



# The Historical Society of Trappe Pennsylvania

For the preservation of the history, ancient buildings and land marks  
of the Trappe area.

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 Volume VIII, Number IV      THE TRAP CHRONICLE      July, 1980  
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Dear Members and Friends:

Please remember to mark your calendar on September 21, 1980 as a day you won't want to miss. This will be our Annual Trappe Day Celebration.

When we commemorate Washington's Army arriving into Trappe and surrounding areas (Date September 19, 1777), this year we will begin with a church service in the Old Lutheran Church in Trappe. After that, we will have a luncheon at the Lamb Hotel, by reservation. Then we will proceed to Parkerford area and visit some interesting places that were involved in the Crossing of the Schuylkill.

We will then proceed to the Historical Society's Headquarters in the Dewees Tavern. A detailed schedule will be sent to the members after all completion.

If you cannot make the entire day, we invite you to pickup with the group at your convenience. Reserve that date now so you won't forget. We will be looking for you.

*Elmer R. Frank*

President

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 Around The Tavern -

Since we last updated you on whats been happening at the Tavern, we have had much good news. The excavation of the basement by Walt Sauer and Lat Hoopes has been completed and we are awaiting for the results to be made known. The ladies from the Community Club have graciously redone the entire herb garden and it looks wonderful. They currently are drawing up plans to plant a ground covering along the side of the driveway under the pine tree to help keep the soil from eroding away. We did however have our bit of misfortune. Last month when we had our sudden thunderstorm, a large section of the tree which is outside the fence at the rear of the property broke off and came crashing down thru the replica of "The Trap." The limb tore the chimney off and damaged the roof. With the help of Walt Sauer, we hope to have it repaired in short order.

We are still in need of firewood if anyone knows of anybody who would be willing to share or donate some wood, please let us know and we'll have it picked up. Thru the generosity of Fred Conard, a fellow member, we have acquired some firewood from the Eisenhower School in Norristown which is under construction.

Believe it or not, we are currently making plans for the Open House at Christmastime - more details as to the time and date to follow shortly.

The Bullards,  
 Mark, Linda and Joshua

## Curator's Report -

Both old and new projects have been part of the work this past year. It has been an interesting year, one with much potential as we build on the past for the future.

The library has serviced many people, either in person or thru mail requests, as they search for ancestors and history. We have placed our manuscripts in safe, low-acid folders and boxes; and we continue to acquire both through the contributions of friends and through purchases. Among the interesting contributions of the past year were a German grammar (from Nevin and Clara Gensler), Historical news-clippings (from Mrs. Erma I. Walters Seaman), and issues of the Perkiomen Region (from Esther Keller).

A lot of work is being put in on the museum, but this is work which few of you will notice. It involves behind-the-scenes marking and cataloguing of each item and piece of item, for proper identification and control.

Two archaeology projects are underway, and very much in need of volunteer workers. One project is exploring the cellar of the oldest section of the tavern building, while the other is searching for the location of the old stone kitchen.

A new brochure has been produced for this year, listing the hours open: Sunday 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. and Monday 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. We are planning for a film festival in the Fall.

Research into our town's past has continued for publication both in The Independent series, and the County's upcoming Second Hundred Years book. Some interesting facts are coming to light. For example, did you know that:

Uniform Tube began in a barn in Yerkes

In 1907 natural gas sold in Trappe for \$1.50 per hundred cubic feet

In 1909 Collegeville tried to annex part of Trappe

In 1901 Main Street was macadamized to allow for speeds of 8 miles per hour

One question, for our long-time residents of Trappe: "When was the last calithumpian band performance (or serenade) in the area?"

It will be a busy year, as these projects continue and others begin. I look forward to seeing you at the Headquarters.

Robert Ulle,  
Curator

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The following is one of a series of articles that has been appearing in the Collegeville paper, The Independent. Since many of our members and friends do not have access to the paper, these articles will be printed in The Chronicle for you to read. The articles are written by Robert Ulle, the Curator at the Headquarters.

