

# The Jacobsburg Record

MAY/JUNE, 1977

Vol. V No. 4

## THE CRAFT FAIR LOOMS CLOSER AND CLOSER

Just one month from the date of this writing, on Saturday, July 16, our Fourth Annual Craft Fair will take the spotlight. Hours will be from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., at the Bushkill Center 4-H Club grounds, north of Nazareth on the Bushkill Center Road. Response from Craftsmen and exhibitors has been good (in fact, slightly in excess of last year), about forty entrants in both categories already being registered — so there will be plenty to see and to marvel at. As special entertainment for the young fry we have been able to make provision for hay rides, and as in previous years there will be other entertainment as well.

Bobbie DiGerlando is doing her usual efficient job in putting the Fair together. It takes an unbelievable amount of work, and she has had good support from the members — BUT, we still need more help : workers to help her in her many chores; attendants at some of the stands and to help in car parking; and cash donations from those who feel unable to volunteer their services otherwise. Please come forward with your help. There is still time (but not any too much).

And you can help promote the project by spreading the news among your friends and acquaintances who are not members of the Society. These Fairs are always interesting and informative, and this one will be no exception. It will be well worth any one's while to attend.

\* \* \* \* \*

## OPEN HOUSE COMBINES WITH 'WALK' IN FALL

We now have set a date for the Open House at the Homestead, in previous years customarily held in May, but deferred this year because of pond reconstruction and the resultant damage to the gardens. All the work will have been completed by Fall, and the new plantings in the gardens will have had time to establish themselves. Because Fall is the time of the annual 'Walk Through The Woods' the two have been combined and the date set for Sunday, September 11 (rain date September 18). Buses will be waiting at the end of the Walk to bring participants back to the parking area, and to visit additional historical sites not within the line of the Walk. Full details will be published in later issues of the 'Record'.

\* \* \* \* \*

## WE HAVE MUCH TO BE THANKFUL FOR

This month we owe our thanks to Francis Kocher and his brother Charles Kocher for their gift of a thirty-five-foot flagpole and an American flag, who live on Schoeneck Avenue not far from the Homestead. The pole is being installed by Albert Toth and his son, Buddy.

And a special note of thanks goes to Aubrey B. Wolle who gave to the Society a complete genealogical chart of all the members of the Wolle family descended from William Henry through his daughter Sabina. The chart has been given an honored place in the archives of the Society as part of the important body of genealogical information gradually accumulating there. This includes the work already done by Charles Sandwick, and together they comprise a source of genealogical material not available in collected form in any other repository.

Accompanying Mr. Wolle's gift was a letter addressed to Charles Sandwick, which we reproduce here because of historically interesting material which it contains. The letter follows.  
"Dear Mr. Sandwick:

"You have done an excellent job on the "Wolle Branch of the Henry Family" (in our April issue) as it appears in the April copy. That is until you get down to the information regarding my father George.

"George married first Lena Clauer of Galena, Colorado. They lived at the Sun Inn until Lena died in childbirth along with her child.

"George's second marriage was to my mother Evelyn Jane Williamson nee Rhen. Evelyn was widow of Doctor Williamson, who died of pneumonia at the Army Post now known as Bismarck, North Dakota. They had a daughter Margarete.

"Of the union Aubrey Bevan (10/29/1898) and Clarence Wood (12/27/1900). See further on enclosed chart.

"It is interesting to note that George and Clarence A. Wolle, working together, put up through financing and construction the first electric light plant in Bethlehem. They connected the horse car line used to pull passengers up Hamilton Avenue in Allentown from the Reading and Lehigh Valley railroad stations to Bethlehem by tracks along the Allentown-Bethlehem Turnpike through Rittersville. Built the Rittersville amusement park. Ran one line of car tracks down Main Street (in Bethlehem) to Church and up Church Street to New because the family home was at #66 after the depression of 1868.

"Ran another line to Nazareth, Wind Gap, Pen Argyl and Bangor. On the way to Nazareth the trolley line crossed and re-crossed the turnpike some five or six times because one farmer or the other would not sell the right-of-way. One old fellow demanded a free pass for himself and wife for their lifetime. He got it.

"The chart sent here, if you are a historian, will I am sure interest you. At least it is a different way of doing it. Robert Brown of Bethlehem whom I am sure you know has outlined the Wolle Family in a different form; they come out the same in the end.

"Incidentally, on the 100th Anniversary of Lehigh University there was a write-up about Augustus Wolle, co-founder with Asa Packer of Lehigh. His great-great-granddaughter Elizabeth is in the Freshman class and doing very well.

"I am very much impressed with the work that is being done by the Society. I wish that I could contribute more. Thank you again for an excellent job.

