



Maine Exchange 4-Hers Visit Lancaster County

by: Sally Bair
Farm Feature Writer

"People everywhere are basically very nice," according to Rusty Clark, Extension Agent for Oxford County, Maine. He was in Lancaster last week with a group of 23 4-H'ers from his County, and he has participated in eight inter-state exchanges so he's in a position to know.

The group arrived last Monday and left early Sunday, and filled every minute in between getting to know their host 4-H families and the county better.

Oxford County, Maine has a lot of agriculture, but it also has a lot of industry, Clark said, as he talked about the county in the dining room of the Lewis Bixler's, Marietta RD1, who were hosting him for the week. "Most of the industry is wood related - pulp and paper," he said. The state is, after all, 90 per cent wooded.

Maine is larger in geographical size than Pennsylvania, but it has fewer people, according to Clark. The county is located in southwestern Maine, and borders on New Hampshire and Canada. There are over 1,000 4-H'ers in the county.

In agriculture, there are some specialized dairy and poultry operations and a few general farms which have a variety of animals. Some farms have as few as one or two cows, Clark said and some have several hundred. He puts himself in the small farm category, living on a 128 acre farm on which he raises Jersey cows, sheep, chickens, geese, rabbits, and "a little bit of everything." He also has six children who help are for the assortment of animals.

One thing Oxford County has in common with Lancaster County is that tourism is a major industry. Most of the tourism centers around nature, but there are lots of motel for those who find camping a bit too rugged.

When asked what the biggest difference was between Oxford County and here, Clark answered emphatically, "Corn. There's a lot more corn grown here." He implied that everywhere he turned he saw field upon field of corn.

Something that is "very much different" according to Clark is the architecture. He was awed by the large stone farm houses which are found here, and said that most of the homes in Maine are constructed of wood. But the biggest difference among homes is that older farm homes in Maine are constructed with the barns and out-buildings



Just to show what she's learned while she is here, Cindy Robinson helps Pam feed calves.



Lancaster Farming Photos

Many ideas are exchanged over the dining room table. From left: Mrs. Lewis Bixler, Mrs. Helen

Wivell, Pam Wivell, Cindy Robinson and Rusty Clark.

attached to the house. As he put it, "There may be a pantry, woodshed, workshop and then a barn or stable." The purpose, of course, was as protection against the severe winter, so there was always easy access to all the necessary buildings.

He said such construction is no longer found, because of the difficulty in obtaining insurance.

Another big difference is in the style of barns. In Maine, according to Clark, old barns are mostly two-story and wooden, although new barns are usually steel and pole, one story buildings. He added that bank barns are something new to him.

Cindy Robinson, 13, was a guest of Pam Wivell, Columbia RD1, and she talked enthusiastically about the exchange, saying, "I think exchanges are worthwhile to help to get to know the differences between the states." Pam agreed that it's a great way "to get to know the people from another state and to see how their life is different."

Mrs. Bixler, who was hosting Clark, said, "I thoroughly enjoy it. I think it's wonderful."

Pam's mother, Mrs. Helen Wivell, said, "I feel 4-H has hidden values which the young people recognize as they get older. It teaches them a lot about getting along with people."

Cindy talked about some of the projects she has as a 4-H'er in Maine - some were familiar ones, but some were different. She has belonged to a community club, which meets primarily in the winter, for two years. One project she has is fat lambs, which she will raise to be at least 65 pounds, and they will be sold at round-up. She said she has already told her father not to plan to eat any of her lamb!

She also has had sewing, and a slightly different project she has is raising guinea pigs. She said she has six, and explained that you show a guinea pig by holding it in your hand for the judge to examine it. What does a judge look for? Cindy said, "It should look good and be gentle and not bite." Other projects Cindy has are wildlife, one aspect of which is to feed the birds, and wild flowers, which consists of identifying and drying flowers.

For those who don't have room for an animal or inclination for something more active, Cindy also has a reading for a project. She explained that those who enroll read books and write a review of them. She has also taken rug braiding and photography.

Cindy is actually a transplanted Pennsylvanian, having lived in Doylestown until three years ago. Her mother was from Maine originally, and so the family decided to move there. Her father works in a woolen mill. Cindy says, "It's

pretty up there." The only disagreeable aspect of being here to visit is the weather. According to Cindy, "It's too hot!"

While visiting with Pam, Cindy is learning about Lancaster County farming and 4-H. She says she never knew what a capon was, which Pam has as a 4-H project. Pam has been a 4-H'er for five years, as a member of the Elizabethtown-Donoga Community Club, and she just completed her first year as a member of the Lancaster County Holstein Club.

Cindy explained that the 4-H members who came to Lancaster had to help raise money for the trip. They had a clam bake supper where all those who wanted to come helped wait on tables. They also put out a special newspaper.

Cindy and Clark agreed that the people at home eat a lot of seafood since they are so close to the shore. Cindy learned to make Lancaster County shoo-fly pie, under the watchful eye of Mrs. Wivell. Clark's comment about the

[Continued on Page 36]



Dan Dolloff goes along for the ride with his host, Darryl Bollinger.