

Holstein Ladies Look Back Into History

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GETTYSBURG (Adams Co.)
— History, heritage and heirlooms combined in a sparkling Ladies' Day program, held February 25 during the annual Pennsylvania Holstein Convention in Gettysburg.

In keeping with the convention theme of "Holsteins and History," Ladies' Day planners staged a show of fashion, food, and music at Patty and John's, an old barn restored into a restaurant/reception facility on the outskirts of Hanover, York County.

Speaker Linda McRae came garbed in appropriate dress to talk about the role of ladies during the

Civil War era. The McRae family is involved in Civil War re-enactment, a hobby in which they research, dress, and camp as people of that time. Some re-enactors, she noted, actually do "first-person" role-playing, reliving as much as possible during encampments the life of a particular individual from the Civil War period.

"Clothes were reused, again, and again," she explained. "And so many layers of clothing were worn in part to help cover body odors because they didn't have the facilities to bathe and do laundry like we do."

Wearing eight or nine layers of clothing was commonplace when
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"Nothing makes people get along like having to fork out box stalls together," says Pennsylvania Dairy Princess Jennifer Grimes. Jennifer kept PHA women laughing as she related her family's efforts to curb sibling squabbling by putting her and her brother to work forking out dairy barn stalls.



Melinda Johnson, wife of PHA treasurer Dean Johnson, designed the dress for their 1981 wedding with a country Victorian look. The gown of white crepe de chine has a blouson top, short train and bishop sleeves with cuffs of Schiffli lace. When the couple was ready to depart for their honeymoon after an outdoor reception at her family's dairy farm, they found Dean's pickup packed with hay.



Becky Sonnen modeled the gown worn in 1935 by her grandmother, Lillie Burkhart. Originally aqua, the fabric has faded to a pale brown-green. A long-sleeved jacket covers the crepe, sleeveless dress. In April, former state dairy princess Becky will march down the aisle in her own wedding gown.



Entertainment at the ladies program wrapped up with the rousing patriotic vocal salute from the Pat and Paul Miller family's Singing Millers Plus Six. Pat Miller chaired the ladies day program.



Women of the Gettysburg battle era dressed in up to nine layers of clothing, according to Civil War re-enactor Linda McRae. Outer layers were rarely laundered and clothing was reused, restyled and recycled over and over.

Homestead Notes



A wedding cake decorated in the European style of rolled fondant icing looks more like a priceless piece of porcelain than a tasty dessert. Decorated by Rosie Rohrer of Lancaster County, the cake was accented with lovely pink roses fashioned from gum paste, an edible modeling material.