

Sheep farmers fleece inflation

By Brenda Stewart

It all started with the purchase of a pet lamb as an Easter present for their son.

Three and a half years later the Matthew family has 70 animals. Sheep farming has become a part-time business for them. Even the children, at five and eight years old, are involved.

"It just happened to click," says Nancy Matthew, Secretary Treasurer of the Russell Area Sheep Club. "We felt if one was that much fun we had to have more. It's more than a hobby now. It's a second job."

The sheep club consists of 31 families. It meets once a month and usually features guest speakers on such subjects as nutrition, flock health, preventative medicine and any other topic which might help farmers in the area.

According to her most small farmers are commercial growers of sheep. The commercial grade sheep are not registered or purebred and are raised for meat.

The other type of sheep being raised is purebred. Many farmers have both types. The purebred flocks are raised for show and for breeding stock. The culls, or the imperfect animals, are used for meat.

The Rivers family also raises sheep in Russell. Jean Rivers says: "We sell our sheep in two ways. One market is the sale just prior to Easter when the prices are supposed to be the highest. The lambs are 30 to 50 pounds and they are sold to packing houses who will sell to restaurants and butchers."

"The other market is for lambs of about 100 pounds which are nine months to one year old. We make these sales privately to individuals. The lambs are killed at

the local slaughterhouse where they will be cut and wrapped as a freezer order.

Bigger producers tend to market their lamb only at the weekly sales, because private transactions are simply too much trouble."

Different weight of lamb appeal to different tastes, according to Mrs. Rivers.

The British, for example, prefer the heavier lambs. They want more meat for their money.

"We do sell wool here," says Mrs. Matthew, "but it is strictly a by-product. We sell it to get rid of it, because the sheep must be shorn once a year.

The sheering is necessary because of the heat in the summer and because if it is not done, the second fleece comes up under the first. I have seen sheep which have not been shorn once year — they are a pathetic looking sight."

"Our wool is sold through the Canadian Co-op of Wool Growers, whose main office is in the old train round-house in Carleton Place.

Very few farmers in Ontario make a living from sheep. One needs about 400 commercial sheep to make it worthwhile.

Still, with better management and marketing, sheep farming is growing. According to Nancy Matthews the sheep industry is on the move upwards and she considers sheep farming a "great life."



The Matthews with part of the flock

Library News

Library Hours

Mon. Fri. Sat. 2:30 p.m. to 5 p.m.
Wed. 12 to 1 p.m.

Tues. Thurs. 7 to 9 p.m.

Story Hour will be held Oct. 8 and 22 Nov. 5 and 19 from 10 to 11 a.m.

October is Library Month. There will be no charge on overdue books.

Coming event: Friday Nov. 7 at 7:30 P.M. at the Public Library. Canadian Antiques: Paul Warman will give a lecture including a display and a slide show on Canadian antiques. Everyone is welcome.

NEW BOOKS NON-FICTION

The Invasion of Canada 1812-1813, Pierre Berton; From the Packsack of Gregory Clark, Gregory Clark; Entertaining at Bridge, C. Empey and Bea Steward; Astrology, Ian Kurrels; Ethnic Folk Costumes in Canada, Peggy Tyrczniewicz; How to Live on Almost Nothing and Have Plenty, J. Chadwick; Overcoming Shyness, Barbara Powell, Ph.D.; The Life and Times of Lord Mountbatten, John Terraine; Teenage Drinking, R. North and R. Orange, Jr.; The Facts About Drug Abuse; The Life of Mary Roberts Rinehart, Jan Cohn; Yes, Virginia There is Right and Wrong, K.M. Gow, Ph.D.; The Complete Book of Ballroom Dancing, R.M. Stephenson and Joseph Iaccarino; The Seven-Day Quilt, Josephine Rogers.

REFERENCE

The Encyclopedia of Organic Gardening, The Mammals of Canada, the Dictionary of Canadian Quotation and Phrases, Organic Plant Protection.

FICTION

The Yellow Brier, Patrick Slater; Charting by the Stars, Linsey Abrams.

JUVENILE

Best in Camp, Mike Neigoff; Where the Wild Things Are, Maurice Sendak; Catch a

Sunbeam, Florence Adams; Because a Little Bug Went Kachoo; Squirrels, Brian Wildsmith.

GREELY

with Carol Parker

Greely Public Library would like to report a fantastic summer with a good response to the summer reading program and the Write-a-Book competition

READING SUGGESTIONS

ADULT: Death Wears a Red Hat, William X. Kienzle; Voice of the Pioneer, Bill McNeil; It Could Have Been Worse, Peggy Holmes. JUVENILE: Stand in the Wind, Jean Little; The Little Ghost, Otfield Preussler; A Walk in Wolf Wood, Mary Stewart.

October being library month in Eastern Ontario, we have several dates for you to remember:

— Oct. 18, movie Smokey Joe's Revenge, 10 a.m. Admission .25 cents.

— Oct. 24, Special EOLS presentation, Snakes Alive with Jim Loviser of the Royal Ontario Museum, 7:30 p.m.

— Oct. 31, Halloween Party at the community centre, 6 p.m. Everyone welcome, help needed ahead of time. Call Carol Parker, 821-3313.





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