



# Notes from the Farm

Volume 30 Issue 2

November 2020

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## Chairperson's Report

By Bernadine Schwartzentruber

In spite of this “topsy-turvy” situation in which we find ourselves, the mission and vision of AMHA remains the same. The mission of AMHA is to collect, record, interpret, and share the cultural heritage of the Anabaptists of northern New York from the 1830s to the present.

And that mission continues with the dedicated work of our archival staff and volunteers. Quite a bit of their work is being done from their homes. We have had some visitors this year (usually by appointment). Although our programming is on “pause,” the AMHA board continues to conduct business as needed.

AMHA is more than the Heritage Farm at Kirschnerville. Of course, the Mennonite Heritage Farm is the visible and tangible component that requires attention and care to keep ahead of weathering and the passage of time.

A big “thank you” goes to Neil Keib for going ahead with installing windows and building an entrance door in the bottom level of the granary.

The vision of AMHA is more of an intangible idea that dwells in the hearts and minds of our supporters. It is what compels us to create programming and events that endeavor to tell the story of our ancestors’ faith journeys and experiences as they settled in “this howling wilderness” so many years ago.

In addition, the vision of AMHA also points us to the present and future. We learn from the past to guide our lives right now, especially in these new uncertain times.

## AMHA 2020 Vision

Our “AMHA 2020 Vision” capital project has been pushed into 2021 because the contractor has experienced delays with a current job. So, on a positive note, this allows more time to raise funds. In late summer “AMHA 2020 Vision” donation cards were put in church mailboxes. So, just a gentle reminder... if you overlooked or set your card aside, please send a donation now at this end-of-the-year giving time.

## Supporting AMHA

We have lost revenues because of cancelled events, but our fixed expenses remain. To support our various funds such as Endowment, Partnership, 20 for 10, and AMHA 2020 Vision, please contact Don Roggie, treasurer.

Thanks to all who supported our recent ham loaf fundraiser. Programming plans are still uncertain for 2021 at this time.

A reminder to those who have access to retirement funds that the “Required Minimum Distribution” can be automatically transferred from your fund to AMHA tax free as a “Qualified Charitable Distribution.” It must go directly from the retirement fund to the nonprofit.

We thank you for your prayers and financial support during these challenging times.

## Visitors at the Farm

By Rosanna M. Moser

The Mennonite Heritage Farm is pleased that we had a number of visitors between June and October. Some of them were by appointment and others came on days that the Mennonite Heritage Farm was open (Wednesday). A group of 16 members from the Adirondack Architectural Heritage, Keeseville, NY, spent some time at the farm on Tuesday, June 30, and also visited historic sites in the village of Croghan.

Other visitors (33) came from Pennsylvania, New York City, Long Island, and Louisiana. The majority of them were camping in the region and looking for sites to visit. In late October, a student enrolled in a community college in New Orleans and visiting in the Watertown area requested an interview with AMHA to discuss cultures, beliefs, and practices of the Mennonite community. She chose this topic for an assignment in an interpersonal communications class. The three-hour interview was a fruitful experience to talk about our Christian faith and heritage pilgrimage. In addition, many artifacts were shown, such as hymnals (*Ausbund*, *Church & Sunday School*, *Life Song*, *Mennonite Hymnal*, *Christian Hymnal*, etc), *Confession of Faith* books, clothing, etc. We look forward to receiving a copy of the student’s paper for the archives.

## Music Library Collection

The archival office is very interested in collecting stereo records, 8 track tapes, and cassette tapes of the Choraleers directed by Arnold Moshier between the 1970s and 1990s.

