



# Notes from the Farm

Volume 26 Issue 2

November 2016

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## AMHA Announces "Capital Campaign"

The AMHA Board is excited to announce "Capital Campaign 2017 - Restoring the Heritage Farm for the Future." We have made significant restoration progress in the last few years, and now we want to continue with the following projects:

1. Finish residing the house and repair/replace windows on the north side of house.
2. Install a new roof on the house with new roof vents.
3. Build work station in curator's office.
4. Install new windows and door in lower level of granary.
5. Repair/replace fascia and soffits on granary.

You may ask "why now?" The house roof and vents have been cited by the Code Enforcement Officer as necessary. Also, time and weather take their toll on structures. By addressing these issues now, more costly future repairs can be averted.

The Board of Directors has "kicked off" this campaign by pledging \$7,250 toward the goal of \$34,000 to be raised by June 1, 2017, so the renovations can be completed by December 31, 2017.

It is through your past generosity that AMHA has been able to make necessary improvements to the Mennonite Heritage Farm that we have today. As we move to this next phase of work, we thank you once again for helping us reach our goal.

To donate for this capital campaign, please forward your contributions to the treasurer (address on the back page).

## Chairperson's Report

Bernadine Schwartzentruber

Here is a highlight of recent Mennonite Heritage Farm programs and farm renovations.

The 26<sup>th</sup> Zwanzigstein Fest on Saturday, July 2, had the theme of "Celebrate Croghan – 175 Years." Several new exhibitors were present. The Adirondack Community Chorus sang as well as several other groups. The groups performed for the first time at the "show wagon" behind the barn. About 575 people attended the event, including well

## Chairperson's Report, Cont.

over 100 children. Our total on-site attendance this year was about 900 people, and off-site events were attended by about 1300, including the Holocaust program.

Other first-time events included a children's "Fine Arts Faire" and a hymn sing in the parlor. On Saturday noon, May 21, a "Roadside Historic Marker" dedication/unveiling ceremony was held at the Mennonite Heritage Farm.

An afternoon tea in memory of Kathleen and Charlotte Zehr for 11 ladies and 1 child was enjoyed in the dining room at the Mennonite Heritage Farm on Saturday, October 8. One group had four generations represented, namely, Janet Zehr, Joan Zehr Gerdon, Cassandra Zehr Moser (daughter of Jesse and Barbara Zehr), and Hannah Moser (great-granddaughter).

AMHA sponsored the appearance of Mr. Joseph Hirt at Lowville Academy & Central School in April. He recounted his experience as a victim of the Holocaust, including time spent at the notorious German concentration camp in Auschwitz.

It was thus with great shock that we came to learn Mr. Hirt's personal anecdote of the Holocaust was, in substantial part, a fabrication. This conclusion was based on the thorough research of Andrew Reid, a local history teacher. While we are saddened by this unfortunate turn of events, we are grateful for Mr. Reid's research and commend him for his professional approach and service to the community. Our hope is this incident will call attention to the real human suffering of the Holocaust victims.

On a brighter note, our Partnership Program continues to expand our financial support base. So far this year it accounts for 40 percent of our income, which is a substantial increase from a year ago. **By partnering with us, you can share in improving the facilities at the farm and in bringing more programs to the community.** To join this program, please forward your contributions to the treasurer.

Other fundraisers, such as bake sales, food booth at the Harvest of the Arts, and "Christmas in Croghan," generate additional income but more importantly bring publicity to AMHA. Also, our website and Facebook generate contacts. A new link has been added to the website entitled "News," which has AMHA newsletters from the past years. This is work in progress. We continue to receive more artifacts.

Families and other groups are welcome to use the Mennonite Heritage Farm for reunions, gatherings, etc. Tables and chairs are available for use in the lower barn and/or outside. There is also a refrigerator in the milk house and two stoves in the garage. Arrangements may be made with Bernadine Schwartzentruber.

We are open to suggestions for future programs and farm activities that will carry out the mission of AMHA. Our newly stated mission statement is as follows: The mission of the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association is to collect, record, interpret and share the cultural heritage of the Anabaptists of Northern New York from the 1830s to the present.



