



June and Jack White of RR 8, St. Thomas with one of the production awards their Valleystream Jersey herd won during 1985. The Valleystream farm has the top Jersey herd in

Canada, with breed class averages for milk and butter fat both over 200.

Valleystream strong after dispersal sale

The Valleystream herd of John and June White and Family of RR 8 St. Thomas is still the top producing Jersey herd in Canada, even after a 50 per cent dispersal sale in July, 1985.

Mr. White said in an interview that while his herd's breed class average had dropped since the sale, both milk and butterfat production remain over the 200, the highest in Canada.

At the time of the sale, the herd had the highest average for butterfat in North America, he added.

The dispersal sale "set a bunch of sales records," said Mr. White.

The sale brought in more than \$200,000, and the average per lot price of \$4,630 was the highest ever for a Canadian Jersey auction.

The high bid of \$20,200 for a half-interest in Valleystream Silver B Jo, a production-record breaking cow, was the most ever paid for a half-interest in a Canadian Jersey cow, he said, adding the cow would stay on the Valleystream farm.

The high bid for full interest in a cow at the sale was \$24,000 for Valleystream Title June, a three year old daughter of Silver B June.

More than 500 bidders from Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Canada were at the sale.

Mr. White said the sale made life "hectic" for a while at the farm.

The family retained a little over half the herd, about 100 Jerseys, Mr. White said.

Voluntary dispersal sales didn't happen too often, Mr. White said.

He said "It's one way of cashing in. A person can build up a herd, but you never know the value until you put it on the block."

The success of the sale put the Valleystream farm in a stronger financial position, Mr. White said.

He said last year was "exhilarating. It's been a great year, really.

"You couldn't ask for a whole lot more," he added.

J. St.

EJS

J. H.

EJG

March 1986



SAFETY CONSCIOUS -- Pat Thomson, R.R. 1 Belmont looks over the control panel of the tractor in an attempt to locate any visible hazards. She along with about 11 other Elgin

area farm women participated in a safety day at Ellis Farm Equipment in Alymer.

(Staff Photo - Heather Buchanan)

V. of the E.F.



March 1986

SAFETY DAY -- Donna Lunn, R.R. 1 Belmont, left, tries on a disposable pair of coverall, designed to be worn when handling chemicals during a Safety Day For Women sponsored by the Elgin County Safety Association and Ellis

Farm Equipment in Alymer. Also pictured is Nancy Gardner, an Elgin Safety Association representative from Port Stanley. About 12 women participated in the seminar.

(Staff Photo - Heather Buchanan)

12.

May 14, 1986

J.F.

EJS



Donna Lunn

Cash flow important to viable farm

By Heather Buchanan

Donna and Brian Lunn, R.R. 1 Belmont, feel keeping the farm in a viable cash flow position is an important ingredient in their operation.

The Lunn's purchased the 100-acre Jersey operation from Brian's father in 1980.

Donna is proud of her husband's efforts to improve the BCA average on their 30-head herd. She said the average which was less than a 100 when they bought the farm has jumped to 156 in 1986. The butterfat stands at 5.4 per cent.

The couple realize changing consumer taste requires alternative farming measures.

Brian, who takes stewardship of his farm seriously, has been involved with crop rotation of hay, corn, oats and barley for a number of years.

This year, they will slowly enter into organic farming. Donna said they had been composting manure for the last few years.

She said agriculture has become technologically advanced through the use of chemical enhancements, making the change to natural farming almost a re-educational experience.

She has grown a garden since moving to the farm and has always stayed away from fertilizers and pesticides.

The Lunn's have learned a considerable amount about organic farming from Oak Manor Farms, outside of Tavistock, and through articles in the Country Guide.

Brian's background has been in agriculture; for Donna, a nurse, the move to country living was a dramatic change.

Both she and Brian had been working in off-farm occupations prior to taking over the Jersey operation.

To adjust to rural living she joined Elgin County Women for Support of Agriculture. The support group helped her cope.

"At first I felt guilty not pulling my weight on the farm, but with young children it wasn't possible to be as active as Brian," she said. "I found out during the season's peak busy times it was acceptable for the house not to be spotless."

Donna said because the dairy industry provides a certain stability for the farm operation, its easier budgeting each month's expenses. They attempt to keep the debt load at a minimum so it's not necessary to re-finance every year.

