



From Morning View p. 1

In 1940 Ernest G. Gehman and "Uncle Hop" Turner were given pastoral oversight at Morning View, and were at the same time helping with the work at Pleasant Grove and Cross Roads. Although Sunday School was held every Sunday in those early years, preaching was held every other Sunday, and this was on Sunday afternoon. It wasn't until 1942 that services were held on Sunday morning. Preaching appointments were filled by the Northern District calendar so there were many preachers in those years. By 1947 E.G. Gehman was given full responsibility here. A.T. Rollins filled in one year while Bro. Gehman was studying and teaching in Heidelberg, Germany.

By 1954 the congregation was feeling cramped for space, especially with all Sunday school classes meeting in one room with only curtain dividers. That year the average attendance was 54. Also, although there was electricity, it was heated by a wood-burning stove in the center of the church, and there were no indoor bathrooms. At Bro. Gehman's request the Northern District church council appointed a building committee, and under his guidance an enlarging and remodeling program began. There was a full basement for classrooms, bathrooms, and later a kitchen. Also, an oil furnace was installed and a cistern was built for a water supply. The old church was rolled over onto the new foundation and became the front part of the new church with additional auditorium space in back as well as a small nursery and a council room on either side. The building was dedicated on the evening of August 5, 1956, with Timothy Showalter giving a history of the church and J. Ward Shank preaching the sermon.

Also in 1955 Clayton Showalter was ordained deacon. Since his marriage to Thelma Getz in 1941 both of them were deeply involved in the work of the church and continued to be involved into the 90's.

In 1975 there was another change for the congregation. Dwight S. Heatwole was licensed for a year and then ordained to serve the Morning View Congregation, along with his wife, Fannie S. Heatwole. Then in May 1990, Phillip Borntrager was ordained as deacon to serve with Clayton Showalter.

Again in the 80's there was talk of a need for some new and expanded facilities. A well was drilled for a better water supply. This time, after much deliberation and under guidance of our present pastor, Dwight Heatwole,

a building committee was formed and plans began to take shape for a larger fellowship room, more classrooms, better nursery facilities as well as wheel-chair accessible bathrooms. Bernard Martin drew up the plans & organized volunteer labor to make this dream a reality. On May 30, 1993, this latest addition was dedicated.

More recently in 1996 Ric Gullman was licensed as assistant Pastor, and he and his wife Joy, are presently serving along with Dwight and Fannie Heatwole.

-Sara E. Kreider

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

We're on the verge of great things! The Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians are ready to acquire land and to begin serious preparations for a heritage center at the north edge of Harrisonburg. It will be part of a "campus" that includes a Mennonite-operated restaurant and inn and an historic Swiss-German log house moved from Shenandoah County.

Come to the annual meeting on November 14 to find out more and learn how you can be involved. The Saturday morning event includes a delicious breakfast served at Shady Oaks next to Weavers Mennonite Church.

This past summer, two of our members published historical books. I urge you to get a copy. The one I'm reading right now is *Harold S. Bender* by Albert Keim. It is a biography of this most fascinating Mennonite leader. The other one is *Lindale's Song*, a history of Lindale Mennonite Church, which just celebrated its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Congratulations, Al and Jim!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions about the work of the Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians. You can call me at (540) 432-4208 (work) or 433-7477. Or you can e-mail me at [shenks@emu.edu](mailto:shenks@emu.edu).

-Steve Shenk

### FROM THE TREASURER:

Receipts for 1998 through September 8, 1998 totaled \$914.00. Supplies and newsletter expenses total \$304.00, leaving a net income of \$610.00 for the year.

-Elroy W. Kauffman, Treasurer

## THE FARMER'S HOUSE on the site of the present Seminary Building

In the spring of 1920, Eastern Mennonite School decided that the tillable parts of its farm would be cultivated to provide food for the school. A small white frame house was built south of the new Administration Building (the "Cracker Box") as living quarters for their newly-hired farmer, D. Stoner Krady.

The Krady family, consisting of Stoner, his wife Frances, and five-month-old Elva, moved to Harrisonburg from Lancaster that spring to fulfill this venture. With Stoner Krady's efforts, the front campus became a cornfield, a cow he kept provided milk and butter, and a truck patch nearby grew vegetables for the school kitchen.

In July 1921, daughter Ruth was born in the small white house. That autumn, at the beginning of the school year, Stoner wanted to join the student body. He had only a fifth-grade education, and his dream was to get a high school Bible diploma. He and his family had to leave the little white house they loved and move to the Old Assembly Park Building where other student families lived. In November 1922, third daughter Naomi was

n.