## Office Assistant

Cindy Lehman Thomas was born and raised in Beaver Falls, daughter of Nevin and Donna Lehman). She grew up in the Mennonite community...a graduate of Beaver River Central School and attended First Mennonite Church at New Bremen. Cindy was chosen as an exchange student to Chile between her junior and senior year of high school.

Cindy received a scholarship to attend SUNY at Fredonia and received her B.A. in Music. She spent her junior year of college in Vienna and studied voice at the Conservatory. After college she lived in Buffalo and spent a decade performing in theater and designing costumes. She has traveled extensively in Europe and South America meeting a large and varied group of people.

In 1980 she moved to Seattle, WA, where she lived for 35 years. For 20 years, she worked in the field of law enforcement (records and evidence). She also attended the University of Washington studying film and video production. She met her husband, Paul Scoles, at the university and was married for 25 years. An offshoot of the UW study led Cindy to write and publish a children's book. She also wrote and sold a script for a TV series. Cindy continues to develop stories for children.

In May 2014, Paul passed away, and her father, Nevin, died in January 2014. This prompted Cindy to move to the North Country in October 2015. She currently lives with her mother on the Erie Canal Road and began working May 2016 in the curator's office as office assistant.

## Fine Arts Faire for Children

With sincere thanks to a Stewarts Holiday Match, AMHA hosted its first "Fine Arts Faire" on August 3 at the Mennonite Heritage Farm for 21 children between the ages of 7 and 14. The children were under the instruction of Bronwen Keefer, art teacher, between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. Before instruction began, they had a tour of the farm. Then the children painted their impressions and/or reflections. Several adults accompanied the children and also enjoyed the learning activities. The children had a fun day and are looking forward to coming back to the farm.

AMHA will make application with Stewarts; and hopefully, the faire will occur again next summer. It is hoped that we can have other faires for interested children in choral music and knitting.



## Hymn Sing by Bernice Zehr

We returned to the first English hymnal Friday evening, September 23, for our first hymn sing in the parlor at the Mennonite Heritage Farm. Prior to the *Church and Sunday School Hymnal*, German singing was in unison using memorized tunes. The hymnal published in 1952 was an attempt to standardize hymn singing with words and music.

In keeping with house services, the women sat on benches on one side of the room, and men sat on the opposite side. Accommodation was made for four-part harmony by keeping the singers in one room. The group of about 35 people represented most of the Mennonite churches. Choristers for the evening were the following: Anne Martin, Ken Erb, Karleen and Elsie Zehr, and Steven Moser. (Simon Gingerich was unable to attend.) Selections were made by choristers and also by the audience. Donna Lehman delighted the group with a history of the “Hardly Ables.” (See article below.) The Dorrance and Anne Martin family graced us with their musical abilities. The Martin children, along with Anne’s sister from Ohio, sang “Great is Thy Faithfulness” in memory of Dorrance and Anne’s 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in August. We also sang “Happy Birthday” to Dorrance.

The evening was capped off by singing hymn No. 606 by popular demand followed by cookies and cider. We received several suggestions for ongoing hymn sings and needing opportunities for four-part harmony. We will try to keep you in tune through the bulletin.

### Hardly Ables

by Donna Lyndaker Lehman (Nevin)

In the late 1970s, one Sunday after service, Charlotte Zehr approached me and said that she would like to see a men’s group started at our church (First Mennonite Church at New Bremen). She felt we had quality men to have a group. Nevin and I began discussing men that would be available. The group consisted of Clayton Boshart, Perry Farney, Ralph Hirschey, Addison Lehman, Milton Lehman, Nevin Lehman, Vernon Lyndaker, and Glen Stalter. Since we had a young daughter at the time, the men decided they would meet at our house every two weeks for practice. The practice sessions were always for two hours and treated them to pie and coffee.

Though the group started out first as a fun thing to do because the men loved to sing, God had other plans. We sang, of course, in our own church, First Mennonite Church, but we were invited to many church functions for a period of 20 years.

How did we arrive at the name of the men’s group? Over refreshments one night, the men decided we needed a name. One of the men spoke up and said, “You know we are hardly able to sing some of these songs Donna wants.” I immediately said, “There’s your name...Hardly Ables.” Our pastor, Lester Bauman, did not care for the name. When he introduced our group, he would say, “Our men’s group will now sing.”

