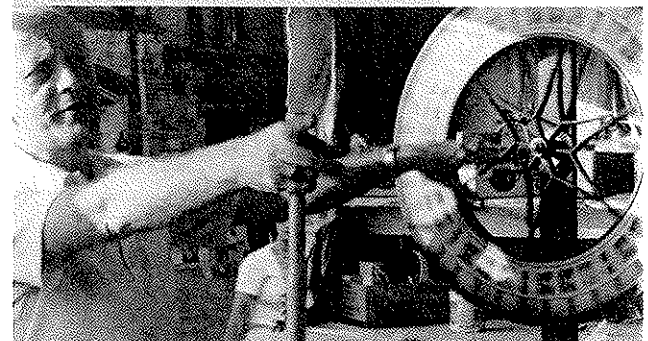


Summer Festival Revisited



At our Reverend Mother's bidding, we assembled one and all.

The year was 1952, the place, Cecilian Hall.

"Dear Sisters, as you all do know, a new building we have planned,

A costly project it will be. I'm sure you understand.

We must launch a great fund-raiser. Your suggestions let me hear.

We have come to plan a festival before summer days draw near.

So use your creativity, your talents please employ.

Preparing for this festival I'm sure will be a joy."

We recall the months of planning that preceded the event,

As in keen anticipation all our waking hours were spent.

Newspapers and church bulletins and posters here and there

Did advertise the festival to people everywhere.

At last the great days had arrived, a weekend of work and fun.

The excitement of those days appeared on the face of every nun.

The maintenance crew was busy designing booths they did erect.

With all sorts of decorations, the nuns these stands bedecked.

From the oldest to the youngest, every sister did her share

To staff the many booths and stands that Maintenance built there.

The names of all who helped us form a list that never ends,

For the volunteers were many from our families and our friends.

On the lawn on Sunday morning we would gather first to pray,

To celebrate the Liturgy, asking blessings on our day.

That the weather would be pleasant, we petitioned Heaven's Queen,

And a statue of our Mother always graced the festive scene.

We used the barn for Games of Skill; the paddle wheels did spin;

And eager throngs assembled there with hopes that they would win.

But when the old barn was no more, there still were Games of Skill,

And outdoors the callers' voices did resound upon the Hill.

There was a game named Hooligan, and another Huckley Buck,

An attraction, Show-down Poker, and the favorite, Chuck-O-Luck.

If you drew a lucky number, a big winner you could be,

For the prizes were all choice ones at Lucky You and Lucky Me.

Huge crowds flocked to Instant Bingo when they heard the callers yell,

To acclaim each lucky winner by the clanging of a bell.

Great Bingo fans all gathered up on Sullivan's top floor,

And as each game was ended, they called for "just one more."

There were special games for children, and when they'd win a prize,

There were smiles upon their faces and a sparkle in their eyes.

Young dancers came to entertain, and a lively band was there,

And when some choral groups arrived, sounds of music filled the air.

All descriptions of aromas were wafted through the air,

Fresh baked goods, pizzas, burgers were in abundance there.

Homemade fudge and luscious caramels and other morsels sweet
For sale up at the Candy Booth were a very special treat.
Each day a thousand meals were served in Lowe's great dining hall,
And gracious hostesses were there to greet guests, one and all.

A Post Office and a Wishing Well held gifts all shapes and sizes;
Both children and the grown-ups were delighted with surprises.
The Flea Market and an Antique Shop were places of fascination,
An inventory of their wares defies imagination!
Avid bookworms found a treasure where, by popular demand,
All the prices were astounding, and the books were second hand.
An All-Occasion booth was staffed by our sisters from DePaul,
And lovely handcrafts were on sale by our own Assumption Hall.
From the Arizona desert at the "Ye Olde Western Stand,"
Were cactus plants and artifacts that were always in demand.
All the clerks were kept quite busy at the local Country Store,
As they spun the wheel to raffle grocery baskets by the score.
But without a money raffle, no festival was complete,
And to be the lucky winners, all our patrons did compete.
A favorite stand was Wall Street, with its merchandise so rare,
Big investors who would deal there paid a quarter for each share.
And when the dealing ended, a great auction we would hold,
And the fans stayed down at Wall street till all prizes had been sold.
As long as there were prizes left, the bids went on and on,
Until the auctioneer proclaimed, "It's going, going, gone!"

All good things must have an ending. Of festivals this was true,
For we saw their termination back in 1982.
Sounds of brightly colored fireworks announced the grand finale.
Excited crowds applauded long for every rocket volley.
To our friends and loyal patrons, we then sadly bade adieu.
The last of all our festivals was June of eighty-two.
The campus lights were slowly dimmed; the faithful crowd departed.
Some had come here every year since the festivals had started.
The gavel of the auctioneer now lay silent on the block.
We slowly wended our way home; it was midnight on the clock.
Though our festivals have ended, fond memories linger still
Of that thirty-year tradition up here at Seton Hill.

For our many benefactors, do we sisters daily pray.
We owe a debt of gratitude that we never can repay.
In Heaven there's a festival that never, never ends.
May our loving God reward you there, dear families, and dear friends
Sister Sara Louise Reilly

