



PORT PERRY
FAIR

CELEBRATING
150 YEARS

Acknowledgements

The information contained in this booklet was obtained from two main sources; the minutes of the society and the newspapers of the area. Ledgers containing the minutes of the board meetings are available from 1853 to 1894 and from 1940 to the present. The missing 1894-1940 minutes present a number of problems in obtaining an accurate account of the affairs of the Society but some of that was given in the newspapers of the day.

The more important newspapers include the Ontario Observer which was started in Prince Albert in 1857, moved to Port Perry in 1873 and became North Ontario Observer. It ceased publication in 1920.

The Port Perry Standard was first published in Port Perry in 1866 and was renamed the Port Perry Star in 1907. The Uxbridge Journal, the Uxbridge Times-Journal, the Oshawa Tribune and the Whitby Chronicle, also provide some information on key issues of the history of the Port Perry Fair.

The above newspapers are to be found on microfilm at the Scugog Memorial Library and the Scugog Shores Museum. The Museum also has some early documents of the Societies and their Fairs.

Port Perry Agricultural Society

Text and research by Paul Arculus

Layout & Production by J. Peter Hvidsten, Observer Publishing

Printing - Port Perry Print & Digital Services

Published 2006

THE PORT PERRY AGRICULTURAL FAIR

THE ORIGINS:

The pioneers of this region of Ontario came mainly from the British Isles bringing with them many traditions including Agricultural Societies and the market and trade fairs. The fairs had their origins in the 12th century. In 1792, John Graves Simcoe organized the Agricultural Society of Upper Canada, the first in Ontario. It was held in what is now Niagara-on-the-Lake.

As early Ontario settlements developed into larger communities, Agricultural Societies became more widely popular and in 1830 the Legislature began to give grants to district Agricultural Societies. Lindsay organized an Agricultural Society in 1833 and Whitby followed in 1838. These Societies were non-profit organizations whose main purpose was to assist in the improvement of local agriculture. They also served as livestock and implement co-operatives. Eventually, most of the original objectives of the Societies were taken over by various branches of government and the Societies focused their efforts on holding fairs throughout the year.

In 1851 the provincial Government expanded its grants to include County Agricultural Societies. The purpose of these grants was to encourage improvement of agriculture through the organization of fairs and exhibitions. This enabled farmers to meet and share ideas and techniques. The grant money was permitted to be used as prize money for grains, livestock, machinery and produce. By 1854 there were 41 County societies and 175 Township societies.

The Ontario County Agricultural Society was organized in 1851 and set about organizing a fair for the County. Ontario County formed the major portion of today's Durham Region. The Society's first fair was held in Whitby in September 1852.

Not to be outdone by their neighbours in the south of the County, the citizens of Reach Township set about creating their own agricultural society. (Reach Township, when added to Cartwright Township and Scugog Island, forms today's Municipality of Scugog). On January 22, 1853 a meeting was held in the Reach Town Hall (Manchester). In a beautiful flowing script Joshua Wright recorded the following minutes:

At a meeting called to take into consideration the propriety of forming an Agricultural Society in this Township.

The meeting organized by calling Mr. Joseph Cloughtin to the chair and Mr. Neil McDougal to act as secretary.

1st Resolved that we do form ourselves into an Agricultural Society to be called the United Townships of Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society.

2nd It was moved and seconded and carried that Mr. George Currie be president of this Society.

3rd It was moved seconded and carried that Mr. William McGregor be Vice President

4th That Joshua Wright be secretary

5th That Mr. William Boynton be Treasurer

6th It was then moved seconded and carried that Mr. William Ward, Mr. John Weir, Mr. William Tummons, Abner Hurd, Esq. and Mr. John Agnew be directors.

The meeting was then adjourned until the 29th Inst at 2 o'clock at this place to complete the organization of this Society.

It was signed by Joshua Wright, secretary and co-signed by William McGregor, Vice President.

The proposed second meeting took place on January 29 and the following directors were added to the initial roster:

Ezra Gamble, Henry Robinson, Nicholas Mark, John Kellington.

The minutes continued:

An outline of the Constitution of the Society was submitted and unanimously adopted. The Secretary was then directed to get copies of the Constitution printed.

In the Constitution it was clearly stated that:

Any person residing in the Township may become a member of this Society by paying five shillings, and signing the declaration, and five shillings yearly after.

Paid membership allowed the individual member to attend meetings, to vote and make motions. The minutes note that the Society had 174 paid up members in 1853 and that membership remained stable for the ensuing years.

The next meeting was held, again in the Reach Town Hall at Manchester, on February 14. At this meeting the Society unanimously agreed that

...the spring fairs be held in Prince Albert and the Autumn Fairs be held in Epsom (Houcks Hotel, Brock Road) and the first spring Fair be held on the 8th day of March and the Secretary was directed to prepare printed Notices to that effect exhibiting a list of the premiums to be awarded...

After the directors had been duly elected, they later held a Directors meeting at which the President and all executive members were elected from the Directors. This is still the process today.



Port Perry Fairgrounds and grandstand circa 1890

CONSTITUTION

OF THE

UNITED TOWNSHIPS OF REACH AND SCUGOG AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

ORGANIZED 22ND OF JANUARY, 1853.

The style of this Society shall be, the United Townships of Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society; its object shall be to improve the condition of Agriculture, Horticulture, and the Household Arts.

