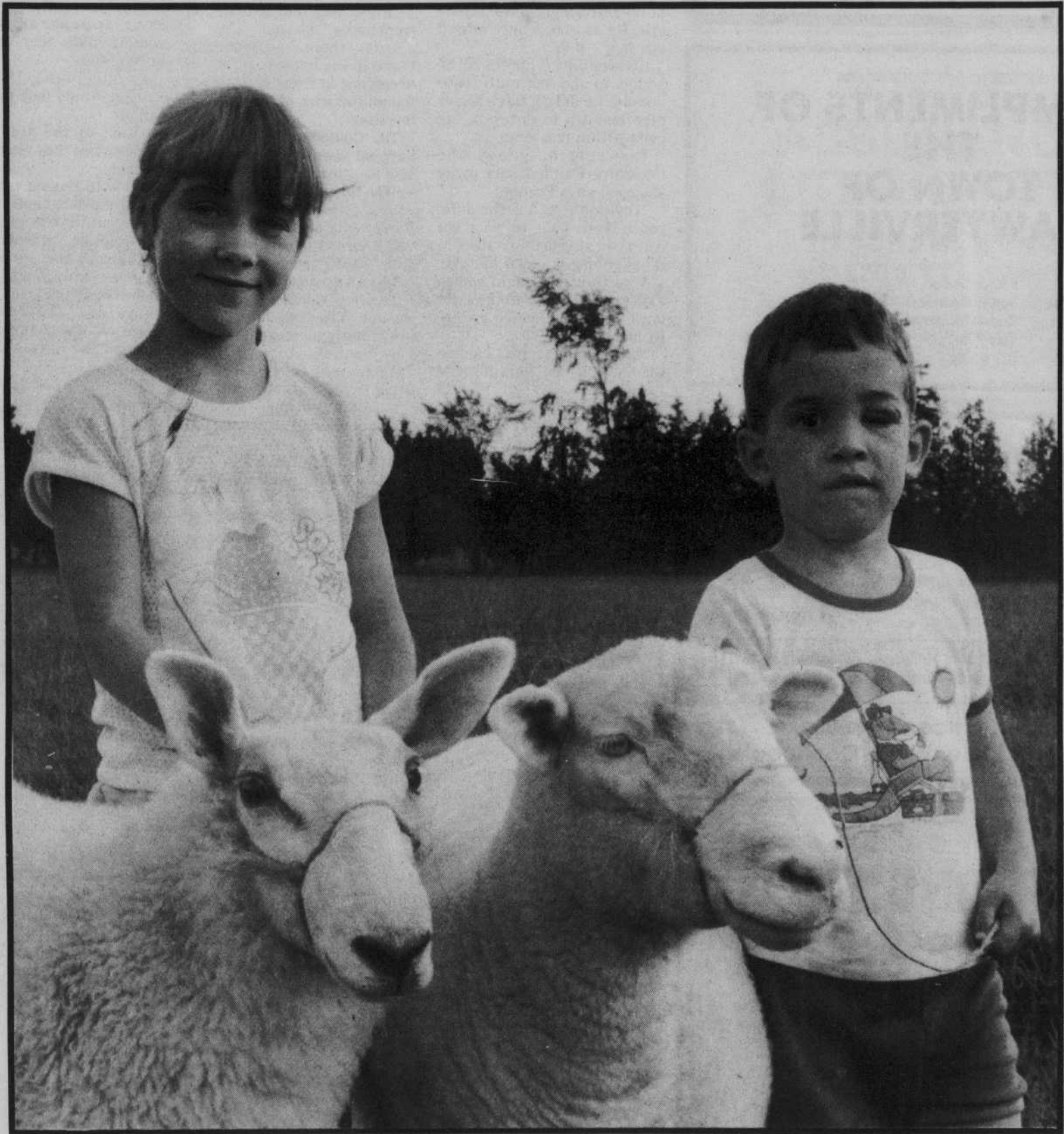


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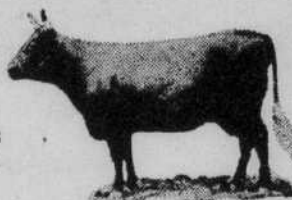
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# Fair senior says he'll be back for one more

By Sylvie D. Nelson

**SAWYERVILLE** — When Gordon French entered his first colt in the halter category at the Cookshire Fair in 1928 he was 9. That was 64 years ago.

