

# The Berlin Informer

East Berlin Historical Preservation Society

April – June 2019

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## *A Message from the President....*



Welcome, members, to a new season. Finally it is spring, a new chance to do the things you have promised to do all winter long.

I have awoken to the requirements of this new position, truly a motivation to me to organize things around me. It has only been possible with the help of our board and members being active and present.

We have developed some new ideas to earn additional income including holding teas and sandwich sales, and offering open hearth cooking classes as well as classes in chair caning and powder horn scrimshaw. Several of these projects will actually take place in April; others are in the planning stage. The Society also plans to participate in the EBACC's Fall Festival.

Several of us recently met with a group of Adams County Historical Societies to share ideas and to talk about how to work together to promote our organizations.

The Board has been busy this year with plans to repair some of our buildings. When you read the building report you will see a bit of what your Society is facing.

Some of our projects can be done by our own membership, others need to be completed by professionals, but remember the old adage,

"The Titanic was built by professionals, the ark by an amateur"! Our Society was started by locals of ALL TYPES. They moved and assembled a log house, restored the mill, adapted and restored Red Men's Hall, took on responsibility for the log schoolhouse, and invested incredible efforts in the Liberty #1 Engine House.

**Volunteer some time!** If you can lick a stamp or build a building come on and help. If you can't, then come on down and we will teach you. **That is how we started and how we shall continue.**

Some work parties are forming and additional help will be needed. Some jobs are physical, some mental, and some are mundane, but they all need to be done.

*Submitted by Richard Fox*

## **A NEW VIEW: BIRDS WITH A GETTYSBURG ADDRESS – 2019**

Bonnie Portzline returns to EBHPS with a new program for 2019, her latest slideshow of her best and most recent birding adventures and photo highlights from around historic Gettysburg. In this presentation her focus is on the descendants of "witness" birds (bird species in and around the battlefield in July 1863) and marvels at the fascinating nature of local birds and nature's ability to survive. Everyone is invited to attend this presentation at the East Berlin Historical Presentation Society headquarters, Red Men's Hall, 332 West King St., East Berlin, PA., on Wednesday, May 15, at 7:30p.m.

### **The Berlin Informer**

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# **Education Programs Planned**

With warmer weather on the way, area school students will be heading to East Berlin to enjoy field trips to our society's buildings.

I have been in touch with York County Day School and they plan on bringing both their second and third grade classes. Their group will include 36 students, several adult chaperones, and two teachers. After visiting the three buildings that we use for our education program, they will enjoy a packed lunch at the Community Center's picnic pavilion, weather permitting.

Bermudian Springs Elementary School is planning three tours in May. Their third-grade classes have been coming for many years, and are eager to learn history by participating in hands-on activities with our volunteer docents. Their tour dates may be May 7, 14, and 21 and will be verified soon.

Freedom Christian School near Gettysburg has also contacted us about a one hour tour at the log house for their preschool and kindergarten classes. They have visited us in the past and we gladly accommodated them, using an abbreviated program for these young children.

*Submitted by Karen Sheaffer*

## **WHAT'S IN YOUR BACKYARD?**

**Red Men's Hall, July 17, 7:30 p.m.**

The Lost Boys Recovery team of Andy Snell and Nate Keister, metal detecting hobbyists, will present a Power Point program giving an overview of their business including beginnings, research, property owner permissions, the digging process, and code of ethics. Andy and Nate will have their metal detecting equipment and many examples of local finds on display. Society members are welcome to contribute their backyard finds to the presentation.

## **Poldark Goes Local**

The Hearth Cookers will gather in the log house April 7 to cook an interesting menu from The Unofficial Poldark Cookbook. Our group has been enjoying the Poldark series and now there is a cookbook available so we have planned a Poldark meal. We will prepare barley soup, saffron buns, cider vinegar and honey chicken, Turo turnip gratin, Cornish pasties, a ragoo of asparagus, and milk cake served with berries. Creating this meal will keep us busy for about four hours.

