

FORFAR

An Excerpt from The DISPATCH AND HERALD, in 'FORFAR', SCOTLAND
Dated November 5, 1981

WHY FORFAR SENDS CHEESE TO FORFAR

With Christmas just around the corner, it would be an ideal present - a chunk of delicious cheddar cheese from Forfar.

But, before dashing to the nearest delicatessen, be warned there is a slight snag. The 'Forfar' we refer to is situated in the Rideau Lakes area of Eastern Ontario in Canada.

You can count the buildings in this particular Forfar on one hand but the community is gaining an international reputation for its makes of cheese.

Having the good fortune to acquire a sample of this product is Mrs. Dorothy Parr, Peffers Place. Last month, Mrs. Parr was at High Lea, Hoddesdon, Herts, attending the British Ikebana Symposium (Japanese flower arranging) and she struck up a friendship with Mrs. Doris Graham who, by an amazing piece of coincidence, lives only a few miles from Forfar, Ontario (Portland, Ont.)

On leaving the Symposium, Mrs. Graham promised to maintain a link with Mrs. Parr and just last week a 3 lb. chunk of cheese arrived at Peffers Place. Intrigued to learn of this Canadian hamlet, we did a little bit of research...

The tiny village of Forfar in eastern Ontario is no bigger than Padanaram and like many other rural communities in Canada, has suffered at the hands of progress.

In 1963 a large conglomerate bought and closed down the cheese factory but the few residents refused to buckle under. They promptly banded together and re-opened the establishment. Now the factory, one of only 6 in the eastern region of Ontario, ships its products all over the world.

The factory employs 14 local residents and during summer months produces up to a tonne of cheddar a day. During winter the cheese is made only 3 times a week.

Cheese processing units around this area of Canada have certainly been decimated in recent times and the Forfar factory has done well to survive. In 1945 there were a grand total of 570 plants but by 1969 this had dwindled to

only 92. At present there are a mere 6.

The village of Forfar has gone through some sticky periods in the past, but residents have struggled to keep the community alive.

When the schoolhouse went up for sale they quickly acquired it and, with volunteer labour, turned it into a comfortable community hall. The vacated United Church has been taken over by a local club and is used for a variety of functions. The cheese factory directors recently bought an adjacent house to their premises and are renting it out as a barber's shop.

At present, residents of the community are trying to get central government to build apartments for senior citizens.

Residents boast of a strong community spirit and unabashedly suggest that other communities in that area could profit from their experiences. They haven't grown much in the last century - but they have fought, and won, a battle to survive.

FOOTNOTE: For assistance in compiling this article we would like to thank Mr. John Fyfe from Winnipeg. A Forfar man, he lived at John Street and worked in Lowson's factory before emigrating in 1922 at the age of 19. Before retiring he was in charge of a large fleet of delivery vehicles.

Area Masons Honour Grand Master

Seven area lodges, all of which Most Wor. Bro. Howard O. Polk, Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Canada in the Province of Ontario, is a member, held a joint reception at the Mariners Inn, Smiths Falls, on Sat. Nov 7. The lodges were: Merrickville #55; Simpson #157, Newboro; Evergreen #209, Lanark; Harmony #370, Philipsville; Lansdowne #387, Lyn #416 and Otter #504, Lombardy. Most Wor. Bro. Polk was born and raised at Lombardy and is well known throughout the district. He was initiated into Otter Lodge in 1938 and was Wor. Master in 1959. He was elected Grand Registrar in 1962 and has been elected member of the Board of General Purposes of Grand Lodge since 1964. He was installed in the highest office of masonry, that of Grand Master, on July 16, 1981.

Some 150 masons and ladies attended the banquet and social evening. All enjoyed a turkey dinner and the formalities included the traditional toasts, introductions and an address by the Grand Master. Mrs. Hazel Wykes sang a number of old songs and led the gathering in a sing-song. Mary Richardson accompanied on the piano.

As a fitting conclusion, the Grand Master was presented with a painting and the guest book. Mrs. Polk was presented with flowers. The Grand Master expressed his pleasure for the reception, thanked the organizing committee and everyone for attending. He then spent considerable time visiting with everyone.

ELDON R. KIRKLAND

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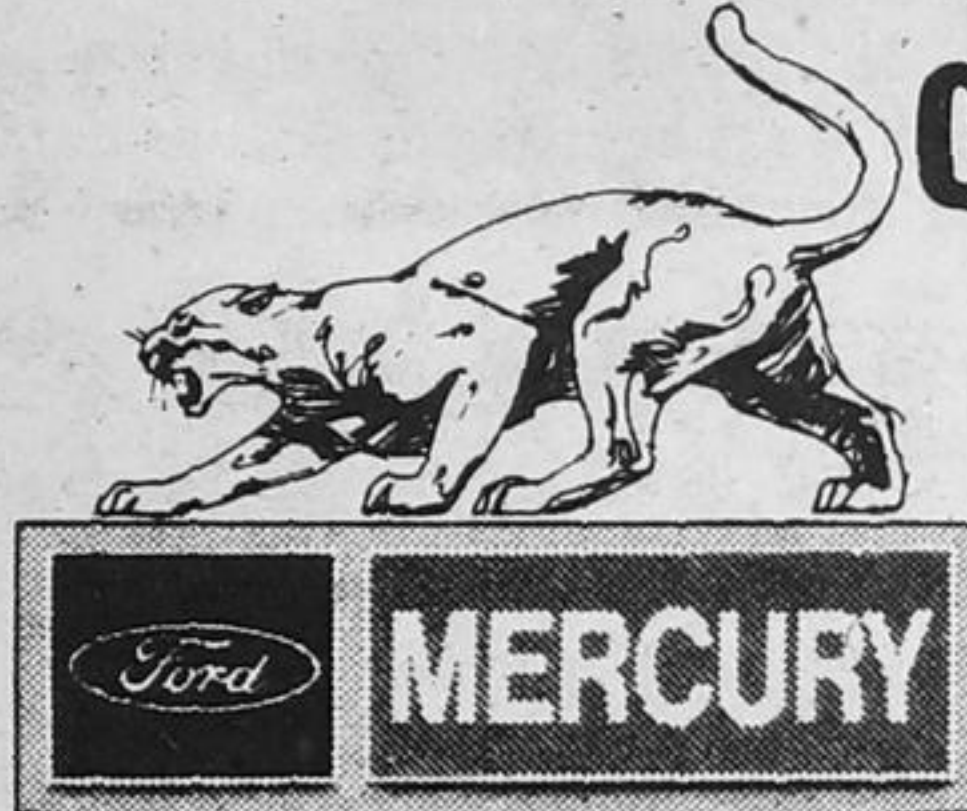


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