



REMEMBER WHEN? This photo, taken during a competitive trail ride for the Rockwood Trail Riders, dates back to 1966. The club plans five shows for this summer.

Trail Riders evoke fond memories

BY JAMIE HARRISON
The Rockwood Miller

At a time when Saturday western serials were all the rage at movie theatres, when *The Lone Ranger* ruled TV screens, and young boys dressed in hat, vest and six shooters, the Rockwood Trail Riders were living the dream.

Formed in the early '60s, the horsemen and horsewomen blazed trails throughout southern Ontario, riding through rough terrain, open fields and areas now so populated, one could hardly imagine that they were once a mecca for equine passions.

Times have changed and so has the group. While weekend excursions were once marked by trail rides, weekends now usually focus on horse shows, competitions and allowing young riders the freedom to learn on and about their steeds.

"They get tips on what to do, what they've done wrong and what needed to be improved on," says Penny Duval, a member of the Trail Riders, a group which draws

from Rockwood, Acton and the surrounding area.

While ribbons are awarded during competitions, no points are generally awarded as the weekends are intended to be a learning experience. Duval says the age range goes from the youngest member at 3 or 4 years of age, to those in their teens to young adults.

The weekends are usually marked by both an English and Western show, as well as barrel racing.

"It's an all-day affair," Duval says. "We usually have people showing up at 7:30 am," and competition wraps up about 12 hours later.

"The idea is to let the horse experience being in a ride situation, and the rider, too."

Mo McGinnis was one of the group's early members. He remembers the Great Pine Ridge Trail Ride in 1965, which took the group from Hamilton to Frankford (near Trenton). Back then, it was a different kind of club.

"We looked and tried to find a club that wasn't serious and competitive. We just

wanted to find a club for trail riders," McGinnis said. He and his wife joined the club a few years after its inception.

"I really don't believe in racing the hell out of a horse for 100 miles or so," McGinnis said of his disdain of grueling endurance rides.

"Back in my day, a pair of jeans, a clean saddle and you were ready to go. Nowadays, the kids have \$200 suits and \$1,000 saddles, and parents just can't afford it anymore."

During the club's heydays in the '60s, riders could be guaranteed a good turnout for any ride, with riders coming up from the U.S. to participate. Several from the Rockwood group, including McGinnis, traveled to the States to participate in trail rides. In addition, the group often rode in the Acton Fall Fair parade.

The Trail Riders plan five shows for this summer on the third Sunday of each month, starting in May.

Admission for spectators is free. For information, phone Penny Duval at (519) 856-9618.

Watch out for those dinosaur footprints!

ERAMOSA P.S. NEWS

BY SHANNON DODGE & KELLY WOODS

Here's the latest news from Eramosa.

On Wednesday the primary students had their annual Oral Communications Festival. The first place winners who said their poems were Jessica Dean, Grade 2; Roberta Plazek, Grade 1; and Cassie Parkinson, Grade 3. Congratulations to all students!

The Kindergartens, Grades 1 and 2s have been studying about dinosaurs. They have learned poems, songs and dances and our hallways are covered with dinosaur footprints!

The Grade 5-6 students have recently finished making their Inuit dioramas. They enjoyed putting their time and effort into the projects.

Have a super March Break, and enjoy your time off!

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In loving memory of
Frank Van der Geer
Who died so tragically
March 8, 1996 Age 31

I lost my soul's companion
A heart linked with my own
And day by day I miss you more
As I walk through life alone.
I will always love you, Frankie
- Love, Leslie

A gentle smile
A happy face
Someone special we can't replace.
- Sadly missed and always remembered
by his father-in-law Victor Davidson,
mother-in-law Irene Davidson
brother-in-law Derek Davidson

There is a star in Heaven
That shines brighter than the rest
We know it is our Daddy's
'Cause our Daddy was the best.
- Love, Jake and Justin

He didn't ask for much from life
His heart was warm and tender
He worked so hard for those he loved
And those he loved remember.
- With love, from your little family