



A MONTHLY SURVEY THROUGH THE FARM FENCEROWS AND VILLAGE VERANDAHS OF NASSAGAWEYA, ESQUESING AND SOUTH ERAMOSA

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VOLUME 2, ISSUE 7

"A RURAL PAPER TO CALL OUR OWN"

SEPTEMBER 24, 1999

Halton Farm Tour '99

Diversification remains the key to success in a changing Region

BY REID KENNEDY
THE COMPASS

Government representatives, municipal staff, media and agriculturalists participating in the Halton Farm Tour on September 16th learned first hand that forward thinking and diversification are key for agricultural operations to succeed in the Region.

First stop on the tour, sponsored by the Halton Agricultural Advisory Committee, was at Norm Biggar's cash crop operation on Burnamthorpe Road. Biggar said his operation will likely shut down within 10 years. "The pressures of growth are just too great. Much of the land worth farming is virtually gone. How can you compete when some land is worth \$100,000 per acre?"

Another problem with farming in south Halton is high powered lighting. "It never gets dark. Soybeans won't ripen until they sense shorter days."

At Birdolm Holsteins, located on 8th Line, Halton Hills, the tour heard from dairy farmer George Bird that water remains a serious issue for farmers.

With 40 to 45 milking cows and a total herd of 95 head, the

operation requires up to 2,000 gallons of water daily. Birdolm Holsteins purchases much of its water as wells on the property are no longer able to produce adequate quantities because the water table in Halton Hills has dropped significantly. "I get upset when driving in Georgetown and I see people wasting water washing their concrete driveways."

Birdolm Holsteins has diversified in recent years as Mr. Bird is also a Pride Seed dealer. However, he is concerned with large spray companies buying up seed companies, leaving the farmer as the only "risk taker."

The Hendervale Equestrian Complex on 1 Sideroad just west of Tremaine Rd. is one agricultural operation that has experienced a complete change of direction.

Once a 250 acre Shorthorn beef farm, Hendervale is now an international quality facility for horse training and competition. The Complex features the largest Grand Prix ring in eastern Canada and can accommodate thousands of spectators and the largest indoor arena in Ontario.

Operated by the Manbert family, Hendervale can accommodate 350 horses. It is a potential site for equestrian events if Toronto's bid for the 2008 Summer Olympics is successful.

The tour ended at the Ireland House Museum in Burlington where participants were treated to a sampling from the Scotch Block Winery, Halton's only winery that opened in August at Andrews Scenic Acres.

During the all-Halton produced dinner supplied by Richardson Farms, Lance Pocock and Long Lane Orchards, Region of Halton Chair Joyce Savoline spoke to close the tour. "Our farm businesses have been able to take advantage of the large urban population on our doorstep by developing pick-your-own farms, agri-education and entertainment operations, and now a winery, to highlight just a few examples."

"While not always successful in limiting or stopping the loss of agricultural land, Halton Council steadfastly remains committed to the protection and long term viability of farming in our Region."

Metroland buys Nassagaweya Country News

BY DONNA DANIELLI
THE COMPASS

The coverage of local news in rural Milton is changing once again.

The Nassagaweya Country News, an independent monthly newspaper, was recently sold by Gerry Brooks to Metroland Printing, Publishing and Distributing Ltd.

According to Metroland, Brooks, formerly a rural Milton town councillor, had purchased the paper in partnership with Bruce Attenborough, also a former town councillor, in 1997. Apparently, Brooks assumed sole ownership of the paper in 1998.

Brooks is quoted in the

Friday, September 17th edition of the Milton Canadian Champion as saying that the Nassagaweya Country News had "reached a plateau", and that "If you stay the same, you fall behind ... I think it's good for the community."

Metroland publisher Ian Oliver was enthusiastic when reached for comment about the sale. "It's great for the community. It helps expand our involvement in the community. It helps to pool our resources. We have over 50 papers in the Metroland chain and each one operates independently. We share ideas and resources when necessary."

Oliver foresees no changes for publication dates and states that while Gerry Brooks will no longer be at the helm of the Nassagaweya Country News, "he is available to offer advice."

For now, The Nassagaweya Country News will operate out of the Canadian Champion offices in Milton. No decision has been made as of yet as to who will be replacing Brooks at the newspaper. Oliver said there are no immediate plans to change the employment status of the four full time and ten part time staff that The Nassagaweya Country News currently employs.

