

Voices from the Vault

Issue 12 May 2010

Archives Receives Prestigious Grant

The Moravian Archives, in partnership with Lehigh University, has been awarded a \$90,000 grant by the Council of Library and Information Resources (CLIR) under its Cataloging Hidden Special Collections and Archives Program, funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

This two-year collaborative project, **“The Moravian Community in the New World: The First Hundred Years,”** will process collections documenting the material culture, religious values, and cultural diversity of the Moravian community of Bethlehem from its founding in 1741 until the opening of the community to non-Moravians in 1844 and the subsequent incorporation of Bethlehem in 1851. Included are personal papers of early Moravians, along with business records and the 2,000 volume congregational library. In addition, approximately 800

maps and architectural drawings showing the earliest documentation of European settlement in Pennsylvania will be included in this project.

The project started with the hiring of the project staff, consisting of (currently) four Lehigh students as well as Dr. Pauline Fox. Dr. Fox was the project archivist who processed the records from the Bethlehem Boarding School for Girls (Female Seminary) in 2006 and 2007. Two of the



Lehigh students, Andrew Stahlhut and Samantha Berman, are cataloging the books from the congregational library (see article on page 3), under the supervision of Lehigh library staff as well as **Moravian Archives’ volunteer**, Phil Metzger. Kristine Mayer is processing personal collections and David Zboray is working on the architectural drawings and hand-drawn maps. Unfortunately, Samantha and Kristine are graduating this year and will be replaced with other students in the fall.

The project is coordinated and headed by Lois Black, curator of special collections at Lehigh’s Linderman Library. **“This project is a wonderful opportunity for the Archives to get a lot of work done,”** commented archivist Paul Peucker; **“A grant like this was long overdue.”**

Special points of interest:

- Moravian Archives begins work on \$90,000 project
- **New exhibit in Archives’ gallery**
- Online book catalog contains almost 7,000 titles
- **Archives’ volunteers** gave total of 1,918 hours
- Lehigh University Press **publishes new Archives’ publication**



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In Memoriam: Vernon Nelson

While walking to a lecture at the Moravian Archives on January 26, 2010, Rev. Vernon H. Nelson was hit by a car. He passed away later that evening. A memorial service was held at Central Moravian Church on February 27th.

Br. Nelson began his work at the Bethlehem Archives in 1961 as assistant archivist. He was director from 1961 until

his retirement in 2004. He taught numerous scholars the ins and outs of 18th-century German script and many scholars are grateful for the research guidance he provided.

In 2003 Br. Nelson was presented with a *Festschrift* in his honor. A reprint of this book, *The Distinctiveness of Moravian Culture* is planned for later this year.



A Word from the Archives' President

With a thankful heart...

So much of what occurs in and around the Moravian Archives creates a thankful heart.

We celebrate the contribution to the Moravian Archives of those very special people who have **"entered the nearer presence of our Lord and Savior"** during the past several months. A huge debt is owed to these gracious souls who dedicated so much of their lives to our greater Church and the mission of its Archives. We are encouraged with the new

members of our Board of Directors who bring their special gifts of skills and experience. A legacy and a promise combine on parallel courses.

All the while we enjoy the benefits of an outstanding director, staff, volunteers and friends of the Archives. Through all of these fine people, our Archives reaches researchers and writers, educators and academics and into the lives of our congregations.

With a thankful heart we search for new ways for our

heritage, our history, to direct us towards a more complete understanding of our purpose and mission.

Thank you to all who make our Archives a place of learning, exploration, understanding and spiritual renewal and focus. Our history, which we have in common, is most certainly an uncommon heritage. We strive to find new ways to uncover how our past can affect our future in a positive and enlightened way.

Mike A. Long, President



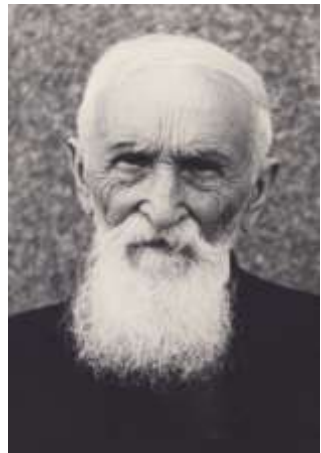
Exhibit and Art Contest

At Friends' Day in March we opened our new exhibit, **"The Health of Thy Countenance"** in our large gallery. Combining 18th century portraits with photographs from our collection, the exhibit illuminates a sermon by Zinzendorf which focuses on the Moravian idea that our facial expressions reveal the state of our souls.

