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New members are always
welcome to join AMHA.

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

Notes from the Farm

Volume 24 Issue 1

Fall 2014

NEWS FROM THE FARM

Bernadine Schwartzentruber, Board Chairperson



Several projects at the Heritage Farm continue to keep us busy.



The granary foundation work is completed as well as the landscaping and grass seeding finished around the buildings. The pine lumber siding for the house and barn has been purchased and is now in

storage at the farm.

A "Zwanzigstein Circle" is under construction on the north lawn. We appreciate the generosity of Arletha Bender Yoder for donating the cost of this walkway. The large elm tree in the south lawn is dead and has been cut down. New cedar fence posts and fencing will replace the fence along the front and south lawns.



A group of Naumburg Mennonite Church youth and sponsors had a "rock party" on Saturday, May 17, to place rocks on the slopes of the new barn bridges and hauled rocks via a "bucket brigade" system out of the newly repaired lower level of the granary.

The first edition of *The Plowman's Journal* for AMHA members was issued this spring. To become a member of AMHA, please call Don Roggie at 376-3076 or e-mail info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com.

A large crowd enjoyed a presentation of "The Amish of New York State" by Karen Johnson-Weiner for the annual meeting program on Sunday afternoon, April 13. The wax on snow was an eventful first for Karen.

We continue to make progress on transcribing the oral histories that Dawson Grau had done within the Mennonite community. To date, the following histories are available for reading in the archives at the Mennonite Heritage Farm: Vera Lyndaker, Michael Moser, Christina Schwartzentruber, Nelda (Moser) Steria and Nelson Moser, Arlene and Ellen Yousey, Charlotte and Kathleen Zehr, Eileen Zehr, Pearl Zehr, and Vernon Zehr.

A visual presentation (PowerPoint) on the history of Lewis County Mennonites is nearing completion. Originally, the 35mm slide presentation was created by Arletha Bender Yoder.

News from the President, cont.

The Z Fest on July 5 was very well attended under bright, sunny skies. Eight foreign exchange students from China enjoyed the sights, people, food, and stilt walking. Rev. Bruce Roggie, who was at the Anabaptist booth, interacted with them about our Christian faith and Mennonite culture.



The Lewis County Agricultural Society donated the show wagon to the Heritage Farm. It was recently moved behind the barn where it will be used for storage as we empty and sort through the granary and hay barn lofts.

So now we look forward to finishing up some of these projects before the snow flies! (The house siding is planned for next spring.) We probably will need volunteers to help with the barn and house siding tasks!

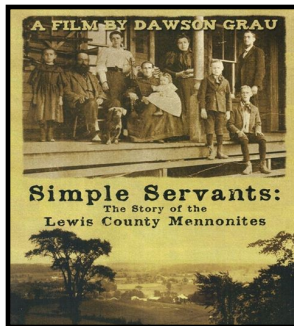
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Release of *Simple Servants: The Story of the Lewis County Mennonites*

A story of faith that was written, directed, and produced by filmmaker Dawson Grau was released at a free premiere to a large crowd (over 500) at the Lowville Town Hall Theater on Saturday evening, August 30. Jerry Reed, film narrator, and Jacqueline Schwab, nationally renowned pianist, were also present and participated in a question-and-answer period followed by a piano concert. The event was sponsored by the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association and Lewis County Historical Society.

Dawson is a sixth generation descendant of Philip and Katie Roggie Moser and son of Michael and Cynthia Moser Grau of Niskayuna, NY. His keen interest in Mennonite heritage throughout his life inspired him to pursue the production to share the story of the Lewis County Mennonites throughout the state and nationally.

The film will also be shown on Friday, September 26, at 7:30 p.m. at the Croghan Mennonite Church followed by refreshments. DVDs of *Simple Servants* will be available for purchase that evening. In addition, the Mennonite Heritage Farm has DVDs available. The farm is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. until October 4. To place an order, you may call 376-7822 or 346-1122 or e-mail info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com.



THANK YOU and REQUEST!

Ten tables were purchased for use at the Heritage Farm as a result of our appeal several months ago. We also appreciate the donated linens (assorted white tablecloths and napkins). Thank you to the donors who made this possible.

AMHA would appreciate a donation of another used vacuum sweeper.

The Saga of the Siding By Bernadine Schwartzentruber

In late November 2013, I read in *The Budget* about an Amish man from Fultonville, NY (near Amsterdam) who bought 400,000 feet of pine lumber at a sawmill bankruptcy auction for a very cheap price. Since AMHA was already looking to buy lumber for barn and house siding, we decided to check this out. I had no names or addresses so I went to West Lowville and inquired at several Amish homes as to how to contact the *Budget* writer.

