

Boehm's Chapel Society

FALL-WINTER 2017

boehmschapel@gmail.com

West Boehms Road, Willow Street, Pa., 17584

INSIDE



After the Revolution, a revered educator

Henry Rossman was a captured Hessian soldier, who stayed in new nation to teach and preach. Pages 2-3.

300th anniversary of big migration

Darvin Martin will talk about the 70 Mennonite families who came to county in 1717. Page 3.



The Boehm family and church history

Sowing Seeds of Faith

*A Boehm History
The First 300 Years
1717-2017*



By: Dolores S. Myers

Book ready for sale in late October. Page 3

APPLE BUTTER TIME!



Summer is waning and that means it's almost time for the annual Boehm's Chapel Apple Festival. It will be held Saturday, Oct. 7 on the grounds at West Boehms Road. Above, visitors last year check out the vendors behind the Chapel. At right, a copper kettle holds boiling apples, part of the process in making apple butter the old-fashioned way. For details, Page 5.



School days and Golden Rule days

A young Hessian soldier educated the locals

Regarding early education among the Mennonites, Martin G. Weaver stated in *Mennonites of Lancaster Conference*, "The early church fathers were greatly interested in the education of their children, as is shown by the provisions made by them for school facilities as soon as they had their homes established.

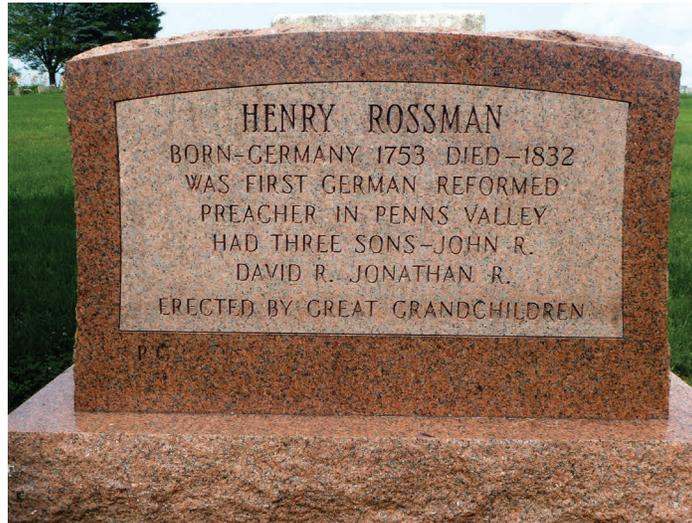
"Their first places of worship often were used as their first schools for the entire communities, and when the free schools came, they allowed the community schools to be erected on a part of their church property in many instances in the county."

Regarding the Pequea Mennonite Colony, centered at the 1719 Christian Herr House, Weaver is quoted, in *Christian Day Schools for Mennonite Youth*, 1945, as follows:

"The little colony improved their land, planted orchards, erected dwellings, and a meeting house and a school house for the settlement in which religious instruction on the Sabbath, and during the week knowledge of letters, reading and writing were given to those who assembled to receive information."

James P. Wickersham, American educational administrator and the first superintendent of Lancaster County schools, in 1854 stated in H.M.J. Klein's *Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, A History*, "Intellectual darkness would have reigned supreme throughout the Province had not the various churches and the people themselves been more alive to the importance of education than the government."

Klein continued, "In 1712, the same year in which the Provincial authorities placed education in the hands of the



Above is the grave of Henry Rossman in Tusseyville, Pennsylvania. Shown at left is Henry Boehm, one of his students.

Protestant societies, the Swiss Mennonite settlers in the Pequea valley established a log meeting house, to be used also as a school. This was near Willow street, in West Lampeter township."

In an article published in the *Christian Monitor*, February 1950, titled, "Education in Early Pennsylvania," Ira D. Landis stated:

"As far as the Mennonites are concerned, if the story were known, possibly the 1747 Byerland Church, the early Landisville, and even Abbeyville were used for school purposes also."

Henry Boehm, traveling companion of Bishop Francis

Asbury, America's premier Methodist, was born June 8, 1775. The youngest child of the Rev. Martin and Eva Boehm, Henry fondly recalled his formative years of education.

