

Fair Time the Same, the World Over

By George Abell of Stouffville
It's been a great week for the small fry. Reason being that there has been a spate of fairs and other amusements in the neighborhood and as usual the smaller and more active members of the Clan Abell have talked the old codgers into putting in an appearance at all of them.

At the beginning of May (three weeks ago) the billboards bloomed with multi-colored posters announcing the arrival of a travelling carnival for a three day stand the following week in a vacant lot at the edge of town. If you

could have walked with us through the lanes of gaily colored booths the night it opened you would find the scene no different to that of any similar fair in Canada. Merry-go-rounds, ferris-wheels, dodgem cars, same games in the booths and the crowds look the same as the crowds in town for a street dance in Stouffville or on the Exhibition Midway. But your ears would soon identify the location. Not altogether from any difference of speech for tone and accent in Surrey are on the average no different to the tones and accents of Markham Township. The difference is in certain phrases

and words, the most noticeable to a stranger being those to do with money. Admission to most rides and games is a "tanner" (six-pence) for children and a "bob" (1 shilling) for adults. Change for a "nicker" (pound note) is given in "half dollars" (half crown) pieces value two shillings and six-pence) because a "little brownie" (ten-shilling note) may be put away to be wasted next day on things like food or rent. The main attraction here was a hoop throwing game with gold fish as prizes. Everybody else seemed to be able to ring a jar, but to the twins' great disgust this feat was beyond

the powers of my wife and I. The evening was not a total failure however for we managed to bring away some very valuable plaster cats and dogs which unfortunately just melted away the first time they had their faces washed. A short distance from our home is the village of Cheam, which is a very lovely and (yes I'll say it though I hate the phrase) high class neighborhood. Most of the village consists of four and five bed-roomed houses built in the late 1930's. The streets and boulevards are laid out with different types of flowering trees and shrubs and as every householder seems to take great pride in the landscaping of his property the whole village (population 40,000) is a fine example of England at its best. The fair there came up on Thursday

and no pressure was necessary to ensure my presence. There is considerable historical significance (please excuse the use of such mumbley-guck phrases as the last two words but I seem to be getting so "Juicerfield" that they creep in everywhere when nobody's looking) attached to this fair. In 1259 King Henry III gave his royal grant to the village of "Kayam" as it was then called to hold an affair on the 15th day of May each year on the two furlongs of what was then the "common-road" and is now named "Park Road". King Henry laid down one condition, that at least one stall or sideshow must be set up each year or the grant would be revoked. Not a year was missed till 1910 but during the war the people of the district had no wish to com-

mit suicide by gathering in crowds on the main route of Herman's bomb delivery service to the Big Smoke so the fair was discontinued. But an ice cream salesman kept the tradition unbroken by pedalling his tricycle into Park Road each year on the 15th of May. He carried a dartboard on his hamper, stopped for an hour or so and then pedalled away after chalking on the pavement "Cheam fair was held today". If Ann Boleyn and Nell Gwynne knew this they would both be pleased for each in her own period of the past had a good time at this fair. It is a joint effort of the local clubs and organizations (42 different ones all told) and is a success. A Queen is crowned and an old (continued on page 7)

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