SEC. 1.—Any person residing in the Township may become a Member of this Society by paying Five Shillings, and signing the Declaration, and five shillings yearly thereafter; any Member being at liberty to withdraw at any time before the General Meeting, by giving notice to the Secretary in writing of his wish to do so.

SEC. 2.—The Officers of this Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, with not more than nine Directors. The Directors shall be an Executive Committee, three of whom, with the President or Vice-President, the Secretary and Treasurer, shall form a quorum. The Officers shall be elected annually, at the General Meeting to be held on the second Saturday in January in each and every year, at the Town Hall by a majority of votes of the members present, every member being entitled to vote at such general meeting.

SEC. 3.—It shall be the duty of the Directors to collect the Yearly Subscriptions from Members in the Section for which they are elected, and pay over the amount to the Treasurer at the first Director's Meeting in each and every year; also to procure as many new Members as they possibly can. It shall be their duty as an Executive Committee, to decide on the time and place for holding the Cattle Show and Fairs of the Society, the amount and nature of the Premiums to be awarded; to select proper persons for Judges, and to make all other necessary arrangements for the Fairs. And if any vacancies shall accidentally occur by death or otherwise of any of the Officers, they shall elect some fit and proper person to fill such office until the General Election. They shall meet twice in the year (or oftener if necessary), by order of the President for the transaction of business; all questions of importance, resolutions, or amendments, proposed by any member of the Committee must be in writing, and shall be decided by a majority of votes; the Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer are to vote as part of the Executive Committee; when the votes are equal, the President to have a casting vote.

SEC. 4.—The Secretary shall keep the minutes of the transactions of the Society, and shall prepare a Report of the proceedings to be submitted at the General Meeting.

SEC. 5.—The Treasurer shall hold the funds of the society, and shall disburse them on order of the President or Vice President, countersigned by the secretary; and shall make a report of the receipts and expenditure at the annual meeting.

SEC. 6.—This Constitution may be amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members present at any General Meeting.

GENERAL RULES.

Any person being a member can compete for any or all prizes offered at the Fairs of the Society, but for every entry over four by one person 7¹/₂d will be charged. Resident persons not members will be charged 10 shillings for every entry. Persons not resident in the township owners of any stud horse, may exhibit such animal by paying 15 shillings, and bulls rams, and boars by paying 10 shillings for every entry; but should any such animal obtain a premium it must serve in the township for the ensuing year. No animal or animals obtaining the first prize in their class for three years in succession shall be allowed to take a premium again in this Society. The entry and exhibition of any animal or article does not necessarily entitle it to a premium where there is no competition, the Judges in such a case are to decide on its worthiness. The Directors are to use their utmost endeavours to restrain the Judges for examining the animals or articles exhibited until they proceed on their duties, or from obtaining any knowledge of the ownership until their duties are performed; and any person conversing or otherwise interfering with the Judges while on duty, will forfeit any right they may have to a prize. All entries to be made to the Secretary before Eleven o'clock on the day of the fair. Numerical Tickets will be supplied, which must be attached to every animal or article entered for competition.

Published by order of the President and Directors,

[PERRY & DORNAN, PRINTERS, WHITBY.]

JOSHUA WRIGHT, Secretary.

THE FIRST FAIR:

On March 8th 1853 the first Fair of the Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society was held in Prince Albert. In agriculture, prizes were awarded for: best 10 bushels of spring wheat, barley, oats, peas, best one bushel of clover seed, timothy seed and the best 2 bushels of potatoes. In each category prizes were awarded for first, second and third places.

At the conclusion of the fair, the executive decided to "...hold a Fair in Prince Albert on the 3rd of May for the purpose of exhibition of stock and farming implements."

At this Spring Fair prizes were awarded for: best stallion, best three year old colt, best mare with colt, best mare "not with colt", best team of horses, best saddle horse, best milch cow, best one year old bull and best yoke of working oxen.

Farming implement awards were: best plow, best double harrow, best lumber wagon and best grain cradle. These implements were hand made by the individual exhibitors.

After the successful conclusion of the fair an executive meeting followed at William Boynton's hotel in Prince Albert, at which it was decided to hold a Fall Fair at Epsom on October 18, 1853, "...for the purpose of exhibiting seed wheat, live stock, dairy produce and roots."

Prizes were awarded for the following: Livestock - the best 2 year old colt, 2 year old filly, year old colt, year old filly, foal, bull, heifer, bull calf, heifer calf, ram, best pen of 2 year old ewes, fat sheep, ram lamb, ewe lamb, boar pig and the best breeding sow. The Dairy Produce section had prizes for the best 6 lb of butter and the best cheese not less than 8 lbs. In the Roots division, prizes were awarded for the best bushels of turnips, carrots, beets, mangle wartzel and onions.

Prizes were also awarded for the best set of double harness, the best pair of men's fine boots, the best pair of women's fine leather boots, the best 10 yards of full cloth, the best 10 yards of flannel, the best pair of socks and the best pair of mitts.

At this fall fair the first ploughing match was held and prizes were awarded in: iron plough, wooden plough and boys plough. In the minutes of the competition both spellings occur: plowing and ploughing, but by 1860 the American spelling of plowing was fully adopted.



Horses racing to the finish line at Port Perry Fair in 1910

BEGINNING OF QUARTERLY FAIRS:

The executive of the Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society met in the Manchester Town Hall on January 14, 1854, to celebrate the success of the first year and to elect a new executive. At the first meeting of the new executive, the pattern was established for the Fairs which was followed for many decades; two Spring fairs and two Fall Fairs.

