The Jacobsburg Record

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1986 VOL. XIV, NO. 5

GALA 15TH ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DINNER
STOCKERTOWN MEMORIAL HALL
THURSDAY, OCTOBER 23, 1986

Send in reservations by October 15! Use the form at the botton of the letter received several weeks ago. In this beginning of the 200th Anniversary of the Signing of the Constitution, September 17, 1787, we can be particularly pleased to see the two short films of the Morristown, N.J., Encampment of the Army of the Colonies--in representation, of course! It was the winter of 1779-80, reputedly the coldest weather and deepest snow of the century. Officers were in the town itself, in the Ford Mansion, while soldiers were in tents in Jockey Hollow.

The dinner menu we have had word on--always home made and bounteous. This is one menu for which the price has stayed the same over a period of several years--total, $8.50. Dinner, 6:30; cash bar, 6:00.

Janet Gum has been in charge of arrangements, along with Earl Van Norman who secured the two films from the National Park Service. The Nazareth National Bank and Trust Co. will furnish the head table centerpiece. Additional flowers will be secured and arranged by Mary Banks and Betty Morris.

This is the night we elect members to the Board of Directors. The Nominating Committee, John Schlamp, Robert H. Daws, and Louise Young, present the following names for election: Reginald M. Banks, Jr., Dallam E. Blandy, Joseph T. DiGerlando, Virginia Lopresti, Walter L. Peters, Hilton N. Rahn, Jr., and James A. Wright. The Society welcomes nominations from the floor; just please be sure the person has agreed. Also please check the complete list on the last page of this issue. The Board will elect officers in January.

We are delighted to present the new Editor of The Jacobsburg Record as of January 1, 1987: Miss Beatrice Schlamp. Bea is in the finance department of the Moravian Church in North America, Bethlehem. She has been a guide at Open House and has accepted responsibilities to organize the Office at the Homestead (no mean task!) and has worked with Hilton Rahn on organizing trips along with the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society, the most recent, the upcoming one on October 14 to Lancaster to include the Heritage Center and Strasburg R.R. Bea is a Nazareth native, and yes, she is a sister to John Schlamp, immediate past president of the Society. Her home address is 49 W. Church St., Bethlehem, 18018; phones 867-0466 at home and office, 867-7566. We are all looking forward to working with her. Come to the dinner meeting to meet Bea herself.

Charles M. Sandwick, Sr., will be present to autograph copies of "Jacobsburg: A Pennsylvania Community and Its People." Price, $25.18. At this writing, 274 copies have been sold.

Henry rifles, too, will be on display at the annual meeting with Bob Newell on hand to answer questions.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION CENTER

Earl Van Norman

At the time of this writing it's hard to think that summer will be gone in less than a week. Of course the unofficial closing, Labor Day, has brought with it the seasonal changes we have come to expect. The number of visitors is increasing now that the oppressive heat and humidity are behind us and people are coming back from vacations. The steady buzzing drone of the cicadas is gone now, and the crickets sing throughout the daytime hours. The nights are void of the lightning bugs that not too long ago filled every open area. The katydids are tiring of their arguing, whether "katy-did" or "katy-didn't," but they'll be back again next year in full force just six weeks prior to the first frost.

Frost. Doesn't that have a wonderful ring to it? It immediately sweeps us away from the hot lazy days of summer into the exhilarating clear cool days and nights of fall when a jacket feels good and you want to take a long deep breath, just because the air smells so delicious. This is the time of year that can't be beat for sights and sounds and smells and tastes. It is also the time for change.

Change and replacement are the order of the day now. The thistle with its attendant "distilfink" has now become the pastel New England aster with a striking black and orange Monarch butterfly. The smell of new mown hay is replaced with that of rich spicy wood smoke, blend of hickory, pine, and apple. And apples. Glorious apples. Their blossoms were a beautiful and welcome sight to behold last spring, but they were only a showy promise of the fruit that would follow and the reason for their being. Names like McIntosh, Winesap, Cortland, and Smokehouse can make our mouths water, especially when we think of the dumplings our grandmothers made. Mine would serve them hot right out of the oven. Then she would put them in a big bowl and pour raw milk, fresh from the springhouse, all over them, and we could see the little yellow beads of tub butter floating to the top. We didn't need anything else for supper those nights.