ROVING AMBASSADORS



PHOTO BY REID KENNEDY

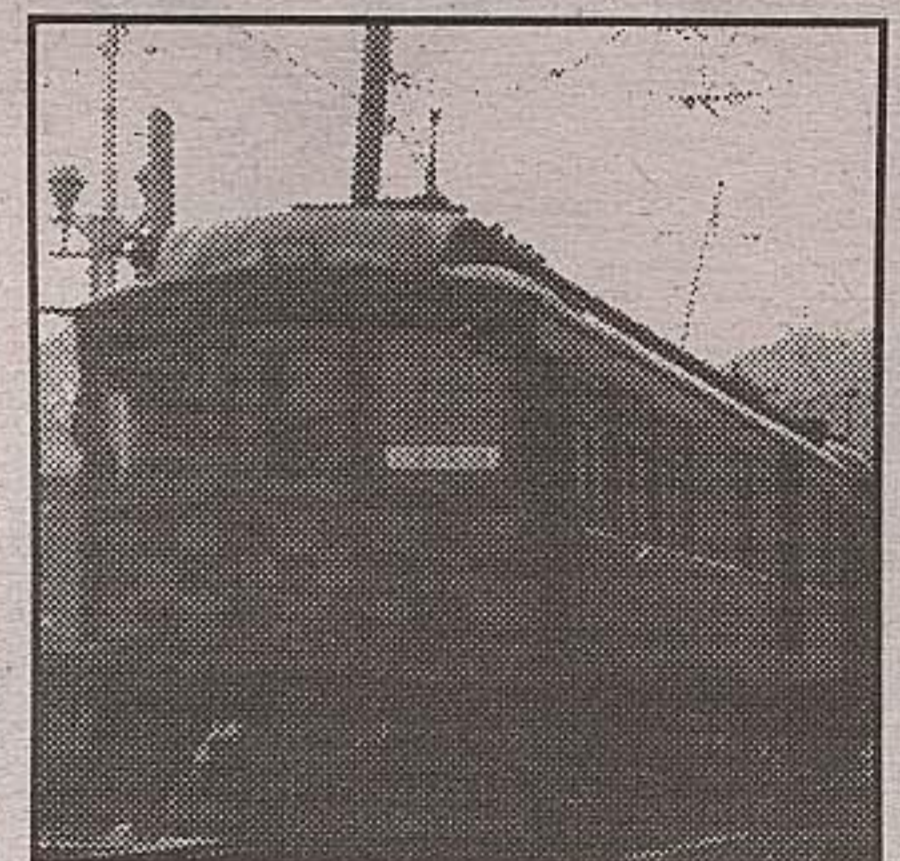
Arden McLean, the new Georgetown Fall Fair Ambassador pictured on the right, gets set to take Sheena Butler, 1998 Ambassador and Carrie Roberts, this year's Milton Fall Fair Ambassador, on tour at the Georgetown Fair on the weekend of September 10, 11 and 12th.

Inside This Month's Compass

Back in Canada

The 797 is tucked safely into its temporary berth in barn #3 at the Halton County Radial Railway Museum, as the volunteers work to raise funds for its restoration. The historic rail car will need regaging to operate on the museum's existing tracks.

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Eden's Writers Festival

Crowds were down slightly but the festival ran smoothly with great entertainment, continuous shows, and a fine mix of excellent writers - such as local resident Janice Kulyk Keefer - that read their works in various locales around the village.

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Shoebox Memories

Sarah McDonald came to Canada in 1819 with her parents Ronald and Catherine from Inch in Invernesshire, Scotland. They settled in Esquesing Township on lot 14, concession 5, East half, taking title for 100 acres.