He mentioned his old school house and his schoolmaster, Henry Rossman, in his memoirs, *Reminiscences, Historical and Biographical*. While a small amount of information was available about the life of Henry Rossman, questions arose when trying to determine where the young Henry Boehm may have attended school.

Per the Rev. Boehm, his old school house remained, circa 1856, when he paid a visit to his native town and inquired after old schoolmates. Hoping to find someone to reminisce with about bygone days, Henry stated he found himself alone.

Because Henry specifically referred to the building as a schoolhouse, it was most likely a designated structure, set apart from the old Mennonite Meeting House at Byerland.

From an article penned by Wilma Musser for the 1976 Bicentennial edition of *Millersville-Penn Manor*

Community History, we learn:

"The first school, (in Pequea Township), is thought to have been the little log schoolhouse which stood on the present Radcliff Road in the southeast part of the township." Although it is purely speculation, this is most likely the school house which Henry Boehm attended. Radcliff Road parallels the western property line of the Böhm homestead.

Relating to his old schoolmaster, Henry Rossman, Henry Boehm stated, "To him I am indebted for my accurate knowledge of the German language, which I learned before the English.

"His school was kept in perfect order; every scholar knew his place, and was obliged to keep it. The teacher prayed in school and taught the children short prayers. Like Ichabod Crane, he sung (sic) psalms and hymns, and we learned to sing them. Some of the German hymns which he taught me to sing over eighty years ago I still remember well."

The Rev. Henry Boehm continued in his memoirs,

"Henry Rosman I well remember. He went from house to house, and it was a great occasion when he came to my father's to board. He was quite a character, a perfect original. He came from Hesse Cassel, (sic), and was one of the Hessian soldiers taken prisoner at Trenton, N.J. when Washington and his noble band crossed the frozen Delaware and surprised Colonel Ralle and his troops and took them prisoners, while their commander was slain.

"Many of the Hessians had come to this country contrary to their own will to fight against America, and

they preferred remaining here to returning to Europe. A number of them were sent to Lancaster County and among the rest my old schoolmaster. He possessed many rare qualifications for an instructor. He was a thorough German scholar and had mastered the English language.

"I was a great favorite with Mr. Rossman, and he took delight in giving me instruction."

Georg Henrich Rassmann's name was found in the AMREV HESSIAN website, John Merz's *Guide to Help You Find Your Hessian Soldier of the American Revolution*.

Rassmann served as a light infantryman in the Kassel Feld jaeger corps. Significant numbers of the Hessian troops, (so named after their home land, Hesse-Kassel), captured at Trenton were transported to Lancaster, Pennsylvania. After the war, many elected to marry and assimilate into the local Lancaster County German population.

Georg Henrich Rassmann also listed as Henry Rossman, married Catharina Elisabetha Schweitzer, circa 1789, and per family genealogical records fathered eight children.

According to an 1898 history of the counties of Centre, Clearfield, Jefferson and Clarion, Rassmann, a Rebersburg schoolmaster, would sometimes conduct religious services at the schoolhouse in Oak Hall. Rassmann became licensed as a German Reformed minister on April 27, 1812, and was approved to pastor all the Reformed churches in Centre County and part of Clinton County, Pennsylvania.

The Rev. Rassmann was considered one of the pioneer ministers in the area and rode from charge to charge on horseback. From St. John's UCC history, we learn, "In 1822, under the leadership of Rev. Rossman, the St. John's Reform Church was organized. This congregation, along with Zion Lutheran Congregation, continued to meet at the

Oak Hall Schoolhouse. On June 6, 1825, the two congregations, acting jointly, laid the cornerstone of the Union Church of Boalsburg, on the site of the present Zion Lutheran Church building. The building was dedicated on August 4, 1827."

Henry Rassmann, 79 years, died in Potter Township, Centre County, Pennsylvania, and was interred in the Emanuel Union Cemetery, at Tusseyville.

Henry Boehm ended the story of his revered teacher, by stating: "In 1790 my old schoolmaster left Lancaster, and I did not know where he had gone. One Sabbath in July this year, (1807), while preaching in German in a barn in Liken's Valley, (Dauphin County, Pennsylvania), I saw an intelligent-looking man viewing me intently through his spectacles. I wondered who it was, and where I had seen him. Behold, it was my old schoolmaster, that I had not seen since I was his pupil 18 years before. We greeted each other with tears and talked of bygone days and scenes. He was a Lutheran, and used to read the burial service at funerals when the minister was absent. He became a minister, and was pastor of a church west of the Susquehanna. I never saw him afterward, but I never can forget Henry Rossman, my old schoolmaster, to whom I am so deeply indebted, especially for my knowledge of the German language."

