Upcoming Events

Blacksmith Days
June 20, 12-4 pm, June 21 10-4 pm
1719 Hans Herr House and Museum

From Germany to Germantown
September 20, 7:30-5:30 pm; See p. 2
Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society

Native American Tour
November 1, 8:30 am-5:30 pm; See p. 2
Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society (USPS 882-020)
2215 Millstream Road,
Lancaster, PA 17602-1499

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- Exploring the Title Search Index
- The Arts and History
- Take a Trip with the Society

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Community Favorite Bookworm Frolic

This coming August, over 40,000 books will cover the grounds of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society. Laid out in neat rows, their unveiling heralds the 34th annual Bookworm Frolic. This year, the frolic will start Wednesday, August 13 and runs through Saturday, August 16. The sale opens at 9 AM every day, closing at 7 PM Wednesday through Friday and at 4 PM on Saturday.

David Sauder, Bookworm Frolic Coordinator, notes that the sale “is about making books available to the community.” And the community has responded positively over the years.

Last year, nearly 4,000 people visited over the course of four days, and purchased a combined total of over 24,000 books. This year looks to be even better. There are 25 categories of books to pick and choose from, ranging from history and biography to fiction and music. There is an especially fine selection of books for children.

Books start between $3 and $1, with prices dropping each successive day. The final two days of the frolic, there is a “box special,” where prices are reduced even further—$15 per box on Friday, going down to $10 on Saturday.

An assortment of food will be available throughout the frolic, including sandwiches, cold beverages, homemade pies and Lapp Valley Farm ice cream. Chicken BBQ will be available Friday only.

The Society’s year-round bookstore will also be open, selling new and used books, folk art, music, games, and genealogical resources. There will be a 10% discount on all new books, and a 25% to 75% discount on select titles.

Joanne Shenandoah blends folk and traditional music into an ancestrally inspired fusion. Her music has been repeatedly honored, with a Grammy, 13 Native American Music awards, and over 30 other recognitions. Describing Shenandoah’s singing, Robbie Robertson formerly of The Band, notes “she weaves you into a trance with her beautiful Iroquois Chants and wraps her voice around you like a warm blanket on a cool winter’s night.”

Shenandoah will give a concert benefiting the Lancaster Longhouse on Saturday, August 30, 7 PM, at the Fulton Theatre in Lancaster, Pa.

Scott Sundberg, Director of Development, explains “This is just one way that the Society is helping to educate the community about local Native American history. This event is a way to greater understanding of who our neighbors are and is a foundation for healing.”

Part of this is the symbolic importance of holding this performance at the Fulton Theatre, which stands on the site where the Paxtang Boys massacred the last of the Conestoga Indians in 1763.

Tickets are available for $25 and $45, depending on seating. All money raised will go to support the Lancaster Longhouse. The longhouse is an exhibit of the 1719 Hans Herr House and Museum, located at 1849 Hans Herr Dr., Willow Street, Pa., 17584. For more information, visit www.hansherr.org/home/longhouse.
Rare Book Auction

An 1851 cloth map, 42”x48”, and rolled on a wooden frame, is one of many old and valuable items that will be sold at the June 13, 2014 book auction that will take place at the Society headquarters. Book buyers frequently ask where one can purchase “The Earth is the Lord’s,” the comprehensive history of the Lancaster Mennonites; this sale features two of them. The auction also features two copies of “Annals of the Conestoga Valley.” A fine copy of “The Jonas Martin Era” is included in the auction listings. The sale also features some valuable reference books. Two 4-volume sets of “The Mennonite Encyclopedia,” and two 3-volume sets of “The Brethren Encyclopedia” add a lot of interest to the book auction. Persons interested in books published at the Ephrata Cloister will take note of a 1787 German New Testament printed at the Ephrata press. There is a collection of old German books that German readers will find interesting. There are also some unusual non-book items like a 1750 copper plate etching, and an 1840 bookplate.

The entire sale catalog can be accessed at lmhs.org. Information can also be obtained by calling 717-393-9745. Mail-in bids are accepted through 4 p.m., Thursday June 12. No absentee bids under $10 will be accepted.

Music Fills Herr House Orchard

The fourth season of “Music in the Orchard” at the 1719 Hans Herr House and Museum is just around the corner. Come hear ten local bands over the course of five evenings, every other Saturday June 14 through August 9, starting at 6 p.m.

Lancaster’s own Sopa Sol headlines the opening concert on June 14 with their distinctive synthesis of world folk music. Opening for them will be Indian Summer Jars’ dynamic mixture of folk, bluegrass and the blues.

On June 28 Dearest Home will bring traditional music from Pennsylvania to the orchard, with close harmony and authentic instrumentation.

July 12 will hear from Vinegar Creek Constituency and Matt Wheeler. Vinegar Creek plays what they call Amerikindsorta music with a string band, and gives a rollicking live show. Wheeler will open with his poetic folk-rock songs that reflect faith, love, and what it means to be human.

Music in the Orchard takes a jaunt to Ireland and Scotland with Across the Pond. Their music is traditional, woven on fiddle, guitar, whistles and more but comes across with a distinctly modern edge.

Marty Shaughnessy, the former front man of Rainchildren, will open with his original mix of rock, roots, and rhythm.

The season will close with a pair of jazz acts on August 9. The Ryan Kauffman Jazz Trio will take the stage. Jazzreview.com asks of Kauffman “What is not to like about a throaty tenor saxophone with a big aggressive sound, a full voice soprano saxophone, or a hauntingly velvety flute?” Find out as Kauffman brings his exceptional playing to the Orchard. Main Street Mystics will open the evening with a mix of original and jazz standards.

