

Joan Rohrer

This Farm Wife Has a Flair for Entertaining



by
Mrs.
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Farm Feature
Writer

Mrs. Robert E. (Joan) Rohrer, Nottingham R1, Chester County, PA, a city girl who married a farmer ten years ago, not only adjusted very well to country living but has put her many talents and interests to use to make her home attractive, her family well fed and cared for and helps her husband with farm work when needed.

Entertaining plays a large part in the lives of the Rohrer family. They enjoy having friends come for dinner and giving parties. As some examples, they have had a holiday drop-in party for 110 people, pig roasts, family reunions, brunches and even mending parties.

The mending party is similar to a quilting, but instead of working on a quilt, each guest brings a piece of needlework or an article to mend while visiting. For one New Year's Eve party, Bob borrowed a ski movie from the local lending library because most of the group present was interested in skiing and this was great free entertainment for them.

If Joan hosts a wedding shower, she takes different kitchen gadgets and makes a mobile as a decoration to hang over the refreshment table and gives the mobile to the bride-to-be. For her sister's wedding reception, Joan made cookies to use as favors that took their cue from the bridesmaids' large hats. These cookies also make a nice favor for a fashion show or tea. To make them Mrs. Rohrer bakes three inch size sugar cookies. She then drops a marshmallow for each cookie into hot milk to soften the outside. Next she rolls each in tinted flaked coconut to cover the sides and one end. The other end being sticky helps the surface to cling to the cookie. She places coconut trimmed marshmallows, sticky side down, in the center of the cookies, for crowns. Hatbands and bows are confectioners sugar icing, tinted and pushed through a pastry tube. She tucks a fresh mint sprig feather in the hatbands before the icing sets.

Rohrer's children, Robbie and Tiffany, also like to have

their friends in for Easter Egg hunts and have a New Year's Eve party in the afternoon.

At Christmas time, the children and their friends decorate the old-fashioned Christmas tree that must have the traditional popcorn and cranberry garlands. When children visit over the holiday season, Joan puts her old Christmas ball ornaments to use. She writes the children's names with white glue on the balls and then sprinkles glitter on them. The boys and girls really seem to like that idea.

Joan tries to give craft items or hand-made articles as gifts as much as possible. Last Christmas, she made seven pine cone wreaths and eight baskets arranged with pine cones. This year, she is doing a lot of Scherenschnitte (paper cutting) and will give these pieces away for birthdays and other special occasions. In the works right now is an old window with six panes that Joan will put a different piece of Scherenschnitte in each pane, to use as a wall hanging in a new addition that is being added to their farmhouse.

Joan makes a lot of beautiful crewel pillows and wall hangings and crochets pocketbooks and necklaces for gifts. For some of the necklaces she uses a gold metallic thread and links beads together with a chain stitch. They are very attractive, light in weight to wear and resemble and gold link bought necklaces. She also made four bread dough baskets and several napkin rings for gifts.

Mrs. Rohrer has a twelve taper candle mold and pours her own beeswax twelve inch tapers which burn much longer than regular candles. She attended craft shops and learned to do decoupage, make Williamsburg dried flower arrangements and put under glass in a picture frame, cornhusk dolls and pine cone wreaths and arrangements. She used the decoupage on boxes and pictures. She makes fresh greens arrangements. Quilling is another craft she learned to do. She makes snowflakes for windows, Christmas trees and package decorations. Her next craft may be to make an apple head doll.

Homestead Notes

Joan has had a vegetable garden for two years and cans and freezes a lot of things. She also puts a lot of pork and beef in the freezer. She started an herb garden which includes basil, marjoram, dill, orange mint tea and parsley. She plans to use the basil to season tomatoes. She also has flower beds planted with coleuses, begonias and a few colorful ones to dry such as strawflowers. She is air drying these to use for her arrangements.

Rohrer's, while making their farm home a very happy place to live, are at the same time conducting a very large and successful farming operation. Joan assists Bob with the bookwork, driving the tractors if she is needed to work the ground, helps get equipment started and she and their son round up their hogs if they get out. She also operates the corn dryer in the fall. These are necessary when they have such a large operation and do not have hired help. Bob's father helps during planting and harvesting of crops.

