

# MHC Quarterly

Mennonite Heritage Center

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Mahlon Gross and family, circa 1911. His letters and those of his father Abraham to grandfather John Gross are featured in this issue. The exchanges reveal a moving account of faith, family relationships, illness and change.

# MENNONITE HERITAGE CENTER

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## 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  
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Our mission is to educate, inspire and witness to the church and community by collecting, preserving and sharing the Anabaptist/Mennonite story.

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*The Home Place: One Woman's View of Family and Farm Life* exhibit features the photography of Anna B. Guntz. Visitors can enjoy searching for the items in the individual photographs that are displayed in the exhibit.

# Work and Hope



It is March and here at the Heritage Center, we are in “work and hope” mode. Working on upcoming events, exhibits and programs and hoping for good attendance and memorable times.

I have been thinking lately about the iconic “work and hope” image that it is on the title page of the 1748 *Martyr’s Mirror*, the early Anabaptist book about the tragic persecution of the Anabaptist martyrs of the Reformation period. “Work and Hope” is also the name of our history exhibit here at the center.

An online search for “work and hope” turned up an interesting article by Julia Kasdorf published in *The Mennonite Quarterly Review* 69 (1995):178-204. Ms. Kasdorf’s writing about the origins of the

symbol made me realize that there is more history and complexity to the image than what I was aware of. Versions of the peasant worker digging in the soil were used throughout the medieval period, even dating back to Roman times. Kasdorf states that art historian Emil Mâle wrote “The primeval work of tilling the soil, the task which God Himself imposed on Adam... the Church seems to have given foremost place.”

The first printing of the Dutch *Martyr’s Mirror* in 1660 has the digging worker with the Latin motto: *Fac et spera* (Do/work and hope). When the German immigrants in Pennsylvania translated and printed a German “Martyr’s Mirror” at the Ephrata Cloisters in 1748, the Latin phrase was transcribed in the German “Arbeite und Hoffe” (Work and Hope). The German Mennonites felt that the stories of the early Anabaptist martyrs were important to remember as they faced uncertain times during the American revolutionary war period. Historian John Ruth wrote about this time in his book *Maintaining the Right Fellowship*.

You, as members, are an important part of Work and Hope at the Mennonite Heritage Center. Thank you for your support, participation and feedback. We want to ask for your prayers at this time. Executive Director Steve Diehl has been diagnosed with a serious cancer and is currently on medical leave. We ask for prayers for his health and well-being and also prayers for our organization during Steve’s absence. Board and staff are working to pick up the tasks that Steve was leading and we are hoping that he will be able to get back to his good work at the MHC as soon as health permits.

Sincerely,  
Sarah Heffner  
Program Director

# “As a Son to a Father”: Gross Family Correspondence, 1890s

by Jean Godsall-Myers; introduction by Forrest Moyer

Jean Godsall-Myers has been diligently transcribing manuscript letters in the Mennonite Heritage Center archives. In this article, a series of letters from one family is presented along with her annotations. A German linguist and tireless scholar, Jean is an asset to the Heritage Center’s work. Her detailed transcriptions and translations open our correspondence collections to genealogists and others who seek to understand local and family life in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The letters excerpted in this article represent communication between three generations of the family of John W. Gross (1814-1903), a conservative old preacher at Deep Run Mennonite Church East. He was ordained in 1852, shortly after the congregation lost many progressive members in a schism. John’s father Christian and grandfather Jacob had been preachers before him at Deep Run. John preached in German and reportedly wept when English hymns were sung in church. Evidence suggests he opposed the introduction of revival meetings.

His children and grandchildren were more progressive, yet affection and sharing of counsel and biblical discernment continued between the generations, as these letters attest, even when formal church relationships were impossible.

Thanks to the generosity of descendants, many letters that John received are archived at the Mennonite Heritage Center (Hist. Mss. 9). Included are letters from his son Abraham “Abram” C. Gross (1844-1926) and grandson Mahlon G. Gross (1873-1937). The letters overlap and complement each other in interesting ways, so we’ve chosen to publish them in chronological order.

To set the stage...

