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Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society (USPS 882-020)
2215 Millstream Road,
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Celebrities and Cellmates at Family History Conference

by Eileen R. Kinch

Does your family have connections to a famous historical figure? How can you prove this is true or just an urban legend? The 2015 Lancaster Family History Conference can help you find out. Joshua Taylor, cohost of the PBS series *Genealogy Roadshow*, will give some tips in the keynote speech, “Celebrities and Cellmates: Finding that Famous . . . or Infamous . . . Ancestor.” Taylor, who has also been featured on NBC and TLC’s *Who Do You Think You Are?*, is a professional genealogist for Findmypast.com.

The conference will also offer workshops on locating famous or infamous ancestors. “Lawyers, Judges and Trials” gives researchers context in understanding legal documents. For those researching forebears without land or money, “Finding Land-Less Ancestors” suggests techniques to locate persons who did not leave behind deeds or wills. Another workshop, “To Share and Share Alike,” helps participants to understand estate records. For those interested in the latest scientific methods, “The DNA of Celebrities Past and Present” reviews the DNA of European nobility, United States presidents, and some celebrities. Attendees who have had previous testing can see how their DNA compares to that of someone famous.

The Lancaster Family History Conference is not just for experienced researchers. The workshop “Beginner’s Luck—A Primer for the Beginning Genealogist” covers methodology and concepts to help beginners focus their research. “What is a Palatine, Anyway?” aids those seeking an introduction to their German ancestors. Other workshops will provide information on records and holdings of the Moravian Archives, the Pennsylvania State Archives, and the Lancaster County Archives.

Field trips and research seminars take place on Thursday and Friday before the conference. Attendees who go to the Lancaster County Archives will be given a tour and time for their own research. Research seminars include special research assistance, a DNA roundtable discussion, and learning how to decipher German script. Joshua Taylor will also share about past and current episodes of the PBS series in a special seminar, “Behind the Scenes of the Genealogy Roadshow.”

The conference runs April 23-25, 2015. The Saturday conference and workshops will take place at the Lancaster Host and Resort Conference Center at 2300 Lincoln Highway East, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Registration is available online at www.lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. Registration for field trips and seminars is done separately from the conference, but priority seating will be given to conference attendees.

Dr. Nancy Heisey, former president of Mennonite World Conference, will speak at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society annual banquet.

This summer, Mennonite World Conference will hold its assembly in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. World Conference Assembly, dubbed “PA 2015,” has been a way for Mennonite and Brethren in Christ congregations to connect with the global church every six years since 1925. Get a glimpse of the inner workings of Mennonite World Conference as Nancy Heisey delivers an address on the topic “Does Mennonite World Conference Unify All Anabaptists?” at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society’s annual banquet at 7 PM on Saturday, April 11.

Heisey is a professor of biblical studies and church history in the Bible and Religion department of Eastern Mennonite University. Her work has been influenced by a childhood with Brethren in Christ missionary parents among the Navajo people. She was also shaped by her years as a secondary schoolteacher with Mennonite Central Committee in the Democratic Republic of Congo. She served as president of Mennonite World Conference from 2003 to 2009.

The annual banquet will be held at Yoder’s Restaurant and Banquet Facility, 14 South Tower Road, New Holland. Tickets cost $25 per person and can be purchased online at lmhs.org or by calling (717) 393-9745. The deadline for registration is Tuesday, April 7.
Upcoming Folk-art Events

The Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society has a trio of opportunities showcasing Pennsylvania German folk art as part of the Lancaster Roots program of events.

On Saturday, March 14, come to the Society and learn about pies in the Mennonite tradition. This is a great opportunity to celebrate pie and pick up pointers on making a good pie crust from the demonstrators on hand. If you need a recipe, all cookbooks in the store will be 20% off as well. Plus, you don’t have to leave hungry. There will be a wide variety of pies available to sample, along with good coffee to accompany it. Space is limited, and tickets cost $15; children 12 and under are free.

Later in the month, come back to the Society to hear Ann Hermes talk about Pennsylvania patchwork pillowcases and other small treasures. Hermes, author of a book by the same name, will talk about this distinctly Pennsylvania German folk art from 10 AM to 12 PM on Saturday, March 28, 2015. There will also be an exhibit of items from the LMHS museum collection and local collectors. This event is free and open to the public.

Finally, you can also join the Society on Saturday, April 18, for a tour of Lancaster County Old Order Mennonite folk art featuring the extended Hoover family farms and shops. Ride buck wagons through rural settings to see painters, carvers, and woodworkers. The evening ends with a hearty Pennsylvania Dutch dinner in the home of Mary Hoover. Tickets cost $45 for Society members and $50 for nonmembers; registration deadline is April 11. Space is limited.

For more information about any of these events and to register, visit lmhs.org or call (717) 393-9745.

Society Hosts Five Field Trips in 2015

This year the Society is offering five field trips exploring Mennonites and Lancaster County.

On Saturday, May 2, from 8 AM to 5:30 PM, “Of Dioramas, Nobel Prizes, and Mennonites” will visit three sites of special interest: the home of James and Nancy Binsberger, the Mennonite Heritage Center, and the home of Pearl S. Buck. The Binsberger residence is notable for the fine collection of Abner and Aaron Zook dioramas, some of which were exhibited this past year at the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

The Mennonite Heritage Center is noted for its fine collection of fraktur, the largest such collection of any Mennonite institution.