We are pleased that 10 stereo record albums have been donated and request the following three stereo records: *Another Oasis*, *Music*, *God’s Magic Link*, and *The Song of the Tree*. The Choraleers also had 8 tracks for a short season. Finally, 21 cassette tapes were produced with some overlapping of the stereo records. Maietta Moshier (wife of Arnold) donated the following cassette tapes (11):

|                        |  |
|------------------------|--|
| <i>A Time to Sing</i>  | <i>You are Worthy</i>                    |
| <i>Part the Waters</i> | <i>Encore</i>                            |
| <i>Celebrate Life</i>  | <i>Music, God’s Magic Link</i>           |
| <i>In Focus</i>        | <i>When Thou Walkest</i>                 |
| <i>Christmas</i>       | <i>Lord, Take The Hand Of This Child</i> |
| <i>All the Glory</i>   |  |

We welcome any other cassette tapes that you may have in your possession not on this list and are willing to donate to have the music collection complete. The cassette tapes presently in the library have been copied onto CDs and will be available for sale upon request.

## Travel from Home

TRAVEL with TourMagination as it continues its virtual museum and archive tours in January and February 2021. Archivists and executive directors from Anabaptist and Mennonite museums, archives, and heritage centers in the USA and Canada show unique artifacts, photos, and documents as they share part of the Anabaptist story. One must register with Zoom to select the presentations interested in attending. Please visit <https://www.tourmagination.com/vtour-2/> for more information.

## "Blast from the Past"

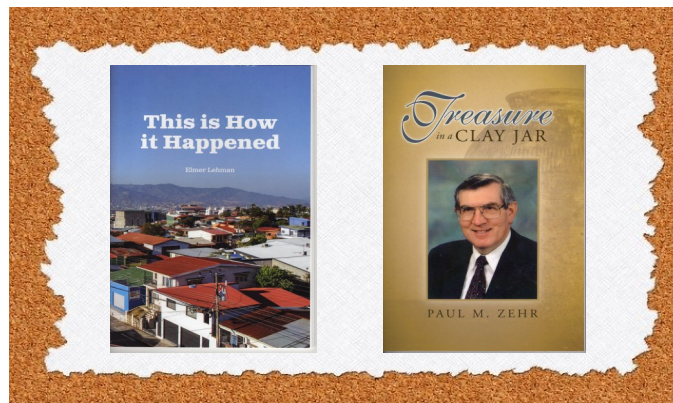
WATERTOWN, N.Y. (WWNY) - On this week's "Blast from the Past," we go back to 2001 for a story of hope and help to keep people warm in the winter.

Here is the address to view the video clip that was on the WWNY-TV station Friday evening, November 13, 2020: <https://www.wwnytv.com/2020/11/13/blast-past-quilt-making/>

## Gift Shop Books

Though the gift shop at the Mennonite Heritage Farm is closed, there are many books available for Christmas gifts. You may view a complete listing of books available at [www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com) and place an order at [info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com](mailto:info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com) or call 315-376-7822.

In particular, two authors originally from Lewis County (Elmer Lehman and Paul M. Zehr) published the following books this year:



We also have a good supply of the following:

*Generation to Generation*: The keepsake book consists of old-time recipes, remedies, and sayings from the local Mennonite community.

*Genealogy of Christian Lehman and Mary B. Zehr* by Janice Crofoot

*One Step at a Time - Our Missionary Pilgrimage* by Elmer & Eileen Lehman

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

*Strangers and Pilgrims - History of Lewis County Mennonites* by Arlene Yousey

*Simple Servants: The Story of the Lewis County Mennonites* (DVD) by Dawson Grau



The poem "True Evangelical Faith" is based on a 1539 writing by Dutch Anabaptist leader Menno Simons. Norman and Phyllis Lyndaker donated the plaque, which is hung in the parlor. On many occasions, visitors will comment on the meaningful poem. This is another opportunity to talk about our Christian faith during the tour.

# Granary Restoration

By F. Neil Keib

One of the earliest structures to be erected at the Mennonite Heritage Farm is the existing granary. The granary, built in 1845, consisted of a two-story structure. On the ground level was the “chicken coop/pig pen.” The upper level consisted of a wood shop and an area for grain storage (wheat, oats, etc.). The building of approximately 25’ x 25’ has foundation walls 2’ thick. It is believed the stone for the walls came from clearing the adjacent woods while making crop lands.



