

Stitching Romance And Time-Saving Techniques Into Sewing

BY BARBARA MILLER
 Lycoming Co. Correspondent
TOWANDA — The emphasis was on romance for those who attended Bradford County's Sewing Into Spring program held April 12, at the Wysox Fire Hall, Wysox. Approximately 75 people attended the workshops, fashion show, and retail exhibits.

Five hand-sewn wedding gowns plus other wedding attire and several prom gowns were featured in the evening fashion show. In the afternoon Gay Deats, Tioga County extension master clothing and textile volunteer, presented a workshop geared to helping participants sew fabrics and styles popular for proms and weddings this spring and summer.

To help everyone sew their dream gowns, as well as other clothing, additional workshops provided updated information on clothing construction techniques, sewing equipment, products and notions.

According to Deats who works at the Bridal House, Wellsboro, "The best seller (in gowns) is still ruffles and 'Gone with the Wind' styles." She noted that the bustier look and the short mini-pouffed skirts are becoming the current fashion rage.

After choosing a pattern, Deats



The audience enjoyed the exposure to different styles of gowns modeled at the workshop.

advised referring to the pattern book for help in choosing appropriate fabric. Then, to see if it is a

pattern within your capabilities, pull out the pattern instructions and read them. If it seems too hard, choose a simpler pattern.

Deats cautioned, "If you're sewing to save money, make sure the pattern and fabric are within your budget." Include both the cost of the outside fabric and the inside fabric.

Also consider the costs of the various interfacings, notions, a hoop or petticoat if they are required. Often, Deats said, these undergarments are not mentioned by the pattern books.

Deats listed several popular fabrics currently in use and gave tips on handling them. Matte taffeta, which has a sheen and rustles when you walk, is presently the most popular fabric for gowns. Deats stressed that one of the most important things to realize is that these dressy fabrics will stain easily. For example, a dripping iron will water spot and ruin taffeta.

The lames or metallic fabrics are the second most popular choice for gowns even though the material is rough on the edges and extremely hard on needles. Deats suggested the use of a blow drier to help handle the material. Setting the blow drier on medium to warm the material just before sewing makes the material easier to handle and less likely to pull.

Other fabrics mentioned in declining order of their popularity were sheer nylons, laces, chiffons and georgettes, polished cottons, and the sequined fabrics.

"It's a whole other ballgame when you sew the sequined materials," Deats stated.

She suggested choosing a pattern to eliminate as many seams as possible, cutting the fabric one layer at a time, using an expendable pair of scissors, and removing the sequins in the seam allowance and finishing off the seam.

After choosing pattern and fabric, Deats advised workshop participants to first make a trial garment out of muslin, old sheets or old material before proceeding with the gown.

Some recommendations by Deats for laying on the pattern and cutting out the fabric were as fol-

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Robyn Leidhecker, Sewing specialist, and Gloria Gray (right), proprietor of the Williamsport Dry Goods, display new sewing products. Robyn holds two magnetic pin cushions, one for the sewing table, and one for the wrist. Gloria shows off a new product, Dust Away, designed to keep sewing machine clean and sewing machine foot pedal holder that grips the floor.



Bradford County 4-H'ers display a variety of clothing they have created. (left to right): Annette Murphy, Terri Packard, Wendy Hollenback, Joan Gilliland, Amy Packard.

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