

THE CHURCH SQUARE JOURNAL

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WHAT GOOD NEWS THE ANGELS BRING, WHAT GLAD TIDINGS OF OUR KING!

— from the lovefeast ode sung in the Lititz Moravian Church on Christmas Eve

Pictured above: Angel with trumpet. Detail from cast-iron six-plate stove in collection of the Moravian Congregation of Lititz. Signed: D. Buckley & Co., the stove was cast in Hopewell Furnace, Chester County, circa 1816-1827. Photograph by Jack Alvarez.

CHRISTMAS ON CHURCH SQUARE — A Time of Sharing —

There was the Christmas Eve lovefeast that many of them would remember all their lives as the most sublimely beautiful thing they had ever witnessed so that, in looking back through the mists of the long years, they would ever see its candlestars, ever thrill to the rich, poignant memory of its music. "I can yet hear," writes one who is reaching the end of life, "the voice of a dear scholar singing 'Thou Child Divine, Emmanuel . . .'" And who cannot? Once that melody has stirred the heart, it can no more be forgotten than purple dusk, and stars, and the breathless wonder of hope.

— E. M. Eller, *The Houses of Peace*

Thus, another Moravian, writing some thirty years ago, speaks of the timeless beauty of that high point in the Moravian year: Christmas Eve. That "the most sublimely beautiful thing *they* had ever witnessed" continues to move and touch *us* to the depths of *our* persons, was never more profoundly felt than at this past Christmas-time. And isn't it more so with each passing year of our earthly journey? One is led to share with the reader one's thoughts concerning that memorable 1976 season:

Christmas in Lititz was lovely. All the old friends and many new ones, too, vied for those treasured little slips of paper which would assure them entry, filling the church four times over for those cherished moments that arrive once a year, moments of substance and constancy so rarely found in our fast-paced world.

As she has done for so many years, our Sister Herma Losensky "preached the gospel" in her own matchless eloquence through her loving and devoted attention to the Christmas greens and flowers which dressed our handsome old church: the gallery wreaths of fir, so elegant in their pure simplicity; the sprays of holly filling the sconces; the bold red splashes of poinsettia blossoms; the beribboned boxwood wreaths on the outer doors which, as our late Sister Adeline Snyder so well expressed it, seemed to say: "Come in! We've been expecting you; we're ready for you." Even Count Zinzendorf was crowned with spruce and holly, taking on a particularly waggish air when one branch slipped down over his forehead.

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DECISIONS – RESTORATIONS DONATIONS AND AN EXPEDITION

The year 1977 has been a signal one for the Archives Committee, for it has been marked by two important decisions.

After a long history of offering the guided church tours free of charge, the committee, with the approval of the congregation's Board of Trustees, voted unanimously to establish a fixed fee for the conducted tours. Until now, only a free-will donation was expected but all too frequently not realized. With the scope of the walking tour, the importance of the congregation's collections and the personnel and time involved, the Archives Committee deemed it both wise and just to establish an admission fee of one dollar per person, with the following exceptions: a. children under 12; b. groups of elementary school children taking the tour as part of their scholastic studies and c. fellow-Moravians. This policy went into effect this past summer.

The second crucial decision involved the chairmanship of the committee. The chair has always been occupied by a member of the congregation's Board of Trustees, an appointment by the president of that august body. *Almost* without exception, the committee has been blessed with strong, vigorous leadership characterized by a genuine concern for the group's responsibilities of preservation, restoration and interpretation. And almost invariably, no sooner had the committee gently groomed and educated the new chairman to the committee's workings than the appointment was changed; a fresh, new person arrived to take the helm and the basic training program began once more. Therefore, the Board of Trustees advised the committee to elect, from their own ranks, a qualified person to guide them on their course, with an



Brother Richard Rader with the antique furniture pieces he restored, gratis, for the congregation. Photo: Jack Alvarez.

appointed trustee sitting in on the group's meetings and serving as a liaison between the committee and the trustees. And so, during the September meeting, Brother Wayne LeFevre was chosen as president with Brother Rian Shank as vice president.

