

Voices from the Vault

Issue 33 November 2020

New Acquisitions from the Wolle Estate

In July the Moravian Archives received various items from the estate of Peter and Priscilla Wolle: books, photo albums, music, and four spectacular oil paintings. The Wolles have actively supported the Archives over many years. In 1994, they donated a painting by John Valentine Haidt



depicting the recognition of the Moravian Church by an Act of British Parliament, purchased at an auction in England. This painting is currently on display in

our new exhibit "Zinzendorf in America."

Beginning in 1997 Peter Wolle served on the Board of Directors of the Moravian Archives and

from 2000 until his death in 2009 as president. The paintings received from the Wolles include *Portrait of a Woman* by an unidentified artist, *View of the Lehigh Valley* by Reuben Luckenbach (see image), *Calypso Island*, attributed to Gustav Grunewald, and *Portrait of Ann*

Wood Henry (1734-1799), attributed to Benjamin West Henry.

Special points of interest:

- Rachel Wheeler and Sarah Eyerly win award for "Singing Box 331"
- New HVAC installed for Moravian Archives Vaults
- BAM allocates additional funds to Moravian Archives



Historic Easel Restored



During this year's virtual edition of the our German Script Course in June, the familiar wooden easel that supports the chalkboard and has been with the Bethlehem Archives since the 1800s took a

tumble. The emblematic carved Moravian seal that adorns the crest of the easel broke off.

Our worries about the prospect of losing the easel to disrepair quickly subsided when Hank Naisby agreed to restore the easel.

We are grateful to Hank for his fine work restoring the historical easel, which looks just as new as it did in this

ca. 1890 photograph of the archives' room in Central Moravian Church's Kleiner Saal taken by Julius Sachse.



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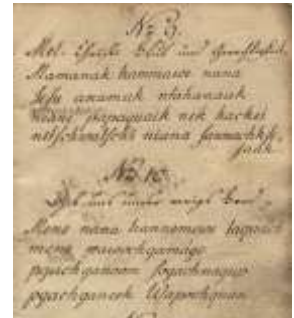
Rachel Wheeler and Sarah Eyerly Win Award

In May of 2020, Rachel M. Wheeler, PhD, and Sarah Eyerly, PhD, received the 2019 Lester J. Cappon Award from the Omohundro Institute, an independent research organization sponsored by the College of William & Mary. The award is given annually to the authors of the best article published in the *William & Mary Quarterly*. Wheeler and Eyerly were recognized for "Singing Box 331: Re-sounding Eighteenth-Century Mohican Hymns from the Moravian Archives," which encompassed their

efforts, with others, to research and revive eighteenth-century Mohican language hymns. Eyerly is Associate Professor of Musicology and Director of the Early Music Program in the College of Music at Florida State University, and Wheeler is Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Indiana University – Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). Both are long-time researchers and supporters of the Moravian Archives, and Wheeler currently serves on the editorial board of the *Journal of Moravian*

History. For those interested in learning more about "Singing Box 331," check out the interactive digital companion version of the article at <https://ioieahc.wm.edu/digital-projects/oi-reader/singing-box-331-rachel-wheeler-sarah-eyerly/>.

"Singing Box 331: Re-sounding Eighteenth-Century Mohican Hymns from the Moravian Archives," *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser., 76, no. 4 (October 2019): 649-96.



The
WILLIAM AND MARY
QUARTERLY

The Moravian History Store

Although the Moravian Archives has had a gift shop for quite some time, Office & Finance Manager Kelly Givens has brought new life to the items and the mission of the Moravian History Store. Over the last three years Kelly has spent time reworking the message of the store and the items it carries. Sourcing from Moravian vendors, carrying the original Moravian Herrnhuter stars from Germany, and crafting a new collection "From the Archives" of

handmade accessories inspired by our collection, and acquiring a collection of new and used books focusing on Moravian history and culture are just a few ways the Moravian History Store sets itself apart.

Every purchase whether it be in person or online at www.moravianhistorystore.com provides the opportunity to take a little piece of Moravian history home with you. But the Moravian

History Store is not just a gift shop. Every purchase at the Moravian History Store allows you to support the Archives and its mission to preserve and maintain the unique history of the Moravian Church.

You may also consider buying a gift card, the ideal present for your friends and relatives who love Moravian history!



