



# Notes from the Farm

Volume 29 Issue 2

November 2019

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## Chairperson's Report

By Bernadine Schwartzentruber

As 2019 draws to a close, a look at the year's projects and programs at the Mennonite Heritage Farm is in order.

### Projects

House Renovation. The north side of the house was resided and new window frames were installed on the first floor by the beginning of September. Throughout the next several years, roller window shades with UV protection will be installed for the majority of the windows. We began with the windows (3) in the gift shop.

Rail Fencing. A split rail fence is being built along the path that leads to the woods. Rails that were stored in the barn loft are being used.

Granary. The drainage issue has been addressed and tightly packed gravel now covers the ground surface in the lower level of the granary. This area was used for the first time at Z Fest for storytelling.

Water Well Liner. The replacement of the water well liner with a 36" diameter culvert-style liner was installed the end of October.

Artifact Displays. Several displays have been improved throughout the season, which has been a great savings through the efforts of some board members and very much appreciated. They are as follows:

- An attractive white display board on the south wall of the upper loft barn featuring haying tools and small equipment.
- A poster display bulletin board for the Jeff-Lewis Mennonite churches (12) was rebuilt with Plexiglas cover in the "ministers' room."
- A small wall display case was constructed for centrifuge supplies in the milk house. The items were donated by Emanuel Gingerich.



- Zwanzigstein Garten. Landscaping edging was completed for the garden to separate the gravel and lawn around the outer perimeter.

## Major Programs/Events

A brief review of the programs, number of visitors to the farm, and events held at the farm and off-site for 2019 is as follows:

Annual meeting in April that featured a John Ruth documentary.

- 430 29<sup>th</sup> Annual Zwanzigstein Fest in July with guests from Bellze, Wales, Canada, Arizona, Georgia, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, and Virginia.
- 220 Visitors between May and October at the Heritage Farm, including six group appointments, one of which was a group from Switzerland who gave a concert with six alphorns (6) and flugelhorns in May at the Naumburg Mennonite Church.
- 135 Special events at the farm includes an outdoor hymn singing, children's fine arts and fiber arts faires sponsored by Stewart's Shops, and neighborhood appreciation picnic.
- 125 Autumn Celebration (Fall Foliage Tour and quilt display of 30 years or older).
- 72 BRCS first graders and home school field trip visitors.

Booth tables at the Beaver Camp auction, Harvest of the Arts at Maple Ridge Center, and Christmas in Croghan.

Legacy 500 (two weekends—July and October)

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AMHA notes with sadness the passing of Tim Rhubart. For many years, he bought our antiques and operated the booth at Z Fest.

## Curator's Notes

By Rosanna M. Moser

AMHA acknowledges the donation of Harold Widrick's Part II book that was on the "Wish List" in the spring newsletter. We also received a large number of the *Church & Sunday School Hymnal* songbooks, a canopy, and varied small tools.

The archival office uses the following board policy for the basis of deeded donations:

Collections shall be primary 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 (19<sup>th</sup>) century.

Items for collection shall be considered on the following hierarchical documentary bases with 1. being of first importance and 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 1.
3. Connection with later Amish Mennonite settlers in Lewis County during the remainder of the nineteenth century to the present day.

4. Connection with other settlers in Lewis County in the same time period as in 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 mid- to late-nineteenth century Mennonite households to the present day.

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

On behalf of AMHA, we greatly appreciate the artifacts donated to AMHA in the past and present. Each artifact has its own number that includes a written description, historical background, and photo(s). A listing of acquisitions catalogued this year will be noted in the Spring 2020 newsletter.

Please call the curator in advance of dropping off artifacts at the Heritage Farm. We prefer that artifacts not be left at the farm without our knowledge.

## **Immigrant Family Recognition**

This was the first year that the Zwanzigstein Fest recognized an immigrant family and likewise will continue to focus annually on a family in the order of its arrival to Lewis County. Michael and Anna Jantzi Zehr and their ten children arrived in New York City on June 19, 1833. He was also one of the first ministers in the Amish Mennonite church community.

The archival office devoted one of the seasonal displays to the past Zehr ministers. The display case in the “minister’s room” consisted of some Zehr heirloom Bibles, Joseph J. Zehr’s *Ausbund*, and sermon notes from some of the ministry.

