

Voices from the Vault

Issue 11 November 2009

Archives Receives Valuable Manuscripts

This summer the Archives received a valuable collection of original manuscripts written by Zinzendorf, Spangenberg, Leonhard Dober, James Hutton, Christian Gregor, and others. The manuscripts, dating from the 1730s until the 1760s, were given to us by the Karl König Archive in Aberdeen, Scotland. The König Archive houses the literary estate of Dr. Karl König (1902-1966), founder of the Camphill Movement. König, inspired by **Rudolf Steiner's philosophy of anthroposophy**, founded communities in Europe, North America, and South Africa where vulnerable children and adults can live, learn, and work together with others in an atmosphere of mutual care and respect.

The connection between the Bethlehem Archives and the König Archive developed recently, when an article was submitted to the *Journal of Moravian History*. In this article the author, Robin Jackson,



Zinzendorf's original rental agreement for the Ronneburg is now in the Moravian Archives

points out that there is a link between the Moravians and the Camphill Movement. **Karl König's wife was Mathilde Maasberg (1902-1983)**, born in the Moravian congregation at **Gnadenfrei, Silesia**. **Mathilde's** grandparents were Moravian missionaries in Surinam, and her father was director of a Moravian textile plant in Gnadenfrei. Through his wife König developed an apprecia-

tion for the theology and ideas of Zinzendorf, which formed an inspirational source for **König's Camphill Movement** (see *Journal of Moravian History*, no. 5, fall 2008).

During the editing process of the article, Jackson noted that the König Archive contained some materials related to Zinzendorf and other early Moravians and he sent reproductions of these manuscripts

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IMLS Bookshelf Award

This summer the Archives was privileged to receive the *Connecting to Collections Bookshelf* collection awarded by the Institute of Museum and Library Services of Washington, D.C. Valued at \$800, the prize is a comprehensive, up-to-date collection of twenty texts, charts, DVDs, and online

resources designed to help institutions care for and preserve their collections. The *Bookshelf* is a set of practical **"power tools" that provides immediate answers to a multitude of conservation issues, ranging from proper storage of documents and objects to emergency response meas-**

ures. The *Bookshelf* grant is part of a national IMLS initiative to raise public awareness **of the need for collections'** preservation and inspire communities to take measures to preserve valuable collections for future generations. The Archives is pleased to be part of this effort!

Special points of interest:

- In Memoriam: Ralph Wanamaker and Peter Wolle
- Moravian Archives offers open houses for school classes and confirmation groups
- Archives in Scotland donates early Moravian manuscripts
- 50th issue of *This Month in Moravian History*



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Moravian Conference 2010: Call for Papers

This conference, sponsored by Moravian College, the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem, and the Moravian Music Foundation, will explore Moravian history and music from the fifteenth to twentieth centuries in Europe, the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Australia within its context. We are now accepting proposals for panels, individual papers, lecture/demonstrations and performances relating to current research in Moravian history and music, but special consideration will be given to the following topics:

1. The history of the *Unitas Fratrum* during the 15th - 17th centuries: hymnody, music and worship practice; question of continuity and discontinuity with the Moravian Church of the 18th century

2. 250th anniversary of the death of Count Nikolaus von Zinzendorf (1700-60): his role in Moravian history, theology, and music; the reorientation of the Moravian Church after his death; Zinzendorf in historiography

3. Musical anniversaries such as John Gambold (1760-95): composer of vocal works and keyboard sonatas; Johann Daniel Grimm (1719-60): musician and teacher, instrumental in compiling the 1755 chorale book; Christian Gottfried Geisler (1730-1810): composer and organist at the Moravian church in Zeist for more than 50 years; John Christian Malthaner (1810-73): piano builder, based in Bethlehem

4. Moravians in the Transatlantic World: missions, trade, communication

5. Instruments and instrumental music: the role of the collegium musicum; use of instruments in worship of the Moravian Church

6. Iconography: the role of art in the Moravian communities; artists; iconography of Moravian worship and music; images included in early hymnals

7. Moravians and the body: gender, sexuality, identity, behavioral roles, encounter with the "other"

Please send a proposal of no more than 300 words by April 1, 2010 to: hlempa@moravian.edu or hbinford@moravian.edu.

The program committee will notify accepted applicants by May 1, 2010. In certain cases we will attempt to provide grants for housing and travel costs. For more information and updates: www.moravianconferences.org

*Bethlehem
Conference
on Moravian
History and
Music:
Oct. 14-17,
2010*

Valuable Manuscripts (cont.)

to the Bethlehem Archives. Paul Peucker inspected the documents and found that they were of particular interest to Moravian scholars.