French has been exhibiting at the fair longer than anyone else. He says he's only missed one year, in 1977.

His specialty is horses but he admits to showing cattle once because he did not have horses nice enough to enter in the competition that year.

Through the years, the Cookshire Fair has seen many changes, says French.

"You don't realize the difference from year to year but when you stop to think about it, it has changed a lot," he said.

According to French, women didn't go to the fair in the early days. It was attended mostly by men.

The proof is at the Compton County Museum, said his wife Lavina.

### FEW WOMEN

"There's a picture of people sitting in the stands and there are about four women, that's all."

"Women started going to the fair when the car became more

popular," he added. "That was in the 20s."

When French started exhibiting at the fair, there were few participants in the harness class. The average was one or two teams.

"If you had four teams, you were lucky," he said.

Today, there are about eight teams in the harness class and according to French, it makes the competition much more interesting.

The Cookshire fairgrounds have not always been at its present location, says French.

"The fair was originally held at Eaton's Corner then in Wesleyville and finally, it moved where it is now in 1921 or 1922," said French.

Throughout the years, French has won many prizes at the fair. Trophies and ribbons are proudly displayed in his living room.

Amazingly enough, French never trained his horses.

"I never practice," he said. "The horses will get hitched at the fair."

### PEGGY AND POLLY

That's what happened to Peggy and Polly, French's two Grade Clydes — they aren't pu-

rebred Clydesdales — who, eight years ago, were paired together for the first time at the fair.

Clydesdales are a breed of large, strong draught horses used to pull wagons in the harness category. Most famous for their appearance in beer commercials, they originated in Scotland.

At one point, the whole French family took part in the fair.

"Most of the kids showed calves when they were young," he said.

His wife Lavina entered her bread and doughnuts in the cooking contest and even won a subscription to the *Record*.

Although there were many changes throughout the years at the Cookshire Fair, one thing remains constant: the midway. Then and now, the mechanical rides still delight the public.

For the past few years, French has been saying he will quit exhibiting at the fair. But he never seems to be able to bring himself to quit.

"I should go on one more year to make it 65 years of participation."



Gordon French and his wife Lavina, parading their two grade Clydes Peggy and Polly.

# 1991 Cookshire Fair outgrows its britches



RECORD SYLVIE D. NELSON

President Roger Bolduc is proud of the interest shown by exhibitors this year. It's going so well that organizers must find extra room to accommodate the 67 horses registered.

By Sylvie D. Nelson

**COOKSHIRE** — Going to the fair always brings back childhood memories of mechanical rides and cotton candy.

This year is no exception.

Fair time is back again and Cookshire is kicking up things with its 146th edition.

One of the oldest fairs in Quebec, the Cookshire exhibition has kept its country quaintness by remaining small.

But this year, organizers face a little problem: They only have room for 60 horses and 67 are registered.

This little problem has president Roger Bolduc very pleased because it shows interest in the fair.

"We're thinking of ways to accommodate the seven extra horses," he said. "No one will

be turned away."

This year, according to Bolduc, is the first time Cookshire Fair will be able to take advantage of a federal program which reimburses some of the prize money for purebred Belgian horses.

"When there is a minimum of 20 animals of the same breed, the government reimburses some of the prize money given to the winners," Bolduc explained.

#### STARTS THURSDAY

The fun starts at 7:30 Thursday evening with a bingo.

Friday is children's day with lots of games and contests for the kids to take part in.

Judging also starts that day. At 9, it's the halter class followed by housekeeping, honey and maple, flowers, vege-

tables and fruit preserves, handicrafts and the children's and men's department.

"At night, there will be a Gymkhana," said Bolduc. "It's a horse club that comes and demonstrates what they can do with their horses."

According to him, they are real maniacs, racing barrels and doing stuff cowboys do in the west. It should be a real crowd pleaser.

At the same time as the Gymkhana, there will be a dance held at the McAuley centre.

On Saturday, showing starts at 9 with the light horse class followed by animal judging.

In the afternoon will be a clog dancers exhibition and at 2, the amateur's fiddler contest will take place.

#### PARADE

The rest of the afternoon will see more animals in the ring and at 3, the 4-h club will parade its champions.

At night, there will be a dance, starting at 9:30 with Bob Lasenba of Ottawa.

On Sunday, judging and showing continue but don't miss the Eastern Townships antique car association exhibit.