Michael Zehr	Possibly a deacon in France, 1852-1862
Joseph J. Zehr	1909, deacon; 1917, minister; 1943-1944, bishop
Elias Zehr	1943-1970, minister
Richard Zehr	1952-1963, minister; 1963-1999, bishop of Conservative Mennonite churches and Woodville Mennonite Church; 1999-2002, pastor at Croghan Mennonite Church
Vernon Zehr	1963-1998, pastor at Pine Grove Mennonite Church
Earl Zehr	1970-1995, pastor at Carthage Mennonite Church

Here are some selected excerpts from sermon notes or a note within the Bible:

Elias Zehr...1948--”Death is an enemy which under the providence of God has been turned into a blessing.”  
GRACE – G = Gift (Eph. 2:8); R = Redemption (Titus 2:14) Regeneration (Rom. 3:25); A = Access to God (Eph. 2:18); C = Christian character and conduct, a new creature; E = Eternity with Christ (Titus 2:13).

Richard Zehr...First sermon given at Croghan Mennonite Church on September 14, 1952, was on the topic of “Self-denial.” Text was Matthew 16:24. Concluding statement was “As time goes on, self-denial will prove to be but an exchange of earth for heaven.”

Vernon Zehr...”Character is what we are when no one else is around. Silence is the only thing that can’t be misquoted. Life is a process. In it we cannot relive, but we can rebuild.”

Earl Zehr...dated October 22, 1972, at Carthage...Text of sermon was the parable of the “Great Supper” in Luke 14. ”They that would not have Christ when they may, shall not have him when they would.”

# AUTUMN CELEBRATION AT THE HOMESTEAD

By Janet Zehr

Early on Saturday morning, October 5, there was a flurry of activity at the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Farm on the Erie Canal Road. For several months, we had been planning an “Autumn Celebration” in conjunction with the Lewis County Fall Foliage Tour. A quilt show featuring handmade quilts 30 years and older was the main attraction, along with free popcorn, cider, pumpkins, and apple pie slices with cheese for purchase. To round out the program, there were demonstrations of corn shelling, woodworking, cider pressing, loom weaving, and the Market Place featuring gently used items. The house was open for tours along with the gift shop.

A couple weeks before the event, three 60’ cables had been fastened in the lower barn. Requests had been circulated in the community for quilts 30+ years to be loaned for display. A total of 42 quilts had been received from 23 donors. All quilts were labeled with owner’s name and interesting details and carefully clothes pinned to the cables and covered with plastic sheets. Because there was a lack of room, only 35 of the 42 could be displayed. The oldest adult quilt displayed was handcrafted in 1903 (see photo at right) and loaned for the day by a great niece and also a baby quilt made in 1882. In the barn loft, the Market Place was arranged and a number of new quilts for sale were hung on a cable.



By 10 o’clock the popcorn was popping, cider press was humming, pumpkins all arranged on the edge of the barn bridges, and the apple pie cut and waiting on plates. Visitors began to come, wandering around the grounds, and enjoying walking through the barn viewing the beautiful display of quilts. The popcorn and cider were enjoyed and children chose their own pumpkin. Several visitors took advantage of the beautiful autumn day and ate their apple pie in the Zwanzigstein Garten.

Events like this require many volunteers before the event and also on the day of the event. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped to make this first-time “Autumn Celebration” a success.

\* \* \*

As quilt making is something I enjoy very much, I was interested in going to the quilt display at the Mennonite Heritage Farm.

The legacy of quilt making within our Mennonite community made a very special display. I observed what I would call some of the oldest quilts that were certainly made for warmth and comfort for our North winters. Fabric was pieces of this and that...probably cut from less worn areas of a garment and certainly not from fabric bought special for the quilt. The subdued colors were very characteristic of the times. Quilts were mainly tied with yarn. I observed one quilt with very short ties, which probably was intentional to save yarn for the next quilt.

One thing that surprised me was the number of quilts that were quilted...some with small, even stitches and some with longer stitches that is typically called the long stitch. I was not aware that quilting was done that much in that time period.

My sincere thanks to all who worked hard to present this vintage quilt display for us to enjoy and learn from it. Well done!

by Phyllis Lyndaker

## Harvest Memories

By Rosanna M. Moser

As we are nearing the closure of the fall harvest, the curator came across a *Watertown Daily Times* newspaper clipping entitled “The Life Story of Joseph Steria, 80, Kirschnerville” by Ernest G. Cook in an archival collection that Nathan Zehr deeded to the archives, which he found in his former store in Croghan. The article was also published on pp. 413-414 in Arlene Yousey’s book, *Strangers and Pilgrims*.

Here is an excerpt from the article that Joe Steria reported in 1931 to Ernest Cook:



When I first came here, we cut all of our grain with the scythe. I started farming with only four cows and made the milk up at home. Later they built a cheese factory at Kirschnerville. I drew milk there as soon as I had a dairy large enough to make it pay. Some of the seasons I think I received as low as .45 cents per hundred for my milk.

