

The Jacobsburg Record

MARCH/APRIL 1987

VOLUME XV No.2

ANNUAL SPRING MEETING

THURSDAY, MAY 14 - 6:00 P.M.

STOCKERTOWN MEMORIAL HALL

This year's spring meeting will be a dinner to honor Virginia and Joe Lopresti's contributions to the Jacobsburg Historical Society, and acknowledge their work in advancing local history and archeological science.

Jo DiGerlando, J.H.S., and other affiliated organizations will make presentations detailing the Lopresti's contributions to these organizations.

Virginia has agreed to report on their many years of valuable efforts in the form of a slide presentation.

PLEASE PLAN TO ATTEND THIS VERY SPECIAL EVENT. Detailed flyers will be mailed to you soon.

BOARD NEWS

At the February meeting, the Board accepted with regret the resignation of Janet Gum and Ellis Neuner, and expressed grateful appreciation for their outstanding service and dedication to the Society. Elected to fill their unexpired terms were Robert Frick and Beatrice Schlamp

HISTORICAL PROGRAM FUND

Approval was given to establish a historical program fund to be financed through the collection of reasonable donation fees from participants in selected historical programs sponsored by the society and environmental education center. Funds collected will be used for paying resource people who conduct historical programming for supplies, materials and services needed in support of historical programming and/or wages of historical program staff.

FIREBACK PURCHASE

Authorization was given to purchase a fireback of the 1720-40 period for use in the Benade House fireplace. A fireback, made of cast iron, was used to protect the walls of the fireplace and to reflect the heat. They were manufactured at one time in Jacobsburg. It was reported at the the March meeting that the fireback has been purchased.

ACQUISITIONS

Through Bob Newell a J.Henry of Philadelphia 1808 contract flint musket has been acquired---it will be restored by George Dech.

A desk (circa 1820) has been purchased from the Estate of Margaret Taylor and will be placed in the Homestead. You will recall that Margaret was one of the founders of the Jacobsburg Historical Society and its treasurer for many years.

INTRODUCING THE TIMES OF JACOB AND ABRAHAM HELLER

By Charles M. Sandwick, Jr.

During the Revolutionary War, one militia company in particular consisted mostly of men who lived in what we have called the extended Jacobsburg area. This was the company commanded by Captain Jacob Heller, in which his brother Abraham Heller was also an officer. In another article, the names of the men who belonged to this company in one or more of the years 1780 to 1785 will be listed. Most of these men served in Captain Heller's company the full six years, and some of them were engaged in the service of their country throughout the Revolutionary War.

Among the patriots enrolled in Captain Heller's company were Jacob Bassler; Daniel, Francis, John, John Jr., and Joseph Clewell; Christophel and Gottlieb Demuth; Dewald, George and Jacob Hahn; Abraham, Isaac and John Hubler; Henry Kostenbader; John Obitz (Opitz); Conrad, George and Jacob Roth; John and Michael Rothrock; Jacob Snyder (Schneider); Christian and Peter Staut, and Jacob Steiner, to mention only a few of the more familiar names. It should be noted that John Clewell Jr. was not John's son, but his younger cousin.

The following officers were commissioned and assigned to the 7th Company of the 5th Battalion of Northampton County Militia on 21 May 1777: George Engle, Captain; Jacob Heller, 1st Lieutenant; Jacob Bender, 2nd Lieutenant; Abraham Heller, Ensign. In a reorganization of the militia, Jacob Heller was advanced to the rank of Captain in the 2nd Battalion. As of 16 May 1780, the officers of the 3rd Company in the 2nd Battalion were Jacob Heller, Captain; Christopher Engel, Lieutenant, and Abraham Heller, Ensign. The militia was again reorganized in 1783, and Captain Heller's company was assigned to the 6th Battalion. The eight company captains of the 6th Battalion drew lots for company numbers on 26 May 1783, and Captain Jacob Heller drew No. 4 as the rank (i.e. numerical designation) of his company. As of 5 June 1784, the officers of the 4th Company of the 6th Battalion were Jacob Heller, Captain; Abraham Heller, Lieutenant, and William Freeman, Ensign.