The group sessions were very therapeutic for our men. We had one man going through a very stressful time at his job. He told us later that the group helped him through that time.

There is one thing I would like to say about our four-part harmony. Recently, I had an adult come to me and say, “When he was young in church, he always made sure he stood by Nevin Lehman or Ralph Hirschey; so he could learn to sing four-part harmony.”

In the 1990s, Glen and Marion Stalter moved to Illinois to care for his Mom so this ended our group. The men were beginning to have health problems also. At this date, two of the men are living, Milton Lehman and Vernon Lyndaker.

Left to right: Clayton Boshart, Vernon Lyndaker, Ralph Hirschey, Addison Lehman, Milton Lehman, Perry Farney, Glen Stalter, and Nevin Lehman. Donna Lehman (piano).



## Translated Book by Rosanna Moser

Communication between Daniel Steiner, Strasbourg, France (bottom Rhine River near Germany), and Rosanna Moser has been occurring for the past two years. Daniel is in the fifth generation after Jacob Steiner and Elisabeth Eichelberger. Jacob Steiner was the brother of Philippe Steiner, father of Katharina (Catherine) Steiner Moser (John), who arrived in Lewis County in 1848. Daniel began his genealogy research about 20 years ago and was unable to find much information about his ancestors in France. At a later date, he acquired much information in the article entitled "One Anabaptist Steiner Family at Strasbourg" by Neil Ann Stuckey Levine in *Mennonite Family History* (July 2005). Then in August 2012, he purchased *Strangers and Pilgrims* by Arlene Yousey through Amazon. In August 2014, he inquired with AMHA about the obtainment of the book that is referenced to in the following text in Arlene's book (page 313):

"Some information regarding the earlier life of the Steiners is revealed in a small, paper-covered book kept by daughter Katarina. This book, divided by decorative hand-printed title pages, contains first the popular songs of the day while the latter section contains farewell messages that Katarina dedicated to her friends at departure time and their farewell lines to her. Katarina, a gifted vocalist, spent many evenings under the moonlit skies boating on the Rhine with her friends singing these songs. The farewell messages spoke of the joyous youth in the rural setting of their village with much symbolism drawn from flowers and nature. They assured her that though mountains, oceans, and years would separate them, the familiar call of the nightingale down by the springhouse will always be a reminder of the wonderful past experiences together."

With the help of Virginia Moser, historian at Croghan Mennonite Church, the book was located in the church archives; and she graciously scanned the German cursive writing pages. The scanned (hundreds of pages) book was sent to Daniel Steiner in November 2014 for translation into English with help from a friend. As of June 2016, the completed bound book was in the AMHA archives. The book is available for anyone to read (appointment basis).

He was hoping to find more elements to recover the genealogy of his family. Upon completion, Daniel states the following: "Desolate, but texts are not from our great-great-grandmother, but copied out of another book or transmitted orally. Those are ancient popular songs among which some of Goethe, Schiller, and other German authors known of the 17th and 18<sup>th</sup> century. On the contrary, I was very surprised at the quality of the writing. At that time, many people could not write yet."

We are indebted to Daniel for his investment of time and interest to do the translation.





## Windows in the Barn

With the completion of the siding on the barn in Fall 2015, natural lighting was necessary for the upper loft. Therefore, four openings were made for new windows in Spring 2016.



## Why Compass Points in the Zwanzigstein Garden?

The Zwanzigstein Garden had compass points added to the garden early this summer. When one visits the garden, you enter at the main entrance, which is the east side. This is the direction from which the 20 families came for religious freedom and economic relief. After a period of time, the families scattered in other directions, that is, north, south, and west. A Purple Martin birdhouse was added to the garden in May.

## Visits at the Farm

About 35 members of the Elias and Martha Widrick Zehr family visited the Heritage Farm during their family reunion the weekend of July 8. Here is a family photo that was taken in the Zwanzigstein Garden (not all were present for the photo).



Front row (left to right): LaVerne Zehr Yoder, Eileen Zehr Lehman, Pauline Zehr Myers, and Margaret Zehr Gingerich.

Middle Row: Lee Yoder, Bonnie Zehr, Ralph and Betty Zehr, Elmer Lehman, Victoria Keener, Donna Zehr Keener, Mary Ann Zehr, Pearl Zehr, Debra Gingerich, Edwin and Rose Zehr.

