

Practice good husbandry at Hoey farm lamb births synchronized for Easter

By Lorraine Root
With a hope of accomplishing synchronized lamb production on her Elm Tree Farm location near Rockwood, Mrs. Elizabeth Hoey, has resorted this year to the "good husbandry" method of breeding.

"Lambing at just any season of the year instead of at one specific season is disorganized and sometimes detrimental" said Mrs. Hoey recently. "It is much more efficient to know that the sheep will have their lambs all within, as nearly as possible, the same span of time, both from the standpoint of the specialized breeder who makes a point of being on hand to watch that their animals don't get into difficulties and also from that of marketing."

"Lambing in early winter is especially handy for the ethnic market at Easter time as it is the biggest and most highly priced one there is and, to have a number of young animals all about the same age and size is better from a business standpoint."

This Easter trade usually requires the lambs come right from their mothers insuring young tender meat and so, almost immediately from the weaning stage when they are about 1 1/2 to 2 months old weighing around 40 to 60 pounds, the young animals are shipped to Toronto for distribution.

"Round, firm, and fully packed as the add says," said Mrs. Hoey as she displayed a bottle with a long nipple attached which she occasionally uses to use for lambs who don't cotton easily to the proximity of the dairy facilities.

The Elm Tree Farm is, at the moment, a beehive of activity. Elizabeth Hoey, assisted by her daughter Caroline and son-in-law Peter, must be in constant surveillance in case the mother sheep produce more than one offspring in too quick an order, thus having to neglect the first arriving lamb who, if not attended almost immediately could choke from mucus, catch cold from dampness, or not be revived completely.

From the layman's point of view, the business of raising young lambs is a highly skilled and intricate one. Last year the Hoey's discovered, through the introduction of a research program dealing with a few chosen farms, the value of synchronized lamb production, using a British manufactured experimental compound which was given orally to the ewes to see how effectively it could arrange breeding regularity.

Because there is such a minimal demand for lamb meat required for food consumption as compared to beef and poultry, however, experimental research in this field has since been dropped and the compound, unfortunately, is now impossible to procure. Having found the synchronous method of raising the young lambs the most advantageous from their point of view, the Hoey's are now resorting to do the same thing, only in its most natural state, which was called, in the early English days, good husbandry.

Elm Tree Farm has 120 breeding ewes and, in this good husbandry method of regulated production, a "change of atmosphere" is used instead of the compound and, two weeks prior to the breeding time of the ewes, five months before the lambing period, they are put into cool dark pens instead of

roaming outside in the warmth and sunshine.

Usually a date is set with intervals of fifteen days between each batch of new born lambs which means that the arrivals could stretch to be a six week, long, drawn-out procedure with the ewe resting period in the early morning 2 a.m. hours, the usual one for "lamb delivery."

Most Canadian sheep produce singles or twins and lamb breeding farmers usually do not expect to find triplets although one enterprising American couple in the United States have got their procedures down to a

science and, with an oral compound of hormones have been able to guarantee six lambs at one time.

"They have since cut down the quantity of the extract" said Mrs. Hoey. "As they have found two or three lambs more easily handled."

There are risks involved in sheep having their offspring too rapidly as immediately the small animal is produced, the mother, taking only minutes to rest, then begins to lick him rapidly with her tongue causing circulation to be stimulated. Within two minutes the husky lamb is on his

feet looking for a feeding station.

If however, another twin is born before the first has been completely stimulated to life, he could lie dormant and never be revived.

So it is necessary for the professional sheep man to be on hand to get the twin arrivals cleaned up in quick succession and also to make certain that the young lamb is dried off and kept warm.

Although in the sheep raising business as a professional who uses some of her own sheared wool for weaving and making woolen garments, Elizabeth Hoey also has an affection for her animals with special attachments for certain ones. One friendly ewe has followed her around since it was a lamb, bunting her with its head and even now, fully grown, still looks for Elizabeth's arrival at the barn.

Then there's Peter, who, as a tiny ram spent a summer in Rockwood visiting a village lad, attending ball games and taking jaunts in the park. Gigi, is a real pet who, with a little girl portraying "Mary had a little lamb" nursery tale won first prize at one of the Rockwood annual carnivals; and one other ewe has even been perpetuated on film as the star performer drinking from a bottle in the T.V. production of Country Magazine with George Atkinson.

This year the date of January 13 had been set as the hopeful finale of the 1970 crop of babies at the Elm Tree Farm.

"But," said Elizabeth Hoey, "There is always the possibility of late arrivals" and so, like chickens, they can't be counted until they've been hatched.



ONLY A FEW HOURS old, this pair of lambs don't take long to find the dinner pail while mother ewe dries them off with her tongue. They were born at the Hoey farm in Nassagaweya last Friday.—(Staff Photo)

Ask return \$200 grant

One small but important item discussed at a recent Eramosa township meeting was a letter from the Ontario Department of Education requesting that a \$200 grant received by the Eramosa Recreation Department for Youth Leadership Courses be returned to the Department of Education.

The youth leadership courses are government sponsored and summer school leaders attend each summer as a preparational guide where they are taught leadership, supervision, crafts, teaching know how, and all other facets dealing with

recreation as it pertains to youth leadership.

