

THE CHURCH SQUARE JOURNAL

Published Spring and Fall by the Archives Committee of the Lititz Moravian Congregation

Volume 21

Church Square, Lititz, Pennsylvania

Spring 2017

Archivers Visit Historic Huber Tavern



The Huber Tavern, now Forgotten Seasons B&B, as it appears today

Several years ago the Archives Committee added regular talks on Moravian history and related topics to their monthly meetings. Such talks have included focus on John George Klein, the William Penn land grants in Pennsylvania, and various artifacts and instruments in the Archives Museum collection. The Committee has also undertaken field trips to such locations as Landis Valley Museum and Historic Bethlehem.

On a recent visit to the historic Huber Tavern (now Forgotten Seasons B&B on Newport Road) to do research, archives member Kim Barabas met with present owners Jay and Kathy Wenger and learned

that they were open to offering a tour of the former tavern to the Archives Committee. The Wengers also encouraged Kim to invite the committee to remain after the tour to conduct its meeting in the large dining room.

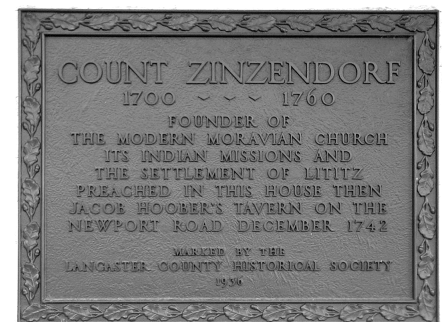
The old Huber Tavern is important to local Moravians because it was here, in December of 1742, that Count Nicholas Ludwig von Zinzendorf first spoke to local citizens about his religious ideals. A local land owner noted for *not* attending Zinzendorf's speech was John George Klein, who later heard Zinzendorf speak in Lancaster and was so moved that in 1755 he conveyed his entire tract of land over to the Moravians to found a new religious settlement, which would be called Lititz. A large bronze plaque, affixed to the front of the tavern wall in 1936, commemorates Zinzendorf's speech.

Archives committee members toured the old tavern, led by the Wengers. One highlight was a trip up the stairs into the third-floor attic. Just like our Brother's House attic, this attic remains much as it was in its early days, with old blue paint on the woodwork, white plaster walls, and the original wide-plank floor. The attic also sported a small smoke house, where meats and sausages were cured, even as recently as the 1950s.

Another highlight was a trip outside the building, down the steep sandstone steps, and into the arched cold cellar that was built under the original part of the tavern. This is where the inn keeper would store food stuffs and, most likely, ale for his road-weary guests. Jay Wenger explained that, in constructing the arch, workers would shape the arch with dirt fill, lay the brick arch over the dirt, then dig out the cellar again, leaving the arch free-standing. The walls are lined with thick limestone, and Jay explained that a stream sometimes wells up and flows through the cellar.

After the tour, the committee conducted its meeting in the dining room, which likely served as the main tavern room in the inn. If only these walls could talk! The Wengers graciously provided the group with a cheese, bologna, and cookie tray. It was a pleasant, productive, and informative evening.

Archives Committee members and guests continue to enjoy half-hour presentations on historical topics prior to each monthly meeting. Congregation members and friends are invited to join the committee in the Heritage Dining Room at 6:30 pm on the second Tuesday of the month for these interesting and informative lectures.



Zinzendorf Memorial Plaque

~ Thomas L. Wentzel

A Message from the Chair

We welcome our readers back to this most recent issue of The Church Square Journal. This publication was conceived and started by one of our current archivists, Wayne B. LeFevre, in 1976 and published until 1981. It then went into hibernation until resurrected by a newcomer to Lititz and to the Moravian Archives Committee, Bob Sandercox, in 2008. Over lunch at the General Sutter Inn, Bob and Wayne hashed out a plan to bring The Church Square Journal back into being. Bob was the editor and publisher until his passing in 2015. We dedicate the return of The Church Square Journal, under our new editor, Marian L. Shatto, to Bob's memory. I would like to thank all those who contributed articles and helped reestablish this publication. We hope you find the articles enjoyable, and in the process, learn more about the history, hidden treasures, and activities of the Lititz Moravian Museum and Archives Committee.

~ John Clark, Chairman, Archives Committee



A Note from the Editor

The first issue of The Church Square Journal appeared in the Fall of 1976. Edited by Brother Wayne B. LeFevre, and building on the renewed interest in Lititz history that had been generated by the nation's Bicentennial celebrations, it was designed to be a semiannual publication containing historical vignettes, more in-depth research, and news of current activities

of the Archives Committee of the Lititz Moravian Congregation. Ten issues were produced between that initial printing and Spring 1981; then publication ceased. Those early journals remain a treasure trove of information to this day.

