Matilda Winter Carnival

Carnival Highlights

Saturday, January 8
The opening ceremonies and 24th annual Matilda Winter Carnival Queen Pageant takes the stage at Matilda Hall at 7 p.m.

Sunday, January 9
Pancake Breakfast & Entertainment by Paddy Stewart starting at 10:30 a.m. Family Fun with games & prizes starting at 1 p.m.

Monday, January 10
Country & Western Night starting at 7 p.m. Line Dancing with Gwen Bosma and Clogging with the River-View Cloggers.

Tuesday, January 11
Amateur Talent night beginning at 7 p.m. Pre-register with Connie at 652-4074.

Wednesday, January 12
Afternoon Tea and Social and Sing Song, 1 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Thursday, January 13
Kids and Ladies Fashion Show, Katie's Kloset and Option L Ladies wear to be modeled.

Friday, January 14
Kids Craft Night at 7 p.m. Come and make your own Mackie, please pre-register with Nancy at 652-2096.

Saturday, January 15
Annual Dr. Thom Maxwell Snowmobile and Car Rally. Registration from 11 am - 1 pm, Dinner from 4 pm - 6 pm, Dancing to "Free Beer" from 8 p.m. - 1 a.m.

Sunday, January 16
Family Sleigh Rides at Ron Smail's Farm, east of Brinston, from 1:30 pm - 3:30 pm. Ecumenical Service at 7 pm.

Matilda Carnival a Winter Tradition

by Sandra Lee Johnston
Chieftain Staff Reporter

The folks in Matilda have established a winter tradition.

Little did they realize in 1974 when the idea of a celebration of the season became reality that it would continue to grow and remain a staple of winter in the Township.

The first of numerous winter carnivals in this part of the province, Matilda sets the tone each January as a hardworking group of people get together and create a festival of snow and fun for the entire family.

Who would have imagined that a winter carnival which began as a weekend of events would grow into a week long festival of snow and ice, where people would come together to enjoy the finest winter can offer in a plateau-like area.

Throughout the last 25 years, events have come and gone. Some new ones being added each year, some being dropped due to participation or through lack of volunteer help, while some remained a part of the celebrations, standing the test of time.

Take for instance what is now perhaps the main feature, the crowning of the Carnival Queen...always a highlight of the entire event. As young ladies from all across the township come out to vie for the honour of being Carnival Queen even this event has changed over the years. As those co-ordinating change they bring fresh ideas to the pageant.

In 1974 when the Carnival started to take shape, there was no Queen of the Carnival, this feature was not included until **1976** when the first crown was worn by **Nancy Cooper** (Duffield). Such a popular addition to the festivities, the Queen Pageant remained a major part of the party. In **1977**, the large crowd which incidently also grew over the years saw **Robbin Whitteker** wear the crown, then in **1978 Penny Major** (Roke), **Angela Casselman** (Mackler) in **1979**, **Claira Karlse** in **1980**. **Wanda Zandbergen** (Douma) was the Queen of **1981** and **Leslie Casselman** (Keeler) in **1982**. It was **Jennifer Sluiskes** (Thompson) in **1983** and **Gayle Carroll** (Ault) who was named Queen in **1984** and **Sharon Andersen** (Kennedy) in **1985**. Then **Cathy Gibson**, the elder of the sisters from Stampville was crowned in **1986**, **Pam Dickson** won the distinction in **1987**, **Leslie Disheau** in **1988** and **Debbie Cooper** (Hodgson) in **1989**. **Kelly Smail** (Baelde) started the next decade as she was crowned in **1990**, while it was **Rhonda Lapier** (Van Beilen) in **1991** and **Connie Bosma** in **1992**. The other Gibson gal, this time younger sister of the former Queen, **Shelley** (Byers) wore the crown as proudly (as her sister, Cathy had previously) in **1993**. It was a well known farm gal in **1994** as **Tammy Henderson** was awarded the honour of being Carnival Queen, **Jo-Anne Larocque** was **1995** Queen and **Tracy Lewis** in **1996**. Another Stampville girl, **Angie Thompson** was crowned in **1997** and **Heidi Tibben** grabbed the honour in **1998** and last year, **1999**'s Queen was **Rebecca Cooper**. Some

Please turn to page 7



Twenty years of royalty at Annual Matilda Winter Carnival 1995.

