Swiss German 1717 Immigrant Journey to Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Follow the path of early immigrants to Lancaster. Come sail with us on the Christina River aboard the “Kalmar Nyckel,” a replica of the Swedish boat that brought the first European settlers to the Delaware Valley in 1638. Visit old Philadelphia and experience some of the sites from the original settlements.

Registration is due August 16. Tickets cost $130, members; $145, nonmembers. Seats are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

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Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
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Becky Gochnauer has resigned as director of the 1719 Herr House and Native American Longhouse. She served as director since 2006. During her time as director, the visitors center was remodeled, which expanded the museum store space, exposed the original walls of the 1892 Huber house and put some of the original wood trim back in place. The snake fence was added around the Herr House “front yard,” creating a visual outline to the 1719 historic district. The Native American Longhouse was researched and built in collaboration with local Native Americans. The addition of the Longhouse expands the educational story told at the Museum to include the history of the region prior to the arrival of the immigrant Mennonite Herr family. Educational programming expanded to include three frolics and three nights of candlelight tours. “Music in the Orchard” concerts were also added during her tenure.

Gochnauer will begin working at Mennonite Disaster Service in mid-June. David Schrock, teacher at Ephrata Mennonite School and experienced 1719 Herr House and Longhouse Museum volunteer, will serve as interim director.

The Pennsylvania Dutch Language

What is the story of the Pennsylvania Dutch Language? Find out at 7 pm on Monday, July 17, at the Martindale Mennonite Fellowship Center. Mark Louden, Ph.D., will present the unique story of the Pennsylvania Dutch language. His research traces the ways this language has been sustained and modified by the descendants of German immigrants to North America, including but not limited to Plain Anabaptist groups such as the Amish and Old Order Mennonites.

Louden is professor of Germanic linguistics and codirector of the Max Kade Institute for German-American Studies at the University of Wisconsin—Madison.

He is the author of Pennsylvania Dutch: The Story of an American Language, published in 2016 by Johns Hopkins University Press. Butch Reigart, reviewing it for “Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage,” called it “the number-one book to read for all who are deeply interested in the Pennsylvania Dutch/German dialect, as well as anyone wanting to better understand this key aspect of their Pennsylvania Dutch-speaking fellow citizens, both Plain and non Plain.”

This lecture is free and open to the public. The Martindale Mennonite Fellowship Center is located at 352 Martindale Road, Ephrata, Pa.
Music in the Orchard

Joy Ike, born to Nigerian immigrants, will give the third concert on Saturday, July 8. With poetic lyrics, soaring vocals, and percussive piano-playing, Ike performs a unique blend of neo-soul with a hint of pop. Terry Strongheart, noted Native American musician, will open.

Sopa Sol will give the fourth concert on Saturday, July 22. Sopa Sol is the combined group of Daryl Snider—a singer-songwriter, guitarist, and saxophonist—and Frances Crowhill Miller. Their music is organic and soulful, with attention given to worldwide influences.

The series will end with a performance by Smokehouse 4 on Saturday, August 5. Smokehouse 4 draws on the rich tradition of New Orleans blues and soul, with a dash of funk, to deliver powerhouse jams and gritty, tight grooves.

Concerts are held rain or shine. In inclement weather, the concert will move into the implement shed on the museum grounds. In cases of severe weather, cancellations will be announced by 3 PM on the day of the concert.
Who Are the Dutchiricans?

Rolando Santiago, executive director

This past spring, the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society (LMHS) hosted an exhibit called “Dutchirican: A Latino History of Central Pennsylvania.”

When I first encountered the word “Dutchirican,” I knew some people would feel offended, and others would feel proud. However, the intent of the word was to represent the complex historical dynamics of a growing group of central Pennsylvanians whose background was Hispanic. The “rican” part of the word refers to Puerto Ricans who migrated en masse in the 1940s-1950s to big industrial cities of New York and Philadelphia and to rural communities of northeastern United States. This large migration initiated a period of rapid growth of the Hispanic population.