Back Row: Kathryn Zehr, Elise Spedding, Emily Spedding, Ethan Zehr, Zvonko Smaltic, Justin Spedding, Emanuel Gingerich, Alyssa Gingerich Wellington, and Steve Gingerich.

In June of this year, a pamphlet for the “Lewis County Crusade for Christ” by Myron Augsburg held at Snow Ridge, Turin, in late Summer 1961 was given to AMHA. (Curator would appreciate donor’s name.) A photo of the tent meetings was put on display along with this pamphlet in the minister’s room. In August a visitor studied the pamphlet and shared enthusiastically with the curator that his conversion date was confirmed. This acknowledgment was truly inspiring that literature is being read by visitors, including the open Bible, hymnals, and other theology books in the parlor. Again, your donations are important to AMHA and do have an impact on the visitors.

## Congrats to Two Couples... Celebrated 70 Years of Marriage!

**MISS ARLENE NAFZIGER WED** *SAV*

**Lowville Girl Is Bride of Anthony Zehr, Croghan, in Mennonite Rites.**

Lowville, Sept. 4.—Miss Arlene Nafziger, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Nafziger, Lowville, became the bride of Anthony Zehr, son of Mr. and Mrs. Andrew B. Zehr, Croghan, at 11:30 a. m. Thursday, Aug. 22.

The ceremony was performed by Bishop C. M. Nafziger, grandfather of the bride at the Amish Mennonite church near Lowville.

The couple was attended by Miss Arletha Zehr, sister of the bridegroom and Alvin Roggie, cousin of the bridegroom, as maid of honor and best man. Miss Mary Nafziger, sister of the bride was bridesmaid and Elmer Nafziger, brother of the bride was usher.

A wedding dinner was served to 425 guests at the home of the bride's parents after the ceremony.

Mr. and Mrs. Zehr are taking a wedding trip through the New England states and Canada, after which they will reside on the farm of Mr. Zehr's parents where he is employed.



On Saturday, August 27, Anthony and Arlene Zehr celebrated their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a special family reunion at their sugar bush, Long Pond. The sugar bush is now owned by two sons, Joseph and Stephen. A chicken barbecue was enjoyed with approximately 180 family members (four grandchildren absent). A grandchild from Guatemala had traveled the farthest. Arlene's two sisters, Doris Nafziger Roggie (Merlin) and Mary Nafziger Roes, Nelson Roes (husband), and Carolyn Zehr (niece) were also in attendance at the gathering. Anthony's sister, Arletha Zehr Bender Yoder, and Arlene's brother, Elmer Nafziger, were unable to attend.

Anthony and Arlene have 11 children. They are as follows: Ivan, Melvin, Lois (Daniel), Darius (died at three years), Andrew B., Joseph, Stephen, James, Timothy, Ann (stillborn), and Eugene. They have a total of 56 grandchildren (one deceased) and 94 great-grandchildren (one deceased).

\* \* \*

In addition, there is another couple of Amish Mennonite background in Croghan who celebrated 70 years of marriage. They are Melvin Kipfer and Glenda Lehman Kipfer and were married on August 10, 1946, in the Beaver Falls parsonage. Melvin was originally from Clarence, NY, and also of Mennonite background. Glenda is the daughter of John Z. and Lovina Virkler Lehman. They have the following four children: Linda Kipfer Kuhl (Wendell), Stanley, Dayle, and Diane Kipfer Beller (Gary).



The year 1946 had 15 marriages in the Amish Mennonite church (Croghan or Lowville). Thanks to Mary Nafziger Roes (Nelson) for providing this list:

|              |                                    |
|--------------|------------------------------------|
| February 14  | Charles Wilcox and Viola Beller    |
| March 5      | Glenn Stalter and Marion Schaefer  |
| May 23       | Ben Yousey and Irene Widrick       |
| May 30       | Beryl Gingerich and Marion Jantzi  |
| June 5       | Clayton Yousey and Iva Yancey      |
| June 13      | Donald Schaefer and Ilona Zehr     |
| June 20      | Harold Lyndaker and Velma Zehr     |
| June 25      | John Lyndaker and Mary Roggie      |
| August 20    | Gilbert Lehman and Esther Roggie   |
| August 22    | Anthony Zehr and Arlene Nafziger   |
| September 11 | Elmer Yousey and Edna Roes         |
| October 1    | Norman Moshier and Irene Gingerich |
| October 9    | Maurice Roes and Rosella Yancey    |
| October 30   | Merrill Zehr and Eleanor Lyndaker  |
| December 12  | Gerald Yancey and Lena Lyndaker    |