"The obstacle course heavy horse will be held at 3:30 p.m. People like to watch the big horses pulling the wagons full speed through a course," Bolduc says.

He may be a little biased as he is known in the region to have one of the best horse teams.

In the early evening, a heavy horse pull contest will take place where horses pull cement blocs until they can't. The remaining horse wins, Bolduc says.

Sunday night another dance will be held at the McAuley center. Gail and Réal will provide the entertainment and when the dance is over, so will be the 146th Cookshire fair.

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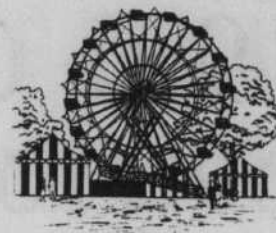
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# FAIR DAYS



**THURSDAY, AUGUST 15, 1991  
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**FRIDAY, AUGUST 16, 1991**

1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**CHILDREN'S DAY AT THE FAIR**

Games Contests Horse Rides

2:30 p.m. Pony pull

7:00 p.m. Gymkhana

8:00 p.m. Registration of teams for tug of war

8:30 p.m. Tug of war

9:30 p.m. Dance at Centre Albert McAuley

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 17, 1991**

9:00 a.m. Light horses classes

10:00 a.m. Animals judging

1:30 p.m. Clug dancers exhibition

Registration for amateur fiddler contest

2:00 p.m. Amateur fiddler contest at Centre A. McAuley

2:30 p.m. Heavy horses classes

3:00 p.m. Champions and 4-H parade

4:00 p.m. Heavy horses classes

6:00 p.m. Registration for farm tractor pull

7:30 p.m. Farm tractor pull

9:30 p.m. Dance with Bob Lasenba at Centre A. McAuley

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 1991**

9:00 a.m. Light horses classes

10:30 a.m. Harness classes heavy horses

1:00 p.m. Antique cars and animals parade

2:30 p.m. Harness classes heavy horses

3:30 p.m. Obstacle course heavy horses

7:00 p.m. Heavy horse pull

3200 lbs. and under — 3200 lbs. and more

9:00 p.m. Dance with Gail and Real at Centre A. McAuley

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**FRIDAY, AUGUST 18, 1991**

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10:00 a.m. Young farmers (expertise) 4-H

1:00 p.m. Light horses

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 16, 1991**

9:00 a.m. Young farmers (judging and showmanship)

9:00 a.m. Light horses

10:00 a.m. Dairy cattle

Beef cattle

Heavy horses

Goats

1:00 p.m. Sheep

Poultry

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 18, 1991**

9:00 a.m. Light horses show

10:30 a.m. Harness classes

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# Fiddling around at the fair

By Sylvie D. Nelson

**COOKSHIRE** — Year after year, fair organizers always have a problem on their hands: How to keep the crowds entertained?

This year, Cookshire Fair organizers have decided to do things a little differently. They're holding a fiddling

contest.

"It started last year when we noticed a lot of the region's fiddlers went to the Richmond Fair to play in a contest," said David Grey who's in charge of the fiddling contest.

"So it seemed like a good idea to do it here."

But the contest is not really a

contest. According to Grey, everyone participating will walk away with a ribbon.

"People participating are people that want to help support the fair anyway they can so we try to help them by giving them the opportunity to do so," he said.

## AMATEUR MUSICIANS

Participants are amateurs, some playing in bands, others just for their own pleasure. According to Grey, most know each other.

There are 15 fiddlers registered to take part, he said.

Because it can take a few minutes for fiddlers to warm up before taking the stage, singers will keep the public entertained between sets.

"The players have the services of a pianist and base guitar player so if they want to, they can be accompanied," Grey said.

The crowd will be welcome to take the dance floor by storm and waltz, two-step or polka to their heart's content.

"We chose fiddling because it caters to everyone," he said.

Grey is also trying to get contestant Eugene Naylor to call a square dance.

If the fiddling contest proves to be popular with the public, Grey said it could become a permanent event on the fair program.

The event is scheduled to take place Saturday afternoon at 2 at the Centre A. McAuley on the fairgrounds.

Anyone wishing to participate can still register. For more information call David Grey at 875-3205.



This year will be the first time the fair will feature an amateur fiddler contest. It will be held Saturday at 2 p.m. Bring your dancing shoes!



