

# On being a farm wife - And other hazards

Joyce Bupp



What was once a highlight of our childhood summers has greatly changed over the years — and in some cases, simply fallen along the tradition wayside.

Sunday School picnics. Back then, (I'm dating myself) nearly every small town and rural congregation hereabouts held a Sunday School picnic. And each church in a community pretty well knew what date the others would be held. Certain churches had their picnics on certain Saturday nights in certain months — and you could set your calendar on it from year to year.

Though each picnic might have varied details, the basic agenda was the same. A popular, community band, entertained with not acid rock or bluegrass, but "picnic music" of traditional old favorites, marches, patriotic numbers. Food played a major role in a Sunday School picnic, homemade chicken corn soup, or ham, beef or turkey dinners. And home-baked goods for desserts and bake sale tables

were generally a donor's specialty — high, rich, and made with extra-loving attention and pride. More than one kid was ordered during pre-picnic preparations: "Keep your fingers out of that, it's for the church picnic!"

Sunday School picnics had an array of neat kids' stuff that we could only get our hands on at such events. We hoarded allowance portions for some weeks in advance, plus usually wheedled from Dad a couple extra nickels or dimes for picnic goodies. Like balsa-wood gliders that inevitably ended up on our house roof or in the cherry tree or the classic paddle-balls with the rubber ball on the end of a rubber band (those paddles met my behind on a few of my less notable days). Hummers, or whatever they were officially called, were gadgets made from a small rectangular, heavy cardboard with a stretched rubber band fastened to one side, trailing a long tail of narrow crepe paper, and which made a humming

sound when the toy was swung around one's head on a long string. (Good for "accidentally" swinging into your brother's head.

I know it sounds boring compared to \$29.95 Jurassic Park dinosaur toys. But then this was back closer to REAL dinosaur times, you know.

While grownups visited with long-time old friends about family, the weather, crops, jobs, and assorted neighborhood gossip, we kids woofed down ice cream and soft drinks (we called it soda and it was a treat we rarely had at home), played tag, the boys chased the girls — and vice-versa. The big church cemetery made a great place for hide-n-seek.

This all comes to mind because, while many Sunday School picnics have passed into history, the one put on by our congregation is alive and well - and set for today. Our St. Paul (Hametown) Lutheran Church near Glen Rock has held its picnic the second Saturday in July ever since I married into the congregation there — and many years before that. Often, it hits one of the year's hottest days — and a drenching thunderstorm has wrapped up more than one of our picnics.

We still have a community band — Southern York County — and an all-you-can-eat ham supper. Regulars come from some distance to enjoy the juicy ham, whole-fried new potatoes, green beans, corn, cole slaw, pickles, red beet eggs and fixin's prepared by our congregation of great cooks.

And those dedicated folks who pull this together still offer child and crowd pleasers like penny candy, homemade style ice cream.

old-fashioned soda, and novelties. Neighbors and friends will again gather to enjoy a picnic-type band concert, share notes on crops, weather, family — and the neighborhood gossip — while enjoying a cream soda and double scoops of

raspberry ice cream.

Other events will keep us from this year's Sunday School picnic. But at a time when many cherished traditions are being forgotten, it's comforting to know that such pockets of history and fellowship live on.

## Civil War Comes To Life At Genesee Museum

MUMFORD, N.Y. — The sights and sounds of the Civil War will come to life as Genesee Country Museum presents the eleventh annual CIVIL WAR RE-ENACTMENT on July 17 and 18.

More than 500 Union and Confederate troops will square off at 1 p.m. each day to re-enact a Civil War conflict which will rage through the historic village and end in the Great Meadow with an artillery battle.

Authentic camps will be in place for Union and Confederate troops and civilians. Camps will be open to visitors during museum hours and re-enactors will interpret Civil War life. Other interpretations are given in a doctor's tent, a communications center and by an undertaker, touting his wares.

Visitors who wish to take a break from the action will have an opportunity to meet the President - Abraham Lincoln himself - as portrayed by nationally - known Lincoln impersonator, Frederick Klein. President Lincoln will be on hand to review the Union troops, address the officers of the Army of the Potomac, and to deliver an authentic oration on the steps of the Town Hall.

All activities of the weekend are included in the daily admission price of \$10 for adults, \$8.50 for senior adults, \$6 for youths 13

through 17, and \$5 children 6 through 12. Children 5 and under and museum members are admitted free of charge. Museum admission also includes visitation to the John L. Wehle Gallery of Sporting Art and the Nature Center, located adjacent to the village.

The museum is located in Mumford, New York, approximately 35 minutes southwest of Rochester. The museum is open daily in July and August from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. In May, June, September and October, the museum is closed on Mondays. During those months, hours are 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. weekdays and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. weekends and holidays. Maps and directions to the museum are available for the asking at Exit 46 (Rochester) and Exit 47 (LeRoy) of the New York State Thruway. The museum is also a 20-minute drive west of Avon Exit 10 of Interstate 390. It is located two hours north of Corning, NY; two hours west of Syracuse, NY; and a little over one hour east of Buffalo, NY.



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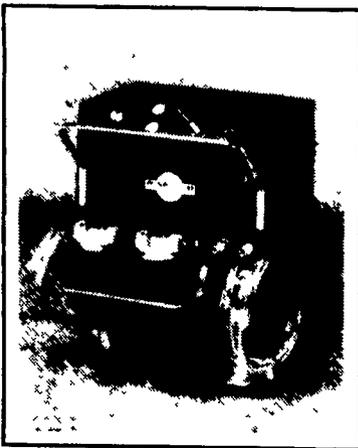
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