Per an article, which appeared in the *Ladies Repository*, Vol XXII, 1862, "Boehm was under a lifelong obligation to Rassmann for taking such pains in instructing him to speak and write the German language correctly."

So pure was his German that many who listened to Boehm were astonished. In 1807 the Philadelphia Conference and Bishop Asbury requested Henry Boehm "superintend the translation of the Methodist Discipline into the German language."

Marking migration's anniversary

It was 300 years ago that 17 Mennonite families came to Lancaster County.



Darvin L. Martin

To commemorate the 300th anniversary of the arrival of Jacob Böhm (Boehm) to present-day Lancaster County, Darvin L. Martin will discuss the genetic background and the land records of local 1717 Mennonite families.

The presentation will begin at 3 p.m. Oct. 22 in Boehm's Chapel.

Since 2010, Martin has been exploring the DNA of Swiss-German Mennonite families and has used this data to reconstruct the ethnic origins of local Anabaptist families back into medieval Europe or beyond.

The influx of the 70 Mennonite families in 1717 greatly changed the culture and ethnicity of Lancaster County. Martin will discuss where these families settled within the confines of the townships in proximity to Boehm's Chapel.

Among the surnames

common to the area are, Baumgardner, Brackbill, Boehm, Brenneman, Eshleman, Good, Harnish, Herr, Hess, Huber, Keagey, Kendig, Kreider, Meili, Stehman and Witmer.

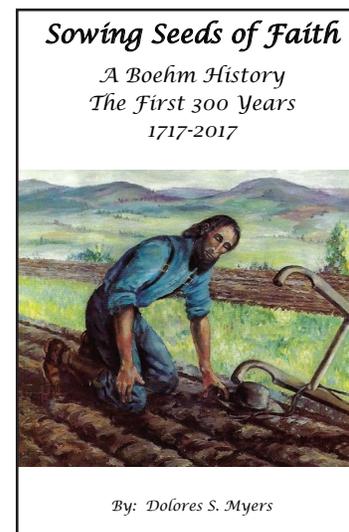
In addition, the anniversary book, *Sowing Seeds of Faith, A Boehm History, The First 300 Years, 1717-2017*, will be available for purchase. The approximately 240-page book presents an insight into the Pequea Township Böhm family, a history of the beginnings of Boehm's Chapel and Church including brief notations for the more than 200 Methodist pastors who have served the congregation, which originated on the Boehm homestead in 1775.

The book was written and compiled by Dolores Myers, executive director of the Chapel Society.

Books are available by contacting boehmschapel@gmail.com or phoning 717-872-4133.

Shipping and handling fees will be added to mail orders.

While the event is free and open to the public, donations will be greatly appreciated.



Shown at left is the cover of "Sowing Seeds of Faith," a history of the early Boehm family, the Chapel and present-day church.

By: Dolores S. Myers

Busy Chapel summer

400 from United Brethren in Christ denomination visit

Summer 2017 brought an influx of visitors to Boehm's Chapel.

Delegates of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ marked the 250th anniversary of their denomination with visits to locally recognized historical sites while meeting in Lancaster for their national conference.

More than 400 members of the denomination visited Boehm's Chapel, July 13-14.

The spiritual origins of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ date to the 1767 Great Meeting at Long's Barn, north of Lancaster, when William Philip Otterbein embraced Martin Boehm, declaring, "We are brothers."

The two leaders were named the first co-bishops in 1800 when the denomination was officially formed.

International delegates attended from Germany, Jamaica, Haiti, Hong Kong, China, Sierra Leone, Honduras, Nicaragua, India, Macau, Liberia and Canada.

U.S. visitors came from Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania.

Descendants of Rudolph

Three generations of descendants of the Rudolph Böhm family visited the chapel in July.

Rudolph, like his brother Jacob (the Rev. Martin Boehm's father) was also an Anabaptist minister (at Rapho Mennonite Church, northern Lancaster County) and a blacksmith.

