

# Heritage Site Preserves History Of Canadian Beef Rings

Before electricity and refrigeration, resourceful Canadian farmers came up with a practical way to preserve and enjoy beef through hot summer months. Similar to today's "crowd butchering", where an animal isn't butchered until enough people commit to buy shares, Beef Rings were cooperative-like groups that divided a newly-butchered steer each week to shareholders. The community ventures were especially useful in times such as World War II, when beef was rationed.

Visitors can arrange a tour of what may be the only building left in Manitoba that was once used for a beef ring. The Gilbert Plains Beef Ring was restored and named a designated municipal heritage site in 2006.

Located on property owned by Lorne and Victoria Smith, the couple restored

the building with the help of neighbors and a community development grant in 2007-2008. The building was used when Lorne's grandfather, Selby Smith owned the property, until the Beef Ring ceased in 1951 after power lines were installed.

"A lot of it is original," Victoria Smith says of the 1923 building. "It has a pole in the middle where the wooden winch hangs, a thick rope, the original cutting block, and knives and hooks they used."

Though details varied at other Beef Rings, the concept was similar to the Gilbert Plains setup. Each Friday during the summer, one share member brought a steer to the holding stall. After passing inspection to ensure it was healthy and would dress out to 500 to 600 lbs., the steer was slaughtered. The carcass was lifted by the large wooden built-

in hoist, and on Saturday a butcher cut it up.

The number of member families varied over the years from 16 to 24, but the meat was divided equally. Each family received different cuts of meat each week so that by the end of about 20 weeks they had received all the cuts of beef. The meat was placed in cotton sacks (often sugar sacks) and hung on numbered hooks along two walls of the building. Families took their sacks home and kept the meat cool as best they could in a well, ice house or cool basement.

Because it was important to the Smiths to preserve family and local history, they maintained the building through the years and were pleased to have it restored to its original design.

Lorne takes visitors to the site for tours, Smith says. Call ahead to set up a time with



This building preserves the history of Canadian Beef Rings - cooperative-like groups that divided newly-butchered steers among shareholders.

him or call Gilbert Plains Municipality (ph 204 548-2326).

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Lorne and Victoria Smith, Box 201, Gilbert Plains, Man. R0L 0X0 Canada (ph 204 548-2548).

## Want To Learn How To Make Acorn Coffee?

Coffee lovers who can't handle caffeine might want to consider acorn coffee. People who love it appreciate the strong nutty flavor and the health benefits. In addition to B and other vitamins, it has 37 percent starch and 8.1 percent protein.

Here, according to a YouTube video called "Make Acorn Coffee At Home", is how to make it:

Pick up acorns right after they have fallen and are fresh. Discard ones with holes or that are discolored.

Remove the shell. This part takes the most time. Again, only keep white nuts, discarding

dark ones.

You have to leach out the tannic acid, the bitter component of acorns that is dangerous for your liver. Boil the acorns, drain and repeat 3 or 4 times until the water is clear.

Then chop the acorns into smaller pieces while still wet, spread them out on a flat sheet and let them dry for a couple days.

To roast them, one method is to heat them in a pan on the stove with low heat stirring frequently for 5 to 8 minutes until they get a light brown color. The acorns are then ground in a coffee grinder until they are a fine powder, then roasted in a pan again until

a dark brown coffee color.

Now, the acorn powder is ready to brew, in a percolator, French press or drip coffee maker. Depending on your taste, it takes up to a heaping tablespoon of acorn grounds for a cup of coffee.

After all that work, hopefully you enjoy the flavor, which some describe as having a caramel nutty flavor.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, YouTube: Make Acorn Coffee At Home (Roasting Ersatz Coffee).



Acorn coffee has a strong nutty flavor as well as health benefits.

## Retired Farmer Exercises In Comfort

Just looking at Wilbert Friesen's fitness setup makes a person want to exercise. The 82-year-old Manitoban pedaled 200 miles this past winter.

"What I was thinking was that instead of going out into the cold and on icy roads with my Terra Trike, there must be some way I could use it inside," Friesen explains.

The retired farmer mounted the trike and reclining seat from an old van on a steel plate clamped to the treadmill. Only the back wheel of the bike rests lightly on the treadmill.

"I can adjust the back to recline, and I can

slide it forward or backwards," Friesen says.

When he's comfortable, he turns on the treadmill and pedals 10 mph for 5 miles.

The makeshift treadmill bike worked great, he says, and kept him exercising through the winter. But when the snow leaves, he'll remove the trike from the treadmill and take it back on the road again.

"I will keep the recliner on the trike," Friesen adds with a laugh.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, Wilbert Friesen, RR1, Box 44, Morris, Man. R0G 1K0 Canada.



Wilbert Friesen exercises in comfort with a Terra Trike and the reclining seat from an old van. Trike's rear wheel rides on treadmill.

## Toy Logging Truck Built From Scrap Metal

James Daugherty, Gray, Georgia, recently made an 18-in. long toy semi trailer logging truck entirely out of scrap metal. His brother John was so impressed that he sent photos to FARM SHOW.

All components on the truck are made from mild steel and are mig welded together. A series of 4-in. tall uprights, made from 3/8-in. thick square stock, hold the "logs" in place on the trailer. The cab is made out of 2 by 4-in. rectangular tubing; 6-in. tall exhaust pipes are made out of 3/8-in. pipe; and the fuel tanks are made of 1-in. dia. solid round bar. Nuts serve as the truck's headlights.

But what's most striking about the truck are the wheels, which Daugherty made by tach welding nuts together inside cylinders made from round tubing.

"My friend who works in the logging industry recently turned 31 years old, and for a birthday present I wanted to make him a toy logging truck something like the real ones," says Daugherty. "I didn't build it to scale but just went by memories of logging trucks that I've seen."

To make the wheels he cut 1 3/4-in. dia. tubing into 3-in. cylinders, then set each cylinder on a table and dropped different size nuts inside it on their edge. He pressed

the nuts all the way down to the table, then tach welded them together and also welded them to the pipe.

The fenders are made from 1 3/4-in. tubing. Daugherty cut a small piece of the tubing in half and pressed it in a vise, in order to open it up so it would fit around the wheel.

When he was done building the truck he applied a layer of clear coat.

"I didn't paint the truck because I like the look of steel and wanted to show my craftsmanship, including the tach welds and all the grinding," says Daugherty. "I tried to make everything on the truck look as clean as possible, which was real hard to do with all the welding."

The trailer's frame is made from 1 by 1 1/2-in. steel, the rear mud flaps from rectangular sections of flat metal welded to a horizontal length of rebar, the radiator grill from 1/4-in. thick short metal rods, and the brush guard from 1/8-in. thick, 1 1/4-in. wide flat stock.

Contact: FARM SHOW Followup, James Daugherty, 144 Old Fortville Road, Gray, Georgia 31032 (ph 478 957-0748; jddaug23@gmail.com).



Toy logging truck uses a series of 4-in. tall uprights to hold "logs" in place. The wheels were made by welding nuts together inside cylinders made from round tubing.

## Take Us To Your Barber

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