



Champion COMMUNITY Page

Farm Museum looking for new image

Funding grant helping museum operators create new programs and spruce up site

By LISA CARTWRIGHT
The Champion

Operators of the Farm Museum will use a \$71,000 grant to help them create a new, more exciting image, says the landmark's general manager.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation grant will fund three projects including creating a new name and image, designing historical-themed landscapes and installing natural gas to the 8,000-square-foot Gambrel Barn meeting place and event centre, according to Reg Cressman.

The projects are already underway and will be completed before the end of the year, he said.

Right now, organizations are being polled on potential new names, and recommendations are due within the next couple of weeks, Mr. Cressman said. It's hoped the new name will be in place by spring.

"Unfortunately, the Farm Museum name is not sufficiently appealing to the urban audience we need to attract," said Dr. Rob McLaughlin, chair of the Country Heritage Experience Inc. — the non-profit organization that operates the site.

"The new name must reflect the wide range of educational and entertainment opportunities that are available."

Mr. Cressman said when people visit the

Tremaine Road museum for the first time, they expect to find one building with a few artifacts.

He said people are "quite surprised" to discover the museum sits on 80 acres of land and boasts more than 30 buildings, 20,000 artifacts and interactive activities.

"It's a very dynamic heritage centre."

The addition of heritage-themed landscaping will add to the esthetic and educational portion of the museum.

Each year, about 15,000 school children visit the site.

With the grant, the museum will expand several of its educational programs and create new ones. One of the projects is a pizza garden.

"A plot of land will be developed in the form of a pizza pie," the general manager said.

"There will be six to eight slices in the pizza."

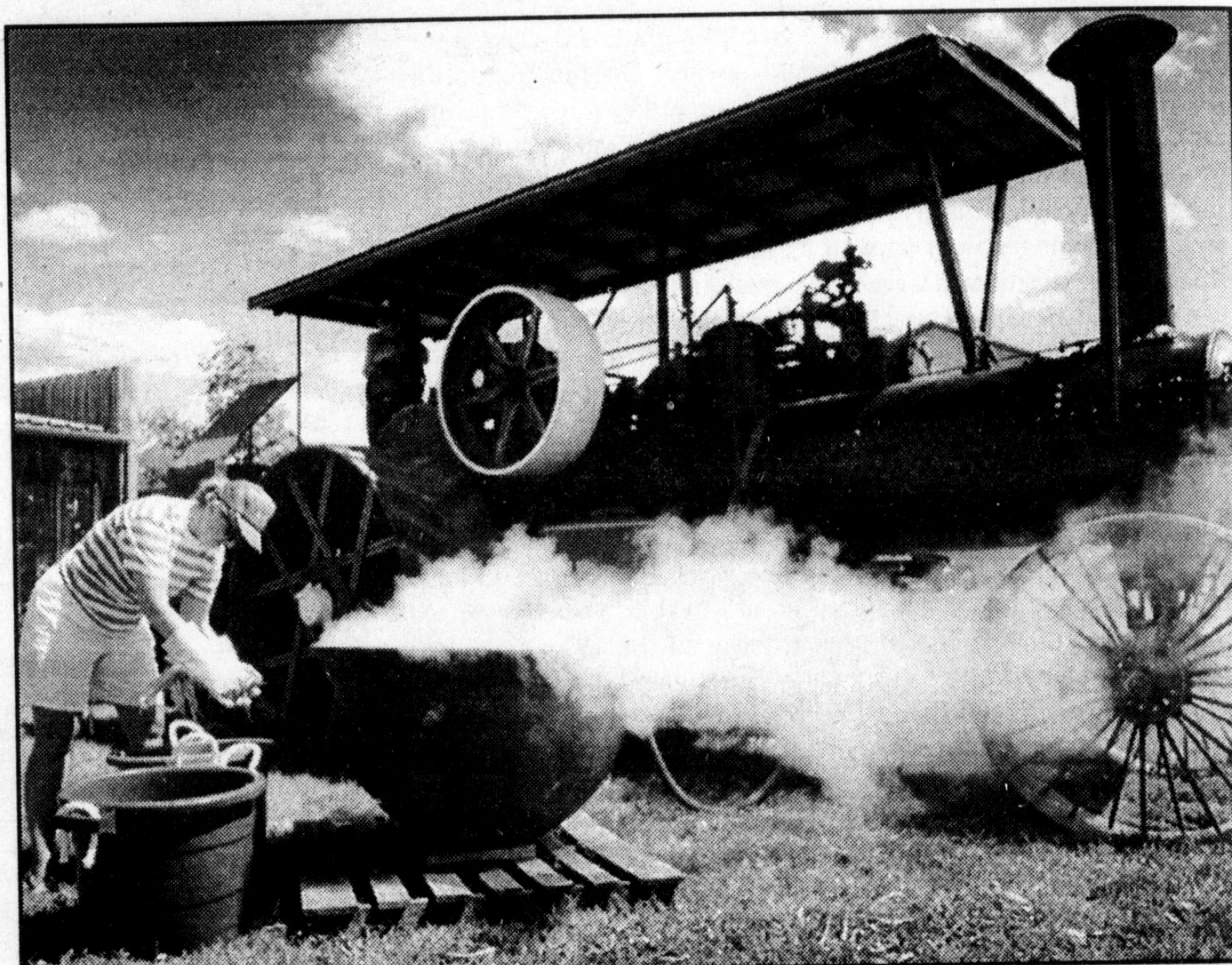
Each slice will contain an item used to create a pizza. Slices could include tomatoes, onions, green peppers and wheat.