Rudolph's family arrived in the Warwick Township area of Lancaster County in 1727.



During a visit this summer to the Chapel, Caleb Boehm compares his nose and profile to that of his ancestor, Martin Boehm. Caleb Boehm is a first cousin nine times removed from Martin Boehm.

Visiting from Washington state were Richard and Paula Boehm with son Jon and daughter-in-law Carolynn, and grandchildren Caleb and Wynter from Oregon.

Society officers elected

Chapel Society officers elected at the June 25 Heritage program include president the Rev. Helen Adams, pastor of Stehman Memorial United Methodist Church, and vice president Marv Adams. Dolores Myers, Chapel Society director, will serve as interim recording secretary.

Doris Moore continues her term as treasurer.

Those new to the board include Elizabeth Mills, a member of Willow Street Mennonite Church; Pamela Martin, a descendant of Rudolph Böhm and a member of Wayne United Methodist Church; and Wes Swanson, a member of Stehman Memorial United Methodist Church.

All will serve a two-year term.

Many ways to support our Society

Please remember to renew your 2017-2018 Chapel Society membership. Membership dues help support Chapel programs and preservation, plus aid with the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter.

Please use the form below.

■The Society is also seeking donations to help defray costs of maintaining The Tying Shed. Persons donating \$225 or more will have their names added to "The Builders" plaque. Please specify in honor of, or in memory of, if so desired.

Please make all checks payable to Boehm's Chapel Society and mail your membership or gift to:

BOEHM'S CHAPEL SOCIETY
P.O. BOX 272
WILLOW STREET, PA 17584

■Also, remember to use AmazonSmile when making purchases. You will help support the Society every time you shop online. An Amazon Smile icon has been added to the homepage of www.boehmschapel.org. Click on the icon, and you will be taken to the sign-in page for AmazonSmile or go to smile.amazon.com and select Boehm's Chapel Society from the drop down list before you begin shopping.

Support the preservation and future ministry of Boehm's Chapel: BECOME A MEMBER TODAY	
Membership Categories:	
Individual	\$ 25.00
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*Plaque is pictured on memorabilia page

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For Membership Year: June 1, 20__ To May 31, 20__

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Boehm's Chapel Society
P.O. Box 272
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boehmschapel@gmail.com

Apple Festival, Advent on calendar

The 32nd annual Boehm's Apple Festival will be held, rain or shine on Saturday, Oct. 7, 9 a.m.-3 p.m., on the Boehm's Campus.

Music will be presented by Jay Eddie & His Cowgirls.

Craft stands will line the chapel walkway and fill the church fellowship hall. The 1791 chapel will be open for tours. The video, "The Boehm Legacy," will be available for viewing in the Tying Shed.

Luncheon foods will be served by members of Stehman Memorial United Methodist Church. Members of Boehms UMC will contribute homemade apple ice cream, apple nuggets and ham and bean soup.

There will also be apple dumplings, hot and cold cider, chicken corn soup and the ever popular Grandview UMC apple bread will also be available.

A limited amount of apple butter will be available for purchase.

For additional information please email boehmschapel@gmail.com or phone 717-872-4133.

Advent program planned Dec. 3

The Boehm's Chapel Advent service is planned for 3 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 3. The traditional program of lessons and carols will include a capella congregational singing and special music.



At left, Jay Eddie is shown with his Cowgirls. They will perform at the Apple Festival on Oct.. 7. Below, middle, a look at the front of the big tent last year. Below, Kathleen Railing sells apple nuggets at last year's festival.



Sons of Boehms

Two pastors, with roots in Boehm's United Methodist Church, are pictured on Heritage Sunday. They are, left, the Rev. Guy Carrigan, who was brought to Boehm's as an infant, and the Rev. Bob Brown, who spent his teen years at Boehm's, when his father, Bill Brown, pastored there. Bob gave the Heritage Sunday message.



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226 Easters

The Rev. Chris Eden, who finished his tenure at Boehm's United Methodist Church in June, took this photo on Easter Sunday morning following the sunrise service. Shown is the Rev. Bob Garvey, of West Willow United Methodist Church, leaving the Chapel, after preaching the message that morning. Rev. Eden is now the pastor at Memorial United Methodist Church in Quarryville. The Chapel has seen 226 Easters.