It is believed that in the 1920s the blacksmith shop was converted to a two-stall garage to accommodate the addition of motorized vehicles on the farm. From that time forward, no additions or alterations were added other than installing electric lights and a few convenience outlets.

By the late 1990s, the foundation walls were in disrepair; and by 2010 the time had come to either tear the granary down or rebuild the foundation wall. It was a unanimous decision by the Board of Directors to rebuild the foundation wall. The crumbling wall was first shored up until funds were secured and a contractor selected. In late Fall 2013, the construction of the foundation wall began and was completed in January 2014. In Summer 2014, a new drainage system was installed between the granary and the garage to alleviate the excess water from the roofs of the two buildings which caused the walls to fail.

The next big issue to be addressed in the granary was that of removing approximately 2 feet of debris left over from the rebuilt foundation. This work was all pick and shovel work and with the gracious help of a few local youth groups, the debris was removed a year or so later.

In 2017 work began on installing an underdrain system in the lower part of the granary. Three trenches were dug by hand, pipe installed with stone backfill, vapor barrier installed, and a 5” stone layer was placed.



Most recently (Fall 2020) five new windows (two-unit) with screens were installed, and one window (two-unit) was refurbished and reinstalled with a screen in the lower level of the granary. In addition to the new windows, a small “chicken door” was replaced. This door (approximately 18" x 18"), from what I have been told, was to allow the chickens to go in or out as they pleased. A small pole (ladder) was placed on the inside and outside to allow the chickens access

and would discourage predators (foxes, coyotes, and weasels) from raiding the nests, destroying the eggs, and killing the chickens. Finally, a pair of new exterior doors has been installed in the lower level of the granary. The lower level is now ready to be transformed back to its original layout, namely nesting boxes, roosting areas, and pig pens.



In the next few years, additional work will be needed on the granary. This work includes the following:

- Residing the south and east walls.
- New windows and door on the upper level.
- New overhead doors (2).
- Paint building.

AMHA is most appreciative to everyone who has donated to our restoration projects in the past, and it is hopeful everyone will continue to do so for our future projects.

# Roots of the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association

1989-2019 – 30 Years

Since the observance of the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Lewis County Mennonites in May 1983 at the Croghan Mennonite Church, interest developed in having the Menno Moser property on the Erie Canal Road preserved for a historical museum. The buildings (granary, house, and barn) were the most original of any in the community to reflect the style of living of the early Amish Mennonites. In addition, the pioneer John Moser homestead was one of several homes within the larger brotherhood that came together for worship services. The services were followed by a light fellowship meal of homemade bread/butter, pies, cookies, etc., for over 75 years.



Menno was a grandson of the pioneer John Moser who originally settled on the property in the mid-1840s. The youngest living son of John and Katarina (Catherina) Steiner Moser, Philip and his wife Katie Roggie Moser, owned the farm after his parents were deceased in January 1901. Philip and Katie were married in October 1885 and were dwelling in the three-generation home. Two single sons of Philip and Katie, Joseph and Menno, operated the farm until their mother died in 1944 and then they became the owners. After Joseph died of a heart attack in 1956, Menno became the last owner of the small dairy farm. After Menno suffered a brainstem stroke in October 1982, the property was vacated. His youngest single sister, Veronica, was unable to live alone at the home and therefore moved to Steepleview Court, Croghan, for a period of time. Menno and Veronica died within six months of each other in 1988, March and August, respectively.

Over the years of Menno's stay in the nursing home (Lowville), he periodically would talk with Arlene Yousey, niece and executrix, about the status of his finances. After consultation with his attorney, Menno decided in November 1987 that an auction was necessary. Arlene and her sister Ellen started the organization of an auction for the spring. (Due to Menno's death in March 1988, the auction sale was temporarily halted. There were two auction dates with the nephews and nieces on October 15, 1988, and July 1, 1989.) With the property disintegrating, especially a large portion of the barn stone wall, Arlene was eager to unload the property. At a prior date, Dale Moser, nephew of Menno, had made known interest to his Uncle Menno of buying the property. The entire property was deeded to Dale and Donna Moser on May 30, 1989.