In conjunction with the exhibit we are holding an art contest for adults and teens based on the same theme. The entries



are rolling in and are on display in our small gallery. The contest entry form is on our website. We will accept entries through August 31, 2010. At the beginning of September they will be judged and the top three winners in each category will be announced at a reception open to the public on September 21 at 7:00 pm. Cash prizes generously donated by Long Funeral Home and Nazareth Veterinary Center will be awarded at that time.



Volunteer Profile: Marsha Fritz

The Moravian Archives is extremely fortunate with its talented pool of volunteers. Marsha Fritz is a new volunteer who adds another level of depth and expertise to our pool. Before moving to Bethlehem in 2006, Marsha lived in Chestertown, Maryland, where she worked as an architect for 25 years and owned her own firm which specialized in historic preservation. Upon moving to Bethlehem in 2006 Marsha was immediately attracted to the Moravian architecture downtown.

When she accepted a position as Director of Collections and

Public Programming at Historic Bethlehem Partnership, she was excited about the opportunity to look after some of the old buildings she initially admired. Marsha was recently appointed to the Downtown Bethlehem Historical & Architectural Review Board (HARB). As a resident of West Bethlehem, Marsha tells us she is having fun researching her home and others in her Mt. Airy neighborhood.

At the Archives Marsha is organizing our subject files so that they are more useful and accessible to researchers. Along with Heather Reinert, Marsha was key

in preparing our new exhibit, **"The Health of Thy Countenance."** It simply could not have been done without her technical expertise. Marsha says when she was looking for a volunteer opportunity earlier this year, the friendly staff and atmosphere at the Archives seemed a perfect choice. We are glad she picked us!



Oldest Library of Bethlehem Reconstructed

As early as 1751 Moravians in Bethlehem established a library for the congregation that existed well into the 19th century. The congregational library contained a wide variety of topics: agriculture, bookkeeping, architecture, mathematics, technology, religion, home economics, linguistics, etc. Many of the books were purchased for the library, while others were donated by members of the congregation. The library reflects the interests of early Moravians and gives us insight into the information needed to establish Bethlehem and the other Moravian communities in the New World.

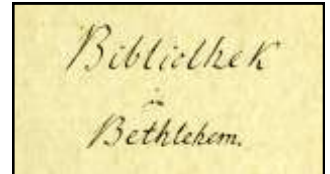
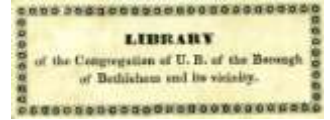
During the early years the congregational library was probably located in the Gemeinhaus. In 1819 the library, to-

gether with the archives and the bookshop, was moved into the Old Chapel, as that space was no longer needed as a sanctuary upon completion of the new church. In 1827 the library was moved into the northeast room on the first floor of Central Church. We know that the congregational library was completely cataloged in the 1850s and book plates were pasted into each book. This catalog currently serves as our source to reconstruct the congregational library.

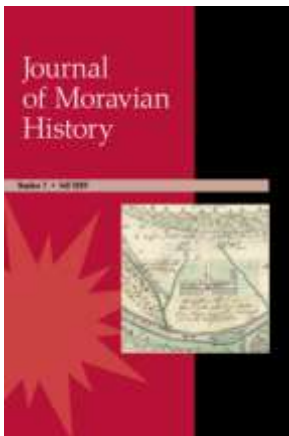
The books from the congregational library are now part of the book collection of the Moravian Archives, mixed in with many other books from various provenances. Thanks to the CLIR grant the Archives recently received (see page 1) it is possible

to identify the books from the original congregational library, to catalog them and to place them in their original order as a separate collection. We do not know how complete the congregational library still is but it seems that a large percentage of the books is still here. The book catalog can already be searched online (see article on page 4). By typing “conglib” as search term, all the titles cataloged thus far will be listed.

The congregational library was not the earliest library in the American colonies, but it is definitely a very early library. More research needs to be done on this library and on the reading culture of early Moravians. It is our hope that this cataloging project will encourage scholars to use this collection!



