

JACOBSBURG HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc.

P.O. Box 345 Nazareth, Pa. 18064

NEWSLETTER

Vo. 2 No. 6

September 1974

President: Mrs. Lewis Beers
Vice President: Joseph DiGerlando

Secretary: Hilton Rahn
Treasurer: Miss Margaret Taylor

THOUGHTS

What do you say when you lose a friend? What can you say when an important part of your life is suddenly snatched away? The old cliché is true - you never miss someone until they are gone, and this will be especially true of Buck Hemphill. His tragic death has left a void that is going to be hard to fill. He was christened Darold by his parents, but to his friends he was known as "Buck." He was heard to comment that "few people could pronounce it and less could spell it." Buck was a lawyer by profession, but he was an exceptional human being by practice. He would not be considered a religious man, if he were judged by his regular attendance at church services and functions; but his moral attitude and ethical conduct would put many well known religious leaders to shame. Buck's life was the Golden Rule.

I came to know him as most people did. I had problems that required a lawyer and he was recommended. Over the years we became friends because of our mutual interest in civic and environmental activities. When I became involved in starting our Society over two years ago, Buck was interested and volunteered his services. He was deeply involved with us at the time of his death. He never wanted financial reimbursement for any of his efforts, the joy of giving was reward enough. That was Buck. He was involved in some way in almost every civic or environmental activity. Buck and his wife, Mary Jane were jailed during the Civil Rights marches in Washington, D.C. before it became fashionable for whites to be integrationists. (This police record was later used as political ammunition without fully explaining the details behind it.) He was the moving force behind the Lehigh and Northampton Counties Legal Aid Society which has been of great benefit to our poor people. He was known in the Spanish community of Bethlehem, as well as by all the poor people in trouble, as a man you could turn to in troubled times. The story was told of a Saturday morning phone call to his home. A man asked the telephone operator if she knew the lawyer that helps the poor people. She put him through to Buck. Buck was frequently late, but as Mary Jane explained that was because he cared. He would keep rich and poor alike waiting, but not out of malice. To him the person with him at that moment was the most important problem. When your turn came you received the same consideration.

He did have some shortcomings by some people's standards. A very close friend once commented that Buck could never be a good trial lawyer. "To be a trial lawyer," he said, "you have to be an actor - hard, calculating, and play the role of the tough guy. You use scare tactics and sometimes people get hurt." Buck could never do this, he was too honest and straightforward. He took people at face value and expected the same from them. Buck was known to be a mediator. He would take the most heated and difficult situations and calmly reduce the arguments to the simplest forms and soon have all parties quietly reconciled.

Buck's most outstanding trait without a doubt was that he was a friend. You always knew that if you needed help, even at 3:00 A.M., he would get there.

What do you say when you lose a friend? Nothing! You are just grateful that you had the opportunity to know him for a few short years, and remembering what you learned from him go on living your life accordingly.

HOMESTEAD PROGRAMS

Our lease has finally been approved by the state and our new tenants are moving in. Robert and Sandy Morris, both long time area residents, have been working with other society members to refurbish a portion of the Homestead for immediate occupancy. This has included electrical rewiring, painting, papering and general clean-up. Immediate plans call for upgrading the electrical system and redesigning the heating system to include better insulation to help reduce our winter fuel bill. (The petroleum industry is making enough profit without us). We are also in the planning stages of providing space for office and work areas, meeting and display rooms, and storage facilities. Albert Toth of Belfast is looking for volunteers to assist him in these projects. One of the benefits of our Society is that we have enough variety in our activities to appeal to everyone from students and teachers to carpenters and gardeners. Give us a little of your spare time - get involved today!

NEW CONCEPT FOR WALK

"Back by popular demand" seems to be the motto for many of the activities that we have sponsored. Because of the fantastic turnouts for the last two walks (well over 500 people last year) we have planned an entirely new format to better accommodate the crowds. Parking will be at the FIRST bridge on Belfast Road and NOT at the stone piles as in the past. We will have buses to take walkers to Jacobsburg where they will view the remains of this 18th century industrial complex and also see the results of the extensive excavations of the tannery (probably the largest in the Lehigh Valley) conducted under the direction of Virginia and Joe Lopresti.