"We don't expect to be at the same financial place that someone with 30 years in the industry would be," she said.

She said money from her part-time job goes towards household expenses, to provide a quality of life for her family, which might be impossible on only the farm income.

Donna said while agriculture's direction is changing there will always be a place for young progressive farmers.

"As long as a farmer, the eternal entrepreneur, is willing to take risks the industry will survive," she said.

Donna said agriculture is cyclical. The cycles might change slightly with technological advancements, but there will always be good and bad financial times.

She said its important for farmers to remain united. Donna felt the Ontario Federation of Agriculture led by Harry Pellisero could accomplish that goal.

Donna is involved with the Elgin Federation of Agriculture and is secretary for the Tri-County Jersey Club Association. The club covers Elgin, Lambton and Middlesex Counties.

Donna and Brian have three children; Ammie, 10 years; Bradley, eight years; and Rebecca, five years.



John & June White

Room for farming errors narrowing

By Heather Buchanan

John White of R.R. 8 St. Thomas said intense competition among Ontario farmers has narrowed the room for operation error.

John, a Jersey farmer located just south of Mapleton, said the 50's and 60's were the best-times for learning and expanding farm operations.

"You didn't have to try so hard to survive. . .it allowed more room for error. It was definitely easier to make a net return on your investment," said John, a third generation farmer.

John started working on his father's mixed farm after graduating from Ridgetown College of Agricultural Technology in 1956. The family moved to its present location in 1959. He and his father remained in farm partnership until 1969.

He said his present high production Jersey herd was built from a nucleus of 15 original purebreds brought to Valleystream Farm. In the fall of that same year the family started on recorded production tests.

John has always been very active in agricultural organizations. As past-president of Western Ontario Breeders Inc., he strongly believes in the benefits of artificial insemination.

He is also past-president of the Ontario Jersey Club, Ontario Association of Animal Breeders, Alymer Agricultural Society and a 4-H leader for the East Elgin Dairy Calf Club, the same club of which he was a member a number of years ago.

John and his wife, June, are extremely proud of their 40 cow milking herd. They make about 20 per cent more sending the same volume of high test milk.

"That's one reason Jersey herds are gaining popularity in the dairy industry," John said.

He suggests Holstein owners developed a certain amount of complacency, inspired by the breed's reputation and popularity as a European export.

"Jersey owners were never reliant on foreign markets," he said. John felt the loss of European markets has adversely affected Holstein breeders. The Whites 140 acre farm has only

80 workable acres. John purchases the majority of his herd's feed because he can't grow it as cheap as it is to buy.

He feeds a mixture of corn silage, forage alfalfa, grain and hay along with a 16-17 per cent dairy ration to his award winning herd.

For the past four years, his nephew, Alex McPhee, has been full-time herdsman on Valleystream Farm. John and June's two teenage sons, John and Jay are also active in the farm operation.

John raises the majority of his replacement cattle with the occasional introduction of new bloodlines to the herd.

John held a dispersement sale at Valleystream last summer at which time about half of the herd was sold. Many of the cows were bought by American farmers.

One cow sold at the sale, with the Whites retaining partial ownership is Valleystream Silver B Jo-ex. The four year old was honoured as the Highest Canadian Jersey for butterfat for 365 days. Her record includes 26,973 pounds of milk with 5.4 per cent butterfat.

The Whites recently picked up several awards during the Elgin County Dairy Herd Improvement Corporation Awards dinner based on Valleystream Silver B Jo's production performance.

John said the herds production has improved through the genetic use of proven sire Valley Silver Beacon-ex.

During the last two years the herd has received 13 Canadian class leader awards. He attributes the herd's success to improved management and genetics.

He said the operation is standing at a cross-roads. He will have to make a decision on whether to increase the farm's milk quota.