The dissolution of the Rockwood summer playground made the grant an undeserved fringe benefit and must be returned to the donors.

The youth leadership courses

Mrs. Day celebrates 80th birthday

Birthday celebrations were planned and held last Wednesday evening at her home for Mrs. Leola Day, Main Street, Rockwood.

An exciting sit-down supper to which all the guests contributed their specialties, was glorified by a pretty centerpiece composed of daisy mums, purple heather, and pink rosebuds, which Mrs. Day's daughter, Marion, had brought from Burlington, along with a specially made cake for the occasion.

It was a family affair to which the family of four children feted their mother on her 80th birthday; Fred Day and his wife Margaret, from Ancaster, Marion and Milton Greer from Burlington, George and Grace Day of Rockwood, and Roy Day from Toronto.

Many presents, cards, flowers and a special telegram from a sister-in-law in England, Mrs. R. Parish, reminded the well known lady just how well she was liked. Residents of Rockwood also wished her a happy birthday.



LANDMARK FOR over 100 years in Rockwood Conservation Park, this stately elm is disappearing into piles of kindling as axes and saws wielded by park officers are busy. The four foot thick tree had Dutch Elm disease.—(Staff Photo)

No heat-rescued

Harry Edwards recovers after fall in cellar

Rockwood's retired village constable, Harry Edwards, is now recovering from his recent fall which, fortunately, was not serious enough to entail broken bones or other injuries.

While stoking the furnace at his home, Mr. Edwards who had been suffering from the flu, tripped last Wednesday afternoon and, for 22 hours crawled about and moved his limbs in an effort to keep from freezing after the fire burned out, too ill to pull himself up the cellar stairs.

A concerned visit from his daughter, Lisa, resulted in the required assistance of his neighbor Louis Hiltz, who carried him to his bed and, after applying heat and blankets, called the doctor. After a check-up at the hospital he was released with a physician's diagnosis of slight frostbite without breaking injuries.

Mr. Edwards is presently recuperating nicely under doctor's care at his home on Main Street.

Meeting to discuss snowmobiles rules

A meeting was held in the building at the Rockwood ball park last Monday night with six men organized as a committee discussing and planning with Jim Muir, the Conservation Park superintendent, the possibilities involved in foundation rule setting for local snowmobiles.

The six man committee composed of Bruce Richardson, Frank Allsop, Jimmie Milne, Louis Hiltz, Eddy Kingsbury and Charles Petty, after their discussion of proposals and suggestions will set up a brochure of rules and regulations which they, including Jim Muir, will present at an open meeting for all snowmobile operators or anyone interested, including youngsters with access to the machines.

Next Sunday, Jan. 18, at the Rockwood Centennial School at 2 p.m. is the hour and date of the proposed open event. Everyone is invited to attend.

Comin's and Goin's

The Christmas get-together party was an evening of fun Saturday, December 27, when 17 children and grandchildren of Mrs. L. Day, congregated at the home of Grace and George on Jackson Street, along with Mrs. J. Gordier, Grace Day's mother. A real fun evening of togetherness which was dulled only by the absence of Jean Day, who is still residing in England.

Good friends of Harry Edwards, missing him around the village, will be happy to know that he is now recuperating from his recent illness of flu and also his fall. They are looking forward to seeing him on his local walks soon.

Approximately 18 visitors dropped in for an after New Year's visit recently on Mrs. Alice Hiltz, Main Street. Guests included nephew, Mr. Thomas Waddington and his wife and children from Preston, and Mrs. Johnson and her daughter and son from Guelph.

The United Church ladies catered last Saturday evening to a 7:30 p.m. banquet for 120 Guelph and vicinity trail riders of the Circle A Westerners. The catering ladies had received some good publicity about the marvellous dinner they served to the Rockwood Trail Riders recently at the Rockwood town hall and decided to emulate the village riding club. A good hot meal was the order of the day and the Guelph customers went home happy.

Two visitors were seen recently. One, a sleek and lovely deer, from a kitchen window, peering with curiosity at its viewer; the other, standing complacently beneath the sign as if reading "Crown Game Preserve - No Hunting and Trapping" was a young buck who seemed quite certain that

the notice insured complete safety.

It was fun to see Rick Wall back in his old haunt when he came down from Midland to spend last weekend with his mother, Mrs. Ruth Wall, and his grandmother, Mrs. Winch.

Hats are off to little Jean Bonner the 9-year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. H. Bonner of R. R. 3, Rockwood, who has been creating great spectator interest at the local rink with her skating abilities. A member of the Guelph Skating Club, Jean has been taking private lessons for three years and is, presently, working for her Bronze qualifying examinations for her Junior Bronze medal.

Mrs. K. Rhodes, one of Rockwood's newest residents, living on Guelph Street, and the sister of Mrs. Rose Oakes, has now been released from the Guelph General Hospital after her recent illness and is recuperating at home. Neighbors will be pleased to know she is getting better.

D.D.T. depots

A program presently being established by the Department of Health for the Wellington, Dufferin and Waterloo districts will be announced shortly regarding depots where supplies of D.D.T. insecticides, etc. can be taken for disposal by the Ontario Department of Health. Although dates are pending, depots are being considered at Rockwood town hall, the Eramosa township offices, and Eden Mills.

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