**Shuman Farm**

The Shuman Family Farm as told to Patchwork by Jerrold Griffis

Interviewed by Laura Gross & Elyse Mills in the Spring of 2003

The Shuman Family Farm has changed dramatically from when it was first built in 1850 by Clinton and Anna Shuman. Clinton's first born son, Samuel, was married in 1899 and acquired the property. Samuel and his family maintained the farm as a Holstein dairy farm. Since then the farm has had many different purposes.

Jerrold Griffis and his wife first moved into the house in July 1973 and raised their children there. They used the farm for various 4-H programs. Many different animals inhabited the farm when they moved in and the Griffis family also added a pond in 1973. The 90 acres of land has been timbered twice since 1970 and Jerrold Griffis uses the wood in his woodworking. They now call the farm "Hidden Acres." Helping Jarrold and his wife if Mrs. Faux who grew up on the farm.

PATCHWORK: What do you do for a living?

GRIFFIS: I'm retired. I was the Vice President for Student Life at Bloomsburg University for 20 years, 71-91, retired during the summer. We've been here for the 30 year period.

PATCHWORK: How long have you lived in the county?

GRIFFIS: We moved to Bloomsburg in 1971 to 5th Street for a year and a half and moved out here in 1973. 32 or 30 years.

PATCHWORK: Do you have any children?

GRIFFIS: We have four, all gone. Bradley is 31. He lives in Colorado Springs. Scott is 39, he is in Charlotte, North Carolina. Jenny is 36, and she's in Denver and she's married and has our first grandson, he's a year and a half. And Julie is 33 and she's Bloomfield, New

Jersey. She's married. They weren't all born here, but they all lived here and had lots of animals and other things.

PATCHWORK: When did you and your family move into this house?

GRIFFIS: July of 1973.

PATCHWORK: What can you tell us about this house?

MRS. GRIFFIS: You want the construction of it? It's a double planked house built around 1850 or 60 and these ladies were born in it.

GRIFFIS: There was a lot of lumber taken off the place. But the barn was burned down in 1918, and it was rebuilt with the lumber from the place. It was a dairy farm, it was a fruit farm, vegetable farm, at different times with different families.

MRS.GRIFFIS: And their brother-in-law was born here. His name is Hanley, and our banister going up the steps was hand hued from a tree on the farm.

GRIFFIS: They had a windmill right outside the back door with a well which somebody dug by hand.

MRS. GRIFFIS: And these gals lived in the home when there was outdoor plumbing and Mrs. Shuman, their mother, demanded as I understand an indoor bathroom. One of the girl's bedrooms was turned into the bathroom.

MRS. FAUX: We were the first ones who had indoor plumbing. Our friends used to love to come over because we had indoor plumbing.

GRIFFIS: There's a summer kitchen which is attached with a screened in porch there, a connection between the two.

MRS. GRIFFIS: When we moved in 30 years ago, our kitchen was just one big room and with no building coverage or anything, and Mrs. Shuman would feed the farm hands there and through her preparation made it into a laundry room then her summer kitchen.

GRIFFIS: We made that into our guest house though. We have a butcher house with a fireplace in it. It was burned down when the barn burned down. The only thing that was left was the fireplace. The fireplace is all burned down and we thought it was from the fires we had in the fireplace, but it wasn't. The garage went and the butcher house went… you did a lot of butchering in there, I'm sure.

MRS. FAUX: Oh yes, every time it rained our dad went and butchered and sold the meat in Hazleton.

GRIFFIS: This addition right behind you there was put on before the early 1930's and had a room upstairs. There are seven buildings all total on the place. Let's see, what else can we tell you about? We added a pond right down there in1974 and it is fed by a major spring which is down at the bottom of the hill.

MRS. GRIFFIS: No fireplace, only the butcher house has one.

GRIFFIS: And your next question is?

PATCHWORK: Who originally owned the house and farm before you did?

MRS. GRIFFIS: Before we did? Frank and Josephine Orzley. We bought it from them in 1973.

GRIFFIS: And before that it was the Shuman's.

MRS. GRIFFIS: The original family was the Shuman's and it stayed in the family over the years for most of the part. And Mrs. Faux and her husband came back to farm it, and her sister Pearl also came back to live here and farm it with her husband and the two times it's been out of the Shuman family.

GRIFFIS: Just a few years when it's been out of the family, just a couple years the rest of the time from 1850 through till 1950 and then just a couple years out and then we got it 1973. It's one of the older farms around here.

MRS. FAUX: Well, the four farms here were owned by my father's brothers and sisters. They had four in their family. My dad had one brother, two sisters, and the four of them had farms just around this area like a rectangle.

PATCHWORK: What was the house and the land originally used for when it was first built?

GRIFFIS: It was farming; initially it was a fruit farm.

MRS. FAUX: Fruit farming and vegetable farming.

MRS. GRIFFIS: And your family used to sell produce over to Mahoney City.

MRS. FAUX: Oh yeah, we had quite a grape industry. One acre of grapes and we never went away on Labor Day because we had grapes. We would cut the grapes and have truck loads and take it to Mahoney City.

GRIFFIS: Now, you sold the grapes and sold them for wine. Apples and peaches and pears and a few cherry threes left and that's about it- a few walnut trees. All the way up the lane there were orchards. Then it became a dairy farm for a number of years.

MRS. GRIFFIS: And you grew tomatoes and potatoes right?

MRS. FAUX: Yes, many vegetables. We'd have people come over from Berwick- they picked all day.

MRS. GRIFFIS: And didn't your father supply the local church, the Lutheran Church, with wine for communion?

GRIFFIS: And for the 30 years we've had it, we've had horses, deer, pigs, sheep, ducks, chickens, hens, dogs, and cats. We didn't get a milk cow because she [Mrs. Griffis] wouldn't let me. Each of one of the lads, of our four children, had responsibilities for one of the things. We have no animals now at this point; we have a cat in the barn. This farm out of the area had a lot of pheasants in 1973, 74, and 75 in there.

PATCHWORK: Is there anything unique about this house?

MRS. GRIFFIS: The one thing I fine unique is that you can close off the dining room and living room and still have complete access to the rest of the house.

GRIFFIS: If you go down stairs and look at the beams down there, they are all hand hued. All those beams all across the bottom are double planked. They don't make double planked anymore, used for insulation.

MRS. GRIFFIS: Only one bedroom has a closet in the bedroom.

PATCHWORK: How has the farm changed since the Shumans moved out?

MRS. FAUX: Well, we didn't recognize some things. It has a long narrow road- was it always that narrow?

GRIFFIS: We mowed both sides pretty much to give it more width. The only thing that has changed pretty dramatically was the little house out here. We do a little bed and breakfast- for friend and the church.

MRS. GRIFFIS: Basically for the 30 years we have lived on the farm, it was catch-all. Everything from ice skating to bird cages, and about once every two years we kinda clean out the family kitchen. But the structure's still pretty much the same.

PATCHWORK: Well, that's all we have is there anything else you would like to add?

GRIFFIS: It's a pretty good place to heat, but we replaced the windows, when there was a breeze, you could see the curtains moving. Every curtain in the house would float. Before when I still worked out at the University, we had a lot of events out here. We had as many as 600 for picnics, and in the barn we had a lot of barn dances and weddings. The horse ring is new. Now it's falling down and you can see the trim around the quest house.

MRS. GRIFFIS: And we try to replace it with natural fencing like evergreen and what have you.