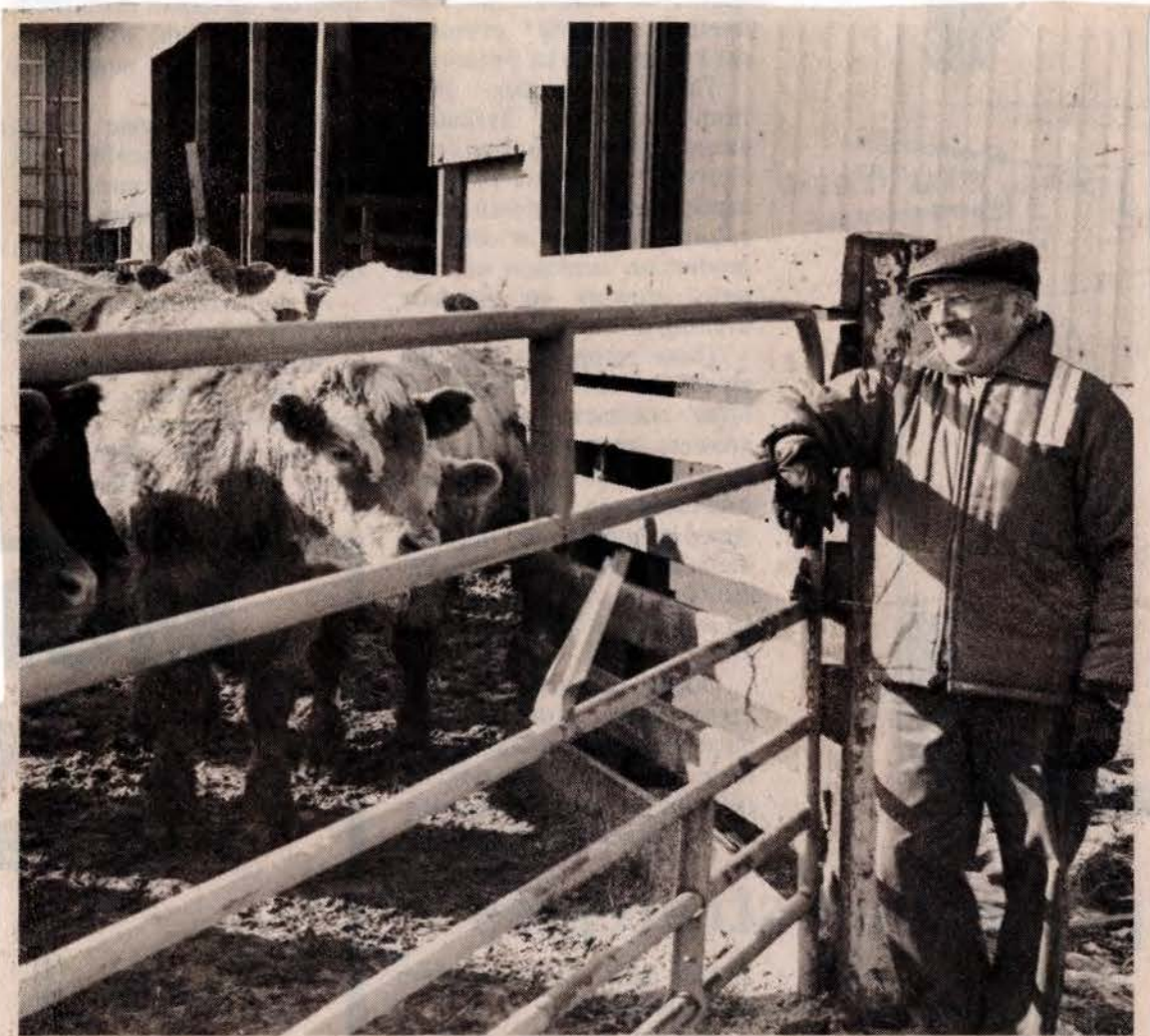
John said what ever the outcome, he and his wife don't want to be totally tied to the farm operation.

"I think it's important to have time away from the farm. You tend to get in a rut if the farm becomes too great a tie," he said.

J. A.

E. J.

1987



Former Elgin MPP Ron McNeil returned to full time farming with his election defeat in September 1987. While he has no regrets about his time in public office

he does miss contact with old friends at Queen's Park. He and wife Doris operate a beef cattle and cash crop farm north of Lyons.

J.A.
A.O.

FARM FAMILIES



15A.

J. H.
A. V.

-AYLMER EXPRESS—Wed., April 19, 1989

South Dorchester farmer returns from Australia



Eleanor VanRooijen of RR 2 Springfield recently returned from a six-week Rotary study exchange trip to New South Wales in Australia. In return for the trip, Miss VanRooi-

jen will spend the next several weeks giving talks on what she saw in Australia to area Rotary Clubs.