The wills of Jacob and Abraham Heller reveal that both of them owned considerable land in both Plainfield and Bushkill Townships. In his will, Abraham named his wife and each of his six surviving children, as well as the husbands of his three living daughters. Jacob, alas, was not so considerate of future genealogists; he mentioned only his wife and "all my sons" and "all my children" without even telling how many there were; except that he did mention his daughter Elizabeth for the purpose of restricting her legacy, and his son Jacob Jr. by making him one of his executors.

William J. Heller, writing in 1898, could name only eight of Jacob Heller's children, adding "and several others who died in infancy." In

1912, John Eyerman named ten children, including the eight listed by W. J. Heller. Neither of these men seemed to be aware of the fact that Jacob was married twice, although two of the children named by them were of the second marriage. The truth is that Jacob was survived by fourteen children, of whom we can definitely identify twelve. We can also identify five who died before him; so we know that he was the father of at least nineteen children.

Jacob Heller was born in Lower Saucon Township 6 Mar 1750 and died in Plainfield Township 8 Oct 1822, son of Johan Simon and Louisa (Dietz) Heller. His will was dated 10 Apr 1822 and was proved 21 Oct 1822. He left five contiguous tracts of land in Plainfield and Bushkill Townships, containing nine hundred two acres and seventy-three perches (i.e. square rods) strict measure. He mentioned his wife Hannah; "all my sons", not by name; "all my children", not by name except for mention of his daughter Elizabeth and her children. He named as executors his brother Simon Heller (1767-1833) of Hamilton Township, and his son Jacob Heller Jr. (1782-1834) of Easton. The will was witnessed by Samuel Bittenbender, Isaac Grotz and James M. Porter, all of Northampton County. (File no. 3508; will book 5, page 35.)

The records of the Orphans Court of Northampton County contain the following item under the date of November 6th 1822: "The petition of Hannah Heller widow & relict of Jacob Heller senior late of Plainfield Township in the said county yeoman deceased, was read representing: That the petitioner's said Husband left issue fourteen children one of whom to wit: Henrietta Heller is a minor under the age of fourteen years and has no Guardian to take care of her person and estate. Praying the Court to appoint some proper person as guardian of the said child &c. Whereupon the Court on recommendation of the petitioner appointed Conrad Bender of Plainfield township, yeoman, Guardian of the person and estate of the said Henrietta Heller."

On the same date petitions in their own behalf were presented by Rebecca and Thomas Heller, minor children of Jacob Heller who were over fourteen years of age. Daniel Brown of Forks Township was appointed guardian of Rebecca. George P. Dreisbach, Esq., of Plainfield Township was appointed guardian of Thomas. Neither Henrietta nor Thomas was named by W.J. Heller or John Eyerman as a child of Captain Jacob Heller. The baptism of Thomas has not been found, but both Rebecca and Henrietta were baptized in the Reformed congregation of the Plainfield Township Union Church. On 1 Apr 1830 Thomas Heller of Lower Mount Bethel Township, having reached the age of twenty-one years, signed a release to his guardian, George P. Dreisbach, Esq., which was recorded the same day in the office of the Recorder of Deeds.

Final settlement of the estate of Captain Jacob Heller did not occur until 1854. Executors and a succession of administrators persisted in dying before their responsibilities to the estate had been fulfilled. In the interim between 1822 and 1854 several petitions concerning the interests of grandchildren were filed with the Orphans Court. Some of these documents reveal information about the family of Captain Heller. For example, it is disclosed that his daughter Rebecca was the wife of Abraham Eckert. This is important because there were two Rebecca Hellers, nearly

the same age. The other, Rebecca, daughter of Peter and Sarah Heller, married Samuel Stocker.

Another example is the disclosure that Jacob's daughter Mary was the wife of Peter Hauser of Smithfield Township. When Mary died, her children became heirs to the legacy due her from her father's estate. On 24 Aug 1827 Peter Houser (i.e. Hauser) petitioned the Orphans Court in behalf of two of their children, Peter and Susanna Houser, heirs of Jacob Heller, who were minors under the age of fourteen.

