



# Notes from the Farm

Volume 27 Issue 2

November 2017

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## Chairperson's Report

By Bernadine Schwartzentruber

As 2017 comes to a close, a look back at the activities and events of the Heritage Farm is in order.

A review of the maintenance and renovations includes the following:

The barn loft has been cleaned out including many church pews. We have kept some for our use.

A new loom room is mostly completed. We had a "minibarn raising" on June 7, where a group of volunteers helped Norm Moshier and his crew raise the assembled heavy side beams. Check out the pictures on our Facebook page.

The horse/sheep barn has been taken down. The local Amish salvaged the metal roof. The beams, siding, floor joists, and boards were in much better shape than expected and will be used in future building projects, so the effort to sell these items is put on hold until we use what we need. The "1874" boards at the peak have been safely stored and will be used in a new building.

A rainy summer delayed addressing the drainage problems in the lower level of the granary but recently has been completed. It will be restored to show how it was used as a pigsty and chicken coop in the past.

The tree at the south corner of the house had to be cut down. Several people were nearby in the lawn and actually saw a large limb break off this spring!

The "show wagon" was moved to make it more conducive for programming. The house siding on the south side with new windows is completed.

Work continued on clearing out paths in the woods. Our John Deere tractor can now give wagon rides through the woods!

Several culverts were placed in the slough in front of the barn and fill brought in so to create a driveway in that area. If anyone has clean fill, please call one of the board members.

## Highlights of 2017 Programs and Events

- Participated in "American the Melting Pot" (different cultures) at Lowville Academy in March, where we served Croghan bologna and homemade bread. Our old-time "button and string" toy demonstration was a big hit with the children.
- The annual meeting program in April featured a slide show of a 2010 European Mennonite heritage tour narrated by Neil Keib and Rosanna Moser.

## Chairperson's Report (continued)

- Z Fest held on July 1 with a wet parking field and light rain presented challenges, but we were pleased with the attendance and income generated from our major fundraiser.
- August...Iron Horse Day in Croghan, Stewart's Shops sponsoring children's art and craft/knitting faires, and TAUNY's Folk Instruments Research Project.
- September...Camden's senior citizen dinner and Harvest of the Arts.
- October...Leadership Academy tour, Beaver River Central School community work day, and BRCS Grade 1 tour.
- Martyrs' Mirror programs with David Weaver-Zercher on Mennonite Heritage weekend in October.

### France Couple Visited Lewis County

by Rosanna Moser

Daniel and Martine Steiner, Strasbourg, France, made their first visit to the United States and chose Lewis County, the roots of Phillippe and Marie Zehr Steiner, who arrived in Croghan early 1848. Phillippe Steiner had an older brother, Jacob, who is from Daniel's ancestral family. Phillippe and Marie's daughter, Katharina (Catherine), married John Moser (pioneer) in October 1848.

The Steiners chose the end of June to help with the Zwanzigstein Fest preparation and also attended the July 1 event. At the Steiner reunion on Sunday, July 2, Daniel displayed an impressive 32' Steiner family genealogy chart. For over 20 years, he has researched the Steiner genealogy. He continued the Steiner research at the AMHA archives and met several cousins and other individuals who could assist with more genealogy information. They also visited the remains of the Steiner Mill at the home of Kyle and Emily Zehr on the Steiner Road, Zehr Cemetery, Apostolic Christian Church Cemetery, Kirscherville Cemetery, and Philip Moser's 1912 sugar bush, etc.



Daniel Steiner and Glendon Widrick attaching fence wiring to a post.



Martine Steiner working in the gift shop.



## Acquisitions

By Rosanna M. Moser

The archival office continues to receive artifacts, which is greatly appreciated. We continue to catalog and also store the textiles, books, photographs, and objects accordingly for their preservation. By the end of November, we completed 169 accessions for the year. This makes a total of 2023 accessions and 3082 items since 2010.

In the spring newsletter, we will have a complete listing of the artifacts accessioned in 2017. Three objects will be shared in this newsletter.

In August 2015, Norman Moshier was looking for boards in the 1874 horse/sheep barn to reuse on the barn renovation and came across a wooden grave marker that was broken in a vertical half.

The readable text is as follows:

n  
ser  
21, 1901  
4 mo.