And then we have cider. Sweet and cold, its brownish-orange color-----but we were talking of change, weren't we? How easy it is for us to flit from the sight of a long thin line of Canadian geese, to the taste of black walnuts, to the smell of burning leaves, to the sound of a beagle chasing a rabbit. We are just like a bee sampling each and every offering from this sensuous smorgasbord.

If you would like to experience this wonderful time, why don't you come out to the Center and take a leisurely walk through Henry's Woods or up on the ridges? Travel light if you want, but you'll wish you had brought your camera or binoculars and your field guide of birds, trees, and wild flowers. If you can't walk very far, but would still like to explore and see things you have never seen before, simply bring a magnifying glass. I guarantee you'll go home with a new appreciation for the words that were given to Job: "Stand still, and consider the wondrous works of God" (37:14).

P.S.: If you are a Society member, how about introducing yourself to us? It seems everyone in the area comes to visit us but members of the Jacobsburg Historical Society!

THE BASSLER FAMILY OF OLD PLAINFIELD TOWNSHIP

By Charles M. Sandwick, Sr.

The earliest Bassler to come to Plainfield Township was Michael. He is presumed to have been the Michael Bassler who arrived at Philadelphia 3 Oct 1753 on the ship Eastern Branch. Michael Bassler was taxed in Macungie Township in 1761. By 1768 he had acquired property in Bethlehem Township and was taxed there in 1774 and 1776. In 1779, 1783, 1785 and 1786 he was taxed in Plainfield Township. In the Federal tax of 1785 his tax was 3 shilling on 1 horse and 2 cattle, while his son Jacob was taxed 2 shilling 9 pence on 15 acres and 1 cattle. The following year Michael's tax was 1 shilling 6 pence on 1 horse and 1 cattle, while Jacob paid 3 shilling 6 pence on 10 acres and 1 cattle. In all likelihood Michael and his wife lived on Jacob's property, possibly in the same dwelling. In 1786 Michael returned to Bethlehem Township, but Jacob and his family remained in Plainfield.

Michael Bassler attended confession and communion with the Lutheran Congregation of Dryland Union Church at what is now Hecktown. Michael and his wife Anna Gertrude (usually called Gertrude) were recorded as having attended in 1769, 1770, 1771 and 1772. They communed there on 3 Dec 1780, although by then they were living in Plainfield Township. At the Dryland Church on 14 Aug 1774 they were sponsors at the baptism of Michael Hoffman, who was born 31 Jul 1774, son of John and Barbara Hoffman.

Their residence in Plainfield is presumed to have been in the western part of what is now Bushkill Township, inasmuch as they associated with the Evangelical Lutheran Congregation at Moorestown rather than with the Lutheran Congregation of Plainfield Union Church, southeast of Wind Gap. Michael Bassler and Jacob Bassler communed at Moorestown on Exaudi Sunday in 1782. Later that year, on the 20th Sunday of Trinity, "Michael Bassler, et uxor Gertraut, and son Jacob Bassler," were recorded as having attended communion. On 25 Dec 1782 Michael and Gertraut Bassler, grandparents, were sponsors at the baptism of Michael Bassler, who was born 4 Dec 1782, son of Jacob and Maria Bassler. On the 16th Sunday after Trinity in 1783, Michael Bassler and wife Anna Gertraud again communed at Moorestown, and again on Cantate Sunday in 1784.

From 1786 to 1801 we find the name of Michael Bassler recorded twelve times as having communed with the Lutheran Congregation of Dryland Union Church. Only once in that interval, on 15 May 1791, is Gertrude listed. We have searched in vain for the dates and places of birth and death of Michael and Gertrude Bassler, and for Gertrude's maiden surname. They may have had children other than Jacob, but he is the only one whose relationship to them has been definitely established.