## Painting

Eileen Zehr (wife of the late Rev. Richard Zehr) worked on a painting of the horse and sheep barn (1874 date on the barn) at the Zwanzigstein Fest. She recently completed the painting, which is hung in the parlor. Other paintings that she has donated include Steiner Mill and farm barn with its two bridges.



1874



2016

## Christmas Gift Ideas at the AMHA Gift Shop

New books in the gift shop this year are as follows:

*And Mommy Loved Me So* by Cindy Grau and Dawson Grau - \$9.95

*Jacob and Catherine Zehr Roggie History and Genealogy* by Arletha Zehr Bender Yoder - \$32.00 (**Special sale** - \$30.00 in November and December) – The new book is also available at the home of Arletha Yoder (376-6109) and Rosanna Moser (376-7822).

*Gettin' the Lead Out - A Study of American Primitive Bullet and Shot Bags* by Karl Z. Smith - (**Sale price** - \$10.00)

A new order of Zwanzigstein Fest T-shirts with the 20 family names has arrived at the gift shop. Choice of colors is blue and green at \$13.



## Thank You!

- Over 20 Naumburg Mennonite youth, 3 couples, and their children came to the Heritage Farm on Friday evening, May 6. The youth and sponsors helped in cleaning the house, washed house and barn windows, and moved old boards out of the barn upper loft and other artifacts at the farm.
- Dawn Noftsier Roes and her granddaughter, Emma Waugh, did a majority of the displays in the house.
- Lewis County Social Services provided youth volunteers (8) on two occasions in August who did a variety of outside work, such as backfilled south foundation wall to the house, removed bark from fence posts, and excavated rock, soil, and debris from pig/chicken building (below granary).
- Beaver River Central School students (11) plus teacher worked Thursday, October 13, on shoveling mud and dirt from the pig/chicken building in preparation for a gravel floor.

## Donations

An animal treadmill (believe powered by a horse for use with threshing machines) was surprisingly found in the barn on Waters Road in August. The barn is owned by Brookside Senior Living Community. (This barn was demolished and burned in September.)

The treadmill of approximately 150 to 170 years was donated to AMHA and appears to be in good condition.



It is planned to have the treadmill in operation for demonstration.

Other donations to the farm are as follows: filing cabinets (2), John Deere lawn mower (2002), butter churn, oil lamps (4), three-ring notebooks, serving tray, teapot, shop light, bulletin boards (2), refrigerator, freezer, stove, gas grill, and children's table and chairs (4).

## Wish List

For use at the farm: two-wheel trailer or hay wagon, milking machine, antique china hutch, and monetary donations for pop-up tents.

Gift shop: homemade textiles, such as doilies, quilts, table place settings, and table runners, and used nonfiction Christian and children's books.

## Quilting Bee

To climax the display of **Warmth, Remembrance, and Art: 200 Years of Quilts and Comforters in Northern New York** at TAUNY, Canton, Jill Breit, executive director, extended an invitation to the Mennonite Heritage Farm to invite Lewis County Mennonite church sewing circles for a quilting bee to tie the "30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Signature Quilt" at TAUNY. Through the curator's office, arrangements were made to have four women do a full demonstration for the tying of the signature quilt on Saturday, October 22. Several visitors were excited to have a first-hand experience of learning to tie a knot. Individuals who assisted in this project were Rosanna Moser, Susan Moser, Elizabeth Steria, and Lois Zehr. To see photos of the quilting bee, you may visit <https://flic.kr/s/aHskGIGDiK>.

## Correction in Fall 2015 Newsletter

Milford and Carolyn Zehr Lyndaker live in West Virginia, not Virginia. They donated a large, homemade dollhouse, which is on display in the large bedroom upstairs.

**FOR SALE:** If you are interested in a used General Electric stove (one burner does not work), please call Bernadine at 376-2792.

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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