

# Voices from the Vault

Issue 24 July 2016

## Moravian Roots

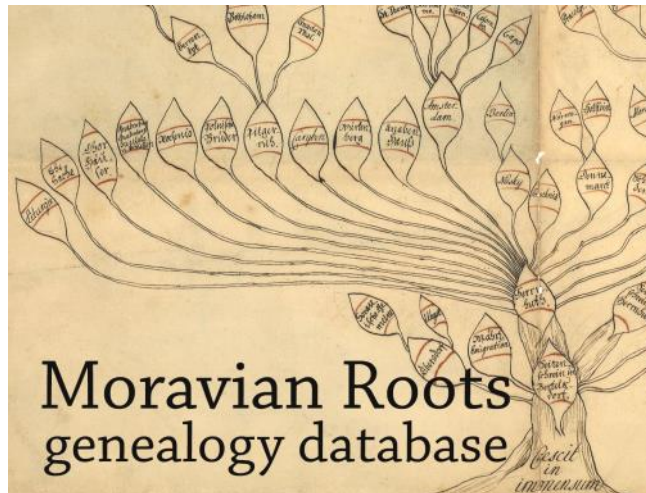
This summer the Moravian Archives is launching a new project, "Moravian Roots." The Moravian Roots database will eventually include information on thousands of baptisms, marriages, and funerals from almost two-hundred and fifty church registers kept at the Moravian Archives. Volunteers and staff have begun to enter information into the database; so far several Moravian Church registers have been indexed, including New Dawn (Toronto, ON), Canal Dover (Dover, OH), Lake Mills (Lake Mills, WI), Midland Beach (Staten Island, NY), First Moravian (Easton, PA), Big Oak (Yardley, PA), and Hope (Hope, NJ). Moravian Roots will make it so much easier to find vital information on any person who has been baptized, married, or buried by the Moravian Church since 1740. The database will also include confirmations and receptions into the congregation. A professional database programmer designed

the database in which the registers are indexed.

Ultimately, we intend to make Moravian Roots searchable online. We are also talking to other Moravian archives to participate in the project.

However, before we can make the database available, many more records need to be entered. Many registers kept in English, German, Danish, and even Nor-

wegian, are still waiting to be indexed! Please let us know if you'd like to volunteer for the Moravian Roots project. If you are unable to come to the Bethlehem archives we would be happy to digitize registers for those who wish to work on indexing remotely. For more information, contact assistant archivist Tom McCullough at: [tom@moravianchurcharchives.org](mailto:tom@moravianchurcharchives.org)



## New: Saturday Hours at Moravian Archives

The Moravian Archives is introducing Saturday hours. On four Saturdays during the upcoming months, the Moravian Archives will be open to the public. Anyone interested in doing research in the reading room, in seeing our fabulous Building Bethlehem exhibit, or in purchasing something in our

gift shop, can now do so on the weekend.

The Saturday hours are introduced as a trial. "We regularly hear from people who would like to come in on a Saturday," says Moravian archivist Paul Peucker. "During the Bethlehem anniversary year, we would like to open

the anniversary exhibit on a Saturday as well."

The Moravian Archives will be open from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm on the following four Saturdays: September 24 and December 17, 2016, and on March 18 and on May 20, 2017.

## Special points of interest:

- Moravian Roots project launched
- More than 850 visitors for Deed Day
- Saturday hours at Moravian Archives
- Register now for Fifth Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History & Music



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## Workshops at the Moravian Archives

Both of our workshops held during the month of April 2016 were a great success. Early in April, a genealogy workshop was led by assistant archivist Tom McCullough. Tom discussed recordkeeping practices in the Moravian Church, and, using hands-on exercises with items from the collection, instructed participants about a variety of resources available at the Archives for family research, including church registers, catalogs, congregational diaries, and memoirs. Tom will present this summer at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania on a similar topic: "Family Research Using German

Church Records."