The bus will then take the walkers to the Henry Gun Factory to begin the second phase of the walk. They will see the housing complexes of Boulton and the site of the now-famous gun factory with its dam and mill race, and they will stroll through the ever popular Henry's Woods, where they will hear about plans for outdoor education programs being developed for area schools. The major change this year is that guides will be at points of interest along the route and walkers will proceed at their own pace equipped with maps, tour guides and bus schedules. This way we hope that we will be able to accommodate all who participate. We will have a rest area at the end of the walk where refreshments will be available and many of our researchers and information specialists will be mingling with the walkers to answer any questions about the Society or the history of the Jacobsburg area.

Mark your calendars and bring your friends on Sunday, October 13 (rain date Oct. 20). First tour leaves for Jacobsburg at 12:30 P.M. and for Henry's Woods at 1:00. Last tour for Jacobsburg at 2:30, for Henry's Woods at 3:00. Plan to come early and spend the day in one of the most naturally beautiful spots in the Valley.

ANNUAL MEETING

Date: Thursday, October 24, 1974

Time: 8:00 P.M.

Place: College Hill Presbyterian Church
Easton, Pa.

Topic: Annual Business Meeting
Election of Officers

Speaker: Dr. Hugh R. Gibb
Specialist in Industrial Collections
Eleutherian Mills Historical Library
Wilmington, Delaware

Dr. Gibb was responsible for collecting and cataloging the Edmund T. Lukens Collection of Papers which hold the story of the Scranton family and their financial encounters in the Wyoming Valley of Pa. and the Oxford Furnace in N.J.

His talk will be about these ventures as well as William Henry III of Boulton and gun-factory fame. He will cover the period 1825 - 1875.

This promises to be a very informative meeting so plan to come and bring your friends. Refreshments will be served.

BRIEFS

- With regret we note the passing of William E. Henry of Nazareth, after a period of illness following a stroke. Mr. Henry, 98, was a descendent of the Henry gunmakers.

- Mrs. Carol Parker of Easton is our new typist for our newsletter and Mrs. Bernie Agnew and her daughters of Nazareth are in charge of the mailing and distribution.

- Any person wishing to donate any items to the Society for exhibits or display or for usage - tools, office equipment, etc. may do so by contacting any of the officers for information.

- A donation of wooden folding chairs is being gratefully accepted from the St. Lukes United Church of Christ in Belfast. These will be very useful for our meeting room now that we have acquired the Henry Homestead.

- Thanks to Mrs. Hazel Lytle of Emmaus for her donation of a handbound copy of "Foxfire" a book on folk lore, old crafts and Early Americana.

- Mickey Toth has donated a glass display case to hold some of our artifact collection and also a replacement furnace for the Henry Homestead. This will help reduce the winter heating bills.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As our Society grows and progresses we are constantly seeking ways of improving our work and program. It seems now that we should add two more types of membership to our society. i.e. Student and Family. To do this, we must change our Constitution and By-laws which state that "The Constitution and By-laws of the Society may be amended by a vote of 2/3 of the members present at a stated meeting of the membership, provided that the quorum is met. A copy of the intended amendment shall be mailed to the membership at least 10 days prior to the stated meeting."

The stated meeting will be held in the College Hill Presbyterian Church on Thursday, October 24 at 8:00 P.M.

The changes shall be as follows: under Article III Membership shall be added to sections 1 and 2, Active and Honorary Membership; Section 3 Student Member: Any member under 18 years of age or any undergraduate in a college who agrees to the purposes of the Society as specified in Article II of the Constitution shall, upon application and payment of dues, shall be considered a Student Member. Section 4 Family Membership: Parents who join the Society may include as members all the children of this family as members of the Society upon payment of stipulated dues.

The By-laws shall be changed as follows: Article III; Section 2 shall read "The Annual Dues of members shall be \$5.00 Regular, \$10.00 Sustaining, \$25.00 Organization, \$2.50 Student, \$12.50 Family.

I hope we will have many of our members present at our meeting on October 24 to make these necessary changes, to elect officers and Directors and to hear our splendid speaker, Dr. Gibb, a fascinating historian, who will tell us more about the Henry family.

