

Feed-Sack Fashions

Sew What?

I WAS 17 in 1963 when my aunt and uncle paid a visit to my family's Detroit, Michigan home. My aunt asked me to cut her hair, then said she had "something for [me]."

Being a teenager, I was hoping for a couple of dollars. Instead, my aunt gave me the Community Arts books for the Michigan State Fair and suggested that I enter a garment made of feed sacks.

My mother remembered some feed sacks left from her mother's farming days.

When I saw the dark green material with flowers, I had one thought: This is not cool material for the early '60s.

Today, I know better. This was very desirable feed-sack material because it had no natural color showing, and the colors were in register.

I had only a month to deliver my entry, so everywhere I went, my embroidery went. My beau did not quite understand the need to sew constantly or that I did not have time to cuddle and smooch.

Finished in Time

At the fair, we found my dress displayed with a blue ribbon on it! My prizes included a Sears straight-stitch portable sewing machine and a box of small spools of thread in every color.

I asked if I could take my sewing machine home that day, and my poor beau had to carry it to the car. I'm sure that the case it was in was the only thing that made the machine "portable." It was the heaviest machine ever created!

It served me well for 15 years before I literally wore it out.

So—my reward for cutting my aunt's hair was very generous! I hope that I thanked her properly at some time for her generosity.
—Sandra S., West Branch, Michigan