

The Christmans make traveling a hobby

BY LAUREL SCHAEFFER
Staff Correspondent

Few people have seen as much of our world as Roy and Gloria Christman. Owners and operators of Ro-Ria Farms, Shartlesville, with their son Ronald, the Christmans have traveled to different lands and experienced different cultures through "People to People" and farmers and World Affairs tours.

They have been in twenty-seven countries and presently are

Gloria has always done "the books" but is gradually passing the duties onto her daughter-in-law, Faye. She used to garden but has given up that. She and Roy both felt her time was more valuable and important as a bookkeeper.

"The time spent at a desk is worth more than in a garden," Gloria commented and then added, "Roy loves records."

In their early farming years, the Christmans lost their cows to Brucellosis and had to resort to

Farmers' Association State Women's Committee and Roy is a director of Berks' County Farmers' Association. Gloria belongs to the Society of Farm Women and has held the office of treasurer in the past. She has been involved in PTA and 4-H while her children were growing.

"I find that I've been involved on the levels my children were on," she explained.

Roy and Gloria's first trip ever was to California when Roy, selected as the Kutztown Chapter's first Outstanding Young Farmer, won the State award and went to represent Pennsylvania in the national contest. This trip took place in 1959 when they were still farming about 100 acres.

The Christmans were also selected as the Reading Fair Family one year and Roy was named a Master Farmer in 1968. The Christmans' first trip abroad was to Europe and Russia in 1965 and they have been going about every two years ever since. They have attended a World Food Congress in Japan and have been on all continents except South America, Arctica, and Anarctica.

Other than traveling, Gloria especially enjoys doing ceramics which she describes as "her therapy. Poking around in a flower

very sorry for the way some people must exist such as in Ethiopia, to reminiscing of our own earlier days," this traveler remarked. "It is as if many of these countries are 25 to 50 years behind us."

the poor. "If you can get past the governments and can relate person to person with everyday people you find they are nice. People of different countries don't hate each other when they can be

"...There's no better way of finding out if your kids can handle the farm than going away for three weeks..."

"Roy and I come home and feel we're so much farther ahead."

When travelling in Pakistan, Gloria said she could easily imagine Biblical days. But, she also remarked that some countries are very much like our own. Especially Australia and New Zealand.

The Christmans have seen modern countries and very primitive ones where the people were in masses and masses and literally lived on rice and a few vegetables.

Gloria was impressed with the beauty of countries lying near the equator, envying them for their beautiful flowers, countryside, and weather. She said she was thrilled to see the Sphinx in Egypt, and the Acropolis of Greece while winds blew sand in her face.

on the same level. It's the governments that do," she commented.

Gloria also was amazed as to what people in many countries do for entertainment.

"They don't even have a local fire company," she said with amazement.

Language has never been much of a barrier when communicating with people in countries where English is not the native language. "We should be ashamed that we can only speak English, however," Gloria remarked.

Most people and children of other countries can speak English as a second or third language. The Christmans have also found that their Pennsylvania Dutch can take them many places in Europe too: "even in Russia."

"Exchanging money is the largest problem we've found," Gloria remarked. "This is one reason it's nice to have a tour guide. Without one, much time can be wasted looking around for good hotels, banks and whatever. Guides know where to go."

But as noted earlier Gloria and Roy are always glad to come home and haven't seen a better place to live.

"There's no better way of finding out if your kids can handle the farm than going away for three weeks, either," she added. "You're only fooling yourself if you don't give them a chance to do the work."

"It was when we came home that was the roughest; when we found out about the problems which developed," she said.

As a complement to all of their traveling, the Christmans have hosted visitors from other countries as well. People from Russia, India, Turkey, Pakistan, Japan, Costa Rica, Peru, and Denmark have visited the Christmans. A boy from Denmark stayed with them for a year.

"...Without experiencing many of these things the world tends to look the same..."

preparing for a trip to the twenty-eighth one this year. This one being China.

All of their traveling has centered around agriculture, because as Gloria explained, "if it didn't, Roy wouldn't go. There's nothing like going for three weeks without seeing a cow," she laughed.

The Christmans are milking about 300 Holsteins and have the capacity for 400, which was Roy's goal until milk became such a surplus.

Roy and Gloria started milking as soon as they were married, in 1944 with a rented farm and 15 cows. Raised in a city, Gloria adapted quickly and seldom missed a milking until her children were in their teens.