"It will be esthetically interesting, and also educational," he said.

The museum also plans to enlarge its livestock program, and plant historical vegetable gardens and heritage-themed vegetation.

"Heritage plants are old traditional flowers — annuals, perennials, shrubs, trees and any type of vegetation typically characteristic of this area 100 to 200 years ago," Mr. Cressman said.

Museum operators will decide which heritage vegetation to choose, then establish a theme and



File photo by GRAHAM PAINE

With a \$71,000 grant from the Ontario Trillium Foundation, the Farm Museum will expand several of its existing educational programs as well as create new ones. The organization will also get a new name and image and will add heritage landscaping.

develop it over several years.

Throughout the warm months, weddings, banquets, conferences and parties are currently held in the post-and-beam Gambrel Barn. Bookings begin to taper off once the cold

months begin, Mr. Cressman said.

But the addition of natural gas heat will make the Gambrel Barn perfect for special occasions year-round.

Mr. Cressman said the grant will help create projects and services to meet the goal of being self-sufficient by 2001 — the year government funding to the museum stops.

The museum was once provincial-government owned, but when funding cutbacks threatened its existence, it was taken over by a group of private citizens to be run on a non-profit basis.

"The programs and activities help to generate revenue to be self-supportive and not depend on the taxpayers money," Mr. Cressman said.

But the projects do require the help of partnerships.

Mr. Cressman said the organization is looking for master gardeners, horticultural associations and nurseries to supply materials and complete the work.

And the museum is always looking for volunteers.

"It's a very exciting time for the Farm Museum. It's going to be a very exciting and dynamic year," he said.

Museum tractor driver Volunteer of Year

By LISA CARTWRIGHT
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The Farm Museum's Volunteer of the Year award winner is doing his part to ensure the museum remains accessible for future generations to enjoy.

"It's very important that we preserve our rural heritage," Harold Middlebrook said. "I want to do everything I can to help this place succeed."

A Milton resident, Mr. Middlebrook said many residents

think the museum closed down when the government cut its funding.

But thanks to the 50 volunteers, who do everything from acting as tour guides to handling receptionist duties, the museum is still a valuable part of the community, he said.

Mr. Middlebrook started volunteering at the museum just over a year ago. The former dairy farmer worked as an interpreter for the dairy barn before he began offering wagon rides.

Called 'The Tractor Guy' by the children, Mr. Middlebrook can be



Harold Middlebrook enjoys his job as a volunteer tractor driver with the Farm Museum.

seen pulling a wagon full of kids from one end of the museum to the other.

Mr. Middlebrook said teachers, parents and children all love going for a wagon ride, and said kids are disappointed if they don't get to go.

During the winter, Mr. Middlebrook drives his own tractor because it has a heated cab. In the summer he uses the museum's tractor, which allows him to talk to the people who board his wagon.

"He is an absolute delight to work with," said Reg Cressman, Farm Museum general manager.

"He will do anything for anyone. He is a great ambassador for the Farm Museum."

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COGECO 14 Programming Schedule — February 15th, 2000 - February 21st, 2000

Tuesday, February 22nd	Wednesday, February 23rd	Thursday, February 24th	Sunday, February 25th	Monday, February 28th
10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore	4pm, 5pm, 6pm Plugged In! Week In Review	10am, 11am, Noon Plugged In! Encore
5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!	4:30pm The Local Scene	5:30, 6:30, 7:30pm Plugged In!
6:00pm Seniors Showcase	6:00pm Cable in the Classroom	6:00pm The Local Scene	5:30pm Seniors Showcase	6:00pm Living on the Edge
7:00pm Money Week	7:00pm Swap Talk - Live!	7:00pm The issue is...		7:00pm To Be Announced
8:00pm 1999 Hockey Heritage Awards	8:00pm Milton Council - Feb. 21st	8:00pm Victim-less: Donna French		8:00pm SportsZONE Live

Feature this week: Optimist TV Bingo returns to Cogeco 14! - Tuesday, March 7th, 6:30-7:30 pm