The Church Square Journal was dormant but not forgotten. In 2008 Brother Robert Sandercox, a recent and welcome addition to our church family, teamed up with Brother Wayne to revive its publication. With Bob's editorial expertise and ability to cajole writers into providing a steady stream of contributions, combined with Wayne's vast knowledge of the historical intricacies of Lititz Moravian, eleven more issues appeared between Fall 2008 and Fall 2014. Then declining health forced Bob to suspend his efforts. On December 27, 2015, Brother Bob passed from this life into the more immediate presence of our Savior.

This time the Archives Committee was unwilling to see a hiatus of twenty-seven years before the next issue of The Church Square Journal would appear. Members of the committee approached this writer, who had worked with Bob as author and proofreader, and inquired if I would be willing to assume the editorship. After some thought and prayer, I agreed to give it a try. I am thankful for the great support that I am receiving from the Archives Committee, and for all the proofreaders, and contributors who have provided copy.

So this is an open invitation to all who love history and Lititz Moravian. If you have an idea or a story; if you have been working on a history project or know someone who is; if you are intrigued with some odd fact about our buildings or grounds, customs and practices, and want to explore it in greater depth, please write about it and send it in. My email address is mlshatto@dejazzd.com. Submissions are always welcome. They will be what keep this third iteration of The Church Square Journal going into the future. Thank you.

~ Marian L. Shatto

Twenty-five Years of Giving ... The Moravian Mission Gift Shop

"The Little Shop with the Big Heart"

For the past 25 years, in an inconspicuous location on Church Square in Lititz, something special has been happening. From a small shop located behind the Archives Museum, thousands of dollars have been given away locally and worldwide. The concept of helping others in need began in March of 1992 under the leadership of Rick Nelson, an active Moravian Missionary, who worked in the Lititz church office at that time. Over the years, many volunteers have generously given their time to maintain the Shop and to greet visitors from places both local and faraway.

Housed in what was once the kitchen area when the building was known as The Moravian Home, where elderly widowed or single women lived, the shop for many years was accessed only by a narrow walkway. Signs led visitors around the Museum



Stars and candles in all shapes and sizes are featured in the shop.

to the door of the Shop. There now is an entrance from Main Street with a sidewalk and beautiful perennial gardens greeting customers and visitors. A unique feature near the Shop entrance is the restored privy which was located on this historical property, certainly a conversation piece.

As you enter the shop, you will walk into a "cloud of stars" hanging from the ceiling. The shop handles a variety of Moravian stars, from traditional lighted ones made of translucent plastic, to decorative tin punch, stars etched on glassware, framed, and printed on tea towels and notecards. Visitors find an eclectic array of items for gift giving ... and maybe something special for themselves.



A few of the selections for historical and inspirational reading

All proceeds go directly to helping others. Beneficiaries of annual donations are carefully and prayerfully decided by a committee of shop volunteers, with 20% distributed locally to Lititz/Warwick projects, 30% to Lancaster County projects, and 50% to projects of the world-wide Moravian Church. Every purchase helps to spread God's blessings to those in need.

Shop hours are from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm Friday and Saturday, March through September. In October, November, and December the Shop is open Thursday, Friday, and Saturday. At other times a volunteer will gladly open the Shop by appointment. Please call 717-626-9027 or email: moravianshop@gmail.com

~ Kim Barabas

Asylum: The Case of Mary Tippet

Mary Penry (1735-1804) often described the Lititz single sisters' house in which she lived for more than forty years as an "Asylum." By this word she meant primarily that the choir house was a religious refuge that protected her from the spiritual dangers of the wider world. The daily routines and organized piety of the single sisters' house sustained Penry's faith. But the single sisters' house also served Penry (and others) as an economic refuge. These choir houses offered a place of security from an early American social and economic world that posed particular dangers to single women for whom the promise of America had turned out to be an illusion. Moravian sisters' houses made room for these women, giving some a chance at a fulfilling life.

The case of Mary Tippet (1750-1829) illuminates the opportunities available to girls from impoverished families. Tippet's mother had emigrated from England to Maryland, where Mary—later often called Molly—was born. Bishop Augustus Gottlieb Spangenberg, traveling to North Carolina, encountered her when she was twelve. Spangenberg told her: "you belong to the Lord, you are and will remain His property." In subsequent years she met Nathanael and Johanna Seidel and Joseph and Martha Powell, whom Moravian authorities sent to preach in the Carroll's Manor area in Maryland. Tippet describes her teenage self as torn between matters of the spirit and things of the world, but the Powells fired Mary Tippet's desire to go to Bethlehem. "I held firmly to my Savior and asked Him to grant me strength and grace to withstand all temptations and He helped me graciously through it all." During a visit by Nathanael Seidel in October 1767, she was given permission to move to Lititz "as the first fruits" of the Savior's work in Maryland.

