

EDITORIAL COMMENT

Should Win Excellence Award

If there is such a thing as an award of excellence for business, the Driftwood Restaurant near Orillia would win it hands down.

Driving north for the day, we had noticed this charming spot on No 11 highway and noted its location, as we knew we would be passing it at the supper hour.

We stopped on our return trip, and found it everything we expected, and more. Food reasonably priced, delicious and well served. There was a beautiful view overlooking a valley with rustic tourist cabins. There were flowers in profusion and an attractive patio.

There was an adjoining service station with tarvia pavement. It was spotless, not a trace of rubbish, and obviously had been

well swept and scrubbed that day.

While having dinner we have looked out the window and saw a young man busy washing the car windshields of all the restaurant patrons. A real nice 'extra,' so we reciprocated by filling up with gas. The young man checked oil and water without being asked, added battery water and was so genuinely obliging that we were happy to give him a little tip for his trouble.

The business included all the things for which a businessman should strive, and reflected an attention to every little detail. Obviously he gets a pleasure from operating his business which is reflected in patronage, for he was doing a brisk business that day.

Ridiculous Decision

Although a threatened one week walk-out of postal employees did not occur last week, it should have.

The trouble arose when, after declaring Monday, July 3rd a public holiday, the federal government refused to grant a day off at some other time to employees whose normal day off came on the Monday.

In other words, a percentage of employees had the holiday while those who by chance already had the Monday missed out.

The decision was so patently unfair that we cannot imagine the thinking of the department head who first made the decision, nor the lack of consideration by all officials up the line to the postmaster-general, who refused to change their minds.

Why Ride the Ex?

The theatre seems to be fair game for sniping. Time after time, unflattering reviews of attractions at the Royal Alex and O'Keefe Centre appear in the newspapers — shows which are playing at theatres where millions of dollars have been spent by private individuals to keep the legitimate theatre alive.

They harass visiting Broadway shows with as much zeal as they attack local productions by professional groups who are providing the training to create the next generation of actors. And the power of the press is so great that, almost invariably, such criticism can create financial disaster for a theatrical production.

This year it was the turn of the Canadian National Exhibition.

Not only did the grandstand show get a panning in the dailies, but the general comments about the Ex itself were mostly unflattering.

Yet, as a spectator, we spent our day

The employees would have had one hundred percent public support in their walkout, and it is still a matter which should not be dropped for the same situation will come up in the future and this is the time to declare a policy.

There are much more important things to argue about than one where the employer is so patently wrong. Even at this late date, the department would lose no face, if it said "Sorry, we were wrong," and granted the disputed day off to those who missed out.

City newsmen, particularly those who write for the entertainment columns, don't seem to know where their bread is buttered.

at the Ex, enjoyed it tremendously, and thought the grandstand show, always good, perhaps one of the best yet.

If these reviewers are so jaded that everything has to surpass the tops, then it's time their jobs were given to people who can appreciate a musical, even if it is not as good as Oklahoma.

To compare the Ex, one of the world's greatest attractions, with Expo is unfair, unwarranted and foolish. It is still a terrific value for your money, an attraction which no other city can boast, and deserves only accolades.

Unless these writers begin to use some common sense, they will be in the same position as the man who killed the goose, and there won't be any shows left to review. The Ex, the theatre, the movies, need every boost they can get. The reviewers have the power to help Toronto become one of the continent's top entertainment centres, or a cultural wasteland.



THE BASEBALL TEAM

Georgetown Fair

Older Than Confederation Itself

Centennial Year . . .

A TIME TO LOOK BACK ON THE PAST AND AHEAD TO THE FUTURE

by Garfield McGillivray

As Georgetown Fair is to form the setting for the town's Centennial celebration, it is fitting that some mention of the history of this organization should be recorded, not only for posterity, but to give the newer residents of our town some knowledge of this time-honoured institution.