I was directed to a Beiler home; and not knowing which door to use, I knocked on the side door that they apparently don't use in the winter. Upon opening the door, a huge chunk of ice was knocked off the roof and hit me in the head and sent my glasses flying! I gathered my wits. We sat down, and I explained the purpose of my visit. Mr. Beiler got out his Amish directory and found the address of a Joe Keim in Fultonville. I wrote a letter to Mr. Keim and after receiving my letter, he gave it to the buyer, Eli Mast, who called me on December 9. With my last name of Schwartzentruber, Mr. Mast wanted to speak Pennsylvania Dutch, but I told him to switch to English so I would get the information correct! It turned out that the auction was at Harrisville! So Norm Moshier and Eli Mast looked over the lumber at Harrisville. We ended up buying enough for both projects at a very reasonable price. But, of course, all the lumber had to be first moved to his sawmill at Fultonville to be inventoried! Eli Mast planed the lumber for the house clapboards. In July the lumber was moved back to Lewis County to the barn hayloft and garage at the farm and now awaits a "barn siding bee" and "house siding" event! So I guess it pays to read *The Budget*!

Recognition of Phyllis Lyndaker

Phyllis Lyndaker, founding AMHA board member, retired in April after serving many years as board chairperson and association service in multiple ways. She was one of several persons who had the vision to create this organization in 1988; and consequently, the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Farm was birthed. We as a board value her wisdom and guidance and will continue to seek her input and advice. The AMHA board and staff recognized her retirement with a luncheon at her home on May 27.



In Loving Memory of Perry Christian Steria (1942-2014)

The Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association board was very saddened by the sudden death of fellow board member, Perry Steria. He was involved in a car accident on February 19, 2014.

As a member of the Board, Perry was a faithful attender, a great listener, a contributor of well-thought-out ideas and comments; and as someone else said of him, his ready comment of “I can do that.” This attitude and action led him to many other volunteer positions at Lowville Mennonite Church, the Agape Shoppe, Z Fest, Brookhaven Home, and others.

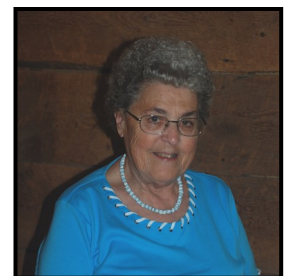
Perry was the fifth generation of Mosers who settled the farm in Kirschnerville, now known as the Mennonite Heritage Farm. His grandmother lived cross-lots from the farm so undoubtedly his mother would have spent time on the farm as a child. Perry enjoyed the farm also and spent hours there especially at the Z Fest each year serving as cashier at the dinner tent and demonstrating how to make sauerkraut. Perry graduated from Beaver River Central School in 1960 and from Goshen College. Later he earned a Master’s degree in Education from SUNY Potsdam. Perry never displayed any attitude of superiority about his accomplishments but remained a humble and compassionate person.

He has a sister Bonnie Wortinger of Goshen, Indiana, and a brother John of Fort Worth, Texas. In 1974 he married his beloved Beth Boshart; and for nearly 40 years together, they enjoyed life, home, family, church, teaching, and volunteering.

What a wonderful legacy of faith and life he has left.

Introducing Janet Zehr

We welcome Janet Zehr to our board. She retired in 2006 after working for 49 years in accounting. She enjoys traveling, crafts, reading, writing, and gardening. Janet has been involved with the Gideons International since 1977 and has held a number of offices and currently serves as Widow Outreach Chairperson for New York State. She has also been a Sunday school and summer Bible school teacher and 4-H leader, served on the church library committee, member of sewing circle and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation.



Her husband Gilbert died in 2012. Their seven children are as follows: Jesse (Barbara), Nathan, (Paula), Alma (Larry Roes), Joan Marie (David Gerdon), Gale (deceased), Adrienne (deceased), Allison (Dan Guenther). She has 19 grandchildren (1 deceased), 23 great-grandchildren, 1 step-great-grandchild. Her accounting skills, a lifelong love of history and genealogy, some computer skills, and a fair knowledge of early Anabaptists and subsequent generations of reading and stories from her mother will be a benefit to AMHA. She is eager to learn more about our organization and wants to help in various ways. Welcome aboard!

NEWS FROM THE ARCHIVIST

Rosanna M. Moser



Glassware Gifts

AMHA is indebted to Catherine Lyndaker Dannan for the preservation of wedding glassware (over 140 years) from the estate of Joseph B. and Catherine Steria Yousey. The pair of glasses was used at their marriage on Thursday, June 8, 1871. Joseph B. Yousey was born March 28, 1840, and died February 28, 1915. Catherine was born September 1, 1848, to Joseph and Catherine Moser Stere and died January 4, 1929.*

For seven generations in America, the glasses have been in the possession of a “Catherine or Katherine.” To our knowledge, the glasses were first in the possession of Catherine Moser Stere (Joseph), a sister to John Moser, the pioneer Moser who resided at the Mennonite Heritage Farm. Catherine and her sister Barbara came to America with John’s parents between 1837 and 1840. (Note: John Moser’s mother name was also Catherine, and it is unknown if the glasses were ever in her possession.) Here is the “Catherine” lineage to the present day:

Catherine Moser Stere (Joseph)

Catherine Stere Yousey (Joseph B.)*

Catherine (Katie) Yousey Widrick (Joseph)

Catherine Widrick Lyndaker (Paul)

Catherine Lyndaker Dannan (Rexford)

Catherine Dannan Crawford (Jason) preferred that the glasses go to AMHA and Historical Society so that other relatives and friends can enjoy seeing them.

