

HAYCOCK HISTORICAL NEWS

The Newsletter of The Haycock Historical Society • Winter 2010

HAYCOCK LOG AND STONE HOUSE

by Pat DeWald

The rejuvenation of an 18th century log and stone home on Deerwood Lane has not been shy about revealing to its owners the construction techniques and local materials used by early western European builders.

The home was built in the mid-1700s and while not a rare birthday for homes in the area, owners Diane and John Vosburgh were struck by how few alternations the home underwent in its more than 250 years.

The stone portion of the house was added to the log house in the early 1800s and has a walk-in fireplace and circular stairs.

The log section was built about 1750 and is 18 feet x 23 feet. About 40 oak and chestnut logs, all hand-hewn with a broad axe to roughly make them square, were used to make the walls. Each wall consists of 10 logs stacked on top of one another to create a height of 10-feet while the two long walls were built from logs all 23-feet long. The marks from the axe are still visible on the timbers that each weigh between 400 to 500 pounds. These logs were notched at the ends with the "V" notch. This type of notch was often used in rural areas where the builder was usually the land owner and not necessarily a craftsman.

The roof rafters rest directly on the long log walls and are made from small diameter trees and not hewn. Where the two rafters meet at the roof's peak, pegs were used to join the two members. About two-thirds of the way up the rafters, horizontal boards called collar ties join the opposing rafter to bring strength to the roof framework.

The windows and door openings were cut out through the logs after the walls were erected. The gaps between the log walls were filled with what is called chinking. Chinking was often made from an assortment of materials including clay, mud, straw and small twigs. On the exterior of some early log homes, horizontal wood lap siding was installed, most often on the north side of the building, to protect the log and

chinking from the weather.

Also, the interior walls of some early log homes were covered with plaster. In cases where the exterior is covered with lap siding and the interior with plaster, a homeowner may not know the home is log until one of the coverings are removed.

At the Vosburgh house, the log portion has a low-ceiling basement under half of the home with stone stairs that lead to the outside. Many early builders preferred constructing their homes into hills so entry to a ground floor partially built into the earth would be accessible at ground level rather than steps.

The Vosburghs said few changes were made to the original house with the exception of a shed addition constructed about 1950 and two dormers on the second floor. Setting aside the minor alterations, nearly all of the original structure was intact and that was what attracted the Vosburghs to venture into



The Vosburgh's 18th century log and stone home

restoring the structure.

When examining the building for what needed to be done, the couple found rotten logs at the southwest corner that caused the floor to drop about six inches. The rot has since been repaired and the floor lifted six inches to make it level.

Another project involved replacing the floors in the log portion of the home that had been worn thin from nearly two and a half centuries of walking. The floors in the stone section were in good condition with some of the flooring planking up to 13-inches wide.

The Vosburgh house is an example of local architecture that shows some of the style variations of early builders. County records show that many early settlers of the Haycock area were of German, Swiss or Dutch descent. Tax records of 1798 listed 126 homesteads in Haycock Township with 80 percent having German names with the remainder being British, Irish or Welch. Of those 126 homesteads, 86 were log homes and most had one story.

continued on page 2

LOG AND STONE HOUSE *continued*

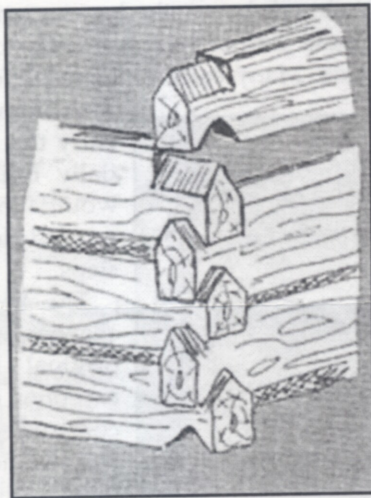
One style of home layout used by early German builders was to construct the fireplace in the middle of the house with an entry door on one side. English builders used a design that created one large room with the fireplace on the gable end and the door in the middle of the long side of the building.

Although 80 percent of the population in the Haycock area in the 18th and 19th centuries were German, the typical German home layout, with a center fireplace, is rarely found. Most of the houses in the area have a fireplace on the gable end, while only a few have them in the center of the house or protruding out from the wall. This type of construction is also seen in many of the stone additions placed on log homes.

