

# HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Fall 2013

## A VISIT WITH ROBERT C. POPE

By Marjorie Goldthorp Fulp

Having arrived sixty-three years ago, in September 1950, Robert C. Pope is a long time resident of Haycock Township, Bucks County, PA. Needing a larger home for a growing family, Robert and Ruth Pope and their three children, Robert Jr., age 3, David, age 2, and baby Ruth Ann (born in June), moved from Coopersburg, PA, to their beautiful old farm on Thatcher Road in Haycock.

Robert C. Pope was born on December 24, 1923, to Robert Pope (born in 1899) and Ruth Dorothy Edling Pope (born in 1902). He grew up in Cranford, NJ. Robert C. was in the Army Air Force from 1943 to 1946, and served in the Pacific Theater in World War II. On September 25, 1944, while he was enlisted, he married Ruth Randall Zehner, who was born on October 12, 1925, to Ran and Hallie Zehner. Robert and Ruth had met through

their fathers, who had both grown up in Brooklyn, NY. Robert's father moved to New Jersey, and Ruth's father moved to Bethlehem, PA. When Robert C. enrolled in Lehigh University, his father contacted Ran Zehner and asked him to "keep my son out of trouble." Ran and Hallie Zehner invited Robert to dinner and there, he met their lovely daughter Ruth. After marrying, they lived with Ruth's parents in Bethlehem, PA, until Robert's



The Popes' Wedding Photograph



Ruth and Robert Pope

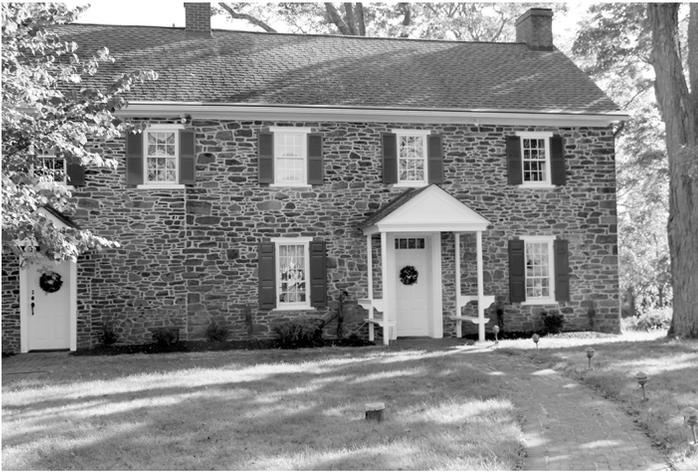
and Ruth's oldest son, Robert C. Jr., was born in 1947. They next lived in a bungalow in Coopersburg, PA. When the family grew to three children, the Popes looked for a bigger home. Real estate agent Leroy Cassel told Robert and Ruth of a house

in Haycock Township, and took them to see it. As he drove the Popes down the long driveway, Ruth caught sight of the beautiful old house, and immediately said, "I want it!" Mr. Pope, who has a good sense of humor, amusingly points out that this consequently took away any bargaining power he had in buying the place.

The Pope farm consists of the spacious stone house, with its cheerful red shutters, a large 50' by 75' stone barn, a smaller building which is a carriage house, a well house, and at one time, a chicken coop. I learned from Mr. Pope that my ancestor, William Bryan, owned the land in 1758, before the house was built. The oldest section of the house was built in 1790, and additions have been added over the years, making a very attractive large, rambling home. Thirty years ago, the Popes hired an architect to do

renovations and the house was beautifully restored, with "nine over six" paned thermal windows, and "lost" chair rails put back in place. The wood work and window frames are painted in pretty colors, such as Colonial blue, deep red, and a creamy gold. The open space between the house and the summer kitchen was enclosed, adding another room to the home. The fireplaces are original, and the two meant for cooking both have a small Dutch (bake) oven inside their interior back walls. Each of the ovens has an iron door of its own to close when the oven is being used. In one room, the windows are Greek Revival (1830-1850), with the walls curving to the window. Another room has cased windows, with wood panels. Robert and Ruth were world travelers, and the house is a visual delight, wonderfully decorated with memories of their trips to far-away places. France and Italy were their favorite countries. They also visited middle Europe, Africa and Asia. There is a wall hanging which is a descriptive tapestry of Swaziland, and arranged on other walls are groups of framed pictures of lands they visited. One window is "the Dutch window," and on its sill is a gathering of mementoes from Holland. Ruth Pope loved to cook, and was an accomplished chef. Ruth's many diplomas from culinary schools in France and Italy are displayed on a wall. Ruth passed away in 2009, but the memory of her is lovingly kept in photos and the décor of the home.