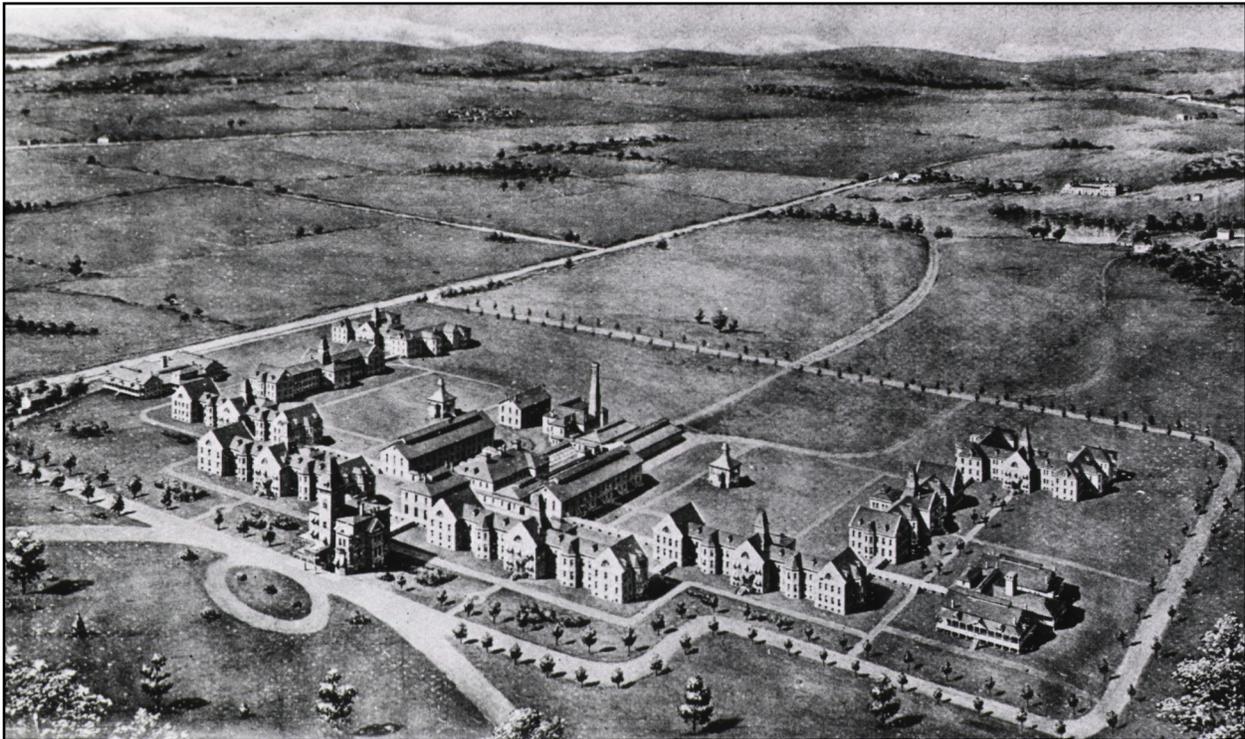
In 1894, Abram at age 50 has been widowed for five years. His children are grown, and he decides to leave the family farm in Plumstead Township, Bucks County and take a job as an attendant at the State Mental Hospital in Norristown. The first two letters describe his interesting work and experiences there, and his sense of distance from father John and the Mennonite community. Perhaps he was on the outs with the church at the time. According to a grandson, Abram “felt no sympathy toward [Mennonite] Conference rules that infringed on what he considered human privileges” and he “never made confession nor asked for forgiveness for breaking Conference rules.” (Wesley R. Gross, *Pennsylvania Mennonite Heritage* IV:4, Oct. 1981, p10)

At the same time, Abram’s 22-year-old son Mahlon has moved to southern New Jersey, where he is renting a farm and setting up house with wife Annie alongside a few Gross cousins. He has chosen to join the Methodist Church, which places him outside the communion of the Deep Run church of his grandfather, and his father appears distant as well. Still, Mahlon writes intentionally to his grandfather, attempting to build bridges and keep communication open. He would have grown up hearing only German preaching from his grandfathers, both preachers at Deep Run. Clearly he is more comfortable with English himself; this was the case for many young people of his day.