Phyllis (Lehman) Lyndaker, niece of Menno Moser and past president of AMHA, writes the following:

“It was approximately 1988 that two nieces simultaneously gave serious thought to the future of the Moser farm property. It had not been lived in for six years and was deteriorating. Were we going to let this historic property deteriorate or was there a possibility that it could become a museum to emphasize the faith values and simple lifestyle of the Mosers who had occupied the home continuously for three generations? With no basic changes to the buildings since construction in the 1850s and 1870s, it was one of the oldest homesteads in the area. This ‘not just another museum’ would be connected to our Mennonite heritage. There was a sense of feeling from the Lord that the home could be used to preserve history and to share our faith story.”

As stated earlier, discussion was occurring over the years for a home to preserve our Anabaptist heritage. In early 1988, serious discussion among the Mennonite community occurred with the ministerial leadership (Richard Zehr, bishop) for a historic museum. Subsequently, interest was ascertained through a questionnaire, discussions and meetings addressing financial and legal concerns, an open house with interested community individuals, and meetings with other historic museum representatives. On June 13, 1988, at the

Croghan Mennonite Church, a decision was made, with about 90 people in attendance, to not have the Moser property as a church project for a historic site. On the following day, Richard Zehr called Norman Moshier, and possibly other individuals, and encouraged him and interested people to keep working on this project. Dale Moser was also consulted and likewise willing to continue discussions.

An ad hoc committee was formed on July 3, 1988, consisting of Eunice Jantzi, Luella Moshier, Norman Moshier, and Evan Zehr. At this meeting, there was a pledged commitment of \$20,000 from the interested people and also to move forward with the legal process to incorporate as a nonprofit organization.

On July 25, 1989, the interested group met again (multiple meetings and correspondence to the Mennonite churches in the interim) at the Croghan Mennonite Church. The decision to purchase 87 acres at \$40,000 was agreed plus the adoption of the Adirondack Mennonite Heritage Association, Inc. The following statement was also formed: "The purpose of the corporation is to (a) preserve our Mennonite heritage (based in its Anabaptist origin of 1525), (b) share our unique Christian faith story with our world, and (c) keep intact artifacts of the North Country Amish Mennonite settlement."

The Board of Directors elected at this meeting consisted of the following individuals: Norman Moshier, Luella Moshier, and Pat Falton (three-year term); Donald and Carolyn Henry and Eunice Jantzi (two-year term); and Ralph Taube, Evan Zehr, and Pearl Zehr (one-year term).

Following the meeting, the Board met to elect officers. The first officers were Norman Moshier, president; Eunice Jantzi, vice president; Donald Henry, secretary; and Carolyn Henry, treasurer. Memberships were received at this meeting, and the bylaws were also accepted by the group.

By the end of 1989, AMHA had received \$16,578.80 in contributions from its membership and a donation of \$355.80 from Lowville Mennonite Church. A purchase offer of \$40,000 was accepted by Dale Moser in February 1990 and the closing in June 1990. A check for \$17,067.58 was sent to Ned Merrill, III to purchase the property with the remaining amount borrowed from Mennonite Mutual Aid at 8 percent interest. Homer Myers was instrumental in making this loan available due to the fact that AMHA was not a legal entity as yet. The full amount of \$40,000 was debt free ten years later (2000).