Robert attended Lehigh University, and after a time off to serve in the Army Air Force during WWII, he returned to Lehigh to finish his education and graduated with a BS in



**Robert Pope's restored farmhouse**

electrical engineering and a BA. He worked for Bethlehem Steel as a Return Division General Foreman. A thousand men were in the division in good times. Iron ore was delivered by carrier across the Great Lakes to Erie, and then by train to Bethlehem. Ore was also obtained from overseas, such as from Venezuela, and Sierra Leone by way of ship to Philadelphia, and then by train to Bethlehem Steel. Robert worked in various positions in the Blast Furnace Division (Ore Handling, Ore Screening, Sintering and Blast Furnace Departments) from Laborer to Divisional General Foreman. The final product, molten iron, was delivered to other departments to be processed into steel or into castings. Left over from the molten iron was "slag," which consisted of iron ore flux and coke. The molten slag was dumped into a refuse pile, creating the impressive red glow that lit up the entire sky above Bethlehem Steel. This could be seen for miles. Occasional "flaring" could occur when excess gas was burned. The cost of using railroads became too high, and Bethlehem Steel's assets were taken over by a British Company, which wanted only waterways used for transportation. Steel plants all across the country that did not have access to seaports were closed.



**Barn**

The Pope children attended the Mt. Airy, Stover, and New Harrisburg one-room schools in Haycock, and the Haycock Elementary School which opened in 1955. Robert remembers the many small farms, which would have maybe a cow and chickens, and a few other animals, in Haycock Township back in the 1950's. Since then, many homes have been built on the

farmlands. Robert is now almost finished in the process of his land being registered to be preserved in the Bucks County Agricultural Land Preservation Program. His neighbor John Ahlum already has his farm registered in the same program. This will save their lands from future development.

Robert Pope was active in the community. He was a founding member and a treasurer of the Haycock Fire Company. He took part in a Civil Defense Unit which planned how to accommodate refugees from the city in case if an attack from a foreign country (the Soviet Union). He held a place on the Quakertown Hospital Board of Directors. Having two sons in the Boy Scouts, Robert was an acting scout master for 10 years.

Shortly after renovations to the house, the Popes had a fire in their home, and if they had come home an hour later from an outing, they would have lost their house. From outside,



**Walk-in Fireplace**

they saw flickering lights on the first floor and at first thought a candle was burning, then realized it was a fire. Mr. Pope asked a neighbor to call the fire departments, and the Haycock and Quakertown Fire Departments quickly arrived and put out the blaze. Mr. Pope recalls, "Our hearts were at our ankles." A malfunction in the propane gas line in the basement was the cause of the fire. Fortunately there was minimal damage, and only a few yards of wood flooring had to be replaced.

The Pope farm has 78 acres, and over the years the land has been rented out to be worked by other farmers. It was farmed by John Ahlum, Al Wukobitz, and presently, by the three generations of the Stoneback family. The farm is surrounded by fields so thick with corn a person could become lost in them. At one time the Popes raised pigs and chickens for meat and eggs. Sheep kept the orchard clean, and their wool was sold. The family also raised one steer. Pets were dogs and cats and a raccoon. The raccoon was caught in Haycock resident Ed Lehman's tree, after Ed phoned and invited them to come and catch it. They had the raccoon for a few weeks before the new pet cleverly figured out how to open the door of his cage, and took off to the countryside of Haycock.



