

# Life On Moser Brothers' Century Farm

**GAY N. BROWNLEE**  
Somerset Co. Correspondent

MEYERSDALE (Somerset Co.) — Brothers William W. (Bill), and Harvey Moser, the only sons born to parents whose four older children were daughters, were delighted this spring to have the family farm named Moser Brothers officially designated a Century Farm. Until 1974, the farm was known as Ralph Moser & Sons.

Bill says he always thought that his ancestors purchased the farm in 1889 until he checked the deed and found the date was 1888.

The original farm, now the century farm, is comprised of 235 acres. Three more farms, purchased in succeeding years by the brothers, have increased their land holdings by 590 acres. Some land is rented to other farmers, much of it supports their own Holstein dairy with crops of hay, corn, and oats. Some parts of it aren't farmed.

Excluding replacement stock, the dairy operates with a fluctuating 75 head of milking animals, of which about one third are regis-

tered. For propagation of the herd they say that artificial insemination is generally used to impregnate the females. Milk from their dairy is marketed through the Maryland-Virginia Co-op.

"We have a cash crop of potatoes and maple syrup," says Harvey. Bill adds that these crops are comparatively small. For instance, the market potatoes are raised on one and a half acres.

When the Moser couples — Bill and wife Roberta, Harvey and wife Nancy — took time from their busy schedules for an interview, it was set for the dubious hour of 9:30 p.m. at Harvey's home. It had to follow a high school musical concert demanding their supportive presence and a foregone supper which normally would have followed the completion of evening milking chores. So, after arriving home, Nancy quickly ordered pizza from a local shop, "So Harvey can have his supper," she said.

We were right on schedule, but the two gentlemen, having already done a good day's work, looked increasingly comfortable in their easy chairs waiting for the kids to



Shown are the Moser brothers standing by the peony flower bed with their wives. From left, Nancy and Harvey Moser and Roberta and William W. Moser, from Meyersdale, RD 3.

bring home the pizza. Was it really a good time for an interview, I wondered.

Initially, the questions were met with a fair amount of cogitation before Harvey gave one answer, Bill gave a different one, and finally, the wives gave the one they knew to be correct.

Harvey said he learned to milk by hand as a young boy.

"I've been milking cows for fifty years," he said.

The previous generation used horses for farming but slowly machinery replaced them until the horses weren't used at all. The first milking machines came to the farm during the 1940 decade.

Bill chuckles as he tells how it



Moser Brothers, Bill on the big John Deere tractor, and Harvey, standing by the rear tire, are now the owners of a Century Farm.

## GAY BROWNLEE Somerset Co. Correspondent

Somerset County correspondent, Gay N. Brownlee, has been a part-time professional writer for five years. With her six children now fully grown, she intends to pursue her passion for writing much more vigorously.

Recently, Brownlee was made an honorary member of the Old Petersburg-Addison Historical Society, located in Addison, PA, on the strength of a single story she wrote telling how the society was restoring an abandoned cemetery, which was buried under a labyrinth of trees, tangled brambles, and wild berry vines. The cemetery's graves were sunken from decayed wooden coffins and had damaged tombstones from unrestrained



cattle.

Besides writing, Brownlee reads, teaches a teenage Sunday School class, enjoys homemaking, and is a volunteer for the Mountain Playhouse, a professional summer theatre located at Jennerstown, Pa.

In the near future, Brownlee has plans to travel and to study creative writing.

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