

# Voices from the Vault

Issue 20 June 2014

## New Paintings at the Moravian Archives

Recently, the Moravian Archives received four portraits, painted by two outstanding Moravian artists: John Valentine Haidt and Gustav Grunewald.

Former Bethlehem mayor, Gordon Mowrer, and his wife Mary, donated two 18th-century oil paintings by Haidt (1700-1780). They are por-

traits of George Burnet (died 1764) and his wife Ismaiah Burnet, nee Thomas (1696-1773). The Burnets were members of the New York Moravian Church and came to America together with New York governor George Burnet. Mary Mowrer is a direct descendant of the Burnets. The portraits were probably done during

May and June of 1757 when Haidt was interim pastor at the New York Moravian Church. The coloring and execution of the portraits were very different than the portraits of church leaders Haidt painted in Bethlehem. The Burnets are depicted in clothing that displays their wealth and social standing.

The other two portraits that were donated to the Archives depict John Malthaner (1810-1873) and his wife Catherina, nee Schoenheinz (1812-1879). They are painted by Moravian painter Gustav Grunewald, who lived in Bethlehem between 1832 and 1867 and taught at the Moravian Female Seminary (boarding school for girls). Donors Anne Malmquist (Sunnyvale, CA) and Catherine Abrams (Alexandria, VA) are descendants of the Malthaners. Malthaner was a piano maker in Bethlehem.



## Gallery Renovations Completed

Thanks to a generous donor we were able to renovate our exhibition space this spring: the walls were freshly painted, an internet/telephone connection was installed, and—most importantly—the old lighting was replaced with museum-quality LED lighting. These renovations complete phase 2 of our Moving History renovations project.



## Special points of interest:

- Restoration of Lititz Manuscript Completed
- Moravian Archives Receives Microfilms of Records Held in Herrnhut, Germany
- Preservation and Digitization of Records from the Caribbean



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## Lititz Manuscript Completed

Last year, while we were moving our collections out of the vault, we came across a handwritten history of the Lititz Moravian congregation from 1784. The manuscript was in such bad condition that we could not read it: pages crumbled at the slightest touch.

We took the manuscript to the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts in Philadelphia

(CCAHA) for professional treatment. The costs for the restoration of the manuscript were covered by one of the Friends of the Archives; the Lititz congregation raised additional funds for the translation of the text. CCAHA cleaned and washed each page, removed tape and any adhesives, reinforced the pages with mulberry paper, and re-stitched the book.

On May 7, the Lititz manuscript returned to the Moravian Archives.

During the process we found that the text in this manuscript was the second part of a history of Lititz and that the first part was in the museum at Lititz. Volume 1 is now also at the Moravian Archives. A translator will translate both volumes from German into English.



## Volunteer Appreciation Party

The Moravian Archives recently celebrated its annual volunteer party on April 8, 2014. Over forty guests attended as food and drinks were served and a message of appreciation was read aloud by archivist and director Dr. Paul Peucker. While all volunteers were acknowledged, special recognition was given to the five volunteers who spent the most hours with us in 2013, listed as follows:

1. Phil Metzger, Library, 410.00 hours
2. Anne Howlett, Memoirs and Gardening, 143.75 hours
3. Roy Ledbetter, German Transcriptions and Translations, 139.00 hours
4. Joe Csrenko, English Transcriptions, 137.50 hours
5. Marianne Ockenhouse, German Transcriptions, 128.00 hours

We thank all of our volunteers for their dedicated service to the Archives. We could not successfully carry out our mission without your help!

For information about volunteering, contact the Moravian Archives (610.866.3255) or the Moravian Historical Society (610.759.5070).

***“Dear Paul and crew,***

*Thank you for the wonderful Pizza Party. The Archives is a great place to come and volunteer!”*

## Herrnhut Microfilm Project

The Unity Archives in Herrnhut, Germany, contains a large collection of material relating to the Moravian Church in North America. For example, there are records regarding the first Moravian community in Savannah, Georgia (1735-40), Moravian work in South Carolina (1738-40), **Zinzendorf’s visit to America** (1742), the purchase and settlement of Wachovia in North Carolina, as well as letters from leaders of other religious groups in Pennsylvania, travel diaries of itinerant Moravian preachers and missionaries, diaries of the schools, histories of the early American congregations, and correspondence of Moravian leaders with Zinzendorf and the administration of the Unity,

including hundreds of letters by Spangenberg, Peter Böhler, Anna Nitschmann, Benigna von Zinzendorf, Friedrich Cammerhoff, Nathanael Seidel, Anna Maria Lawatsch, Anna Johanna Piesch, Johann Ettwein, and Friedrich von Marschall.

In 2003 the Herrnhut Archives received a grant from the US consulate in Leipzig, Germany, to begin microfilming this collection. Copies were sent to the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem. We continued this project with memorial gifts received after the death of former archivist, Rev. Vernon H. Nelson. Recently our colleagues in Herrnhut completed films no. 7–13. Each film contains ca. 550 images. This means that thousands of early

records relating to Moravian activity in America are now available in Bethlehem.

The project, however, is far from completed. We would like to continue microfilming this material. The Herrnhut Microfilm Project serves two purposes: first of all, it will provide easier access to this material and will add to our knowledge of early Moravian history; secondly, the microfilm copies held in Herrnhut and Bethlehem will secure that the information is preserved should anything ever happen to the originals.