**Formal Fireplace**

As previously noted, when Robert was in his junior year at Lehigh University, World War II was raging, and he and a friend wanted to serve their country in war time. They enlisted in the Army Air force. His friend went to be a fighter pilot, and Robert became a bombardier and navigator, flying on B29's in the Pacific Theater. He flew on eleven bombing missions against Japan. They flew at an altitude of 30,000 feet, which was too high for accurate bombing. The bombers in the European Theater traveled at the lower height of 15,000 feet, and achieved much greater success. Consequently, General

Curtis Lemay ordered that the B29's in the Pacific also fly at 15,000 feet, to enable them to better hit their targets.

The last flight for Robert and his crew was a "milk run," to check on weather conditions. They had a crew of eleven on board: pilot, co-pilot, bombardier, radar operator, radio operator, flight engineer, navigator, top gunner, two side gunners, and a tail gunner. Five of the crew were Commissioned Officers, or CO's. A twelfth person joined them for the weather reconnaissance.

Their plane left Saipan and their route took them past Iwo Jima, Tokyo, and over the Sea of Japan. On their return trip, they found themselves fighting 60 mph headwinds, which slowed the plane, causing it to run out of gas after they passed Iwo Jima, which was not secured for an emergency landing. They radioed a destroyer in the area and asked, "Mind if we drop in for tea?" The answer from the destroyer was "We'd be delighted." Robert relates that they landed, or "watered" in the sea, with all twelve persons still onboard. On impact, the plane broke in half, with its nose in the water. The radar man found himself hanging onto the tip of the wing, and Robert was hanging onto him. The plane was bobbing up and down in swells ten feet high. The radar man's hip was hurting and he asked Robert to let go, which he did, with the result of the plane flipping away from him and into the water. Two cutters were coming from the destroyer, and Robert released his dye marker. He was in the water for about 15 minutes before being rescued. He remembers giving a big sigh of relief when he was hauled aboard the cutter. Meanwhile, the tail of the plane had broken off, and the tail gunner merely climbed out and stood on the stabilizer until he was rescued! Of the twelve persons on the plane, six were rescued, but only four survived. Over sixty-five years later, Robert is still in touch with the flight engineer, who now lives in Massachusetts.

Thankfully, Robert C. Pope was able to return home safe and sound to his wife Ruth, and continue his education, leading on to his position with Bethlehem Steel and moving his family to pastoral Haycock Township, where he and Ruth raised their children, and shared many wonderful years of adventures and memories. Robert's father had built a house on Robert's property and lived there for some years. Robert's son, Robert C. Jr., is rebuilding on that same site, and he and his wife will soon be residing there, near his father.



## THANK YOU

Grateful thanks to members for having allowed me the privilege of serving as President of the Haycock Historical Society for these past years.

It has been an exciting journey to steer the ship into the big waters! We have grown in unimaginable ways over the last 10 years and I know, with Pat DeWald at the helm as our new President, we are on the right course!

Thank-you to Linda Stauffer who created my lovely honorarium plate and to the board and members for this unique gift which I will cherish for my lifetime.

Very sincerely, Chris Handschin



**Above, the Stokes House newly painted, with new storm doors. The original shutters were re-installed.**

**To the left is our new packed gravel parking lot.**

# CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

As told by those who grew up in Haycock Township in the 40's to 60's



## Christmas Memories:



Sugar plum wishes and candy cane dreams  
If only I were a kid again  
I'd do all the things that then seemed small  
And enjoy every moment with no regret at all  
But those times are gone and I'm here alone  
Wishing there was some way for me to go home  
Back to the house with the big Christmas tree  
That was filled with people I can no longer see  
This time of year is for those who believe  
Even when faith is tested by need  
So many loved ones each left their mark  
I remain with my memories that shine in the dark

By Pamela Varkony



In the 1920's, Bill Heinrich's parents, Wilhelm and Hilda (Stein) Heinrich, came from Germany to America. Wilhelm came from the town of Banfe', and Hilda came from the town of Tauberbishopsheim. They got married in New Jersey and, due to the rise of anti-German attitudes during WWII, moved in 1939 to the Pennsylvania-Dutch community in Haycock, near Applebachsville. Wilhelm was a wood worker well known for his benches and tables. Hilda did beautiful oil paintings. She came from a family of bakers who held the trade for three centuries in their town in Germany, and she also was an excellent baker, famously known for the delicious doughnuts she made for Christmas, along with other baked goods. In true German tradition, the Heinrichs used real lighted candles on their Christmas trees. No one in their families knew of any fires caused by these candles, because they knew the proper way to use them. Bill has the memory of when he was a teenager, singing carols with his church group as they strolled through Applebachsville, and then on to the Heinrich home for refreshments, which must have included those special doughnuts.



