

# MHEP Quarterly

Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania

ISSN 1098-6359

Volume 18. No. 1, Spring 2015

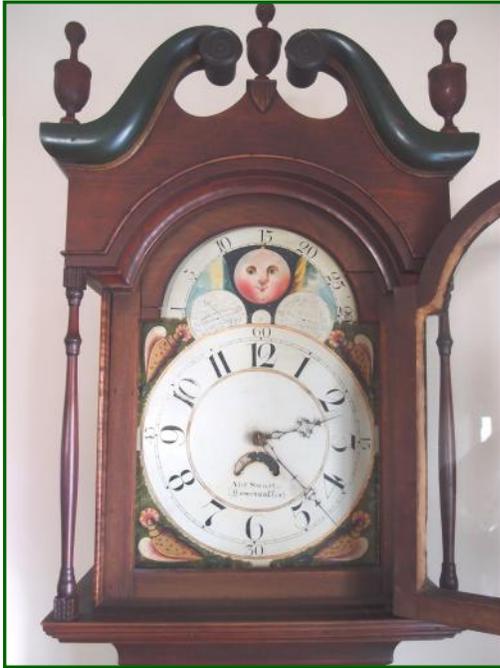


**Snow Geese in the Butter Valley, March 2015.** *Photo by Sarah Heffner*

## *In This Issue*

Changing Times	p.2	You are invited	p.10
Memories of Ralph W. Berky by Pastor Bob Gerhart	p.3	Annual Heritage Fundraiser	p.11
Hymn Sings	p.9	<i>Whack and Roll</i> Reception on the Lawn	p.12

# Changing Times



Abram Schwartz clock.  
*Photo by Joel Alderfer*

The handsome clock face in the photograph is from an Abram Schwartz grandfather clock that was recently donated to the Mennonite Heritage Center by Emily Clemens. Built circa 1825, the clock still has original green paint. This thirty hour clock was built towards the end of the era of thirty hour clocks. Times were changing and eight day clocks were more commonplace.

We are grateful to the individuals and families that consider donating artifacts to the Mennonite Heritage Center. Our collections committee carefully reviews potential donations and considers factors such as whether the artifact is documented and tells a story of a particular time in this community, whether it is unique to our collection or whether we do already have similar items. Accepting an artifact means that we make a commitment to care for and house the piece appropriately as well as share the artifact with the public through exhibits and programs.

Another important component of the collections are congregational collections. Records, such as annual congregational meeting minutes, are essential for researchers when they are working on congregational and conference histories. Even church bulletins are good sources of information on changing times in local congregations.

Changing times on our Yoder Road campus recently included saying goodbye to our Franconia and Eastern District Conference staff friends as they moved from the 569 building on our campus to their new offices on the Christopher Dock Mennonite High School campus in January. We welcomed Peaceful Living, a faith based nonprofit working with individuals with disabilities, to the 569 building in February.

Changes in MHC staff are occurring as well. Susan Liberace has accepted the part time position of Volunteer Coordinator and will be starting in April. Susan has extensive experience with nonprofit organizations and organizing events. We will also be saying good bye to Director of Advancement Alyssa Kerns this spring. Alyssa has brought new, creative ideas and contributed in many ways to events and programs here. She will be very much missed.

Our feature article in this issue is about Ralph Berky, a twentieth century Butter Valley, Berks County inhabitant, who was not particularly concerned with changing times or current societal mores but who “marched to a different drummer”. His love of nature and his faith were his life focus. Much like the folk historian Isaac Clarence Kulp of Vernfield, Ralph was thought by some to be unproductive and eccentric but both Ralph and Clarence contributed to their communities through their dedication to unconventional interests and pursuits and have left legacies worth preserving and sharing.

Along with the feature article, the quarterly contains information on upcoming events. I hope to see you at the Heritage Fundraiser on Friday, May 1 and invite you to the Reception on the Lawn on Friday, May 29. Please reserve your tickets early. You can also join a team for the senior croquet tournament or play for a nonprofit organization at the Whack and Roll Tournament on Saturday, May 30 and enjoy the fun and camaraderie.

Sarah Heffner  
Director

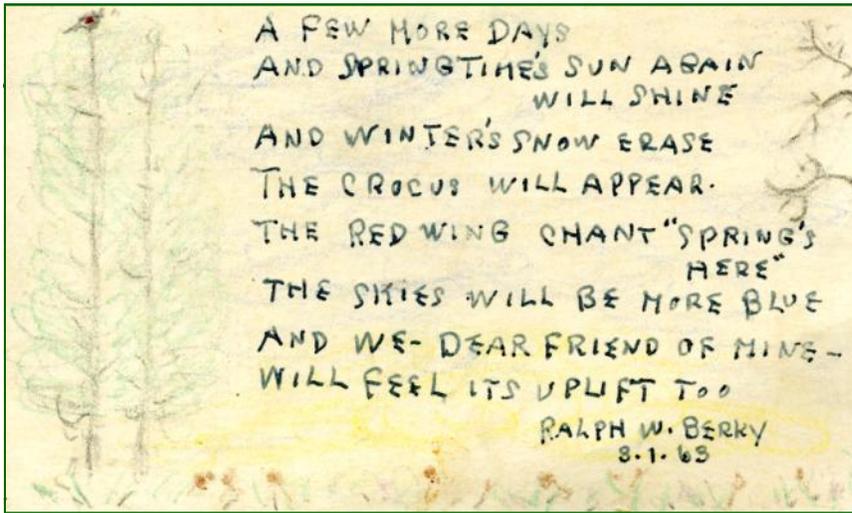
## Memories of Ralph W. Berky and his “Larkland” Recollections by Pastor Bob Gerhart



