

Fond memories for the first Miss Acton

Lots of nerves and lots of contestants in the inaugural 1963 pageant

The first Miss Acton was a reluctant participant in the 1964 inaugural pageant. "I was pressured into it," Linda Ferguson Wilson recalled on Friday, adding her parents thought it would be a good experience for the 16-year-old farm girl who attend Erin High School. As it turns out, they were right.

"It was great experience. I met a lot of really great people and it was fun getting to know the other contestants..." Wilson said on Friday, remembering that she, and most of the other 20-plus contestants, suffered "lots of nerves."

"The competition was strictly an interview and how you presented yourself - there was no dress code - we dressed as we wished and we were interviewed. I remember we met in a gymnasium and the judged were sat at the

back and got to watch us walk in," Wilson said, adding she can't remember how far in advance the interviews were conducted, but they didn't learn who had won until the first night of the Fair.

While pointing out that it all happened a long time ago, Wilson said she, like most winners, was "stunned" to hear her name called as the winner, and enjoyed making presentations to groups as Miss Acton during her reign.

While Acton Agricultural Society Board members bowed to political correctness - and a suggestion by CNE Ambassadors of the Fair officials - to change the name to Acton Ambassador from Miss Acton pageant for two years in the mid-1990's, they decided to follow tradition and reverted to the original name after just two years.



With the name change to ambassador came an opportunity to allow males to compete, but that did not occur.

Wilson, who described herself as "old school" said allowing males to compete, as they do in Fergus where

she now lives, would be a "break in tradition". "And new things are probably fine, and I mean with all the groups trying to get away with, and talk about the exploitation of women, I guess its taking the focus off women and putting it on

the individual to represent areas," Wilson said, adding she "could go either way" on the issue.

Acton Agricultural Society Homecraft President Marg Aitken said the first Miss Acton pageant was to mark the 50th anniversary of the Fair. "My father-in-law (Calvin Aitken) was (Fair Board) President for the 50th anniversary and mother-in-law (Evelyn Aitken) was one of the ones that got the competition going and ran it for quite a number of years," Aitken said on Friday.

She said Acton was the first Fair to stage a pageant, and when the CNE decided to hold a Queen of the Fairs competition, officials came to Acton to learn how to hold a successful event.

Pageant organizers stress the competition is not a beauty pageant, but a viewing of the contestants on their ability to interact with other people and speak in front of a group. For more information about this year's pageant

contact Dominique Evans-Zeldin at missactonfair@hotmail.com

Current Miss Acton, Kailey Donaldson, thanked Acton Agricultural Society members for their caring and thoughtful support during the last year.

"I cannot thank everyone enough for their support and look forward to August, when I will be competing for the title of the CE Ambassador of the Fairs," Donaldson wrote in this year's Fall Fair prize book, encouraging others to enter the Miss Acton Fall Fair pageant as it is a "once in a lifetime experience."



Kailey Donaldson

THE ACTON AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY PRESENTS
Miss Acton Fall Fair

50th Anniversary



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WEDNESDAY SEPT. 11TH AND THURSDAY SEPT. 12TH
THE PAGEANT WILL TAKE PLACE AT 8PM ON FRIDAY SEPT. 13TH

For more information:
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