

Highgate Fair 1946.

Owing to the lack of records having been kept in the earlier years it is not possible to give the many details of the Abford Fair but Miss Blue has an old prize list & record book of her father's who was Sec. Treas. in 1870.

The first fair board - The Howard Abford Agric. Fair Society was formed in 1856 with Mr Ed. Ridley as Sec. Treas. which office he held till 1860.

The 1st fair was in Clearville 1857. It was held one yr. in Clearville & the next in Worpeth.

In 1860 the Abford Agric. Fair Society was organized & the fair was in Stuart Oct. 10th of that year.

In 1870 the records show that

(THIS IS NOT
CORRECT)

John Lee was² Presid. The Sec. was
John Blue. directors Dr. Crawford
John H. Eberlee. A. J. Mc Donald William
Mc Laren, Laurence Gosnell & John
Cunningham. That yr. the fair was
Oct 11th with fine weather & a large
crowd in attendance.

The hall (where the present hall
stands) was filled with various
exhibits of grains fruits vegetables
homemade carpet, yarn, cloth
pieced quilts baking, honey & cheese.
The live stock was shown in a field
across from the hall with a fine
exhibit of cattle, working oxen
~~cows~~ carriage horses, swine & poultry.
Jas. C. Mc Donald made 41 entries
13 for cattle 12 for sheep also entries
for homemade flannel, blankets

and socks. Mr Joe Raycraft had a fine showing of boots & shoes in the hall. A few of the prize winners were Laurence Gosnell, Fred Scott, Jas Byfield, Fred Atkinson John H Eberle John Mason John Routledge A. J. Stone Thomas Tape R. Cleave Wm. Turner John Lee Colin Sutch, Dr Crawford A. J. Mc Donald Peter Kerr, Ed. Massey & Coraly Keyes.

The prize money of \$206.60 was paid that day at the close of the fair.

The expenses were as follows

The Benmill Co. Chatham for printing bills \$5 The Mc Laughlin Co St Thomas printing \$18.17. dinners for judges & directors at Sutch Hotel \$2.50 & at the Robinson House \$4.50. Wallacetown band \$6. paid men for work \$5

Special prizes were given by the

printing Co's. The special for salt yeast bread was won by Miss Mary Ann Crawford + also for paintings of the 4 seasons. Mr Keycraft won the fine boot special \$2.00 J. E. McDonald for the best cattle #4 Mr Keyes for the best pen of sheep \$2.

The race track was the road starting at Mr Hugh Ross gate to the hall Mr Jas. Leitch hotelman having a couple of running horses won. John Leitch of Murkirk had a booth on the roadside selling gum candy & fruits.

The fair was moved from Duar to Highgate in 1875:

We have two old prize lists of 1878 + 1882 gotten up very much like our present ones with probably

a few more ads. In the older one
 these there were 9 classes for horses
 with prizes from 75¢ to \$2.00. Cattle
 were divided into thorough bred &
 grade with 75¢ to \$2.00 money. The
 implement class had a long list
 of iron & wooden plows, harrows
 cultivators, bean ~~havers~~ harvester
 ½ doz. rakes, cradels horse shoes
 pumps wagons carriage & buggies
 & a prize range from 25¢ to \$1.00

Another interesting list was home
 manufactures where 75¢ was the 1st
 award for 5 yd of hand woven flannel
 (spelled f-l-a-n-e-l-l. tufted quilt
 knit quilt ~~wool~~ woollen & rag carpet
 Berlin wool work wax fruit; moss
 work, seed wreaths, hair work.

artificial flowers, harness, men & ladies boots, door & sash. & a specimen of painting. Membership fee was \$1.50 & they were solicited to leave their subscription fee for the next yr. The admission was 10¢ Mr Alex Campbell was Presid & R. C. Scott Sec. Treas.

The 1882 edition printed a list of officers & directors. Presid Lawrence Tape V. P. Henry B'Neil Sec. Treas. J. M. Sutherland directors Thomas Lee John Mason, John Blue Isaac Pool J. S. Backhouse, Alongzo Estlick (Eastlake) David Bladstone Jonas Gosnell & William Asthon. The admission had jumped to 15¢ & children 10¢. The different classes were larger. There were now 23 for horses & instead of horse shoes it

it was the best shod horse. And there were 8 specials 3 for sheep 1 for fowl + 4 for grapes the highest \$2.50

The first grounds $4\frac{1}{2}$ ac. owned by the Society were in Highgate + were purchased by John Lee + John Mason acting for them. As the fair grew more land was bot in 1911. from J.W. Bailey on the South side + a strip on the East side from Nelson Ferris to make the grounds now $8\frac{1}{2}$ ac. John Mc Sean was Pres. at this time

The finances too were steadily growing + there being need of more hall space the directors undertook the ~~elec~~ erection of the present $50' \times 100'$ building in 1928 + '36 paid off the debt with a small surplus ~~on~~ over.

The Township Council helped with

increased grants.

In that yr. there were 126 paid up members 1779 entries of which were 642 were live stock & poultry. the rest being grains dairy & ladies work. Nearly \$1000 was offered in prizes & \$750 taken by exhibitors. The finances were made up of a government grant of \$170 based on the actual amt. paid in prizes for agricultural exhibits only. A township grant of \$200 county grant of \$150 \$25 from Highgate \$75 as specials. gate receipts, concessions & a concert which altogether amounted to \$1069.62. & the expenditures were \$1039.14

A decade later the receipts & expenditures were about the same. Now that the hall was paid the township grant was cut in half. & there were

fewer paid up members. Since the start of the war the proceeds of the concert were given to the Red Cross.

In spite of these cuts the balance isn't so much lower.

Field Crop Competitions were held for several yrs. till the government grants was discontinued + there was also a Boys Beef Calf Club.

The last two yrs. Howard Hospital has sponsored a fire prevention essay among its 3 townships schools.

A few years ago the school fair was merged with the Agric. fair & ever since has had one of the finest exhibits. Most of the township schools participate + bring their flowers vegetables writing drawings & a specially arranged exhibit

depicting some particular event for which the Society pays.

One yr. the fair had to be postponed on acct. of snow but usually we were blest. with fairly good weather & now we carry weather insurance

In 1870 the prize money^{\$ 206} was small in comparison to the present \$700 or \$800 but the overhead of \$42 was small too. There is no record of early gate receipts but the 10¢ entrance fee must have been sufficient to cover expenses.

In Mar 1946 the Board had a banquet inviting the past Presidents. Mr Frank Stone was Pres. 50 yrs. ago & gave a short talk, telling once when he was a boy the fair was in Duart & how it rained

all day & Mrs Joe Hornell hearing of it said how afraid they were that they wouldnt- get to go because of the rain but they all did.

One of the present directors Miss Addie Attridge's mother was a judge many yrs ago & she had an old prize list. It is noticable that many of the names connected with the early yrs. of the fair are still seen in fair reports.