The Esquering Agricultural Society which operated the fair up until this year when the name was changed to Georgetown Agricultural Society, is older than Confederation itself. The first fair was held in 1846. To commemorate their centennial in 1946 a monument and flag pole was erected in Georgetown Park, given by the Department of Agriculture for one hundred years' contribution in the agricultural field. It was the first pylon to be erected in Western Ontario only five having been erected in Eastern Ontario prior to that date.

So, it is only fitting that as the fair celebrates its 121st exhibition, that the town should want to celebrate Canada's centennial at the same time.

A PIONEER BEGINNING

As we endeavor to trace the history of this organization, picture if you can, the pioneer farmers of the last century who decided to organize for the first fall fair and agricultural society. Much of this country was still in a very primitive state, the log cabin was still in evidence, especially farther to the west. There was not a great deal of cleared land, although the more up-to-date and wealthier farmer had progressed somewhat by this time. Motor cars and airplanes were unheard of, and oxen teams were still in use on the farm. We can picture some of the pioneers came to that first meeting by oxen cart or at least in a democrat.

OLD JOURNAL REPORTS

It is almost impossible to get a true glimpse of proceeding at the first organizational meeting. Old-timers say it was held in the old township hall at Stewarttown, and at that time Stewarttown was a thriving community with a large number of inhabitants, taverns, stores and industry. Government records do not reach back far enough from which to obtain information, but a paragraph from 'Journal and Transactions of the Board of Agriculture of Upper Canada, Vol. 1, Toronto, 1856' extracted from county report, p. 527, says: 'The townships of Nelson, Trafalgar and Esquering have each societies established therein for some length of time, and from the exhibitions held during the summer in these fine townships, we can truly say that their agriculture is at present in an advanced state.'

As late as 1858, pounds, shillings, and pence were still in evidence, and a further paragraph from the Journal reads as follows: 'P. 71—One hundred and one members; amount of subscriptions £26; grants £24; total receipts, including balance from previous year, £5, 15s., 6d.; total disbursements £22, 15s., 4d.; balance in treasurer's hands £13, 0s., 5d.'

Then on Page 240 — 'Esquering, one hundred and thirty-six members; amount of subscriptions £36, 10s.; balance from 1855, £13, 13s., 11d.; share of public grants £29, 5s.; total receipts £84, 8s., 11d.; amount paid in premiums £52, 17s., 6d.; incidental expenses £14, 15s., 4d.; balance in hand £17, 10s., 1d.'

While the first fair was held in 1846, it was not until between 1864-68 that the society asked that a charter be filed.

THE FIRST FAIR

It must have been an exciting day for those pioneer farmers as they brought their produce and livestock to Stewarttown for the first exhibition. We understand the hall at Stewarttown was used for displaying the vegetables, grain, fruit, and ladies' work, while the fair proper took place in Murray's field, behind the old schoolhouse on the top of the hill. There were probably lines of hooked rams, mottos and the stocks as the women-folk vied for the honours, as well as those delicious loaves of homemade bread, buns and sausages that are inclined to be conspicuous by their absence at present day shows, as the modern cooks go for the fancy pastry.

While records are meagre to substantiate our claims, we believe that one Abraham Scott, was the first president of the society. Col. John Murray, grandfather of the late J. C. Murray, a resident of Stewarttown until his death a few years ago, was the first secretary-treasurer. Not many have held the position of secretary or secretary-treasurer in the one hundred and twenty-one years, but we will deal with some of these later in this story.

About 1875 the fair was moved from Stewarttown to Georgetown, and was held in the Market Square, which was then vacant land, bordered by Market, Church and Factory Streets. Factory St. was changed a decade ago to Park Avenue. Then, as now, it was only a one day fair and the square was boarded in by an eight foot fence along these streets for the fair. The old drill hall that stood below the present library was used for display purposes.