Ralph W. Berky (1890 - 1977)  
*photo by Bob Gerhart*

Roasting marshmallows on a stick over a dying campfire is the best way to conclude a “doggie roast”. But you don’t want to use just any stick. The best sticks are green pepperwood sticks, easily stripped of twigs and leaves. Sweet birch saplings work, too, and have a nice fragrance. But since pepperwood grows rapidly as underbrush in a Pennsylvania woodland, cutting their thin stems is not destroying saplings of more useful trees that should be allowed to grow. How do I know? Ralph Berky told me and showed me as he showed numerous other grade school boys visiting Larkland in the 1950’s.

Doggie Roasts at Larkland were an annual community event for nearly four decades in eastern Berks County. Farm folks and workers from the villages, school children and the older folks, made their way on a summer evening each year to gather at twilight around a campfire circle of gathered stones from the hillside. Seated on logs arranged as benches they enjoyed a program of singing, recitations and recollections, prayers of thanksgiving and musical talents, before hearing from the main speaker of the evening: perhaps a clergyman or an educator or a significant citizen of the community. As dusk turned to dark and the kerosene lanterns hanging from tree limbs shone with their golden glow, it was time for the doggies, the hot dogs roasted over the campfire, followed by the eagerly anticipated marshmallows. For some of us, this seemed to be the only time we had such a luxurious gooey treat. Marshmallows were too expensive during World War II and its post war years to be commonplace. For both the hot dogs and the marshmallows, the guests could choose their sticks, either pepperwood or birch, forked or straight, that we boys had cut in preparation for the picnic evening.



Card by Ralph Berky sent to Cyrus Lutz. *Collection of Bob Gerhart*

Located on the western slope of the Butter Valley, Larkland was a two and a half acre corner of a forty acre woodland, set apart as "sacred ground," to be an arboretum and a bird sanctuary three miles north of Bally, Pennsylvania. Larkland's woods were laced with trails, some named for persons that Ralph Berky admired, such as Helen Keller and Joyce Kilmer, or had met, such as Henry Van Dyke. Other trails were named for favorite birds of the hillside such as the Cardinal, Wood Thrush and the Towhee Trails. One section was planted with trees in the form of a circular maze.

Old turtle shells were turned upside down to hold rainwater for birds to drink. Hemlock seedlings were available for visitors to plant as a remembrance of their visit. Interesting rocks from across the country were brought by friends and added to arrangements along trails or in shady groves. And, of course, there was the campfire circle that was often the weekday setting for visits by student groups from the one-room schools of Washington or Hereford Township or Saturday visits by Boy Scouts or Campfire Girls. To understand Larkland one has to know something of Ralph Berky who was Larkland's founder in 1933 and "director of activities" until his last years in the 1970's.

Who was Ralph Berky? Well, to those who only saw him walking along Route 100 from Bally and Clayton to the Huff's Church Road, he was often mistaken for a tramp or a vagabond, but he was anything but. His long tattered topcoat worn during all but the warmest months of the year may have looked like the garment of a homeless man. The top coat was necessary not for just for warmth, but it provided the deep pockets needed for carrying bird seed and suet, peanut butter and cheese useful for feeding the birds along the way, and a well-worn bird book. Pockets also concealed the fountain pens and small spiral bound notebooks for writing poems or sketching items of God's creation that might inspire. Summer months saw him wearing a long out of date suit coat over a long sleeved, frayed white shirt frequently accompanied by a limp necktie. His steel rimmed glasses and snow white hair under a tweed cap hinted of a degree of scholarship about him, but his shuffling walk in very worn high-topped shoes raised more question than his appearance would answer.

To those who met Ralph in one of the village of Bally's four general stores or in the unique variety store known as Eli Gehman's (and then as Clara Gehman's, and more recently as Sarah Gehman's) store, and Ralph patronized all five, the community knew Ralph was not a tramp nor homeless. Though he stopped in each of the stores more to visit than to purchase, more to learn the latest news, not for the sake of gossip, but so he could stay informed as to who was sick and needed one of his postcard greetings. Learning of a new baby would prompt a hand drawn card of congratulations. Those grieving would receive an original poem of comfort of encouragement. The community knew Ralph was a brilliant poet who could rapidly compose on the spot, with his fountain pen, perhaps in green ink, spontaneously without the need to write and rewrite to get it just right.