Disaster struck the Krady family. Elva contracted scarlet fever and needed isolation, Ruth became ill and was hospitalized, and Frances was caring for the new baby. One morning Mrs. J.L. Stauffer, who lived with her family in the nearby log cabin, heard Stoner outside at the woodpile chopping wood for the stove that kept their apartment warm. He was whistling. "Why are you so happy, Stoner," she asked, "when everything seems to be going against you?" He replied, "We prayed last night about our situation, and this morning we know the answer; the Krady family is going back to Lancaster, Pennsylvania."

Thus ended the dream of D. Stoner Krady, school farmer, to get his high school Bible certificate at Eastern Mennonite School. However, he was happy when seven of his eight children came to EMC for high school and college training. He was overjoyed later in life to be told that Eastern Mennonite in its records counted him as an alumnus.

-Ruth K. Lehman

## BOOK REVIEW

Review of James O. Lehman, Lindale's Song: A Century of Harmony, Growth and Fellowship, 1898-1998. (Lindale Mennonite Church, 1998) 304 pages, \$12.00.

The challenge for congregational historians is to tell both the small story and the large story: that is, to put congregational history in a larger context. When that is done successfully, the congregational story becomes a window to the broader history of which the congregation is a part. James O. Lehman's *Lindale's Song* helped me to get a new understanding of the nature and quality of the Mennonite experience in the middle Shenandoah Valley during the past century.

Lindale was a rural church with roots deep into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In the twentieth century the congregation resiliently navigated change, especially the swift changes of the 1970's. It developed new forms of pastoral ministry, and absorbed new members in the form of young families connected with EMC, EMHS, and Media Ministries. It seems to have been especially resourceful in shifting from the MC era of sectarian nonconformity to a more contemporary understanding of the "church in the world."

I am impressed by how successfully Lindale contemporized its governance, worship and community life. It managed to forge a new identity rooted in its past, while being receptive to the many new currents flowing through the Mennonite church in the 1960's and 1970's. The story Lehman tells is of a congregation which found its voice and life in the new Mennonite language of the congregation as a hermeneutical community, faith discipleship, and more expressive and inclusive forms of worship.

No one who studies Virginia Mennonite Conference history can avoid surprise at the swift changes which engulfed the Conference in the late 1960's and the 1970's. Suddenly one of the most conservative polities in the MC church seemed to cast off its past. For congregations the changes could be disconcerting. In fact a whole set of congregations withdrew from the conference at this point. As I understand the story, Lindale seemed to move through that era with relative ease, thanks to good leadership and a strong congregational sense of purpose.

-See Book Review, p. 4

From Book Review, p. 3

James Lehman is a good story teller, and part of the charm of this book is the many good stories. The one I enjoyed most was his account of the whirlwind courtship of George R. Brunk Sr. And Katie E. Wenger, sister of A.D. Wenger. Their courtship began when George, sitting on the Lindale pulpit platform waiting to preach, noticed Wenger in the audience. The next day he visited her home and within six weeks they were married! It was "one of the shortest courtships on record for a Mennonite bishop," quips Lehman.

Some readers will have attended the centennial festivities at Lindale in August. No one present can soon forget that powerful scene at the end when the players and the congregation stood and sang the majestic hymn "How Can I Keep From Singing." Lindale's "Song" nearly lifted the roof of the packed sanctuary, and many of us were profoundly moved by the experience. Music, Lehman says, was a powerful alchemist in the 100 year history of Lindale congregation. In fact, it was during those one hundred years of history that, along with quilts, MCC and the Anabaptist Vision, Mennonites developed those wonderful musical sounds which come from four-part acappella harmony.

My knowledge of Lindale congregation and Virginia has been improved immensely by this book. James Lehman has written numerous congregational histories. This is almost certainly his best one. It is a joy to read.

-Al Keim

### STORIES ABOUT ABRAM SWARTZ (1838-1921)

Abram Swartz, my maternal grandfather, was born March 11, 1838 in Shenandoah county, third of nine children of John and Rebecca (Grabill) Swartz. In 1851 the family moved to Rockingham County and settled near Rushville. He was very talented in making things with his hands. He once made an apple peeler which he took to apple snitzing parties.

On November 10, 1861 he married Mary E. Swope (born September 11, 1839, died December 6, 1876), daughter of Reuben and Susan (Swank) Swope. At the time of his marriage he got 72 acres of woodland near Mole Hill from his father-in-law. He cleared most of it, built a

house and barn and several other farm buildings. Although not a particularly tall man he was very strong.

Abram and Mary had eight children. My mother Etta I. was the sixth child. Mary died in 1876 and Abram remarried some years later.

After the Civil War started in 1861 soldiers were permitted to capture horses for the army from civilians. Abram hid his horses up on Mole Hill and at night carried feed and water up to them. My other grandfather, David H. Burkholder, and his brothers hid their horses in a woods some distance east of Stone Spring, but made the mistake of not hiding themselves. When the soldiers saw the boys they knew something was there and they found the horses. They took all the horses except one old horse they left for the boys to ride home.