By Rosanna M. Moser

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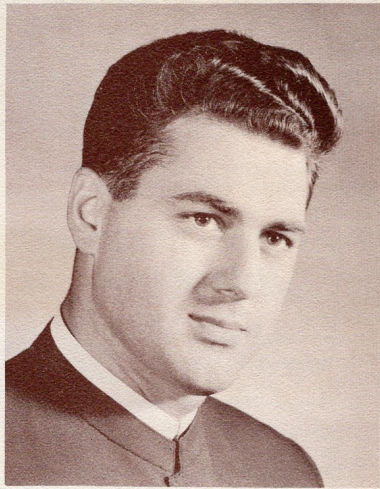
## **Tent Evangelism – Lewis County**

By Bernice Zehr

"We are tenting tonight on the old camp grounds..." Speaking of tent meetings usually brings a note of nostalgia and memory of new beginnings. Our local Mennonite churches had the privilege of hosting four times during a 22-year period.

The first tent revival was held in 1952 with Andrew Jantzi from Buffalo as speaker and combined with the Conservative Amish Mennonite Conference. As host church for conference, Andrew's tent provided additional space. Conference was held at the Croghan Amish Conservative Mennonite Church from August 18-22. Clean up day was on Saturday, August 23, and revival services followed Sunday, August 24, through Sunday, August 30. On Monday, September 1, the tent was taken down.

Ordination services for pastoral leadership then followed at the Croghan church from Tuesday, September 2, through Friday, September 5. On Sunday evening, September 7, conference pastors Emmanuel Peachey (Belleville, PA), and Emmanuel Swartzentruber (Pigeon, MI) led the ordination service. The following ordinations occurred that evening: Andrew Gingerich, bishop, and Donald Jantzi, pastor for Woodville Mennonite Church; Leon Martin and Richard Zehr, pastors for the Lowville and Croghan congregations. It was a very full three weeks.



*Hear!*

## MYRON AUGSBURGER

LEWIS COUNTY CRUSADE FOR CHRIST

August 27 — September 10 1961

7:30 NIGHTLY

IN THE BIG CRUSADE TENT — 2000 SEATS

AT SNOW RIDGE, TURIN

SING WITH STRAT SHUFELT AND THE  
GREAT CRUSADE CHOIR . . . .

Reminiscing...Several people recall the Gingerich sisters from Ohio singing in a quartet and providing “a wonderful blend.” The loud speaker system was set up so one could also hear well outside the tent. Gladys Moshier recalls an evening when her husband Floyd was not feeling well; “so he parked the car near the tent, and we were able to enjoy the service.” A like scenario presented for my family as we children were engulfed with chicken pox. Savilla (age 7), recalls on the last Sunday evening that I was mostly healed, and Mom wanted me to be a part of the big tent service, so Mom and Savilla sat near the back of the tent. Dad took his turn sitting in the car with Evan (age 3) and Bernice (5 mos.).

The well-attended “Crusade for Christ” would follow in 1958 at the Lowville fairgrounds and in 1961 at Snow Ridge in Turin. A telephone interview with Rev. Bruce Chapman revealed the origin of these services. The area pastors met on a regular basis in an ecumenical support group called the “Ministerial Association.” It was at one of these meetings that Donald Jantzi enthusiastically proposed having Myron Augsburger come to the area as an evangelistic speaker with Crusade for Christ. He suggested that area-wide churches join in a cooperative effort. “The whole thing was Don Jantzi’s brain child. He was so sure about it.” Rev. Chapman stated, “I think I am the only one of those pastors still living.” (He will be 90 years in a few months.) “I was one of the younger ones on the Board.” He arrived in our area with his wife June in 1957 at 27 years old to assume his first Methodist pastorate for Martinsburg, Otter Creek, Greig, and Glenfield churches.

Don Jantzi was appointed to contact Myron Augsburger to make arrangements. From 30 miles away at Woodville, Don was liaison between Crusade for Christ and the local pastors. Dates were set for June 20-July 6, 1958, at the Lowville fairgrounds. The plan-

ning was done over a nine month to one-year period. Lloyd Boshart, who was newer in his bishop role, formed the various committees. Aaron A. Widrick was the lay representative working with the pastors.