For decades Ralph had been writing a poem for each new day, and for each new sunset, and frequently adding a poem for a noontime, as well. He composed in both English or in the local Pennsylvania German dialect often called Pennsylvania Dutch. To his Pennsylvania Dutch friends he signed his cards, "Der Busch Amschel", (German for "the Wood Thrush"). The Penny Postcards on which he composed his early verses, through years became Three Cent Cards, then Five Cent and finally it required six cents worth of postage to convey his poetic greetings in the 1970's. Often his original poems were added to other greetings or correspondence under the heading: "In Passing". Though the cards were simple, Ralph embellished them with colored pencil or crayon sketches and doodles. Many recipients kept these simple cards, treasuring the unique greetings for years.

Those who attended the Hereford Mennonite Church, in Bally, knew Ralph Berky as a fellow Mennonite Christian who was deeply in love with His God, His Heavenly Father as Creator and His Savior Jesus Christ. Christ's life of

humility and service provided a pattern for the simplicity with which Ralph lived daily. His fellow church members knew Ralph was a musician with a clear tenor voice. He was a member of the church choir (without his top coat, of course.) On special occasions he used his poetic skills to compose hymns, sometimes for anniversaries, sometimes for historic events. For years he was the tenor in a men's quartet known as "the Atta Boys," four Mennonite men who sang for variety of community and church-related occasions, including on an early live radio broadcast.

To those in the Butter Valley and Upper Perkiomen watershed, in the late nineteenth century, Ralph Weller Berky was known as the youngest son of the schoolteacher, Andrew Stauffer Berky and his wife Amanda (nee Weller) Berky. Ralph was born September 21, 1890, the seventh child in the Berky home. But Ralph never met three of his siblings. Alice died at age three in 1882 and Clara age five and Frederick age four both died in 1887, three years before Ralph's birth.

After attending and graduating from the eighth grade at the local Washington Township School on the edge of Bally, Ralph enrolled at Perkiomen Seminary (a high school level preparatory program) in Pennsburg, following in the footsteps of his older brothers Oswin, Darius and Herbert. Ralph walked from Clayton to Pennsburg (six miles one way) each day. He graduated with the Perkiomen Class of 1912. He attended Pottstown Business School, graduating as a stenographer in 1917. He worked as stenotypist for Dr. William Mann Irvine, Headmaster at the Mercersburg Academy in Mercersburg Pa for six months. In December 1917, during World War I, Ralph began a Civil Service appointment at a stenotypist for the Treasury Department in Washington DC, in the IRS's Special Tax Unit, a position which he held until 1920.

Ralph's father, Andrew, had died at the age of 58, February 20, 1914. In 1920 Ralph moved home from Washington to care for his mother. By this time his brother Oswin was a medical doctor serving the Bally community and had helped organize the Borough of Bally in 1913. His brother Darius had worked for the Carnegie Institute as a physicist in the area of earth's magnetic field. After exploring the Sahara in 1912-13, the Hudson Bay in 1914 and the Amazon basin in 1915 in connection with his work, Darius had married Mabel Schultz in 1919 and began teaching science courses at the University of the South in Suwanee, Tennessee. Brother Herbert was beginning his career as Professor of Chemistry at Bluffton College in Ohio. So it became Ralph's duty to come back to Clayton to care for his aging mother.

Amanda died in May of 1936. On the day that his mother died, Ralph had planted yellow string beans in their garden. Every May on the anniversary of her death Ralph planted at least one row of yellow string beans as a memorial to his mother.

During World War II Ralph Berky was the inspiration behind a mimeographed community newsletter called "Home and Camp News" sent to all the men from Bally and the Butter Valley and beyond serving in the Armed Forces or in Alternate Service in CPS Camps. While Ralph was listed as an "assistant editor" it was clear to all that he had gathered much of the information and wrote most of the news items. News from the public and parochial schools, the three churches of Bally, from the factories and local sports and civic clubs along with jokes, Pennsylvania Dutch humor and weather updates, were squeezed into the four to six pages published monthly. The masthead described the paper's purpose: "That Our Boys May Be the Best Informed Boys." The masthead declared: "Bally Home and Camp News is a Folksy Gossip Sheet, sponsored by the Bally Camp Fire Girls, and is published monthly, every first Thursday." After listing the volunteer staff, the rates were listed as: "Two chuckles per copy, or twelve Ha-Ha's per year Postpaid." That sound like the creative wry wit of Ralph Berky himself.