Roots run deep in Matilda

by Sandra Lee Johnston
Chieftain Staff Reporter

There is something to be said about roots and all that country livin' stuff.

Researching the archives at The Chieftain for information on the Matilda Winter Carnival a photo of MC for the pageant, none other than Bob Bennett crowning Nancy Cooper, who incidently is the aunt of last year's Queen, Rebecca Cooper. What goes around... it is terrific that family roots run so deeply in Matilda that this can occur, more than twenty years later!

It was noteworthy that Nancy received a colour portrait of herself along with $25.00 while the runner-up carried home $15 and the third place gal was $10 richer...time does change some things.

This year the Queen will be crowned on Saturday,January 8th as the Silver Anniversary Queen of the Matilda Winter Carnival starts the Events off at Matilda Hall in Dixon's Corners.

It was neat to read in the January 14th , 1976 issue of The Iroquois Post about the Broomball games that were included in the weekend of events, the adults games where the Recreation Committee played the Fire Department and a Hulbert Squad was declared overall winner. There were school games too as Stampville and Dixons faced off with the former victorious. A Hockey game was played on the Sunday afternoon pitting a pickup junior squad against the Recreation folk. The 6-2 final demonstrated that members of the Recreation Committee while game were no better than those young lads they faced.

How about a snowmobile obstacle race for youngsters? Yup, and Wee Eldon Horner, Jeff Veltkamp, Ronnie Geurkink, Reggie Francis, Gary Shaver (who is on the present day Committee), Helen and Nancy Johnston, Kelly Francis and Bobby Bennett were in the winners circle!!

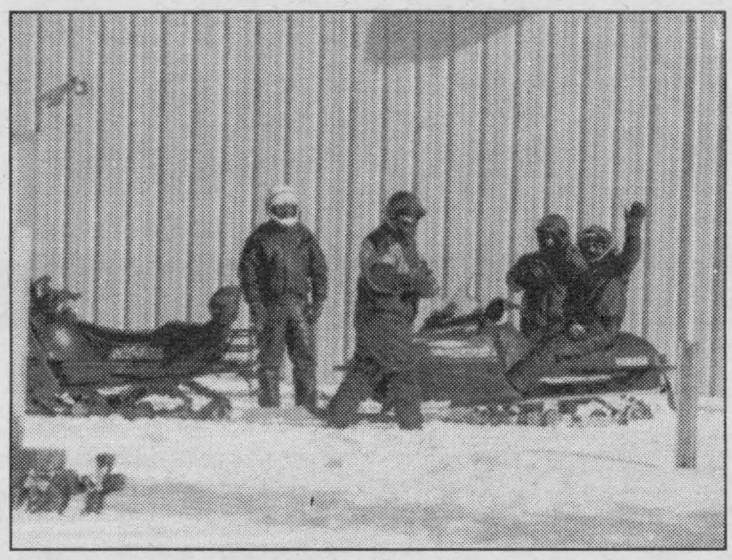
Snowmobiles were popular in the late 70s and so a set of drag races were on the agenda at the Carnival. While Jimmy Thompson (Now of Thompson Yamaha) was overall winner on his Yammy and way down the list under the Powder Puff category (ladies race) was yours truly!! I took first place on an Alouette, my sled of choice then.

Over the years, the drags turned to a Snowmobile Rally, a more family oriented event and due to mild spells on the scheduled dates, to a Car Rally. the last few years, there has been one of each

Please turn to page 7



A wee tot poundin' nails on Family Fun Day.



Snowmobile Rally folks are a hardy lot!

Come out and enjoy the Carnival, you'll be glad you did

Ten years after the beginning

by Sandra Lee Johnston
Chieftain Staff Reporter

In 1985, ten years after the Queen Pageant brought a striking new dimension to the Winter Carnival when Cathy Gibson was crowned and Missy Marston was runnerup, yours truly, yet again was involved, this time at the organizational level.

This was a year which when researching brought back fond memories for the writer. This Recreation Committee was a terrific group to work with as we brought some innovations to the annual event.