Debbie Helms Remembered



The Moravian Archives mourns the loss of volunteer Debbie Helms, who passed away on September 5, 2020. Debbie was a long-time volunteer for the Moravian Archives, the Moravian Historical Society, and

the National Museum for Industrial History. She was also a member of the Central Moravian Church choir and history committee. Debbie embraced Moravian history and always appeared eager to learn something new about the Moravians, Moravian music, and the collections of the Moravian Archives. She was a regular and integral contributor to the ongoing Moravian Roots project, indexing

thousands of baptisms, marriages, funerals, and other acts as they appeared in church registers, while also performing quality control on several thousand entries indexed by others. Debbie likewise indexed thousands of church register entries in an effort to enhance the CLIR-funded *Archiving Antiqua* project. We, in addition to our users, are indebted to Debbie for her faithful and exceptional service over the

years. She will be greatly missed by the Archives community, and her immense contributions will not be forgotten.

Processing: Prayer Day Reports

A little known genre of Moravian records are the so-called Prayer Day Reports. Beginning in 1728 monthly prayer days or *Gemeintage* were held in Herrnhut where letters and reports received during the previous month were shared with the congregation. In 1736 Moravians began writing reports about what took place during the prayer days, including extracts from the letters and reports that were read during these occasions. The reports were then sent to other Moravian congregations to be shared.

The collection of Prayer Day Reports at the Bethlehem archives covers the years 1736-1746. They are rich resources that include letters from people in various countries, reports from Moravian places all around the world, and descriptions of significant events. This summer Moravian archivist Paul Peucker

processed the collection. The Prayer Day Reports were still housed in their original paper wrappers from 1757 when Matthaeus Hehl first organized the Bethlehem archives. These wrappers have been carefully preserved as part of the collection.

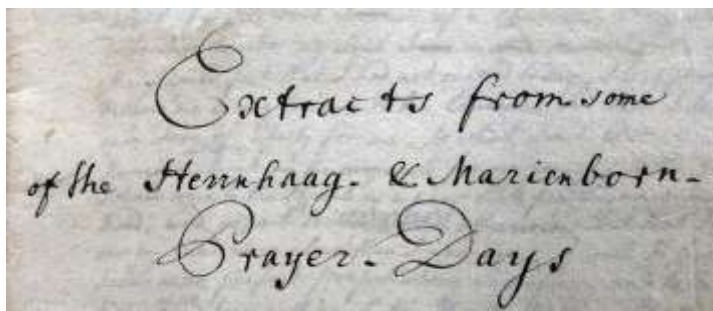
Together with the reports other materials were also sent to Bethlehem, such as diaries from Greenland, Herrnhag, and Herrnhut, sermons by Zinzendorf, a description of the wedding of Johannes von Watteville and Benigna von Zinzendorf, a report about Moravian work in Algiers, and a moving account of the deathbed of five-year-old Johanna Salome von Zinzendorf.

Especially interesting is the report of a prayer day held in London on September 12, 1746. The report does not stop with the end of the prayer day but

continues as a diary of Zinzendorf and his staff through that November. The Prayer Day Reports were the precursor of the Congregational Accounts (*Gemeinnachrichten*) that began on January 1, 1747 and continued until the 1890s. The Congregational Accounts, including accounts of Zinzendorf's activities, sermons he gave, and reports about Moravian work around the world, are a well-known source that is used by many historians. It is our hope that by cataloging the Prayer

Day Reports these documents will receive more attention by historians.

Archival processing is never finished. Although each report is now listed in our finding aid, the next step is to create a list of the contents of each report. Any volunteer with reading skills in 18th-century German script is welcome to help!



New HVAC Installed

In late May a new modern HVAC system was outfitted to service the vaults of the Moravian Archives Bethlehem. During a maintenance visit in February, a technician discovered leaks in the coils of the HVAC system and recommended immediate replacement of the system.

The Moravian Archives has two HVAC systems: a regular system that controls the temperature in the public spaces (reading room and offices), and a specialized

system that controls the temperature and humidity in the two vaults where our collections are stored. The system in the vaults is a high-quality system that is able to keep constant levels of temperature and relative humidity over extended periods of time.

Recently, the archives has been making many improvements to the Archives building as you may remember from previous issues of *Voices from the Vault*. We renovated the bathrooms, converted many of

our lighting systems to efficient LED lights, and made improvements to our landscaping and grounds. The old HVAC system was over fifteen years old! This is quite impressive for a system that operates 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year.

With generous support from the Larger Life Foundation and the Society for Promoting the Gospel, the Archives was able to install a new HVAC system. Over three days a service team from DVL installed

the new system while staff was working from home due to the Coronavirus pandemic. The new system is much more efficient than the old one. It is able to maintain the strict requirements of our vaults controlled temperature environment with greater ease. It is also significantly quieter than our previous system; during the first weeks after installation the staff sometimes had to second-guess if the system was actually operating!

