

Need Christmas gift ideas? We can help ... see insert

BOEHM'S CHAPEL SOCIETY

WINTER 2009 Newsletter

13 West Boehms Road, Willow Street, Pa. 17584



Francis Asbury is ordained Dec. 24, 1784. Image is courtesy of Lovely Lane Museum and Archives.



Rev. O'Neal passes at 67

Rev. Ken O'Neal, a friend and devoted member of the Boehm's Chapel Society board, died Oct. 20.

Following is an abridged version of his obituary which appeared in the *Intelligencer Journal/Lancaster New Era*.

Reverend Kenneth H. O'Neal, 67, of 11 W. Boehm's Road, Willow Street went home to be with his Lord on Tuesday, October 20, 2009 at Lancaster General Hospital. He was married to Jody S. Bixler O'Neal for 16 wonderful years.

Ken was currently serving as pastor of Boehm's United Methodist Church in Willow Street, where he had been for the past two years. A member of the Eastern Pennsylvania

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Please see **REV. O'NEAL**, page 2

Conference call

As Christmas 1784 approached, preachers flocked to Baltimore, to accept Francis Asbury as a co-superintendent of the Methodist Church in America. He became the "Father of American Methodism."

A future for early American Methodism was secured with the ordination of Francis Asbury at the famous Christmas Conference of Dec. 24, 1784, at Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore, Md.

Prior to the Revolutionary War, itinerant preachers and laypersons spread the movement of Methodism in the colonies.

Irish immigrant, and early circuit rider, Robert Straw-

bridge of Carroll County, Md. organized the first American Methodist Society in his home in 1763. Strawbridge also later erected the first American Methodist house of worship,

VESPER SERVICE

Lessons and carols at 3 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 6
Details, Page 6



APPLE FESTIVAL A BIG SUCCESS

Apple butter sells out despite cool, raw day. See pages 3-4.



Roots: Of American Methodism

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built of log, close to his home. As an itinerant preacher, Strawbridge was granted both hospitality and a place to preach at the Boehm homestead in Lancaster County. (The Robert Strawbridge Shrine will be featured in an upcoming newsletter)

While growing up in England, Asbury attended Methodist meetings with his mother. At the age of 7, Asbury was reading the Bible. The religious devotion of his parents fostered an awakening in the faith for Asbury by age 14. He soon began to preach and by 21 was appointed a full-time Methodist preacher.

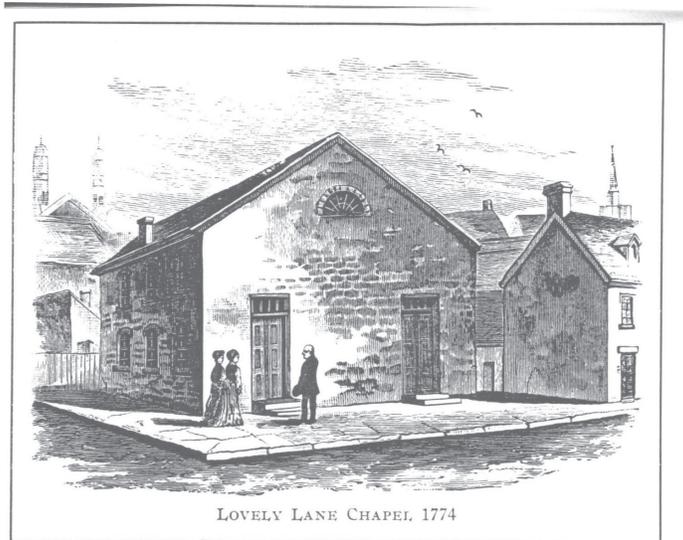
Responding to the call made by John Wesley — “Our brethren in America call aloud for help” — Francis Asbury was dispatched to lend support to the fledgling religious movement in the colonies.

When Asbury arrived in Philadelphia on Oct. 27, 1771, the number of colonists considering themselves to be Methodist had reached 600. Asbury wasted no time in setting forth in preaching. On the day following his arrival, he preached his first sermon in the colonies at St. George's Church in Philadelphia.

Asbury was a noted exception among the early preachers sent to the New World. While his peers returned to England at the outbreak of the war, Asbury remained in the colonies. He would eventually become known as “The Father of American Methodism.”

On July 1784, with peace returning to the colonies, Wesley ordained Thomas Coke (an Anglican priest) at a Methodist conference held in Leeds, England. Coke was dispatched to the new nation with instructions to act as superintendent to the American church and to also find and ordain Francis Asbury as co-superintendent.