Tippet's desire to go to Bethlehem contended with her mother's desire to keep her daughter with her. "It was hard for me to tell my mother about my wish [to live in Bethlehem]," Tippet recalled in her lebenslauf, "because I knew she would not want me to leave her." But on November 25, 1767, Joseph Powell wrote that he "took leave of our child Mary Trippit, who with her Mother set on her journey (by way of Lititz) to Bethlehem." They arrived in Lititz on November 29. Moravian authorities decided that Lititz, rather than Bethlehem, was the best place for her—and her mother returned to Maryland on December 2. Tippet spoke no German.

She lived at first with John Christian and Anna Barbara Fenstermacher in Lititz, not in the single sisters' house. The *Pflegerin* (spiritual leader) of the sisters' house, Mary Magdalena Augustine, wrote that "I believe Molly belongs to a Choir House, but it is likewise good that at first she be a few weeks as a guest with us therefore we have beg'd Brother and Sister Fenstermakers to take her to them and to give her her board & lodging till it shall please our dear Saviour to give her leave to move into the Choir House." Tippet received permission to move to the Lititz Single Sisters' House early in 1768. In April, she wrote to the Powells that "It is not in my Power to express the filial Love and Gratitude which My Heart feels toward you in Words ... I am quite happily Situated in my dear Choir House and hope and pray that our dear Saviour may form me according to his Heart." Tippet lived in a Moravian single sisters' house for the rest of her long life.

Tippet's mother would send four children from three husbands to Moravian communities. Born Sarah Palmer (and known as "Sally"), she first married Benjamin Chitty, then Henry Tippet, and then Robert Toon. Her eldest son, Benjamin Chitty (1743-1822), would live in Moravian communities of Carroll's Manor, Salem, and Lititz. With Henry Tippet, Sally had at least two children: a son, who became a leather dresser (in 1777 he looked for work in Salem), and a daughter, Mary Tippet, who, as we have seen, came to Lititz in 1767. Sally's second husband died in 1752, and by the

geb. Tag	geb. Ort	Aufnahm.	Auflösung	geb. Alter in d. J.	Vermerk
	Susanne Charlotte	d. 23. Febr.	Werde		
	v. Gersdorf	1731.	in d. Lititz	1741	1745. 1747. auf Hagerau
	Maria Tippet	d. 11. April 1750.	in Fried. v. d. Lititz	d. 30. Nov. 1767.	d. 22. Juli 1789.
	Maria Barbara	d. 23. Jun. 1739.	Cley	d. 30. April 1759.	d. 2. Juli 1783.
	Linbachin				
	Elisab. Burnett	d. 16. Juli 1750.	Newyork	1749.	1752. 1754.
	Maria Penry	d. 12. Nov. 1735.	Wales	d. 17. Jun. 1756.	d. 25. Jan. 1750. d. 13. Aug. 1757.
	Maria Magdal.	d. 13. Jun. 1745.	Cley	d. 8. April 1761.	d. 6. Dec. 1761. d. 12. Jan. 1765.
	Cleavelin				
	Maria Catharina	d. 11. Mart. 1737.	Wetterau	d. 9. May 1759.	d. 26. Dec. 1761. d. 10. April 1764.
	Sommerin				
	Anna Conrada	d. 16. Jun. 1743.	Wittenburg	d. 15. Jun. 1763.	d. 3. Nov. 1763. d. 28. Oct. 1767.
	Strubelin				
	Benigna Froelichin	d. 1. April 1748.	Bethlehem	d. 17. Aug. 1760.	d. 11. Febr. 1764.
	Christina Pufchin	d. 4. Jan. 1754.	Yorktown	d. 3. Nov. 1770.	d. 5. May 1771. d. 31. Oct. 1772.
	Elisab. Tippet	d. 10. Dec. 1756.	Lancaster	d. 14. Sept. 1767.	d. 23. May 1768. d. 30. Dec. 1770.
	Anna Nilsin	d. 24. Juli 1745.	Hagerau	d. 14. Oct. 1758.	d. 13. April 1759.

A page from the Lititz Congregation Member Catalogue of 1784 showing Mary (here "Maria") Tippet's name

time the family met the Moravians in Maryland she had married her third husband, Robert Toon. Both of their children followed Mary Tippet to Lititz. Samuel Toon (1763-1821) came to Lititz in December 1774, living initially with Brother Samuel Fockel (1719-99) until Fockel moved to Wachovia in October 1776, after which Toon moved into the Single Brothers' house. He left Lititz in May 1783 for Bethlehem and lived as an adult in Emmaus, where he was involved in the Fries Rebellion of 1799. Catherine Toon (1761-80) came to Lititz in 1779, sick with consumption, and lived only six months. Sally Toon sent these children to Moravian choir houses because she believed that they would be cared for better there than they would be "in the world." As he sent the sixteen-year old Tippet north from Maryland, Joseph Powell wrote that he knew that the Moravians "could do ... more for her then could be don[e] here [in Maryland]." Powell was thinking not only of Tippet's spiritual but also her material well-being, and his confidence proved well founded.