Cooking food in the hearth for a family was very time consuming. I can sympathize because we all are tired after a day of cooking. A typical day for the housewife started before daylight, getting enough coals ready to make breakfast. The noon meal may have been the heartiest and most time consuming of the day, followed by the evening meal of warm ups. I'm getting tired just thinking about the chore of cooking but there were many other things that had to be done on a daily basis. I can tell you our ancestors were not frail, but strong and able bodied souls.

Here is an easy and tasty dish you can make in your modern kitchen. Old receipts (they were not called recipes until later) were not exactly like today's, but I'll do my best and you really can't go wrong. This would be a great Lenten meal or a side dish for any dinner. Save this recipe; more will follow...

### **Potato and Onion Pie**

**Peel and slice potatoes, onions and celery in thin slices. You'll need almost the same amount of onions as potatoes. Put layer of potatoes in bottom of dish followed by layer of onions, some celery, chopped fresh parsley, thyme, salt and pepper and chunks of butter. Continue layers and when dish is full pour rich milk or buttermilk, filling dish half full. Add a top crust (pie dough) and slash it to allow steam to escape. Bake for 35-40 minutes in moderate oven till done.**

*Submitted by Jane Fox*

# **Building Report**

***Spring has arrived and there will soon be a lot of much needed activity at the Society buildings.***

**Swigart's Mill:** Every interior wood surface of the mill will be thoroughly treated for a major powder post beetle infestation. One of the main basement support beams must be replaced due to the beetle activity so the board has approved the ordering of a 20 foot beam and plans are in the works to install it with volunteers and some expert help.

Four or five deteriorated planks on the deck of the rear entrance as well as part of the stair carriage will be replaced.

**Log House:** Powder post beetle treatment at the log house will begin as soon as we get some warm April weather. The building will be safe for use within 24 hours of the completion.

The board has approved the installation of a pent roof the full length of the east side of the log house. It will protect the logs below and help prevent frequent back splash from rain which hits the steps. This project is being partially funded by the very generous donations received in memory of long time member Gerri Alleman.

**Red Men's Hall:** In order to improve the appearance of Red Men's Hall we are taking the first step of replacing damaged shingles above the overhang.

**These are all very necessary repairs. We all know that old buildings are needy and that the Society's funds are not up to even the issues we have identified at this time.**

**We need your help as MEMBERS, VOLUNTEERS, and DONORS.**

*Submitted by Bill Powell*

## **The Search is Over**

Many of the Society's newer members may not be familiar with The Berlin Improvement Society, which was founded in 1836 "for the improvement of reading" and met in the log school house for 74 years. The library of over 600 books the group amassed was stored in the large walnut bookcase which still stands, probably right where it was built, in the northeast corner of the school. The motto painted under the top molding is still clearly readable and is as appropriate today as it was when applied:

### **"EDUCATION: OUR COUNTRY'S PRIDE"**

The organization's original handwritten documentation was also kept in a cupboard in the school. When the Improvement Society slowly declined as schools developed, the library and records remained on site as the building was used for elections, the Berlin Beneficial Society meetings, and as a public school into the 1920's. Eventually the building became a storage area for various tools.

By 1977, the East Berlin Lions Club undertook a project to renovate the building and the historic records were "rediscovered". They were so complete that Wayne Lau and Charles Wallace headed the effort to have the collection documented, microfilmed, and published, resulting in the volume currently found in many area libraries, historical societies, and private homes. (Tales of trips to the American Philosophical Society in Philadelphia and the support offered by Ambassador George Kennan among others are worth hearing!)