Mahlon’s interest in theology and preaching comes through in his letters, along with an attempt to engage his grandfather’s use of German language. Mahlon became a preacher among the Methodists. After he returned to live in Bucks County, he joined the Doylestown Mennonite Church and was ordained a minister there in 1920, by which time the language of the church had switched completely to English. Jean’s notes and transcriptions follow:

*The letters to John Gross from his son Abram, and Abram’s son Mahlon, reveal a web of family relationships rife with respect, faith, love, and conflict. A closer look at the letters leads to some worthy insights as well as further questions.*

*Chronologically, the two sets begin with the letters of Abram to his father. In this first set, there are six letters, all in English, and are all written during a time when Abram was working in the Asylum for the Insane in Norristown, PA. The dates span April 6, 1894 through May 4, 1899. He mentions twice a sickness he had, but we cannot assume he is in the asylum because of mental illness; au contraire, he identifies himself as an attendant and describes his work with patients and his interaction with other colleagues. The insights into asylum work at the end of the nineteenth century are interesting, as is the question why this man would move away from home to work in a government institution, etc. An excerpt from the first letter follows:*



State Hospital for the Insane, Norristown, ca 1890

### Abram

Asylum for the Insane  
Norristown Pa.  
4-6-1894

Dear Father,

By tomorrow it will be one week that I spent in this Institution. The first Sunday I was wishing that I had my trunk at the station. And then I would surely have walked out and home, but as I learn more about the buisness I feel better at home.

There are about two thousand people in this institution. I am in (section 8. D.) the section is divided into two wards. Each ward contains 50 men and five attendents to each ward. My helpmates are all Irish. They are rough fellows, they sware awfull. But as I have gained there confidence and they have used me well so far. When we go to meals two men go on the lead and two on behind. One stays in the ward with such that cant go to the dining-room. It is about four hundred and eighty steps, *Schritte* [steps], from our ward to the dining room. That includes the up and down staires steps as our ward is in the second story. Every day that the whether permits we walk them out two attendents taking the lead the other two coming behind. Looks like driving cows. Some times they get to fighting the one that strikes will get hand cuffs on for several days or a week. They sometimes fight at the table but they are just like children it is soon over. We have enough to eat but nothing fancy. We have frequent changes in diet. At five oclock in the morning the whistle blows. Then we must get up. One day I must be on duty from five in the morning till nine in the evning. Next day from five till six in the evning. My work is not hard. As stated get up at five. Sweep my bedrooms two in number. One has three beds the other one bed. One of the patients makes thoes four beds and his own. At six I must be in my ward. Half past six we go to Breakfast when we get back, we scrub our ward floor. We use no water, first sweep it. Then rub it with wax. Then rub it with scrubbing brushes. It gets very smooth. One can fall down without trying. By nine oclock we are all done. Have nothing to do but be with the patience [patients] and keep order and at there places. Perhaps take a walk before dinner. About half past nine or ten The Doctors come around, they examine the most of them. They must all stand in a straight line. It is called inspection. Sometimes the Doctors are late and our walks are left till after dinner. The two floores are again scrubed.

Must close hope this may find you well. My regards and best wishes to you and Samuels. Not necessary that you tell any body because I may get discharged at any time. If I stay people will find out. If not it is not there buisness. You might read it to Uncle Isaac's and to Uncle Samuel Wismer  
A. C. Gross

*The conclusion indicates Abram's respect for his father. It also leads to questions. Why did he choose this employment? Why does he prefer his father not tell people that he is in the Asylum? Another question is why John is directed to read it to the uncles—could they not read, or was John to also use discernment in passing on only certain parts of the letter, etc.?*

1-13-1895

Dear Father,

Your welcomb letter was received yesterday. It was a surprise to me as I had given up ever receiving a letter from you unless I would first write. I thought I knew that you had plenty of time to write if you wished to and I was quite shure that my time was so taken up with other dutys that it makes it next to imposible for me to write.

I suppose that you have heard that I was transferred to Section 6 Ward C. I have 87 patients 20 of them are fit cases, were it not for those patients getting fits I would have some time to write, but as it is I do not know what minuit one, two or more may drop to the floore. They then need immediate attention. yesterday we had no Fits, which seldom occurs. The highest that we had were ten in one day.... Patients are not considered so dangerous as they are where I was before. However it becomes very unpleasent at times. I have eleven patients that speak German.