A few months after Tippet joined the single sisters' choir, Mary Penry wrote to the Powells that Tippet is "in a Blessed School to learn to know herself and the Friend of Sinners and there is no Place where one can learn those 2 important Points better, than a Choir House. She does very well outwardly, is Industrious, and is an Obedient willing Child in the Family. May our dear Saviour carry on the Work begun in her Soul—and bring her from one Degree of Grace to more, till she behold his Face." About a dozen years later, as Mary Magdalena Augustine grew sick, Tippet became her assistant—and, after Augustine's death, she was appointed to serve as the *Pflegerin* of the single sisters' choir in Lititz. When she served the same role in Bethlehem from 1798 to 1809, she was responsible for the spiritual lives of more than one hundred women. She returned to Lititz in 1809 and resumed leadership of the single sisters' choir there.

Tippet retired from her duties in 1817. She had spent a long career, nearly forty years, fostering the spiritual lives of generations of single women, young and old. She seems to have bought a house in Maryland in 1823—but never left the Lititz where she had flourished. She is buried in Lititz's God's Acre, alongside the many sisters whom she had served.

~ Scott Paul Gordon, Lehigh University

Sources:

Mary Magdalena Augustine to Joseph Powell and Martha Powell, December 1, 1767, PP PJos, Moravian Archives, Bethlehem (hereafter, MAB).

Carroll's Manor Diary, November 25, 1767, MAB.

A. L. Oerter, "Graceham, Frederick County, Md.: An Historical Sketch," *Transactions of the Moravian Historical Society* 9 (1913): 119-305.

Mary Penry to Joseph Powell and Martha Powell, June 3, 1768, PP PoJ, Folder 1, MAB.

Joseph Powell to Nathanael Seidel, November 21, 1767, MyA: Maryland, Box 2, MAB.

Mary Tippet, Lebenslauf, Moravian Church Archives and Museum, Lititz.

Mary Tippet to Joseph Powell and Martha Powell, April 25, 1768, PP PoJ, Folder 1, MAB.



Hehl Diary Restoration Completed



With the receipt of the English translation of Volume Two, the restoration and translation of the diaries written by Bishop Matthaeus Hehl during his time of service to the Lititz Congregation are complete. Pastor Roy Ledbetter, translator and annotator of both volumes, finished his work in July 2016. Subsequently .pdf files of both the original diaries and the translations were made available on line to members of the Archives Committee and other interested congregation members. Anyone who would like to read this fascinating history of early Lititz is invited to contact Marian L. Shatto at mlshatto@dejazzd.com to request access to the on-line files.

The originals now reside safely in the climate-controlled vault at the Moravian Church Northern Province Archives in Bethlehem. The meticulous restoration of the very fragile and considerably damaged Volume Two was done by the Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia. Each page has been reassembled from fragments and enclosed in a transparent, flexible casing. In only a few spots is the text unreadable. Returned with the restored volume was a small zip-lock baggy containing unidentified fragments, no more than two tablespoons in volume.

Cost of restoration was covered by a very generous gift from Professor Scott Paul Gordon of Lehigh University. Donations from members of the Lititz Congregation funded the translation. Because final costs were slightly less than had been estimated, a small amount was able to be set aside for future conservation and translation projects. Having available modern English translations of these significant eighteenth century documents has already proven to be a welcome addition to our collection for researchers of Lititz history.

Errata in the 1999 *History of the Lititz Moravian Congregation*

Introduction:

The historian, whether professional or dilettante, must possess a deep and all-consuming interest in the subject which is being researched, and must leave no stone unturned and no lead, however fragile and unbelievable, ignored in quest of accuracy, a quality that must needs be uppermost in mind at all times. If errors in research and reporting are made and published for the reading public, those errors quickly become accepted as gospel by those readers who are unaware of the truth.

Case in point: the updating, writing, and publication of the red-covered history book, published for 1999's celebration of Lititz Moravian Congregation's 250th anniversary, is a laudable achievement. So, whenever this writer refers to that book for any reason, eyebrows rise and countenance grimaces at the thought of three glaring errors. In consultation with The Church Square Journal's late managing editor Robert Sandercox, the decision was made to correct those errors through the medium of this issue of the *Journal*. To be sure, there are scores of books in possession of those who have no access to the *Journal*, and who could not care less about such a seemingly insignificant matter. Nevertheless, in all conscience, the serious readers of the *Journal* must be apprised of their presence within the book's pages.