The youth group from the Haycock Mennonite Church loved to go caroling in Haycock. Edith Beidler Freed recalls them first traveling in the church bus, which had loud speakers on the roof. As they rode through Haycock their singing was broadcast for all to hear. The bus stopped at homes, and the carolers stepped out to sing to the residents. They took baskets filled with food to the shut-ins. A few years later, when Anna Mae Godshall Landis joined the carolers, they rode in cars, and stopped at homes, where they stood outside to sing. She remembers how cold their feet got. When the group went to the Norman Godshall home to warm up and get refreshments, they were delighted to find a large array of all kinds of iced layer cakes to eat, and hot chocolate. The youths enjoyed filling their plates with the variety of cakes. It seemed that the ladies of the church outdid themselves, each bringing her best and fanciest cake. Anna Mae can't remember anything else: no brownies, no cookies, just all those wonderful cakes displayed on the tables. Sisters Carole Johnson Eddings and Peggy Johnson Casey also loved caroling with the Mennonite group, and remember the gifts of a box of chocolates and an orange which were given by the church to each child. Sisters Faith Beidler Benner and Hope Beidler Brubaker have the memory of their last stop after caroling through Haycock. It was at the home of a German family who lived at the foot of Haycock Mountain. Like the Heinrichs, this family also had real lighted candles on their Christmas tree. For the carolers' treats, there was a large table filled with German food, such as strudel, rolls, and cookies. There was hot cider, coffee, and hot chocolate to drink.



Every Christmas Eve the Guttman family always attended the midnight candlelit service at the Tohickon Church in the village of Weisel. Nancy Guttman Stemler relates that each person held a white candle in a paper holder, and at the end of the service members walked down the aisles, lighting the candles of the people sitting at the end of the rows. They in turn would light the candle of the person seated next to them, and

the candle lighting was passed along until all candles were lit. Nancy's best memory is everyone holding a lighted candle in the darkened church, and reverently singing "Silent Night," as Christmas morning arrived. One year, when Nancy was a little girl, she was missing her favorite doll, and could not understand where it could be. When Christmas came, she happily found her doll under the tree, with all new outfits for it to wear.



Mary Ann Knapp Swartz enjoyed getting a new doll every Christmas. One memory that stands out is the Donald Duck watch she received one Christmas, for it was such a special gift.



Eddie Bauer recalls his family going into the woods and pulling up the green vine named "crow's foot." They would wind it around to make very attractive wreaths. His sisters, Ginny Bauer Schulberger and Ann Bauer Reichert, also remember the vine. Ann loved a spray they made of crow's foot. The family had small, colored clear glass balls, mostly blue and gold, which they attached to the spray, along with a bow, and Ann remembers "It looked beautiful!"



When Jane Clayton Cope attended the one-room Stover School, Mrs. Fluck had the children bring in old 78 rpm records. They would heat the records in the school's big coal furnace just enough to soften them. The students could then bend the records into the shape of "potato chip" bowls, which were gifts for their mothers



Richard Cope also has a Christmas memory from Stover School. As punishment for misbehavior, a certain student named George was being kept on a chair at the front of the room, and while there, somehow managed to set a paper Santa Claus, also at the front of the room, on fire. Billy Brinze sprang to the rescue, and threw the flaming Santa out the window. The Santa landed outside in the piles of dry leaves which were up against the school wall, and set the leaves afire, thus resulting in the whole classroom of children running outside to put out the fire, as the boys pumped water from the outside hand pump used in those days.



Another time, during a Christmas party at Stover School, a student who had a great fear of Mrs. Fluck's paddle, took advantage of the distraction of the festivities and stealthily procured said paddle and took it out of the school. He placed the paddle, with a rock under it, under the back wheel of Mrs. Fluck's car. Later, when she got into her car and backed up, the car ran over the paddle, breaking it.