She never saw a baby chick until Roy brought some brooders home one day. "I still can't handle those little things," she joked. However Gloria's parents both were from farms and didn't move into the city until the depression years. So she said she always heard stories of farming and even worked at a dairy, bottling milk until she began milking the cows.

selling equipment and doing custom work to "survive."

Today their operation has grown into eight hundred head of cattle and 1,000 acres of owned land. They farm 2,500 acres, have eight full-time employees.

The Christmans have three children, Ronald, Barry, and Sandy Kopicz. Presently they have been working on estate planning, and say they wish they had started years earlier.

"We waited too long," Gloria said.

During the past twenty years their business has grown tremendously, partly due to inflation and partly to use the "extra muscle" of their eager children.

Through their estate planning they are slowly turning their business over to Ronald and Faye. Roy and Ronald share in the herd management while Faye manages the calves, upkeeps the dairy barns, and begins to work with Gloria on the books and records, which Gloria estimates she spends about two hours per day on.

Gloria also is serving as chairwoman of the Pennsylvania

"...There's nothing like seeing the places you've been to presented in books..."

bed and reading books on the subject allows her to call herself a "bookaholic."

"There's nothing like seeing the places you've been to in books," Gloria remarked enthusiastically. "Reading about famous restaurants and sights that you've been to makes books and traveling even more terrific."

"I can relate to National Geographic much better now since I've seen many of the things and been in the exact spots that are described in the magazine," she said.

Through traveling with agribusiness groups and visiting farms in other lands, Gloria finds her trips more of an experience than they are educational, as far as learning more techniques to use are concerned.

"My feelings usually go to being

"I know why they dress as they do now," she said.

Just being able to experience the difference between other parts of the world has made her life richer, and at times glad to come home she says.

"Without experiencing many of these things the world tends to look the same," she continued.

Asked what country stood out most in her memory of traveling, Gloria explained that it would be Pakistan. "We were there longer than most trips we've been on and lived in their houses and got to know the people personally," she explained. "We got below the surface."

Gloria explained that in Pakistan there is a rich class and poor class and most money given to help the poor usually stop with the rich, never being of benefit to

Homestead Notes

Learn to "burglar-proof" your home

BY SALLY BAIR
Staff Correspondent

YORK SPRINGS — Rural crime is steadily increasing and most rural residents make it easy for burglars to help themselves to property by leaving doors unlocked and keys in vehicles.

According to Albina B. Woodruff, community development area agent with Penn State's Cooperative Extension Service, rural residents have not discovered that crime is moving away from the cities which are securing themselves and reducing crime to the country where there is often easy access to property. She was speaking at the Adams County Extension Homemakers' Day held recently.

Citing statistics compiled by the Pennsylvania State Police in their Uniform Crime Report, Woodruff outlines the four major crimes in rural areas, including larceny theft, burglary, motor vehicle theft and vandalism. She pointed out that murder is not one of the more

major rural crimes, nor is rape.

Arson is one rural crime which is just beginning to be reported and is increasing.

Larceny theft is the taking of private property without breaking or entering as in shoplifting. Burglary includes breaking and entering and motor vehicle theft includes stealing cars, trucks and pick-up trucks, but not tractors which are considered property since they are not licensed.

According to Woodruff, statistics show that 80 percent of the homes which have been burgled were unlocked. Forty percent of stolen vehicles have the key in the ignition and 80 percent of them were not locked.

Most car thefts are not professional jobs and the removing of keys and locking the doors as well as storing valuables out of sight can prevent much vehicle theft.

Vandalism includes a large number of incidents in school

buildings which are often not reported because the school simply fixes the problem itself. Vandalism has increased 43 percent since 1975 and was up another 15 percent in 1980.

"It's alarming; it's increasing," Mrs. Woodruff noted, showing statistics that vandalism is up in Adams, York and Lancaster counties.

She pointed out that decrease in crime is shown most often in areas where there is a high concentration of local police.

But rural residents do not need to sit and wait to become victims. Mrs. Woodruff suggested many steps to be taken to prevent crime, including running a security check on their homes, learning how to lock up their homes and being aware of how to protect themselves.

Woodruff said that a most effective deterrent can be marking all valuables with your motor

(Turn to Page C4)



Albina Woodruff demonstrates how to use a marker borrowed from the state or local police to mark valuables at the Adams County Extension Homemakers' Day.