Bethlehem Area Moravians

In February of 2020, Bethlehem Area Moravians surprised us with an additional financial contribution of \$10,000. The Moravian Archives was incorporated in 1977 by both the Provincial Elders' Conference

and the Moravian Congregation of Bethlehem (today: Bethlehem Area Moravians, or BAM). Both entities give annual financial support to the archives. This year the BAM board decided to give us an additional

contribution. "BAM considers the Archives a vital outreach," Dan Soos, CEO of the BAM organization, told us.

The Moravian Archives is extremely grateful for this extra financial

support that means so much in a difficult year.

Newsletter from the Moravian Archives, Bethlehem PA

Moravian Archives
41 W. Locust Street
Bethlehem, PA 18018

610.866.3255
info@moravianchurcharchives.org
www.moravianchurcharchives.org

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Upcoming Events

Moravian Archives Pre-Advent Event

Moravian History Store open November 14, 2020, 9:00 am—12:00 pm
10:00 am: Thomas McCullough, "History of the Moravian Star"
Online lecture by Zoom; pre-registration required.*

Lecture: Benigna von Zinzendorf in America

By Marita Gruner, University of Greifswald
November 17, 2020, 4:00 pm
Online lecture by Zoom; pre-registration required.*

German-English Advent Singstunde

December 1, 2020, 7:00 pm
Virtual; details to be announced

Moravian History Store

Open for shoppers on December 5, 12, and 19, 2020, 9:00 am—12:00 pm

Lecture: Moravians and Early American Holidays

By Thomas McCullough, Moravian Archives
Tuesday, February 16, 2021, 7:00 pm
Online lecture by Zoom; pre-registration required.*

German Script Course

July 26—August 6, 2021
Registration now open at www.moravianchurcharchives.org/events

*Registration for online programs at www.moravianchurcharchives.org/events; we will send you a link to the event by email

News and Announcements

NEW ISSUE OF THE JOURNAL OF MORAVIAN HISTORY!

Issue 20.2 (Fall 2020) of the *Journal of Moravian History* features an eclectic collection of research in Hans J. Rollmann, "Literacy and Awakening: The Awakening of 1804/1805 in Hopedale, Labrador"; Pieter G. Boon, "Settlement and Gradual Expansion of the Europeans in Southern Africa: A History of the First Centuries of Colonial Rule in South Africa by Moravian Bishop Hans Peter Hallbeck"; and Thomas J. McCullough, "Benigna von Zinzendorf's Reports about Her American Travels, 1741–1742." The *Journal of Moravian History* is published by the Moravian Archives and the Moravian Historical Society in cooperation with Pennsylvania State University Press. Information on subscriptions and on how to

submit articles can be found on our website. You can order back issues through our online gift shop.

GERMAN CONSULATE SPONSORS ZINZENDORF EXHIBIT

The Consulate General of the Federal Republic of Germany has kindly decided to sponsor our new exhibit "Zinzendorf in America." The exhibit traces the legacy left by Zinzendorf in America: objects that remind us of his visit to Pennsylvania in 1741–43, items passed down within his family, and artifacts acquired by the Moravian Archives. German Consul General David Gill attended the opening of the exhibit on October 20, 2020. The exhibit is open and free of charge during the regular operational hours of the Moravian Archives (please call to

schedule a visit while Covid-19 restrictions are in place).

THE MORAVIAN CHURCH AND ELECTRONIC RECORDS

In our the June issue of *Voices from the Vault* many of you read of how the Moravian Archives has begun developing plans on how best we can preserve and maintain electronic records. Our survey, which was sent to Moravian congregations and agencies in early spring, is an essential component of the framework which we are beginning to establish for conserving digital records. Staff has been researching the electronic records management policies of a variety of institutions to help craft systems and procedures which can most effectively serve the Moravian Archives

and the institutions whose records we maintain. We are pleased with the progress which has been made so far in this long-term project and look forward to sharing developments in future issues.

REMEMBERING DORIS YOB

Doris Rohland Yob was office manager at the Moravian Archives, initially in the 1960s and again from 1996–2001. One of her projects was to prepare volume 2 of the Bethlehem Diary (1744–45) for publication. For many years Doris was executive administrative assistant to the President of the Provincial Elders' Conference of the Moravian Church in America, Northern Province. Doris Yob passed away on August 18, 2020.