I compared this text with the listing of deaths for the Kirscherville Cemetery compiled by Edward Widrick and matched the name to John Moser (pioneer) whose death date is January 21, 1901 (born September 21, 1813). The grave marker is available for your viewing in the lower barn.



Doris Lehman (Everett) has deeded a black horsehide coat that originally belonged to her husband's father, Benjamin Z. Lehman. The collar to the coat is dark brown and widest at 5 inches. Trademark for the coat label (inside collar) states "Three Rivers Robe Tannery, Three Rivers, Michigan."

He was the oldest child of Christian and Mary B. Zehr Lehman, born June 25, 1892; died June 6, 1980. It is believed that Benjamin wore the heavy coat when he traveled to and from the sugar bush woods in Belfort from his Erie Canal home.

Through the estate of Charlotte M. Zehr, two hard rubber and fully dressed baby dolls were donated to AMHA. The dolls are original to Charlotte's mother, Susianna Lehman Zehr. Susianna was born June 3, 1893, in Wellesley, Ontario, daughter of John and Magdalena Kennel Lehman. She married Benjamin F. Zehr on October 15, 1912; died March 13, 1979.



## It's the Story: TAUNY's North Country Folk Instruments Research Project

By Camilla Ammirati

When talking about what makes an instrument special, Parishville, NY, luthier and inlay artist Tracy Cox says: "It's the story." Over 2017, TAUNY (Traditional Arts in Upstate New York, Canton) is conducting a research project on North Country folk instruments, seeking the stories of people who make, keep, and collect instruments connected to music and cultural traditions.

For the past several months, Camilla Ammirati, Director of Research and Programs, has been holding documentation events and making connections throughout the region to learn about the instruments people have made, kept, and collected. This research, continuing through December, will culminate in an exhibit at the TAUNY Center in Canton to be on display from February through October 2018 along with a series of related programs.

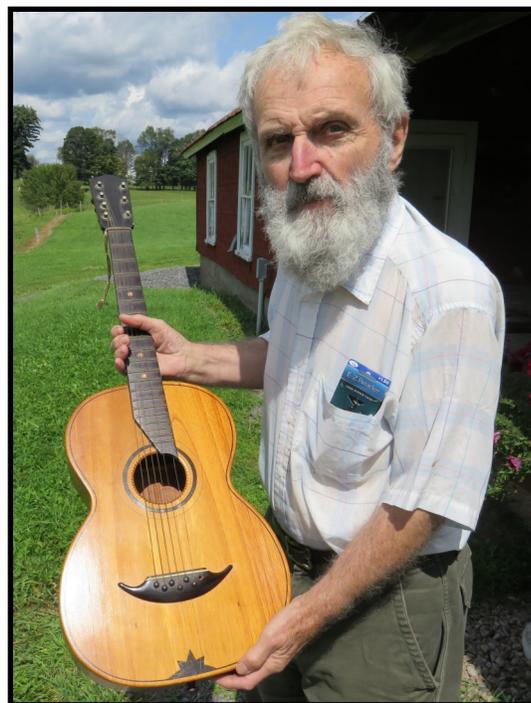
On August 23, Ammirati partnered with the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Farm to hold a documentation day for this project at the farm, inviting the community to bring in instruments and share the stories attached to them. Throughout a pleasant afternoon, various visitors stopped by with instruments they had kept in their families or otherwise held on to for their significance. Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Farm Curator Rosanna Moser shared a fife and tuning fork from the Farm's holdings, which connect to past musical interests and practices in the community.



Nelson and Milford Schwartzenruber showed, among other instruments of Milford's, a beautiful button accordion that had belonged to their father, John B. Schwartzenruber. John had acquired it sometime before instruments were allowed in the church and so had kept it out of the house for many years, but now his grandson holds on to it, playing a bit by ear when time and work allow.

Don and Carolyn Henry also came by with an unusual seven-string guitar they had found in the belongings of a dear friend who had passed away, which may have been picked up on the friend's international travels years ago. From family belongings that hint at decades of changing thought about music as part of community life, to a guitar that keeps close its tales of great journeys, these instruments give valuable insight into regional life and traditions.