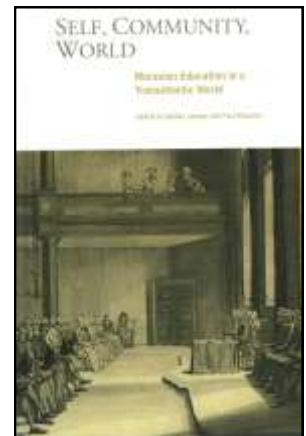
New Publications from the Moravian Archives



Issue 7 of the *Journal of Moravian History* contains articles on Moravians in Australia and Nicaragua, on Zinzendorf’s plan to write a church history, on his theology of the Side Wound and a reproduction of a map of the Indian mission station Friedenshuetten on the Susquehanna. Friends of the Archives can order individual copies for the reduced price of \$22.50. The reduced subscription price is \$50.00/year. More information is available on our website.

Self, Community, World is an edited volume with selected papers, presented at a recent Moravian History Conference at Moravian College. Topics cover music, art, education, the practice of “speaking,” the Enlightenment, Zinzendorf, Comenius, Jablonski and Lessing. A list of contents is available on our website.

Order now from the Archives for the reduced price of \$47.50 (regular price \$55.00).



Volunteer Party 2010

The Archives’ annual volunteer pizza party took place during National Volunteer Week, on Tuesday, April 20. Our reading room was packed with more than 50 volunteers who serve in a variety of ways: from recycling and woodworking, to cataloging, researching, or working at our

yard sale. We are grateful for each and every one! Our volunteers clocked a total of 1,918 hours this past year, which is nearly the equivalent of another full-time person! Paul also highlighted three volunteers who donated the most hours: Anne Howlett, 163 hours; Marga Yu-

has, 168 hours; and Phil Metzger, 379 hours! This year, besides our annual pizza party, we treated our volunteers with a “make your own sundae” station featuring ice cream generously donated by Bill Burkhardt, owner of Bethlehem’s landmark ice cream shop, “The Cup.”



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 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.

Art Contest Reception

September 21, 2010, 7:00 pm, reception in the Moravian Archives (see article, p. 2)
The winners of our teen and adult art contest will be announced.

Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History and Music
October 14-17, 2010, at Moravian College (see below)

German-English Advent Singstunde

November 30, 2010, 7:00 pm at the Old Chapel (on the campus of Central Moravian Church, Church and Main Streets in Bethlehem)

"The Health of Thy Countenance"

Through December 31, 2010; exhibition at the Moravian Archives

For updates, visit www.moravianchurcharchives.org/events.php

News and Announcements

Open Houses for Students

Our visits to local schools have been so well received, that this year we expanded our outreach by inviting students to visit us. So far more than 100 students and their teachers have visited the Archives in order to examine our treasures first-hand: printed and handwritten German books and documents, maps, and art created by local German-Americans. Each visit has been tailored to highlight items that are specific to each **group's local history**. Besides visiting our reading room and gallery, students are also taken on a behind-the-scenes tour of our vaults for a better understanding of how our collections are preserved. More visits are scheduled for the spring! If you would like to schedule a visit

for your school or church group, contact Lanie Graf at the Archives.

Moravian History and Music Conference

Every two years the Archives sponsors an international conference on Moravian history and music, in partnership with Moravian College and Seminary, and the Moravian Music Foundation. **This year's conference** will take place from October 14 until October 17. The program will soon be announced on www.moravianconferences.org.

WebOPAC Restored

The Archives' website offers access to the currently available finding aids of our archival

holdings, as well as to the library catalog (WebOPAC). Due to technical problems the WebOPAC was inaccessible during several weeks earlier this year. In March of 2010 we were able to switch to a new and faster WebOPAC. The WebOPAC gives easy access to the book catalog of the Moravian Archives. Currently, the catalog contains more than 7,000 titles and the number is growing every day. Recently we began to add the books from the 1751 congregational library (see article on page 3).

To search the catalog, go to moravianchurcharchives.org/search.php and click on *book holdings*. Enter the search term and within seconds a complete list of all relevant holdings will be displayed. To view more information, click on *details*.

Memoirs Project Completed

All the memoirs and obituaries found in *The Moravian* since 1857 are now indexed in our database. Thanks to the work of many volunteers this project, that began in 2005, is now completed. Soon the database will be made accessible on the **Archives' website**.

We are currently preparing a new volunteer project: indexing the names in the church registers. The Archives holds almost 200 church registers, each containing entries on baptisms, weddings, and funerals. If you are interested in helping to index the names in these registers, please contact Claire Klatchak at the Moravian Archives.