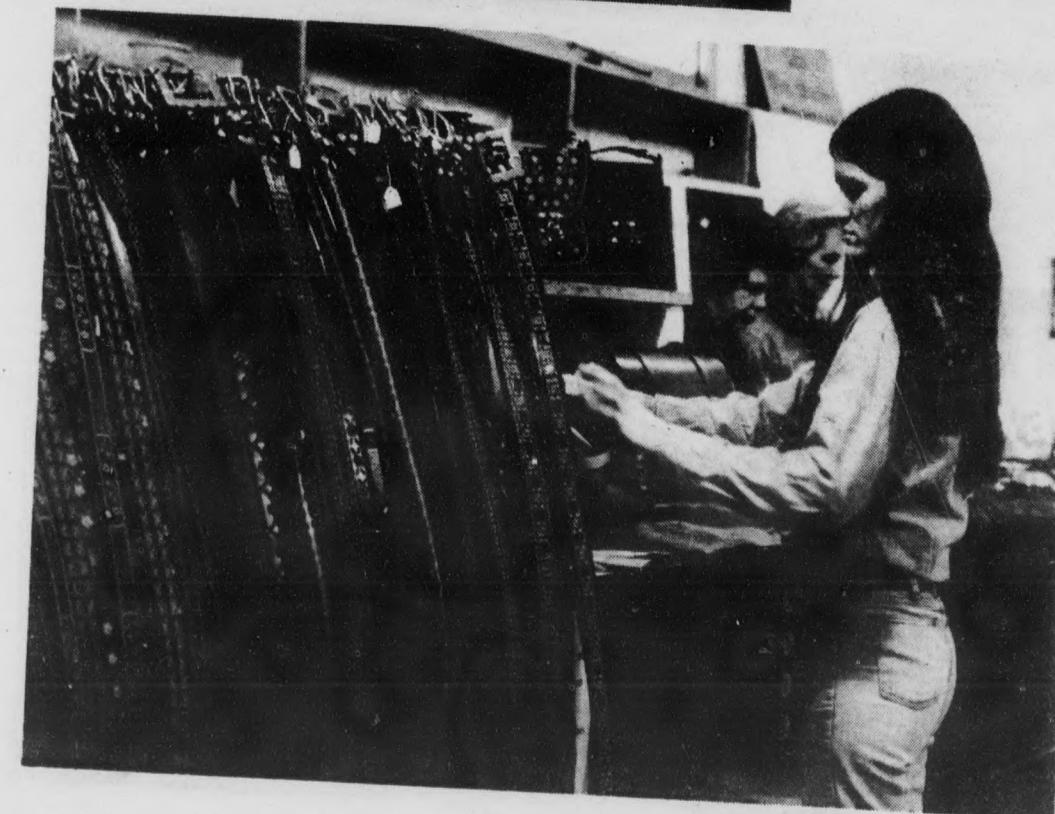




THE BOYCE MARKET : Fredericton's finest entertainment

By MARICA CUMMINGS

Clarence Wade, secretary-treasurer of the former municipality of York, describes it as "the most harmonious enterprise that was ever started in Fredericton. The spirit is beautiful."

A warm and vivacious atmosphere greets all who enter the market and it is the friendliness of the market folk who lure people back week after week. Dot Howe, one of the stallholders who sells her homebaking smiled and said, "I enjoy seeing my old friends and meeting new ones. When I do my cooking, I keep in mind the particular tastes of my customers." The market environment reassures the city dweller that neighbourliness and humanity have not been completely swept away in this modern technological age. While at the market, people take the time to stop and socialize with each other rather than to rush on by in a detached and impersonal manner. The absence of the middle man encourages over-the-counter fraternizing between the customer and farmer or craftsman. Interested customers can

find out first-hand how a lambskin is prepared, why their angel-wing begonias aren't flourishing, or how long it takes to make a leather purse. The market is a very educational and racial-free institution where people of all ages, colour, and class rub shoulders.

Although there was an earlier market place at Phoenix Square, the existing market on George Street was built in 1951 with money bequeathed to the farmers of York, Queen, and Sudbury counties by the late W.W. Boyce. Mr. Boyce had immigrated to Fredericton from England in 1888 to become a feed and fertilizer merchant.

From my visits to the market, I have found the stallholders to be a friendly and agreeable bunch. Most you ask will say that the market is better now than it was in its early years. Many more people attend now, often accompanied by their parents, grandparents, and children. If one were to compare the present-day market with that of 10 years ago, a difference would be noticed in the type of goods sold. Now the Boyce Farmer's Market would more

appropriately be labelled the Boyce Farmer's and Handicraft Market. This influx of handicrafts has only been in the past five years. Most people feel this has enhanced the market with an added variety and flavour that draws those who may not attend if it was solely a "farmer's" market.

One cannot write about the Market without paying tribute to Goofy Roofy's Restaurant whose sales are now double to what they were when Ruth took it over five years ago. Goofy Roofy's is said to consume more eggs on Saturday mornings than some other restaurants in Fredericton do all week. The first restaurant manager used to cater mainly to the farmers, but under new management, the restaurant now directs itself towards the market's visitors. The food is extraordinarily tasty and is a great place for Fredericton's residents and visitors alike to visit.

Boyce Market is presently facing possible relocation problems but meanwhile the market is thriving every Saturday morning on George Street despite future controversies.

photos by Steve Patriquen