Upon his arrival in America, Coke set out toward Barratt's Chapel in Delaware, with hopes of finding Asbury. Arriv-



MORE INFORMATION

To find directions to sites mentioned above or to learn more about early Methodism, please visit: www.boehmschapel.org; www.barrattschapel.org/story.html; www.historicstgeorges.org; www.strawbridgeshrine.org; and www.lovelylane.net

ing on Sunday, Nov. 17, 1784, Coke was invited to take the pulpit. Noting Asbury's arrival during his sermon, Coke came down from the pulpit to embrace him. A star on the floor of Barratt's Chapel marks the spot of this historic meeting. It was during this service that the sacraments of communion and baptism were administered for the first time by ordained Methodist clergy.

Following the service, the two men continued their meeting, in the home of Philip Barratt's widow, across the field from the chapel. Coke explained Wesley's instructions to Asbury. Asbury, however, refused to accept the ordination unless approved by his American contemporaries. Plans were made and messengers were sent out to call all Methodist preachers to meet in Baltimore on Dec. 24.

Coke stated that Freeborn Garrettson was sent out “like an arrow” to summon as many preachers as possible. An entry in Garrettson's journal states: “My dear Master enabled me to ride about twelve hundred miles in about six weeks and preach going and coming constantly.” Coke and Asbury also made use of the intervening

six-week period by undertaking a 1,000-mile preaching tour on horseback.

Of the 83 itinerant preachers entitled to attend, 60 were able to arrive in time for the conference. Additional visitors were also in attendance.

Asbury received unanimous approval and was ordained deacon on Christmas Day by the laying on of hands. The following day he was recognized as elder and on the next day, appointed as co-superintendent of the Methodists in America. Thomas Coke preached Asbury's ordination sermon. Philip William Otterbein, a friend of Asbury who was pastor of the German Reformed Church of Baltimore, also assisted in the ordination by laying hands on Asbury. (In 1800, Otterbein and Martin Boehm were recognized as the first two bishops of the United Brethren Church.)

The entire week was spent in conference. The members elected 12 preachers as “elders,” a term favored by Wesley for fully ordained clergy. Appointments to churches and circuit districts were assigned. Doctrinal foundations were accepted including the General Rules, the Twenty-Four Articles of Religion, and The Sunday Service for Methodists in North America to be used as the liturgical guide.

In addition, a motion was adopted which forbade preachers and members from owning slaves. Sadly, this strong anti-slavery stance soon dissipated.

It is from this historic 1784 Christmas Conference that the present United Methodist Church traces its origins.

Rev. O'Neal

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Conference of the United Methodist Church, he began his ministry in 1977 at St. Mark's in Broomall and then the former Stonehurst Hills in Upper Darby. From 1982 until 1985 Ken was assigned to Bethany in Palmyra and then to Reeders U.M. in Reeders. In 1989 Stehman Memorial in Millersville welcomed him as their pastor, where he served until 1996 when he went to Scottsville in Langhorne. Ken was pastor of Gloss-brenner in Mount Joy from 1998 until 2007, when he retired as an Elder before coming to Boehm's. He also participated in the Rawlinsville Camp Meeting Association during their summer services and served as the chaplain for the Southern Regional Police in Lancaster County. A 1961 graduate of Cedar Cliff High School, Harrisburg, Ken received his BA in Philosophy from Elizabethtown College in 1968 and his Master of Divinity from United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio in 1975. An avid reader, he especially enjoyed theology, newspapers, and current world events. Ken had a high desire to serve others and was a devoted man of God. Along with his wife, Jody, they worked as a team, tirelessly preaching, teaching, and visiting wherever they were called. Known to many in the area as a minister who taught from the Word of God, Ken had a faithful following from past parishioners who attended his Bible studies and worship services on a regular basis wherever he was pastor.

Martin and Eve Boehm's son, Henry, became a prominent leader of Methodism in Colonial America and was a confidant and traveling companion of Bishop Francis Asbury for five years. Henry's journal titled “Reminiscences” records his time spent traveling and preaching with Bishop Asbury. ■

APPLE FESTIVAL 2009



The 28th Boehm's Chapel Apple Festival opened in a light rain, but that didn't stop a large crowd from showing up and buying all the apple butter. At left, above, the crew removes a boiling kettle of apple butter ready to be bottled.