Catherine S. Beers

RAMBLINGS

William Henry asked the Moravian Brethern permission to expand his present building and was flatly denied because of the noise created by testing barrels; so having knowledge of a country spot with stream, he decided to study those surroundings. At the same time work continued in Nazareth. The method of firing used in the forge was charcoal, but its lasting heat was not sufficient to maintain a steady working hour so William Henry decided to use anthracite coal.

Mr. Mickseh was the blacksmith and was asked to use this product. After several attempts which failed, Mickseh took the remaining coal and practically threw it on the ground in front of Mr. Henry's house, perhaps using a different kind of language but stating, "If you want guns made give me back my charcoal or get another blacksmith."

The rebuking statement was effective for the blacksmith continued his work with charcoal.

Note: In the Whitfield house in Nazareth is a gun marked with both Mr. Mickseh and William Henry, Nazareth.

A. Toth

FIELD NOTES

Historical Archaeology is pursued in a different manner than prehistoric investigations. After the site is selected, a survey is best carried out in the winter when there are no leaves on the trees to obstruct the sighting of a datum point. The compass degrees are then noted on a map of the area. As these points never change, they can be compared to old deeds to determine property owners and possible uses of the area in tax records. With snow on the ground, it is a good time to look for outlines of buildings and foundations. These are then noted on the map. It is much safer to remove all underbrush in early spring. Large trees are left until the last, maybe they will not have to be removed at all. As soon as digging is feasible in the spring, a trench is made inside and outside of what hopefully is a wall. Depending on the use of the structure, the area of the structure is divided into sections and at times all sections are not excavated. Fireplaces are excellent places to begin. Much debris is usually discarded there. The dirt can be screened or not screened. Things to look for to determine the time of occupancy are coins, buttons, bits of pipes, ceramics, glass, pottery, etc. Most fascinating areas are the household dumps. Whole bottles are sometimes recovered. When floors or undisturbed clay is reached, digging comes to a halt. By that time you could have exposed a wall from one to six feet high. If the area is of utmost historical significance, the structure may be rebuilt. If it is in a national or state park area with no funds to rebuild, it will be kept clear of grass and fenced in for visitors to speculate upon. If it is of little importance or the site of a new development, it will be lost forever.

At Jacobsburg, we started in late spring 1973 to cut the brush inside what appeared to be a large building. All the inside walls that were visible were trenched. The east and west walls being shorter were also trenched on the outside. On the east side of the building there

were two walls about two feet apart. Since the inside of the area was covered with rubble from two to eight feet deep, it was decided to pile material from the trenches on top. Where convenient some was thrown over the walls. In looking for the floor level, pockets of foul water were discovered. The odor was reminiscent of tanning vats.

Continued next issue

Virginia Lopresti

EXPLORING: HISTORICAL RESEARCH

The research committee is interested in identifying the people who lived and worked in that part of Bushkill Township which now includes the Jacobsburg State Park and its immediate neighborhood, from about 1740 until recently, as well as the succession of occupations and industries that provided their livelihood. Its work is coordinated with that of the archeology committee, and there is some overlapping of membership on the two committees.

The work of the research committee involves searching records at the Court House, the collections of other historical societies, various libraries (especially the Easton Public Library), Whitfield House in Nazareth, the Moravian Archives at Bethlehem, as well as privately owned manuscripts and diaries, early maps, old photographs, and taped interviews with older residents and others with special knowledge of the area. Some members of the committee are studying records that are handwritten in German Script. Future articles will detail some of the "detective work" being done by members of the research committee.

Charles Sandwich

Ed. Note: Mr. and Mrs. Sandwich are retire educators from the Easton Area School System and have been very active in the past with many historical societies and activities. They are very active in the Northampton County Historical and Genealogical Society. Mr. Sandwich is in charge of our research committee and this is the first in his series of articles telling about the work of his committee. For more information feel free to contact him directly.

SLATE OF OFFICERS

The following names are submitted in nomination for the 1975 term of office: President: Catherine S. Beers; Vice-President: Joseph DiGerlando; Secretary: Hilton Rahn; Treasurer: Margaret H. Taylor; Directors: Catherine Bickel Fluck, Joseph Lopresti, Lorraine Mineo, Charles Sandwich, Sr., Mary Margaret Santee, Lester Stein, Mary Henry Stites and Albert Toth.

Respectfully submitted, Mrs. Charles Sandwich
Chairman, Nominating committee