

Elaine Cook is first woman to head Pomona 3

BY SUZANNE KEENE
WEST CHESTER — Elaine Cook of West Chester has been attending Grange activities since infancy and with many years of experience behind her, she is taking her new position as the first woman Master of Pomona Grange 3 all in stride.
 "I'm not so honored because I've been on ever so long," Elaine says in reference to her new position.

"My parents met at Grange, so I've been a Granger all my life," Elaine explained. Her parents took her to many Grange activities when she was a child, and she formally became a member when she turned 14.
 Since that time she has been involved in almost "everything that comes along," she says. "I've been one to enter practically

everything in the Grange."
 In 1979 Elaine received the State Granger of the Year Award in recognition of her participation in many Grange activities.

Acting as secretary for her Pomona for the past ten years is one of those activities. In this position, she said, she was responsible for a lot of the ritualistic work involved in the Grange.

For the past six years Elaine has been the first woman State Deputy for Chester County. Her term in this state-appointed position will end in October.

In this position she has worked as liaison between the state and local Granges. If there is a local problem or a new Grange in the making, Elaine is the one who passes it onto the state. As State Deputy, she has installed many of the officers in her Pomona's 19 subordinate Granges.

To her list of firsts in the Grange Elaine adds the position of first woman Master of her local Grange. Elaine's father had been Master of Brandywine Grange 60 in 1940 and when Elaine assumed the position in 1963, she said that her taking over in this traditional male bastion was quite a change for the group.

"I think they thought I couldn't do it," Elaine says with a gleam in her eye. But with her experience behind her, she was able to prove them wrong.

Now, at age 58, she is ready to embark on a new adventure on her Grange voyage. Although she does not formally assume her new position as Master of Pomona 3 until October, she has begun selecting the committees that will work with her.

This time, Elaine said, she has

heard no negative comments about a woman being Master. "I've been a Granger so long, I think they respect that," she said. Both men and women have congratulated her on her new position.

Her experience and hard work in the past is helping out in other ways as well. She said she has "always tried to do my part and do my job."

Because she has been receptive to other's requests when a job needed done, she is discovering that people are willing to return the favor and help her when she asks them to serve on a committee.

During her two-year term as Master, Elaine says one of her primary goals is to build up attendance. Right now, she doesn't have any new programs in mind, but plans to concentrate on broadening some that the current Master started. "I want to build up what we've got," she says.

While some of her predecessors have tried to initiate a lot of programs into the Pomona's schedule, Elaine says she believes people are too busy with their local activities to devote a lot of time to Pomona events. She sees the Pomona's responsibility as helping the subordinate Granges and passing their ideas onto the state for action.

While Elaine and her husband,

Edwin, no longer live on a farm, Elaine said she believes it is important for them to stay abreast of farm legislation. As a grassroots kind of organization, the subordinate Granges and Pomonas offer an opportunity for people to discuss issues and pass their ideas onto the state if necessary.

"If you've got a local problem, that's the main thing," Elaine said.

Elaine has passed her enthusiasm for the Grange onto her family. She said she met Edwin at a Grange square dance, and while he was not a Granger at that time, Elaine saw to it that he soon became one. Their children, Diane and Darrell, are also Grangers.

When Elaine isn't working on her Grange projects, she enjoys square dancing with her husband, sewing and quilting. She said she also enjoys putting on magic shows for various local organizations, something she learned from her father at an early age and has continued throughout her life.

She is also a member of the County Curriculum Advisory Board for Chester County food handlers, representing non-profit groups.

Elaine shows little sign of slowing the pace of her Grange activities and says she is looking forward to receiving her 50 year pin before too long.



Recently elected Master of Pomona 3, Elaine Cook is the first woman to hold that position. Here she poses with the plaque she received in 1979 when she was selected State Granger of the Year and a quilt that she recently finished.


Penns Valley Beef Club

The Penns Valley 4-H Beef Club met at the Dashem Farm, Centre Hall, on August 5 for a fitting demonstration by club president Kevin Long, vice-president Michelle Hosterman and news reporter Howard Dashem.

