

# 4-H'ers experience life in New England

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — Fresh red lobsters, juicy, squeezey cranberries, Plymouth Rock, pilgrims, quaint little fishing villages smelling of sea weed, and ocean roars became a way of life for 26 Lancaster County youths last week when they journeyed to Massachusetts as part of a 4-H exchange program.

From 11 clubs the 26 came, unpacking their goods in Plymouth and Bristol counties and traveling, 4 out of the 6 days planned, to sites throughout the state.

An entire day was devoted to famous Cape Cod, in Barnstable County, with highlights being a boat ride and an afternoon at the beach.

On Tuesday the travelers visited Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth, a bright part of the vacation according to Nancy Meyers, county agent and tour member, because "We were able to talk to the people who live at this plantation who live, act and talk as if they are Pilgrims. It was really fun and very interesting because they would only eat what they could raise or grow, and they never leave the plantation. They called us witches because we told them we travel on planes and buses." Meyers laughed.

On Thursday, the now weary travelers took a jaunt to Boston on the "T," the city's subway system.

Friday and Saturday was free time to spend with the host families, a must for this trip since the visitors plan to host their new friends from Massachusetts next summer.

When asked to comment on the trip, Meyers said, "I think a lot of the kids enjoyed the historical aspects — this is where America started," she replied.

"Massachusetts has a lot of 'firsts' to offer the traveler. They have the first concrete bridge ever built in the country in Plymouth and the first divided highway also. This highway is very interesting because it is divided by trees instead of concrete," she explained.

This new Massachusetts fan went on to describe the state as "a real nice blend between green forests and blue ocean scenes."

An interesting aspect of the trip might be the fact that none of the

host families were from farms, a switch for 4-H'ers from a county that is predominately agricultural.

"This was a new experience for the farm kids especially," Meyers said.

And according to the travelers, the farm scenes were few and far between.

"You don't see many large farm operations in southeastern Massachusetts — just a lot of cranberry bogs," Meyers explained. She also noted that Massachusetts is a leader in the production of cranberries.

"We were able to see how they grow cranberries. They are grown in areas called bogs a little below the normal walking ground. They have wet and dry harvesting methods. We saw both. The wet keeps the cranberries wet and so these berries are used for sauces and such and the dry are used to be frozen," she said.

"In the winter they flood the area with water and the kids can go ice skating on it. The berries are on vines, so they never have to be replanted, but the farmers do have



A first for many of this county's 4-H'ers was the subway system. Photos supplied by Nancy Meyers, county agent and trip member.

to spend their time with insects and water problems."

And every trip lends itself to a new experience — this one supplying a first in the consumption of "quahogs" for the curious 4-H'ers.

Quahogs are a relative of the clam and we're assured they are delicious.

Hopefully next year will be a fun learning experience for the Massachusetts visitors when they too journey to a lifestyle completely new to them. This trip is one 26 youths will never forget.



Above, "Just got to get my feet in it!"



Cape Cod offers beautiful sites.



Above and right are scenes from Plimoth Plantation in Plymouth.

Left, resting in the Atlantic is the famed Mayflower II.