The Early Spring Fair was usually held in March and was essentially a Grain and Seed Fair. The second Spring Fair was usually held in late April or early May and was a show of horses, cattle, other livestock and farm implements.

The early Fall fair was held in late August and again was essentially a Grain and Seed Fair. The later Fall Fair, usually held in October, was identical to the Spring Fair: a Show of horses, cattle and farming implements. It was usually listed as an "Exhibition for Dairy and Farming Produce."

For 1854, the first Spring Fair was held, as scheduled, on March 7 and the second Spring Fair was held on May 2, 1854. Both Spring Fairs were held in Epsom. The range and number of prizes was increased and prize winning items were auctioned off. Both Fall Fairs were held in Prince Albert, the first on August 29 and the second on October 17.

By the time that the meeting of the Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society was held in Manchester on January 13, 1855, it was obvious that the success of the two previous years had given momentum to the commitment to quarterly fairs for the communities involved. At this meeting, a new executive was installed. It involved a few changes. For the first time, members of the Graham, Holtby and Christie family began their long standing involvement with the Fair.

It was also obvious from the minutes of this meeting that more stringent rules were needed for the events. The following motions were passed:

On a motion from Mr. Wright, the directors were recommended, as far as practicable, to select the judges from adjoining Townships...

On a motion of Mr. Claughton, it was resolved that premiums awarded to stallions not owned in the Township be not paid until the horse had served in the Township.

On a motion of Mr. Wright, it was resolved that no person not a member or in the employment of a member of this society shall compete at the annual ploughing match.

The next meeting of the Society was held in Utica on March 3, 1855. At this event it was decided to hold the Spring Fairs in Prince Albert and the Fall Fairs in Epsom. It was also made mandatory that all prize winners were to be sold at auction and that those refusing to sell "...shall forfeit all right to prizes."

The Spring Fair was held on March 20 at Prince Albert. In the minutes written by the secretary Niven Agnew, it was noted that, "A fine sample of California peas exhibited by John Taylor was awarded a discretionary prize of ten shillings and highly recommended by the Judges."

On July 28, the executive met in Utica to plan the Fall Fairs. The Exhibition of Wheat was held, as planned in Epsom on September 4, 1855 and the Fall Fair was held on October 16. This Fair saw the inauguration of classes for "Domestic Manufacturers" and "Ladies Department." The Ladies Department included prizes for crochet work, embroidery, flat worsted work, raised worsted work, braiding, knitting, wax flowers, quilts, specimen gentlemen's shirts, woolen socks and mittens. At the executive meeting that day, Niven Agnew resigned as secretary and his place was taken by John Christie.

Mr. Christie refers to the event held on October 16 as the "Autumnal Exhibition" rather than the Fall Fair. The Society held its Ploughing Match on Oct. 23, 1855.

CHANGES:

In 1857 the department of Agriculture expanded the grant system to electoral divisions not just counties. This resulted in two levels of Agricultural Societies in Ontario County. The (NOAS) North Ontario County Agricultural Society was the umbrella organization for the Agricultural Societies in the north riding of the county and was legislated to oversee the (RSAS) Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society, (UAS) Uxbridge Agricultural Society and the Brock Agricultural Society. The NOAS held its fairs on an annual basis in the fall of the year.

The first NOAS Fair was held in Prince Albert in the fall of 1858. This was in addition to the RSAS Fall Fairs. The NOAS was eventually divided into two divisions with the Central Ontario Agricultural Society (COAS) being the county umbrella organization for the RSAS.

It should be pointed out that persons who wished to compete in the Provincial competitions had to win at the township level and place at the county exhibitions.

The RSAS and the UAS were funded as follows: for every dollar paid by individuals and groups as membership in the societies, the government granted 60 cents. The County organizations were responsible for the grants and were legislated to hand out, annually, one third to the county organizations and the remainder among the township organizations, according to the paid memberships.

At the annual meeting held on January 9, 1858, there was a significant change of members on the Board of the RSAS. George Currie who had been a founding member of the organization and president for 4 years stepped down, as did directors John Weir and George Lyle. The change appeared to be an amicable one as the minutes of the meeting state that thanks were given to each of the retiring members for their work during the past year. In spite of these significant changes, the Society continued its successful ways, announcing that for 1857, the Society had receipts of £86 and 6 shillings 8 pence, expenses of £ 74/ 18/ 10 leaving a balance of £11/ 7 / 10.

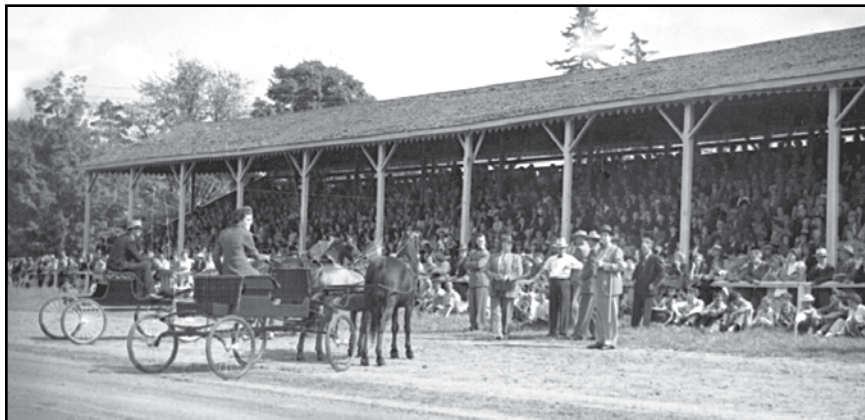
At the January 8, 1859 meeting the treasurer showed his conformity to the official change in currency from British pounds to Canadian dollars. The receipts for 1858 were \$371.07 and expenses of \$319.87, left a balance of \$45.57. It was noted in the minutes that the Society was to demand its due grant from the County Society. This grant amounted to \$51.85.

