers abandoned beaches and cottages for a day of entertainment in town.

Almost every aspect of the craft world could be seen.

While dolls and puppets were among the more numerous entries, leather work, art, ceramics and macrame were well-represented.

Gordon Cross of Toronto gave a lively talk on his nearly-lost art of wood block engraving. As he carried on his rapid-fire reminiscences of his 50 years as an engraver, his hands moved like lightning carving a replica of an 11th century print of a knight covered with intricate flowers and scrolls.

Small fry formed an endless line to try their luck at the fish pond.

There must have been more than a few visitors with a sweet tooth. The White School W.I. sold \$250 worth of fudge before the show ended.

The Elsinore W.I. were kept busy selling preserves.

Raffles were held for quilts and afghans.

Rock hounds could find displays of the rock polisher's are. Semio-precious stones were polished and offered cut

in slabs or mounted as jewellery.

Viewing exhibits must be a hungry pastime. The cafeteria style community centre was always packed. One worker said "It has been just crazy in here all day."

The ever-widening group of doll collectors in Canada must have been overjoyed at what they found.

Dolls of every type and description were to be seen. They ranged from the usual knitted and woven dolls to those made from apples and corn husks.

Apple dolls are for conneisseurs--and so are the prices. They give the impression of wind-and sun-burnt rural people dressed in period clothing. Each one is painstakingly carved by hand and dried. One display featured a small household with the father playing a fiddle and the mother in a rocking chair. The texture of the dried apples gives the characters' faces a rugged look that is almost eerie in its resemblance to real people.

Knitted dolls, Pirate dolls, Indian and Snow White dolls were to be seen.

Many visitors to the fair were impressed by "Spike" puppets. Spike is an ostrich made by Irene Lutowicz of Popular Hill. When activated properly, Spike with his monofilament strings appears to walk around. The effect was uncanny and many fair-goers craned their necks when they say someone with a three foot-high ostrich stepping briskly along beside them.



QUILTING AT THE HOBBY AND CRAFTS FAIR held last Wednesday in the Port Elgin Community Centre attracted many of the visitors to the West Arrian display. Left, Mrs. Betty Stier, Mrs. Laura Donaldson, Mrs. Helen Baeskei and Mrs. Jessie McDonald gave a demonstration on quilting.