

# Twin villages tighten the bond

By Ann Davelaar

Celebration! We have but to roll the word around on our tongue and our minds are immediately filled with visions of ecstatic embraces, flowing wine and trumpeting bands.

Everyone knows it's not what you are celebrating but how, that makes the difference. One person who has made a real difference in turning an original idea into reality for Embrun's 125th anniversary celebration is Ghyslaine Gregoire, a local elementary school teacher.

Just as a seed lies buried under desert sands for years, awaiting the proper conditions for germination, so Ghyslaine's idea lay dormant in her mind until the time was ripe. Certainly she knew how her village had come to be named Embrun. Mid-nineteenth century parish records tell of how Monseigneur Guigues, first Catholic bishop of Bytown, sent for five priests from Les Hautes Alpes, his own native region of France.

One of these priests, Father Francois Michel, came to the picturesque little village of La Riviere de Castor, Ontario, and changed its name to Embrun, in honour of his own place of origin.

Both villages have prospered since then. Today, the Ontario village, which lies about 50 kilometres southeast of Ottawa, has a population of almost 4,000.

Now Embrun, France, is a tourist village of nearly 6,000 inhabitants in the mountains about 800 kilometres south of Paris.

In 1970 Ghyslaine realized interest in her village was growing on the French side of the ocean. Pierre-Henri Donat was the first Embrunais to come over to the Canadian village. He carried out a study on the history and agriculture of the region, and became friends with Ghyslaine. In the course of his research he discovered there were no direct descendants of any Embrunais of France among the Embrunais of Canada.

At different times during the next five years, about fifteen people came to Embrun from the French village to spend their vacations and explore the area. Ghyslaine made friends with some of them and exchanged letters.

She thought it would be useful to exchange visits with the Embrunais, so in 1975 she made her first trip to Les Hautes Alpes. There she had an opportunity to meet the mayor, Alexandre Didier, and explained her idea. He immediately agreed and the project of twinning the two places was born.

In 1979, while Ghyslaine was staying with families in the Alpine Village, she tied the twinning proposal to the 125th anniversary

celebrations planned for Embrun, Ontario, during her discussions with the mayor. After the necessary official correspondence, the French village accepted the proposal in 1980.

The mayor appointed Jean Vandenhove, geography professor at the local lycee, to head the twinning committee. On the other side of the Atlantic, Ghyslaine Gregoire was put in charge of the committee which would receive the party of French guests. During almost a year of correspondence, the two became friends.

"It's fascinating that you can get a feeling of trust in one another right away by letter alone," she said.

In early April of this year, Jean Vandenhove and sixteen other people between the ages of twenty and sixty paid their own way to Embrun, Ontario, as a first step in the twinning process. They spent a busy two weeks being wined and dined by their new-found friends, as well as staying at the homes of villagers.

The French visitors were scheduled to tour Cornwall, visit the Governor-General's home, see a typical French-Canadian sugar-bush and go to some local area farms. They also visited New York City and Niagara Falls.

"For me it's a dream coming true," said Ghyslaine. "It's thanks to the committees that it became reality."

Jean indicated he was quite impressed with his visits to eastern Ontario. He said he was surprised by the strength of the French presence in this province.

"The Embrunais have known how to keep their language, their culture, their religion and their civilization, all the while living in harmony with the English who surround them," he stated.