The year 1860 marked the first of a series of rifts among the local Townships. The minutes of the annual meeting held on January 14, recorded the following:

It was agreed that as Scugog was getting a Society of their own that we let go of the Union of that Township and after this that this Society be known as the Reach Agricultural Society.

In spite of this declaration the secretary continued to record the meetings as the RSAS throughout 1860. Also at the meeting the executive agreed to present honorariums of \$20 to Secretary Duncan Christie, and Treasurer William Boynton junior. One dramatic result of the separation of the Reach and Scugog Townships was that the membership of the Reach Agricultural Society dropped from 174 to 115 for the year 1860. At the conclusion of each of the 1860 Fairs the meetings always ended with a "good Agricultural Dinner." The food must have had a calming influence as the differences between the two groups were resolved and the RSAS continued on its successful ways.

The addition of a Floral Department for the Fall Fair was duly noted in the minutes. A committee was appointed to administer the "Floral Hall." Those appointed were: T.C. Forman, George Currie, Abner Hurd, James Holden, R.H. Tomlinson and the president Timothy Monroe.



The old grandstand at Port Perry Fair was packed for this picture taken in 1950

For the first seven years of the Society's existence the fairs were held in either Epsom or Prince Albert. In 1862, Utica held its first fair and the following year, Borelia was added to the venues, thus marking the first time that the Fair was ever held in what is now Port Perry.

Major changes in directorship in 1864 were notable. William Boynton, who had been treasurer since the Society's was not re-elected. There is no mention of the reason. A motion of thanks was extended to Duncan Christie for his service as secretary, but no recognition was given to the long service of Boynton.

PROBLEMS:

Given the variations of human nature the adjudication of various competitions, their classes and events always present some problems. At the meeting of the Society at Cloughton's Hotel at Utica on Saturday 25 February, 1857, a motion was passed stating that the person entering grain "...shall be the actual grower of such grains and seeds and potatoes otherwise he forfeits his right to a prize," indicating that there had been some question as to whether an entrant was the actual grower. A similar motion was passed at the February 1858 meeting. : "...that all implements showed be made by the exhibiter [sic]... otherwise he forfeits any right he may have to the prize..."

At the meeting held at Manchester's Town Hall on January 8, 1859 the following record appeared in the minutes:

Then John Hodgson said that there was some mistake in the prize awarded for mitts at the last Fall show which he hoped would be made right today, then John Cloughton stated the transaction which went to show that in place of favouring Miss Christie he was taking the prize from her it was proved by the secretary books that he put her name in accordance with the number entered and that it was R .English that entered said mitts in place of John who was complaining.

Then moved by W. Penhall seconded by Moses Vernon that Miss Christie be desired to refund the Society the prize received for mitts...

In August of 1860, the question of implements arose again when the iron plough exhibited by Emaney and White was brought into question. W. Bolton maintained that

the plough entered by them was not of their manufacture. The resulting motion read "...that the amount of the prize be not paid to them unless they give satisfactory proof that said plough was made in accordance with the rules of the Society." The motion was duly moved, seconded and carried.

At the 1862 meeting the Society demanded that John Coates return his prize for Boys Ploughing when it was discovered that he was over age. At the January 1864 meeting the Officers and Directors of the Society asked that Mr. Stones to return his prize for shearling ewes, as it had been paid in mistake. It should have gone to Mr. Stonehouse.

FINANCIAL WOES:

Canada's year of Confederation, 1867 was a celebratory year for the country, but for the Agricultural Society it was a critical year. At the Board meeting held at Plank's Hotel in Manchester on February 20, the board of directors decided to cancel the Seed Fair. There was no reason given for this action but at the September meeting it was clear that the Society was in financial trouble. It could have been a decline in paid memberships but this is not indicated in the minutes. To resolve the crisis the Treasurer urged on the Epsom Delegates to endeavour to raise the sum of \$50.00.

To add encouragement to this effort a group of members promised to match the Epsom group if they raised the \$50.00. A special meeting of the board was held on October 1 at Scott's Hotel. At this meeting a number of donations were received: William Bolton gave \$4.00, Timothy Munro \$2.00, Mr. Wilson gave the prize money of \$5.00 for the Ladies Equestrian event, D. Jennings gave \$1.00 and John Christie gave \$2.00.

The donated amounts seemed to satisfy the board and a motion was passed to hold the Fall Fair at Epsom on October 19 and the admission was increased from 5 cents to 10 cents.

At the January 9, 1869 meeting the board decided to hold all the Fairs at the North Ontario Agricultural Society grounds in the village of Prince Albert. At the same meeting the executive also decided to open the events of the Fairs to members of both

North and South Ontario Agricultural Societies as well as the members from Cartwright and Mariposa Townships, provided that they pay an entrance fee for membership of \$1.80. Annual membership to the Society for Township residents was raised to one dollar.