Erratum #1

Page 12: photo of building, mistakenly identified as the Pilgerhaus

Correction: the photo pictures the Single Brothers House

Readers: Accompanying this article is a copy of the photo as it appears in the book. Compare it with the attendant photo from the writer's collection. The two photos were obviously taken from the same spot and on the same date; one with and one without the grouped men and boys, students and teachers from John Beck's Young Gentlemen's Academy of Lititz, which stood where today's Archives and Museum building stands.

When comparing, note the doorway, the bench to the right of the doorway and the shuttered cellar windows to the doorway's left, the white pump at left edge of photo, the trees and play of light and shadow upon the window panes. At the right rear of the building is a glimpse of what may very well have been the candle-maker's shop, the last survivor of the nine craft shops that stood behind the Brothers House. And on one photo is seen the west façade of the church, which, of course clinches the building's identification as the Single Brothers House. The similarity between the two views should be readily apparent to even the most causal and disinterested observer.



Brothers House with school boys

George Klein, the house on the drawing displays a pent roof between the first and second storeys. It is similar to that of its neighbor built three years later by shoemaker Lewis Cassler and which, fortunately, still stands at 121 East Main Street, owned and occupied by Sister Helen Miksch. This second house – the first private house built in Lititz – became known as the Warden's House. Would that the two stone pent-roofed dwellings were still standing side by side, adding yet more charm and interest to the streetscape. Alas! The stone Pilgerhaus, which later became the



Photo in History, erroneously identified as the Pilgerhaus

The only depiction known to this writer, of the Pilgerhaus itself is a 1757 drawing by Nicholas Garrison, Jr.⁽¹⁾, a copy of which appears here. Built in 1754 by John



Garrison's sketch of the Pilgerhaus

²Huebener: op. cit. p. 7.

Steeple Bells

The Early Years

The ringing of bells has been an integral part of community life in Lititz from its earliest days. Tracing the history of the bells that have graced Church Square is a fascinating, and sometimes puzzling, endeavor. Additional research is still required; this article represents what I have discovered so far.

An entry in the recently translated Hehl diary dated 12 April 1764 states, “our newly recast bell was hung in a frame in front of the Brethren’s House and used for the first time.” And herewith is the first unanswered question: From what was the bell “recast”? Did it replace an earlier one already in use in Lititz? Was it the result of a donation or purchase from another Moravian community? According to historian Mary Huebener, the bell was rung each day at the rising hour.⁽¹⁾ One presumes that it soon was pressed into use for other times as well, including the 11:30 a.m. “lunch hour call” which continues to the present day.



The 1822 Boys' School Bell

Two early 19th century bells are presently housed in the Archives Museum. The finer one, probably of bronze and showing a clear date of 1822, is identified as the Boys’ School Bell. In that year the school headed by John Beck had occupied the newly constructed two-story brick building specifically built for its purpose⁽²⁾, and it appears that a new bell was secured at the same time. The other, an iron bell of considerably inferior quality, is simply marked with the number 2 and is most likely a mass production bell used at some farm or shop.

The Grosh Bell

The church building was dedicated on 13 August 1787. I have not yet been able to discover when a bell was first placed in its steeple, but clearly one was there before the church renovations of 1837, as Huebener notes in her description that “The bell rope hung back of the organ on the west gallery.”⁽³⁾ Substantial documentation exists, however, regarding the bell that replaced it. Samuel Grosh – shop keeper, church officer, and one-time member of the Pennsylvania State Legislature – died on 12 July 1850, leaving a bequest of \$100.00 to the congregation for purchase of a new bell. Negotiations for the selection and purchase were entrusted to Jacob Tshudy, who wasted no time in contacting the Meneely Bell Foundry of West Troy (now Watervliet), New York.

In a letter dated 7 August 1850 Andrew Meneely responds to Tshudy’s initial inquiry, providing a cost of \$0.28/pound for a bell of any size, plus a charge of \$32.00 for complete hangings of yoke and wheel for bells of 500 or 600 pounds and \$35.00 for those of 700 or 800 pounds. Apparently Tshudy had provided dimensions of the steeple in his initial correspondence, for Meneely offers the opinion that “the interior of your steeple or bell room is sufficiently capacious for a bell of 800 or 900 pounds. The aperture however at the side through which the Bell must be introduced will not admit of a larger Bell than one of my 500 pound pattern.” The letter also offers a credit of \$0.20/pound for the old bell, provided that it is shipped back to them after the new one is received.