As the research continues, it holds true that whether it is about a special piece of wood someone used to make a guitar or a family fiddle holding in its strings the experience of generations, people throughout the region keep instruments that tell all kinds of important stories about their family and community histories, their present-day lives, and their hopes for the future. If you have made or kept an instrument and would like to share its story for this project, please contact Camilla Ammirati at [camilla@tauny.org](mailto:camilla@tauny.org) or 315-386-4289.



## Mennonite Heritage Weekend

Beth Steria and Rosanna Moser

David Weaver-Zercher, professor of American religious history at Messiah College, PA, was guest speaker in recognition of Mennonite Heritage weekend on October 28-29. His two presentations centered on *The Bloody Theater* or *Martyrs Mirror of the Baptism -Minded and Defenseless Christians*. The thick, large 17<sup>th</sup> century Anabaptist martyrology book written in Dutch language was first published in 1660 AD in the Netherlands by Thieleman J. van Braght, 1625-1664.

Because the Anabaptists baptized adults, not babies, it was thought necessary to make every effort to stamp out the movement. As a result, many became martyrs (between 2000 and 2500) in various regions of Europe. Early Anabaptists were deemed to be enemies of the state and were often hunted down and severely persecuted by the government and state church authorities. Other groups who believed in adult baptism had individuals who also suffered and were killed.

The first half of the book contains two prefaces, an introduction, accounts of believers' baptism, and suffering/martyr accounts from 30 to 1525 AD, starting with John the Baptist, Christ's crucifixion, and the stoning of Stephen. The second half of the book contains Anabaptist martyr stories between 1525 and 1630 AD.

The revised edition of *Martyrs Mirror* published in 1685 was illustrated with 104 copper etchings by Dutch artist Jan Luyken. The image of Dirk Willems rescuing his drowning pursuer is the most famous of his illustrations. (See *Mennonite World Review* dated October 9, 2017, for an article written by Professor Weaver-Zercher on this martyr.)

The Mennonite Heritage Farm has six *Martyrs Mirror* books in their library; each book of about 970 pages plus an index. All of the books are in German with the exception of Rev. Joseph Lehman's, which is English and published in 1886 by the Mennonite Publishing Company, Elkhart, Indiana. It took 15 men three years to translate the book from Dutch to German and then printed in 1749; the English edition was translated from German in 1837.

The oldest German *Martyrer-Spiegel* is from the collection of (pioneer) John and Philip Moser (book at the right) that was published in 1849 by Shem Zook, King & Baird in Philadelphia, PA. Additionally, the remaining German *Martyrs Mirror* books published between 1870 and 1915 are from the following families with donor name(s): Adam Sauer (collection of Charlotte Zehr), Chris B. Yousey (Ellen and Arlene Yousey), Joseph C. and Barbara Mary Virkler Bachman (Geneva Lehman Virkler), and Michael M. and Christina Gerber Zehr (Llewellyn Zehr).



### Original 1874 Horse/Sheep Barn Razed

By Neil Keib

The horse/sheep barn was razed in mid-November due to a recent building inspection by AMHA's insurance company. It was determined that the structure, in very ill repair, must be taken down due to its unsafe condition. The barn was erected in 1874 as a new addition to the farm as well as the present large dairy barn.

It is noted that each of these barns formerly stood on another site when they were disassembled, moved to the farm, and reassembled. This assumption is based on the fact that some of the main beams are hand-hewed while others are saw cut. Also, there are several additional joint and tendons pockets that are not used. The original building was approximately 26' wide x 31' long with an eave height of 14' 6". The roof type was gable with cedar shingle roof. Sometime around 1900 a 14' x 30' addition was added to the east end of the barn. The main barn structure is of the post and beam type and had large field stones at the main vertical posts for its foundation. The sides were board and batten nailed to the girts. These were the only boards that were nailed on the structure. The floor joist was fitted into pockets in the tie beams, and the floor boards were laid on the floor joist and held there by its weight, no nails.

The teardown began in earnest in early summer with the removal of all salvage material and stored for future use. It is planned to build a new structure identical to the 1874 barn within the next three to five years using some of the salvaged material.