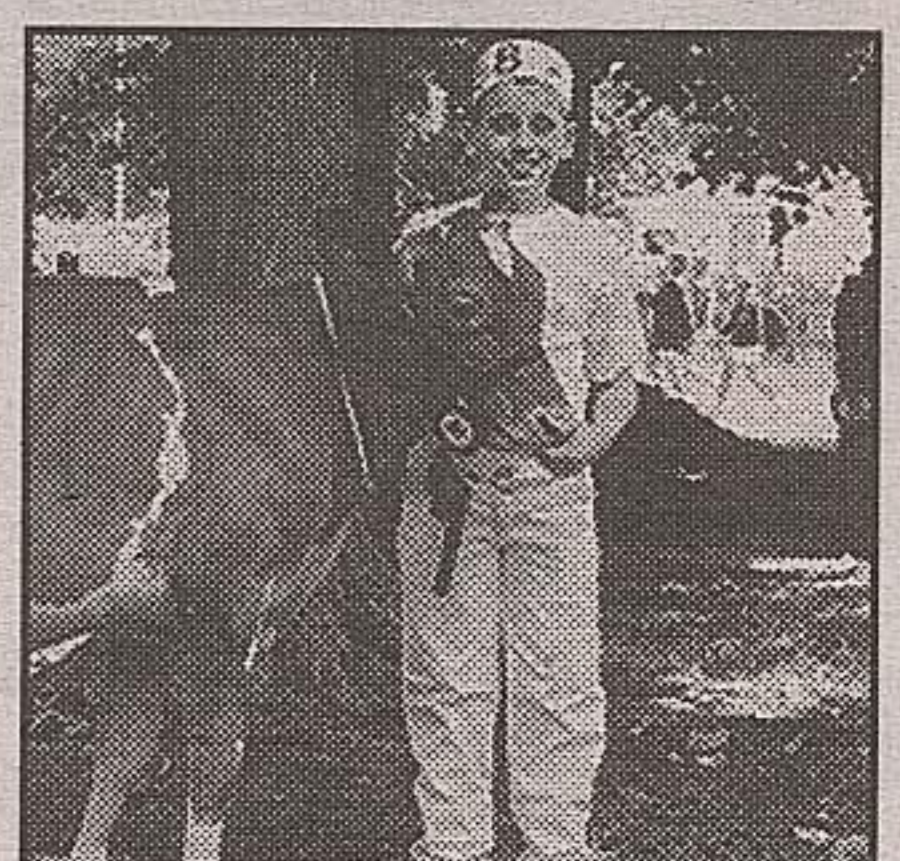
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4-H Achievers

Many Halton 4-Hers, such as David Gooding of Milton, a winning participant in the Junior Dairy Heifer Show sponsored by Chalmers Esso Fuels, achieved at the Georgetown Fair on September 10, 11 and 12th.

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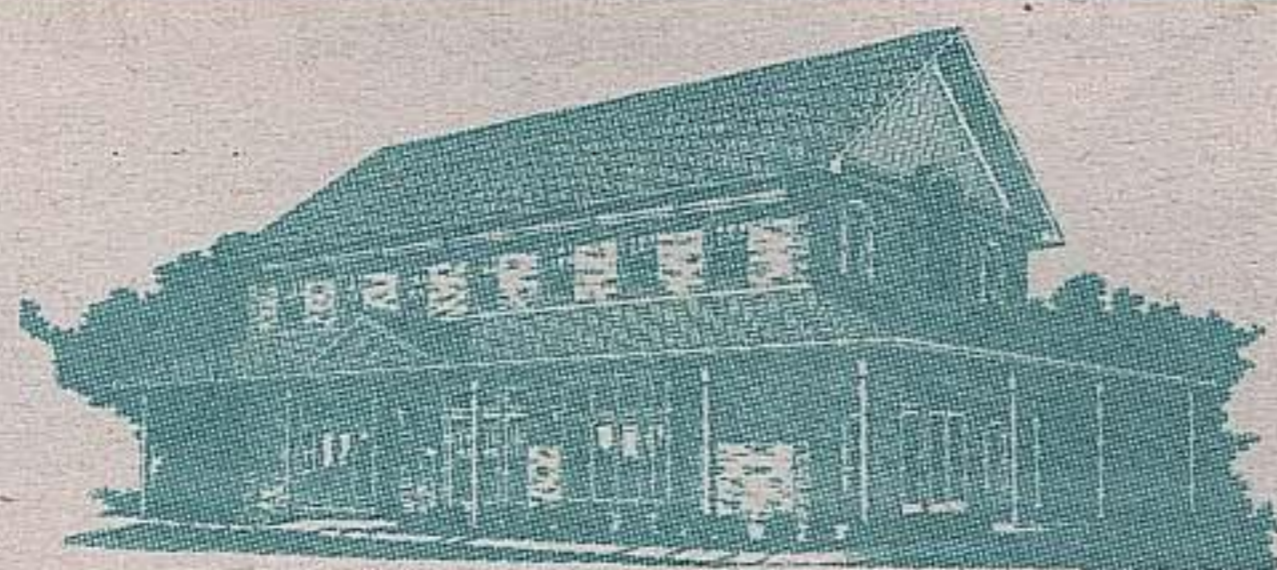


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