To those of us who were children in Ralph's church or who were fortunate enough to live in his neighborhood, Ralph Berky was a type of unassuming hero, not just a friend of our families who knew all about our parents and grandparents, but he cared about us, too. He was interested enough to remember us with cards and poems of our own. He signed our cards, "Uncle Jolly". Most of all he wanted us to learn to see and hear and appreciate God's amazing creation. He was patient with us, willing to tell us again and again what the bird song was that we just heard. He showed us how to discover bird nests without disturbing the birds or bothering the eggs. At Larkland he taught us how to hold still enough to let chickadees come to our hands for sunflower seeds or to land on our noses to pluck a shelled peanut from our lips. And as he did with most visitors to Larkland, he showed us how to plant hemlock saplings, letting us name them and helping us paint the names on a rock marking the date and occasion of the planting. As many others did, we brought stones and rocks back from our trips to other places to add to the geological collection at Larkland.

Ralph was a naturalist, not a worshipper of Nature, but a sincere worshipper of Nature's Creator. He consciously and deliberately walked in God's world, appreciating the wonders and beauty that were all around him. For this



Ralph with his dog Gren. *Photo courtesy of Bob Gerhart*

reason, he preferred walking to riding in a car, so he could hear the birds and the breeze rustling leaves and smell the fragrances of blossoms. Walking, he could stop when he wanted to or proceed at a pace that gave him time to see, ponder and reflect. For a period of time Ralph earned a bit of money mowing the Old Mennonite Church Cemetery with a reel-type push mower. When the trustees, feeling sorry for him and the manual effort required to push the mower, purchased a power mower for his convenience, he used it only once or twice and complained that it was much too loud. "You can't even hear a sparrow sing, while running that machine," he said. He went back to his own manpower, pushing the reel mower, listening to God's handiwork. He was not opposed to modern conveniences but did not feel he had to change his lifestyle for them.

Ralph's daily routine was a six to eight mile walk, beginning from his home at Clayton and going north to Larkland returning over the hills to Bally and back to Clayton by dark. He didn't always go to Bally but for more than forty years he rarely missed spending at least part of the day at Larkland, regardless of the weather conditions. Winter's bitter cold was countered with layers of clothing, multiple socks and several sweaters and coats. He claimed his woodland was considerably warmer than the open roads in winter, though his neighbors worried about his safety in stormy weather. Several got together and moved an old vacated cabin from Blue Church, near Coopersburg, to the east entrance of Larkland to provide Ralph with much needed shelter in rain and snow. Though Ralph never would have requested it for himself, the cabin was greatly appreciated and served as shelter and storage for the last twenty five years of Ralph's nearly daily visits

to his sanctuary. More importantly, perhaps, the little cabin put the minds of his friends somewhat at ease whenever bad weather enveloped the Butter Valley.

For many years Ralph was accompanied on his walks to Larkland by his dog, Gren, a long haired setter. Gren was named for Dr. Wilfred Grenfell, the missionary doctor serving in Labrador and Newfoundland. Ralph's brother Darius had met Dr. Grenfell while on his exploration trip to Hudson Bay.

My earliest memories of Ralph Berky were when during my pre-school years we lived just a few hundred yards from the west entrance to Larkland. To me he was "Uncle Jolly" from the time of my birth. With my older brother Jim, we would occasionally accompany Uncle Jolly on his early morning walk up to Larkland. One time Ralph went past our house early, before we were up, and so we decided (at the ages of three and nearly five) to go up the field lane to Larkland on our own to join him. When we heard loud crashing sounds from the woods on the hillside above Larkland, we were convinced that the Giant from the "Jack and the Bean Stalk" story that our mother had recently read to us, must be coming through the woods toward us, trampling down the trees with the encroaching crash of his footsteps. In terror we ran back to the house without looking back to see if he was gaining on us. Only after Ralph stopped in later in the day did our mother learn the source of our scary noise. A local lumberjack was felling large trees for a nearby sawmill. (I still think their crashing to the ground sounded just like a giant slowly stepping through the woods.)

In 1946 our family moved away from Larkland into Bally and our contact with Ralph was no longer daily but weekly at church activities. We still went to the community Doggie Roast at Larkland with our parents and a

hundred other visitors. This was a summertime event for renewing friendships with other families of the Butter Valley and meeting guests from far away.

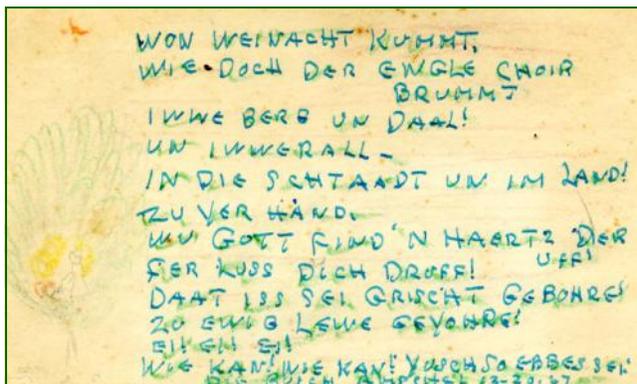
In 1951, my father, James J. Gerhart, Sr., came home one evening and announced that he had just bought Ralph Berky's house along Route 100 in Clayton. Up to this point, my parents had lived in rental houses. Now for his first house to own, it was going to be Ralph's. My mother Mildred was surprised, shocked and appalled. Ralph's house, the Berky homestead, was built by his grandfather Daniel Berky before 1876. The wood framed house had not been painted since Ralph's father Andrew Stauffer Berky had died in 1914. The house was not only very weathered but was badly in need of repairs. In fact, except for the fact that tenants occupied the front half the house and Ralph lived in the back half, to many it had the appearance of "haunted house". Housekeeping was not one of Ralph's strong points or even interests. A lifelong bachelor, Ralph often explained that he hadn't gotten married because "his wife died when she was a baby."

