

Over 400 attend Ladies Day Out

BY DEBBIE KOONTZ

LANCASTER — Female farmers of Lancaster County received an early Mother's Day treat Monday as they left chores and cleaning behind to gather for the annual Ladies Day Out sponsored by the PFA Women's Committee.

Over 400 women from Lancaster and neighboring counties gathered at Indian Springs Golf Club for a luncheon, cheese and sausage quiz and a fashion show by Posers of Park City Mall.

Conducting the cheese and sausage quiz was Michelle Rodgers from the local Extension office. Each participant had opportunity to win cheese by guessing types of cheeses and meats from a selection placed at each table setting. Cheeses were supplied by the Lancaster County Swiss Cheese Company, and sausages came from Stauffers in Intercourse.

Local PFA president Earl Newcomer and PFA news media representative Jan Carson were on hand to address the audience on the goals of PFA.

The program was under the direction of Women's Committee members Shirley Garner, Svea Hoover, Linda Kreider, Ginny Ranck - chairperson, Carolyn Wanner, Irene Wanner, Ruth Wanner and Becky Wivell.

The highlight of the day's event came in the morning, however, when ladies had opportunity to take part in the annual Heritage Trail. This event, now in its sixth year, features open house to five homes of PFA members.

Included on this year's schedule

were the farms of Lilli Ann and Galen Kopp, Eileen and Galen Benner, Erna and Clair Hollinger, Marian and Elvin Brennehan, and the Cameron Estate Inn of Betty and Abram Groff.

The Benners' Home

One of the older and more unique houses on the tour, the Benners home, can only be reached by crossing a beautiful one lane stone arch bridge which flows along Little Chiques Creek near Mount Joy.

But even the little stone bridge and the winding creek don't adequately prepare you for the view which awaits you as you round that last turn on Pinkerton Road.

Just past a 90 degree turn, and the bend in the creek, sets the huge stone house, bordered by a windmill on one side and a barn on the other.

This "Rocky Acre Farm" includes 250 acres and about 75 dairy cows. This figure will soon be changing to 100 according to Eileen, due to three sons who all want to farm.

But if you're thinking that the five of them must live very comfortably in a 16-room house, count again. This family includes eight members. Besides Galen and Eileen, are Lamar, 23; Dean, 20; Arlin, 18; Holly, 16; Loren, 11, and Noel, 7.

A step into the Benner home is like a step into a preserved piece of history. The home features three built-in closets complete with butterfly shelves, and five fireplaces including one walk-in and one the Benners built them-



The beautiful, remodeled kitchen features an original stone wall to the right, and one constructed by the Benners around the oven and left side counters. The kitchen is the

connecting room between the dining room and the family room - the newest addition to the home.

selves. Antiques line every wall, and though Eileen professes to be able to "probably" list everything in the house, she admits she might have a "little trouble."

Perhaps the rarest attraction associated with this home is a room which was part of the Underground Railroad chain spanning to Canada.

The room is in the original part of the house, supposedly built in the late 1700's. The wall behind which the slaves hid, has since been torn down and the wood used to build a closet in another bedroom.

The slave's hideout is now part of a four-room apartment they rent to tourists during the summer for a mere \$25 a day. Included in this apartment is a full kitchen, walk-in closet, and two bedrooms. The apartment, though part of the building, has only one entrance to the rest of the home, allowing tourists complete privacy.

The door which leads from the apartment into the house opens into the dining room. Eileen's pride and joy in this room is a table which can span the 25-foot room.

"This table can stretch from wall to wall and even has boards left over," Eileen said. "I had it made so I could have as many guests or tourists as I want to dinner."

From the dining room guests can
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This is the room where slaves were hidden when the house was part of the historic Underground Railroad. The ceiling rises to a point above the bed; at this point was once a wall behind which the slaves hid.



The Benners' huge stone house rests on lush green land bordering Little Chiques Creek in Mount Joy. The home, built in three parts, is approximately 200 years old according to Eileen Benner.



Though it could pass as one of the original four fireplaces in the home, this one was actually built by the Benners in the family room. The wooden beam was taken from an old barn.



Eileen's pride and joy is this dining table which can span the 25-foot room. In the back corner is one of the original fireplaces, and to

the right, the entrance to the four-room apartment. On the table are antique dishes Eileen inherited from her family.



This huge bed graces the major part of one of the many bedrooms. The bed was given to her as was most of her antique furniture and dishes.