Above, Virgil Meck directs traffic.

At far left, a girl shows off her caricature, drawn by Ryan Toews. At near left, that the vehicle for WJTL which did its Kids' Cookie Break show from in back of the Chapel.

At bottom, from left, the apple dumplings are lined up and ready for sale, a boy takes a bite out of a candied apple, and two boys show off their face painting.

There are more photos on the next page.



MORE APPLE FESTIVAL

Pat Johnson, right, of the Knit Wits, does some spinning; below, a look inside the huge food tent, and at bottom, face-painting wasn't only for children. That's Executive Director Dolores Myers with a cat face and a safety vest for directing traffic.



Photos by Chere' Fizer and Dolores Myers

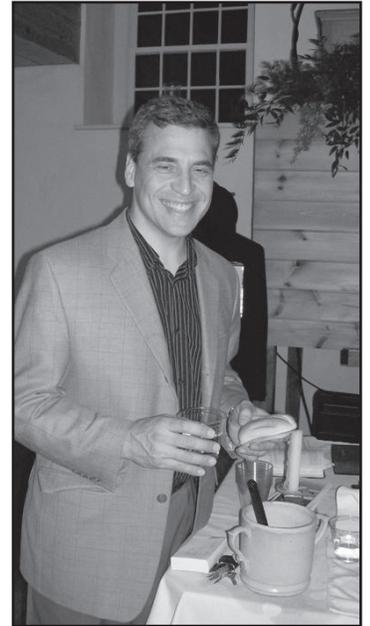
CHAPEL HAPPENINGS



Above, Debi Irene Wahl, plays the part of Fanny Crosby, a prolific writer of hymns and other songs, with her mother, Madeline Kauffman, who plays her grandmother. They performed at the Chapel Oct. 25 before a big and appreciative crowd.

At right, the Rev. Joe DiPaolo uses the Chapel to teach an Evangelical Theological Seminary class in Methodist history.

Below, the Rev. Helen Adams, a Chapel board member, poses with Amy and Robert Fedor after their wedding in the Chapel. Mr. Fedor is an officer with Southern Regional, the police force for which Rev. Ken O'Neal was chaplain. Ken was set to perform the wedding before falling ill. Ironically, he was buried later the same afternoon near the Chapel.



Putting a date on rare photo of the Chapel in disrepair

This rare black-and-white photograph of Boehms Chapel, at right, unfortunately surfaced after the restoration work had been completed for the bicentennial celebration of the historic site.

Regarding the history of the photo, The Rev. Abram W. Sangrey, author of *The Temple of Limestone*, writes:

"On April 8, 1991, a copy of this rare, original photograph of the 1791 chapel was offered to the writer by Mr. and Mrs. Claude Hart, historians at Mt. Hope United Methodist Church. It is the only known photograph of this image in existence! We do not know the picture's origin. We guess-timate this photo was made around 1875. The chapel's apparent visible rundown condition implies that time when it was 'reopened' for use."

A small bit of information about the photograph also appears in a September 1891 issue of Lancaster's *Methodist Messenger*. The year 1891 was the centennial year for old Boehm's Chapel. The article states:

"We are indebted to Mr. George M. Steinman of Lancaster who kindly had a copy made from a picture in his possession. The cut represents the (Boehms) Chapel as it appeared prior to its complete reformation and internal improvements in 1883."

The year 1883 was indeed a significant one for old Boehm's Chapel albeit, from a present perspective, not a positive one. The pastor was Rev. A.J. Amthor who attended and related the following story at the 1891 centennial celebration.

"It was during my pastorate that necessary repairs were made in the church. The gallery was unsafe, the windows were loose from the wall and the roof had many holes. It was decided that the only way to make the building comfortable was to give it a thorough repairing. The galleries were removed; the old high pulpit was taken out; the roof made new; the



This photo surfaced after most of the work was done for the reconstruction of the Chapel in 1991.

"The gallery was unsafe, the windows were loose from the wall and the roof had many holes."

Rev. A.J. Amthor

ceiling lowered, the windows enlarged and new benches were made.

"With all these improvements, the building retains so much of its old character that is readily recognized as the church of 100 years ago."

In 1884, the presiding elder reported, "Boehms Chapel around which clusters so much that is familiar with the labors of Bishop Asbury and Henry Boehm has been remodeled and greatly improved at a cost of \$750.00." The pastor in 1884 was W.H. Smith.