Eleanor VanRooijen, a livestock and cash crop producer from RR 2 Springfield, returned recently from a six-week trip to Australia. And she has lots of koalas to prove it.

She has a stuffed koala bear, t-shirts with koalas drawn on them, souvenirs with pictures of koalas and Rotary Club pennants with koala illustrations on them.

Miss VanRooijen was a member of a four-woman group study exchange team organized by Rotarians in District 633 (including parts of Ontario and Michigan) and District 968 (New South Wales, Australia.)

The trip was open to professional women between 25 and 35 years of age who were not directly related to a Rotarian.

With her brother and mother, Miss VanRooijen raises pigs from farrow to finish, and also produces cash crops on about 150 acres of owned land and 250 acres of rented land.

She spent 28 hours in airports and airplanes to get to Australia, but once there it was worth the effort.

"Sydney's so nice," she said. "It was so fresh and green."

Temperatures were pushing 30 Celsius during February as the province of New South Wales enjoyed its midsummer season. "It was a bit cool for them." Really hot weather during her stay was about 40 C and humid.

J. J. J.
2-0-2

home workers afraid days could cost jobs

The reception she received while in Australia, and during a two-week vacation in New Zealand at the end of the study exchange, was overwhelming, she said. "I was spoiled for two months and I mean spoiled."

What the Australians all wanted to know about when she arrived was the incredible cold wave that swept through Alaska in early February. But she didn't know much, since the cold wave hadn't moved south before she left Canada.

Her hosts were also curious about "driving on the wrong side of the road," she noted.

She stayed with a different Rotary family each week, but really only saw a small part of New South Wales during her visit.

Miss VanRooijen visited elementary and secondary schools in Australia, and was surprised at how eager the students were to meet her.

One elementary class even put together some artwork, "Pigs on Parade," for her visit.

She toured a steel mill, coal

mine, pig farms, vineyards and orchards on her trip.

The swine production facilities were quite similar to Canada's, but the industry wasn't as old or as established in Australia, she said. Full-scale swine production Down Under was really only about 20 years old, she was told.

Australian agriculture was, in general, oriented toward the export market. Farmers were very interested in developing Japanese markets.

The oddest food she came across during her stay was the Australian hamburger, which mixed ground beef with beets. McDonald's in Sydney even featured the Aussieburger. "It was quite good, actually."

She added the Australians "really know how to play." Cricket, golfing, sailing, swimming, lawn bowling, the Australians did it all.

Miss VanRooijen described northern New Zealand as "Green, cows and sheep." The pastoral country, where she stayed with family friends, was a perfect place for a vacation.

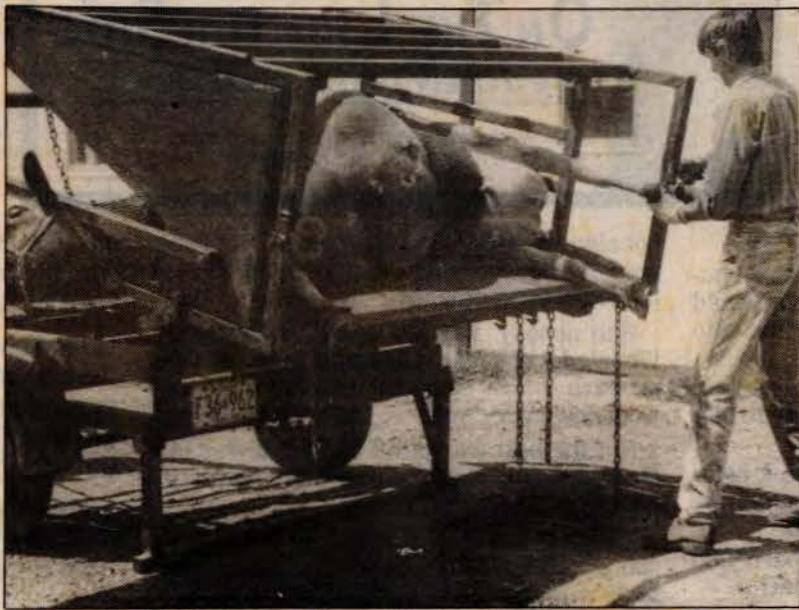
"It was a shock to come back to snow" in East Elgin during April, she added wryly.

confused...
brought up by workers...
conditional on...
Ron Gierich...
If the side of the house...
Mr. Jacques...
Miss VanRooijen...
One elementary class...
She toured a steel mill...

