

# Enjoys working with herd of Jersey cattle

by Dorca Ballantyne

Sharon Agla is a woman who is very involved with their Jersey operation on their 100 acre farm at RR 1, Fordwich, and enjoys every minute of it.

"There was a short period when I wasn't sure I was all that keen about farming," Sharon said.

"I was raised on a farm near Lakeside and when I graduated from the University of Guelph I spent a year in Toronto at Teachers College. It was the year in Toronto that changed my mind about city living versus the farm, and now I would never go back to the city to live."

When she and her husband Richard were married they moved to Listowel where she taught home economics for four years. During that period they bought the farm and when she had her first baby she quit her work and took up farming in earnest.

"Dick, too, was raised on a farm but had worked on various other types of jobs until we bought this farm. He had always wanted to milk cows and particularly liked Jerseys. There were a few on the farm when we bought it so we bought the herd and started from there."

"Now we have 45 head and milk 20 and we believe that the Jersey breed is the most efficient in producing milk. We also feel it is the best way for us to make a living in dairy. During the milk situation we were short on quota but managed to get through,



SHARON AGLA

and hopefully that situation has improved permanently."

Sharon is in the barn twice a day and said she could do nearly all the chores on her own if she had to. She milks and looks after the calves but doesn't do much field work. While she helps with the haying her main work is in the barn. She also looks after the records and registration and keeps the farm books, which, she added, was almost a job in itself.

Their two daughters, Heather, 6, and Jennifer, 4, are already showing evidence of enjoying farm life.

Young as they are they have gone to the barn with her every night and have done this since they were each about three months old, Sharon said.

"They both have their own calves and we will probably teach them how to lead them this summer.

We expect them to show at the Seaforth Fair. Heather did show two years ago. While she was pretty young, in our parish show we have classes for

young children. They are showing against children in their own age group and it is a way of getting them interested in the dairy business and showing cattle. Jersey clubs seem to be very oriented towards the young and family involvement. For the past two years Dick and I have been showing at the Clinton and Seaforth fairs."

They are members of the Perth-Huron Jersey Club of which she is secretary. She expects a busy year on the job as the club will be holding its first consignment sale.

Most of their socializing is done with the Jersey fraternity. They always go to the Royal Winter Fair for three days and attend the Ontario Club meeting in January. Most of their friends are Jersey people so there is a lot of visiting back and forth with them. As they go to these functions Sharon said they were getting to know more and more people across the province.

She is also president of the Fordwich W.I.

"I really enjoy the organization," Sharon said, "and think it is one of the most worthwhile women's groups that there is. Our 75th anniversary will be coming up next January, so there will be lots to do."

"I like to work with my hands so sewing it a foregone conclusion. I sew for everyone in the family and make just about all our clothes including my husband's sports jackets and pants. I've become very interested in macrame and have been teaching classes in it for the last couple of years. I'm also taking a quilting course which the W.I. is having, and find it fascinating."

"While I have a small garden and like working in it time seems to run out on me. There seems to be so much to do in the summer that often it gets ahead of me."

"Reading is something I really enjoy, and the entire family reads. We have both worked at getting the girls interested in books and fortunately they are very interested. I think reading is one of the most important things they can learn to like and enjoy."

Not a sports-minded person, Sharon said she gets all the exercise she wants in the work she does in the barn.

Mrs. Dick Agla

formerly of Lakeside area

daughter of Mr. & Mrs. G. Wortel