On 24 Apr 1840, Jacob Weiss, grandson of Jacob Heller, late of Plainfield Township, a minor over fourteen years of age, petitioned the Orphans Court for a guardian and Samuel Saylor was appointed. The young man was undoubtedly John Jacob Weiss who was born 4 Mar 1820 and was baptized in the Reformed congregation of the Plainfield Township Union Church 3 Apr 1820. His parents were recorded as George Weiss and Elizabeth, nee Heller. The sponsors were Jacob Heller, Sr., and Hannah, nee Whitier (i.e. Whittier). Elizabeth Heller, who was born 13 Nov 1777 and was baptized at the Plainfield Church on 26 Nov 1777, was a daughter of Jacob and (first wife) Susanna (Wayland or Weyland) Heller. Elizabeth must have died before 24 Apr 1840, the date of the Jacob Weiss petition.

Another article will contain the family records of Jacob and Abraham Heller. Reserach is being continued on their families, particularly that of Jacob in which at least two of his children remain to be identified. There is also a need to distinguish between John, son of Jacob, and John, son of Abraham, and to identify their wives. The baptismal records available to us, with rare exceptions, do not give the maiden surnames of the mothers. A notable exception is the one mentioned earlier in this atricle, which disclosed that Elizabeth Heller was the wife of George Weiss, and that Jacob Heller's second wife was Hannah Whittier.

MEET BOB FRICK

Bob Frick is professionally retired from things historical and now serves as a research person. His last position was as Curator of Decorative Arts with the Nassau County, New York, Museum System. He has been associated with both Woodlawn Plantation and Kenmore Museum in Virginia, served on the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, and is actively involved in Historical Societies, among them the Lehigh County, Pennsylvania Historical Society, the Moravian Historical Society, and the Sun Inn. Welcome aboard, Bob.

APOLOGY TO : Dale Prinkey and all others who may be wondering what "Treas" have to do with Buds. One of the environmental center programs listed in the January/February issue should have read "BUDS AND TREES" - not "Treas". We'd like to say that all equipment in a Finance Office is programmed to assume that any word beginning with "Tr." will ultimately be "treasurer" but I guess we'll have to scrap that excuse and admit our fallibility.

HOMESTEAD OPEN HOUSE EXHIBITS

April 26	-	Egg Decorating	August 23	-	Hooked Rugs
May 24	-	Band Boxes	September 27	-	To be announced
June 28	-	Moorestown Garden Club	October 25	-	To be announced
July 26	-	To be announced	December 6	-	Christmas Party

A CALL

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VOLUNTEERS

LIBRARIAN - Is there one of our members, or do you know of anyone who is able to set up our library? We have acquired a number of valuable books which need to be catalogued. Please contact President Earl Van Norman (252-6579) if you are interested or can suggest someone for this very important contribution to the Society.

GUIDES - For Homestead Open House Sundays, the fourth Sunday of April thru October, and the first Sunday in December. You need not be available for each and every Open house -----we don't discriminate - male or female of any age are welcome. Contact Kathryn Schlamp (759-0302) for more information.

We are pleased to announce that Mrs. Helen Zeller has agreed to serve on the Research Committee to read and translate German Script. Thank you, Helen.

1987 COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENTS

President - Earl Van Norman

<u>Executive Committee</u>	Earl Van Norman	252-6579
<u>Insurance Coverage</u>	John J. Schlamp	759-0302
<u>Legal</u>	Walter L. Peters	759-0302
<u>Nominating Committee</u>	John J. Schlamp	759-0302
<u>Office Manager</u>	Beatrice E. Schlamp	867-0466
<u>Photography</u>	Reginald M. Banks, Jr.	759-6696
<u>Corresponding Secretary</u>	Joy Betz	759-1280