Later in the month, a bookbinding workshop was held, where participants had a chance to make their own books from raw materials. This engaging workshop was led by Archives' volunteer Dee Collins, a printmaker and book artist, who retired from the Collection Care Department of the Free Library of Philadelphia and has volunteered at the Archives since 2013. Stay posted for a workshop in the near future for making paste paper, in which Dee will instruct participants how to craft a type of paper that was a product of Moravian Single Sisters..



The next genealogy workshop will be offered on November 18, 2016.

## Deed Day 2016

More than 850 people came to visit the Moravian Archives on April 2, 2016, the day we had named Deed Day. On April 2, 1741, the deed for the purchase of the 500-acre tract for Bethlehem was formally signed. 275 years later we put the deed on display for the public. This was the first time the deed was on public display.

Never before did so many people visit the Moravian Archives. Volunteers were placed in various locations throughout the building to

guide the visitors and to answer their questions. The Bethlehem Area Moravian trombone choir greeted the visitors. Other musical ensembles, sponsored by the Moravian Music Foundation, performed throughout the day.

The purchase of the 500 acres marked the formal establishment of the Moravian Church in America as well as the beginning of the City of Bethlehem. At the end of the day, we safely returned the deed to the vault.



Deed Day was sponsored by Thomas and JoAnne Riddle and Valley National Financial Advisors.

## Moravian Silver Donated to Moravian Archives

A collection of beautiful silver spoons, made by Moravian silversmith John Matthew Miksch, was donated to the Moravian Archives. We received seven tablespoons, three teaspoons, a pair of silver tongs, and a punch ladle. The donor told us she had purchased the silver many years ago. Now that she had to downsize, she was looking for a new home for these items. When she received the previous issue of our newsletter, the donor was reminded of the Bethlehem Archives.

"I want these spoons to stay in Bethlehem and I know they are secure in your facility," the donor told us.

Miksch was born in Christiansbrunn, PA, in 1798 and worked as a silversmith in Bethlehem. Miksch was a notable resident of Bethlehem and a trusted member of the Moravian Church. He was actively involved with the complicated process of the incorporation of the borough of Bethlehem (1845) and the subsequent incorporation of the Moravian congregation of

Bethlehem (1851). He served on the school board and was chief burgess of Bethlehem for several terms.

After his first wife Lizette Dixon died in 1829 he married Caroline Vierling. Miksch died in 1882 and is buried in God's Acre.



## New Finding Aids

Archivist Paul Peucker is currently working to organize the records of the Provincial Helpers' Conference, the predecessor to the Provincial Elders' Conference, Northern Province. This large record group covers the period 1763-1857 and contains a wide variety of sources that effectively document Moravian activities in North America.

During the past few months, assistant archivist Tom McCullough arranged and described a number of small record groups from Moravian congregations in the Midwestern United States. Finding aids are now available for the following Moravian

congregations: First, Trinity, and Wisconsin Rapids (Wisconsin Rapids, WI), Rudolph (Rudolph, WI), Saratoga Union (Saratoga, WI), London (Cambridge, WI), Main Street (Northfield, MN), Hebron (Norton, MN), Bethesda (Bashow Twp., MN), Alice (Alice, ND), Bethel (Leonard, ND), Goshen (Durbin, ND), Embden (Embden, ND), Casselton (Casselton, ND), and Canaan (Davenport, ND).

Additionally cataloged were contemporary records that had been sent to Bethlehem by Newport Moravian Church in Newport, RI. After cataloging thirty boxes of

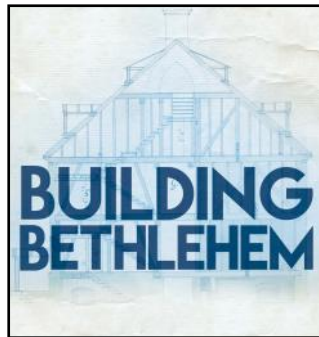
mission-field photographs (now available under the collection PhotMiss), Rhonda Miller, an intern from East Stroudsburg University, cataloged 127 diaries, letters, and membership catalogs, among other items, all related to the Moravian Church in Newport and across New England.