Pearl S. Buck was an American writer and novelist who won the 1938 Nobel Prize in literature. The field trip costs $85 for members of the Society and $95 for nonmembers; one meal is included in the cost of registration. The deadline for registration is April 17.

A week and a half later, on Monday, May 11, from 4:30 to 11 PM, join the Society to learn more about Mennonites and baseball. Enjoy a game in Harrisburg, and watch the Senators take on the Reading Phillies while hearing stories of current and past Mennonites who have played Major League Baseball. The field trip costs $40 for members and $50 for nonmembers. The deadline for registration is April 28.

If you want a more rural experience, take a tour around the back roads of Lancaster County to visit a few historic covered bridges. Kenneth Collins, author of Covered Bridges of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, will lead this tour on Saturday, May 16, from 8:30 AM to 4 PM. The tour costs $55 for members and $65 for nonmembers; one meal is included in the trip. The registration deadline is May 5.

On Saturday, June 13, from 9 AM to 5 PM, you can join a field trip exploring Germanic architecture in Warwick and Manheim. Discover the historic treasures in Manheim Township, Warwick Township, and the surrounding areas. The tour will highlight examples of early Germanic architecture and changing styles as people of different cultural heritages became neighbors and influenced each other. The tour costs $50 for members and $60 for nonmembers; one meal is included in the trip. The deadline for registration is June 2.

The final trip of 2015 is a revised and expanded encore of the “Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania,” on Saturday, October 31, from 8 AM to 4 PM. See where Puerto Rican workers lived, worked, and worshiped, and hear personal accounts of their initial experiences. The tour costs $50 for members and $60 for nonmembers; one meal is included in the trip. The deadline for registration is October 20.

To register for one or more of these field trips, visit lmhs.org, call the Society at (717) 393-9745, or submit the registration form below.

Field Trip Registration

Of Dioramas, Nobel Prizes, and Mennonites: May 2, $85 members, $95 nonmembers; includes one meal. Registration due April 7.

Mennonites and Baseball: May 11, $40 members, $50 nonmembers. Registration due April 28.

Covered Bridges: May 16, $55 members, $65 nonmembers; includes one meal. Registration due May 5.

Germanic Architecture in Warwick and Manheim: June 13, $50 members, $60 nonmembers; includes one meal. Registration due June 2.

Hispanic Mennonites of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania: October 31, $50 members, $60 nonmembers; includes one meal. Registration due October 20.

My check is payable to Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society.

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Lancaster Mennonites Engaged Around the World

by Rolando L. Santiago

Lancaster Mennonites started to engage the world in significant ways almost one hundred years ago. In the late 1910s, they contributed funds for victims of World War I in the Middle East. In 1920, they also played an important role in establishing the Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) to help Ukrainian Mennonites fleeing from war and famine.

MCC is an agency of Mennonite and Brethren in Christ churches with offices in Akron, Pennsylvania. MCC workers have made important contributions to relief, development, and peace. For example, conscientious objectors to war under MCC reformed medical health institutions in the 1940s. Through the PAX program, MCC workers helped rebuild Europe after World War II. MCC was also involved in establishing one of the oldest and largest fair-trade organizations in the world, Ten Thousand Villages, which continues to have its headquarters in Lancaster County. It was instrumental in birthing Mennonite Economic Development Associates in the 1950s, which today creates business solutions to poverty with projects located in nearly fifty countries.

Lancaster Mennonites have also been historically engaged in missions around the world since the 1930s through Eastern Mennonite Missions in Salunga, Pennsylvania. In collaboration with local communities, EMM workers helped establish some of the largest Mennonite conferences in the world. One of them is the Meserete Kristos Church of Ethiopia with over 224,000 baptized members, representing the largest conference affiliated with Mennonite World Conference (MWC).

This coming summer, from July 21-26, MWC will hold its Assembly (PA 2015) at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

To prepare for PA 2015, the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society has partnered with the Brethren in Christ Historical Society and MWC to sponsor several pre-assembly events, including celebrations of Anabaptist communities in Latin America, Africa, and Asia, book discussions, lectures, and music events. These events are listed in the calendar at lmhs.org, at LancasterRoots.org, and featured in brochures that you can obtain by calling (717) 393-9745. Hope to see you at these events!

Auction Features Four Centuries of Martyrs’ Mirrors

People looking to purchase a Martyrs’ Mirror can choose from ones published in four different centuries and three different languages during the auction of rare and used books on Friday, March 13, beginning at 6 PM. The sale includes a book published in 1685 in the original Dutch language; a 1748 German-language edition published in Ephrata; and two English editions, one published in 1886 at Elkhart, Indiana, and another 1964 book published in Scottsdale, Pennsylvania. All four of these books can be examined before the sale date.

The catalog list also includes many books on Amish and Mennonite history. Steven Nolt’s revised History of the Amish and Paton Yoder’s Eine Würzel: Tennessee John Stoltzfus are significant books about the Amish. John Landis Ruth’s The Earth

Recent Acquisitions

Religion/Theology
Heatwole, Charles A. Religion in the creation and preservation of sectarian culture areas: a Mennonite example. 1974 (BX8117. V8 H43 1974)

Biography/Genealogy
Miller, Andrew L. History and genealogy of Adam B. Miller and Elizabeth Beachy, 1842-2012. Andrew L. Miller, 2013 (CS71.M647 2013)

Miscellaneous
Lehman, Earl Wade. A study of the effectiveness of the music curricula of the liberal arts colleges affiliated with the Mennonite Church. 1973 (MT18 J.44 1973)