Speaking of cutting grain with a cradle, reminds me that we often used to form “bees” to cut the grain, a group working together. I was said to be one of the best cradlers in the lot and I used to enjoy cradling grain. I remember once of being asked by a neighbor to come and cut his grain with the cradle and I cut 18 acres with the cradle and I cut 18 acres in eight days. He gave me \$1.50 per acre and I thought it was unheard of wealth.

At a recent Sunday evening church service at Naumburg Mennonite on October 6, Levi Zehr spoke about harvest memories. Here is a selected portion of what he stated:

Oh yes, what about all the second cutting yet to do. Build a fence around it and turn the cows in (right?). Well, it might be time now to reap that oats. It doesn’t have to stand there as long if you were to combine. The reaper tied it in bundles and kicked them on the ground. Just make sure the twine keeps there or they will not be tied. The bundles were stooked and butts on ground and heads up to let dry four to ten days so they threshed cleaner. My Dad bought his own threshing machine, and my brother and I did some custom threshing for the neighbors. When the time came, it was usually in August. The neighbors helped each other. It took four teams of horses, four men to pitch the bundles on the wagons placed by the teamster, two men at the machine, one tended the bagger, and the other helped unload. The machine had a counter on it so when the dry oats came sliding down the shoot and filled the bag, trip the handle over the other side, someone else was there to take it away while you put another bag on. You knew the numbers of bags he got. We got probably 10 cents a bag... that was our pay. But at that threshing time, we had 12 farmers that we threshed for. We got them all threshed and finished on August 15. Once there was a tent meeting (Myron Augsburger) in the community from August 27 to September 10, 1961. We must have had better weather back then.

We also had the corn ensilage cutter to fill the silos and that was done with the exchange of help with the neighbors. They didn’t wait for the corn to mature like they do now. I remember coming home from school shortly after it started, and they were blowing corn at our next door neighbors. We had two neighbors that both wanted to be first. So Dad had to settle that. He told them they had to alternate one year to the next.

Most usually each farmer had about eight acres of corn to fill silo 12’ x 40.’ If we get started around nine o’clock, we could fill the silo by quitting time...that was hard work all day long. But we always got a good dinner from the farmer’s wife. They were good cooks. Sometimes we had to refill afterwards to get the corn all in, even used snow fences sometimes.

At the conclusion of Levi’s talk, the congregation sang “All the Way My Saviour Leads Me,” at his request.

## Legacy 500

By Norman Moshier

*Listen to me, you who pursue righteousness and who seek the LORD: look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn...Isaiah 51:1*

In July, Paul Zehr was the first in a series of guest speakers in an extended program sponsored by the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association. This unique program is intended to make available resources to deepen our knowledge of Anabaptist/Mennonite history and thought as we approach our 500-year anniversary in 2025. Your engagement in this series will open you to a wealth of historical, spiritual, and practical understandings.

Paul spoke three evenings at Croghan Mennonite Church using the title “Roots and Wings.” His talks focused on the period from 1900 until today. In Lewis County we have moved from a single group that met in homes to 12 congregations with various parachurch organizations. He began by asking two basic overarching questions: “What was God doing then and now?” and “What is the meaning of history?”

He divided the 120 years into three periods as outlined below and addressed them in three successive evenings.

1900-1960 – “INSIDE LOOKING OUT – Us vs. Them” – Much of the period was dominated by issues surrounding separation and nonconformity. In 1944, H. S. Bender published *The Anabaptist Vision*. Based on his historical studies, Bender concluded that the Anabaptist vision included three major points of emphasis: 1) A new conception of the essence of Christianity as discipleship, 2) A new conception of the church as brotherhood, and 3) A new ethic of love and nonresistance.

1960-1990 – “THE INWARD JOURNEY – Establishing Roots” – H. S. Bender’s work created a revolution in the Mennonite church and ushered in an era of new historical studies in sixteenth century Anabaptism. The writings of John Howard Yoder, in particular, opened the door of Anabaptism to the entire world.

1990-2019 – “THE OUTWARD JOURNEY – Finding Wings” – This period focused on Anabaptism in the mainstream, the globalization of Anabaptist thinking and theology, and the rise of the church in the global south.

The takeaway from this presentation led directly into the topic of the second speaker, C. Arnold Snyder, from Waterloo, Ontario, who addressed the following questions: “What are the foundations of Anabaptist spirituality? What is it that undergirds the visible life of our beginnings which we have discovered?”

\* \* \*

Recordings of these programs are available. In addition, the following excellent books by C. Arnold Snyder are available at a discount: *Following the Footsteps of Christ* (\$12) and *From Anabaptist Seed* (\$9.50). A book by Palmer Becker entitled *Anabaptist Essentials* (\$8) is also available. Please call 315-376-7822 or email [info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com](mailto:info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com) to obtain the book(s).

