

Minnesota visitors

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which is near Duluth. She said that typically, farm houses are as much as a mile apart. Her husband, Ray, was impressed by "the way they conserve as much land as possible by farming right next to the road."

On their arrival Thursday the Minnesotans took a tape-recorded tour of the Amish area and on Friday they visited the Green Dragon market, near Ephrata.

Al and Helen Strohschein, Cambridge, Minn., were fascinated by the Amish three-family farmsteads and Glenace Fredricksen admitted to a feeling of nostalgia on seeing the horse-drawn buggies. It was only then

that she realized that it was by horse and buggy that her parents got around.

For many of them, the farm of Raymond and Betty Seigris, on Pierson Road, Lititz, was their first look at tobacco farming. The visitors enjoyed Ray's explanations of steaming tobacco beds and of sowing the tobacco. After their one hour tour of the Seigris farm one visitor said, "It seems like an awful amount of work for the money you get." Ray agreed.

This was the seventh year of the visits for the Seigris and they suggested, "They are always nice, friendly people and we enjoy meeting them." He also confessed

that the visits are a good incentive to get the place cleaned up.

For the third time, poultryman Paul Kline and his wife, May, hosted the midwesterners on their Brunnerville grain and poultry operation. But this year most of them came knowing about the Avian influenza situation.

"They knew about our problems from the TV news reports," related Kline, "but they were surprised at the number of birds involved in the depopulation." He also noted their disbelief at the size of Lancaster County farms — extremely small by Minnesota standards.

Jake and Jane Fisher, R1 Manheim, hosted the group for the first time this year and look forward to being a regular part of the annual trek. The common response to the question of what they

thought of the Fisher's goat dairy was, "I've never seen so many goats in my life!"

Visits were also made to the farms of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Hernley, Manheim; Mr. and Mrs. Jay S. Hershey, Manheim and Mr. and Mrs. John Landis, Lancaster.

Darold Fredrickson, a rural mail carrier in Granite Falls, Minn., who once farmed a "small" 186 acre farm, declared this a busier part of the world with more confusion and traffic back-ups. This was his first time east of Chicago. He and his wife, Glenace, noted that it was strange to be visiting houses built before Minnesota was even a state.

The tours were started by Wilton Gustafson, a long-time friend of Longenecker, Wilton, and wife Madalyn, organize and escort the tours each year with Wilton driving the Minnesota Farmers Union bus.

Bemidji farmer Harry Stenberg said that the Green Dragon almost caused him a problem since he wanted to buy some of the calves. "But they wouldn't let me take them on the bus," he jokingly

complained.

While most of the traveling company was content to tour and enjoy the trip, a few ascribed ulterior motives to their visit. Jerome Latour, Annandale, Minn., said they were sent by their governor to drum up industry for Minnesota. Sawyer, Minn. native Lydia Olesiak said they were in the country to convince everyone to vote for "our man from Minnesota, Walter Mondale."

Latour, who had called home earlier in the day to learn that the temperature there was 68 degrees, provided the only serious complaint advanced by the visitors. He said, "We're freezin' to death down here." The local folks could only agree.

Their bus left Lancaster Sunday afternoon, headed for Gettysburg, Washington, D.C. and Nashville. They expect to be home by Apr. 17. And when they arrive home, Lancaster County will bring to mind words like "friendly, hard-working people", "beautiful small but productive farms" and "shoo-fly pie".

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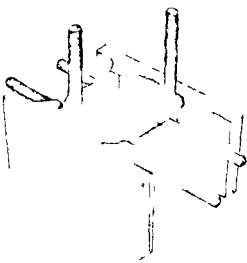
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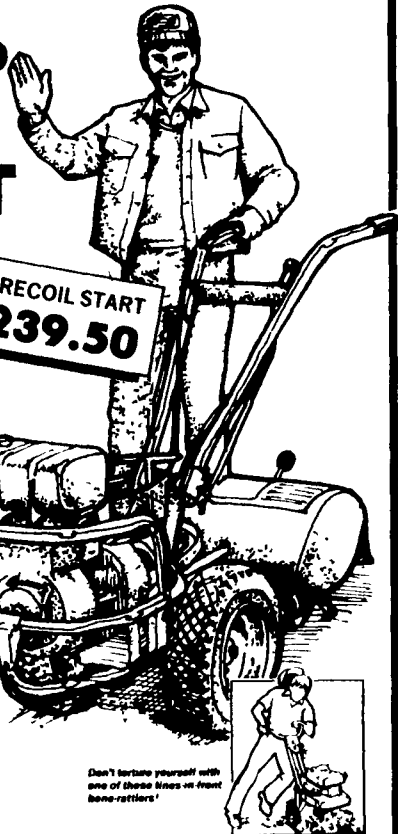
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