By 1869 the hamlets of Manchester, Sunderland, Manilla and Wick all hosted



View of the racetrace and inner field taken in 1951

quarterly fairs. Williamsburg (now Blackstock) Utica and Scugog (Island) held at least one fair a year.

LOCATIONS:

Beginning in 1853 there were four fairs each year in Reach Township.

In 1856, the NOAS also held the first of its own two day Fall Fairs. Until 1861 the RSAS fairs alternated between Prince Albert and Epsom. In 1862 the spring fair was held in Borelia, the May Livestock Fair in Prince Albert, the August Grain and Seed Fair in Utica and the fall Livestock Fair in Epsom.

The next year Manchester was added, beginning an intense rivalry among the communities as to which location would hold the fairs. As late as 1891, the minutes of the Annual General Meeting showed that W. Heard offered to raise \$40.00 if the Spring Fair was to be held in Manchester. James Graham and Meharry offered \$50 if the fair was held in Port Perry. The highest bidder won. Mr Meharry promptly donated an extra \$4.00 to the Society. This rivalry for the Fair location was the major factor in the breakup of the Society in 1894.

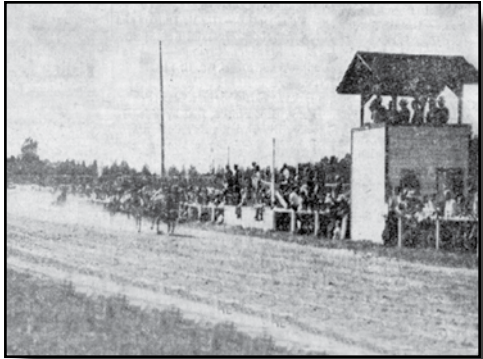
It should be noted that in the 1850s and 1860s Port Perry was a tiny hamlet, the smaller of the host communities. Prince Albert was the second largest grain handling centre in Canada with Manchester not far behind! When construction began on the Port Whitby and Port Perry Railway shortly after Confederation, most merchants from Manchester and all the merchants from Prince Albert moved to Port Perry. When the first train arrived at its northern terminal in 1871, the fate of the other communities in Reach and Scugog was sealed and they began their rapid decline as significant commercial communities.

Spring and winter Fairs were usually a one day event whereas the summer and fall events were frequently two day celebrations. All the fairs were held on farm land loaned or leased to the Fair Board for the specific occasion. The Port Perry location was usually on the Curts' property, the site of present day Reid's Grocery. It wasn't until sometime in the 1870s that land in Port Perry was loaned to the COAS for its long term use. This property was adjacent to the Paxton Tate Foundry on Perry Street where the West Shore Village retirement facilities are today.

The COAS, in turn encouraged the RSAS to use its facilities. The present 23-acre grounds were purchased by the COAS from C.C. Kellett in 1886. This became known as the Central Ontario Fairgrounds. Later, when the COAS ran into financial problems, The Port Perry Council purchased the property and leased it back to the COAS and the RSAS for their fairs.

The COAS only held Fall fairs. The success of the local fairs in Whitby, Port Perry, Uxbridge and Cannington reduced the need for the County Fairs held by the COAS. The COAS ran into severe financial difficulty and closed its books in October 1897.

A group of citizens led by Peter Christie organized a syndicate which bought the fairgrounds and held the Great Syndicate Fair from September 12 to 14, 1900. This was unsuccessful. The Syndicate sold the property to the Regal Packing Company



Judges stand at the racetrack in 1951

to operate an evaporating and canning factory. This facility was burned to the ground in 1904 and the Port Perry Council purchased the property to be used as a park and leased to the RSAS and its successors for their fairs.

EVOLUTION:

At the 1892 Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society AGM, President Graham objected to the way the directors had been elected. He was quoted as saying that “several voters being boys and not on the Assessment rolls.” As a result, all the Port Perry and Scugog Directors refused to attend the next meeting. By January 22, lawyers had been called in and the election of the directors was declared null and void. A year later, the Port Perry faction refused to support the Society unless it held the Spring Fair in Port Perry. It was held in Port Perry but the friction continued and on January 8, 1894, a group of members of the Society submitted the following notice to the board.

Take notice that we, the undersigned, being a majority of the members of the Reach, Port Perry and Scugog Agricultural Society, residing in the village of Port Perry, one of the Municipalities comprising the said union, desire to separate from the said united Society. This Notice is given pursuant to the Revised Statutes of Ontario (1887) Chapter 39 sec 54.

*Signed H.M. Kayie [?] Thomas Hodgson, James Swan, Samuel Graham, George MacMillan, L. Sebert
Port Perry, 8 January, 1894.*

Thus the Society was split into three separate societies; The Port Perry Agricultural Society, the Reach Agricultural Society and the Scugog Agricultural Society. A legal dispute arose over the distribution of the funds. This was eventually agreed upon and for a short time the three Societies operated independently. However, this arrangement proved to be ineffective. With each society holding its own fair, attendance was abysmal and by the time of the AGM of the Scugog Agricultural Society of January 10, 1900, an announcement was made of a re-amalgamation of the three into the Reach, Scugog and Port Perry Agricultural Society. But it wasn't until the AGM of January 1908 that the following was officially declared:

After considerable discussion on re-christening the Society, the appellation Port Perry, Reach and Scugog Agricultural Society was adopted. In future Port Perry will be the headquarters and all Fairs and meetings will be held in this town.