The next speaker is Walfred Fahrer (author of *Building on the Rock* and counselor), which is tentatively planned for April 19-21, 2020.



## CHILDREN'S FAIRES

In August the Mennonite Heritage Farm hosted two children's faires that were sponsored by Stewart's Shops. We are very thankful for the moneys received to offset the expenses of materials, stipends for instructors, and food.

With the growing interest of children attending the painting class (Fourth Fine Arts), we had two classes (morning and afternoon for a three-hour duration) with a total of 29 children painting various scenes or artifacts seen at the Mennonite Heritage Farm. Jennifer Wright was the art instructor along with Taine Millward as an assistant.

The Fiber Arts class was a full-day session and the 21 children in attendance had a choice of crocheting, embroidery, or knitting. Embroidery was a new choice and had the largest class of 12 students with LeEtta Widrick and Carolyn Zehr (Norman) as instructors. Other instructors were Alayna (Sabsutch) Jantzi for crocheting, and Priscilla Lyndaker and Loretta Moser for knitting. We look forward to offering these choices another year. In addition, we are planning to offer a full-day woodworking class.





## Why Become an AMHA Member and/or What are the Benefits?

- To affirm and support the preservation of our Mennonite heritage, to share our unique Christian faith story, and to keep intact artifacts of the Lewis-Jefferson County Amish Mennonite settlement.
- To receive the annual *Plowman's Journal* and *Notes from the Farm* (twice a year).
- To afford a 10 percent discount on books and merchandise at the Heritage Farm.
- To have voting privileges at the annual meeting.
- To be assured of great fellowship and bond of working together in the fulfillment of enlightening future generations.

You may obtain an application for membership online at <http://mennoniteheritagefarm.com/post.php?pid=10> or from the president, treasurer, or the gift shop.



### Trivia Photos?

Answer in spring newsletter.



## End-of-Year Gift Giving

By Bernadine Schwartzentruber

Thanks to all who are supporting our "20 for 10 Fund" that largely replaces our frequent bake sales. The purpose of the "20 for 10 Fund" is to establish a support base committed to help offset heat, utilities, and insurance. The fund enlists committed people to pay \$20/month for 10 months per year. Participants can choose their months for payment.

A new fund called the "Parking Lot/Driveway Fund" has been started to pay for a parking lot and complete a driveway loop. At this time, the fund has \$2,500. Z Fest guests who dealt with the rainy afternoon event this year know how much a parking lot is needed!

Thanks to all who give to our Partnership Fund. The fund generates about 30 percent of our annual income.

Over \$20,000 is now set aside for a future Endowment Fund. We encourage you to consider making arrangements for how your estate will be handled as well as a place to contribute your sizeable donations.

You may send checks to Mennonite Heritage Association, Donald Roggie, Treasurer, 4491 Boshart Road, Lowville, NY 13367.

Your ideas for programs and events are always appreciated. Thank you for your prayers, encouragement, and financial support.



## Website

More information has been posted at [www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com) that includes the following:

- Newsletters from 1991 to the present. (See *News*.)
- Manifests—immigrant passenger lists and translates. (See the details and the family links under *Resources*.)
- Darryl Widrick's Genealogy Blog. (See *Resources*.)

## Winter

Go down a hill,  
One nice day.  
By the mill  
And find the way.

Written by Kathleen Marie Lehman (Moser), 1943



### Gift Shop – Christmas Suggestions

You may visit [www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com) to get a complete listing of books and DVDs. Here is a selected list with some of the books at a discounted price:

*One Step at a Time – Our Missionary Pilgrimage* (SALE price of \$10) by Elmer and Eileen Lehman.

*Jacob and Catherine Zehr Roggie – History and Genealogy* (SALE price of \$30) by Arletha Zehr Bender-Yoder.

*Strangers and Pilgrims: History of Lewis County Mennonites* (SALE price of \$40) by Arlene Yousey.

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

The books will be available at "Christmas in Croghan" on Friday evening, December 6. If you are interested in purchasing a book(s), you may call 315-376-7822 or email [info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com](mailto:info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com).

## Wish List

AMHA would appreciate the following items: wooden office desk, large vacuum machine, and a tractor-pulled eight-passenger narrow wagon. The archival office would be interested in obtaining photos of women and/or men working with quilts/comforters in the 1900s. It can be from the beginning stages of cutting blocks, sewing, tying knots/quilting, etc.

Donations to fund the following project in the archival area: a pull-out work counter for textiles.

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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