I think you still remember that you saw in the papers of a man travling to Washington with the old chair on his back and bible under his arm. He was under my care for a long time while in section 8. He is about 30 or 35 years, about 6 feet high, well proportioned, in evry way, and a good looking man. He gets spells that he refuses to eat. We had to feed him threw the nose for nearly two weeks at a time. Patients cant commit Suaside by not eating here.

I have gotten acquainted with Henry Moyer of Bloominglen, he is looking well, and seams to be rational. He thinks he should not be kept here. He thinks if he was at home and could attend to his trade he would be all right. I think he would to. But wether it would last I do not know. I have been Looking for Tilman Meyers for some time. I think Bucks Co Officers make a poor showing in regards to making use of their authority. What you say in regards to caution and also incouragement to do and live a righteous life is well spoken. For surely this is a place of great and many temptation for such whom the good Lord has not blessed with a perfect will to have a mind of their own in regard to doing and leaving. I have gotten into very tite places but thus far the Lords has helped. When I think back I must wonder that I am yet among the Living. But it often came to my mind that the kind, loving, forgiving Al-mighty God who closed the mouth of the Lions was the same now as he was then and could keep me safe among thoes tretcherous and dangerous people. Therefore I say untill now he hath helped.

Now attendants are requested to take their patients to whare they have music and dancing. I have gotten out of them all so far, whare I am now there are but two [days?] one each week. My partner dose not like to go either, but I do not think that it is against his conscious particular. So he seems to have respect enough for me to go and let me stay on duty on the ward in his stead, but I get 5 nights duty in succession because of it. That is evry other week, if I had not a good partner I would be obliged to go or be discharged. Under such circumstances it often came to my mind what David did when hunger Stared him in his face. Rather than let his men suffer he took of the forbidden bread feeling that god would forgive him owing to the circumstances. Now if it should come to that I must go or leave the Lord would know that I was not going to gratify my own desire and I feel that he would not hold me responsible.

This is my Sunday off to stormy to go out so I thought I must write or it might be long till I had another chance. Tell Mary that it would not hurt her to write once. And let me know whare that dantist [dentist] lives and what his name is. Am writing in Doctor McCaffrig's private room. I have a standing invitation to his room whenever I wish to come, stay as long as I please, read write or ly down.

Respects to all. From your well wishing son  
A C Gross



*Note that the son includes some biblical references (Daniel, David). Furthermore, it is implied that he has discussed his colleague's sense of religion enough to know that the colleague preferring not to go has nothing to do with that man's conscience.*

*It is about this time period that the set of letters from Mahlon to John Gross begins. This second set includes 14 letters, mostly in English, but Mahlon does write some in German script. The set spans November 2, 1895 through March 8, 1900.*

*In Mahlon's first letter to his grandfather, dated November 2, 1895, Mahlon begins with a description of his move into a new home and farm routines undertaken by him and wife Annie. But he then addresses another intent, and that is to connect with his grandfather in the absence of his own father, i.e., John's son Abram.*

Gravestone of John Gross, 1903. Photo by Daryl W. Rice at Deep Run Mennonite Church

### **Mahlon**

Landisville, N.J.  
Nov. 2, 1895

Dear Grandfather,

When we moved down here I made up my mind that I would write to you real often but have had more work than I could do, all the time....

I write to you as a son to a father; and hope that you will receive and answer it as a father. Father has not written to me since I have taken up the cross of Jesus and accepted him as my Savior; which was over a year ago. I wrote several letters but he never answered them. It seems as if he cared not for me. But I am glad to believe that God is my Father and that I am his son. By his help I am trying to lay up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, nor where thieves break through and steal. I am trying to walk in the straight and narrow way which leadeth to life eternal. I don't suppose that you can justify some of my doings, but I believe that God is leading me and my prayer is that I may always be willing to be led. There are many precious promises in the Bible but I get much comfort from the one given in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Luke, 29 and 30 verses. I am only a young follower of Jesus and there are many things that I do not fully understand but I want to obey according to the Light that I have and then I may claim more light.