Three weeks later, after additional exchange of correspondence, a contract was concluded for shipment of a bell of 613 pounds with the hangings and wheel, for a total charge of \$203.64. Meneely notes in the cover letter that “the tone of the Bell is C and its ring, I think, will please.” The bell was to be shipped by barge to Philadelphia, then by cart to Lancaster and on to Lititz. When it had not arrived by September 10th, Jacob Tshudy sent a letter of inquiry to Meneely, who replied on September 14th, “I have made inquiries of the agent of the line where the bell was shipped, who informs me that it was forwarded immediately, but is probably delayed by the break in your canal.”

Finally on September 27th, the agent in Philadelphia reported by letter to Mr. Tshudy, “Dear Sir, the Bell has just arrived, will send it tomorrow if there is any cart in town.” Though the file contains no description of its installation at the church, delivery and hanging must have proceeded without additional delay. A letter sent from the bell foundry on October 29th confirms their receipt of the trade-in, which had arrived that day and been

“weighed on both our scales 293 pounds,” thus generating a credit of \$62.01 and leaving a balance due of \$141.63. When drayage charges were added, the total came to \$183.89, minus the bequest of Samuel Grosh of \$100.00, leaving a cost of \$83.89 to be borne by the congregation. The bell thus secured served Lititz Moravian for nearly 107 years, until the tragic fire of 2 July 1957 sent it crashing to the sanctuary floor.⁽⁴⁾

Rebuilding after the Fire

In that fire two bells fell, the large Grosh bell and a smaller one which rang the quarter hours. Wayne B. LeFevre, writing in the first iteration of The Church Square Journal, supposed that the smaller bell was the one which had occupied the steeple prior to 1850. Details of the purchase of the Grosh bell, as recounted above, make it clear that was not the case. What, then, was the origin of the quarter-hour bell? I had thought to set that question aside until I could find a long afternoon (or three) in which to pore over one hundred seven years' worth of ledgers and Trustees' minutes in hopes of discovering some mention of its acquisition. Then recently Cory Van Brookhoven, President of the Lititz Historical Foundation, forwarded to me an image of a letter he had just discovered in the Foundation files.

The letter, dated 6 January 1860, is from the West Troy Bell Foundry, West Troy, New York to Mr. J. B. Tshudy, Lititz, Lancaster Co, Pa. It reads as follows:

Dear Sir, In reply to your esteemed favor of the 5th inst. we have to say that, our present price for Bells of all sizes, made of the best materials, & warranted in every particular for one year is 35 cents per pound. The price of the mountings can be ascertained by refering to the circular which we have this day mailed to your address.

We have an assortment constantly on hand, & could fill any order immediately upon its receipt. The sizes range about as follows, vz: 518# the key of C, 620# C, 724# B, 828# B, 927# B flat; 1031# A &c. &c. The tones are full & clear & the vibrations long & distinct. We would be pleased to supply you with a Bell & feel confident that we could do so to the satisfaction of all concerned, or failing to do so, we would not, under any circumstances allow you to retain it. This is our method of doing business. We would deliver in Philada. Hoping soon to have the pleasure to hear from you again.

We remain, truly &c. A. Meneely's Sons, Agents

The addressee appears to be the same Jacob Tshudy who negotiated purchase of the Grosh bell nearly ten years before. But why would he be inquiring again about the purchase of a large bell? Is this the initiation of acquisition of the smaller bell to ring the quarter hours? Clearly more research is required, but at least I now have a date to provide a starting point.

The first months after the fire were dedicated to clean-up and salvage. A building committee was established under the leadership of John Muth, and the determination was made to restore the sanctuary as much as possible to the structure and appearance that it had had prior to the tragedy. The Grosh bell was damaged but still essentially in one piece. It was placed on a wooden platform in the parking area behind the church, where it would remain while reconstruction continued. The small bell was also recovered, though I have found no mention of its condition.

The most important decision to make in regard to the bells was whether to recast the existing bells, or to order new ones. A Building Committee (hereafter “B.C.”) report of 9 January 1958 indicates that Mr. Reidenbaugh was to request costs of each course of action, so that an informed decision could be made. A Church Council held on 7 April 1958 approved the purchase of a complete new bell. Subsequently, the file regarding the bells was turned over to a fundraising committee.

Of interest is the report to Church Council on 23 June 1958 detailing the costs of the various options. A quote from the McShane Bell Foundry Company, Inc. provides prices for “one 1500-pound, 41 inch diameter Bell cast to any tone and one 300-pound Bell,” and notes that the “1500-pound bell is intended to replace former 1600-pound bell.” It appears that considerable misapprehension of size and weight of the Grosh bell had developed over the decades, with nearly a half ton of perceived heft added to its original 613 pounds. Fortunately, by August, when firm bids were solicited, a more accurate knowledge of what needed to be replaced had been established.