For Jim Gerhart, buying Ralph's house meant nearly a year of renovation and remodeling the old Berky homestead. The purchase arrangement also included the provision that Ralph could continue to have two sizeable rooms, with his own entrance and privacy, for as long as the Gerharts lived there. So beginning in 1952 Ralph Berky lived in part of our home.

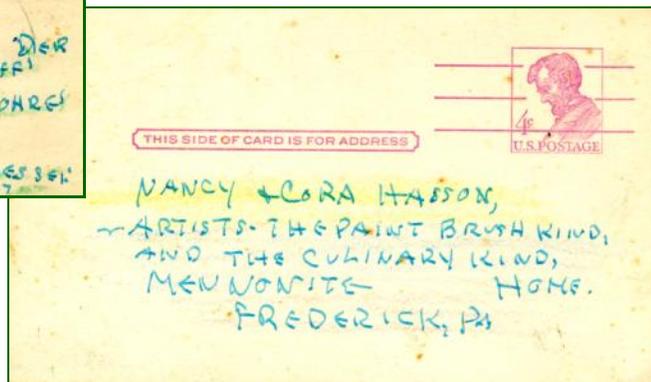
During my junior high and high school days, Ralph was a frequent guest at our supper table. More frequent walks to Larkland were part of our outdoor experiences. Increased interest in ornithology and conservation became part of our teen years. Nature study was a normal part of our activities. However, hearing detailed stories about people we didn't know or who were no longer alive didn't interest us very much as teenagers, and while we tried to politely listen to Ralph's stories, I regret now that I didn't ask more questions and write down what he was sharing. I realize the breadth of knowledge he had of local history and family ties that could have proved so valuable today.

It was from Ralph Berky that we learned of the life and contributions of the 18th century pioneer nurse known as "Mountain Mary" (Maria Jung), who lived near Berks County's Hill Church. Ralph was instrumental in reviving her history through his correspondence with Dr. Preston Barba of Allentown and others of the region. Ralph arranged for memorial programs to be held for several years at Mountain Mary's grave site, programs which we also attended since my father provided the transportation for Ralph to get to the Sunday afternoon service. This was only a fraction of the local history and folklore with which Ralph was knowledgeable and conversant.

As a very young boy, I probably first heard from Ralph of the story of missionary Annie Clemmer Funk and her death in 1912 on the RMS Titanic. He was 16 years of age when she sailed as a pioneer Mennonite Mission worker to India. He always spoke of her with high respect and admiration. But now I realize that Ralph had far more detailed memories of Annie Funk and her family. In fact, the land that became Larkland was part of the woodlands that belonged to the James Funk, Annie's father. In 1933 Ralph entered into a permanent lease arrangement with Annie's sister and brother, Cora and Oswin Funk, to use and develop Larkland.



Card by Ralph Berky to Nancy and Cora Hasson. Collection of Bob Gerhart



Larkland was originally an outgrowth of a nature study group for boys and girls ages eight to eighteen, known as the Butter Valley Meadowlarks, organized by Ralph Berky in 1930. The club continued to operate until 1936. In the meanwhile, Larkland was begun in 1933 and dedicated in October 1934. Ralph described the purpose: *“Larkland Arboretum is a shrine for lovers of nature gratefully responsive to the beauty and song of the world in which God has placed us. Be it ever our prayer and practice: 1. to cultivate a reverence for God; 2. An awe and wonder at His Creation; 3 and a Respect for Life, and so to work in Harmony with all who would remember that ‘This is Our Father’s World.’”*

The development of Larkland expanded beyond the club activities and became the ongoing focus. Unfortunately, Larkland never had a natural water source beyond rainfall. There were no springs or streams in immediate proximity to the acreage set aside for the arboretum. Water used for activities including the annual doggie roast was brought to the site in large milk cans or other containers. Rainwater was collected for the tree and shrub plantings that visitors were invited to do. Friends of Larkland occasionally suggested that a well should be dug to allow a permanent convenience for activities, but it never happened.