Other highlights of the year are more readily tangible. Brother Richard Rader, who served as committee chairman in the early '60s, displayed admirable skill in refinishing three pieces of antique furniture gathered from throughout the church buildings. A Sheraton dropleaf table in cherry, circa 1830, was restored and placed in the Eschbach Parlor. A bow-back Windsor armchair, circa 1790-1810, was rescued from the Single Brothers House lower attic where it had reposed in "splendor" in its garish red and black kitchen enamel. Brother Rader transformed the chair by painting it a deep black-green, closely approximating the color of the very rare and very handsome long-legged Windsor organ bench in the Parish House Museum. The chair, too, has been added to the Parlor furnishings. A walnut Sheraton chairside table, circa 1820, was retrieved from the church office suite where it served as a pedestal for a projector, and has been placed in the northeast room of the Parish House Museum. The committee is extremely grateful to Brother Rader whose skilled craftsmanship was presented as a gift to the congregation.

Another fine old piece rescued from oblivion is a tall, softwood cupboard which had long stood unused in that room leading from the old lovefeast kitchen to the arched food-storage cellar of the Gemeinhaus-Parsonage. What role the cupboard may once have played in the congregation's life is unknown. The six-foot cupboard, circa 1780, has a raised-panel door, handsome bracket feet and cornice detail and an interior fitted with shelves. The Archives Committee contracted a Lancaster firm to make needed repairs and replacements and to remove the many coats of paint, a process which revealed traces of the original old blue, too far gone for preservation. Sister Dorothea Fortier, whose many talents embrace the painting of early furniture, is contributing her time and expertise in developing and applying a pigment closely matching that rare and prized blue. The cupboard now stands in the library room of the Parish House Museum and houses early books and manuscripts.

In May, the committee commissioned the noted wood-worker, our own Brother Paul Eshelman of Rohrerstown, to make two walnut Queen Anne candlestands to be placed next to the Chippendale sofas in Eschbach Parlor. Brother Eshelman, a graduate of the Julliard School of Music in New York City, first taught that art before turning to "lyric expression in



Queen Anne candlestand, one of two made by our late Brother Paul Eshelman as gifts to our congregation. Photo: Jack Alvarez.

wood." He eventually became Professor of Industrial Arts at Millersville State College, from which position he is now retired. His bowls and candlesticks, clock-cases and tables are highly coveted. In 1958, by invitation of the U. S. State Department, Brother Eshelman exhibited an applewood bowl in the Brussels World Fair in Belgium. His work is found in the galleries of the Philadelphia Art Alliance, the Worcester Art Center in Massachusetts and in the Fifth Avenue shop of Georg Jensen in New York City. Sister Eshelman, a distinguished weaver, is retired Curator of Crafts at the Pennsylvania Farm Museum. Both Janet and Paul once served as craftsmen-in-residence at Old Sturbridge Village. After long years in Methodism, "with heart and hand" they "now we own."* Having long joined us for the Christmas Eve Lovefeasts and the Easter Dawn Services, and having been increasingly attracted to Lititz Moravian by the sermons and the music, Brother and Sister Eshelman designate the first issue of this humble *Journal* as having encouraged their final decision for becoming one of us.

*Words from the reception hymn sung by Moravian congregations to those coming from other Christian communions into the Moravian fellowship.

Note: The above paragraph on the Eshelmans appears here, with Sister Eshelman's consent, just as it was written shortly before Brother Eshelman's unexpected mid-July departure for his eternal dwelling place. The candlestands have assumed their assigned positions in the parlor and, in memory of their

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Mid 19th-century photo of Polly Heckewelder, with a wash drawing of the Single Sisters House in Bethlehem, Polly's home for her last 45 years. The symbol ☺ identifies the two windows of her room. From one of two identical albums of poetry and drawings created in 1857 by Rufus Grider as a Christmas tribute to Miss Heckewelder. One copy was presented to Miss Heckewelder; the other was sent to Grider's mother here in Lititz and is now in the Lititz Congregation's collection.