The year-old...
Miss VanRooijen...
visited her...
London last week...
Miss VanRooijen...
Roberta Rose of St. Charles...
Who was visiting...
McGowan Public School...
April 5 when she...
visited a school...

320

J. V.
A.V.P.



Belmont dairy farmer and hoof trimmer Brian Lunn prepares to trim the hooves of three year-old Jersey Lunvale Beam Wanda on a custom-made rack, left, that gently lifts the animal onto its side while sup-



porting its udder and exposing its hooves for trimming. Right, Lunn uses large nippers to remove excess hoof material. Clipping keeps the animals standing properly, an important consideration for dairy cows.



Belmont dairy farmer Brian Lunn has a foothold in the hoof-trimming business. See page 3.

1991

A.O.R.
J.H.



BUSY PLACE — Gerry Vanderwyst, son of Paul and labrador Caesar are framed by the newly-constructed grain elevators at Vanderwyst Brothers, RR 7 Aylmer. —(Staff)

Farmer remains optimistic

MAPLETON - Here's something different - a farmer who is optimistic about the agriculture business.

Gerry Vanderwyst, a cash crop farmer, has just expanded his operation.

This year Gerry built additional grain storage and had as many as 15 part-time employees during building. His operation is fully licensed under the Ministry of Agriculture and Food. In peak season he estimates he can receive 20,000 to 25,000 bushels. With additional storage he can accommodate 265,000 bushels.

In 1972 Gerry and his brother, Bill, started a farm elevator business as partners on County Road 52, a mile east of Highway 74. They bought, stored and sold beans, corn and wheat. The 'Vanderwyst Brothers' found there was a need for more storage for grain grown on their own farms. The operation became computerized eight years ago.

Last year Gerry bought the elevator and farm equipment

BELMONT

By Helen Garton

If Belmont area residents have any story ideas, call Helen at

631-5439



from Bill, and Bill took over the trucking division. This was done to accommodate their sons growing up in the family business.

Gerry has twin boys; Paul who works full-time with his father, and Peter who works off season when he is not attending university in Ottawa. Gerry employs three full-time staff, one in the office and two others besides himself. He also give credit to his wife, Liz, who feeds the men during busy times.

Gerry's day starts at 7:30 a.m. and it is not unusual to finish at midnight during the busy sea-

son. The grain is weighed and tested for moisture. If the moisture test is high, the product is dried. The drying is watched all night in shifts. The dry weather has been ideal for harvesting.

When Victor Soya Mill in Toronto closed this spring, Gerry felt the need for more storage. In the area, there is Topnotch in St. Thomas, Cargill in Talbotville and Cold Springs in Springfield that receive grain.

Gerry says even though a farmer cannot set his hourly or weekly wage, they can just hope there is something left over at the end of the year.

"The young farmer starting out, particularly, have it rough," he said. "Constant borrowing from the bank depletes their equity in the farm operation."

When you see prices shrinking from year to year, it's hard to be optimistic, he said, but it is obvious Gerry enjoys his work and he is determined to be optimistic about the future of farming.

*J.H.
A.O.R.*

PAGE 2—AYLMER EXPRESS—Wed., September 2, 1992

Farm workers won't get right to strike

Reports that unionized farm workers in Ontario would not be allowed to strike were welcomed by Doug Davies of Elgin Federation of Agriculture.

"In farming, whether tobacco, vegetable or whatever, shutting down operations could destroy the whole crop," said the Aylmer area farmer.

The province, he said, recognized the problem and the fact that "some smaller farmers could be put under" by a strike.

Mr. Davies said he agreed there should be some forum for workers "to get better wages and all that but we just can't have them going on strike."

Farmers throughout the province became concerned when they learned workers would be allowed to join unions under revised labor legislation.

Late last week, Elmer Buchanan, minister of agriculture, announced that while farm and horticultural

workers would be allowed to join unions they would not be allowed to strike to back contract demands. Employers will not be allowed to lock the workers out of their jobs either.

The farm workers will not be covered by the Ontario Labour Relations Act, said the minister, but will be

governed by a separate labor relations law.

Instead of allowing strikes, the government will use conciliation and mediation to settle deadlocked contract negotiations. Disputes that cannot be mediated will be settled through binding arbitration.

J. H.
A.V.P.