Music in the Orchard concert goers are invited to bring picnics, blankets, and lawn chairs. OCB Bakery will be selling cold drinks and sandwiches. Concerts will be held rain or shine, moving to cover in case of rain, except in cases of dangerous weather. Pets are not invited. Tickets are purchased on site and cost $20, and family passes for $35. For more information on tickets and passes, call (717) 464-4438. The 1719 Herr House an Museum is located at 1849 Hans Herr Drive in Willow Street, Pa.

Take a Trip with the Society

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society has a full roster of upcoming field trips that are sure to entertain and educate. Have you wondered what it was like for the first German immigrants to come to Pennsylvania? Join the Society on Sept. 20 for a trip entitled “From Germany to Germantown.” Sail on the Kalmar Nyckel, a replica of the boat which first brought settlers to the Delaware Valley; experience old Philadelphia, and visit Germantown on this trip which is not to be missed.

Before the Germans and other immigrants came to Lancaster, numerous Native American groups settled the county. Explore the various pre-European cultures of Lancaster and hear about their life before contact and experiences after. This Native American field trip takes place on November 1, from 8:30 am to 5 pm.

In 1950, Puerto Ricans began arriving in Lancaster County to work harvesting tomatoes. Come visit early places of lodging, work, and worship and hear accounts of those initial experiences. This tour will be held Aug. 23, 8 am to 4 pm.

On Sept. 13 take a coach ride through Lancaster and Mennonite history, visiting sites used in the filming of the 1975 film “Hazel’s People.” Each of the trips starts and ends at the Society. For more information about Society trips, visit lmhs.org or call (717) 393-9745.

Community News

Visit lmhs.org for details and more community news.

Juniata Mennonite Historical Center

Annual meeting, Saturday, July 12, 2014 at 9 am, at the Juniata Mennonite Historical Center, 37322 rt. 35 Richfield, Pa. Direct questions to Betty Ann Landis (717) 444-3466

Allegheny Mennonite Historical Association

Annual outdoor meeting, Sunday, July 20 at 6:30 pm, at the 1855 Allegheny Mennonite Meetinghouse, 39 Horning Rd., Alleghenyville, Pa. For more information, e-mail jgsen@windstream.net or call 717-278-8459 or 610-777-3003.
The Arts and History

Art generates sheer joy within me whenever I dedicate time to appreciate human creativity in a painting, a song, or a novel. History helps me make sense of what I’ve learned about the world that has shaped me.

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society often designs events that contain both artistic expression and historical reflection to enrich the lives of participants.

In April, the Folk Art Committee sponsored a tour through three farms of an Old Order family whose members produce elegant paintings, carvings, and furniture made of scrap materials found around a farm. These families are part of groups that have preserved religious traditions for decades.

Also in late April, the Society’s museum acquired three dioramas created by renowned Beachy Amish artist, Aaron Zook. One of these three-dimensional compositions depicts the debate between Jacob Amman and Hans Reist that led to the 1693 schism that formed the Swiss Mennonite and Amish groups.

In September 2014 Saturday evenings, movie enthusiasts will be treated to four authentic Mennonite films, “Silence at Bethany,” “Hazel’s People,” “The Radicals,” and “Pearl Diver,” projected against an outside wall of the tobacco shed at the 1719 Hans Herr House and Museum. Film is a new artistic vehicle Mennonites are using to communicate their historical identity.

When art and history converge, something happens deep in the soul of communities. In an article of the April 2014 issue of the Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage, Anna Showalter made a case for the impact of singing on Mennonite communities: “Music in song, therefore, is a project of community formation, an exercise of the body in finding a unified testimony of faithful discipleship through the harmony of varied voices." On a related note, Lancaster County historian, Clarke Hess, wrote in his 2001 “Mennonite Arts” book about the essence of Mennonite folk art: “Its value is as a timeless reminder of the loving hands that created it, the traditions that it embodies, and the generations of owners who have treasured it ever since.”

Through events that weave history and art, the Society seeks to nurture memory, faith and hope!

Field Trip Registration

Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster, August 23, $55 members; $60 nonmembers. Includes one meal. Registration due August 6.

From Germany to Germantown, September 20, $120 members; $125 nonmembers. One meal. Registration due August 27.

Native American Tour, November 1, $60 members; $65 nonmembers. Includes one meal. Registration due October 15.

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Please return to LMHS, 2215 Millstream Road, Lancaster, PA 17602-1499

Before a real estate transfer can occur, numerous legal documents must be researched to determine whether there are any liens, mortgages, back taxes, etc. that must be paid off at closing, or if there are restrictions or easements on the land in question.

In 2012 LMHS received three filing cabinets containing nearly 3,000 title search documents compiled by three Lancaster law firms—William H. Mann; John A. O’Brien; and Stein, Storh, Mann & O’Brien. Thanks to the diligent work of LMHS volunteer, Leonard Groff, indexes of these documents are now available on the Society’s website (www.lmhs.org).

While all these records are the public domain, it is a time-consuming process to pull together all of these documents, so it is useful when one finds that the legwork has already been done for a specific property. That is the advantage of this collection.

For each property, the law firm created a Summary or Brief of Title. Typically these include not only references to legal documents, but copies of entire deeds, wills, Orphans’ Court records, survey drafts, etc. that are relevant to the history of a particular property. This establishes the “chain of title” for a property but can also reveal related documents that may be of interest to the genealogist as well.

The records in this collection were compiled from the 1920s to the 1990s, and generally include records at least 80-100 years prior to those dates. Most of the researched properties are in Lancaster County, with a concentration in Lancaster City.

The indexes allow for searching/sorting by owner, other persons mentioned, location, date, and more. Researchers are welcome to view the documents in the LMHS library or to request copies (library@lmhs.org; 717.393.9745; fees apply).