On 12 November 1958, the B.C. reviewed and discussed quotes from three suppliers and agreed to order the new bells from the I. T. Verdin Company of Cincinnati, Ohio, at a net price of \$2,114.50. Minutes of the

meeting note, "This company has the original details of our old bell and should be best qualified to match the tone." The contracted order, concluded with Verdin on 19 November 1958, included one 760-pound bronze bell with complete swinging hangings and one 86-pound bronze bell (to ring the quarter hours) with clapper or hammer and bolt. Verdin also offered a quote on the tower clock, which would have enabled them to install both clock and bells with proper synchronization. The B.C., however, accepted a lower bid on the clock from Rodgers Clock Service of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a decision which would prove problematic later.

Reconstruction continued through the winter months, and on 21 March 1959 the B.C. instructed its secretary, Benjamin Forrest, to get the delivery date for the new bells so that they could be raised with the same equipment used for the steeple. A Building Committee meeting on 30 March established tentative completion dates of 13 April through 24 April for the hanging of the bells. This proved to be overly optimistic. The bells finally arrived in Lititz on Friday, 22 May, with installation scheduled for 29 May. At 10 a.m. on Sunday, 7 June, members of the Church School rang the bells for the first time, at which time the clock was also started.

Alas, what should have been a joyous time was marred by complaints. Building Committee minutes of Thursday, June 11th, note, "Ringer is too noisy. Forrest will bring to supplier's attention for correction." Minutes from a week later record, "Forrest notified Rodgers to correct the advance noise. Final payment withheld pending correction." By August the B.C. had turned to Verdin to address the problem. A letter from B. Forrest to a representative of the bell foundry states, "We will appreciate your inspecting our church bell installation at the first opportunity, as we are not satisfied with the automatic bell ringer. Our major complaint is the advance sound before the hammer strikes the Bell. It is very noticeable, and residents within the Church Square are complaining."

A few weeks later Charles Verdin, brother of the company President, stopped in Lititz to inspect the equipment and make some adjustments. He identified the solenoid striker as the primary source of the noise. In a follow-up letter dated 27 August 1959 Robert J. Verdin advised, "There is a certain amount of noise connected with the solenoid striking hammer which has to be acceptable in a building. It is possible to isolate same in different manners. We could experiment on this if absolutely necessary."

The matter then appears to have been put aside until after the rededication of the church in November. On 13 November Forrest wrote again to the Verdin Company complaining that "The noise is very objectionable and the accompanying vibration actually shakes the Bell Tower and rattles our chandeliers. This condition must be corrected." The reply from Verdin reviews the adjustments made in August and continues, "I believe you are aware of the fact that we did not furnish the solenoid striker. This was furnished by another company who furnished the clock striking equipment." Nevertheless, Verdin instructed one of his representatives, who was scheduled to pass through the area, to stop and inspect the equipment.

The final letter in the file from Verdin, dated 23 December 1959, reports on the inspection performed by their representative, Mr. Jim Doyle. "It is a fact that our Mr. Doyle reports that someone mounted the hammer that strikes the bell directly to an I-beam without isolating it in any way with rubber shock mounts. He reports the bell was installed and set on the I-beams without insulation under the bell. Some type of shock mount could have been used. He further reports that the solenoid that is with the clock equipment is causing quite a thump in the building." The letter continues with a strongly worded reminder that the Verdin Company did not furnish the solenoid nor did they install the bell and accompanying equipment and suggests that those who did the work should be required to make the needed corrections.

On 28 December 1959 the Building Committee was formally disbanded. Their final report to the Trustees includes the notation that the "Bell and clock file will be given to Trustees for further action as we have done all possible to have the thumping eliminated without additional expense."⁽⁵⁾

The Souvenir Bells

After the firm decision had been made to order new bells for the rebuilt church, the question remained as to what to do with the Grosh bell and its small companion. Using them for trade-in credit was a possibility. In March 1959, however, members of the Dieners' Corps approached Brother Al Douple with the suggestion to have small souvenir bells produced from the old bells and sold as a fundraiser to help furnish the Preparation Room. This plan was accepted by the Building Committee, and B. Forrest was instructed to notify the Verdin Company that the damaged bells would be retained by the congregation rather than being sent for credit.

On August 4th the Trustees approved a motion to lend \$1,000 from the building fund to the Dieners so as to finance the casting of the souvenir bells. The old bells had been sent to Bevin Brothers Bells, located in East Hampton, Connecticut. On August 12th the B.C. approved an invoice of \$462.36 for 500 bells, which were to be sold by the Dieners for \$3.00 each. From the proceeds the Dieners were first to reimburse the Trustees for monies advanced and the salvage value of the old bells.

