

Heritage Day At Heritage House

**On being
a farm wife
- And other
hazards**

Joyce Bupp



When it comes to enjoying the attributes of May, nothing beats a porch.

Porches - or decks, or patios - are great places to "hang out." Many of my pleasant childhood memories are linked to the porch on the home in which I grew up, shaded through the summer months by three stately maple trees.

On a classic porch swing, I spent hours reading and practicing needlework skills like embroidery and knitting. (Boy, does that date me!) The porch was also a handy place for the likes of shelling peas, nipping string beans or folding laundry while still enjoying the outdoors.

From it we could observe the drama of the changing seasons, played out on the panoramic stage of a neighbor's farm which spanned the deep valley below us. It gave a vantage point to learn about planting and harvest, the difference between corn and alfalfa and wheat, and an understanding of farm equipment.

Looking back, it must have been there that my love of "country" took root.

To have a porch on our farmhouse is a bonus I've grown to appreciate more with each passing year.

Just outside the kitchen, our porch is an extended dining area through the warm months, offering a perfect excuse to linger there a few moments. And, like the porch of my childhood, it overlooks the panorama of farm activity.

Central in the view at the moment is the mid-pond nursery, where Mama Goose patiently waits out the hatching of this year's flock-to-be. Pap Goose keeps relentless vigil on the bank, regularly flapping off intruders

such as the dog, a tractor moving bales of hay or the manure truck.

He takes great pride in chasing off the farm equipment from his territory. It seems to give him as much satisfaction as re-routing the two trespasser geese, which regularly cruise in about dusk to land on "his" pond.

Porch-perching provides a chance to watch the heifers returning single file from the meadow to dine at the feed bunk and the dairy cows grazing in the exercise lots. On occasion, the binoculars kept just inside the door are handy for a more close-up look at those cows that delight in scaring us by stretching out on their sides in the green grass for naps.

More than once while doing a porch pasture scan, I've had a cow mentally dead and buried, when the snoozer calmly sat back up, still chewing a cud.

The binoculars are also kept close to the porch door to admire the birds, like the goldfinches. Goldfinches have returned to the bird feeder with the onset of porch weather, their feathering changed from wintry grey-brown to a brilliant, almost neon, yellow. We saw few goldfinches all winter; perhaps there are fewer feeders kept filled as the year turns into May and they've just now discovered our sunflower stash.

From the porch, equipment traveling the meadow-field road can be spotted and field work progress monitored. Passage of chisel or plow, planter or drill, rybine, rake or combine gives clues to who's doing what field chore in which direction. Often on super-busy days, it's the only way to have any notion of what's going

ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Tours and demonstrations will be the order of the day during Heritage Day at the Herit-

on.

And, from the second-floor porch vantage point, garden, flower and yard growth can be assessed from a more distant, encompassing view. A bush to be trimmed here, or cluster of weeds to yank there - or that the lawn needs mowed. Again. And to get the skippers I missed the last round.

On warm mornings, The Farmer often grabs a quick breakfast or after-milking snack on the porch while mentally plotting the day's job lineup. Sometimes, we roast hotdogs there after dark. Solomon snoozes his days away there on an old rug, and the cats enjoy its sunny shelter.

In May, when the hours and days are just too short for all that needs doing, it's especially nice to sneak a brief time-out on the porch.

age House Museum, 43 East High Street, Elizabethtown, on Saturday, May 8 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Heritage Days are held on the second Saturday of each month from March through November.

Interpreters Cathy Krall and Pamela Spath will be demonstrating bake oven baking throughout the day in the 1847 squirrel-tail bake oven which was reconstructed on the original foundation found during archaeological excavations.

A weaving demonstration will be performed by Heritage House Interpreter Betts Miller from 9:00-11:00. Tours of the herb garden will be given by Carol Keirard from 10:00-12:30.

Mary Conrad will offer guided tours of the historic building throughout the day, and an archaeological display of artifacts found on the museum grounds will be available for viewing by the public.

In addition, the genealogical library, staffed by a genealogist

who is available for consultation, the preservation bookshelf, and the Information Center will be open.

The Heritage House Museum Store will also be open. Craftspeople making wares appropriate to the 1750-1859 period are being sought to place consignment merchandise in the store. Those interested in doing so may call Cindy Bishop 717-367-8572 for information.

There is a charge to participate in Heritage Day at the Heritage House Museum: Non-members - \$1.00 adults, half-price for children 12 years of age and under. Members showing their membership cards are admitted free of charge.

Heritage House is open every week during the following hours: Thursday, 12:00-5:00; Friday, 9:00-5:00; Saturday, 9:00-11:30. The genealogical library is open every Thursday, 1:00-5:00 P.M. There is a donation for non-members of EPA to use the library.

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