

# Fisher Homestead Showcases Living History

(Continued from Page B2)

Oley Valley.

which threatened traditional land use patterns. The Oley Valley Heritage Association was formed to study and preserve the heritage of the historical region.

Lenni Lenape Native Americans inhabited the area before the 1700s. Settlers of German, French, Swiss, English, and Swedish heritage brought agricultural and architectural traditions to the area. Mostly stone

"It was a great accomplishment," Hilda said with obvious pride. She has a large notebook filled with handwritten records, which will be passed on to the historical society.

"Every place is special," Hilda said of historical landmarks. She said the project began in 1980 when local residents were concerned by a stream going dry

inherit many of the pieces and refurnish the home to much of its original state. These furnishings include such items as 1830's walnut wardrobes, marbleized wooded furniture, bustle chairs, and daybeds.

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The Fishers have an abundance of stories about the rooms, furnishings, and family history associated with the home.

cabins, springhouses, and out-buildings were erected. From 1740-1780, second generation farmers built steep-roofed houses and barns with arched openings, and Germanic style buildings with medieval overtones. From 1780-1820, prosperous farmers and ironmasters built elaborate Georgian manor houses as water-powered mills, forges, and furnaces flourished. The Fisher homestead and 10 other mansions have been registered as being built in the Oley Valley during this time.

Bushels of shellbark nuts and of pecans gathered from a century's old pecan tree line the farmhouse's side porch. Hilda continues to make family favorites passed down through the generations such as sour string beans made with dried string beans.

The couple is active at the Salem United Church of Christ and with the Oley Fair.

One of the things they do together is mow the lawn.

"She has the easy job," Frank jokes about a heart problem that has slowed him down a bit. "She mows with the push lawnmower and I use the riding one."

When she received the Ag

Woman of the Year Award, Hilda was lauded for exemplifying generosity of spirit, continual willingness to help advance agriculture in every day life, and to get the job done.

"If you practice Christian principles, with the help of God, you will accomplish things," Hilda said. "We never lived on Easy Street but we lived on Happy Street."

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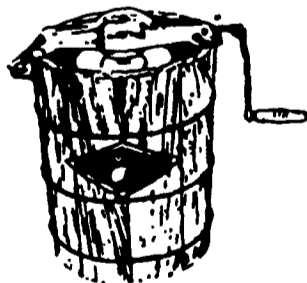
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