A collection of 700 photograph portraits was cataloged by volunteers Daniel Stocker and Mitchell Thomas, students of Moravian College and Lehigh University, respectively. We are currently in the process of digitizing this collection through the help of volunteers.

## Exhibit: Building Bethlehem

Moravians began building Bethlehem 275 years ago. On a bank overlooking the Monocacy Creek and the Lehigh River they built a log cabin and a large community house (Gemeinhaus). Within a few years, many structures were erected to house a diverse community of men and women who lived, worked, and worshiped together.

This special anniversary exhibit in the gallery of the Moravian Archives features some of the earliest building plans, drawings, and maps



showing the development of Bethlehem during the colonial period. The drawings are combined with artifacts, paintings, and nineteenth-century photographs of the buildings. The exhibit highlights the role of Henry Antes who purchased the Bethlehem tract for the Moravians and oversaw many of the building projects.

Free admission; through June 30, 2017; sponsored by Thomas & JoAnne Riddle and Valley National Financial Advisors.



## Registration is open



Join us for the Moravian history event of the year: three days of history and music in the historic center of Bethlehem, PA!

The program includes lectures, concerts, discussion panels, historic beer tasting, films, presentations on new research projects, and much more.

Find detailed information on the conference website. You are welcome to register online or in person at the Moravian Archives.

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

## Newsletter from the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem PA

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## Upcoming Events

### Free Summer Sundays

Free admission at the Whitefield House Museum in Nazareth, through August 28, 2016

### Summer Soiree

August 16, 2016, 5:00—7:00 pm, at the Moravian Archives  
A special event for the Friends of the Moravian Archives

### Meeting of Moravian Archivists

October 27, 2016, 9:00 am—12:00 pm, at the Hauptert Union Building, Moravian College

### Bethlehem Conference on Moravian History & Music

October 27—29, 2016  
Sponsored by the Moravian Archives, Moravian College, and the Center for Moravian Studies, in partnership with the Moravian Music Foundation, Moravian Historical Society, Moravian Theological Seminary, and Historic Bethlehem Partnership

### Privacy and Confidentiality Issues in Digital Archives

November 9, 2016, 9:00am—5:00pm at the Moravian Archives  
Workshop offered by the Society of American Archivists (SAA)

### Genealogy Workshop

November 18, 2016, 9:00 am—1:00 pm, at the Moravian Archives  
Registration fee \$60.00; register online

### German-English Advent Singstunde

November 29, 2016, 7:00 pm  
In the Old Chapel on the campus of Central Moravian Church in Bethlehem, PA

### German Script Course

June 5-16, 2017

## News and Announcements

### Privacy & Confidentiality Workshop

The Moravian Archives is proud to host this workshop offered by the Society of American Archivists (SAA). This course covers privacy and confidentiality legal issues specific to archives of digital material. Participants will examine the intersection of (and the tension between) privacy/confidentiality, free speech and freedom to research/write, and focus on how electronic records and the digital realm have altered the scene. You'll look at privacy and confidentiality issues in the context of third party rights, donors, special situations such as medical and education records, national security legislation, and the overriding impact of the digital world. Through case studies, you will examine specific

situations pertinent to the work of archivists. For more details and to register visit the SAA website: [www.archivists.org](http://www.archivists.org)

### New Archivist of the Unity Archives, Herrnhut

In January 2016, Claudia Mai of Jonsdorf, Germany, former assistant archivist of the Moravian Archives in Herrnhut, was called to serve as Unity Archivist. Olaf Nippe of Herrnhut was appointed as assistant archivist. Dr. Rüdiger Kröger, who served as Unity Archivist from 2004 to 2015, will now serve as an archivist for the Protestant Church in Hannover, Germany.

### MHS designated Preserve America Steward

In February 2016, the Moravian Historical Society, our affiliate in

Nazareth, PA, was designated a Preserve America Steward by First Lady Michelle Obama. In recognition of the Society's "volunteer programs that have demonstrated

success...in the best tradition of the national historic preservation movement," MHS is now one of 54 institutions in the United States to receive this designation.



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