Recalling people like Lester McInnis, Pat and Sandra Murphy, Kim Storto, Gwen Bosma, Miles

Please turn to page 6



Taking a "sleigh ride together" with friends at Smail Family Farm.

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Last year as Queen Rebecca made her ceremonial walk and Queen Angie and her court posed for photographs.

Y2K Brings Carnival changes

by Sandra Lee Johnston
Chieftain Staff Reporter

As the Winter Carnival hits the Y2K and their 25th Anniversary, some changes will happen. A return to the days when the Wednesday afternoon Tea and Social included a sing-song. According to organizers the past few years it has been a time that included the fashion show as well...but only the last few years, and so this time around will see the fashion show move to Thursday evening.

The dances saw dwindling numbers the past few years and so will not be a part of the festivities. On Friday evening the young people are encouraged to create their own Mackie the Snowman mascot of the carnival. This is a FREE event and he is made of wood...

Bundle the family and come out and have a pile of fun at the 25th Annual Matilda Winter Carnival. From Queens, to pancakes, from clowns to fun ont he ice, from country to amateur night, from tea to fashions, from crafts to rallies, from sleigh rides to church services, there is definitely something for everyone!!



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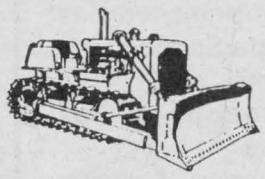
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2000 Matilda Winter Carnival!

Saturday, January 8, 2000

7:00 p.m.
- ***25th Annual Carnival Queen Pageant***

Sunday, January 9, 2000

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
- Pancake Breakfast
- Entertainment by Paddy Stewart

1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
- Family Fun Afternoon - Dundela Park
- Games & Prizes

Monday, January 10, 2000

7:00 p.m.
- ***Country/Western Night***
- Line Dancing with Gwen Bosma & Clogging with the River-View Cloggers

Tuesday, January 11, 2000

7:00 p.m.
- ***Amateur & Talent Night***

* Pre-register your talent with Connie-652-4074
- NO KARAOKE
- Betty Casselman with accompany on piano if requested

Wednesday, January 12, 2000

1:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.
- ***Afternoon Tea and Social and Sing Song***

Thursday, January 13, 2000

7:00 p.m.
- ***Kids and Ladies Fashion Show***
- Katie's Kloset (Kim Hutt) and Option L Ladies Wear to be modeled

FRIDAY, JANUARY 14, 2000

7:00 p.m.
- ***Kids Craft Night***
- Come & make your own Mackie, pre-register with Nancy - 652-2096

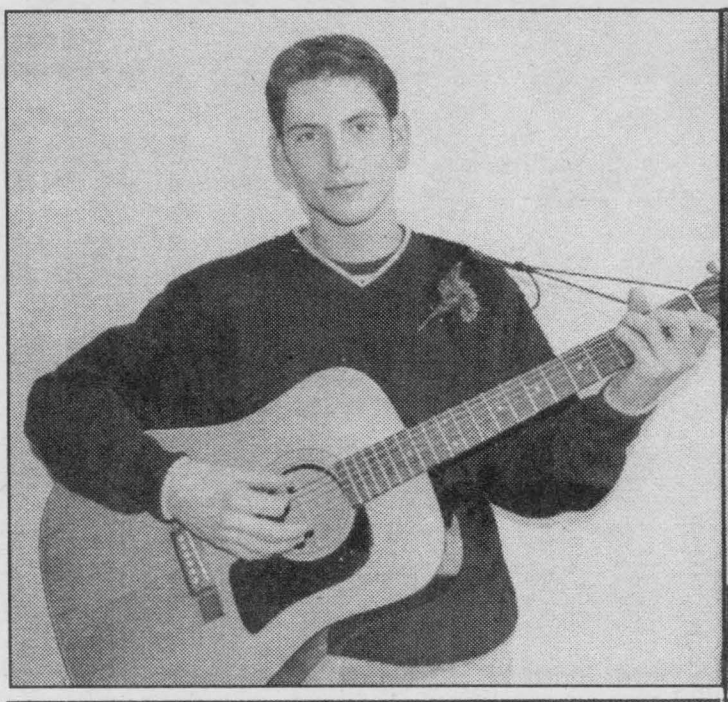
Saturday, January 15, 2000

Annual Dr. Thom Maxwell Snowmobile & Car Rally
Registration - 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Dinner - 4:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.
Dance - 8:00 p.m. - 1:00 a.m. - Entertainment by "Free Beer"