1st Vice President - Dallam E. Blandy

<u>Acquisitions</u>	Mary Henry Stites - Co-Chairman	759-1441
	Walter L. Peters - Co-Chairman	759-1530
<u>Annual & Spring Meetings</u>		
<u>Archeological & Artifacts</u>	Joseph Lopresti - Chairman	759-1580
	Virginia Lopresti-Co-Chairman	759-1580
<u>Exhibits</u>	Margaret Peters - Co-Chairman	759-1441
	Elizabeth L. Morris-Co-Chairman	759-0751
<u>Gunnery</u>	Robert R. Newell	759-5432
<u>Research</u>	Charles M. Sandwick, Sr.	252-1280
<u>Printing & Binding Research Papers</u>	Hilton N. Rahn, Jr.	868-1789
<u>Distribution of Publications</u>	Robert Tomino	759-9458
<u>Registration of Property & Homestead Contents</u>	Marjorie Peters - Co-Chairman	759-0694
	Elizabeth L. Morris-Co-Chairman	759-0751
<u>Barn Restoration Committee</u>	Joseph DiGerlando	759-7239
<u>Gardens</u>	Bobbi DiGerlando	759-7239
<u>Homestead Committee</u>	Kathryn Schlamp	759-0302
<u>Hospitality Committee</u>		
<u>Jacobsburg Record</u>	Beatrice E. Schlamp	867-0466
		867-7566
<u>Maintenance</u>		
<u>Membership</u>	Beatrice Leh	252-6899
<u>Publicity</u>	Doris Kennedy	694-0122

We hope to be able, in the next issue, to be able to fill in all the areas designated "to be announced" and to have the list of Committee Chairman complete.

To date 350 members have paid 1987 dues; there are 16 new members.
HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 1987 DUES? Do you know of anyone who should be a member?

JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Officers and Board of Directors, 1987

OFFICERS

Earl Van Norman, President	Easton	252-6579
Dallam E. Blandy, 1st Vice President	Bethlehem	867-6849
Hilton N. Rahn, Jr., 2nd Vice President	Bethlehem	868-1789
Elizabeth L. Morris, Secretary	Nazareth	759-0751
Reginald M. Banks, Jr., Treasurer	Nazareth	759-6696

BOARD OF DIRECTOR

Term expires end of 1987

Bobbie G. DiGerlando	Wind Gap	759-7239
Joseph A. Lopresti	Stockertown	759-1580
Elizabeth L. Morris	Nazareth	759-0751
Charles M. Sandwick, Sr.	Easton	252-1290
Jessie Sandwick	Easton	252-1290
Charlotte C. Sayre	Easton	253-9516
John J. Schlamp	Nazareth	759-0302

Term expires end of 1988

William Henry Atherton	Stockertown	759-7710
Robert Frick	Bethlehem	
Matthew K. Morris	Nazareth	759-0751
Doris Kennedy	Bethlehem	694-0122
Robert N. Newell	Nazareth	759-5423
Beatrice E. Schlamp	Bethlehem	867-0466
Kathryn Schlamp	Nazareth	759-0302
Ann Marie Trbuza	Bath	837-9925
Earl Van Norman	Easton	252-6579

Term expires end of 1989

Reginald M. Banks, Jr.	Nazareth	759-6696
Dallam E. Blandy	Bethlehem	867-6849
Joseph T. DiGerlando	Wind Gap	759-7239
Virginia Lopresti	Stockertown	759-1580
Walter L. Peters	Nazareth	759-1530
Hilton N. Rahn, Jr.	Bethlehem	868-1789
James A. Wright	Nazareth	759-9119

Emerita Member of the Board

Mary Henry Stites

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FOR JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Student	\$2.50	Sustaining	\$10.00	Contributing	\$15.00
Individual	\$5.00	Family	\$12.50	Organizations	\$25.00

NAME CONTRIBUTIONS

Tannery Club	\$100	Boulton Club	\$500	Henry Rifle Club	\$1000
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NAME AND ADDRESS _____

TEL. NO. _____

Please return this slip with your check, payable to Jacobsburg Historical Society. Send to P.O. Box 345, Nazareth, PA 18064. All contributions are tax deductible to the extent provided by law. Cancelled check is your receipt.