Jacob and Maria (Rothrock) Bassler

Johann Jacob Bassler (called Jacob) was born in Macungie Township (now Lower Macungie) 1 Oct 1758, and died in Plainfield Township in the Fall of 1799, son of Michael and Gertrude Bassler. His will, dated 11 Oct 1799, was proved 4 Nov 1799; so his death occurred in the interval

between those dates. The executors were John Rothrock and George Gold. The will was witnessed by Nathaniel Michler, Abraham Metzger and John Rothrock.

No later than 1782 Jacob Bassler married Maria Rothrock, daughter of Michael and Catharina (Frey) Rothrock. Jacob and Maria (Rothrock) Bassler had eight children. (1) Michael, born 4 Dec 1782, of whom more will follow. (2) Elizabeth, born 14 Jul 1784; married 9 May 1802 William Keller. (3) John, born 9 Oct 1786; died 24 Jul 1858; married 25 Sep 1809 Barbara Deily, who was born in Forks Township 4 Nov 1794, died 3 May 1880, and was buried at Schoeneck.

Also born to Jacob and Maria (Rothrock) Bassler were: (4) Jacob, born 9 Dec 1788; died 16 Sep 1819; married 8 Nov 1812 Susan Horn. (5) Catharine, born 19 Jun 1791. (6) Johann George (called George), born 16 Jan 1794; married Susanna, whose maiden surname we haven't learned. (7) Mary Magdalena, born 19 Oct 1796. (8) Susanna, born 7 Sep 1799.

Michael and Maria (Steiner) Bassler

Michael Bassler was born in Plainfield Township (presumably the part which is now Bushkill Township) 4 Dec 1782, and was baptized in the Salem Lutheran Congregation at Moorestown on Christmas Day, with his grandparents Michael and Gertrude Bassler as sponsors. He died no later than 1821. His parents were Jacob and Maria (Rothrock) Bassler.

On 27 Jul 1806 Michael Bassler married Anna Maria Magdalena Steiner (called Maria), who was born 7 Dec 1789, daughter of Friedrich Heinrich and Susanna (Volz) Steiner. Michael was a Schreiner, or house carpenter, a trade he probably learned in association with his father's friend George Gold.

Michael and Maria (Steiner) Bassler had eight children. (1) Maria Anna (Mary Ann), born in Plainfield (now Bushkill) Township 25 Jul 1807; baptized at home 23 Aug 1807 as recorded at Schoeneck; married John Fritz. (2) Florentin Alexander, born in Plainfield (now Bushkill) Township 9 Dec 1809; baptized at home 24 Dec 1809 as recorded at Schoeneck; died 26 Sep 1810 as recorded in the German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation at Easton. (3) Julianna (Julie), born about 1811; married 6 Sep 1829 William Heller, widower, born 14 Jun 1802, son of Jacob and Hannah Heller.

The next child of Michael and Maria (Steiner) Bassler was (4) Gideon S., who was born 29 Sep 1813; baptized 9 Feb 1814 in the German Evangelical Lutheran Congregation, and confirmed in the Plainfield Reformed Church 15 Jun 1833 at the age of 19. He died 7 July 1855. On 20 Apr 1834, as recorded at the First Reformed Church of Easton, Gideon Bassler married Anna Maria Heller (Mary Ann), who was born 13 Jun 1815; was baptized at the Plainfield Reformed Church 13 Aug 1815; died at Filetown 16 Feb 1899, and was buried (as Mary A. Kaske) in Schoeneck Moravian Cemetery; daughter of John and Elisabeth (Siegel?) Heller. The descendants of Gideon and Mary Ann will be the subject of another article.

Also born to Michael and Maria (Steiner) Bassler were: (5) Abraham,

born about 1815, was confirmed at the Plainfield Reformed Church 27 Jun 1835 at the age of 19. (6) Aaron, born 28 Mar 1816, was married twice, and both wives were named Catharine. In the 1850 census of Polk Township, Monroe County, Pennsylvania, we find a mixed household consisting of Jeremiah Page, 24; Aaron Bassler, 34; Catharine Bassler, 31; William Bassler, 3; and Joseph Moyer, 36; all of whom were born in Pennsylvania. Aaron Bassler married second, at the parsonage of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Easton, on 24 May 1863, Catharine (Brader) Fishler, of Easton, who was born in Forks Township, daughter of Jacob and Elisabeth Brader, and widow of Nicholas Fishler.