In 1864 when General Phil Sheridan of the Union Army came through the area burning buildings, Abram Swartz's house was burned. The family escaped, as the soldiers usually gave the family time to get out with a few possessions they could carry. That night they put blankets in a wagon, pulled it out in a field and slept there. There were two children at that time.

Then Abram built a one-room building with a loft which they lived in until he could build a new house after the war. The one-room house and the new house built after the war are still standing and the house is now occupied by Joe Showalter's son. The ground cellar Abram built for storing potatoes, apples, etc., is still in good condition and being used by the Showalters.

Abram was a farmer, a cooper, and would re-babbit threshing machine bearings. He also made his own farm wagon. He made tight cider barrels which he sold for 50¢ each. He could make three barrels a day when ordinary wages were 50¢ a day. With that and his farming and good business ability he was well ahead for his day. He brought two cherry trees from Shenandoah County on his horse's back. They grew and bore heavily. He also kept bees. Each year he saved back a pan of honey in the event next year's output was not good.

Bishop L.J. Heatwole lived near Abram Swartz. Abram helped Bishop Heatwole by giving him potatoes, groceries, and once a load of hay to feed his horse.

The Swartz children went to Pine Grove School, not far  
-See Abram Swartz, p. 5

From Abram Swartz, p. 4

from their farm. It caught on fire one day and Abram and his oldest sons went to help put out the fire. The boys got over-heated and had to recover.

Abram and his sons rose early before daylight, did the milking, ate breakfast, and then sat talking while they waited for daylight so they could do the outside work. He wouldn't let his wife fry mush for breakfast because he said it would take too much time. But she and the girls got tired of the men's talking and looking outside every once in a while until finally Abram would announce, "Well, boys, it's daylight. Let's get to work."

Grandfather kept several guns for shooting chicken hawks. The old muzzle-loaders took a while to load, so he kept one loaded behind the kitchen door where he could grab it quickly when needed. When Grandmother cleaned house she carried them outside one at a time very carefully.

## MEMBERSHIP

To become a member of Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians and to receive future copies of this newsletter, send name and address and 1999 dues (\$10 per couple, \$6 per single) to:

Michael Shenk  
1345 Hillcrest Drive  
Harrisonburg, VA 22802

When plans were made to build a new frame church at Weavers in 1881 to replace the original log church, Abram was chosen as foreman. They held preaching in the old log church in February 1881 and by June 1881 services were held in the new church building. The old log church was taken down and the new church was built on the same site or very close. From February to June services were probably held at the Pike, Bank, and Mt. Clinton churches, as preaching was held once a month at each church at that time.

Abram's funeral was held in the church he helped build (July 1921). The preacher remarked what a faithful attendant Abram had been. He always sat at the wall under the clock and the preacher knew that whenever he looked toward that spot, Abram Swartz would be there. He is buried in Weavers cemetery.

-Ruth L. Burkholder  
-Material supplied by Herman L.  
Burkholder, Ruth L. Burkholder

## ON NOSTALGIA

Old things represent an era: memories of how it used to be; sometimes dubbed as "the good old days." Geography tells us where people lived, literature tells us how they thought, while history tells us how they lived. Tools and items of the past tell about their way of life. Many of us have old toys, lamps, pictures, paintings, books, dresses, candle molds, hand tools, machinery, dishes, furniture and other items that were most useful to our ancestors. We keep these things, not for their present usefulness but rather for what they were. We call them "antiques." Officially, an antique is anything that has been around for a century or more.

-Paul E. Bender, Mifflin County  
Mennonite Historical Society Newsletter

You are invited to come to the

Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians ANNUAL MEETING at Shady Oaks  
at Weavers Church, US 33 West, on Saturday morning, November 14, 1998.

It will begin with a PANCAKE BREAKFAST, served at 8:00 am,  
by Early Katering. Annual meeting will begin promptly at 8:45 am.

Agenda will include:

- 1) Annual business meeting with reports from president,  
secretary, treasurer, secretary and Newsletter editor.
- 2) Election of officers.
- 3) Latest developments regarding hotel, restaurant and heritage  
center.
- 4) Introductions: donors of site--Hatcher and Eby families,  
introduction of Steering Committee for heritage center.
- 5) Open discussion regarding Heritage center program and building  
plans.

Adjournment, by 10:30 am.

Please let us know by November 6 at the latest that you are coming.  
The cost of breakfast will be \$5.00 plus 50 cents tax; payable at the  
door.

Please call Steve Shenk (432-4208 daytime; 433-7477 evening/weekend)  
telling us how many from your household plan to come.

--Shenandoah Valley Mennonite Historians

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