While recently comparing the old black and white photo to the current exterior of Boehms

Chapel, it was discovered that the two large tombstones in the photograph, enclosed within a fenced in family plot, are the tombstones of Fanny and Samuel Charles. The stones remain standing today. Confirmation was made by the ornamentation on the top of each stone.

Fanny Mylin Charles died Dec. 21, 1878. In order for her gravestone to appear in the period photograph, the picture could not have been taken before 1879. The trees and bushes in the photograph suggest a summer season. Several smaller stones in the photo apparently were relocated over the years to their pres-

ent position to form a straight line of tombstones. The date on Fanny's tombstone helps to narrow down the time frame in which the photo was taken to 1879-1883.

This rare 19th century photograph has enabled the Chapel Society to have shutters recreated and replaced. Under consideration for the future is the replacement of the ornamental brickwork that appears in the photo over each window and surrounding the date stone. ■

Planning your estate?

For those doing estate planning, the Boehm's Chapel Society asks to be remembered for its work, not only in maintaining the Chapel and preserving its heritage, but for the Society's work in carrying on the word of our savior, Jesus Christ.

Vesper service is Dec 6; features lessons, carols

A Christmas vesper service will be held at Boehm's Chapel at 3 p.m. on Dec. 6.

The program will follow a traditional service of lessons and carols, retelling the story of redemption, from prophecy to fulfillment, through Holy Scripture and music.

Pastors who have formerly served the Boehm's congregation along with members and friends of the Boehm's Chapel Society will participate in the annual service.

Returning to the Chapel pulpit are the following former pastors:

The Rev. Dennis R. Snovel, retired, who served Boehms between 1977-1985, The Rev. John J. Keretzman, currently serving at Memorial United Methodist Church, Quarryville who served at Boehm's between 1991-1995, The Rev. William W. Spiegelhalter, retired, who served the Boehm's congregation 1990-1991; and the Rev. Mary Elizabeth Hoskins, who retired from the pulpit after serving as Boehm's pastor 2003-2007.

The Rev. Robert Brown,

serving as senior pastor of Plymouth Meeting Evangelical Congregational Church, Plymouth Meeting, will also participate in the annual program. Bob attended Boehm's between 1962 and 1968 when his father, the Rev. William Brown Jr., served as pastor.

Several musicians will combine to provide special music.

James Landis, of Mount Joy, has performed with Opera Lancaster (formerly Lancaster Opera Company) for more than 20 years and has sung with area choirs and as a baritone soloist in concert performances and at church services.

Joanne Swords-Wang was a soloist in the Lancaster Opera Company on the Fulton stage, Pennsylvania Academy of Music and other local venues. She is currently the accompanist for Boehm's UMC choir.

Kathleen Horein will be featured on oboe. A former music teacher in the School District of Lancaster, Kathleen teaches music at Lancaster Country Day School. She has performed as an oboist



Joanne Swords-Wang, top, and Kathleen Horein, will provide music at the vesper service.

with the Lancaster, York and Harrisburg symphonies. She freelances in the area and last performed in the pit for the play "Les Misérables" at the Fulton Opera House. All events at Boehms Chapel are free and open to the public.

UPCOMING EVENTS IN NEIGHBORHOOD

■ Conestoga Area Historical Society
Phone: 872-1699.

Email: cahs@paonline.com
—5 p.m. to 9 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 12, candlelight tour. (This is a change to one day from a previous announcement.)

—1 p.m., p.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 13, seasonal closing. Last chance to view Boehm's Chapel display in Pequea Pride exhibit.

■ Hans Herr House
Phone: 464-4438

Email: info@hansherr.org

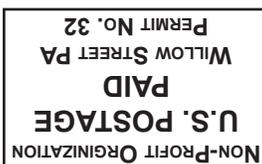
—Friday, Dec. 4, Christmas Candlelight Tours, 6 p.m., with last tour at 8:30 p.m., and Saturday, Dec. 5, beginning at 5 p.m., with the last tour at 8:30.

—The museum is closed on Sundays and Thanksgiving and all days from Dec. 1 through March 31 except for the above Christmas Candlelight Tours

■ Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
Phone 393-9745

E-mail: lmhs@lmhs.org
—9 a.m., Saturday, Nov. 14, Basket-making Pennsylvania German folk art class
—6 p.m., Friday, Dec. 4, Benefit Book Auction.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Boehm's Chapel Society
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WILLOW STREET, PA 17584