POLLY HECKEWELDER
A Storied Lady – A Cherished Doll

Can there be any night of the year more filled with wonder and mystery, excitement and magic and eager expectation than that night of nights. The Night Before Christmas? Tho we may try to hide it, the child in each of us is very close to the surface on that blest Eve and we are filled with a tremulous anticipation and a quiet joy which know no equal elsewhere in the seasons.

As you first read this issue of the *Journal*, November is already with us and "visions of sugar plums" are gathering for their annual dance through our heads. Little girls are dreaming of the sweet new dolly which may await them beneath the tree on Christmas morning. What better time than now to tell about a very special doll, a very Moravian doll – the Polly Heckewelder doll. Although she is a Bethlehem creation, the Polly Heckewelder doll does have connections with our beloved Lititz, as the reader will soon discover.

Brother John Heckewelder was a Moravian missionary to the Delaware Indians in Ohio. In 1781, a year after he married Susan Ohneberg at the Indian mis-

sion station there, Johanna Maria Heckewelder was born. She acquired the nickname of Polly and the distinction of being



A Polly Heckewelder doll. Adopted "daughter" of Brother and Sister Diffenderfer, this Polly is dressed in pink with a crisp white apron, freshly laundered for the visit of photographer Jack Alvarez.

the second white child born in Ohio. Little Polly's first years were spent among the Indians until she was sent to Bethlehem to school. In 1800, at age 19, she came from Bethlehem to Lititz as a teacher. Here, she lived in the Single Sisters House, attended services in our church and taught the Boarding School girls the art of ornamental needlework, for which the school was famous. Linden Hall's diaries record that she also read history and geography to the girls during long winter evenings.

While in Lititz, Sister Heckewelder was honored with two birthday songs composed especially for her, for in those early years, the Moravians made a great to-do over birthdays, celebrating them with small private lovefeasts and singing. In Lititz, these festivities were often held outdoors in that beautiful tree-shaded area then known as "The Wilderness." Today, we continue to enjoy lunches and suppers there; but we know the spot as "The Pines," that majestic hemlock grove at the foot of the parking area behind the church. While it may have been too cool for Sister Heckewelder's April birthday to have been celebrated in "The Wilderness," the date did not pass unnoticed by one in whose esteem she must have held a special place. The Reverend Johannes Herbst was

the Inspector or Headmaster of The Boarding School and the pastor of the Moravian church next door. Herbst is known today as that exceptionally fine early Moravian composer, copyist and compiler of music, whose vast collection of manuscript materials forms the basis for scholastic activity conducted by the Moravian Music Foundation. In 1801 and 1802, Herbst wrote a birthday song for Sister Heckewelder, both of which are to be found in the Foundation's collection and are known as "The Polly Heckewelder Birthday Songs."

In 1805, when she became too hard-of-hearing to continue teaching, Polly Heckewelder returned to Bethlehem; five years later, Polly's parents retired there, too, and the three of them lived in a little plastered stone cottage along the avenue which leads past the stately old Moravian church, through the tree-shaded terraces and up the hill to Market Street. Today, this pleasant way is fittingly named Heckewelder Place. After her parents had taken their last journey to God's Acre, "Aunt Polly," as she was affectionately known, moved across the green to the Single Sisters House on old Church Street where, we are told, she held court till the end of her days, never venturing out without a green veil arranged over her bonnet to protect her delicate pink and white skin from the sun.

Bishop Peter Wolle's diaries, in the Lititz Congregation Collection, give us these entries written in Bethlehem in September, 1868:

September 19

Old sister Polly Heckewelder departed this life about noon, aged 87 years.

September 25

At 4 p.m. was the funeral of our aged Sister Joanna Maria Heckewelder by Br. Schweinitz. He first spoke German, then followed 2 English verses on which he based his brief reflections, — then came the long German *Lebenslauf* written by her father mainly, entering minutely into the perilous times of war at the time of her birth, and continued until she was brought to Bethlehem; then followed an addition by herself, — and then the close. It was so dark in the chapel that the pastor had to come from his seat nearer the window to see the handwriting of Br. S. R. [Samuel Reinke?] — The musical piece selected by Thede* was nothing extra, and executed very imperfectly.