The first show on the present grounds in the Georgetown Park took place in 1889. Around this time the fair, being a township fair, was held alternately in Acton and Georgetown, and it was not until 1908 that the last fair was held in Acton by this group. It was in 1907 that W. A. Wilson became president, later becoming secretary, a position he held for over twenty-five years. It is ironic that Mr. Wilson's five years. It is of interest that Mr. Wilson's niece, Mrs. George Ironside, is the present secretary of the Georgetown Agricultural Society.

Joe Flynn of Acton was president in 1908, and John Cunningham in the year

1909. In 1907 the society organized the first plowing match in the township, holding it on William Cleave's farm. It drew considerable attention.

In 1946 when the Esquering Society celebrated its centennial, we talked to two of the oldest members at that time (both are now deceased) and gleaned much of the history of the fair. W. A. Wilson said he could remember his father showing a Preston bay mare at Esquering fair in 1879. W. J. Alexander had a good memory and could recall many of the early exhibitors — back in the early 80's and 90's. Brain Bros. of the Norval district showed oxen; imported Shorthorns were exhibited by Thomas Book; Leicester sheep were shown by Brain Bros. also; while Henry Ross was the first exhibitor of Holstein cattle. John Brownridge was an outstanding exhibitor of Yorkshire, Tamworth and Berkshire pigs, and his early breeding of registered swine has been carried on down through the years by his descendants, who to this day breed and export high quality hogs. Thomas Brownridge and son Alan R. R. 2, Georgetown, are still taking the ribbons at the CNE and the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto.

Road and carriage horses were the pride of the early fairs as they are today, although not as plentiful as in former years. Around 1900 and previous, the names of exhibitors still ring familiar, were John Wrigglesworth, William Patterson, Joseph Brownridge, William Fisher, William Leslie, Sandy Waldie, Joseph Cottrell, W. Wilson, Henry Wilson, J. D. Orr, Neil Gillis, J. L. Clark, John McDonald, Dave Brooks, Harrison Bros., Mark Given, D. L. Herbert, Allan Devereaux, Hugh Morrison, Andy Little, Aiken Dolson, Ashenbush Bros., Fuller Bros., R. J. Graham, John McKay, Goodson Appelbe, James Nickell, Dr. H. A. Reid. W. J. Alexander was one of the early exhibitors of fancy poultry, a class that has vanished from the fair the past few years. The late C. E. Herrington, probably Canada's foremost authority on fancy fowl and editor of Feather Fancier, a poultry magazine at the time of his death, started showing at Georgetown Fair in 1908.

Some of the early fairs that we can remember were a far cry from those of today. Not that they did not have some fine livestock shows, excellent hall exhibits and outstanding harness races, but the crowds were small in comparison; the town had only about 2,000 people at that time. Harness racing was the big attraction. In fact the society formed a driving club that sponsored races on the 24th of May. The midway didn't sport the rides for the children, but there were many games of chance, and booths with taffy apples, pop corn and horchound candy. We can remember when the late Cy Kennedy, father of Mrs. Jack Wilson of Main St., used to travel the fair circuit with his team and wagon with goodies for the children.

OFFICERS THROUGH THE YEARS

Many presidents have captained the ship through its one hundred and twenty years. While all have made a fine effort for the good of the fair, at least three have stood out above others. The late Benjamin Petch was popular in the early '20s, while in later years Craig Reid and Harding Price did much to promote the fair and knit the board together.

While we don't have a complete record of presidents prior to 1931 these men did hold the top office before that time: J. B. Bessey, George Tolton, Joe Flynn, John Cunningham, W. A. Wilson, Thomas Moffatt, Al Clark, Herb Cook, Alex Joe, Jim Reid, J. A. Elliott, George Leslie, Henry Wilson, Ed Huffman, Thomas Cook, Hume Currie, W. C. Anthony.