One of Ralph’s weaknesses was that while he made the most of every moment, savoring being in God’s amazing world of nature, and expressing his insights and observations in poetry and hymns, he made no provision for preserving or continuing his work after he was gone. He rarely arranged for his poetry to be published. A few hymns were printed by others for special occasions, but never commercially or for his own profit. His many notebooks and diaries have been lost. A great loss took place shortly before he sold his house to the Gerharts, when a fire broke out in the attic in late 1950. Piles of his writings and notebooks either burned or were soaked by the water sprayed to save the house. Much that had been written prior to 1950 was destroyed or had to be discarded.

Ralph never set up a board or organization to assist with fund raising or permanent development. No arrangements were put in place that would keep Larkland functioning beyond his involvement. The only dream that he expressed to a few on paper was that someday a carillon be erected on the upper side of the hill above Larkland. It would have required a much more permanent organization to have even begun a project like that.

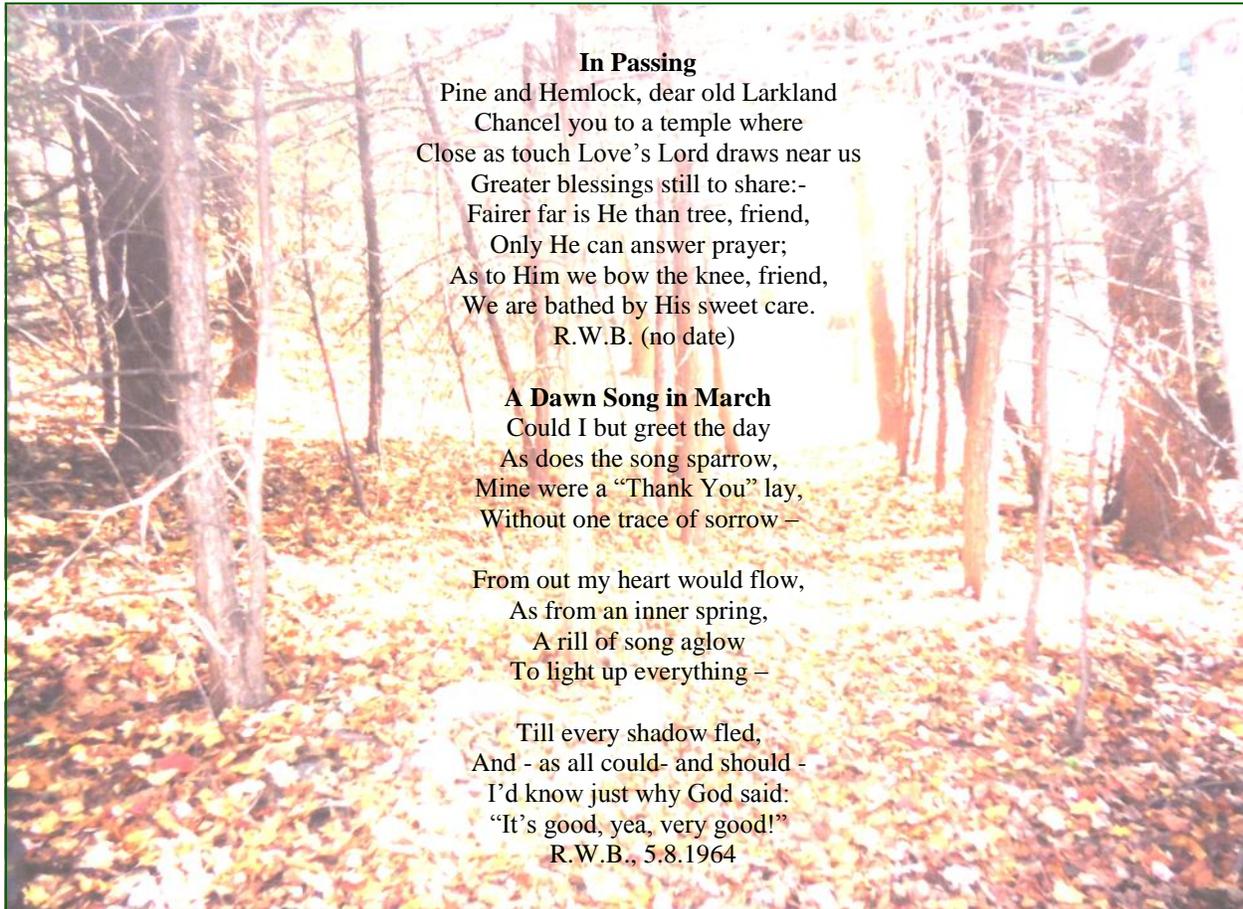
When James and Mildred Gerhart sold their Clayton home in 1962 in order to move to Camp Men-O-Lan near Quakertown, it was no longer possible for Ralph to have accommodations in the old Berky homestead. Walter and Florence Shuler, living on a nearby farm, had a small cabin-style room available which they offered for Ralph’s use. He lived on the Shuler farm for nearly fourteen years, until failing health in 1976 made it necessary to move to the Frederick Mennonite Home.