*Note: Thede was Bishop Peter Wolle's son, Theodore Wolle, who at this time was Professor of Music in Bethlehem's Young Ladies Seminary and organist of the chapel which we know today as "The Old Chapel." A few years later, the con-

gregation elevated Theodore to the position of organist-choirmaster in their larger, more prestigious Central Church next door. He became the first organ teacher of his cousin's son, the legendary J. Fred Wolle, who, upon Theodore's death, became organist of Central and went on to organize and conduct the famous Bach Choir of Bethlehem. Incidentally, in 1842 when he was but a nine year-old boy living in the Moravian parsonage here in Lititz where his father was pastor, Theodore made his first public appearance as organist in a church service in our Moravian church. Pastor Wolle's diary records:

January 19

Mother's [Mrs. Wolle's] birthday, distinguished with us by the circumstance that our Theodore played the Organ in church for the first time, in the English meeting held in the evening; he performed his part very well, and astonished all who heard him.

But now, back to Polly Heckewelder. In 1872, four years after Sister Heckewelder's home-going, the Ladies Sewing Society of Central Moravian Church decided to begin making a rag doll in order to raise money to finance one of their laudable projects which has ever been to make and present, as a gift, a white surplice to each new Moravian minister of the Northern Province at the time of ordination. And in memory of "Aunt Polly," who had become an institution in Bethlehem, the ladies named the doll Polly Heckewelder. She was and still is all hand-made. Her dress has changed down

through the years but her hand-painted face has always smiled out from under a woolen cap. At first, her stockings were dark and her shoes were high; today, she wears white stockings and the low shoes that are the only part of her not hand-done. While Polly was once a plaything for little girls, she has now become a cherished collectors' item, travelling to all corners of the globe: Japan and China, Russia and Finland, England and Canada and Africa and South America. Sometimes she returns to Bethlehem for surgery or a face-lift, for the ladies of Central Church still meet to make new Pollys and mend old ones. Yes, Polly may still be had; but one may need to wait two years before she arrives in one's arms. In 1972, one hundred years after Polly's first appearance, the ladies estimated that between 3,000 and 4,000 dolls had been made. And last year, in 1976, 76 sweet new Pollys put on their smiles and sallied forth from "favored Bethlehem" to captivate hearts near and far.

Although the real Polly Heckewelder once walked the halls of the Sisters House in Lititz, although she once raised her voice in song in the Lititz Church, there are few, if any, Polly Heckewelder dolls in the town. However, our Sister Florence Diffenderfer *does* have a Polly who lives with her and her husband, Fred. Sister Diffenderfer helped make the dolls when she lived in Bethlehem and was a member of Central Church. Polly greets all visitors to the Diffenderfer residence in Olde Hickory Village, for there, not only at Xmas-time but all the year long, she occupies a very special chair just inside the front door.

— WBL



Sister Florence Diffenderfer admires her Polly.
Photo: Jack Alvarez.

The distinction of presenting to early America the purest and most beautiful celebration of Christmas surely belongs to the Moravians. They were eminently suited for this. Their ancient customs, their intense love of music, and their joyful devotions combined in the eighteenth century to set them apart from their colonial neighbors in everyday life, and to center their qualities of excellence and sensitivity on their festivals, chief of which was Christmas.

— From AMERICAN CHRISTMASSES
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THE MORAVIAN BELL

— Rags to Riches —

Now, read the story of a bell. A most special bell. A quite Moravian bell. A bell which arrived on Church Square in Lititz way back in the very middle of the 19th century, fell from its honored position atop the church 107 years later and, instead of being discarded, was made over into many miniature bells which today continue to ring their way into hearts and homes of those eager for a bit of historic Moraviana.