A final change took place in 1965 when a motion was proposed to change the name to The Port Perry Agricultural Society. This motion was ratified at the January 1966 A.G.M.

BUILDINGS & FACILITIES:

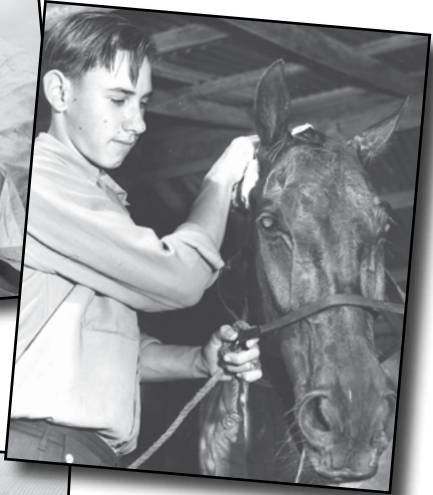
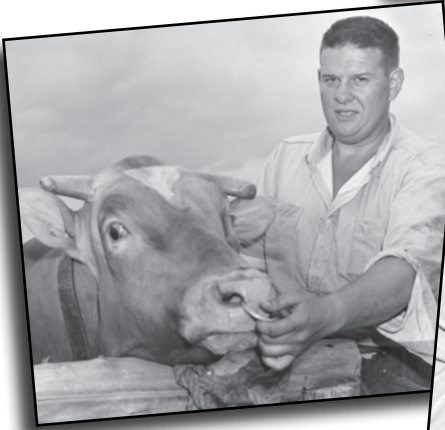
Shortly after the COAS acquired the present grounds in 1886 several buildings including an imposing grandstand and display buildings were built. The Main building was referred to as the Crystal Palace, named after the huge glass structure built in London for the 1851 World Fair in Hyde Park, London. The name Crystal Palace was used for the main building of many fairs across the province including Ottawa and the CNE in Toronto. Although they bore little resemblance to the original in London, they named them in order to attempt to evoke the immense popularity of the 1851 Fair which drew more than six million visitors.

To accommodate the livestock, at the Port Perry Fair, permanent horse stables and cattle sheds were built. In 1904, the Crystal Palace was destroyed by fire but

**Livestock
at the
Port Perry
Fair
1950s & 1960s**



*Eldon and Irwin Smith
at the Black & White Show*



*A young farmer
grooming his horse*



*Upper: Lloyd and Les Smith with
one of their Holstein cattle*



Right: Walter Kerry shows his best



The former Baptist Church was moved to the fairgrounds

the grandstand was saved. In place of the Palace, a large barn was built. Shortly afterwards, the first baseball diamond was built on the grounds.

The grandstand lasted until 1967 when it too was destroyed by fire. That year the board signed a contract with Mel-Ron Construction to build a new grandstand at the cost of \$15,000. The stands would be on a concrete block wall base containing 6 rooms, two of which would be washrooms. Above would be the actual stands, 85 feet long with 10 rows of pre-cast concrete risers and have a seating capacity of 576 people. It was completed in time for the 1967 Fall Fair.

The Craft Building started its life as Mechanics Institute in 1856 at the north east corner of Queen and Rosa. The building was bought by the Baptists in 1866. At this time a front entrance and steeple were built. The steeple was removed in 1925. In 1930 the Baptists sold the building to the RSAS and it was moved to its present location on the Fairs grounds. In 1999, the building was raised three feet and placed on pillars to allow air circulation under the floor. At the same time, a ramp was constructed at the entrance.

In 1976 a new display building was constructed at a cost of \$14,000. At the August 1976 Board meeting it was decided to name the new building the Christie Building in honour of Grant Christie.

TRAGEDY:

In late July 1961, 14 year old Gary Wayne Jackson joined his friends for a baseball practice at the fairgrounds. When he didn't return home for dinner, his parents became concerned and went to the fair grounds to look for him. Gary was found dead, hanging from a rope in the barn. At the inquest, the jury was informed that many boys



The last known picture taken of the former grandstand, which was destroyed in 1967

went to the barn to practice their "Tarzan" imitations. Gary was by himself and unfortunately had become entangled while swinging on the rope, getting his arm caught, covering his face and suffocating him. The Society was instructed to ensure that the building was properly locked.

NOTEABLE ITEMS:

- 1853: The RSAS had 121 paid up members.
1857: The RSAS had 187 paid up members,
1895: Because of disputes the membership had dropped to 75. At the Fair, Mrs. Paxton and several other ladies had purses stolen.
1920: Motorcycle races were held at the fair for the first time.
1923: A public telephone was installed on the Fairground for the first time. Calls could be made for 5 cents.
1937: The first Black and White (Holstein) show was held.
1940: The Junior Fair was added to the events of the Fall Fair.
1941: Entrance fees: Adults 35 cents, Dance 25 cents. Children under 12 free.
1942: The Fair was reduced from two days to one.
1943: The Society decided to hold the fair permanently on the Labour Day week end each year.
1946: The first special Car entrance was built on the north side of the grounds.
1948: The AGM noted that the previous year had shown a deficit of \$429.42. This was rectified at the followin AGM by a profit of \$474.70.
1949: The entrance was raised to \$.50 cents. The proceeds from the dance were counted separately and given to the IODE who ran the dance.
1951: A fund raising raffle was held and the first prize was a television set. Gate receipts passed the \$2000, mark for the first time. Attendance was 6,000.
1955: R.D. Woon retired after 15 years as Secretary and Treasurer of the Fair Board.
1956: Poultry Show and pony races discontinued.
1957: First 15 year agreement between town and Fair Board.
1961: Mr. G. Nelson congratulated Port Perry on having the first Black and White day in Canada.
1965: Discussion with council regarding a 20 year lease. Attendance at the Fair exceeded 8000.
1970: Mr. and Mrs. Fred Lamb were honoured for 22 years service on the Fair Board.
1980: Return to three day Fair.
1986: The Durham Board of Education decided that a new Elementary school to accommodate 400 pupils was needed in Port Perry. The Township entered into a discussion with the Durham Board regarding selling the Fair Grounds for a new school and establishing a new Fair Grounds elsewhere in the Township. In August, 13 Fair Board members resigned over the issue. In the Fair Board's 22 to 20 vote opposing the breaking of the Fairground lease, the School Board was forced to look elsewhere for school grounds.



