

Leo's Livestock

by Ann Davelaar

Business is booming at Leo's Livestock Exchange near Greely. By mid-morning on almost any Thursday of the year, trucks ranging from double-deckers to pickups, line up almost to the highway, waiting, sometimes for hours, to unload.

But nobody seems to mind, as some people drink coffee behind the wheel and others take a nap. Though the smaller trucks show eastern Ontario and western Quebec place-names, the bigger trucks display permits from as far away as Michigan, U.S.A.

Across the barn a white-and-black painted house contains a restaurant. It is already crowded with customers having a late breakfast. French and English mingle pleasantly in the air, as everyone catches up on the latest market prices and personal news.

The green-trimmed metal barn already resounds with the lowing of cattle and the bleating of sheep and goats. The occasional neighing of a horse adds an exotic note to the atmosphere. However,

all this is music to the ears of the office-staff, for of course it means that adding-machines and calculators are clattering constantly as buyers throng before the counter.



Leo Menard

The inside of the huge barn is constructed entirely of wood, with walkways from which prospective buyers can inspect the livestock.

Sawdust is everywhere and as the day wears on it becomes mixed with mud in the unloading area, causing calves to skitter around like reckless football-players.

As each animal arrives, a numbered yellow patch is glued on both flanks. Some of the holding-pens contain at least twenty head. But the wait for most animals is not long, since an auctioneer's voice crackling above the din is already setting a rapid-fire pace.

In a small room beyond the office Harold McNeely and Francois Menard, veterinary technicians, test blood-samples non-stop for brucellosis among the cattle.

"They hardly ever have a sale under 1000 head of livestock, and the fall is busier than the other seasons," says Mr. McNeely.

According to Roger Guillemette, antemortem and meat inspector for Agriculture Canada, no tests are done on horses at the livestock exchange. However, post-mortem inspection is carried out at the slaughterhouse level whenever horsemeat is destined for human consumption, either domestically or overseas. At the livestock exchange buyers are expected to be able to judge whether the horse they want is in healthy condition,

according to Dr. Reginald Chapel, the federal government veterinarian on duty.

There are three rings in the barn complex and by mid-afternoon the decibel level has risen considerably as auctioneering gets into full swing. In the first ring Leo Menard keeps a sharp eye on the crowd as he auctions the smaller animals: calves, lambs, sheep and goats. Del Spratt is by turns jocular and commanding, as he persuades the buyers of beef and dairy cattle to raise their offers. In the third ring dairy cattle are usually auctioned by Regent Menard.

The pace quickens as heifers, cows and bulls pass through the ring. Finally Del Spratt says that according to the office-staff he has sold 150 dairy cattle in record time. The stands are packed as he announces over the P.A. system to those in the barn area that the sale of ponies and horses is about to begin.

These animals are sold at the end of the day because most of the people involved are hobby-farmers, so it's a convenience for buyer and seller, according to Del Spratt. The Greely exchange is also the only barn that specializes in horses in the area. Ponies and

draft horses form the bulk of this segment of the livestock trade. Prices have been holding steady over the last six months.

"On the average we sell 1500 head of livestock here. That includes 15 horses, so it's only one per cent of our sales," says Del Spratt, when asked if selling horses is profitable.

But the glint in his eye as he looks over the first pony led into the ring shows that he'd probably stay with the horse-market, even if it became a losing proposition. As anyone who has ever been seriously interested in horses knows, the horse is more than an animal: it is a state of mind.

Eight ponies quickly change hands, while the children watch with rapt attention. Some ponderous draft horses follow. To top off the evening several owners give bareback riding demonstrations in order to convince potential buyers of the prowess of their riding horses.

As the crowd disperses under a full moon, an air of general satisfaction spills into the parking lot. As cars and trucks pull out to the highway, Leo Menard's voice wafts into the darkness in a veritable vocal marathon.

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LOCATION OF POLLS:

Poll No. 1 — Fred McLaren Residence **2** — Russell Recreation Centre **3** — Russell Recreation Centre **4** — Mrs. Ida Magladry Residence **5** — Township Hall **6** — Township Hall **7** — Laurent Beaudin Residence **8** — Embrun Fire Hall **9** — Embrun Recreation Centre (A-M) **10** — Embrun Recreation Centre (O-Z) **11** — Embrun Recreation Centre (Rural) **12** — Roger Grenier — Limoges Residence **13** — Township Hall — Advanced Poll (November 1st only)

TENDERS FOR

SNOW REMOVAL

Tenders are invited for Snow Removal — Parking lot and Front Entrance, Bank of Nova Scotia, Russell, Ontario.

Sealed tenders will be received until 6 p.m. Nov. 14, at which time they will be opened and reviewed.

NOTE: For further information, regarding the tenders contact I.A. Dejardins, at 445-2880.

The lowest of any tenders not necessarily accepted.

**BANK OF NOVA SCOTIA,
P.O. BOX 190, RUSSELL, ONT.**

NOTICE OF

POLL

Notice is hereby given to the municipal electors of the Township of Russell that whereas more candidates have been nominated to each of the following offices than the number required to fill such offices, therefore polls will be held upon the dates and at the times and places stated in this notice for the purpose of electing the holders of such offices.

OFFICE(S) FOR WHICH POLL TO BE HELD:

3 Councillors Out of 7

3 Representatives for the Secondary School elected at large in Casselman Village

Township of Cambridge and Township of Russell by Separate School Supporters only

REGULAR POLLS:

Date: November 10th, 1980

Location: 10 Different Locations see circular.

Time: Regular polls will be open from 11 o'clock a.m. until 8 o'clock p.m.

PROXY APPLICATIONS

A person who has been appointed a voting proxy may apply to the clerk not later than 5 o'clock in the afternoon of Polling Day to receive a certificate to vote by proxy for the polling subdivision in which the person appointing the voting proxy is entitled to vote.

Given under my hand this 22nd day of October, 1980

J.G. Bourdeau, Returning Officer