The August 27th issue of the Lititz Record Express carried this notice: **Moravian Bells Recast for Sale.** The two bells on the Moravian church at the time of the fire have been recast into 1,000 small silver bells that will be sold by the dieners of the church for the benefit of the coffee kitchen. The two bells, one to call to services and the other to strike the quarter of the hours, weighed over 600 pounds and were recast in Connecticut. The little bells are four inches in height and have the inscription “Lititz Moravian Church 1787 – 1957.”⁽⁶⁾ This, at least, represented the plan. Two current members of the congregation, however, recall that far fewer bells were actually produced, due to the inability of the foundry to recover sufficient useable bell metal from the damaged bells and the unwillingness of the dieners to permit the foundry to complete the order with metal from other sources.



A pair of the souvenir bells, from the collection of the Lititz Moravian Archives Museum

Postscript

To the questions noted earlier for further research must be added these final two: How was the disturbing thumping and vibration caused by the ringing of the new bells resolved? And how many little bells were made and available for sale? With further study and a little luck, I hope to write a follow-up article for the Fall 2017 issue of The Church Square Journal.

As for the three bell foundries involved, two remain in business. Andrew Meneely established the first Meneely Bell Foundry in West Troy, New York, in 1826. Upon his death in 1851, two of his sons continued the business. In 1870 a third son, Clinton H. Meneely, partnered with George H. Kimberly to start a rival foundry across the river in Troy, New York. Between them the two companies produced more than 65,000 bells before discontinuing operations in 1952.⁽⁷⁾ The I. T. Verdin Company, now simply The Verdin Company, has been a family-owned business operating in Cincinnati, Ohio, since 1842. They produce clocks and towers in addition to casting bells and claim more than 50,000 installations.⁽⁸⁾

William, Chauncey, and Abner Bevin started Bevin Brothers Bell Factory in 1832 in East Hampton, Connecticut. They were later joined by another brother, Philo. The company has remained family owned and operated for 185 years, today claiming the distinction of being the oldest continuously-operating bell maker in the U.S. On 27 May 2012 their historic 19th century factory was completely destroyed by fire, but with great support and encouragement, they were able to rebuild just a quarter mile from the original location.⁽⁹⁾ When I started this research more than three years ago, they were just beginning to manufacture bells again and were selling commemorative enameled cow bells as a fundraiser. It seemed only fitting that I should help their recovery by purchasing one, as they had cast the fundraising bells for Lititz fifty-five years before. The bell features the image of a phoenix, that mythic bird which rises anew from the ashes of its own demise.

~ Marian L. Shatto

⁽¹⁾History of the Lititz Moravian Congregation 1749-1999, p. 23

⁽²⁾Ibid., p. 59

⁽³⁾Ibid., p. 56

⁽⁴⁾File of correspondence, contract, and other documents held in the Lititz Moravian Archives

⁽⁵⁾Minutes of the Board of Trustees, the Building Committee and accompanying correspondence 1957-1959 held in the Lititz Moravian Archives

⁽⁶⁾Lititz Record Express, 22 East Main Street, Lititz, PA; 27 August 1959

⁽⁷⁾https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meneely_Bell_Foundry

⁽⁸⁾<http://www.verdin.com/about/index.php>

⁽⁹⁾<https://bevinbells.com/about-bevin-bells/>

Christmas on Church Square

The December version of Loving Every Second Friday in Lititz is always an interesting night to be in town! And the December 9, 2016 event was especially exciting for Lititz Moravian Church's Archives Committee. Our group partnered with the Lititz Historical Foundation to provide the community with a coordinated open house. Planning for the event began in the spring of 2016. Spearheaded by Kim Barabas and Tom Wentzel, the committee of archive volunteers met several times to plan the presentations and the refreshments.



Dale Shelley speaks to visitors in the Sanctuary

Following the candle luminaries into Church Square and directed by costumed youth volunteers, community members were able to tour the museum, hear a presentation on the Moravian Star, visit the coffee kitchen, attend the Putz presentation, and enjoy refreshments. The history of the Moravian Star was beautifully presented by Dale Shelley in the decorated sanctuary. Tom Wentzel and Charlene Van Brookhoven shared the customs of the coffee kitchen with small groups throughout the evening. As visitors left the kitchen area, they were given a Moravian mint to enjoy. These mints, each individually decorated with intricate symbols of the Moravian Christmas celebration, were created by Lititz Moravian congregation member Connie Lawrence!

During the course of the evening, numerous small groups traveled back in time to the first Christmas through the Putz presentation. Over 110 people were welcomed to the sanctuary and the coffee kitchen during the four-hour open house. The evening created a special opportunity to share our beloved Moravian Church history with our community.

~ Maryann Richmond



Left:
Lovefeast mugs and coffee-making items are on display in the Coffee Kitchen.

Right:
Wooden trays hold the thousands of beeswax candles trimmed and ready to serve during the Christmas lovefeasts.