Rohrer's live on a 100 acre farm on Fremont Road in West Nottingham Township, known as the Rob Roy Farm. They rent additional acreage in Chester and Lancaster Counties for a total of 750 acres. They raise 500 acres of corn, 140 acres of small grains (oats and barley) and 112 acres of soybeans. They keep 500 feeder hogs at a time. They buy these shoats at 40 pounds each and market 800 to 1000 hogs a year. They sell some each week. They have hogs butchered for their own pork but butcher a few at 100 to 200 pounds for pig roasts. For the pig roasts they burn wood for eight hours then have a man come in to roast the pig. He also uses 100 pounds of charcoal to roast it and it takes about eight hours to roast it. Rohrer's roast a few smaller pigs and stuff them with sauerkraut for the Rohrer reunions and their hunting club outings. Bob, with the help of automatic feeders and fountains, handles the hogs with a minimal amount of time and labor required. He spends just an hour or so in the mornings and evenings tending to them.

Bob also raises four or five steers for their own beef and for a few friends. He has five trucks and several tractors, a combine and other equipment. He does some combining for neighbors. He owns three grain trucks and trucks grain to Indiana Grain in Baltimore and to John Hooper, Gordonville. He sells some of his own grain in addition to what he uses. He operates a lime truck out of Martin's Quarry, Limeville, in winter.

Bob and Joan bought this farm from his parents, Mr. and Mrs. Ellis M. Rohrer, who now live at Atglen. His parents originally owned and operated a dairy farm at Paradise where Bob grew up. They lived on this farm on Fremont Road from 1952 to 1965. Ellis farmed the land, had sheep, chickens and ducks, boarded horses and drove a truck.

Joan, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Stuart, Lancaster, was graduated from McCaskey High School and Millersville State College and did graduate work from Temple University on the Franklin and Marshall College campus, Lancaster. She taught one year at the George Washington School in Lancaster and two years at Quarryville Elementary School. She has been doing some



Joan is sticking a few red velvet bows in the antique basket pine cone arrangement to give it color and a holiday touch. She made the scherenschnitte (paper cutting) valentine picture with a red background for her husband, also the one with a pale blue background in the foreground.

substitute teaching and private tutoring since.

Bob was graduated from Oxford Area High School where he was president of the Student Council. He took the Ag course and was in FFA. He was a military policeman in the U. S. Army two years and was stationed in Georgia and at Aberdeen, MD.

Rohrer's have three children. Robert Jr. (Robbie) is six years old and will be in first grade at Oxford Area Elementary School in Oxford this fall. Tiffany is five and will attend Kindergarten class in Oxford this fall. Ryan is a very active ten month old boy who keeps his mother very busy.

Both Mr. and Mrs. Rohrer are active in the community. Bob was Township Supervisor in West Nottingham Township for four years. He served on the Advisory Committee for Oxford Area Schools for one 9 month school term. He has been a member of the Lancaster County and the Penna. Farmers Association for eight years. He belongs to Chesco, a group of farmers who have incorporated to buy supplies in quantities. He has been a member of the Paradise Sportsman Club for many years. He is a member of the Paradise Hunting Club that owns a 140 acre farm in Tioga County. They raise some corn there for deer and turkeys. Their large farmhouse can sleep 25. Rohrer's go there one week in the summer and a lot in winter for winter sports such as skiing and snowmobiling and of course Bob goes there for the hunting season. Besides these sports he enjoys trap shooting on range at

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Mrs. Rohrer prizes the antique jelly cupboard which belonged to her husband's grandparents. On it are a dried arrangement picture, bread dough napkin rings and a molded beeswax candle she made. She also made the crewel picture she is holding.

Country Corner

with: Melissa Piper
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Farmfest Celebrates Ag Bicentennial

While most of the events scheduled for the Bicentennial are going to be staged in the nation's large cities such as Boston, Philadelphia and Washington D. C., a salute to the agricultural bicentennial has been slated for Minnesota.

Nicknamed as the "breadbasket of the nation" Minnesota will be hosting Farmfest '76, the largest farm exhibition ever presented.

The festivities will be held September 13-19 in Lake Crystal, Minnesota and will feature exhibits on agriculture from the past, in the present and horizons for the future.



Farmfest was officially inaugurated on July 18th with a flag raising ceremony complete with bands, cannons and visiting dignitaries.

John Warner, head of the American Revolution Bicentennial Administration, was on hand to present the official bicentennial flag.

Throughout the coming weeks, more information on Farmfest and the activities planned around it will be coming to our office. We at Lancaster Farming will try to keep our readers informed on this "world fair of agriculture" as announcements are made.

Why not plan now to take at least part of next year's vacation at Farmfest to view agriculture's past and hope for tomorrow.