In July of 1850, a prominent Lititz merchant and Moravian churchman — once a member of the state legislature — died. Samuel Grosh was his name. He lived on the northwest corner of Church Square, having built the splendid red brick house in which Sister Louise Pfautz now makes her home. His oil portrait and that of his wife hang in the congregation's museum and are fine examples of early 19th-century American primitive portraiture.

Brother Grosh's will left a sum of \$100 to be applied toward the purchase of a new, larger bell for the church belfry, that elegant piece designed in 1786 by the noted 18th-century Lititz Moravian organ builder, Brother David Tannenberg. The 1850 diary of Bishop Peter Wolle, pastor of the Lititz congregation at that time, notes that on August 21, *Gemeinrath* (Church Council) authorized the purchase of a 600 pound bell from the Meneley Bell Foundry in West Troy, New York. Wolle records that the bell came to Lititz and "was brought to its place on the steeple" on October 14; and on Sunday, October 20, "the new bell was rang at its proper place." Here, it tolled the hours daily while its smaller, older companion rang the quarters.

At the time of the bell's arrival, Lititz was still a closed congregation-town, exclusively for Moravians. If one was not a Moravian, one could not live in Lititz. But in 1855, all this changed. Lititz was the last of the Moravian settlement towns in America to discard the ancient lease system; thereafter, anyone was free to establish housekeeping and business in Lititz. And so, the bell witnessed this drastic transformation which resulted in trauma for some and jubilation for others.

Down through the years, our bell told the time of day and night, called the faithful to church and saw them respond

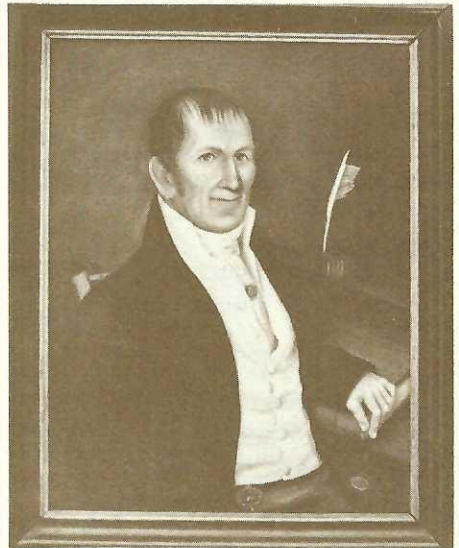
in carriage and sleigh and Henry Ford. One wonders: how many noon dinnertimes did the bell announce? A lovely old custom which has persisted from the 18th century — and continues today in this present era of nuclear energy, supersonic jet travel and landings on the moon — is the "dinner bell" ringing at 11:30 every morning, Monday thru Saturday, warning local housewives that it is time to get the noon meal on the table.

Our bell saw the young men, who harkened to its sound, go off to four battles: the Civil War, the First and Second World Wars and the Korean War. One somehow knows that, during World War 2, each Lititz Moravian boy in uniform, celebrating Christmas as best he could far from home, remembered the bell's rich tone as he opened the little package sent him by the good Moravian ladies back home at the church in Lititz; a package which unfolded to reveal two little beeswax Xmas candles in their white paper ruffs — one for himself and one for his buddy.

Came the mid-20th century and the bell was to perish in a tragic conflagration, only to rise again, phoenix-like, from the ashes. A quiet summer noon in July of 1957 saw wisps of smoke — that dread spectre of impending disaster — curling from the church eaves down the long slope below the belfry. The blowtorches of careless painters — who chose to ignore the advice of those far wiser than they — had ignited the 18th-century mud and straw plaster lining the venerable old building. Flames raced through the tinder-dry attic and soon, a great cloud of heavy black smoke signalled to villagers that tragedy was at hand. The grim, blood-chilling message sped across town: *The Moravian church is on fire!* Firefighters could do little but confine the flames to the doomed structure. Not only Moravian faces were streaked with tears as the throngs crowded into the square that afternoon to watch helplessly as their familiar beloved landmark slowly succumbed to the blaze. Having burned away the roof covering, the flames patiently licked at the now-exposed skeleton of roof posts and trusses supporting the belfry with its two bells. All afternoon, this 170 year-old framework of hand-hewn timbers continued to smolder until at last, at six o'clock, the flames completed their evil task, the framework gave way and, with a great roar, the charred belfry and its two ancient occupants plunged to the floor of the church, landing with a deadening metallic clank — a finale which somehow marked the end of an era. The church lay in ruins, both bells cracked and of no further use.

