

# Forest Agricultural Society

The first record of a fair being held in Forest was at the corner of Broadway and Main Streets in 1870. The following year it was moved to the Drill Shed. In 1874 twelve acres of land at the south-west corner of the town were purchased and called the Forest Pleasure Park. This property was used as a fair ground until the present park was purchased in 1909. This land was given to the town by the Pleasure Park Company in 1939 and in 1946 the town leased the grounds to the Forest Agricultural Society.

In the files of the Forest Free Press and the Forest Standard, are fairly complete accounts of some of these early fairs, which were well attended. Emphasis was placed on livestock, but there were prizes for bread, maple sugar and other culinary arts.

In 1879 Burney Bros. offered a large framed picture of Queen Victoria for 10 pounds of crock butter, the butter to become his at the market price. G. M. VanValkenburg gave a clock for fancy work; Tom Wood delivered three peach trees for the two best pumpkins; Neil McCahill and Co. gave a dollar for the best turkey red wheat. Twenty dollars were offered for a farmers' race for horses that had never won money. John Hamilton gave Two dollars for the fastest automobile at the same time.

Annual meetings in the 1890s took much the same form as today. Following is an account of one in 1895.

The annual meeting of the Forest Union Agricultural Society was held at the Council Chamber with about 40 members in attendance.

The 1894 board held a short session with A. W. Gifford, the President in the chair, H. J. Pettypiece as secretary. Balance in the treasury books was \$160.85.

A general meeting was held in 1895 with Mr. Gifford in the chair. Officers and directors were elected as follows: President, Jas. Maidment of Warwick; 1st Vice, John Vivian of Bosanquet; 2nd Vice, W. H. Bartram of Forest, 3rd Vice, S. Bailey of Plympton.



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No accurate record of the first officers is available, but one of the early Presidents was Albert Gifford. Working with him were George Core, George Gammon, and a Mr. Fisher, from Plympton. The first Park Board of which there is any record was in 1909, when the officers were: President - Reg. F. Scott; Vice-President - W. J. Skinner; Secretary - J. M. Shaw; Treasurer - H. E. Taylor, Directors - Bosanquet - John Emerson, Hugh Russell, John Vivan. Plympton - George Core, Sam Bailey, Archie McKinlay. Warwick - Duncan Campbell, John Campbell, John Farrell, William Janes. Forest - Chas Anderson, John Maylor, H. B. Stoddart, H. J. Pettypiece.

Present officers are: President - Cecil Vance; 1st Vice President - Allan Garrett; 2nd Vice President - O. R. Totten; Treasurer - R. S. Fleming; Secretary - Mrs. W. J. Morrison. Directors - Forest - Miss Laurena Campbell, R. B. Douglas, Bosanquet - Joe Hill, Duncan McIntyre. Plympton - Wm. Manning, Frank Smith, Melford Lester. Warwick - Mrs. Orville Dailey, W. R. Cable. Besides the twelve directors, there are at the present time about one hundred Associate Directors and Lady Directors.

A number of the directors have served the Society for as long as fifty years, and a number of fathers and sons have been directors at the same time. In at least one instance, a father and son both held the office of president - the late Hamilton Taylor in the late thirties and R. Geo. Taylor in 1956-57. While Hamilton Taylor was President, W. W. Kemp was Secretary, and his daughter was appointed Secretary during George Taylor's term of Office.

The Fall Fair is a symbol of life in which urban and rural people get together and become better acquainted. It is also the show window for the products of the farm. It is by coming into competition that livestock, grain, seeds, vegetables and fruit are improved. The Women's Section — baking, canning, sewing, fancy work, art, crafts, hobbies and flowers are no small part of the Fair, and the School Displays are a very important part of it.

We sincerely hope that the interest of the public will be sustained, and that the people of the community will continue to work together to make our fair bigger and better in the years to come.