



Miss Acton Fall Fair 1980 Lisa McGrath seated is flanked by her runners-up and last year's winner, her sister Cathy, just minutes after her crowning. Standing, left to right, first runner-up Gwyneth Gibb, 1979 winner Cathy McGrath, and second runner-up Kym Lakla. Lisa and her princesses reigned over the fair, and she will represent Acton at the Miss CNE Sweetheart of the Fairs contest next August. Photo by GORD MURRAY

Town may hire cops to guard dragway

The town may hire off-duty policemen to guard the dragway this weekend so there isn't a fifth weekend in a row of races and parties.

Monday night at Halton Hills council Mayor Peter Pomeroy and Councillor George Maltby revealed residents in the area of the long closed Toronto International Dragway on the Fifth Line north of Highway 7 have been complaining about the property being invaded on the weekend by as many as 200 cars and 1,000 young people.

Pomeroy said he has information that liquor and drug laws are being abused. In fact, he said, there is "abuse of just about everything a person could think of."

Maltby noted the town has been trying for some time to have the drag strip track removed and he thought four weeks ago the owner of the land had agreed to post guards to keep trespassers off the site and tear up the track.

The mayor said he too thought the owner of the land, which has long been slated for housing, was finally "dealing in good faith" with the municipality.

Pomeroy said the owner obviously has no real interest in Halton Hills and he is considering asking council to withdraw all previous agreements for the development of the property and turn it back to agriculture or whatever it was used for before the dragway was built.

Both the mayor and Maltby asked for a fund to be set up so off-duty policemen can be hired to guard the dragway so trespassers can't get on the land. They also want the town to go in and tear up the track.

Clerk-administrator Ken Richardson reported the owner is well aware of the problem and has now given police written authority to go on his land and press trespassing charges.

He explained the police have been patrolling in the area but can't keep on-duty officers there all the time.

The town is concerned about liability if they tear up the track and a trespasser is hurt. The owner is trying to get equipment up to the dragway this week to tear up the asphalt.

Several councillors wondered why if the police can now go on the site and press charges the town needed a special fund to hire off-duty officers.

Pomeroy said if police wait until after there are hundreds of youths on the dragway property there could be a big confrontation and riot. On the other hand off-duty officers posted at the gate could turn people away as they arrive.

In light of the fact the problem has been going on for four weekends now the police should provide emergency service and post on-duty officers at the dragway, Councillor Marilyn Serjeantson contended.

The mayor reported he'll be speaking to the chief of police about solving the problem without having to hire off-duty officers but he doesn't want another weekend to arrive without the town being ready to take action if the police won't.

Police are on the scene at strikes to prevent trouble and they should be at the dragway, Councillor Walter Biehn said.

It would be pretty hard for police to prevent the crowd at the dragway because their job is to take action after a crime has been committed, Councillor Pat Patterson noted.

Off-duty officers won't want to get involved in a crowd situation at the dragway and police patrols are the only answer Councillor Mike Armstrong said. Tearing up the track won't do much good either, he added, since the youths will find some way to "get even" with the town or property owner.

Council voted to allow the mayor to spend \$500 to hire policemen to guard the dragway if necessary.

There have been complaints from area residents about the noise, dust and reckless driving at and around the dragway for much of the summer. Fences have been knocked down by the trespassers and some public and private property has been vandalised.

Special fall fair coverage

If a picture is worth a 1,000 words then today's Free Press contains 100,000 words about the 67th Acton Fall Fair. Plus some stories.

We dispatched a team of six photographers to the fair and they came back with over 1,200 frames and pages and pages of notes.

With so much coverage of the fair we had to drop a number of regular features of the paper, Profiles, Bill Smiley, News Digest, Photo Gallery and more but they'll all return next week.

Inside you'll find a number of small fair photo features as well as three full pages of pictures.

Fall Fair coverage can be found on page 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, B1, B6, B7, B8, B10 and B11. Fall Fair photos by JENNIFER BARR, KEN BUSTIN, ERIC ELSTONE, GORD MURRAY, HELEN MURRAY and DIANA WALTSMANN.

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Record crowd for 67th Fall Fair

by Jennifer Barr

"Bigger toys for bigger boys" is how Fair president Brian Evans summed up this year's Acton Fall Fair and bigger and better it was.

As of Tuesday's count 10,514 people paid admission to the fair however, children under 12 got in free Saturday and fair secretary John Rowe says there could have been thousands of them. Final attendance figures won't be known until weekend pass holders have also been counted.

Attendance was "better than last year" Rowe comments, up about 1,000.

Weather is a major factor at any fair and fortunately the weatherman smiled on Acton—well, maybe not smiled but at least he didn't cry.

Most events were well attended and new features drew extensive crowds. The Arabian Horse show held Friday topped attendance considerably. Most of the 82 entries came from far afield. Organizers say the Arabian horse show committee want to come to Acton again next year.