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# Fair is a great way for 4-Hers to show what they've learned

By Sylvie D. Nelson

**ISLAND BROOK** — Where can youngsters learn about farming and raising cattle while enjoying themselves and meeting other youths with similar interests?

By joining the local English-speaking Quebec Young Farmers — or 4-H club.

The agriculturally oriented 4-Hers learn about farm management and have the opportunity to take part in activities whether among members or with other local clubs.

Anyone between the ages of 5 and 21 can become a member. The Cookshire Fair is very important for the Sawyerville 4-H club because it's an opportunity for members to show what they've learned.

"Even if you don't have a farm, a club member can lend you a calf during fair time," said 4-Her Casey Stanley.

As Stanley explained, the Sawyerville 4-H club has taught her how to judge cattle so when it comes time to pick an animal to show at the fair, she knows

what to look for.

## AYRSHIRE CALF

"I'm going to show a Ayrshire calf which is a junior yearling — about 17-months old," she said.

Although it sounds easy, there is an art to picking the animal which best represents the breed.

"They have to have a nice, straight top-line (back) with a nice rump. The legs have to be straight, yet with a little curve. The cow must also look dairy: slim with sharp shoulders that comes to a point and that aren't too rounded," said Stanley.

About a month ago, Stanley picked what she thinks is the winning calf: 17-month old Sugar Ledge Cinnamon.

Since then she has been training Cinnamon to look her best in front of the judges.

"When you're showing, you put on the halter and walk backward and forward. You have to keep the head up high, give them a little thug and walk slowly," Stanley said.

According to Stanley, the

tricky part is to teach the calf to stop with front and back legs parallel to each other.

There are three categories members can enter.

## SHOWMANSHIP

The first is showmanship, where participants are judged on how they present and handle the calf and how well the animal is trained.

The second is calf competition where the calf is judged.

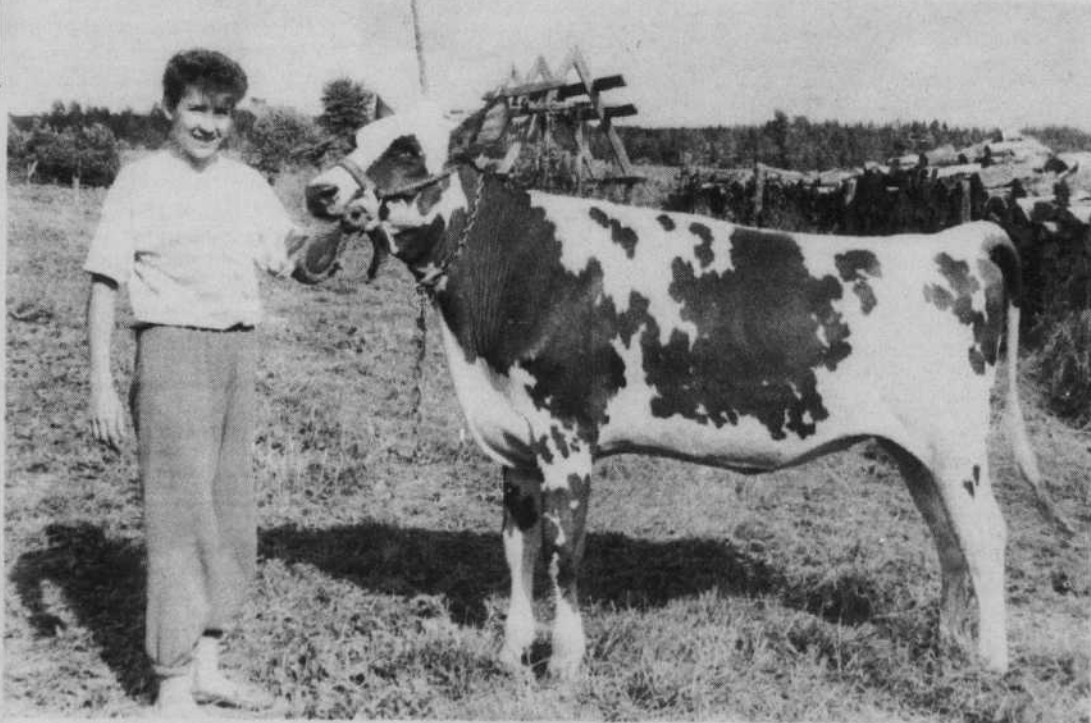
The third category is judging. Club members judge — along with regular judges — cows of a particular breed belonging to exhibitors. Judges go over members decisions to see if the youngsters have an eye for judging.