#### Strange Beliefs Of The Germans

These early whites were queer people - they had all varieties of unusual ideas about spirits, and the dead; about hidden healing practices and other strangenesses. It was not long after they had crossed the ocean when they realized that this "New World" was as haunted as the "Old World" had been. The legends and tales of unknown mysteries were soon being told in the home and inns of early Pennsylvania. One of the better known stories had to do with a German man named Frederick Reimer, and perhaps it was recited with hushed voice at the tavern of Jacob Schrack in the Trappe. Already in 1748 it was an old story, known throughout the province.

Frederick Reimer lived at Falckner's Swamp, and he had two daughters - one was nine years old, the older seventeen. One day the nine year old saw a strange man pulling straw out of a roof; later she saw the same man sitting on a stump. When she described him to her parents and to the neighbors they all said it sounded

like a man who was dead already for years. So the next time she went out, the little girl took her older sister along. Strange to say, the older one could see nothing when the man was plainly visible to the little girl; however, she did use her knowledge to tell the little one what to say to him. Soon they discovered that he was indeed departed from this world, but that he could find not rest in the other world because of a three Gulden debt which he owed to a woman named Steinman. If only this debt could be paid, he would be free.

Once when the ghost appeared he wore a shroud, and the little girl saw that he had two red fangs protruding from his mouth. When he left, she followed him until he disappeared into a grave in the burial ground at Sieber's farm. The good people of the area tried to repay the debt, but could not find the woman Steinman. The ghost was not seen again, but perhaps he still lies restless under the soil of Falckner's Swamp.

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Historian -

We have been very fortunate that copy of an autobiography of Benjamin Franklin Gilbert was loaned to us and a photostat put on file in our library. Benjamin Franklin Gilbert was the son of Samuel Gilbert, the weaver who made the Poley coverlet we reported on before. Much interesting information about Samuel Gilbert is in this paper such as "Grandfather was a weaver before and taught all his sons to weave. Father (Samuel Gilbert) worked upon the looms and wove during Winter and spare time in Summer. He made Cover lids, carpets, Counterpanes, Tablecloths, Linen sheets, etc. He also taught me to weave Carpets and assist him in Weaving and putting his name on Coverlids. He also played the Violin at Parties and other gatherings during Winter, being considered an excellant Violinist. Mother often did cooking at these gatherings, She being considered an excellant Cook and Baker. My Father, having a very large acquaintence and numerous relatives, was the entertainer of a great many friends in his own home. I have seen numerous teams and often as many as 15 persons as visitors on a Sunday." This paper came to us through Judy Yeoman of Collegeville, a direct descendant of Benjamin Franklin Gilbert, discovered by Betsy Ross. Never know what you might turn up when you start talking about our activities.

Esther Keller,  
Historian

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Membership -

We welcome the following new members into the Historical Society of Trappe:

- |                   |                         |                         |
|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Mary Kutra        | Ken Davis               | Ruth R. Thomson         |
| 1670 Main Street  | 244 Saylor Lane         | 311 E. Ninth Avenue     |
| Trappe, Pa. 19426 | Collegeville, Pa. 19426 | Collegeville, Pa. 19426 |

Just a reminder to pay your dues. They are now past due. Special Memberships are: Life - \$100, Muhlenberg - \$50, Dewees - \$25, Schrack - \$10, Yearly membership - \$4.00 and Student membership - \$2.00. Make your check payable to Historical Society of Trappe and mail to Charlotte Rosser, 347 Main Street, Trappe, Pa. 19426

Thank You Ann -

A special recognition and "Thank You" to Ann Schrack who made a beautiful afghan, donating all the wool and her time.

At the Grange Fair, chances were sold and later in the day, the drawing took place. The winner - Betsy Ross. Since Betsy had other afghans, she very kindly donated it to Mark & Linda Bullard, who were very happy to receive it.

A total of \$105.00 was given to the Society's treasury. Thanks to Ann and her work.

THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF TRAPPE  
Treasurer's Report 3/25/80 - 6/30/80

RECEIPTS:

Flag Day Banquet	\$ 427.00
<u>Fund Raising Projects:</u>	
Sale of Pansies	268.00
Sale of Holly Trees	147.00
Quilting Project	140.00
Refreshment Stand at Sale	171.12
Genuardi's Super Markets	31.94
Membership Dues	349.00
Miscellaneous (Refund)	50.00
Rent (Bullard)	630.00
Sales (Dewees)	62.21
Historical Research (\$500.) (\$500.)	50.00
Corporate Fund (Landes Agency & Times Herald)	1,000.00
Voided Check No. 711 (HA Workshop)	37.00
Voided Check No. 716 (Dr. Ivan Hess)	25.00
Receipts from Tour	550.75
	\$3,939.02

EXPENDITURES:

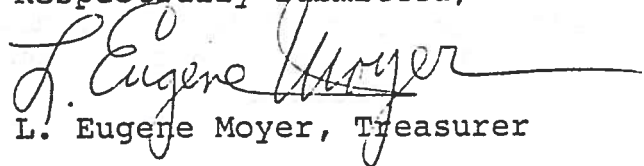
695 Robert Ulle, Library Supplies	\$ 3.43
696 George Didden Greenhouses (Pansies)	180.00
697 Peter Lumber Co., Shelving, Dewees Tav.	135.30
698 Robert Ulle, Consultation Fee, March	160.00
699 Peco, Electric	8.40
700 Walter Sauer, Postage, Newsletter	7.35
701 Robert Ulle:	
Consultation fee, April (181.39)	160.00
Library Books & Supplies	21.39
702 Kathleen Hoisington, Tour Advance	40.00
703 Winter Thur Museum, Admissions	150.00
704 Hagley Museum, Admissions	80.00
705 Perkiomen Tours, Bus for Tour	209.00
706 Peco, Electric	4.13
707 The Independent, Stationery	50.30
708 Nat'l Trust for Hist. Preservation, Dues	15.00
709 Mark Bullard, Change for Ref. Stand	50.00
710 Hist, Soc, of Mont, Co., Bean's History (Lib.)	43.00
711 Harriton Association, Workshop Regis.	37.00
712 Walter Sauer, Postage & Printing	17.48
713 Wilton Armetale, Sale Items	16.16
714 Robert Ulle, Consultation fee, May	160.00
715 Postmaster, Collegeville, Postage	30.00
716 Dr. Ivan Hess, Banquet speaker	25.00
717 Swain's Printing, Brochures	48.00
718 Robert Ulle, Library Supplies	5.25
719 Provident Nat'l. Bank, S.D. Box Rental	10.00
720 Plotts Bros., Fuel Oil	116.98
721 Peco, Electric	5.01
722 Caroline Moorhead Caterers, Inc. (Banquet)	406.25

(over)

Treasurer's Report 3/25/80 - 6/30/80, con't.

723 Wilton Armetale, Sale Items		113.69
724 Robert Ulle, Consultation fee, June		<u>160.00</u>
		\$2,468.12
BALANCE, Checking Acct. 3/24/80	\$1,114.00	
RECEIPTS	<u>3,939.02</u>	
	\$5,053.02	\$5,053.02
Less EXPENDITURES		<u>2,468.12</u>
* <u>Balance, Checking Account 6/30/80</u>		\$2,584.90
Balance, Statement Savings (Provident) 5/31/80		101.13
Cvl. Bldg. & Loan, Cert. #1098 - 2/5/80		629.10
" " " " " #1655 - "		<u>1,009.17</u>
GRAND TOTAL		\$4,324.30
(*) Includes Balance, Library Fund (\$484.10)		
Outstanding loan owed to Dr. Ivan W. Hess		<u>2,100.00</u>
TOTAL ASSETS		<u><u>\$2,224.30</u></u>

Respectfully submitted,

  
L. Eugene Moyer, Treasurer

CURATOR'S REPORT  
AUGUST 26, 1980

1. Progress in museum cataloguing. Eleven items catalogued.
2. Progress in library cataloguing, with Linda working this month.  
New accessions on a separate sheet.
3. A number of visitors have stopped by the tavern to do research or to look around.
4. The final document for listing the Lamb Tavern on the State Register has been prepared, and is under review by the owner.

Old Business

1978-79 Stabilization grant.  
1979-80 stabilization grant  
Trappe Day plans and luncheon reservations  
Sunday volunteer schedule.  
October workshop on displays on a shoestring  
Second Hundred Years <sup>11</sup>manuscript-comments.

New business

National Register listing for Tavern?