One of the documents is a draft for a hymn Zinzendorf composed in 1734: "**Wie könnt' es möglich sein**" (HG 923). There is a note by August Gottlieb Spangenberg, written when he was exploring Pennsylvania for the Moravians in 1738. Christian Gregor, author of a letter from 1765, is mostly known for the hymns and musical compositions he wrote. He was also a member of the **Unity Elders' Conference, the administration of the world-wide Moravian Church**. In this capacity he wrote the letter that the Bethlehem Archives now received. It is a cover letter for various documents that were to be taken to Bethlehem by David Nitschmann on his official visitation of the American congregations in 1765. The most exciting document in

this collection is the original rental agreement, signed by Zinzendorf, for the use of the Ronneburg in 1736. When Zinzendorf was exiled from Herrnhut he, his family, and staff took refuge in the Ronneburg, a medieval castle north of Frankfurt/Main. In the rental agreement Zinzendorf agreed to pay a weekly rent of ten guilders.

How did these documents end up at the Karl König Archive in Scotland? Should these manuscripts not be in the Unity Archives in Herrnhut? Our suspicion was confirmed by the fact that some of the letters bear pencil markings in the hand of 19th-century Unity Archivists. We know that around 1900 various "superfluous" manuscripts were removed from the Herrnhut archives and sold to collectors of autographs. The König Archive told us they could trace the collection to Carl Alexander Mier (1902-1975),

anthroposophist and founder of the Biodynamic Agricultural Association. We found that Mier, like the Königs, also had a **Moravian connection**. **Mier's original name—and here the story sounds more and more like a detective story—was Mirbt and his father was the German professor for church history, Carl Theodor Mirbt (1860-1929)**. Mirbt Sr. was born in Gnadendorf, the same Moravian town where **Karl König's wife, Mathilde, was born** four decades later. With his Moravian background and his professional interest in church history, Mirbt Sr. must have purchased the eleven manuscripts during a visit to Herrnhut. His son later passed them on to the König family, probably because he was aware of their Moravian connection.

In 2009 the Board of Directors of the König Archive decided to give the manuscripts to the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem.



Anna Thomas (1746-1815), in Moravian dress in 1798, watercolor attributed to Georg Fetter

Volunteer Profile: Laura Bennett

The Archives has been very fortunate to count Laura Bennett as one of our new volunteers. Laura started volunteering here on a regular basis this past July, after relocating to the area from Princeton with her husband, Paul. Laura did her undergraduate work at Williams College, and more recently earned her masters degree and doctorate from Princeton University's Religion Department, specializing in religion in America. Because of her doctoral research, Laura has spent a lot of time in denominational archives. She thought the Moravian Archives

would provide a great local opportunity to combine her love of religious history with her love of filing papers while meeting interesting people (of course!). To date Laura has organized the records and new acquisitions from the following congregations: Easton, Pa.; Yorba Linda and Covina in California; **Evangeli in Tom's River, NJ; Schoenbrunn, Ohio; and Vanderbilt Avenue in Staten Island, NY.** Laura is an extremely efficient worker and a tremendous help to us. She appreciates the trust and opportunity to work on her projects in an independent man-

ner. She finds it extremely satisfying to organize congregational records, and likes learning about Moravian history and its connections to broader American history. **For us, she's a perfect fit.** Welcome, Laura!



Archives' volunteer Laura Bennett sorting congregational records

In Memoriam

During the past year two of our board members passed away. Both of them had served on the Board of Directors of the Moravian Archives for many years.

Ralph Wanamaker, who passed away on June 9, 2009, was treasurer since the incorporation of the archives in 1975 until 2009. Peter Wolle joined the board in 1997 and served as president from 2000 until his death on October 2, 2009. We are grateful for the commitment and dedication of both men to the work of the Moravian Archives. Our thoughts and prayers are with their families.

Open Houses for Students

The Archives has been offering German script presentations to local schools since 2006. In three years this program has reached nine school districts and more than 1,200 students! In addition to our regular presentations, this year we are expanding our outreach by offering a **new option: an "Open House"** opportunity for classes or German clubs to visit the Archives. Here students will have the unique opportunity to view primary documents in German written about their local communities. They will also have a chance to view art, books, and

manuscripts produced by German-Americans in the Lehigh Valley. The **"Open House"** would also be a fun field trip for Moravian youth groups or confirmation classes - a great way to introduce them to Moravian history and the history of their local congregation. Day, weekend or evening tours are available. Contact Lanie Graf at the Archives to schedule your tour!