Stanley has won the showmanship category three years in a row.

"There is also Achievement Day where members compete against each other," she said.

That will take place Friday.

Saturday will be the inter-club competition where members from different clubs compete against each other.



RECORD SYLVIE D. NELSON

The 4-H club has taught 17-year-old Casey Stanley how to pick the perfect cow to enter in the fair. She has chosen Cinnamon for her straight top line and curved legs to enter in this year's fair.

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# Sylvie, Queenie and Jenny go for a ride

By Sylvie D. Nelson

SAWYERVILLE — The shatter-the-city-folk-myth series continues. I even think I'm going to make it a regular feature of fair supplements this summer.

It's in that spirit that I decided to try my hand at driving a horse-drawn wagon.

Harness class heavy horses seems to be a popular event at the Cookshire Fair and I thought I should experience it first hand.

Wednesday, I went to fair president Roger Bolduc's farm in Sawyerville to ride and drive a carriage pulled by a pair of purebred Belgian horses.

For people who don't know much about horses, Belgians are a breed of heavy horses, meaning they're huge monsters. So huge that their shoulders at their widest measure a good two and a half feet.

## EVERYTHING'S BIG

Actually, everything on these horses is big. You should see their hooves. They're very, very large. To give you all an idea, think of regular horses hooves and enlarge them three times.

During competition, it's important for the horses to look their best. To give the hooves, which are often cracked, a po-

lished look. Mr. Bolduc must put horse shoes that are larger than the hooves and fill the gaps with tar.

Belgians are also very tall. They average at least 21 hands — a normal horse can be 16 or 18 hands.

When sitting in the wagon, overlooking their behinds, you're almost as high as if you were sitting in an 18-wheeler. It's true, when we crossed some on our outing, we could have passed the Grey Poupon.

Travelling in a horse-drawn carriage is probably not like it used to be in the old days. Today's wagons are equipped with springs to make the ride more comfortable.

But the charm of riding in a horse-drawn carriage must be the same.

## BACK TO THE PAST

When we left the main road and made our way through a quaint path, which used to be an old railway, it was like going back in time.

There were no cars, just nature surrounding us. Everything was quiet as the two horses trotted along.

After a while, Mr. Bolduc handed me the reins telling me to "keep a continuous tension."

Have you ever tried to keep 4000 lbs of horsepower under

control? It takes strong arms and I've got puny little ones.

Still, I managed quite nicely thank you. And the feeling of control I got was pretty powerful.

One of the Belgians, Queenie, was a little more restless than her partner, Jenny. She seemed to be pulling in a different direction. Mr. Bolduc figured it was because the bit — a piece of metal in the horse's mouth to which the reins are attached — was bothering her.

But when we came back, his son noticed blood on Queenie's hoof. It turns out that one of the harness' buckles had broken and it had slowly made a cut in her leg.

When I say a cut, I mean a tear. Large and deep, bleeding profusely with muscle pieces stuck on the broken buckle.

I felt bad because I figured if I hadn't asked to go for a ride, it would have never happened. But Mr. Bolduc said that when you live on a farm worse things happen.

But all that blood, I had to put my head down a couple of times or I would have passed out.

Still, it won't stop me from taking the reins again. Next time, I'll try to go during the spring so I can stop by Mr. Bolduc's sugar shack and enjoy maple products.



Yes, that's me (with Roger Bolduc). Notice how I am in control of the big beasts.

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# Goats and sheep add flavor

By Sylvie D. Nelson

COOKSHIRE — There's more than just cows and horses at the fairs.

Smaller farm animals such as goats and sheeps add flavor to local fairs and the Cookshire exhibition is no exception.

In the area, goats are more po-

pular among farmers than sheeps. The proof is there are only 25 sheep entered compared to 75 goats entries.

"There's no demand for sheep so that's the main reason breeders get out of it," said Ronald Arbury, who's in charge of sheep and goat entries at the

fair.

The main reason is the price war between Canadian producers and Australia and New Zealand producers for the past few years.

Another reason is that according to Arbury, goats make much better pets than sheeps. "Sheeps are more aggressive," he said.

"When they decide something, they go. Nothing stops them."