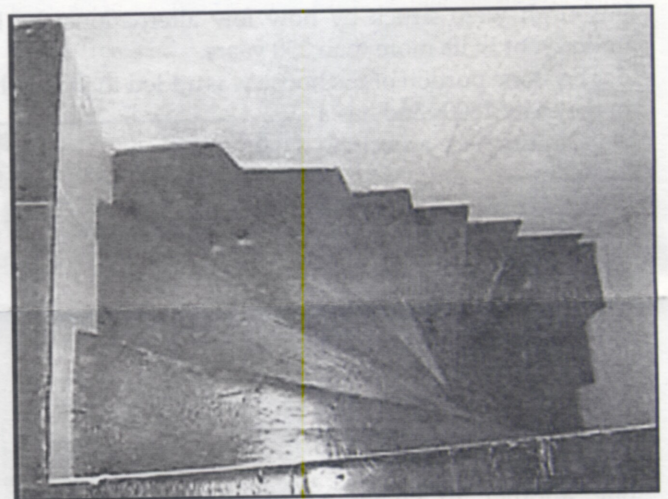
A large cooking fireplace, sometimes called a walk-in fireplace, was sometimes found in the corner of the gable end of

the house, which took up half of the stone wall. A small enclosure which covered the underside of the stairs was used for storage and the circular steps in the other corner went to the loft. Sometimes these steps also descended to a basement, one staircase was placed over the other. Depending on the size of the stone addition, some of these circular staircases were wider than others. Some had very narrow steps and one wonders how they managed to negotiate these stairs while holding a candle or a baby.

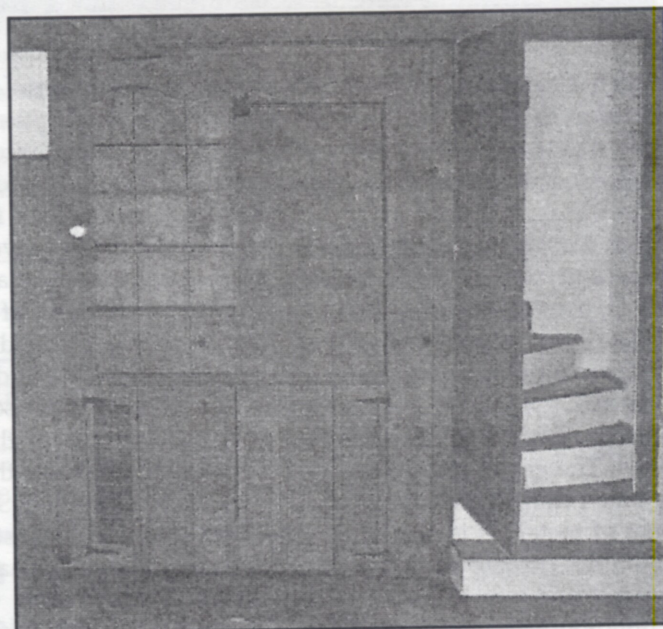
For 250 years the old house stood strong, and with Diane and John's help it will stand strong for 250 more years. Diane loves to sit at the window, looking through the old wavy glass, thinking about all the people who may have passed over the stone threshold worn smooth by many feet. At present she is researching the deeds and hopes she will be able to identify the house on the 1798 direct tax records.



V-notch log home construction diagram



View of the corner stairwell looking down



Vosburgh home's stairwell

HAYCOCK PROFILES: EDNA BERGER

by Jane Nase



Edna Berger lived on the other side of Haycock Mountain on Haycock Run Road, which is now in Lake Nockamixon State Park. She was born ninety years ago on a farm that was in the vicinity of the parking lot of the state park's Haycock Run fishing area.

Her parents were Stella Ott Berger and Harvey Berger, and her grandparents were Sarah Atherholt Frankenfield Ott and Oliver K. Ott. Her great grandfather, Jeremiah Ott, is buried in St. Paul's cemetery in Applebachsville.

Grandmom Ott's parents ran the Frankenfield store that was on Route 412 in Nockamixon Township for many years. Edna's family went to live with them when Grandmom Ott got sick. Edna's grandfather, Oliver, was the postmaster at the Haycock Run Post Office for many years. After his passing, his son, George Wesley, became postmaster and was also interested in car mechanics. He built a garage near the post office where he also repaired cars as a second job.

