

Traveling School Visits Lancaster Co. Farm

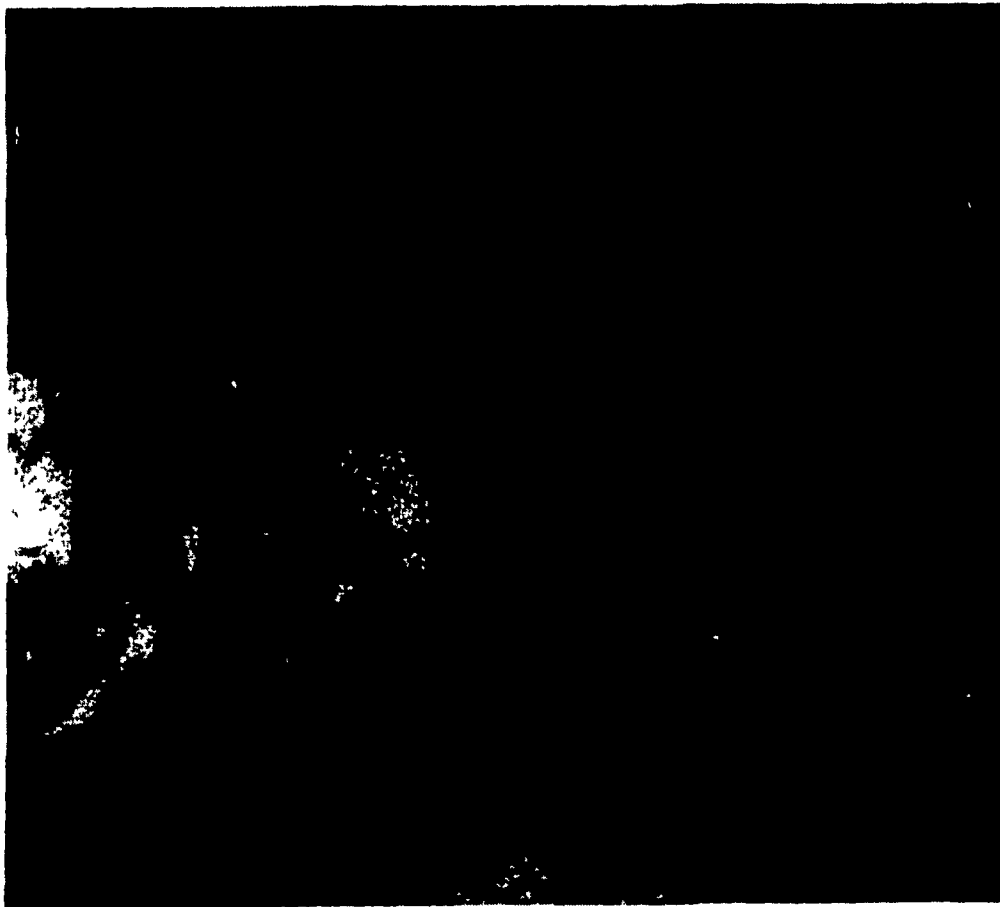
As interesting, in its own way, as Halley's Comet, the Trillside Country School in Killington, Vermont, is a shining aberration in the "blue sky" region of the educational world. And, like the famed comet, it keeps coming back.

This year, in fact, marked the sixth consecutive year that Mike and Diana Cohen brought their traveling school to the same Eastern Lancaster County farm. The publicity-shy Mennonite farmer who has hosted the school for the past six years, said he is always eager for their visit. This year, the yellow Trillside School bus - pulled into the lane loaded down with 18 high schoolers, three instructors, a dog named Timber and a ton of camping gear, sweaters, jackets, candy bars, cereal boxes, thumb pianos, guitars, sleeping bags, tents and cooking utensils.

For ten days, the students stayed in Lancaster County, working on the farm during the day, returning at night to a nearby campsite. The youths, mostly urban dwellers, gather eggs from the hen house, paint, build and help with other farm chores. Since they've been coming to the farm, they have built an addition to the chicken house, put a new roof on a wash house, and erected a small barn. In return for their labor, the farmer answers the youths' questions about his way of life.