"Sincerely,

"Aubrey B. Wolle"

\* \* \* \* \*

#### THE BARN - WHAT WILL BECOME OF IT?

For quite some time we have been bending our efforts toward the preservation of the barn at the Homestead site. As will be recalled the State, in their published plan of operations, proposed to tear down the barn and to utilize the space for a parking lot. Since the land involved is part of the acreage which the Society rents from the State, the State asked us for our comments on their proposal, and at our February Board meeting Mr. George, the Park superintendant, was present and presented their plans in detail. At that time the Board members did not feel they were informed enough to give a fast answer until they had inspected the barn and site. After this had been done and the matter thoroughly discussed the Board went on record as unanimously in favor of preserving the barn, and the State was so advised.

This was not an arbitrary decision. As was pointed out to the State there are other areas in convenient locations suitable for parking purposes. The main part of the barn, which is the older, is in sound condition and is not only typical of local barn construction in this area and of its era, but seems well adapted to future use by the Society as an exhibit hall.

As Mrs. Beers stated in her letter informing the State of the Board's decision, "We are very fortunate to have several members who are very knowledgeable about the construction and dating of barns. It is their considered opinion that the barn, especially the old part, is unique in its construction and therefore should be preserved as an example of our barns in the county.

Our records show us that the first part was constructed prior to 1790 and some elements of construction date it as early as 1750. The 'new' part dates from 1821 according to construction (supported by) a letter written by John Joseph Henry. In addition, we found the barn to be much sounder structurally than had been thought."

It would, of course, be the obligation of the Society to make any repairs necessary to bring the barn to prime condition. The only major item of repair involved would be on the roof of the 'new' part, a small addition to the east end added in the early 1820's, and the suggestion has been made that this addition be torn away entirely, leaving the main structure in its original condition, thus saving the expense of roof repairs.

The matter has been placed in the hands of a special Barn Committee consisting of Albert Toth, Claude Jones, Howard Culver, Fred Koehler and Geary Gum. You may be sure that every continuing effort will be made to secure its preservation.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### HAVE YOU PAID YOUR 1977 DUES?

There is an easy way to tell: simply look at your address on the mailing side of your newsletter. If there is a 76 after your name you haven't paid them. Will you please check right now and rectify any oversight on your part. Our secretary-treasurer is short a number of names and she is beginning to get worried. Please help her out.

\* \* \* \* \*

IMPORTANT DATES: June 20, 7:30, Research Committee at home of Charles Sandwick.

July 6, 8 o'clock, Board Meeting at home of President.

July 16 (Saturday) 10 to 5, 4th Annual Craft Fair, Bushkill Center 4-H Club Grounds.

See details in lead article, page 1.

September 11 (Sunday) Annual Open House and Walk in the Woods.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### DID YOU KNOW?

By Virginia Lopresti, Chairman, Archaeology

Although present-day residents of Belfast would certainly object to the appellation, to the hundreds of motorists passing through the place on their way to points beyond it doubtless remains in their memory as 'a sleepy little village'. Whether this was always true or not, there was a day when the hamlet, then known as Tria, and sometimes as Wardsburg, in the Plantation of Belfast, was perhaps the most important commercial center between Easton and Wilkes-Barre, not even excepting Wind Gap, which also did a respectable amount of business. Lying as it did at the crossroads where the king's highway to Wilkes-Barre (now 115) met the road from Henry's Forge to the west and to McCall's Mill (Martins Creek) on the Delaware to the east, it was the logical trading center for residents from the large area which these roads served. For nearly a hundred and seventy-five years, almost without interruption, there has been a general store at this location. The store at Jacobsburg, operated in connection with the old Jacobsburg Hotel, was never a serious competitor, apparently catering to the needs of only its immediate neighbors, witness the fact that three of the Henry family connection, who for a time operated in Jacobsburg, after only a very short while disposed of their interests there and re-located at Tria, and a fourth, seeking new worlds to conquer, established his store business at Wind Gap.

The story of the old store stand begins in 1804 when the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania sold to Frederick Koehler fifty acres in Plainfield Township (Patent Book 54, page 102). This was the parent tract from which the store premises were carved in 1805, when Koehler sold three and one-half acres to John Fair for a consideration not disclosed. In 1810 Fair, then described as a storekeeper sold the same acreage to Conrad Ward; and in 1818 Ward sold it to



Francis Herlinger. Later the same year Herlinger sold it to John Wolle, it being described as a tract lying at the forks of the roads from Henry's Forge, Wilkes-Barre Turnpike and the road to the Delaware River (Deed Book E, Volume 4, page 116). This was the first appearance of the Henry connection at the site.

