

EANS Newsletter

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Report From the President, EANS



Brian Casey at the Reins

As I write this report, we can only hope the rain has finally stopped. It is pleasantly surprising to see fairly good attendance numbers at most of our exhibitions despite not having any summer. I have finished my commitment of attending all Nova Scotia exhibitions with the exception of Cumberland Co., which I couldn't attend as we were showing our horses in Antigonish. Glen has been busy working behind the scenes on various projects trying to access more funds. As a board, we will continue to put pressure on government to show them the contributions we provide to agriculture and the economy.

I guess the most important news this summer is that after twenty eight years, we have finally received an increase in our funding (approximately 30%). With this increase in funding, I think that we can agree that persistency does pay off. The Board is meeting this fall to make recommendations and decide how we best allocate these funds. I realize we would all like to have seen a larger increase but at least it is a start. The increase will come at the end of this year. I would personally like to thank the Honorable Brooke Taylor and his staff for their help in receiving this increase. Also a big thank you to Liz Crouse, John Longley and Glen Jefferson in helping me in our meetings and discussions with all of our MLA's to make our association more visible to all members of the government.

As we move into the fall, we are busy preparing for our board meeting in October and CAFÉ's annual meeting in November. We are also working on our AGM in Jan 09. Your board will continue to work for your Association and your local exhibitions. If I can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me. Once again thank you for all your support.

Brian Casey, President

Meet Doreen Holdright

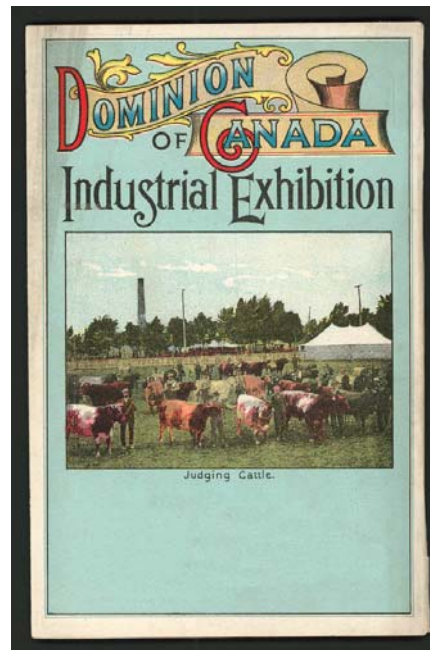
*Doreen Holdright at work*

Doreen has taken on the role of Acting Manager for the Queens County Exhibition for the past year and has done a great job in organizing the exhibition at Caledonia this year. Doreen was born in Caledonia and has been a frequent visitor at the exhibition over the years. She has been involved in the exhibition as a volunteer for about twenty years and was named a Director two years ago. She has seen many changes over the years but is glad that the event retains the agriculture content that is a familiar theme at exhibitions and fairs throughout the Province. Managing a five-day event is a major task besides the work that goes into planning and organizing the daily schedules. She says that the volunteer effort was a significant contribution to the exhibition in the many days of planning, during the exhibition and the following clean-up of the grounds. Annual maintenance of the buildings is essential to provide a satisfactory experience for visitors and ensure adequate upkeep for future exhibitions. Doreen has a bright outlook for the future of the Queens County Exhibition and looks forward for the event for many years to come. The exhibition is especially noted for the artistic signage and identification of the buildings, including the barns that house oxen, dairy, beef, light and draft horses. Special attention is directed to youth and 4H events.

For more information on the Queen's County Exhibition:

<http://www.queenscountyfair.ca>

Canadian Agricultural Exhibitions: A Brief History



Agricultural exhibitions probably began as bazaars or fairs. Through the centuries these gatherings diverged somewhat from their original function and became primarily competitive showplaces for livestock and produce and settings for the display of new agricultural technology, as well as social events. Canadian agricultural exhibitions derive much of their character from the agricultural fairs of England and Scotland. North America's first such fair was held in NS in 1765. Fairs continue to make important contributions to Canada's rural society by providing social and educational opportunities, and for all Canadians by helping to improve agriculture through competition.

Contemporary agricultural exhibitions vary greatly; the majority are country "fairs" lasting one or 2 days and featuring a cross-section of agricultural products and local crafts. Regional exhibitions, lasting 3-4 days, are less common, encompass areas served by several local fairs and satisfy the desire for larger events featuring greater competition. A third type of fair, the provincial exhibition, draws exhibits from a still larger geographic area and tends to be more "commercial" in that dealers in farm machinery and other farm technologies display their wares. On the inter-provincial or national level, Toronto's Royal Winter Fair, probably Canada's best-known agricultural exhibition, serves a great cross-section of the industry. Other well-known exhibitions are the Royal Manitoba Winter Fair at Brandon and the Calgary Stampede. Most recently, large, specialized shows have appeared. For example, well over 1000 head of cattle are exhibited at the annual Agribition in Saskatchewan and Ag-Ex in Manitoba. The Annual Farm Progress Show in Regina represents another type of specialization: agricultural

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equipment worth millions of dollars and representing the most modern agricultural technology is exhibited.



The main agricultural product exhibited in most of the regional, inter-provincial or national exhibitions is livestock, although grain, fruit, poultry, pets, vegetables, flowers and crafts are important features. The spirit of competition of these events has contributed to improvements in livestock breeds. The horse show is an important livestock exhibit because of its entertainment value and the quality of product displayed. Exhibition activities have been largely responsible for the development of keen national and international equestrian competition. Standards of desirability in the appearance of commercial livestock (eg: cattle, sheep, hogs) change as consumer diet preferences change. Swine, for example, have been bred over a period of many years to be long and lean rather than short and fat, as consumers opt for less fat in their diets. Similarly, size and breed of beef cattle have changed to reflect perceived production efficiencies assumed to be inherent in the more rapid weight increase of larger breeds.

Exhibitions have played a special role in personal development through the promotion of 4-H Club programs. The 4-H movement really started when, early in the century, exhibitions began sponsoring livestock competitions for youth. Exhibitions continue to change along with the public's desire to observe new developments in the agriculture and food system, to remain current in standards of excellence and to enjoy the opportunity to socialize with people from a cross-section of the community at large.

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