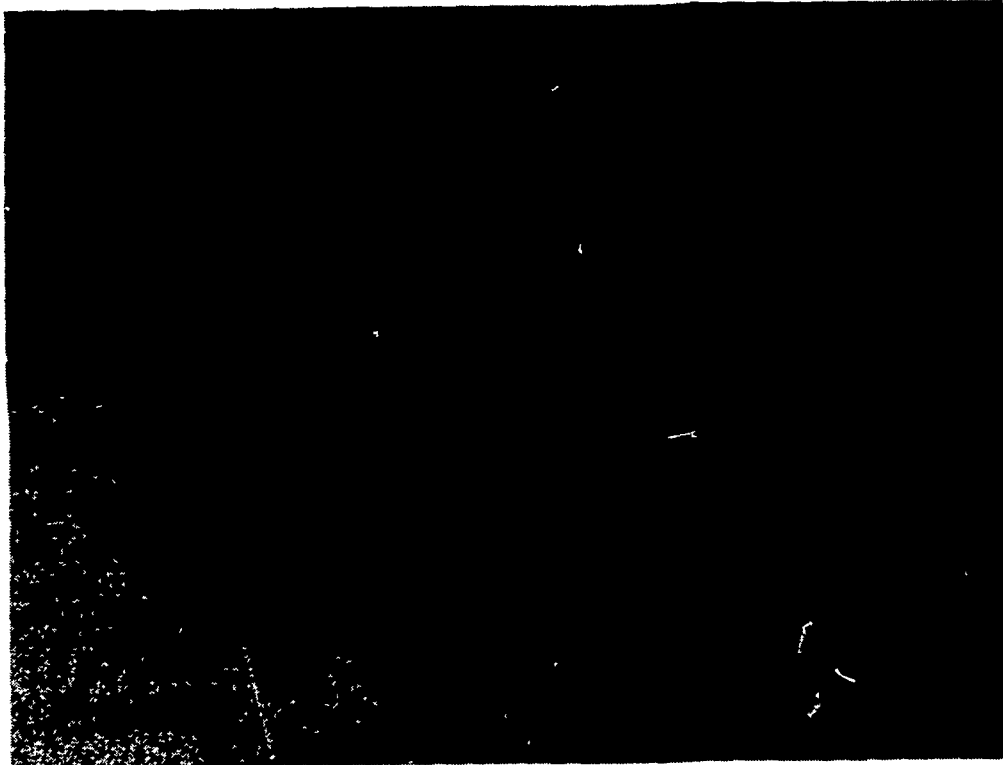
"What we try to do in our school," Cohen told Lancaster Farming, "is to show the kids other ways of life. We get mostly urban kids, and we try to get them close to the natural history and the people of the regions we visit."

When this writer visited the group on the farm, they were crowded into their bus, listening as their host talked about the history of ice and ice boxes and the role ice used to play before un-



Gregory Leeds, a resident of New York's Long Island, had a chance to become familiar with the facts of egg

production during his visit to a county farm with the Trillside School from Killington, Vermont.



Mike Cohen and his wife, Diana (back to camera) have been riding around the country with a busful of kids for the past six years. "We need a vacation," Cohen told Lancaster Farming. The Cohens operate the Trillside Country School out of Killington, Vermont.


dertakers discovered embalming fluid. After they had run out of questions, the students piled out. Part of the group went to gather eggs out of the hen house. Another few hopped onto an old, but very well-preserved, wagon to do some more work on the new running gear they were constructing out of old lumber. The county should get more tourists like this. Although one hesitates to call them tourists.

From Lancaster County, the group planned to go to Arizona to spend a week or so on an Indian reservation.

It's an absolute certainty they'll be doing more than shop for turquoise trinkets.

Students spend only a year in the Trillside school. They leave their regular classes for that year, but they do get full academic credit for their time with the Cohens. Normally, the school year is broken up into three 11 week terms with three-week breaks between terms. The group we visited will be finishing up in January, though, after an abbreviated version of the Trillside School.

[Continued On Page 25]



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