Your Grandson,  
Mahlon

Historians report that Mahlon Gross left the Mennonite faith and became a Methodist, and that his wife Annie was initially a Baptist. The writings of Mahlon's son, Wesley Gross, confirm the emotional distance between Abram and Mahlon. This letter provides a more intimate perspective—to say nothing of arguably Mahlon's pain. The subsequent letters reveal an evolution of sorts as well as a resolution to the conflict. The evolution comes first.

A half year later, Mahlon is confident enough in his grandfather's acceptance of him to question his grandfather about faith:

Landisville, N.J.  
June 16, 1896

Dear Grandfather,

...My school closed on the 8<sup>th</sup> of May. I have been farming since. We have about 6 acres of corn four of which 4 are on Samuel Grosses' place. There is plenty of land here that ought to be farmed but it is a hard matter to get a bargain with [landlord] Mr. Collins....

On June 7 our Sunday School lesson was taken from the 22 chapter of Luke. What does Jesus mean in the 36<sup>th</sup> verse when he says, "he that hath no sword let him sell his garment and buy one"? Does he really expect them to buy and use a sword made of steel or does he mean something else? Is it right for us to use a sword, a gun or a club to keep some one else from hurting us or taking our lives? This is something I do not understand. Will you explain it to me?

*Wir sind alle gesund. Ich wünsche daß dieser brief dich in gesundheit antreffet. Got sei mit dir* [We are all healthy. I wish that this letter finds you healthy. God be with you]

Mahlon Groß  
An Johannes Groß, Plumsteadville, Pa.

The relationship continues, and so do the questions. In February of 1897, Mahlon again addresses his grandfather about faith, beginning the section with German, apparently having read the grandfather's letter in German, and then gradually moving back to English.

Landisville, N.J.  
Feb. 6, 1897

Dear Grandfather,

...*Du hast some dutch geschrieben in deinem brief. Ich habe bei nahe 2 stunde daran gelesen. Ich habe das gröste theil dafon verstanden.* [You have written some German in your letter. I read it for nearly 2 hours. I understood the largest part of it.] *Du hast geschrieben, "Weist du nicht das dich gottes güte zur buse leitet."* In English that passage reads, "Know ye not that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." You also quoted Matthew 5:45 The Lord sendeth his rain on the just and on the unjust. Did you mean that we had need of repentance more than other followers of Christ, or did you mean that we can never get so far that we have no need of repentance. When I read I John III chapter, I am lead to believe that no one who is a follower of Christ has any right to commit sin. Do you believe that it is possible to live in this world without sinning against God? I would like to have your explanation of the 9<sup>th</sup> verse.... I often wish that I could have a talk with you when I come to something that I do not fully understand....

Your grandson,  
Mahlon Gross

Detail of Mahlon's letter of February 6, 1897. Mennonite Heritage Center Collection

Linguists will note the English word "some" within the first German sentence, as well as spellings based on sound (dafon, ferstanden). Were Mahlon to have his dream of actually speaking in person with his grandfather, we can only guess at the combination of English and German that would be spoken. A year later, he states in a postscript his preference to read English.

Landisville, N.J.  
March 9, 1898

Dear Grandfather,  
...I could read your last letter very well, very much better than when you used german letters...

More significantly, on March 20, 1899, Mahlon shares about the value of the familial ties, for language, faith, and conflict with his father:

Landisville, N. J.  
March 20, 1899

Dear Grandfather,

We just received your welcome letter this evening. We were very glad to hear from you. We had been thinking about you and wishing you would write....

We have all been exceptionally free from colds this winter. Annie has not been very well for several months but she is better at present. Adela was three years old in February and she is a big healthy girl for her age. She talks a great deal. She can say *Gross daughty Gross, Ridy, ridy, Giley, Alle stund ein mile* and so on. I like to hear her say german words and want her to learn as soon as she can.

I wish you would write often. Your letters do me so much good. My father does not write and it does me good to think that I have a grandfather who thinks enough of me to write. Grandpap Godshalk [Samuel Godshalk (1817-1896), co-minister with John Gross at Deep Run and father-in-law of Abram] used to write and answer so promptly but now he is gone. If it is the Lord's will I hope you may yet live many years in good health....