Ralph W. Berky’s walk on this earth concluded on Good Friday, April 8, 1977, at the age of 86. His funeral was held Easter Sunday afternoon, April 10, in his beloved home congregation, the Hereford Mennonite Church in Bally, with Rev. Charles Sprunger officiating. Interment took place the next day in the Hereford Mennonite Cemetery. Friends throughout the local community and the wider region revived a multitude of memories of this special person, Ralph Weller Berky, whom God in His providence had given to our generation. Ralph’s life was a reminder of what is truly valuable. Ralph taught us what should not be overlooked or neglected. He showed us what must be treasured and shared if we are to experience the peace and joy that the wonders of God’s creation were intended to give.

Ralph once wrote on a card of condolence to dear friends:

*God’s heart can have no room  
For death and its dread sting  
Many mansions fair  
Are promised there  
With Christ the Risen King.*  
Ralph W Berky 4.25.63

Author Bob Gerhart is currently Executive Director of the Association of Mennonite Evangelical Congregations (AMEC) and served as pastor of Hereford Mennonite Church (now Butter Valley Community Church) for almost twenty years. He enjoys researching local history topics and has given numerous programs, including presentations about missionary Annie Funk who lost her life on the Titanic.



### **In Passing**

Pine and Hemlock, dear old Larkland  
Chancel you to a temple where  
Close as touch Love's Lord draws near us  
Greater blessings still to share:-  
Fairer far is He than tree, friend,  
Only He can answer prayer;  
As to Him we bow the knee, friend,  
We are bathed by His sweet care.  
R.W.B. (no date)

### **A Dawn Song in March**

Could I but greet the day  
As does the song sparrow,  
Mine were a "Thank You" lay,  
Without one trace of sorrow -  
  
From out my heart would flow,  
As from an inner spring,  
A rill of song aglow  
To light up everything -  
  
Till every shadow fled,  
And - as all could- and should -  
I'd know just why God said:  
"It's good, yea, very good!"  
R.W.B., 5.8.1964

## **Singing the Mennonite Hymnal**

In honor of the 40th anniversary of the Mennonite Heritage Center in 2015, and inspired by a recent marathon hymn sing at Goshen College, the MHC is hosting a sing-through of the 1969 Mennonite Hymnal in twelve sessions over the course of 2015. **The singings will be held the second Sunday of each month at 4:00 p.m. in the meeting room at the Heritage Center.**

**April 12** - Mennonite Hymnal #89-110, #205-224 and #527-538

Praise and glory of Jesus Christ; the Holy Spirit and Holy Scriptures; Gospel songs

**May 10** (Mother's Day) - Mennonite Hymnal #225-277

Life in Christ: call, repentance and forgiveness, faith and assurance, love and gratitude, joy and peace

**June 14** - Mennonite Hymnal #278-332

Life in Christ: purity and holiness, hope and aspiration, prayer, communion with Christ, pilgrimage and guidance, conflict and victory

**July 12** - Mennonite Hymnal #539-594

Gospel songs

**And continuing through the fall months:**

August 9 - Mennonite Hymnal #333-387

September 13 - Mennonite Hymnal #388-44

October 11 - Mennonite Hymnal #442-476 and #607-619

November 8 - Mennonite Hymnal #477-526

December 13 - Mennonite Hymnal #111-153 and #595-606

## You are invited



### **Thursday, April 23, 7 pm, Weaving and Dying of the Pennsylvania Dutch Program by Alan Keyser**

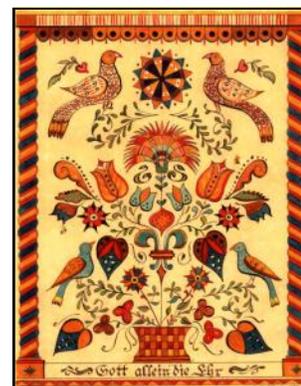
Historian Alan Keyser will present an illustrated program on the distinctive textiles of the early Pennsylvania Dutch. Before 1860 many of the fabrics used at home were hand spun, locally dyed, and custom hand loomed. Farmers raised the flax for linens and sheep which produced the woolens. From these farm raised fibers they were able to make their table linens, bed linens, towels, coverlets, grain bags and work clothes.

No registration necessary. Admission is donation.

### **Saturday, April 25, 9 am to 3pm Fraktur Workshop**

This workshop will focus on Susanna Heebner's fraktur, an extraordinary eighteenth century fraktur artist. Participants will learn about Susanna's life as a member of the Schwenkfelder community and her influence on future generations of fraktur artists. You will create an 11x14 size fraktur using verses and design elements from her original artwork. A list of materials needed for the class will be provided upon registration. Previous fraktur class experience is helpful but not necessary.

Pre-registration is required as class size is limited. The class fee is \$55 (\$50 members) plus a booklet fee of \$8 in addition to the class fee. No refunds are given unless a workshop is canceled for insufficient enrollment. To register, go to [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org), email [info@mhep.org](mailto:info@mhep.org) or call 215-256-3020.