Catherine Chinue Crawford (three years old) will see the glasses at the Mennonite Heritage Farm someday.

The archival office has on file this written story from an interview in July 1995 between Arlene Yousey and Nelson Widrick (son of Joseph and Katie Yousey Widrick):

“On Grandma’s wedding day, June 8, 1871, she used two gold-trimmed water glasses, one for Grandpa and one for herself, on the wedding table. These glasses had been brought by her mother from France at the time of her emigration. The customary hard stick candy was used at the wedding; and after Grandpa had drunk his water, he put his stick candy in his glass with a thump. The glass being very fine and thin did not withstand the force of the thump and was broken at the bottom. Grandma always retained these two glasses in a special place in the cupboard in spite of the one being broken. Even when Grandma moved to the Widrick home, she still stored them safely in her cupboard. Ma, likewise, stored them after Grandma’s death.”

Catherine Lyndaker Dannan recorded the following for the archival office:

“Catherine Widrick Lyndaker, intentionally and thoughtfully, gave the glasses to me after my Goshen College graduation in August 1961. My mother died in a car-related accident one month later (September 28, 1961).”

In addition, wedding glassware gifts (pitcher and glasses) have been donated from the John B. and Mary Yousey Moser estate.

All of the glassware is in a display case (dining room) at the Mennonite Heritage Farm. Other displays at the home consist of the 100th anniversary celebration of the Lowville Mennonite Church, “Life in the Howling Wilderness of the 1800s,” Conservative Mennonite Conference, plus other artifacts. Thank you, Bronwen Keefer, for your artistic talent and assistance in the design layout of the farm house display cases!

New Kirschnerville Cemetery Sign

Over the past few years, the Cemetery Committee worked on having a sign made to identify the Kirschnerville cemetery, which is one-fourth acre running along the Erie Canal Road. This was finally accomplished in Fall 2013. In

the book *Strangers and Pilgrims*, Arlene Yousey writes the following information to explain the purchase and name of the cemetery:

“About 1870, minister John and wife Catherine Steiner Moser donated a piece farmland adjacent to the road for cemetery use. As was often the case, the deed process was delayed, but on January 17, 1874, they executed the legal papers and deeded the land. Their original intent to donate the parcel and convey it by deed proved legally impossible, so a mandated price was set. Stipulating a \$5.00 charge, five members contributed one dollar each, namely Deacon Joseph Steria, Minister John Moser, Bishop Jacob Roggie, and neighbors Joseph Moser and John Widrick.



of

The transaction took place about the time a fire destroyed Christian Beller's barn. John Moser donated the \$5.00 to Mr. Beller as aid in his loss. The first burial grave is reported as Mrs. Barbara Hirschey Noftsier.

The church group had no affiliation with any conference, so the deed was executed to the second party which carried the title of the “The Society of the Amish Menoniten of the County of Lewis.” (Legal documents of the era were written in English but interspersed with German spellings.) The deed stipulated that “said lot to be free from any highway and to be used as a cemetery for the interment of the deceased of said society.”

Basis for Donations

The text below is from AMHA's “Collection Management Policy” that outlines the basis of accepting donations, such as archival **documents** (family/individual histories and/or genealogies), **objects** (textiles, men's, women's, and children's clothing, household or farm-related, etc.), individual and/or family **photos**, and **books**.

Collections shall be limited to those artifacts which depict the daily life in agriculture, homemaking, worship, and other activities of the Amish Mennonites who settled in Lewis County during the nineteenth century.

Items for collection shall be considered on the following hierarchical documentary bases with one (1) being of first importance and five (5) being least:

1. Connection with earliest Amish-Mennonite families, in particular those articles which traveled with them from Europe or were used by them during the mid-nineteenth century.
2. Connection with other immigrants from Alsace-Lorraine to Lewis County in the same time period as in No. 1.
3. Connection with later Amish-Mennonite settlers in Lewis County during the remainder of the nineteenth century and the first half of the twentieth.
4. Connection with other settlers in Lewis County in the same time period as in No. 3.
5. When there is no connection as outlined in any of the foregoing, but items have been verified as identical or similar to those documented as having been a part of period (1840-1950) Mennonite households.

Items will also be considered on the basis of their physical condition, quality of workmanship, and appropriateness to the expansion of the permanent collection.

AMHA appreciates the ongoing acceptance of donations/gifts to the farm and historical society. Each donation adds more history to the story of the Lewis County Mennonites. The archival basement is housed in an environmental controlled area for temperature and humidity. Inquiries may be directed to the archivist.

Partial Listing of Books and New DVD Available at the Heritage Farm

Generation to Generation (A Keepsake Book of Old-Time Recipes, Remedies & Sayings) compiled by AMHA
Strangers and Pilgrims—History of Lewis County Mennonites by Arlene Yousey
Genealogy of Christian Lehman and Mary B. Zehr compiled by Janice Lehman Crofoot
Town of Watson by Arletha Bender-Yoder
Simple Servants: The Story of the Lewis County Mennonites (DVD) by Dawson Grau

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. Please send checks to:

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