Many volunteers were needed. The grounds were mowed and the tent set up. Simon Gingerich recalls the gentleman in charge directed that “no one is to walk on the tent. If needing to cross over the tent, the route was on hands and knees.” Pearl Zehr stated, “My brother Paul and I attended counselor sessions well in advance of the meetings.”

An adult mixed chorus of 30-40 members was directed by J. Mark Stauffer (Crusade chorister). Eunice (Zehr) Gingerich stated, “I remember sitting with the choir toward the back of the stage and viewing the service seeing Myron’s back as he preached to the congregation in front.” J. Mark Stauffer and Myron Augsburger and their wives provided some special singing.

The pastors were hoping for 1000 attendees at the services. Their prayers were answered. The attendance hit over 1000 the first evening and steadily climbed each successive evening. Pearl Zehr stated, “The ushers were busy bringing chairs.” Rev. Chapman had this to say about Myron, who was 28 years old, “Myron was excellent. He had a sound biblical presentation and did not get hung up on the particulars.”

There were over 200 public responses. Joseph Zehr (age 12) stated, “This was when I made my decision for the Lord and walked the sawdust trail.” Rev. Chapman praised the Crusade organization for the excellent setup system whereby pastors and churches could continue follow-up with people making new commitments.

The Crusade staff conducted a daily broadcast over WBRV Boonville while they were in the area. The station was generous in providing program and spot time at half price.

Enthusiasm was high for the 1961 Crusade for Christ. Many of the pastors involved in 1958 remained in the area. Since the 1958 Crusade, interest had also grown in the southern part of the county. Collectively, the pastors wished to move the location site to accommodate these churches. The staff at Snow Ridge offered their site with no charge. Dates were arranged for August 27-September 7, 1961. This was a cooperative effort of eight or nine different denominations or faiths.

The pastoral committee was chaired by Robert Allen, Baptist pastor in Lowville. Vice Chairman Donald Jantzi was pastoring at the First Mennonite Church of New Bremen. Rev. Bruce Chapman was chairman of the Lewis County Ministerial Association. Aaron A. Widrick again served as laity representative.

J. Stratton Shufelt, Wheaton, Illinois, was music director and provided nightly solos. He directed an adult mixed choir of approximately 50 members. Ruthann (Boshart) Roggie, music teacher at Beaver River Central School, was instrumental in putting choral volunteers together for the rehearsals. An organ was procured and delivered by a music store in Syracuse. Paul Lehman, Lancaster, PA, served as organist the first week, and Wendell Boertje, Lima, Ohio, (cousin of Myron Augsburger) played the organ the second week.

Attendance was ranging between 1500-2000 and over 2000 the last night. Rev. Chapman states, "That is not bad considering Lewis County's population...then was 26,000-27,000 people." There were some 125 recorded decisions for Christ with many first-time decisions. Eugene Witmer (Crusade staff person) had this to say, "Seldom have clergymen of any area become as enthusiastic about a Crusade as did the many in this particular area."

George Brunk was well known to our congregations as he had ministered several times as revival speaker. He held tent services from July 28-August 11, 1974, at the Lewis County fairgrounds.

The Lloyd Boshart family shared a long friendship with Mr. Brunk. Ruthann Roggie stated, "We just loved him. He was our very good friend." She and Martha Boshart mentioned the fun of his flying up to Duflo's airport in his private plane and taking them up for their first plane ride.

Harold Stoltzfus served as chorister and also conducted daily Bible studies at 11 a.m. The "Christ Alive" children's choir presented a program(s). Gladys Moshier recalls that one evening a ladies sextet consisting of Mary Ellen (Wagler) Good, Maxine (Zehr) Moser, Gladys (Widrick) Moshier, Mary Ellen (Gingerich) Roggie, Marie (Zehr) Yousey, and Lois (Wagler) Zehr sang.