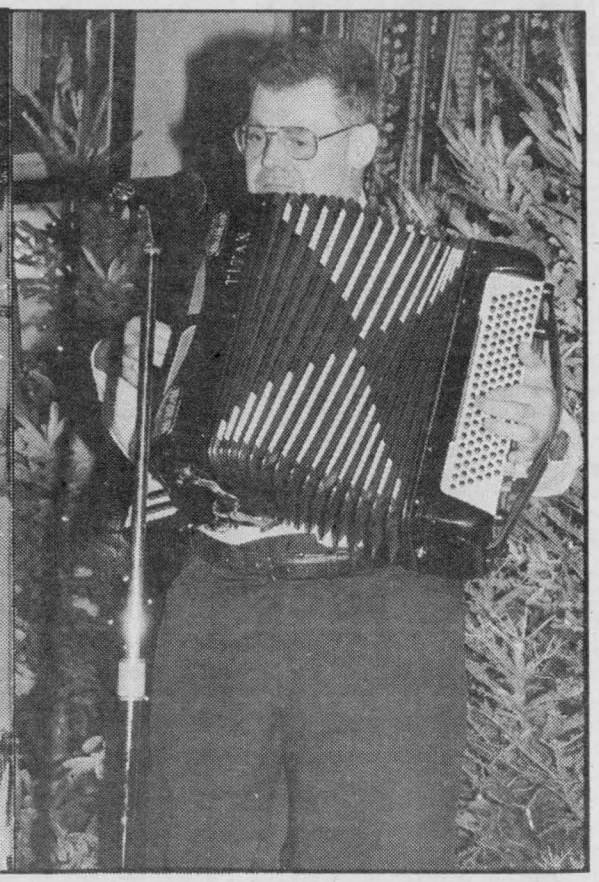
Sunday, January 16, 2000

1:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Family Sleigh Rides at Ron Smail's Farm, east of Brinston
7:00 p.m.
Ecumenical Service









Musical Men

Joel and Paul sang sweetly as they took their turn serenading past Carnival Queens. Billy has played at all the Matilda Winter Carnivals... this will be his silver anniversary as he makes his accordian sing. Robert Thompson took his turn as our own 'Bert Parks' as did his son Andrew, then too Todd did a great job. This year the Matilda Trio will be a part of the celebration. *Photos by S.L.J.*

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Come Out & Have A Good Time at the Matilda Winter Carnival

CONTINUED

Ten Years

Lewis, Margaret Webb, Lorne Mellan and Steve Shaver it brought a smile to this old face. We spent too many hours working out plans for the events, setting up a runway, complete with Christmas lights, for the Queens and decorating the backdrop for the pageant.

Those days saw a variety of outdoor events for all ages. The nail pounding, the tug of war, the puck shooting, the pulp (taber) toss, the log sawing (Cross Cut style) and snow games for youngsters of all ages. I recall meeting a lady who offered to be the other end of my cross cut saw in the competition and we won!! Elizabeth was a fine lady and a resident of the township I would probably not have met otherwise.

The opportunity to meet celebrities when I was a Committee member will not soon be forgotten either.

The young men who sang to the Queen were all exceptional talents and the entertainment over the years has been the best. A highlight not only of the Carnival but the entire year, the Queen Pageant is shaping up to be as terrific as in the past and a gauge for the future.

There is a story where the Snowmobile Rally was cancelled due to warm temperatures which caused a lack of snow and a Car rally was run under rather muddy conditions. The turnout for the rally was astounding and so became a regular part of the Carnival.

There was a house decorating contest which was run throughout the Township where folks were encouraged to decorate their homes sticking to the theme of the Winter Carnival. Lee and Jean Shaver, Sandra and Jim Primrose were winners the same year...this is no longer a part of the party.