At one Christmastime in earlier days, the teacher at the Mt. Airy one-room school needed a Christmas tree for the classroom. A student, who shall remain unnamed, volunteered to find a tree. He went to a nearby residence, where he cut down a nice evergreen tree from the owner's lawn. When the teacher saw the tree, she said they could not use it. The student took the tree to the dam at Sheard's Mill. There he found a hole in the ice, and shoved the entire tree through the hole and down under the ice, to be hidden until the next thaw.

Wayne Keller remembers the pine tree he “stole” from the farm of Natalie Nichols and Zena Plataff. Wayne furtively went into a grove of pine trees on the farm and cut down a perfect tree for his family’s Christmas. He was “real proud of himself.” Another year, he cut down two tall, skinny cedar trees. The trees were higher than the ceiling. His family put the trees in two separate stands, a little distance from each other, and then tied the tops of the cedars together, creating an arched Christmas tree! It looked great, the cedars stayed green a long time, and his family kept the trees up for months. When children, Wayne and his sister Sally would come down on Christmas morning to find a beautifully decorated tree and an elaborate train platform that had not been there the night before, all done by their father. They had Lionel and American Flyer trains.



Bob Smell had American Flyer trains on a 5 ft. by 8 ft. platform. He and his sister Betty would go with their spouses and children back to their parents’ home at the store in Applebachsville, for Christmas dinner. His mother Sadie had roast beef and ham, with all the trimmings. There were cookies and pie for dessert. Bob’s best memory of the dinner is the good pumpkin and apple pies his mother made.



John, Bob and Rich Landgreen had two Christmases each year. One was the December 25, and the other the Greek Orthodox Christmas on January 7. Their train set-ups were Lionels. For Christmas feasting they had pierogies, cooked wheat, fish, and baked goods. Their parents were Ukrainian, and their mother had a special rounded bread, called kolach.



A Christmas without presents, without a tree and without Santa—who would be happy with a Christmas like that? Well, our family was pretty happy when we lived in Haycock because we celebrated with other traditions.

What we had was a full night of Christmas caroling, sometimes lasting as long as four hours. Our church people bundled themselves into cars and drove all around the Haycock community. We had stops where we would pile out of cars and stand together in somebody’s front yard or at their front door and sing as loudly and as harmoniously as possible (accapella) in the dark night and cold air. We had fun, mostly, even though our toes would feel frozen, especially when tromping through snow. My Dad (Stanley Beidler) was the one who usually organized the itinerary, sometimes planning for two groups going different directions. He knew folks in the community who might enjoy our caroling. Our songs were only Christian songs although we did sing “we wish you a Merry Christmas...” at the end, at each house. Most people did come to the door to thank us and some invited us in. We didn’t stay long because we had more stops to do and miles to go before we could go back to the church for hot drinks and homemade cookies, another Mennonite Christmas tradition.

Another tradition I remember well at church was to create Christmas fruit baskets which were given out along the way in our caroling. The fruit baskets were special because we made them, getting together as a group of young people and working for months ahead of Christmas to make them. Actually we recycled old Christmas cards—we had to put those old cards to good use! We used a pattern to cut cardboard forms; then we cut and glued recycled cards onto those forms; then punched holes in the edges and croqueted the six sides and a bottom together for the basket. The baskets were loaded with fruit and wrapped in colored cellophane and tied with a bow. These baskets along with decorated boxes of groceries were distributed to families in our caroling rounds. We thought this was fun—and maybe it was more fun than stressing out with Christmas shopping.

On Sunday during the holiday, we had a special Christmas program at church featuring our Sunday School children. Each child and adult got two oranges and a box of chocolate candy at the end of church services. I looked forward each year to these simple gifts.

The only problem with this kind of Christmas, which I might characterize as a more spiritual rather than commercial Christmas, was that I always dreaded going to school after the holidays. Invariably some teacher would ask us to write on “what I got for Christmas”! What do you say when all you got was two oranges and a box of chocolate candy. I was taught to see Christmas as a time to give to others in the larger community. Sometimes I felt deprived—I did miss the gifts and festivities that my friends talked about. Mostly I just felt different. I had a hard time explaining to my school friends why I had a good Christmas, one without presents, a tree or Santa.

by  
Eva Beidler November 1, 2013



# SOCIETY NEWS

## THANK YOU

We thank Eva Beidler for a copy of the book she authored, titled *The Early Mennonite Mission at Haycock*. Eva's parents, Stanley and Ethel Beidler, were very instrumental in the founding of the Haycock Mission.



