



Notes from the Farm

Volume 23 Issue 2

Fall 2013

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mennoniteheritagefarm.com

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New members are always welcome to join AMHA.

Your support and expertise will help fulfill the goals and purpose of AMHA.

Heritage Farm Renovations Underway!

The AMHA Board is pleased to announce the much-needed renovations have begun.

The barn bridges have been completely rebuilt. The foundation work for the bridges solved the issue of water seeping into the south corner of the stable. The bridge railings were made possible with a grant from the BRCS Youth Advisory Council.

Brush and debris were removed from around the barn, granary, sheep shed, and garage. The ravine between the road and the barn received the fill, and this area will eventually extend the driveway in a loop to the road. The final grading and landscaping will be done next spring. A new culvert under the road improved the water drainage situation.



Ken Good and his crew will be rebuilding the granary stone foundation wall. The water runoff between the garage and granary that was a major source of the foundation problem is being addressed to prevent future damage.

The water well will be worked on next spring so that the water will be potable.

We give a special thank you to our board member, Neil Keib, who headed up the projects. Also, thanks to Eli Beiler, Mose Beiler, Rod Mattis, Norm Moshier, and Don Roggie for helping with the projects. AMHA has raised \$20,000 for the renovations. To contribute to our remaining capital fundraising goal of \$15,000, see page 8 for mailing information. Thank you for your support.



Before



After

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Lowville Mennonite Church Celebrates 100 Years

Why was the Lowville Mennonite Church begun? The first Mennonite church (originally Amish) in Lewis County was the Croghan congregation. Most of the original settlers lived in that vicinity and worshipped in homes until 1912 when the Croghan Amish Mennonite Church was built. As more members moved west across the Black River to the Lowville area, the need arose for a new church because some families were traveling long distances by horse and buggy.

So because of geographical necessity, Lowville Mennonite Church at Dadville, also called the "River Church" or "Dadville Church," was established in 1913. A former Methodist church building was moved from Rectors Corners on Tug Hill to Dadville. The two churches operated as a unit with the same leadership alternating between the two sites until 1931. A new building was built in 1934 with a major renovation in 1971. An elevator and a portico were added later. Several renovations have been done since then.

As a result of combined efforts of the Croghan and Lowville churches, the Pine Grove Mennonite Church was started in the early 1950s and Carthage Mennonite Church in the 1960s. Because of overcrowded conditions at the Lowville and Croghan churches, the Naumburg Mennonite Church was established in 1964.

In the 1970s, Lowville Mennonite Church became a dual conference congregation belonging to the Conservative Mennonite Conference and the newly formed New York State Mennonite Fellowship. In 2012 the congregation withdrew from the Conservative Mennonite Conference and now remains in the New York State Mennonite Conference, which is a part of Mennonite Church USA.

Some former ministers were the following: Chris M. Nafziger, Jacob Gingerich, Allen Gingerich, Elias Zehr, and Lloyd Boshart. Milton Zehr was ordained minister in 1969 and served until 1990. Evan Zehr pastored from 1984 until early 2009. The current pastor is Keith Zehr.

The church is commemorating this 100-year milestone by highlighting some events of significance during the Sunday worship services this fall. On February 9, 2014, Paul Zehr of Lancaster, PA, will be the guest speaker to commemorate the dedication of the church meetinghouse 100 years ago.



Dadville Mennonite 1913

HERITAGE FARM WISH LIST:

Small Farmall Tractor
Wheel Barrow—rubber tire
Laundry Wringer (hand crank type) that has slots to slide over a square wash tub
Plastic-lidded tubs for storage of Z Fest booth items
Mannequin
For more information, please call any board member.



Bernadine Schwartzentruber—Board Chairperson

Year in Review... 2013 AMHA Highlights

As this year concludes, we highlight our events and look at future plans.

Our annual meeting program in April featured a DVD entitled *And When They Shall Ask*, which is about the Mennonites in the former Soviet Union.

Our Z Fest on July 6 was a sunny day after three days of heavy rain showers. New popular venues included Martin's Pretzels and artist Loretta Lepkowski's booth. A special feature included a choral group, Adirondack Community Chorus, that sang familiar hymns. Our attendance was about 486. Free admission for persons under age 18 brought many new children and families. Our new book *Generation to Generation* went on sale that day.