Edna's mother, Stella, attended West Chester State College and taught at the Hickory Grove School, which was demolished in 1968 to make way for Lake Nockamixon. She was also a substitute teacher at the New Harrisburg School, now a private residence on Harrisburg School Road. Uncle George, who attended Kutztown State College, later built a garage and house at the inter-

section of Rts. 412 and 563 in Nockamixon Township. The building is now an ice cream store called Owowcow Creamery.

Edna's memories of growing up in Haycock Run are pleasant. She would sit on the rocks near the water and do her needlework with her friend. Edna often enjoyed the view of the mountain from a neighbor's porch. All her neighbors were friendly and helped each other.

She enjoyed grade school at Hickory Grove and continued her education at Quakertown High School where she graduated in 1940. As a teenager she has fond memories of her involvement in the 4-H club at the Keller's Church Grange on Ridge Road in Bedminster Township. She took classes on baking, canning, sewing and room improvement (which is now called interior design). Edna was an accomplished seamstress and remembers winning some blue ribbons at the Quakertown Fair for a jumper and blouse that she sewed. The teacher for the 4-H club used to ask Edna to help some of the other girls since her skills were advanced.

After high school she worked at Woolworth's in Quakertown, which was located in the shopping center at Route 309 and West Broad Street. She took care of the art goods department that included sewing items and yarns for knitting. She worked there until she retired. Edna, who now lives in Quakertown, still enjoys sewing, needlework and remembering the happy days of living on the other side of Haycock Mountain.

ANNA HEVERLY - OVER FIVE DECADES OF SERVICE

by Jane Nase

Anna Helverly doesn't do anything for a short period of time.

She has lived on the same street, Covered Bridge Road, for 79 years, worked at the Roy Ann Diner on Old Bethlehem Pike in West Rockhill Township for more than 30 years and has been married to George for 59 years.

And for 56 years, the 80-year-old Haycock resident was the Judge of Elections in the township.

2009 marked her final year in the post and she left holding the position of being the longest serving election official in Bucks County. And it all began almost unintentionally in 1953.

She recalled being asked by a local election official to help at a polling place because they were understaffed and she agreed. Well, little did she know that one question would lead to a lifetime of service as an election official.

As a child, Anna said she remembers going to vote with her parents. Her mother, Millie Beck, was a school teacher at Mt. Airy School, now a private home at Thatcher and Creamery roads and her father, Warren Beck, worked in Quakertown at McAdoo and Allen as a leather tanner.

When she began as judge in the mid-20th century, children were not allowed in the polling place and had to stay outside. The early voting sites included the White Hall Hotel (now a private residence near the intersection of Old Bethlehem and Apple roads) and later changed to Marx's Butcher Shop on

Apple Road. The third and current election site is the Haycock Fire Company on Old Bethlehem Road.

Besides allowing children in polling places now, Anna said a significant change was going from paper ballots to mechanical levers and now to computers.

During the paper ballot years, Anna explained the process of tallying votes. After the polls closed, she and the staff counted each vote by hand and was a task that took all night. She would then deliver the ballots and the voting results to the county courthouse in Doylestown in the early morning after being up all night.

With the electronic machines, she explained, there are only a few calculations that are completed in a short time rather than the all night process of paper ballots.

In the early years, many voters came by horseback, but now most come by car. She said she also used to know everyone that came to the polls, but that too has changed. With so many new residents, she said she doesn't know all of them. However, she still enjoys chatting with the people who come to vote.

As Judge of Elections, her responsibilities included filling out numerous official forms, being sure all the procedures were followed accurately and to assign jobs to the staff. The workers always got along with each other so it was easy to manage them. Before the election, she had to be present for