It is interesting to note that in the 36 years from 1931 to 1967 the society has had only five presidents. In 1931 T. L. Leslie; 1932 Ed McWhirer; 1933-34-35 George Leslie; 1936 James Fisher; 1937-38 T. J. Brownridge; 1939 Frank Petch; 1940-41-42 Herb Cleave; 1943-44-45-46-47 Craig Reid; 1948-49 John Bird; 1950-51 Nelson Robinson; 1952-53-54-55 Harding Price; 1956-57 Spencer Wilson; 1958-59 Wilfrid Bird; 1960-61-62-63 Garfield McGillivray; 1964-65-66 Ken Ella; 1967 Keith Webb.

We have no knowledge of the secretaries or treasurers prior to 1931, except to say that Percy Cleave took the treasurer's position from the late J. A. Tracy and held that position for over thirty-five years, retiring in 1963. W. A. Wilson was also secretary for over twenty-five years.

Secretaries from 1931 to the present included: W. A. Wilson 1931-38; Oscar Litch 1939; Frank Petch 1940-42; Garfield McGillivray 1943-1955; Trevor Williams (sec-treas.) 1956-1961; Mrs. George Ironside 1962-67.

WHAT OF THE FUTURE

As the agricultural society approaches Canada's centennial celebration the directors are confident that future directors and townsmen generally will rally around and see that this time honoured institution will continue for many years to come.

You ask why it has succeeded so well? It is due to the hard work which succeeding directorates have put into each fair — always striving to make the next fair a little better than the one before. If a fair was offered for the best rural fair in Canada today, we doubt if any finer example could be found than that presented by your own. One has only to stand by the grandstand, looking out over the crowds of people and livestock, and turn and catch the beauty of the grove of maples in their autumn colors on all sides to realize that we have a good thing here for Canadians, and with a will, go on striving for a fair that may eclipse those of the past in further progress of agriculture and entertainment for the community as a whole.

SUGAR AND SPICE by Bill Smiley

THE EXPO TRAIL

Well, Expo is all they say it is. It's fantastic and fabulous, exhausting and expensive. It's got everything from Saturday night in Hayfork Centre to a round-the-world cruise in your private yacht.

later, the old man is still limping, clutching his chest in the region of his heart, and you can make him jump two feet straight up merely by uttering the word "pavilion."

It's true that the lineups are long at some of the pavilions, but you can easily get around them. Some people put on a walking cast and are ushered to the head of the line. Others use a wheel-chair. Or you can buy a sailor suit. Visiting sailors march straight to the head of the line, wink at the girl and walk in.

One way of getting around smartly, saving time, and giving your dogs a rest is to hire a podi-cab. This is a rickshaw-type vehicle propelled by a youth on a bicycle. Holds two. And it's only 25 cents a minute. Come now, don't be so cheap. Normally, it costs you forty cents just to climb into a taxi and the surly driver cowers you into tipping him for not helping you with your luggage.

One chap I know spent two hours in a lineup with no strain at all. We was organized. He set up his folding stool, sat down, put on dark glasses to make him think he was in a bar, and opened the quart-size thermos of ice-cold martinis, which he had prudently brought along. All about him people were cursing, fainting and wishing they were home in bed. He killed the quart and never did make the pavilion, but he made a lot of life-long friends when he shared his position, and still claims it was the best party he was ever at.

One thing you can say about Expo is that nowhere in the world can you get so much for so little. And so little for so much. The first applies to all the wonderful free entertainment, the sights and sounds, the second applies to liquid refreshment.

Another middle-aged friend, whose only normal exercise is walking out to the car, went to Expo with his son, fifteen. The boy is a fiend for organization and had a series of plans and time-charts worked out. They covered 57 pavilions in two days. Thoroughly. Three weeks

Many people feel it's a great pity that these magnificent buildings should simply be demolished when the fair ends. Some think it would make a fine university. Others believe it could become a great international centre for the exchange of ideas and cultures. Something like the United Nations, without the scab-picking and backstabbing.

Montreal, which had the imagination and guts to create the thing, will probably sail.

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