Rich in faith...revival services have provided a means for conviction, learning, and renewal. Many of God's servants have stood in the gap for us. Donald Jantzi summed up the Crusade's blessings as "the Gospel transcended denominational emphasis and was presented without apology as the answer for man's deepest need."

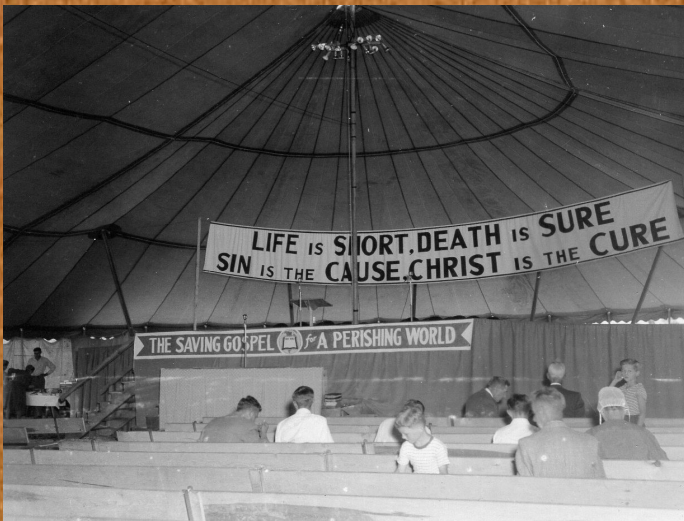
**Note:** Vintage photos of the past tent meetings as well as annual Conservative Mennonite Conferences over the years would be greatly appreciated for the archives at the Mennonite Heritage Farm.

Sources:

1. Interviews (phone): Martha Boshart, Rev. Bruce Chapman, Eunice (Zehr) Gingerich, Simon Gingerich, Gladys (Widrick) Moshier, Donald Roggie, Ruthann (Boshart) Roggie, Savilla (Zehr) Steria, David Yousey, Joseph Zehr, and Pearl Zehr.
2. *Journal & Republican*. Newspaper clippings—Myron Augsburger and Crusade for Christ.
3. Stauffer, J. Mark. "Crusade for Christ, Lowville, New York." *Gospel Herald*, 9 July 1958.
4. Hurley, Lawrence. "Lewis County's Christ Alive Crusade," *Brunk Revivals, Inc.*, Vol. II, No. 11, Fall, 1974.
5. Moser, Kathleen (diary).
6. Witmer, Eugene. "Crusade in the Adirondacks." *Gospel Herald*, 20 October 1987.



Photos (3) from 1952 conference and tent meetings (collection of Ellen Yousey) and Myron Augsburger in 1958 (bottom right):



## Wish List

We would appreciate the following items: large vacuum machine, tractor-pulled eight-passenger wagon, wooden sap spigots, and skipjack.

The archival office is starting a collection of vintage photos, such as individuals, families, children, occupational living (farming, logging, sugaring), tent meetings, church conferences, etc., which would be scanned. The photos would be returned to the donor, if so desired.

AMHA has a large collection of church periodicals, for example, *Gospel Herald*, *Brotherhood Beacon*, *The Mennonite*, etc. We are lacking some church periodicals and would be glad to take whatever is needed for the archival library. Please email [info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com](mailto:info@mennoniteheritagefarm.com) or call 315-376-7822 for inquiries.

## REMINDER —WEBSITE Sources

The Mennonite Heritage Farm website ([www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com)) has added links to “Find a Grave” section (available from either the [Home](#) page or the [Resource](#) page). To avail the ease of finding Mennonite and other cemeteries (burials of Mennonite individuals), a link is listed for each cemetery.

A number of people have been involved from the community to keep our cemeteries updated with tombstone photos, obituaries, and family information. Please check out the new cemetery links.

Here is a reminder of information posted at [www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com](http://www.mennoniteheritagefarm.com) for your viewing and research:

- Newsletters from 1991 to the present under [News](#).
- Manifests—immigrant passenger lists and translates. (See the details and the family links under [Resources](#)).

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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