continued on page 5

| | LIST INVESTMENT PRIORITIES: Should HHS fund several listed causes or concentrate on only one? Please check all that apply by importance. Please identify other funding interests below. | NOT Important | Undecided | Somewhat Important | VERY Important |
|---|--|--------------------------|------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1 | Investing in property for the purpose of meeting, museum & hosting events within the township. The historic value of such a property IS important. I am willing to wait until such a building becomes available. ---or--- | | | | |
| 2 | Investing in property for the purpose of meeting, museum & hosting events within the township. The historic value IS NOT important. Such a property may be available sooner. | | | | |
| 3 | Use collected funds for research by our HHS Research Committee members as well as other professionals, producing such items as books, chronicling early Haycock life, tax parcel maps of early Haycock Township and to create a genealogic database of former residents and their properties. | | | | |
| 4 | Providing a financial source for historic preservation of structures within Haycock Township, including bridges and publicly owned buildings of historic value. | | | | |
| 5 | Member & Community Enrichment; Using funds to pay for professional speakers, demonstrators and re-enactors and/or to sponsor trips to historically significant places. | | | | |
| 6 | Providing the continuity of interest in future generations of historians by awarding Scholarships and/or Grants to young residents who have demonstrated interest in Haycock through research projects or who have demonstrated a commitment to helping Haycock Historical Society or our local community. | | | | |
| 7 | Other: (Please describe & list level of importance) | | | | |

Member's Name: _____ Date: _____

Return completed survey to any HHS Officer or mail to: HHS P.O. Box 715, Quakertown, PA 18951

PLEASE RETURN BY 4/6/2010

ANNA HEVERLY *continued from page 3*

the arrival of voting equipment and supplies. She was also charged with inventory of supplies and checking the machines. If she ever had questions, she said she would call officials at the Board of Elections in Doylestown.

One night a year, she said, she would attend a school to be updated on new voting procedures.

In the five decades she served, only once was there a dispute about an election result. Although she wasn't specific, she recalled a man running for an office who didn't win and

accused her of tampering with the voting machine. She told him she wasn't smart enough to tamper with the machines and nothing ever came of his complaint.

Anna enjoys spending time with her family and gardening takes up her time in the spring and summer. She still cans many of the foods she grows and keeps busy maintaining her property.

This year on Election Day, Anna only needs to vote. Thank you Anna for your service to the community.

SOCIETY NEWS

Members,

We are asking for your valued opinion concerning the future financial course of Haycock Historical Society. Where we go and what we do must depend on you, our valued members. Please take time to fill out the survey on page 4 of the newsletter and return it to any one of the HHS Officers or mail it to Post Office Box 715, Quakertown, PA 18951 by 4/6/10. We'll need your input by our April Officer's meeting. This survey will also be available online. Talled results will be discussed at the April 15th General Meeting.

Chris Handschin, President
Haycock Historical Society

THANKS

Members of Haycock Historical Society wish to thank Riegelsville resident, Mr. Tom Pugel, who generously shared his knowledge of the American Chestnut tree and donated leaves from his specimens for our 2009 Commemorative Plates. Each plate required one leaf's imprint which he enthusiastically shared for our project. Mr. Pugel, who is an active member of the American Chestnut Society, has made a donation to our society. He has requested that his employer, Exxon/Mobil Corporation match his donation.

OFFICERS COMMITTEE

At the February Officer's meeting the group officially voted Membership Chairwoman, Jane Nase to the position of HHS Ad Hoc Officer, completing the official roster. Haycock Historical Society is grateful to Jane for the dedication and insight she brings to the governing body of our organization. She will take the position Henry DePue held before he assumed the role of acting-Secretary which Sue Kleiner-Grew held until her passing in March of 2009. Welcome Jane!

Hopefully you will be able to take a break from shoveling snow long enough to complete the HHS calendar scavenger hunt. We have extended the deadline for the drawing until the April 15 HHS meeting. Cash prizes will be awarded at the meeting so mail or bring your postcard to the meeting.

SOCIETY MEETINGS

March 18, Ed Tice, "The Doan Gang"

April 15, Michael Webb, "American Chestnut Restoration after the Blight"

May 20, Carol Schroding, Master Gardener

The Haycock Historical Society is a non-profit organization whose mission is to research and record the history of Haycock Township and the surrounding environs. General meetings are open to society members and the public. Meetings are held six times a year, clustered in the fall: September, October and November; and spring: March, April and May, and usually held at 7 p.m. at St. Paul's Lutheran Church across from the Haycock firehouse in Applebachsville.

The society's newsletter is published four times a year and distributed to members and also available to the public at general meetings, the Haycock Township Building and other public locations in the area.



KRAUSE
CONSTRUCTION

ADDITIONS ▼ REMODELING

Gary Krause

Certified Remodeler
(610) 847-5253

170 Buck Run Road
Quakertown, PA 18951

HHD
USA