Summer activities included our booth at the Beaver Camp auction, participation in the Harvest of the Arts at Maple Ridge, a neighborhood picnic and the Martin reunion at the farm, and the start of our major renovations. The Lowville Mennonite Church Junior Sunday School visited on August 18. The Alden Mennonite Church group and a senior citizens group from the Osceola area toured the site in July. The Osceola group then had a noon meal at the Croghan Mennonite Church.

We have held five fundraising bake sales at Kinney's so far this year that have generated over \$2,000.

Work continues on the documentary about Lewis County Mennonites. Our former executive director, Dawson Grau, is the producer.

Mallori Norris was hired as our summer docent and continues as our office assistant. She also volunteered in many other ways.

Fall activities included a September visit by a home school group from Jefferson County of about 40 students and adults. They enjoyed a busy day of "hands on" old-time food and fiber demonstrations and lawn games such as stilt walking and sack races. The annual Leadership Academy group toured on October 4. The Beaver River first graders visited on November 1. The Beaver River Senior Citizens enjoyed a delicious turkey dinner at the Croghan Mennonite Church on November 13. Our total number of visitors to the farm this year was 840. On the evening of November 26, John Ruth, a gifted historical storyteller and popular heritage tour leader from Pennsylvania presented a travelogue at Lowville Mennonite Church that told his story and took the audience through the historic background of Anabaptist people in Germany and Switzerland.

Other items of interest include: a new web and Facebook page, our site on Lewis County Mennonite churches web page. Our current AMHA membership is 63 with 10 new members this year. Also, our

Year in Review, Cont.

Other items of interest include a new Web site and Facebook page and our participation on Lewis County Mennonite churches' web page. Our current AMHA membership is 63 with 10 new members this year. Also, the farm has a phone answering service.

Looking ahead...Our landscaping will get the final touches next spring, the water well situation will be addressed, and the lower floor of the granary will be restored. Accessioning will resume in the granary and upper barn floor in the spring.

AMHA generates a modest but dependable income from the bake sales. Several long-time bakers plan on cutting back. If you love to bake, we would appreciate your skills. With five to six persons willing to help take up the slack, the investment of time and expenses could be shared.

Because of a planned retirement, a board position will need to be filled early next year. For more information, please call 376-2792 or e-mail schwartznb@yahoo.com.

As board chairperson, I thank each board member for all the hard work you have done during this very busy and eventful year.

FRIENDS OF THE FARM...

Donor Recognition:

Thank you, donors, for the following items to be used at the Heritage Farm:

Reel lawn mowers (Jim Lehman and Ralph Taube)
Corn sheller (Glendon Roggie)
Laundry wringer (Kermit Lyndaker)
Mannequin (Elizabeth Lassen)
Child's tricycle (Pearl Zehr)
Church and Sunday School Hymnals



Volunteer Services:

Thanks to the following individuals:

Beryl Gingerich, Neil Keib, Nelson Moser, Norm Moshier, and Levi Zehr for their assistance in identifying objects in the granary.
Bronwen Keefer for arranging display cases.
Margaret Widrick for putting on a dinner for the July 24 tour group.
Lloyd Brugger for translating German book titles and cover pages.
Phil Hill and Neil Keib for helping with grounds maintenance.
Generation to Generation keepsake/cookbook work: Phyllis Lyndaker, Beth and Marci Nafziger, Elsie Nafziger, Mallori Norris, Eileen Zehr and Pearl Zehr.
Neil Keib for planning and spearheading construction of barn bridges.
Donald Roggie for water system monitoring and landscaping behind granary and barn.
Heidi Honey, Rosanna Moser, Elsie Nafziger, Mallori Norris, and Marie Western for transcribing the oral documentaries.
Many Z Fest volunteers for grounds preparation, donating food, booth work, traffic control and much more!
Harvest of the Arts volunteers.



What's New at the Heritage Farm?

Since July 2010, a total of 1450 objects/library/archives/photos have been cataloged or accessioned into a museum software program. AMHA is very appreciative for over 25 donors who have given gifts to continue telling the story of our Lewis County Mennonite heritage this year. Here are just a few gifts that have been received.

GEARHART'S FAMILY KNITTING MACHINE

Katie Leis Moser (John) made her children's stockings on this 1914 "Gearhart's Family Knitting Machine" in the 1920s and later. Sharon Wuerschmidt assembled the machine after it was found in the granary early July. Here is a picture of Sharon using the machine at Z Fest with CallaHan Chung Roggie (Keith and Amy) looking on the demonstration. We look forward to using the machine again at next year's Z Fest.