Michael and Maria Bassler had two more children. (7) Elizabeth (Eliza) was born about 1818, and was confirmed in the Plainfield Reformed Church on 27 Jun 1835 at the age of 16; she married William Myers or Mayer. (8) Sarah, born 1 Jan 1819 (or '18), was baptized in the Salem Lutheran Congregation, Moorestown, 17 Jan 1819 (or '18).

Two generations of descendants of Michael and Maria (Steiner) Bassler lived in Filetown. We shall continue with them in another article.

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HOMESTEAD NEWS

On October 26 at Open House, William Gold, Nazareth, will exhibit his miniatures of Nazareth historical sites in the Nazareth Square. Time: 2-5 p.m. Remember we turn our clocks back one hour the night before to Eastern Standard Time.!

In addition, Bob Newell is arranging for a two-tent Miniencampment of living history by the Lehigh Brigade of the Civil War Roundtable. About six to eight men will set up and open the night before on Homestead grounds. Equipment will include 10-in. field artillery (no live ammunition), and permission has been granted for a small contained fire. This is a unit headed by Jack Morrow, Phillipsburg.

On that day, no Henry guns will be on exhibit inside the Homestead.

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Work on the new septic tank, as well as the septic tank field installation, has been completed. The locust tree within the perimeter of the leaching field must be removed. Previously the tree had been diagnosed as dying, and plans are now made with the Kratzer Co., Nazareth, to take it down this fall.

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The Board approved an amount up to $2,000 to do needed repairs to th Carriage House and the Homestead.

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Bob and Margie Peters have finished a good job--registering acquired tools. Betty Morris and Margie will register all other items. We appreciate the considerable time and work needed to do a finicky job. Thank you so much, everyone!

HOMESTEAD NEWS, continued

There will be no Open House in November because the Christmas Party date is the first Sunday in December, December 7. Time: 1-4 p.m. Please note the 1-4 time. Details of our Open House on that date will be in the November/December issue of the Record.

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As of this writing in late September, we need only eight persons to fill the second bus for our Lancaster trip on October 14. Item: Althea and Ellis Neuner, now of Manheim near Lancaster, have arranged to meet and be with us for the day. We'll be happy to see them.

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Help! Because of changes in oeprations, the Nazareth Area School District can no longer do stapling of the Newsletter. The Society is looking for volunteers to take over. Please see Reggie Banks or Matt Morris for details.

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THIS 'N' THAT

We are pleased to announce an honor to Charles M. Sandwick, Sr., from the Sons of the American Revolution. The award was given by the Society for 1985-86 during Recognition Night at the 96th Annual Congress in Tampa, Florida.

Charlie was notified he had been given The Stephen Taylor Award (to the Compatriot who by his research and writings has made a distinguished and significant contribution to the preservation of the history of the Revolution and its Patriots) for his work as author and editor of "Jacobsburg, a Pennsylvania Community and Its People."

Congratulations, Charlie! We are truly proud of you and can only say it is a well deserved recognition for a fine job.

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Dale Prinkey, Superintendent of the Jacobsburg Environmental Education Center, filled out the papers in connection with "Take Pride in Pennsylvania 1986 Awards Program." This is the first year of an annual awards program aimed at encouraging a sense of stewardship and responsibility for our nation's public lands and natural cultural resources.

Taking part are 36 States and two U.S. Territories. Applications had to be in by September 1, and considering we received word only on July 29, 1986, Dale did a magnificent job under hurry-up circumstances. Along with the formal application, Dale sent numerous examples of Jacobsburg publications. We applied for an Award in the category of Public/Private Partnerships, No. 8 in a possible 11 areas. Presumably announcement of these 1986 Awards will be made at least by the middle of 1987.

JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Officers and Board of Directors, 1986

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

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Term expires end of 1986

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Term expires end of 1987

Bobbie G. DiGerlando	Wind Gap	759-7239
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Earl Van Norman	Easton	252-6579

Emerita Members of the Board

Mary Henry Stites
Margaret E. Taylor

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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

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. Canceled check is your receipt.