If you are interested in helping us continue the Herrnhut Microfilm Project, please let us know. The costs to produce one microfilm are about \$450.



## Preserving Moravian History in the Caribbean

Since the late 1960s, the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem, has housed a wide range of manuscript materials from the **church's missions in the Caribbean**. Encompassing over 120 linear feet, these materials serve scholars, genealogists, and pastors as primary sources for the history of Caribbean missions and congregations. Additionally, they serve as an invaluable resource, shedding light on slavery in the Caribbean and the general history of the Eastern West Indies (EWI).

Once housed in tropical climates detrimental to their long-

term preservation, many of the precious materials suffer from conditions such as iron gall ink degradation, paper brittleness, and insect damage. A large percentage of the collection is in such poor shape that it can no longer be used.

We are excited to announce that we have begun the formal stages towards a grant that will effectively serve to extend the lives of these fragile materials. In March, a professional paper conservator from the Conservation Center for Art & Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) visited us to survey and assess the physical

condition of the manuscripts.

Working together with the CCAHA, we intend to secure a Humanities Collections and Reference Resources planning grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the same federal institution that previously awarded the Archives a grant for our Moving History campaign. Stay tuned for updates on our progress in securing funding for a long-range planning assessment for our manuscripts from the Caribbean.



## We Need Your Help!

The two portraits by Grunewald (see page 1) have been in the possession of the Malthaner family for 175 years. The exposure to an uncontrolled environment has left its traces on the paintings. According to

the donors, one of the recent owners was a smoker. We would like to have these portraits professionally cleaned to remove the yellow nicotine discoloration and to bring out the original clarity that Grunewald was so

famous for.

Please contact us if you are interested in helping to professionally treat and conserve these paintings.



## Word from the Archives' President

It seems a long time since the Archives was not in the midst of a construction project or the installation of new equipment. As an Archive, as a Board and most importantly as a part of the Moravian Church, we have been blessed to accomplish so much in the past two years. Appreciation must be expressed to our staff, the volunteers who so graciously give their time and talent, our supporters of the Moving History Campaign and Friends of the Archives through their donations and to the Board and officers for their insight and commitment. When you think of all the fine people who put so much effort into our mission, it is no wonder that so much has gone so well in our recent endeavors. Thank you all for ex-

ceptional work and thank you to those who pray for us and for the future of our Moravian Church and our Archives.

At our most recent board meeting, Paul Peucker reported that the number of researchers is twice as high as average and that access to the records will be improved by a new website. Obviously, it is important that we store, conserve, and preserve the records and treasures of our denomination. However, accessibility to our collection in a secure physical or digital environment is key to accurate presentation of our history and faith. New projects are under consideration and development for the study and cataloging of information available to the Archives. With engagement in

the historical, educational, and faith community comes the opportunity for new projects, access to new information, and a deepening of the appreciation and relevance of the Moravian Church in the world.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to thank the Mowrer family and the Malmquist/Abrams families for their recent donations of paintings as well as the anonymous donor for their special gift to renovate the gallery.

The support which the Moravian Archives receives from you is very much appreciated and provides encouragement to the board, archivist, staff, and volunteers to preserve and promote our church and history.

*Michael A. Long, President*



## Newsletter from the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem PA

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## Upcoming Events

German Script Course

June 2-13, 2014

for more information: [www.moravianchurcharchives.org/germanscript.php](http://www.moravianchurcharchives.org/germanscript.php)

36th Annual Arts & Crafts Festival

June 7, 2014, 9:00 am - 3:00 pm

Featuring approx. 100 local artisans on the lawn of the Whitefield House in Nazareth

Hands-On History Camp

June 23-27, 2014, at the Whitefield House (ages 8 to 13)

For more information: [www.moravianhistoricalsociety.org](http://www.moravianhistoricalsociety.org)

Summer Soiree

August 12, 2014, 5:00–7:00 pm

A special event for the Friends of the Moravian Archives

**“Terror and Faith in the Pennsylvania Backcountry:  
The Moravians and the Paxton Riots of 1763”**

Lecture by Scott Gordon, September 23, 2014, 7:00 pm at the Moravian Archives

4th Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History and Music

October 2-5, 2014 at Moravian College

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

## News and Announcements

### Website

Our website is an important tool for communicating with our constituency and for providing access to our catalogs and finding aids. We are currently upgrading and redesigning our website. Soon you will be able to find more up-to-date information about our holdings and events. We are also adding an online store.

### Sharing Staff with MHS

We are entering a new phase in our affiliation with the Moravian Historical Society in Nazareth, Pennsylvania. From now on, we will be sharing more staff in order to make the work of our two organizations more efficient and productive. Areas where we will share staff include event planning and financial bookkeeping.

### Now Available:

Moravian Walking Tour & Guide Book

Are you interested in the history of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and the surrounding Moravian settlements? Well, look no further! The Moravian Historical Society's newly-released Moravian Walking Tour & Guide Book features hundreds of published images of the Lehigh Valley's historic Moravian sites, from churches and choir houses to taverns and gristmills.

Perfect for those interested in the area or for those planning a day trip around the Valley, this publication is now available for only \$6.95 at the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem and at the 1740/1743 Whitefield House in Nazareth, in addition to other regional shops and outlets.