JAW WRENCH



A wrench with the trademark "Ashcroft Mfg Co." was found in the granary with the initials "C Zehr" inscribed more than once. The wrench may be dated back as far as 1870. Can you help in identifying which "Zehr" family has connections to this object?

CORN SHUCK MATTRESS

Baby crib and feed bag mattress filled with corn shucks and believed to be approximately 100 years old. The donation came from the family of Arthur and Mary Widrick Moser that was originally used in the Jacob and Lena Martin Widrick family.



DEACON'S BIBLE RETURNS TO LEWIS COUNTY

John Nafziger's 1798 German Bible printed in Basel, Switzerland, was returned to Lewis County in October 2013. John Nafziger served as deacon of the Amish Mennonite Church in Croghan starting in 1874 or 1875 until 1909. He was born in France on April 10, 1828, and migrated to Lewis County at the age of 11 years with his parents, Christian and Marie Jantzi Nafziger. John married Barbara Martin (ca. 1859), who was the daughter of Joseph and Barbara Beckler Martin.



On the inside front cover page of the Bible, the following was handwritten in pen: "Deacon John Nafziger A.M. Croghan Mrs. Jonas Kennel Aug 1951." Mrs. Jonas Kennell (Miriam Farney) was a granddaughter of Deacon John Nafziger. Miriam's parents were David C. and Rebecca Nafziger Farney (widow of John Sauers).
NOTE: The late Joseph Kennell of Copenhagen was one of nine children of Jonas and Miriam Farney Kennell.

Continued.

It is necessary to provide this background information to understand how the Bible was returned to Lewis County. In Fall 1941, members (67) of the newly formed First Mennonite Church of New Bremen signed a resolution “to seek a church home with another conference.” Until conference affiliations could be arranged, Rev. David A. Yoder of Elkhart, Indiana, was one of three individuals out of state asked to serve as bishop for the new church. He served in this capacity until 1961, although conference affiliation was completed in 1959. The New Bremen Mennonite Church was the home church for Jonas and Miriam Kennell. Prior to Kennells’ relocating to Phoenix, Arizona, in June 1961, it is presumed that Miriam Farney Kennell gave the Bible to Rev. David A. Yoder. The Yoder family from Fort Wayne/Goshen, Indiana, area desired to return the archival Bible and therefore initiated communication through AMHA’s website to return the Bible to Lewis County.

GERMAN PLAQUE

A plaque with German text has been deeded to AMHA that came from a granddaughter of Joseph and Rose Widrick Nafziger. The text “Bei Gott ist mein Heil, meine Zuversicht ist Gott” has recently been translated to “With God is my healing (salvation), my confidence is God.” The plaque is hung in the dining room at the Heritage Farm.

Other Donations

Genealogies and/or family history received this year are as follows: Jacob and Lena Moser Zehr Farney, Peter and Suzanne Frosch Yousey, Andrew R. and Emma Widrick Moser, Joseph P. and Katie Widrick Moshier, and Christian B. and Mary Zehr Lehman.

In addition, we have received a diagram of Daniel and Magdalena Steinman Schrag family tree and a handwritten story on the life of Allen and Marian Zehr Gingerich written by Marian Gingerich.

The following textiles donations have been donated:

An heirloom quilt made by Magdalena Kennel Lehman (John), Benjamin F. and Susanna Lehman Zehr, Charlotte Zehr, and Kathleen Zehr in the 1930s.

A candle wicking bedspread.

A bear hide fur coat (adult) came from the Howard and Verna Lehman Roggie family. The coat has a label of Crosby Frisian Fur Co., Rochester, NY, which was founded in 1889.



AMHA continues to accept archival documents, objects, photos, and old books. We are especially interested in receiving textiles (quilts, comforters, linens, white tablecloths), family histories/genealogies, clothing (men, women and children), etc. Again, we thank you for the continuation of gifts for the display and preservation of our Anabaptist/Mennonite heritage. The new archival basement is housed in an environmental controlled area for temperature and humidity. Please call 376-7822 or e-mail rmmoser78@gmail.com for any questions or information.

Submitted by Rosanna M. Moser

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEAS: Need ideas for family members? Our gift shop offers various genealogy/history books, *Generation to Generation* (cookbook and remedies/sayings), Dutch Blitz games, quilts, comforters, etc. Please call Rosanna Moser to make an appointment.



2013 PICTURES FROM THE FARM



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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