

A host of varied interests keep her busy

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"I think I'd feel old if I sat around and did nothing. I can't sit still." These words were spoken by Mrs. Roy Weinhold, Ephrata, who was the chief architect and worker on the tablecloth and banner which were presented at the county convention of the Society of Farm Women of Lancaster County. The materials were the gift of Lancaster County Farm Women Society 3, of which Alva has been an active member for 48 years.

Alva talks readily about the part she played in getting the richly-made banner and tablecloth completed for the convention two weeks ago, but says it nonchalantly because her whole life centers around being busy - and mostly in the service of others.

The Farm Women project, she said, took up "most of the Summer." "It was natural for her to design the insignia because she is the one who paints the insignia on the scrapbooks which are presented to each outgoing president of her society. Furthermore, she has made many banners for Salem Lutheran Church, which is just three doors away from her home and where she is an active member.

Sewing is, obviously, a large interest for Alva who says, "My mother taught me to sew very young. I made a patchwork quilt where I had nine pieces of fabric to join. I could also embroider, knit and crochet." She says there was a time when she made all her own clothes, including



Doing needlepoint brings a lot of satisfaction to Alva, who currently is working on a design which will be used in reupholstering a rocking chair.

suits and coats. She simply followed pattern instructions and never had formal instruction.

Alva took up practical nursing as a career and eventually the sewing gave way to other interests. However, when she later gave up nursing she turned to a job with "a lady who made slipcovers and draperies." This was work she enjoyed despite the bulky and heavy material with which she worked. "I loved making draperies and slipcovers," she said. Her background is diverse, because she also worked for five years running a children and infants clothing store.

As for making the Farm Women Banner, Alva explained that she merely made a pattern "which fit together like a jigsaw puzzle," and cut the fabric accordingly. Acquiring all the proper fabrics took those in charge of the project to York and to the garment factory store in Columbia. She said she also learned about "stitch witchery," a fusible binding which allowed her to put the pieces together first without sewing. Then the entire design was applied to the cloth, with each part being applied separately. When they tried to glue the letters onto the metallic fabric which was used for the border, they would not stick so they were applied with a braid border also handsewn.

She said she began making banners at the church "through a former pastor." She said they looked through books to help get designs, but the final form "came from



Having taken up oil painting, Alva Weinhold displays her technique which has produced many beautiful landscapes and still lifes.

our heads." She also hand embroidered altar cloths for the church.

One interesting banner she designed and made was presented to the Lincoln Fire Company on the occasion of its 125th anniversary.

Alvin recalls that her first craft was egg decorating, which she learned through a course at the YWCA. She has many beautiful examples of the craft on display shelves in her home. She has used all kinds of eggs for her work, including goose, turkey, chicken, pigeon, partridge and pheasant eggs. She currently has an ostrich egg and an emu egg to be decorated.

She talks about egg shows she has attended, both in Ephrata and in New Jersey and enthusiastically describes the "elaborate, exquisite" eggs she has seen. Her own eggs also fit that description, but she is modest about her accomplishments. She explains that she often blows the eggs out of the shell, or cuts the shell with manicure scissors. She has been known to use an electric saw on the larger eggs, and acknowledges, "Yes, it does take a steady hand."

At first it was a problem for her to find tiny figures and decorations with which to complete the eggs; however, now that egg decorating has gotten to be more popular, the tiny accessories are available readily. She has decorated eggs for herself and for gifts, but declares that she has done none for a long time. She laments, "I haven't had time to do anything."

In addition to her long Farm Women project she explains that a close friend of hers has been hospitalized for four weeks, and she has missed just one day of visiting.

Oil painting is another interest of Alva's, something she took up when she was "in my sixties." She took lessons

As if it isn't obvious, Alva has a lively interest about her. As a result she says, "I have a man collecting things for scrapbooks." Indeed, several in our conversation she brought out a scrapbook which contained pertinent pictures. She added, "I guess 'cutter upper and a cutter outer'. I save local news way back, and news about some of the buildings in Ephrata."

Another interest is needlepoint, and she proudly shows chairs that are completed with her handiwork and pieces she is working on which will be used in upholstering a rocking chair.

A supporter of the Ephrata Fair, Alva helped bake goods at the Fair, eventually becoming head of the department. Now she says, "I help with the needlework can't seem to get out of it."

In the Summer she enjoys freezing and canning, so she gets the things from her own garden, and adds, "As old as I still like to try new recipes."

She has no intention of slowing down. "I would like to decoupage and I have all the materials but I don't have time around to it. I guess I really should concentrate on one thing."

Her association with Farm Women has been a big one for her, and she talks with pleasure about the trips she has taken with them. She was born and raised on a farm and her husband is a retired farmer.

Married for just 11 years, Alva enjoys a stepdaughter and two step granddaughters. She was formerly married to Stuber.

She is obviously in good health to carry out her many activities with such enthusiasm, and at this point she doesn't look like she'll have much chance to "feel old

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with a friend then. "I always liked to draw, and enjoyed painting and drawing. I had always wanted to oil paint. It takes me quite a while to paint a picture. I have sold some and gave some away for gifts."

She likes to paint from photographs or postcards, and occasionally sets up a still life, one of which won first place at Ephrata Fair. She says, "I haven't had the paintbrush in my hand for a long time; my fingers are getting itchy."

She said she once thought that when she retired she would have time to do all the things she was interested in. When she finally retired, at age 72, she finds her days speed by with interesting activities, but she does not accomplish all she would like to.

At one time she made pressed flower pictures and notepaper, and she once did a lot of quilling, admitting, "It doesn't seem to be as popular now."

One of her current successful craft interests is drying bridal bouquets. She said, "I went to one demonstration and learned the rest just by reading. Now my florist sends people to me who want bouquets dried."

She uses silica gel to absorb the moisture from the flowers, and she draws a diagram before taking the flowers apart so that she can reassemble it in the same order. The flowers tend to shrink somewhat in the drying process, so they are not as large when completely dried. Once dried, the arrangement will last indefinitely.

Last May Alva had so many orders for drying bouquets and prom flowers that they covered the table and the floor in her dining room - work area.



Alva is much in demand for her work in drying bridal bouquets. She says the flowers will last indefinitely once the process is complete.