

Irish Young Farmer visits Halton farms

A more happy image of Northern Ireland than usual is being created in Halton this week by a charming young Irish visitor, Bertha Harkness of County Antrim. She is one of six young people from England, Scotland and Northern Ireland visiting Canada on a four-month exchange program sponsored by the Junior Farmers.

Some of the sparkle leaves her eyes when she's questioned about the political troubles in her homeland, but she's also anxious to tell about its beauties and hopes.

This week Bertha is the guest of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Swackhamer, Rae and Janice, at their farm on the third line of Exquisite. Last week she was with Mr. and Mrs. A. Harrop and family.

Heat wave
Her hosts are setting a lively pace with meetings and sight-seeing. She's thoroughly enjoying it except for a while Monday at the Lion safari when "I got so hot I couldn't even speak!" she laughs. With the car windows shut the temperature rose to way above the summer average in Northern Ireland which is 60 degrees. "Oh, 70 degrees is a heat wave," explains Bertha in her delightful lilting voice.

Common market
Her father Gilbert Harkness runs a 100-acre farm with 100 head of beef cattle that's above the average for Northern Ireland. Their beef will eventually go to

the Common Market so farm outlook is bright.

Bertha sees the Common Market also as a possible solution to the problem of uniting northern and southern Ireland. It could help eliminate the boundary, she thinks, bringing more trade and industry to the south. But that's a long-term solution, she stressed.

Now, fighting and bombing continue, mainly in the towns like Belfast.

Adapt to trouble
"We're all right in the country, she said; we adapt to it. At night we are searched and out at meetings or dances there are often bomb scares.

A bomb scare is very different from a bomb, she and all her friends have learned. Sometimes they don't even evacuate. They surprise some of the scares might have been phoned by young pranksters.

Her younger sister, wearing a school uniform with a crown on the crest, has been attacked. Who by? By young girls in gangs who probably don't even really understand what they're doing.

"It's not a religious problem any more," says Bertha. She lays blame on Communist agitators who support young extremists and can supply them with arms.

Get along well
But it's not everybody, she explains. In her junior farmer club there are both Protestants and Roman Catholics; they go to visit other clubs and go to each others' halls and churches.

But the intimidation is so great no one dares to speak out for fear of retaliation. We couldn't do without the British soldiers, since policemen have little authority any more. The violence is pointless; her friend's husband was shot and killed, apparently because of mistaken identity. He

belonged to no groups. Nobody has the solution, it appears.

Some people leave the country. But Bertha says that's not why her sister is going to Scotland to train as a nurse, and her married brother studies medicine in England. Brother Robert is still on the farm, where her mother makes her own bread and butter in the old country way.

Many new friends
A little apprehensive about living with families here at first, Bertha is very happy with her new friends like the Harrops and Swackhamers in Halton. She could not have believed that they could become such good friends in a few days and that she could feel so much one of the family.

After a dance Friday evening at Marville she came Saturday to Swackhamers. She attended the Junior Farmer dance Saturday night at Ballinacra, Orangeville races Sunday, Lion safari Monday with Janet Henderson along; 4-H meeting at the farm of Mr. and Mrs. S. G. Bennett Monday night; up to Lake Simcoe for fishing Tuesday, county board meeting Wednesday where she's to show slides; Ontario Place and Kitchener Market Thursday.

She'll be 12 weeks in Ontario altogether before going west, ending up at Vancouver. The group may return east through the States. Their stay is very well organized by the Junior Farmers. Bertha is a member of the Young Farmers Club at Crumlin.

One regret is that North Ireland can't reciprocate this year. Junior Farmers from Canada, Australia and New Zealand had to exclude her trouble-torn homeland from their exchange itineraries this year. "It's too bad," she comments, "because our organization is doing so much."



Rae Swackhamer with Irish visitor Bertha Harkness.



I'VE NEVER SEEN one of these before, says Bertha as Doreen helps her start the riding lawn mower. Bertha will be in Halton county two weeks-one at the Harrops' and the other with Swackhamers.

Halton co-ordinator seeks exchange homes

Cathy Laaby is writing a lot of letters. She's looking for host families and applicants for the Urban-Rural Exchange Program run by the Ontario government as part of Experience '73.



CATHY LABBY

She has written over 200 letters to 4-H and other groups in Halton and Wentworth counties asking for support. So far only one host family has confirmed its willingness to have an urban guest.

The visits are one week in which students from 12 to 15 years will participate in the life of the host family. Rural homes are the most difficult to arrange; urban parents whose children visit in the country usually offer to host a rural visitor. Last year's restriction of only rural hosts becoming urban visitors has been removed.

Cathy will also be visiting local schools this week to publicize the program. She will be going primarily to schools in which there has been no interest shown, to discover problems.

When she receives applications, Cathy interviews both

prospective visitors and hosts to screen them and thus make the best matching arrangements. She says there is a lot of interest from Burlington and Oakville students. Last year 130 visits were arranged.

Information and applications are available through schools or the local office of the Ministry of Agriculture and Food at 181 Main St., Milton.

Scale kills Junipers

By Robert Stokes
Juniper Scale is common on Pfitzer and Savin Junipers. These scales are small, white and just visible to the naked eye. Large populations of this insect cause the needles to turn yellow and branches may be killed. These pests mature toward the end of May and eggs are deposited under the scale. In June, these eggs hatch into small "crawlers" that move to another portion of the plant, settle, and form a new scale. Not only do these insects harm the tree, but also affect the general appearance. The home gardener should check his shrubs regularly for the presence of these pests and when they are noticed crawling on the needles, malathion should be applied and then re-applied 10 days later for later hatches. Malathion should not be put on Cannertii Juniper.

The rabbit's eyes are well back on its head enabling it to see in both directions at once.

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HALTON JUNIOR FARMERS honored their top bowlers with an awards night dinner and dance at Ballinacra hall Saturday. Among the trophy winners were, seated, left to right, Barb Britton, ladies high triple; Donna Hamilton, member of the winning team; Wilma Ella, ladies' high single and winning team member. Standing, Ernie Alexander, men's high single and member of winners; Earl McLean, most improved bowler; Rick

Britton, winning team; Earl Burt, high average, and Bill Robertson, winning team. Missing were Rick Rutledge of the winning team; Mary Hamilton, ladies' high average and Robert Rutledge, men's high triple.

—H. Coles Photo

Discuss control

By Karen Wickson
The Halton 4-H Field Crop club held the second meeting on Tuesday May 8, at the home of John (Harvey) Nurse on Trafalgar Rd. John Nurse discussed a number of topics: why cultivate corn, why weed control in corn and weed control generally. A quiz and refreshments followed the discussion.

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