The inclusion of the Citizen of the Year Award presented a venue to acknowledge people who have made a contribution to the community that deserves to be recognized continues to the new millennium. Over the years the award has been handed to people who have given freely of their time and talent mostly on the quiet side, expecting nothing in return for their efforts. Among those who have been named Matilda Citizen of the Year (Chosen by the community) are Ruth Coons (1982), Joan Zandbergen (1983), Gerald Munroe (1984), Helen Gilmer (1985) , Allan Tysick (1986), Grace Strader (1987), and Gwen Shaver (1988), Lorne Strader (1989), Frank Sisty (1990), Robert Thompson (1993), Gerry Bureau (1994) Ken Kirkby (1995), Sandra Lee Johnston (1997) and Charles Cantin (1999). In those years where no winner is named, there was none, except in 1998 when the entire populace was awarded the designation for their help to others and their courage during the Ice Storm. Who will it be as we hit Y2K?

This recognition began in 1982 when the council of the day decided that such an honour was needed for the people of their municipality. the idea behind it was that the person chosen should be able to represent the Township of Matilda in a manner that typifies the entire population of the municipality...people who should be what Matilda is all about. When you look at the person chosen Matilda Citizen of the year you should be able to see Matilda Township, what it is and what it stands for and what the future in this rural piece of Ontario warrants. The person should be without reproach and someone whom the young can look up to and see a reason for doing what they do.

Some times the chosen recipient has refused to accept the honour for whatever reason. Others have felt that those before them were so deserving that they can do no more than accept in honour of those folks. Some who have won have gone on to a better place, while there are some among us who have the plaque and remember how they felt when they were notified of their being chosen. It is indeed a very high honour to be chosen by your peers, by your community, the place you call home, usually the accumulation of events have led to the nomination and those items are carried out without anyone knowing except the person receiving the help, or the organization, the person hardly ever is recognized for the efforts over the years of service, volunteering or just giving of themselves to someone in need. Busy people make time for others and in Matilda we have the cream of the crop. This is a wonderful way to make them and their work known to all.



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FROM FRONT

Carnival

lucky gal will be given the distinction of being crowned the 25th Matilda Winter Carnival Queen 2000 as she walks the ramp on Saturday, January 8th, a Saturday evening as the new millennium begins.

There is no doubt a huge crowd will gather at the Matilda hall in Dixon's Corners to enjoy the Queen Pageant and all the fun and excitement it brings with it.

As is a custom Billy Sypes will play his accordian as part of the entertainment of the evening. Billy is selftaught and does a great job on an instrument that is not all that common today. This marks Billy's 25 time on stage at a Matilda Winter Carnival Queen Pageant...Congratulations Billy!!

There will be other entertainers who take to the stage to fill in those slow portions in the program, especially when the girls need time to change outfits. This year as a special celebration the Matilda Trio has been invited to be a part of the party. two of the members, George Cooper (daughter and granddaughter) and Robert Thompson (daughter) have had Carnival Queens in their families.

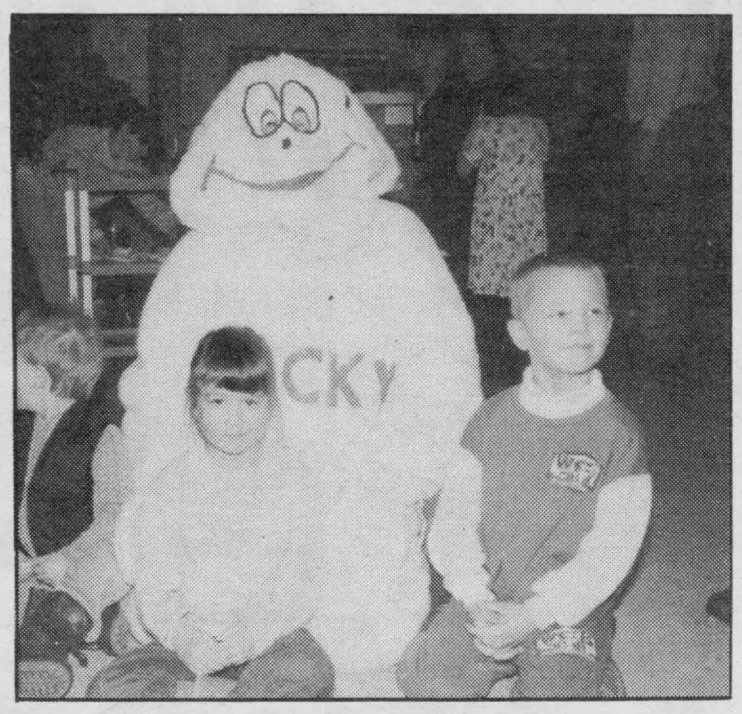
Themes have danced from the Snowflake ball onward and Masters of Ceremonies as well revved up capacity crowds at the hall? Remember when Bruce Wylie of CFJR did the honours? Dave Holmes of 96.3 FM Kingston; Jane Gilbert, Brian Smith and Max Keeping all of CJOH; Hal Anthony of CFRA Radio, Ottawa; Gord McGregor (who filled in when the scheduled MC was unable to attend at the last minute) and this year's man who has done a great job previously, Gerry Morrell.