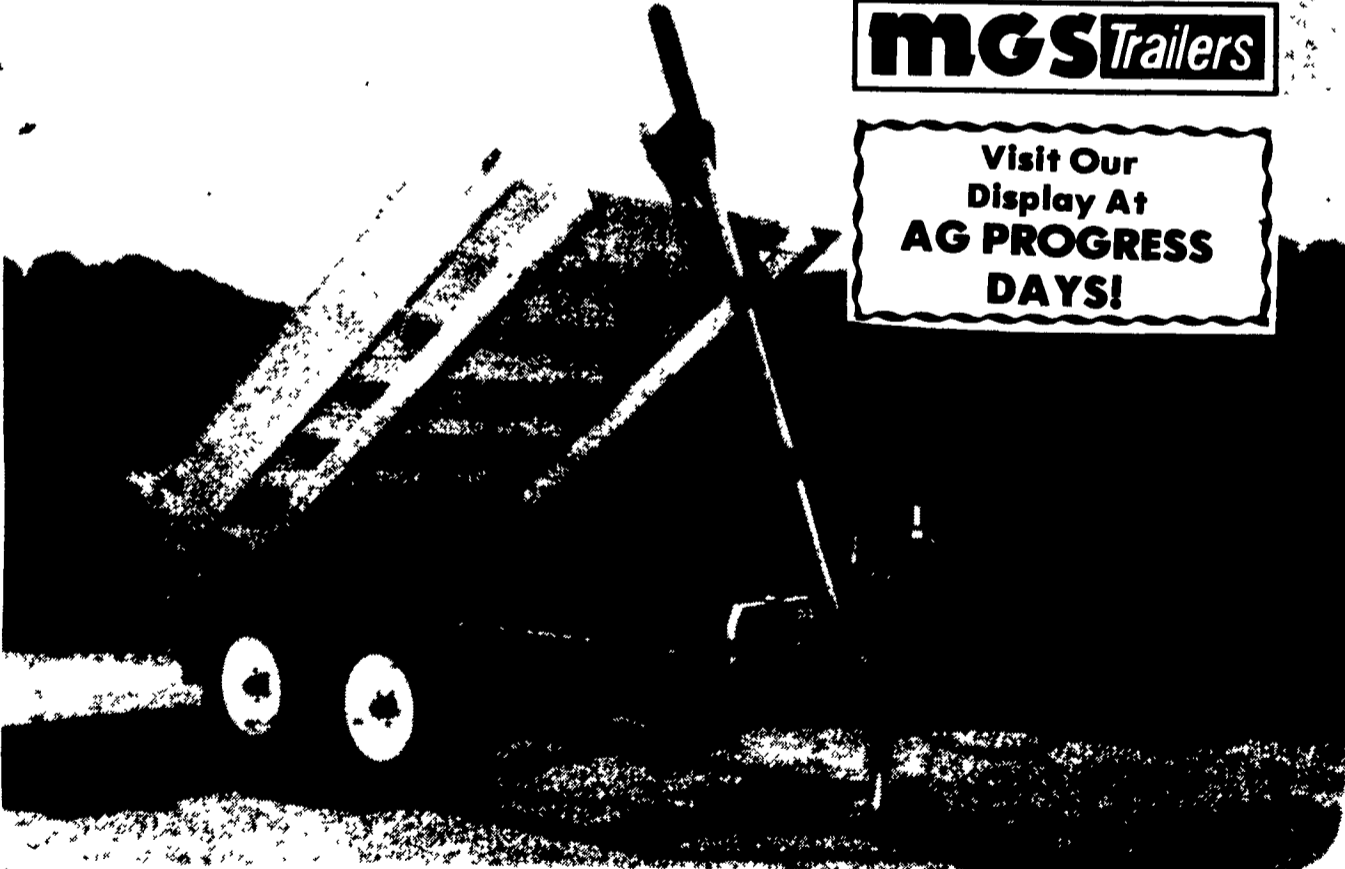
The group discussed plans for a


float for the Grange Fair. News reporter Howard Dashem gave a report on the Massachusetts Exchange trip which was on July 11 to 18.

After the meeting the group had a family picnic supper and went swimming.




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