*R.D. Woon was
Secretary/Treasurer
for 15 years*

- 1994: The Horse barns were torn down after being considered too dilapidated to be repaired.
 1999: Sheep Show returns to Fair.
 2000: Return to a 2-day format.
 2003: Return to a three day format.
 2006: The Society elected its first woman president, Janet Goris.

EXECUTIVES OVER THE YEARS

REACH AND SCUGOG AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
1853	George Currie	William McGregor	Joshua Wright	William Boynton Jr
1854	George Currie	William McGregor	Joshua Wright	William Boynton Jr
1855	"	Frederick Graham	Niven Agnew	"
1856	"	William Ward	John Christie	"
1857	"	"	Charles Payne	"
1858	William Ward	William McGregor	Duncan Christie	"
1859	Samuel Netherton	Timothy Monroe	"	"
1860	Timothy Munroe	William Penhall	"	"
1861-63	William Penhall	Joseph Claughton	"	"
1864	"	Samuel Netherton	"	William Scott
1865	"	Adam Gordon	"	"
1866	"	J.W. Baird	John Christie	"
1867	Samuel Netherton	Timothy Munro	"	"
1868	James Graham	Robert Dobson	"	"
1869-73	"	Samuel Netherton	"	"
1874	"	"	"	Thomas Forman
1875-81	"	"	"	Samuel Christian
1882	"	James Baird	"	"
1883	James Baird	Samuel Netherton	"	"
1884	"	"	Francis Earchman	"
1885	Samuel Netherton	Peter Christie	"	"
1886	C. Sharrard	James Leask	Samuel Christian	Samuel Christian

S. Christian was elected as Reeve of Reach Township in January 1886. He resigned as Secretary/Treasurer at the July 1886 meeting. Francis Earchman was elected as Secretary and Peter Christie was elected as Treasurer.

1887	C. Sharrard	Samuel Netherton	Francis Earchman	Peter Christie
1888	Samuel Netherton	E. Stickney	William Spence	"
1889	E. Stickney	Samuel Netherton	"	"
1890	Thomas Graham	Donald McKay	"	"
1891	"	William Pearson	"	"
1892-94	"	Joseph Baird	"	"

THE PORT PERRY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
1895	Joseph Baird	Samuel Netherton	"	"
1900	Thomas Graham	A.W. Williams	J.H. Brown	J.C. Browne
190	"	Thomas Manderson	"	"
1902	"	A. W. Williams	"	"
1903	"	Thomas Manderson	"	"
1904-08	"	A.W. Williams	"	"

PORT PERRY, REACH AND SCUGOG AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
1914	William Graham	H.G. Hutcheson	?	J.L. Forman
.....				
1925	R.M. Holtby	Lawson Honey	?	
1926	Grant Christie			
1927-28	Lawson Honey	Grant Christie	Neil Sweetman	
1929	Grant Christie	F. Shepherd	"	
1930-32	"	"	N. Ewers	
.....				
1938-40	W.F. Thompson	? MacGregor	R.D. Woon Sec/Treas.	
1941	"	Fred Christie	"	
1942-50	Fred Christie	Armour McMillan	"	
1951-53	"	Anson Gerrow	"	
1954	Armour McMillan	Murray Holtby	"	
1955	"	"	Ryerson Beare	
1956-58	"	"	Fred Lamb	
1959-61	A.R. Johns	Dr. D.C. Christie	"	
1962-63	Dr. D.C. Christie	Frank Honey	"	
1964-66	Frank Honey	Clarence Carter	Fred Lamb	

PORT PERRY AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

Year	President	Vice President	Secretary	Treasurer
1966-67	Frank Honey	Clarence Carter		Fred Lamb
1968-69	Clarence Carter	Clare Vernon	Fred Lamb	
1970-71	Clare Vernon	Neil Hunter	Glenn & Marjory Wanamaker	
1972-73	Neil Hunter	Don Crosier	"	
1974-75	Donald Crosier	Ronald Deeth	"	
1976-77	Ronald Deeth	Grant Parrott	"	
1978-79	Grant Parrott	Joe Baxter	"	
1980	Joe Baxter	Irwin Smith	"	
1981	"	"	James Duncan	
1982-83	Irwin Smith	Stewart Diceman	"	
1984-85	Stewart Diceman	Jim Jamieson	"	
1986	Jim Jamieson	Doug Coates	"	
1987	Rod McKay	Clare Vernon	"	
1988	"	Ross Bailey	"	
1989	"	Keith Phoenix	Shirley Hunter	
1990-91	Keith Phoenix	Dr. Bill Cohoon	"	
1992-93	Dr. Bill Cohoon	Paul Christie	"	
1994-95	Paul Christie	Frank Fielding	"	
1996	Frank Fielding	Rusty Hick	"	
1997	"	Dr. Paul Puckrin	"	
1998-99	Whitney Cohoon	Dr. Paul Puckrin	"	
2000	Dr. Paul Puckrin	Robert Smith	"	
2001	Dr. Paul Puckrin			
2002-03	Robert Smith	Bob Beach	Heather Callan Secretary/Treasurer Barbara Weese	Stephen Gray
2005	Bob Beach			
2006	Janet Goris	Frank McKey	"	

No reports or records for 2001, 2004. No AGM report for 2005.