We thank Nancy Singer for the donation of these ink wells

## DONATION

On behalf of the Haycock Historical Society, Pat DeWald and Nancy Janyszeski donated a *Johnny Rivers American Marine* book and two bayberry candles to be used as a door prize at the open house at the Golden Pheasant Inn, sponsored by the Bucks County Visitor Center.

## HHS BOOKS NOW ONLINE

*Our Lost Tohickon Valley* and *Haycock and Eddie Bauer* books are now available on Kindle online at Amazon.com. The books may be purchased and viewed on computers, Kindle readers, I-pads and many other devices.

HHD  
USA

## ACTIVITIES

**December 6 , 7 , 8 - Kringle Christmas Shoppe**

**December 22 - Victorian Tea/Christmas Party at STOKES HOUSE - 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.**

Haycock Historical Society's Christmas Party with a Victorian Tea theme, at the 1740's Stokes House. Just think of all the holidays this house has hosted, from colonial, Victorian, and modern to the electronic age. Share your holiday spirit with the house, decorated for a party, and your fellow history buffs.

## MEETINGS

**Nov 21- Larry Roeder, "The Day the Music Died - The History of Sleepy Hollow Ranch" This was thought of as the Nashville of the North.**

**March 20, 2014 - Margaret T. Eberz, "History of the Stover family in Bucks County"**

**April 17, 2014 TBA**

**May 15, 2014 TBA**

**Meetings are held at the Bucks County Latvian Baptist Church in Applebachsville and begin at 7 p.m.**

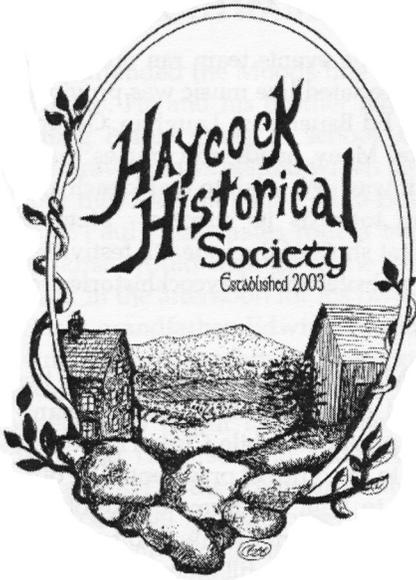
## DUES ARE DUE BY DECEMBER 31

Annual membership holders should have a form with this newsletter. Please complete and return to our post office box.

## OFFICERS

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Please submit material for the newsletter or suggestions for interviews to Margie Fulp. (215-257-7472) or [m\\_fulp@hotmail.com](mailto:m_fulp@hotmail.com)



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[www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.haycockhistoricalsociety.org)

## AN INVITATION TO MEMBERSHIP

YES, ENROLL ME AS A MEMBER OF THE HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY!

I WANT TO BE PART OF RECLAIMING OUR HISTORY AND PRESERVING IT FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS.

- Individual Membership - \$20/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Family Membership (Parents & Children in household) - \$30/year**  
Receive quarterly newsletter and attend all special functions this year – Jan. thru Dec.
- Corporate Sponsor - \$100/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad size smaller than business card)
- Corporate Patron - \$200/year**  
Gain advertisement in our newsletter by yearly sponsorship (ad is full business card size)
- Lifetime Individual Membership - \$200**  
Receive honorary lifetime status, receive quarterly newsletters and attend all special functions
- Lifetime Household Couple Membership - \$250**  
For just \$50 more, join as a household and enjoy all the benefits of lifetime membership

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SEND APPLICATION ALONG WITH CHECK MADE PAYABLE TO HAYCOCK HISTORICAL SOCIETY TO:  
P.O. Box 715, Quakertown, PA 18951