Ah, but no! In succeeding months, single Sister Martha Sturgis — at the urging of her brother, Edgar — conferred with the congregation's Head Sacristan, Brother Alfred Douple, concerning a unique project which would preserve the old bell. Brother Douple offered the suggestion to the Dieners Corps; and through the grace and vision of this carefully selected group of dedicated church-servants, the old bell was "saved" by shipping it to East Hampton, Connecticut, where it was melted down, with the resulting bell metal cast into a series of small hand-bells of tea table size. 1,000 bells were ordered in two separate lots of 500 each. Molded with the inscription, *Lititz Moravian Bell 1787-1957*, the bells sold for \$3.00 to both Moravians and non-Moravians alike, for the dear old church occupied a tender spot in the hearts of a countless multitude beyond the Moravian brotherhood, many of whom remembered warmly treasured moments of the unforgettable Christmas Eve lovefeasts and those long, gray Easter dawn processions to God's Acre mid the blare of trombones.

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Samuel Grosh, 1768-1850, Lititz Congregation storekeeper, whose will provided for the church bell ruined in the 1957 fire and subsequently recast into many small bells. This portrait and its companion-piece of Mrs. Grosh were painted in the early 19th century by Peter Lehn Grosh and, in the 1960s, were presented to the congregation by Sister Elisabeth Hepp, who long owned and resided in the present 1793 Gross House on Church Square. In 1972, under the auspices of the Archives Committee, the portraits were restored in the Clear Spring, Maryland, Bear Pond Studio of Bruce Echison, former director of the Abby Aldrich Rockefeller Folk Art Collection in Williamsburg, Virginia. From their vantage point in the museum's northeast room looking out over Church Square, Brother and Sister Grosh now smile benignly upon our late 20th-century comings-and-goings.



CHRISTMAS ON CHURCH SQUARE, *continued from page 1*

Brother Kent Herzer "preached," too, with his placement of tiny white lights deep within the tall cedars, providing a touch of unexpected splendor as they inconspicuously came softly aglow during the arrival of the lighted candles. The coffee cooks and dieners preached a great message of love in preparing and serving to each one present the simple lovefeast meal of a sugared roll and a stout mug of coffee, followed later by a tiny lighted taper symbolizing the Light come into the world. The voices of choirs and organ and instruments were all that they are expected to be in

this hallowed spot of cherished old traditions. The residents of Church Square spoke of their hearts' love and faith through lighted Moravian stars, candle-lit windows and fir-trimmed doorways.

All was done with dignity and restraint, with joyful hearts and hands reaching out to those who sought to be with us at this High Season of the church year.

There remain a great host of us who are convinced that this fabric of color and light and sound, this irrepressible outpouring of love and devotion, of sharing and fervent praise, this using "of our blessings to be blessings for others," all blend together into one incomparably exquisite symphony of faith and belief and witness each Christmas-time here on Church Square, a symphony that reaches deep into the hearts of grateful thousands from near and far who steady their faith annually

through their Christmas pilgrimage to Lititz Moravian. May we not believe, too, that our Lord does *indeed* look with favor upon this gift of ourselves to others and that this gift speaks far more clearly, far more simply and directly to hungering, searching hearts than does so much of the people-manipulation and frantic activity which masquerade as organization-church busyness?

So then, brethren, let us be ever sensitive to those among us — and our number is legion — whose inner beings are fed by that which no *words* can utter, with our souls carried onward and upward "even to the throne of Him who sitteth between the cherubim and seraphim amid the everlasting choirs of heaven," sending us away wiser, better, nobler and happier than when we came.