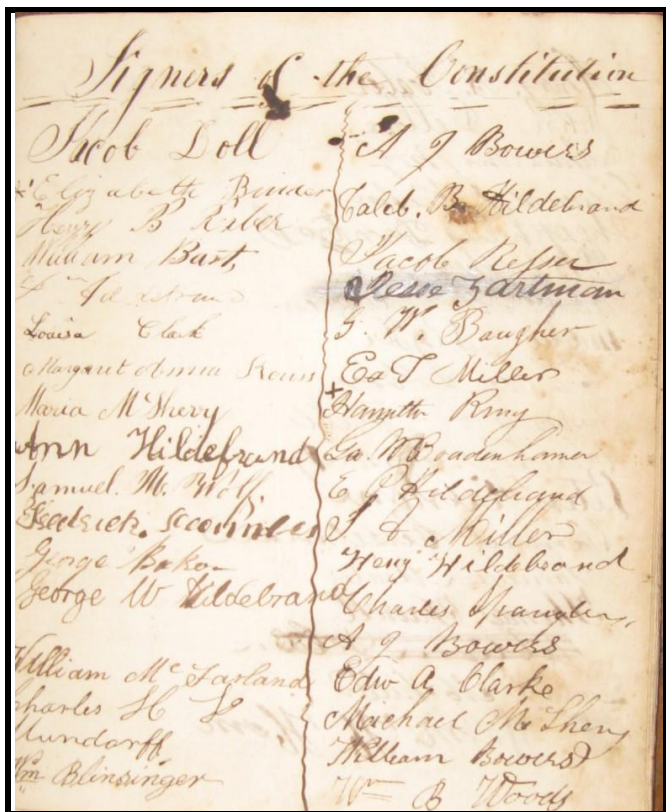
At some point after the microfilming in Philadelphia, **the documents disappeared**. For decades they remained missing in action. The school was searched. Red Men's was searched. Questions were raised, but.....nothing.

Enter Jenny Hess, who works at BB&T, and is familiar with EBHPS activities. The bank is in the process of merging with

SunTrust Bank and evidently it was decided to do some cleaning, including an old vault in the basement. Many outdated files were likely headed to the shredder, but Jenny spotted the cardboard carton marked "Property of EB Historical Society. Never remove from the Vault. Stored 5-6-97".

The carton was delivered to Red Men's where Wayne Lau confirmed that it contained the entire original trove of documents; constitution, minutes, financial records, letters from Thaddeus Stevens and James Buchanan, the sketched plan for construction of the bookcase, *everything*. These treasures are now located at Red Men's, reunited with the entire library, and are available for study on site.

Can you spot an ancestor's name in the partial list of original members below?



# MEMBERSHIP

Please join me in welcoming our newest members:

Joe and Krista Bannak, Gettysburg, PA

Harold Coldren, Hanover, PA

Natasha Stock, East Berlin, PA

Thank you to all of our members who have renewed their 2019 Membership. If you haven't yet renewed, please renew as your membership in the EBHPS is very much appreciated. As a courtesy to those who have not renewed we are sending the Informer to you for this quarter. Please renew soon so you will continue to receive the newsletter.

Are there friends and family on your gift list this year and you really don't know what to get them? People who love history or historical preservation? Please consider gifting them with a membership in the EBHPS. It will be one of the best gifts you can give someone. Preserving the past for the future.

Membership forms are available to print on our website at [www.EBHPSPA.org](http://www.EBHPSPA.org) or call the EBHPS office at 717-259-0822 and ask to have one mailed to you. Thank you for your continued support to EBHPS.

Submitted by Mary Titzell



## 2019 Calendar of Events

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
April 17	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
April 27	Spring Tea	Sold Out	Red Men's Hall
May 15	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.	Red Men's Hall

### Bonnie Portzline : "A New View- Birds with a Gettysburg Address"

June 5	Building Cleanup and pot luck	TBA	TBA
June 19	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
July 17	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.	Red Men's Hall

### The Lost Boys Recovery Team: "What's in Your Back Yard?"

August 21	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
September ?	EBACC Fall Festival	TBA	
September 18	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
	Program TBA		
October 16	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
November 20	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
	Gen. Meeting/Election	7:30	Red Men's Hall
	Program TBA		
November 29- Dec. 1	Log House Craft Show	10 a.m.-4 p.m.	Log House
December 14	Holiday Dinner	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall
December 18	Board Meeting	6 p.m.	Red Men's Hall