

Lancaster Farm Women Install New President

At Home With Kathryn Fry

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MANHEIM (Lancaster Co.) —

Twenty years ago Kathryn Fry joined the Society of Farm Women. Today she assumes the presidency of the Lancaster County Society with its 720 members in 28 societies.

Kathryn typifies the qualities upheld by the society that was founded in 1914. Members seek to foster a love for the farm and family and to enhance the charm of a real country home.

The century farmhouse of Kathryn and her husband Albert permeates the warmth and atmosphere of a home where love flourishes.

The Frys' two sons are now married, but the oldest son Lowell lives on adjoining land and farms in partnership with his dad.

The farmhouse and gabled stone barn, called the Half-Moon barn, were built in 1868. Lowell is the sixth generation to farm the land that was passed down through Albert's mother's family.

Albert and Kathryn married in February 1961 after a snowstorm postponed their wedding a few days. Albert's parents built a house on the land so that the newlyweds could move into the farmhouse.

Albert told his bride that he didn't marry her to work in the barn, but she may if she wanted to. Kathryn did.

Kathryn, who was a nurse, quickly adapted to milking cows and farm work.

"I found my nurses' training benefitted in caring for the cows and calves. They are just like people — each has it's own personality," Kathryn said.

She was thrilled that at the first field day that she attended, she won a prize in cow judging.

When the boys were growing up, Kathryn stopped working as a nurse but continued working on the farm. She assisted in Red Cross training and gave injections to several people who needed them on a daily basis.

When her friends discussed the possibility of beginning Farm Women Society 27, Kathryn was interested but illness kept her from attending the first meeting. Interest was so great that membership was closed.

"Later, when there was an opening, I was asked to join," Kathryn said.

"It's such a great organization. Everyone shares a common interest and they are such lovely people."

Kathryn held offices in her society and then served terms as first and second vice president. Becoming president of the society is a natural progression.

In her term as president, Kathryn said, "We may need to look at some changes to fit into the '90s that will be more encouraging for others to join. Meeting times and responsibilities may need to be more flexible. Just because something is always done a certain way doesn't mean it needs to continue."

"In the past, farm women members came from the farm, but today anyone interested in country life will find Farm Women beneficial."

While many groups are having difficulty recruiting young mothers, Kathryn's enthusiasm for the Farm Women Society has influenced both her daughter-in-laws and some of their friends to join.

"I always like to try new things," Kathryn said of her many talents that have been developed through self teaching and friends who share. Knitting, decoupage, flower arranging, crewel embroidery, baking, and trying new recipes are a few of her favorite things. She makes her own clothes and sewed all the curtains and draperies for her many-windowed farm house.

The farmhouse is filled with family heirlooms and antiques collected by both she and her husband.

It's impossible to tell where Kathryn's decorating touches

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President of Lancaster County Society of Farm Women Kathryn Fry stands in front of the 1868 farmhouse that has been in her husband's family for six generations.



The spacious laundry room was formerly the summer kitchen. The walk-in fireplace is a perfect spot to display collectibles.



Kathryn examines a child's antique tea set.



The tin cookie cutter collection is Kathryn's husband Albert's. The couple share a love for antiques and preserving the past.



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