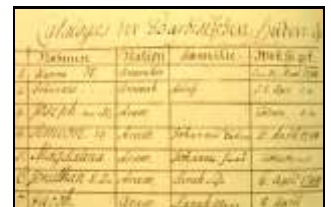
German Script students practicing with quills, June 2009

Processing the Earliest West Indies Missions Records

This summer assistant archivist Lanie Graf began cataloging and rehousing the earliest records of the West Indies mission. This collection comprises original diaries and letters sent to authorities in Bethlehem, who directly controlled the mission field until 1764 when central authority was transferred to Herrnhut. This material is a treasure trove for scholars as it

documents the missionaries' efforts to establish themselves on the islands, their initial interactions with slaves and whites, and hardships faced by climate, rampant illness, and death. Slave rebellions are described, as well as rebellions within the missionaries' own ranks, as they struggle with changing leadership and their own internal conflicts. So far the records of Ja-

maica, Surinam (incl. Berbice), St. Croix, St. John, St. Kitts, and Barbados have been completed. Remaining are the records of St. Thomas, Montserrat, and Antigua, including the papers of the missionary Samuel Isles, and early letters composed by natives during the 1750s and 1760s. The Archives is pleased to make this valuable collection more accessible to researchers.



page from a list of Arawak converts in Berbice, Guyana, 1748

Newsletter from the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem PA

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Support the archives by becoming a Friend of the Moravian Archives. Send your check to the address above or make an online donation: moravianchurcharchives.org/support.php

Upcoming Events at the Archives

German-English Advent Singstunde
December 1, 2009, 7:00 pm at the Old Chapel (on the campus of Central Moravian Church, Church and Main Streets in Bethlehem)

Pottery and Piety: Reinvestigating the Moravian Potters of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, 1745-1775
lecture by Brenda Hornsby Heindl, Winterthur Museum & Country Estate
Jan. 26, 2010 (*snow date: Febr. 2*) 7:00 pm at the Archives

German-English Lenten Singstunde
February 23, 2010, 7:00 pm at the Old Chapel (on the campus of Central Moravian Church, Church and Main Streets in Bethlehem)

Friends Day 2010
“18th-Century Moravian Mapping and 21st-Century Technology”
lecture by Dr. Katherine M. Faul
All current and future Friends of the Moravian Archives are invited!
March 14, 2010, 3:00 pm at the Archives

Volunteer Appreciation Party
April 21, 2010, 6:00 pm at the Archives

Yard Sale
May 7-8, 2010, sixth annual yard sale in the parking lot behind the Archives

German Script Course
June 21 - July 2, 2010, in the reading room of the Archives. Please note that the Archives will be closed for research during this time.

News and Announcements

This Month in Moravian History

In January of 2010 the 50th issue of our monthly electronic newsletter, *This Month in Moravian History*, will be sent out. We started this free service in November of 2005. You can sign up by sending an email with the word “**subscribe**” in the title field to email_request@moravianchurcharchives.org.

Moravian College Students Process Title Deeds

Moravian archivist, Paul Peucker, is teaching an Archival Studies class at Moravian College during the fall semester of 2009. A group of nine students are processing a collection of title deeds from the records of the **Provincial Elders’ Confer-**

ence. For the students this is a unique opportunity to get hands-on experience with 18th-century records.

Sixth Annual Yard Sale

If you are cleaning out your closets, your attic, or your basement this spring, please remember our upcoming annual yard sale (see above). We accept items for the sale beginning May 1, 2010 (please no clothes, large furniture items, or electronics).

Closing during the Holidays

Please note that the reading room will be closed from December 24 until January 3. The reading room will be open again on January 4, 2010.

Ideas for Christmas Presents

Are you looking for ideas for holiday presents? Give the gift of Moravian history this season! What about giving your dear one a subscription to the *Journal of Moravian History*? Or ordering a museum-quality reproduction of an image in the Archives? You can also make a charitable donation to the **Archives in someone’s name.** In our online bookshop you will find numerous interesting books on Moravian history. Visit our website or call Claire at the Archives.

Journal of Moravian History 7

The next issue of the *Journal of Moravian History* will be available around Christmas. It will contain articles on the Mora-

vians in Australia, on Moravian work in Nicaragua, on **Zinzendorf’s plans to write a church history, on Zinzendorf’s side-wound theology**, and a reproduction of a 1768 map of Friedenshütten on the Susquehanna near present day Sunbury, Pennsylvania. For more details, visit our website.

New Server + Wireless

This fall a new computer server will be installed at the Archives. We will also install wireless internet access in the reading room. Researchers can then access the internet, including our online catalogs, from their laptops. Internet access to our online book catalog (the WebOPAC) will be much faster once the new server is in place.