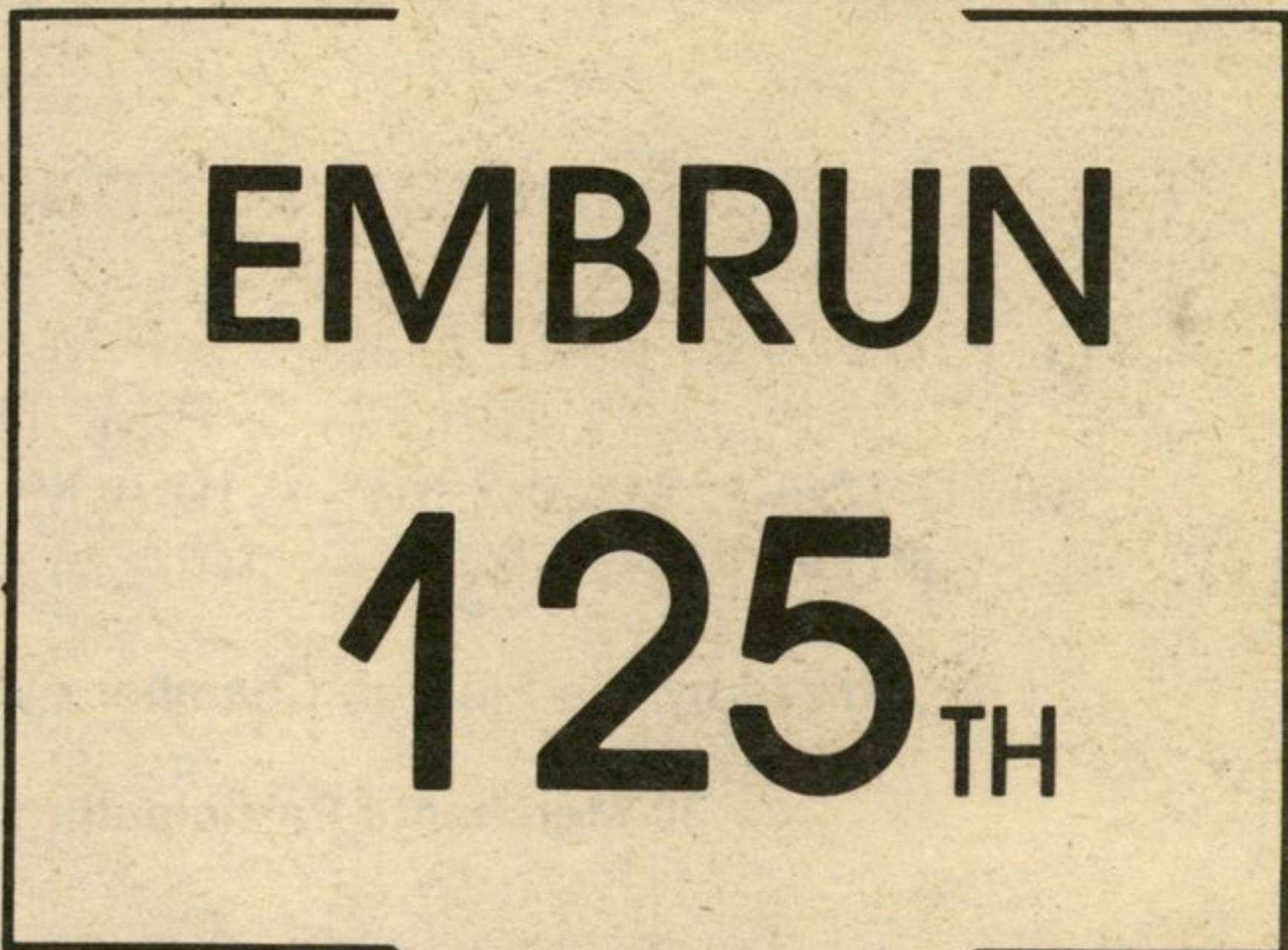
The French professor said this bilingualism in action impressed him most during a Question Period he and his compatriots attended on Parliament Hill, when several ministers, including the Prime Minister, spoke in both of-

ficial languages with perfect ease.

Jean stated his own village had a much more serious problem preserving its lifestyle than the Canadian village.


top off the 125th anniversary celebrations of the Ontario village.

Ghyslaine said she is confident the marriage of the two villages.



The mayor of Embrun, France, is expected to accompany almost a dozen other visitors who will arrive in the final week of June to will become solidified with the passage of time.

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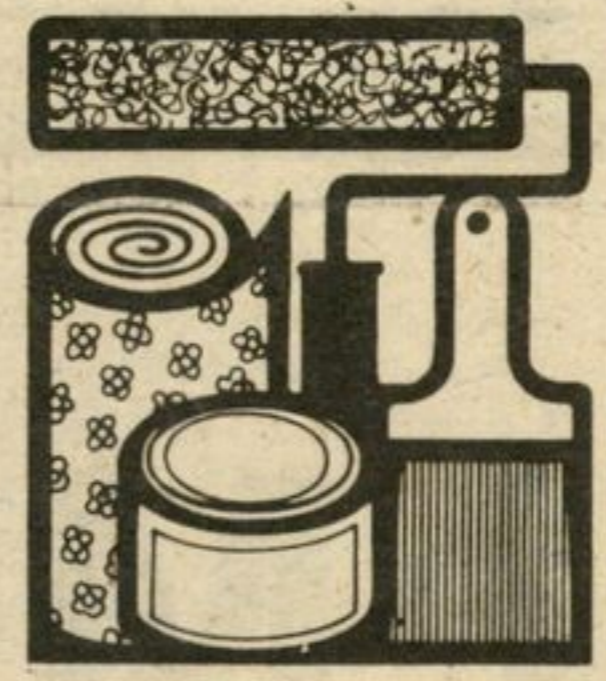
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### HORSE BITS

With Lola Wood

This month, I'm going to continue with my series of articles for horse-hunters. The topic — conformation. If you want your horse to serve you for many years without breaking down; then you should study him carefully. There are specific preferences among different breed owners but the basics are the same.

Head: comparatively small, large nostrils (breathing), upper and lower teeth meet when biting, eyes intelligent. Neck: flexible — trim throatlatch. Shoulders: long, well-laid back, fairly high withers — withers and croup approximately same height. Chest: deep and broad. Back: short — powerful across loin. Croup: long. Gaskin: well muscled. Barrel: deep girth (room for heart and lungs) well sprung ribs, deep through flank. Legs: straight — set well apart — cannon bone short — hocks broad, flat, strong — knees large flat — pastern moderately long, well sloped.



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