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ACROSS THE ISLAND

Fair Reminiscences, Islanders Are Great

By NEIL A. MATHESON  
Provincial-Farm Editor

I HAVE written in considerable detail about Island winnings at the fair in the Guardian's news pages, but I learned this week that Shirley Burke, Elm Avenue – she's the Pipe Major of the Lads and Lassies Pipe Band – gained additional honors in the class in which I reported a first prize for her early last week.

That was the first prize for her Cockatiel. She also won a Rosette for second best bird in the British and foreign bird class, and has an attractive China cup and saucer donated by James Beattie, a bird fancier from Dartmouth, N.S. This beautiful bird attracted a great deal of attention at the big show and Shirley is understandably proud as a result.

This is my first opportunity to extend my most hearty congratulations to all of the Prince Edward Island people who participated, with such great credit to themselves and to the Island. It was easy for me to carry my head high as I toured the fair facilities, seeking news of the many triumphs and taking pictures of a few of the more prominent ones.

THE STRING of victories started with the ladies' home craft work, the potato championships and the finished steer champions – all three reports came in my first batch of stories – to the finale of the show on Saturday night when the Red Point Farmers' tug-of-war team completed successfully the sensational bid for the Atlantic championship they had started on Friday evening.

It was a tremendous 10 days of successful competition so far as our people were concerned. Again congratulations.

Before I leave this phase of the fair, I must explain that there were many top places taken by showmen and women from the sister provinces. The Island does not even compete in many phases of the show. And Nova Scotia and New Brunswick breeders of livestock also scored impressive triumphs in livestock rings. But pound for pound, and rated according to the size and number of our exhibits, our livestock men were outstanding. Writing for an Island newspaper as I do, that's just the way it should be.

Marked Improvement Seen In Fair

MARKED IMPROVEMENT was seen in many phases of the fair this year over the standard reached on the first attempt in 1963, but there are a number of changes being considered, and others that are hoped for, by exhibitors and fair people alike.

Livestock superintendent Alex Lamond – he's also vice-president of the fair – said following the completion of the livestock part of the exhibition "I'm 100 percent happy about it. There is a great improvement over 1963". He added that the livestock show had improved both in quality and quantity.

Elsewhere throughout the vast array of exhibits and commercial displays, visitors were fairly unanimous in their opinion that the display was more interesting and that its scope had been greatly expanded.

### Split Show Is Unpopular

JUST ABOUT everyone concerned was unhappy about the “split” show method for cattle. Holsteins, Jerseys, Dual Purpose Shorthorns and Angus were shown on Monday and Tuesday. Then they had to clear out of the cattle barn and make room for Hereford, Scotch Shorthorn, Guernsey and Ayrshire cattlemen who had to be ready to show their animals starting Wednesday noon.

There were many reasons why this was unsatisfactory. It makes a rush-period for all of the cattlemen, particularly those who showed on the last two days. Many cattlemen said it gave them no time to talk to visitors and to each other, or to make sales, or gain experience and information.

But the fair people also dislike it. Mr. Lamond emphasized that fact; so it looks like a remedy will come as soon as extensions to facilities warrant it.

### Government Grants Discussed

AND THAT brings me to something I learned in a chat with this genial gentleman, after the livestock show was completed, and we had a chance to relax. The big fair has not drawn a cent of government money to date. The only working capital has been put up by the City of Halifax, and it amounts to something more than \$200,000, of which some \$102,000 was for the stanchions and related equipment for the livestock.

It's easy to say Halifax benefits from the fair, but you have to listen to their retort “why should we put up the money to finance an Atlantic Fair?”

I have to agree with the Lamond idea that the government grant that went formerly to the Maritime Winter Fair should be made available now to the AWF, at least so long as there is no revival of the old MWF, and that seems unlikely at the present time.

Nova Scotia's minister of agriculture has agreed that this province should give their share of the old MWF grant to this new fair. Our Andrew MacRae agrees and stands ready to recommend to our government that we do the same thing, he told me this week. But thus far, New Brunswick's minister is not ready to do the same thing. The New Brunswickers, apparently, are still not convinced that Halifax is not too far away from them to join in wholeheartedly in the fair program.

THE PROVINCIAL grants would total some \$18,000, Mr. Lamond tells me. And the federal government would match that money. So an additional \$36,000 would be available annually, which would ease the problem of breaking even financially.

And it is a problem. They lost \$28,000 the first year, I was told. Figures were not available for this year when we were talking, as there was still more than a full day to go. I still have not heard whether the expenditures and receipts have been totaled and compared.

Before I leave this fair story, I want to acknowledge with warm appreciation the courtesies extended to me during the 10 days I spent gathering stories for this paper. They came to me everywhere I went. It would be most unfair to single out anyone for

special mention. Little things may seem unimportant at the time, but they all add up to make covering the AWF one of my most enjoyable working experiences.