*In this letter, Mahlon also expresses his wish that his grandfather would write often. It is perhaps not so much a command (after all, at this point John Gross is 85), but really a heart-felt wish that his own father would write. But even if that is so, it is also true that correspondence with John was more erratic than either Abram or Mahlon would have wanted. When we look at the archived boxes of correspondence that John Gross received, we can better understand why the son and grandson did not always receive immediate reply or frequent missives!*

*When we turn to the letters of Abram, we see another reason for Abram not to be writing, namely his own life has grown more complex: :*

**Abram**

11-22-89

Dear Father,

I expect to be married on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup>. My intended companion is Mary Ann Hunsberger of Dublin, Daughter of Abraham F. Hunsberger. You may wonder why it should take place So Soon after my Sickness. The time was fixed before I got sick is the reason. You may tell my Sister Mary.

Respectfully your Son, A C Gross

*There follows news of Abram's illness:*

Asylum 12-13-89

Dear Father,

I received a letter from Jacob Egley. The letter was written while he was with you no doubt, as the address is your hand writing he wished me to Send him his Clothing that he had while here. I cant do that, and if I could slip them away I would not consider it right to do so. I told him to go to Williams and show his letter and he [may?] give him a Suit of Clothes that I have out grown. It would possibly fit him and do for evry day. I am very sorry for him. He had been here for a long time with no hope of getting away. He is not Insane. He is very ferm in his way of thinking, to much so for his own good. But there are many people that are that way and they are not locked up here and they are considered pretty good people to. He was very clean and particular while here, very industrious and very kind to me. If I was living on the farm I would not leave him go away this winter. He tells me his Clothing are poor and perhaps he may not be able to Change his Clothes often enough to keep himself Clean. He is naturly very clean and industrious. I do wish you would be kind to him as he had been very kind to me. It is true that he should not have goan away from here so late in the season but it seems he did and if he wonders around and comes in contact with Some of his foes or his people who dislike him he may be arrested and sent back here. I would be very Sorry to see him back here. he would not have any favors Showen him here if brought back. If he is with you yet try and get them Clothes for him at William if he has left you try and send him his letter. He failed in giving me his address.

I have pretty well recovered from my Sickness. I am not as heavy as I was before. But am gaining fast. I had lost 30 lb Hope this may find you quite well.

regards and best wishes A C Gross

*It is likely that the "William" named by Abram in this letter is his oldest son, William S. Gross (1866-1903), who lived in Bucks County, much closer to home and grandfather. It is commendable that Abram is going out of his way for Jacob Egley in the midst of wedding and work duties.*

*Letters from the year 1899 show much change in the lives of both Mahlon and Abram. In March, Mahlon writes about his attempt to purchase a new property:*

## **Mahlon**

March 20, 1899

...No we have not bought yet. I liked that place so well and had counted on getting it so much that it made me feel quite disappointed when we did not get it. But I suppose it is best as it is. Annie thinks that the Lord has something better in store for us. We rather expect to stay here another winter, how much longer the good Lord only knows. I have said to Annie, "It was easier to get down here but it does not seem as if it would be so easy to get back." But we ought not to complain or to feel discontented for we have been blessed in many ways....

*Subsequent letters focus on arrangements for John to lend his grandson money for purchasing a different piece of property. On a happier note, Mahlon also reports of the birth of a son (Paul), indeed a joy after a son had died shortly after birth in 1897:*

Landisville, N.J.  
August 10, 1899

Dear Grandfather,

...I suppose you have heard that we have a little boy in our family. He was four weeks old on Sunday. We call him Paul. Annie thinks he will have red hair. Annie is as well as could be expected considering what she has passed through. She and I do most of the work. Ethel helps to take care of the baby. Adela likes him very much and wants to help take care of him. She rocks the cradle some times and sings to him...

*The year is somewhat tougher for Abram, as indicated in his last letter, written in May. His work is not easy and he had hope to see John.*

## **Abram**

5-4-1899

Dear Father,

I have a few moments time before it gets dark. So I will let you know that I am midling well. I can get along with the work much better than at first. But I would not stay here for the pleasure of the thing. But as I must be somewhere and have it necessary to earn something I do not know to do any better for the present. I was told that you had goan to Philadelphia on Tuesday. Rather understood that you would come home by way of Norristown and see me. As you have not yet come I suppose you are having treatment. I do hope that you may meet with success. Write and let me know how you are getting along....

