

# Fair a tradition year in and year out

## 152nd annual fall festival packs 'em in to fairgrounds

By MELANIE HENNESSEY  
The Champion

**K**eeping family tradition alive was what it was all about at the 152nd annual Milton Fall Fair this past weekend.

Parents — many who've been attending the event since they were just toddlers — milled through the bustling crowds with their children in tow, anxious to pass the fair experience on to the younger generation.

Such was the case for Miltonian Mark Armstrong and his four-year-old son, Ben.

The pair stood alongside the track watching the tractor pull, young Ben sitting on Mr. Armstrong's shoulders donning a balloon hat.

"Look at it go!" Ben said excitedly to his father, watching the tractor go by.

Mr. Armstrong has been attending the fair since he was just a small boy in the 4-H Club, entering cattle in the competitions.

"I still have my 4-H ribbons," he said. "Now, my kids are winning their own ribbons."

While the Armstrongs attend the fair every year, this fall held special significance for the local family since it was the first time Mr. Armstrong's wife and children entered their creations to be judged in various competitions.

"We entered 16 things and got eight ribbons," Mr. Armstrong said proudly.

"And we get money," Ben chimed in.

Across the fairgrounds, Milton native Daniela Moffatt and her five-year-old daughter Samantha were watching a sheep be sheared — just one of Samantha's favourite animals at the fair.

"We like to see the animals," noted Ms Moffatt, who's been attending the local fair for about 30 years.

So what is it that keeps her coming back year after year?

"It's just that small hometown feel," she explained. "You get to see people you don't see very often."

### Fair Ambassador crowned

Another fair tradition that was alive and well this year was the annual Milton Fair Ambassador competition, held Friday evening. Miltonian Laurie Cameron, 18, was crowned this year's ambassador, taking over the position from Milton's first male ambassador Vincenzo Carito.

"I was actually surprised I won. I thought a couple other girls were going to win," she told *The Champion*, her face radiating the excitement she has for her new position.

Ms Cameron beat out four other contestants — three female, one male — for the title, fulfilling a dream she's held for a couple of years now.

During the competition, she had to give a short speech and answer an impromptu question, when she said she was asked what she would do to ensure others would want to vie for the ambassador position next year.

Her answer to that was simple: "I'm just going to get out there and get people as excited about it as I was on stage."

The Milton Fall Fair has been a long-standing tradition in the ambassador's family, with Ms Cameron reminiscing about her days as a youngster coming to see the petting zoo.

Now, she's serving as a role model to that younger generation — something she's enjoyed doing so far.

"I love how the kids keep coming up to me to say 'hi,'" she said.

Whether it was the young or young at heart, people of all ages took the time to stop by this year's fair.

At the homecraft building, 71-year-old Milton resident Jean Fuller sat quietly, observing those milling around checking out local residents' entries.

"I've been coming here since I was a child. It used to be pretty rustic," she said. "We came for the country part of the fair. I think things have got a little modern now."

One thing that hasn't changed though for Ms Fuller — who's also with the Halton Agricultural Society homecraft division — is the family atmosphere.

She noted she used to bring her children to the annual event when they were young, and now she brings her grandkids to take part in the fun.

"It's a real family affair, I think," she said with a smile.

Nancy Comber — secretary/treasurer of the Halton Agricultural Society, which puts on the fair each year — said that despite some morning showers Sunday, attendance for this year's event was just under last fall's record-setting mark of 25,000. "It was a great time and participation for a lot of the activities was up," she said.

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Clockwise from above: Five-year-old Talia Johnstone whispers some words of encouragement to her kitten Spike before the children's pet show. Kirsten Pitkanen performs on stage. Lindsey McMullen, 16, gives her calf Valleycrest O'Lulu a hug in the barn between 4-H youth dairy competitions. David Moore, 14, gets his cow ready for competition as his grandfather Bert Stewart holds onto the lead prior to their second-place finish in the 4-H junior showmanship class for dairy cattle. Ben Caunter runs alongside his pony, leading it out of the ring after taking first in the hackney junior showmanship competition. Laurie Cameron beams with excitement after being crowned Miss Fall Fair Ambassador.



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