— Wayne B. LeFevre, editor



DECISIONS, *continued from page 2*

maker, have been presented by Sister Eshelman as a gift to the congregation. These two handsome pieces of exquisite craftsmanship — lovingly fashioned by a world-renowned artist — provide a beautifully fitting remembrance of our dear and esteemed brother who, for all too short a time, walked and talked with us. Rest in peace, Paul.

Appreciation is extended to Sister Mildred Snyder for her gift, a copy of Louise Weitzel's book of poetry, *A Quiver of Arrows*, containing several poems on Lititz. We are grateful, too, for the financial contributions provided by an anonymous donor who realizes the value of the work being done by the committee.

A work night replaced the March meeting; the committee prepared the museum's library room for the arrival of bookcases, hung the Huber clock and several Haidt paintings and enjoyed Brother Rian Shank's Danish pastries and the bundt cake and coffee of Doctors

Irene and Peter Seadle. Travel was not forgotten, for an early June Saturday found the group in Bethlehem visiting the new Moravian Archives building, the Bethlehem Congregation's Moravian Museum in the Gemeinhaus next to Central Church, and enjoying that favorite Moravian delight, *essen* and *fressen*. This last, according to the tongue-in-cheek observation of our new Brother, Dr. Peter Seadle, is obviously the *raison d'être* for much Moravian activity which politely poses under varied titles of greater refinement!!

—WBL



MORAVIAN BELL *continued from page 5*

The sale of the bells enabled the Dieners to equip the Preparation Room (formerly the Old Chapel) as a new lovefeast kitchen, replacing the far older one in the cellar below where, until that needless fire of 1957, the lovefeast coffee had always been brewed in that great copper kettle which still hangs there in the fireplace whose chimney siphoned off the smoke of many a cord of wood offered up in the name of brotherly love. Now, however, the mere mention of the word *fire* chilled a Lititz Moravian's heart and all possible precautions were taken so that the like should never again occur. A live flame in the old lovefeast kitchen simply would no longer be trusted or tolerated. Quite obviously, then, the old bell's offspring performed an honorable mission in removing that danger.

Thereafter, visiting in Lititz homes, one almost invariably encountered the

ubiquitous little Moravian bell peering out from behind a cupboard's glass door, perched high on a knick-knack shelf or standing within reach on a chair-side table. And, save for a quick mental return to that disastrous summer fire, one thought little more about it.

Well! Before too long, the little bells began to appear occasionally in auction sales of deceased Moravians' effects and one could be had for a few dollars. In early 1972, this writer left a bid of \$15 for his late aunt's bell, but without success; that particular piece was sold for \$35, which price was thought rather high. Not so! The going figure soon spiraled to \$60 and then to \$90. Then came a lull, like that ominous stillness just before the break of a mid-summer thundergust. And break it did!

In early summer of this year, 1977, Sister Lorraine Sweitzer listed a Moravian bell in her public sale of household goods. Gasps of astonishment and murmurs of disbelief chased through the crowd as the little bell was awarded to the highest bidder for \$165! This unbelievable event was the talk of the town for days after-

ward. Ah, but all this was mere child's play compared with that which was soon to follow. In mid-July, Sister Esther Wert's bell found a new home to the tune of \$230. And a few days later, *Behold!* The Dr. Richard Landes bell caused spirited bidding to soar to \$500!!!

By now, Lititz Moravians, some of whom own several of the coveted specimens, are viewing their bells in a new light — and moving them to higher ground. And it is the sad plight of the congregation's museum to possess not one single example of this desirable commemorative piece. Such are the vagaries of time, of fortune, of circumstance, of taste.

Today, the reconstructed church is crowned by a nobly conceived adaptation of the original Tannenberg belfry housing two exquisitely voiced bells from Holland where, in the town of Aarle-Rixtel, one finds the bell foundry of Petit and Fritschen. Yet, the old bell of 1850 does ring on and bids fair to add increasing lustre — and notoriety! — to its already long and storied career.

— WBL