Wolle operated the store until 1826, when he in turn sold it to William Henry (III) (C-5-113). William operated there for only three years, and in 1829 disposed of it to Matthew S. Henry for a consideration of \$3,000, the first time any price was mentioned in any of the early deeds. Matthew Henry sold the same corner in 1833 to Samuel Fehr (C-6-209). So the entire tenure of the Henry family as storekeepers there (including John F. Wolle, a Henry connection) lasted only fifteen years, which would seem to indicate that operations there were not as profitable as might have been desired. Samuel Fehr continued there in business for sixteen years and in 1849 sold the property to Peter Haas and Flory Jennings for \$2,500 (A-8-251). Jennings apparently ran into difficulties, for on a date undisclosed the property was conveyed by Sheriff's deed (Book 2, page 254) to John Micke, the consideration again being \$2,500. In 1864 Micke sold to John K. Patrick, described as a storekeeper, for a consideration of \$1,100 (G-10-659). In 1867 Patrick sold to John Speer (H-11-205), subject to payment of \$750 to Lewis Micke, who apparently held a lien on part of the property, which may be an explanation of Flory Jennings' involvement with the Sheriff at the time of conveyance to John Micke.

In 1868 John Speer sold the property, described as containing three acres, land and buildings, to Solomon Werkheiser for \$2,500. In 1880, after operating there for twelve years, Werkheiser sold to Joseph Breidinger (E-16-231). The consideration in this transaction was \$3,226.

In 1887, when Breidinger sold the property to George W. Laub for \$3,600 (E-19-26) there began the longest tenure of one family of any on record, a total of seventy-two years.

Laub came to Belfast from Beersville, where he was born and where he had operated a general store for a number of years in partnership with another man. At the time of his arrival Belfast was described as the center of trade for a large area. He must have been a thoroughly progressive citizen, for soon after locating there his store was selected as the location of the Postoffice for that area (it had for a time been located at Jacobsburg) and he himself served as postmaster for many years. He was only thirty-seven when he arrived there, so he undoubtedly ran the store himself for a time, although eventually he was succeeded by his son Elmer Laub, to whom he conveyed the property, 3 acres, for \$7,500 in 1920 (D-47-202). In 1891 the elder Laub perfected title to all the land in the tract when he obtained conveyance of one and one-half acres from Theodore Whitesell, being part of the land of Lewis Wicke, then deceased, for a consideration of \$1.00, apparently a quitclaim deed to quiet title (A-22-411).

Another son of George W. Laub, born in Beersville but being only six when he arrived at Belfast with his father in 1887, was the late Herbert F. Laub, Esq., who served as Judge of the Northampton County Courts, and prior to that, while district attorney, instrumental almost single-handedly in ridding the County of the gangster influence which gained foothold here during the days of Prohibition, and in cleaning out the vice elements which had permeated the area and had reached even into the high places in local government. His son George C. Laub, grandson of the store owner is today one of the County's leading attorneys.

Elmer Laub, who succeeded his father in the store business, had a daughter, Annie. He also had a clerk, Roy S. Kostenbader. You guessed it! Roy married the boss's daughter and eventually he became owner of the property, though the date of acquisition is not at present available. All we know is that in 1951 (B-89-31) Roy S. Kostenbader conveyed the premises to Roy S. Kostenbader and wife and that the premises conveyed were the same as had been conveyed between George W. Laub and Elmer Laub in 1920.

Roy sold the contents of his general store in 1959. For a while it was a garment factory and is now Werner's Variety Store, and the residence of the storekeeper is attached to the store as in years gone by.



## DIRECTORY

Catherine S. Beers — President

Easton (253-4547)

Joseph DiGerlando — Vice President

Jacobsburg (759-7239)

Hilton Rahn — Secretary

Bethlehem (868-1789)

Margaret Taylor — Treasurer

Easton (252-1315)

### DIRECTORS:

Mary DeRaymond — Open House

Nazareth (759-2820)

Janet Gum — Membership

Nazareth (759-1862)

Joseph Lopresti — Archaeology

Stockertown (759-1580)

Lorraine Mineo — Natural Garden

Nazareth (759-0867)

Charles Sandwick, Sr. — Research

Easton (252-1290)

Martin A. Smith — Editor, The Jacobsburg Record

Easton (253-2293)

Mary Henry Stites — Homestead Grounds

Boulton (759-4693)

Albert Toth — Maintenance and Repairs

Belfast (759-2153)

### COMMITTEES:

Bobbie DiGerlando — Craft Fair

Jacobsburg (759-7239)

Virginia Lopresti — Archaeology

Stockertown (759-1580)

Judy Sandercock — Hospitality

Easton (258-3806)

Joy Nathan — Publicity

Easton (253-7532)

John M. Dickey, A.I.A. — Consultant

Media, Pa.

Dr. Lee Graver — Archivist

Nazareth (759-3132)

---

### MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION for JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Student — \$2.50

Individual — \$5.00

Sustaining — \$10.00

Family — \$12.50

Contributing — \$15.00

Organizations — \$25.00

Check Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please return this application with your check made payable to Jacobsburg Historical Society, and mail to:

Miss Margaret H. Taylor, Treasurer  
733 Paxinosa Avenue  
Easton, Pa. 18042

All contributions are TAX DEDUCTABLE to the extent provided by law.