How many recall when the girls entered in the Queen conterst had to provide a talent? Yes, it was not too long ago that all the contestants did show their talent on stage during the evening. Most years it did not contribute to their overall score, but did make them earn the right to try for the crown and when a girl wanted to join the competition she need not have been a singer, an instrument player but just enough get up and go to read a poem in appropriate costume, tell a joke or act a drama or pantomime. I can still hear Cathy Gibson reading about "John Deere" with her green promo cap on, or Caroline Swank with her toilet seat in hand as she read about....well; each gal came up with something to entertain the always appreciative audience. This has been dropped from the event. The idea of the girls walking the ramp and switching in a reheased twist has remained a part of the event and those who came up with this cute idea can be proud of their imaginative way to feature the girls.

One year there was a surprise visit from Dolly Parton and Kenny Rogers who sang to the girls as they waited for the judges to deliberate. Rumour had it that they were imposters, but it was difficult to tell and spawned a new career direction for a couple of locals!!

The judges table has been occupied by a variety of folks from veterinarians to politicians, from ladies to gents. Their task is never easy and no one wants to take their place. This year will be no different as the young ladies of the area continue to be tops notch.

This year is shaping up to be a silver anniversary celebration, see you all there!!



Mackie and some of his buddies enjoy the show.

Roots

to satisfy those who do not wish to brave the elements on a snowmachine enjoy the rally idea. So much fun was generated over the years by the "rally" idea and such a marvellous job was done by the local Amateur Radio group that a member of the group who was adamant about the safety of the participants and worked so diligently throughout the event, Doctor Tom Maxwell had the event named in his honour after he passed away. Today the Dr. Tom Maxwell Snowmobile and Car Rallies continue provide a wonderful draw to the local Carnival. This year Saturday, january 15 will see snowmachines filling the yard and cars and trucks in the parking lot as registration starts at 11am and winds up at 1pm when the final vehicle will hit the predescribed trail and begin the rally, whether on the snow or on the road.

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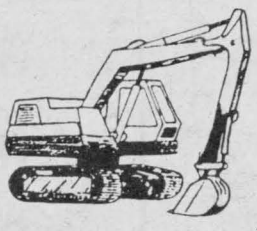
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Happy Anniversary Matilda Winter Carnival!

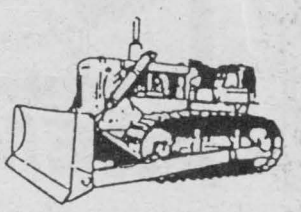
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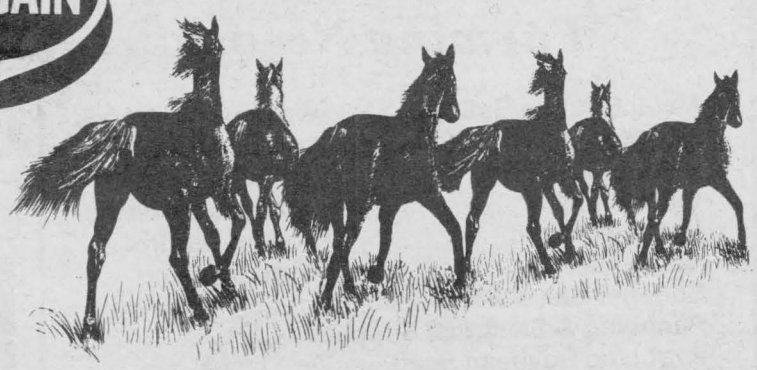


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