LADIES DIVISION/ HOMECRAFT PRESIDENTS

1970-78	Ruby Christie	1984-85	Betty Cincurak	1994-97	Linda Atkinson
1979	Jesse Chambers	1986	Marilyn Smith	1998-99	Isabel Lee
1980-81	Noreen Crozier	1987-88	Dorothy Catton	200-01	Barbara Weise
1982-83	Margaret Ann Lamb	1989-93	Penny Pettypiece	2002	Julie Lee

FAIR PEOPLE



Joshua Wright
Secretary 1883



Peter Christie
Vice Pres. 1885



James Graham
President 1868



Thomas Graham
President 1890



Samuel Christian
Treasurer 1875



Grant Christie
President 1929



R.M. Holtby
President 1925



Armour McMillan
President 1954



Fred
Christie
President 1942



Marjorie & Glenn
Wanamaker
Sec

PAST - PRESENT & FUTURE

The Port Perry Fair has a long and colourful history. As farms make way for huge subdivisions, particularly in the Greater Toronto area, agriculture is rapidly disappearing from the landscape. Yet, here in Scugog, farming is still the primary land user and will continue to be so for many generations into the future. This factor supports the optimism of the Directors of the Port Perry Fair in their desire to present our agricultural heritage as a major part of the Fair.

Events for boys have always been a part of the fair since its inception. Ladies and girls displays and competitions were initiated as early as 1855. Indeed so many of the events held in the first fairs are still an essential and important part of today's fairs here in Scugog, and in 2006, the Society returned to its roots by holding a parade on Queen Street. The Black and White show is still one of the largest outside the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. Beef Cattle and a Beef auction provide considerable interest as does the Harness Racing schedule. The traditions of the Homecraft and Junior Fair competitions and displays continue to attract both the young and the older members of the community. Music also plays a major part in the program. The Directors, over the recent past, have made a supreme effort to attract visitors with a variety of other activities including visiting musicians and groups, Hell Drivers, Demolition Derbies and Tractor Pulls. The younger folk can find also find fun and excitement at the Midway.

Thanks to so many hard working volunteers Port Perry Fair has a bright future ahead. We are all looking forward to the 200th anniversary of the Fair.

SPRINGS SHOW



PRIZES OPEN TO THE DOMINION!

The Reach, Port Perry and Scugog Agricultural Society will hold their Spring Show for the Exhibition of Horses, Cattle and Implements, at

MANCHESTER

ON TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 1892.

LIST OF PRIZES TO BE AWARDED:

HORSES.

Draft Stallion, seed, Imported, \$10 of first prize given by Mr. W. C. Heard, low fee \$200	\$25	\$10	\$5
Three-year-old Draft Stallion, Imported	7	5	3
Two-year-old Draft Stallion, Imported	4	3	2
Draft Stallion, Canadian	3	2	1
Two-year-old Draft Stallion, Canadian	3	2	1
Single or Carriage Stallion, shown in harness	4	3	2
Open Drafting Horse, single or pair, \$1000 & up	3	2	1
Span Gen. Purpose Horse, pairings of more	5	3	2
Saddle Horse	5	3	2
Imported Drafting Brood Mare, in full or half bred	5	3	2
Canadian Drafting Brood Mare, in full or half bred	3	2	1
General Purpose Brood Mare, in full or half bred	3	2	1
Single or Carriage Brood Mare, in full or half bred	3	2	1
Single Driving Horse, pair or set, 1000 & up	5	3	2
Single Driving Horse, pair or set, 1000 & up	5	3	2
Drafting Saddle Colt, foaled in 1891	3	2	1



DURHAM CATTLE.

Aged Bull, first prize by R. Miller, Esq.	\$5	\$3
Two-year-old Bull (age to be on numerical ticket)	2	1
Yearling Bull (age to be on numerical ticket)	1	0

IMPLEMENTS.

Lumber Wagon, thin skin	\$2
Single Juggy, with top	2

SPECIAL PRIZE.

O. C. Kellist, Esq. Port Perry Nurseries, will give a Special Prize of \$5 for the best Roadster Pully

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

A meeting of the Directors will be held at the Revere House, Manchester, at Ten o'clock on the morning of the Show.

DIRECTORS—D. F. Hagerman, James Graham, E. H. Purdy, Francis Earchman, James Pearson, J. C. Browne, J. W. Meharry, W. C. Heard, John Heard.

SPENCE,

SECRETARY

P. CHRISTIE,

TREASURER.

JOSEPH BAIRD,

V. PRESIDENT.

THOMAS GRAHAM,

PRESIDENT

Poster advertising the Reach, Port Perry, Scugog Fair, held at Manchester in April 1892