### **Thursday, May 14 Bus Tour to Brandywine River Museum and Winterthur**



We'll visit the Brandywine River Museum of Art in Chadds Ford, which features an outstanding collection of American art (including work by the Wyeth family of artists) in a nineteenth-century mill. The afternoon will be spent at Winterthur Museum and Garden, the premier museum of American decorative arts, where we will have a custom tour of the Pennsylvania German rooms and enjoy the new exhibit "A Colorful Folk: Pennsylvania Germans & the Art of Everyday Life". Winterthur also features a 60-acre naturalistic garden, which in mid-May will be filled with color. On the return trip, we'll stop at Terrain, a unique and whimsical home and garden store in Glen Mills.

The tour fee of \$90 (MHEP members \$85) includes admission to both museums and gratuity for the bus driver. Lunch is on your own at Winterthur. Tour participants will board the Hagey Coach at the Hagey Transportation Center located at 210 Schoolhouse Road, Souderton (located 1 ½ miles east of Route 113). The bus will depart on Thursday morning, May 14, at 9:00 a.m. with boarding at 8:45 a.m. The tour will return to the same location around 6:30 p.m. Your automobiles may remain parked at Hagey's fenced parking lot.

For more information or to register, go to [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org), call 215-256-3020 or email [info@mhep.org](mailto:info@mhep.org). Deadline for registration is Thursday, April 23.

## Annual Heritage Fundraiser

Friday, May 1, 2015

Deep Run Mennonite Church East  
350 Kellers Church Road, Perkasie

6:00 pm Delicious Buffet Dinner

7:15 Program

*Order and Change: The Amish in 21<sup>st</sup>  
Century America*

By Herman Bontrager

Advance Registration by April 24 - Tickets: \$50  
go to [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org) or call 215.256.3020



Old Order Amish, one of the fastest growing Anabaptist descendant churches in North America, are visible alternative communities in the United States and Canada. The Amish thrive within the dominant “modern” culture but at times their way of life is in conflict with the dominant culture and the laws of the land. This will be an opportunity to better understand and appreciate the Amish part of the Anabaptist family and to reflect on the counter-culture role of the Body of Christ.

*Herman Bontrager, a member of Akron Mennonite Church, grew up in a Beachy Amish home in Indiana. As secretary of the National Committee for Amish Religious Freedom since 1985 he has worked with Amish on a variety of religious liberty and other legal matters affecting the Amish. Since 1990 he has been CEO of Goodville Mutual Casualty Company in New Holland, Pa.*

## MENNONITE HISTORIANS OF EASTERN PENNSYLVANIA

### Board of Trustees

Christopher J. Detweiler, *President*  
John L. Ruth, *Vice President*  
J. Oliver Gingrich, *Secretary*  
Kathy Q. Bauman  
Gerald A. Benner  
Jeffrey L. Godshall,  
Jeffrey T. Hackman  
S. Duane Kauffman  
Andrew S. Lapp  
Edie J. Landis  
Donald L. Nice  
D. Eugene Wampler

### Trustee Emeriti

Ray K. Hacker  
Mary Jane Lederach Hershey

### Staff

Joel D. Alderfer, *Collections Manager*  
Ivan L. Derstine, *Custodian*  
Sarah W. Heffner, *Director*  
Alyssa S. Kerns, *Director of Advancement*  
Susan Liberace, *Volunteer Coordinator*  
Forrest L. Moyer, *Archivist*  
Rose A. Moyer, *Assistant Director*

### Editorial Staff

Sarah W. Heffner, *Editor*  
Joel D. Alderfer, *Contributing Editor*  
Forrest L. Moyer, *Contributing Editor*  
*The MHEP Quarterly*  
is published four times per year

### Mennonite Heritage Center

565 Yoder Road  
Harleysville, PA 19438  
Telephone: 215.256.3020  
FAX: 215.256.3023  
e-mail: [info@mhep.org](mailto:info@mhep.org)  
Web: [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org)

### Museum & Library Hours

Tuesday - Friday  
10 am to 5 pm  
Saturday, 10 am to 2 pm

The mission of the Mennonite Historians of Eastern Pennsylvania is to collect, preserve, and interpret the Anabaptist-Mennonite heritage in order to educate, inspire, and witness to the church and broader community.



NONPROFIT  
POSTAGE PAID  
LANSDALE, PA  
PERMIT NO. 502

**MHEP Quarterly**  
565 Yoder Rd  
Harleysville, PA 19438-1020



Event sponsored by



## *Join the fun*

Whack and Roll  
Reception on the Lawn  
Friday, May 29, 2015, 5:30 pm

Delicious Pork Roast  
Strawberry Shortcake

Entertainment by *Easy Grass*

A traditional Bluegrass band hailing from  
Elizabethtown, PA "They just may be the best  
little band no one has ever heard of."

Tickets required - \$25 per person.  
[www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org) or call  
215-256-3020