

Kirks Mills' Flying Farmers



Mrs. Harry Wilson selects anthems for her church choirs before Wednesday evening rehearsals.

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a full set of pedals and an old-fashioned square piano and stacks of music.

The Wilsons' farm home was built in 1814 by Thomas Furniss. He was a large land owner and had a son, Gardner, to whom he gave a large grant of land in Township, near and around Fairfield. Their present acreage consists also of the Whitson farm, Kirk Brown farm, Edith Conrad farm and two fields of the Pennell farm. They named this farm "Brookside Farm" for Mr. Wilson's home farm in Valley Forge.

He was born on that farm which was Lafayette's headquarters in the Revolutionary War. His grandfather left that farm to the University of Pennsylvania.

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Wilson's have lived on Brookside Farm for 14 or 15 years.

Mr. Wilson keeps 75 to 80 milking cows. He has a mixed herd but largely Holsteins. They have one hired man and the children help with barn work and milking and Mrs. Wilson helps in the fields.

They sell practically all their milk retail through their jug store "The Milk Barn" at Oxford. Any surplus is sold to a cheese factory. They have their own processing plant where they pasteurize and homogenize the milk. It is sold in gallon and half gallon jugs. They have a

drive-in window which makes it very convenient for their customers to pick up milk.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson work at the store part time, jugging and processing the milk, and have two girls who work for them. They handle some other dairy products such as cheese and buttermilk, meats, bread, potatoes, potato chips, etc. Mrs. Wilson assists her husband with their store and farm accounts.

This jug store is just a short hop from their farm in their Cherokee Piper plane which they keep at the Oxford Airport and have a landing strip on

their farm. They bought this in 1965 and both Mr. and Mrs. Wilson are licensed pilots. Their son, Henry Ritter III (Corky) has started training to pilot it and their daughter, Judy, is interested in piloting.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson joined the Flying Farmers in 1964 and Mrs. Wilson was chosen as Pennsylvania Flying Farmers queen in the summer of 1965. Two weeks later she was crowned International Flying Farmers Queen at Omaha, Nebraska. This kept her busy that year traveling 40,000 miles in their Cherokee plane and they were gone from home 134 days. She visited 30 chapters, 25 of which were official visits where she spoke. They took each of the children to some of these meetings and had Judy and Roxy along for the last three weeks.

Ruth says being I.F.F. queen is mostly just plain hard work, writing speeches and a column in their national magazine each month plus encouraging wives of members to learn to pilot. The first runner-up in the I.F.F. queen contest is called a Duchess. She also encourages wives first to land a plane then to learn to pilot it. The present queen is from Arizona and the Duchess is from Ontario.

Among Ruth's souvenirs is a silver bowl from the Pennsylvania chapter for being I.F.F. queen, beautiful pins for chapter queen and I.F.F. queen furnished by the Cesna Plane Co. of Wichita, Kansas, her tiara for chapter queen, a typewriter for I.F.F. queen and a trophy from Mr. Piper of the Airplane Co. at Williamsport for people who get a license. She received this in 1966. She also received cash

awards. The I.F.F. tiara passes from queen to queen.

Mr. Wilson has just been appointed Legislative Agent for I.F.F. As such he will fly to Washington as necessary to try to secure legislation to benefit private plane owners and farmers and will write a column in the I.F.F. magazine each month. They have a membership of around 9000 in I.F.F. It is the second largest to Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. I.F.F. will meet this year at Ames, Iowa, next year at Alberta, Canada and the following year in Pennsylvania.

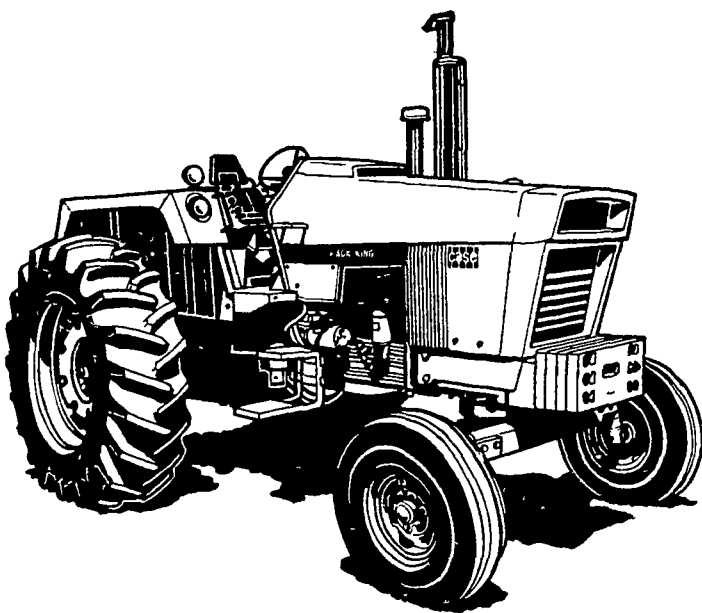
Wilson's started farming on Pomona Hill Farm at West Chester, then were on a farm at King of Prussia. Harry was in training with an oil company awhile. He used to belong to the Toastmasters Club in Lancaster.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson's oldest daughter, Dana, graduated from Solanco High School in 1965 and is a '69 graduate of Messiah College, Grantham, having taken her senior year at Temple University satellite campus in Philadelphia. She is an English major doing student teaching at Newark High School this semester while attending the University of Delaware and will teach school this fall. She has no inclination for flying.

Beverly graduated from Solanco and does office work in Lancaster. Henry III is a freshman at Shippensburg State College in Business Administration. He is in their brass choir and concert band.

Judy, 15, is a Solanco freshman and loves horses. She has a license. She received this in a half Arabian horse and a pony. (Continued on Page 23)

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