Must close hoping you are doing well. My regards and best wishes to you and any friends that may inquire.  
Respectfully A. C. Gross

*Abram does not mention his new wife, or any of his children. What he does mention is his sense that his father did not visit him, reasoning the father's treatment regime precluded that. He closes with a wish for the father's "doing well", and signs off "Respectfully"—phrases which may be appropriate in the era and genre of such letters.*

*But the letters from Mahlon offer another insight. Sometime during 1899, John advised Mahlon to visit his father. Mahlon did so, despite the uncomfortable relationship:*

### **Mahlon**

Landisville, N. J.  
Dec. 6, 1899.

Dear Grandfather,

We went to see my father on Monday and we are not sorry that we did. I think we would not have gone if you had not urged us to do so. He seemed to be glad to see us. He thanked us for coming. He said the time seemed so very long. He is much discouraged at times and fears that he may remain a cripple. You told me to go. Now I am going to tell you to go. Don't wait for an invitation, but think of his condition and go. He is away from home and friends, in pain of body and distress of mind. I think our visit was appreciated and I am glad we went. He asked whether you were well. He will not be able to leave the hospital before Christmas. I feel sure that he would be glad to see you.

Your grandson, Mahlon Gross.

*So the patriarch, John Gross, is partly responsible for a reconciliation between his son and grandson. What a blessing—and it doesn't stop there, as we read Mahlon advising John to do likewise, to visit Abram. Is Mahlon's letter further evidence that there been a separation between John and Abram? Mahlon mentions his father's state of being a cripple—is this the sickness Abram wrote of in November 1898, or was that something else? And most importantly, did John go and visit Abram? The remaining four letters written from Mahlon to his grandfather make no mention of his father or any further visit, and instead focus on the purchase by Mahlon of Philip Miller's farm [near Doylestown, Bucks County], with the assistance of a loan from John. It would be interesting, indeed, to read any letters after John's death in 1903, to learn of the relationship between Abram and Mahlon. We are fortunate to have even these letters as a source for insights into the personal stories of their lives.*

*Abram soon moved back to Bucks County, where he settled on a farm with his new wife, Mary. He and son Mahlon rebuilt their relationship, at least to some extent, over the next quarter century, living close to one another in the Doylestown area. Mahlon rejoined the Mennonite Church around 1912, and was ordained several years later, before Abram passed away in 1926. You can read more about both of them in the writings of Mahlon's son, Wesley Gross, archived at the Heritage Center (Hist. Mss. 571).*

# Exhibits

## **The Home Place: One Woman's View of Family and Farm Life**

**February 28 – June 15, 2019**



A photo exhibit of selections from the color slides of Anna B. Guntz (1913-2005), a Mennonite woman of rural Montgomery County.

## **56th Annual Membership Exhibition of the Perkiomen Valley Art Center**

**April 2-26, 2019**

Reception: Sunday April 7, 2:00-5:00 p.m.

Open to the public, no reservation needed.



## **Dock Academy Intergenerational Art Show May 7-24, 2019**

Art by Dock Mennonite Academy middle school students displayed with artwork by family members. Reception, Tuesday, May 7, 3:30-5:00 pm. Open to the public, no reservation needed.



# Workshops

## **Harmonica Workshop led by Sharon Hunsberger, Tuesday evenings 2 April to 23 April 2019 at 6:30 pm.**

Enjoy a four session harmonica workshop with folk musician Sharon Hunsberger. This will be an informal time to learn and enjoy playing in a small group setting. No previous experience is needed.

Harmonica is a relatively easy musical instrument to play and is used in many types of music, including folk, country, blues and rock and roll. The group will go through the musical scale, learn notes and progress to playing simple tunes. No prior knowledge of the harmonica is needed.

Preregistration is required because participation is limited. The cost for the four session workshop is \$55 (\$50 members). This fee includes a basic diatonic harmonica with brass reeds.

## **Papercutting Workshop led by Pam Hults, Saturday April 27, 2019 9:30 am – 3:30 pm**



Popular paper cutting artist Pam Hults will teach the workshop. Participants can choose from several patterns that include both seasonal and traditional paper cutting designs.