## EASYGOING GOATS

Goats, on the other hand, are more laid back and it takes less time to break them in says Arbury.

"There will be 10 or 12 exhibitors, two or three of them having a herd of 100 animals or more. Others are smaller producers who own between 25 and 30 goats," he said.

Arbury got into the goat business when he needed to get rid of some brush on his property.

"They say to buy a goat to clear the land so I bought five," he said.

He now owns 25.

Goat meat is very popular among Greeks and East Indians.

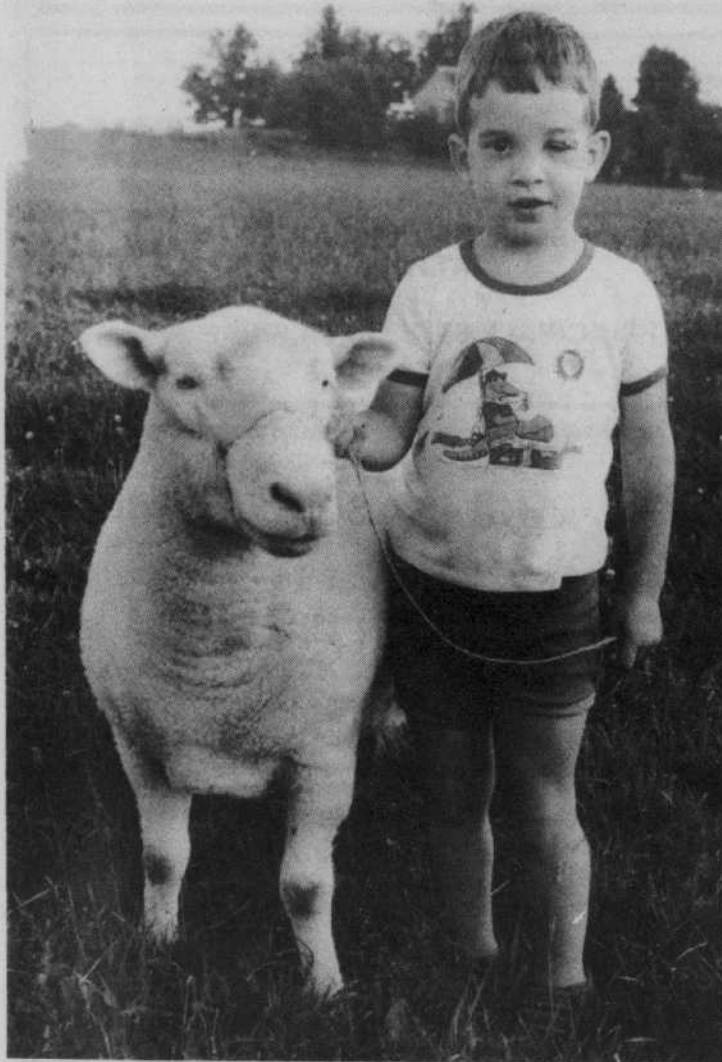
"They buy it as a delicacy during the Christmas and Easter holidays," said Arbury.

This year, a new breed of goats will be featured at the fair.

"We will have two breeders of La Mancha — goats that have no ears," he said.

According to Arbury, La Mancha goats look the same as regular ones but, as he explained, they only have small holes — acting as ears — on the side of their head.

It should be a sight to see.



Four-year-old Christopher Grey looks forward to taking part in this year's fair with the sheep he has been raising since its birth.

RECORD/SYLVIE D. NELSON

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We warmly welcome  
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Fair much success.



# The Town of Cookshire

MAYOR: GUY VEILLEUX

Mr. Marcel Shank,	Councillor
Mr. Yves Bibeau,	Councillor
Mr. Rhéaume Beaudoin,	Councillor
Mr. Gilles St-Laurent,	Councillor
Mrs. Estelle Couture,	Councillor
Mr. André Croisetière,	Sec.-treas.

**PERSONNEL**

Mr. Real Martel	group man.
Mr. Benoit Busque,	fire chief

For information on Industrial Sites,  
write or call the Secretary, Town of Cookshire

BEST WISHES TO THE COOKSHIRE FAIR

## LE Rénovateur **RONA**

Matériaux de Construction Létourneau Inc.

4855, Route 143 South  
Lennoxville, Quebec J1M 2A3  
Telephone: (819) 566-5633  
Fax: (819) 566-0008

Jocelyn Létourneau  
Director General