## Wagon Trails, Hiking and Nature Trails Taking Shape

By Neil Keib

After the tragic loss of AMHA board member Perry Steria in February 2014, his family decided to start a Memorial Fund to create a series of wagon, hiking, and nature trails at the farm. The outpouring support for this Memorial Fund was overwhelming. A proposed SITE PLAN was developed outlining a trail system on the east side of AMHA's property containing approximately 30 acres of woodland and about three miles of trails.

In September 2015, work began on the wagon trails with the north loop and a short trail that has access to the large meadow on the west and the cemetery. This first portion of the north loop was used to give wagon rides at Zwanzigstein Fest 2016. In Fall 2016, the south loop was marked and cleared. Additional work is needed on this loop such as widening and improving several ditch crossings. Also, in the fall the first hiking trail was marked, but due to being late in the year and a very wet spring, clearing was not started until October 2017. This first portion of the trail system was cleared by a group of BRCS students as part of their community service project.

When the trail system is completed, there will be a trail map, trail and intersection markers, rest stops, and observation areas. Some of the highlights of the trail system will be views of the farm, cemetery, woodland pond, wetlands along with a variety of trees, plants, animals, birds, etc. Also, one feature that stands out are the large stone piles that were placed there by John Moser (pioneer) when he cleared the land to grow his crops. The task of clearing the proposed remaining trails is ongoing. If you and/or know of a group who would like to work on this project, please call Neil Keib at 315-825-0242. Happy trails!

## Website

Edward Widrick of Deer River has provided listings (alpha and date) of burials for the Kirscherville Cemetery and Croghan Mennonite Church Cemetery. Interested individuals may review the reports at the archival office. This link [www.findagrave.com](http://www.findagrave.com) is available on the "Resource" page from the [mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://mennoniteheritagefarm.com) website.

## Gift Shop

Though the gift shop is closed for the season, a number of books are available for Christmas and/or other gifts until we reopen in Spring 2018. The books and other gift shop items will be available at the "Christmas in Croghan" on Friday evening, December 8, at the fire hall. Otherwise, please make arrangements with Rosanna Moser at [info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com](mailto:info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com) or call 315-376-7822 for inquiries. You may check the complete listing of books on the website. Here are the newest books:

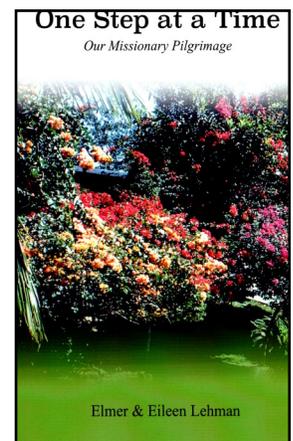
*One Step at a Time – Our Missionary Pilgrimage* by Elmer and Eileen Lehman

*Jacob and Catherine Zehr Roggie Family and Genealogy* by Arletha Zehr Bender Yoder

*Philip and Katie Roggie Moser History and Genealogy* by Rosanna M. Moser

*The Miner's Song, Returning Home, Crossing the Distance, and Secret Shadow* by Loreen Plett Zehr

Arlene Yousey's book *Strangers and Pilgrims History of Lewis County Mennonites* is also available.





“It always saddens me to see an old building deteriorate and eventually disappear. I think of all the people who built it, worked in it, enjoyed it. The animals and/or people who it sheltered. Sad.” Janet Zehr, AMHA board member



Thanks to Stewart's Shops!  
 Fine Arts and Fiber Arts Faires  
 August 2017

**Wish List**

For use at the farm, antique china hutch, tea pots, vintage women's clothing of the late 1800s to early 1900s that would be wearable, and church hymnals, especially *Life Songs*, *Church and Sunday School*, and *Church Hymnal*.

The farm is also in need of a new gas grill and a hay wagon. Monetary donations for pop-up tents and white vinyl tables would be appreciated too.

The Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association operates under the nonprofit charter granted by New York State. Your tax-deductible gifts will help secure the future of AMHA and give you a part in preserving the homestead and the Lewis County Mennonite story.

Send checks to:

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Whether the weather be fine  
Or whether the weather be not,  
Whether the weather be cold  
Or whether the weather be hot,  
We'll weather the weather  
Whatever the weather,  
Whether we like it or not.

Anonymous British

**NOTE:** Elmer Lehman quoted this poem several times while he was at the Z Fest on July 1, 2017.

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