John Hinshaw and Ivette Guzmán-Zavala, professors at Lebanon Valley College, curated the exhibit. According to them, “this exhibit looks at the diverse history of the region, exploring some of the reasons Latinos choose to work and live here, as well as the deep roots this community has in Pennsylvania. It includes an analysis of some groups that continue to expand, such as Puerto Rican Mennonites.”

The “Dutchirican” exhibit is now travelling to the Suzanne H. Arnold Art Gallery (934 Church and White Oak Streets, Annville, Pa.) of Lebanon Valley College. It opens on Thursday, June 29 (1 PM–4 PM) and Friday, June 30 (1 PM–4 PM), with a reception on Friday, June 30, 5-7 PM. It will continue through August 13 on Saturdays and Sundays from 11 AM–5 PM.

Why is the “Dutchirican” exhibit relevant to the history that LMHS features? History is about recording events of the past. LMHS preserves, interprets, and communicates the history of Mennonites connected to Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. For two and a half centuries, these Mennonites were mostly of Swiss German ancestry; but over the past seventy years, Lancaster Mennonites are becoming more diverse. For instance, of the total of 164 congregations in Lancaster Mennonite Conference, twenty-one are Hispanic.

I encourage you to consider visiting the “Dutchirican” exhibit. You may want to organize a Sunday school class for an inspiring learning experience. Consider also attending the opening reception on Friday, June 30.

Ephrata “Martyrs’ Mirror” at July 14 Book Auction

A Martyrs’ Mirror, published in Ephrata in 1748, will be sold at the July 14, 2017, book auction. This valuable book from the Groffdale Mennonite Meetinghouse is in good condition.

Another old Mennonite book, Die Kleine Geistliche Harfe der Kinder Zions, an 1803 hymnbook published for the Franconia Mennonites, is included in the auction.

A more recent Mennonite book, The Jonas Martin Era, a presentation copy from the editor to Sjouke Voolstra will be of special interest.


Encyclopedias include a four-volume set of Mennonite Encyclopedia, and the Brethren Encyclopedia.

For local historians there is an original Ellis and Evans History of Lancaster County and a reprint of the same book. There are also Revolutionary War era books from the collection of York County Heritage Trust.

Full catalogs are available at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. The sale will be held at Society headquarters, starting at 6:30 PM. Absentee bids are accepted until 4:30 PM, Thursday, July 13.

Three Cocalico Deeds Acquired

Steve Ness, librarian and archivist

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society recently purchased three deeds which should be of interest to Mennonite, Cocalico, and Bricker family historians. All three indentures apparently were never recorded at the Lancaster courthouse.

1. Christian Eby (1734-1807), Warwick Township, Lancaster County, Pa., and Tietrick Caquelin (Dietrich Gockley, 1714-1793), Cocalico Township, executors for Peter Bricker (1700-1761), Cocalico Twp., to John Bricker (d. 1813), one of the sons of Peter Bricker, 242 acres in Cocalico Twp., September 15, 1761. Contains the signatures of Christian Eby and Didie Caquelin (Tietrick Caquelin).

2. Christian Eby, Warwick Township, Lancaster County, Pa., and Tietrick Caquelin, Cocalico Township, executors for Peter Bricker, Cocalico Twp., to Jacob Bricker, one of the sons of Peter Bricker, 264+ acres in Cocalico Twp., September 15, 1761. Contains the signatures of Christian Eby and Didie Caquelin.

3. Samuel (1780?-1841) and Barbara Bricker, Cocalico Township, Lancaster County, Pa., to Joseph Eby (1772-1854), Cocalico Twp., 124+ acres in Cocalico Twp., March 31, 1813. Christian Eby (1734-1807) married Catherine Bricker (1743-1810), a daughter of Peter Bricker. He was ordained ca. 1776 as the first deacon for the Hammer Creek Mennonite congregation.

These deeds have been cataloged as part of the LMHS Deeds Collection. Persons interested in viewing them should contact Steve Ness (sness@lmhs.org; 717.393.9745 x202) to make arrangements.