Students will take home a finished piece along with a finished grain painted frame provided by the instructor. Workshop fee is \$60 (\$55 for members) plus a materials fee of \$30 that includes the designs and frame. Participants should bring along a cutting surface, exacto knife or small scissors and small paint brushes. All other materials for the workshop will be supplied.

## **Workshop: Traditional Woodworking for the Kitchen led by**

### **John Monroe, Saturday, May 4, 9:30 am—3:30 pm**

An opportunity for novice and intermediate woodworkers to focus on and learn the use of traditional hand tools in making wooden spoons, ladles, spatulas, cutting boards and bowls. Workshop will be led by John Munro.

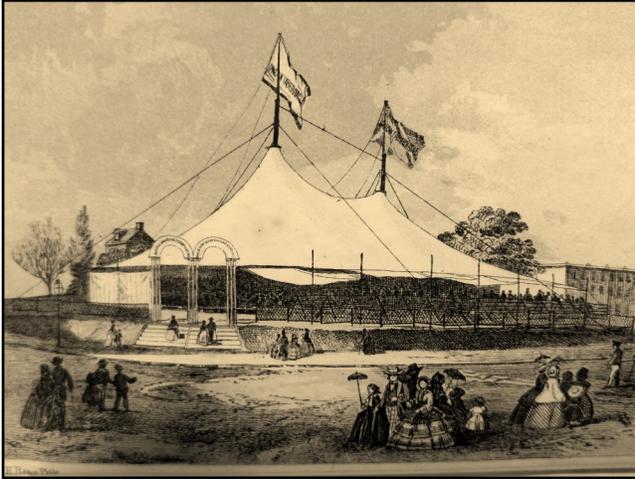
Workshop fee is \$60 (\$55 for members) plus a \$20 fee for use of tools and materials. Register at [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org) or call 215-256-3020.

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## Programs

**"Jonas Schultz and the Big Tent: an interesting life and the amazing 1858 traveling church" by Pastor Bob Gerhart. Sunday, April 28, 2 p.m. Mennonite Heritage Center**



Jonas Schultz was a nineteenth century itinerant pastor of Mennonite, Schwenkfelder, Brethren and Lutheran background who traveled widely. A model of the moveable tabernacle will accompany the illustrated program. Open to the public; admission by donation.

**Acapella Hymn Sing at Frick Meetinghouse, E. Orvilla Rd., Hatfield, PA  
Sunday May 5, 4 p.m.**

Acapella singing in four parts is a long-standing tradition, in which participants blend their voices to create harmonious music without the aid of instruments. Whether you're new to acapella hymn singing or grew up with it, you will enjoy this rich hour of music in the peaceful and historic setting of Frick Meetinghouse, Hatfield. A window into the 19<sup>th</sup> century! *Hymn books will be provided. An offering will be taken to support the work of the Mennonite Heritage Center and the preservation of the meetinghouse.*



**Whack & Roll Croquet Tournament, Friday and Saturday, June 1-2  
Mennonite Heritage Center campus**



Whack and Roll Croquet Tournament. The weekend kicks off Friday night with youth groups vying in a fast-paced competition for prize money for service/mission trips. On Saturday, teams compete for \$10,000 in winnings for local nonprofits. *Player registration required. Go to [www.mhep.org](http://www.mhep.org) or call 215-256-3020*



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Joel Alderfer, Collections Manager, recently installed a new exhibit of fraktur with wonderful examples of this distinctive art. The piece to the left by Andrew Stauffer is currently on exhibit.

Andrew Stauffer (1786-1870), was 17 when he drew the fraktur and may have been a schoolteacher at the time. He is buried in the Bally Mennonite Cemetery.

This piece came into the possession of John Gehman (1793-1882) and passed down in his family to the donors. John Gehman could have been Andrew Stauffer's student, but they also married sisters, Maria and Esther Latshaw, daughters of John & Hannah Moyer Latshaw. John Gehman also did fraktur work and may have received or inherited this piece from his brother-in-law because of that common interest. The donor of the fraktur, Melvin Gehman, was John Gehman's great-great-grandson.