Miss Acton Fall Fair crowning and the accompanying Variety Show were still the largest attraction on Friday night with the Horse Pull coming a close second. Horse pull winner, a contestant from Ohio, donated his prize money to the Terry Fox cancer fund as did many of the lesser winners. Lisa McGrath won the Miss Acton title and was crowned by her sister Cathy.

Saturday, the warmest day of the fair, saw record crowds enjoying the midway, exhibits, livestock and boat shows.

A new addition for 1980 the model boat races and display attracted vast numbers of spectators. On the far side of the lake ducks lined up to gaze open-beaked at the spectacle. One duck couldn't contain himself and joined in the fun. Unfortunately he sustained minor injuries when he failed to yield to one of the high powered mini boats.

Horse events were generally down in entries but good shows were still the order of the weekend. The big news was the increase in heavy horse entries on the track. Fair organizers were delighted to note many more draft horses. According to fair director Bob Marshall there were 48 heavy horses on the track at one time. Among the noteworthy numbers were 11 unicorn hitchers, eight four-horse-hitchers, and four six-horse-hitchers.

Pony hunter show and youngsters' gymkhana games attracted crowds of fence sitters and anxious mothers calling out instructions. Children as young as three and four were bouncing around on ponies enjoying themselves immensely.

The parade seemed to be shorter according to viewer comments. First prize winner was a float by the Acton Fall Fair Ladies Board. The Acton Free Press float took second and the Red Cross won third. There was a huge crowd on hand to see the bands and floats.

Hall exhibits were generally up but some areas, particularly quilts and flowers, were less than usual. The Canada Packers Heritage quilt collection was well displayed and one non-competitive entry, a heritage quilt made by the Jennings family of Eden Mills, was appreciated.

The baby show attracted over a hundred entries and many times that amount of friends and relatives.

Beef cattle show saw many entries from out west and seven herds of Galloways, a new class for

Acton. These charming woolly toys were the bright spot of the back ring. All breeders were happy to have found a good place to show, says president Evans.

Sheep entries were more than double the number expected. Evans states double the number of pens were borrowed from Erin Fair and there still weren't enough.

Midway run by Happyland was one of the biggest draws for the small fry. Sixteen large rides were on hand instead of the anticipated 11. One of the arcade games, a fish pond, had to be closed down by police for alleged mispractices. It was one of the biggest midways in years.

The beer tent, always a profitable event for the fair, was quiet thanks to the two policemen hired by the fair board to smooth things out.

The Old Tyme Fiddlers contest kept spectators happy all Saturday evening with 65 entries in both fiddling and step dancing. The Reid family from Shelburne, Canadian fiddling champs, gave a welcome display.

More entertainment, The Royal City Ambassadors, Guelph barber shop choral group, were well received according to spectators, who pronounced them "very pleasing."

Sunday's mini tractor pull was the most successful such event ever seen at the fair judging by the enthusiastic crowd—and the noise. Those little tractors can sure move! "Overwhelming" was the president's response.

Waterball fights—correction contests—held between various fire departments at the rear of the park, kept spectators cool and damp.

Tug-of-war winners are yet to be announced, Rowe said, but the pulling contests, held between Western horse events, provided comic relief for equestrian enthusiasts.

Swine classes were small as is the usual case. Only two or three breeders filled the pens and judging was over early.

The pet show was much more efficient this year with judging being over in little more than an hour, which was a relief to young owners trying to control clothed chickens, pups, and rabbits. Goats were a new part of the pet show and managed to behave themselves at most times.

The rabbit show, an innovation last year saw a disappointing 20 entries after last year's marathon 40. However, organizers feel the show will be much bigger next year when word gets around to breeders.

"I thought it was great" said one newcomer to the

(Continued on page B 7)



The ladies had their turn at directing the heavy horses with wagons. Lois Teeple, of Paisley, has her Clydesdales turn just the way she wants on the track. Her son George sits beside her. The rig belongs to Russell Teeple who has often shown his horses at the Acton fair. Photo by ERIC ELSTONE



Free Press Classified Ads sell just about anything was the theme of the second place prize winning float by The Acton Free Press in Saturday's parade. It was the first float ever entered by this newspaper, and we were pleased as punch by our win. Photo by GORD MURRAY

Another Rockwood drowning

Rockwood was the scene of another tragic drowning this weekend when Toronto resident, Kemchan Mahara, 32, lost his life while swimming in the Erasmus River at the Main Street bridge.

Rockwood Volunteer Fire Department answered the distress call from the victim's companion at 7:30 Saturday evening. According to the one witness and Guelph OPP Mahara had been swimming in the area east of Main Street when he "just went down"

in about six feet of water. Rockwood Firefighters fished the body out of the water. An ambulance and Guelph Provincial Police were in attendance.

The incident follows hard on the heels of another Rockwood drowning of a Toronto man, the August death of Derek Liu, 21, while swimming in the Rockwood Conservation Area. A coroner's inquest into that drowning was held last week.