



# THE LANDMARK

Volume XXXI, No. 6

November/December, 2011

Newsletter of the Friends of Old Annville  
P.O. Box 99, Annville, PA 17003



## A BUSY YEAR

### *President's Message By Owen*

2011 was an exceedingly busy year for Friends of Old Annville, but in most ways a very good one. We have been so pleased by the enthusiasm shown by the Annville community for Paul Fullmer's excellent new book, *Annville Township*, published by Arcadia Press. While collecting historic images and narrative documents for the book, Paul scanned much of the memorabilia he collected and saved and cataloged that Annville history in what we now call the *Electronic Archive of Annville History*. Already the archive has proven its value as we have used it in several instances to quickly provide historic information in response to requests. We still have a need to scan images and documents for this growing archive, and Paul has placed an ad in this edition of the Landmark, looking for volunteers to assist with the scanning. Please consider helping us with this effort.

Many thanks are due to the members of the Quittie Creek Nature Park Committee and other community members of a special fund-raising committee that helped to raise funds for the park expansion project. We had a spirited response from the Annville community to this fund raising effort, and we sincerely thank all of you who so generously donated to the project that seeks to add significant streamside acreage to the Quittie Park. We now await final word on our DCNR grant proposal which, if successful, will complete the funding necessary to expand the park.

Dennis Flake of our board has worked for the past several years to implement and build our *Façade Improvement Grant Program*. This year FOOA was able to assist in the funding of four improvement projects in Annville, an all-time high, and we are pleased to be able to provide this type of assistance. This year we supported a painting project, a porch/entrance renovation, an entrance enhancement project at the Annville Free Library, and the replacement of gutters and spouting using the historic half-round design.

We also thank Nevin and Eileen Hoover, first for choosing to renovate their fire damaged home at 125

West Main Street and secondly for hosting a FOOA-sponsored tour of their home in September. Their home, built in the 1820's by Dr. John Marshall, is an Annville landmark and we greatly appreciate their commitment to that building. Friends of Old Annville recognized the Hoover's contribution with our 2011 Historic Building Award (see story in this issue).

Our main event, Historic Old Annville Day, getting primary leadership from Mike Bowman and Jill Palanzo of our board, was the largest and the most successful such event we have held to date. It just keeps growing. And I would be remiss if I did not thank John Norton, our new treasurer who was sorely tested by the inundation of checks and invoices associated with the book sale, the park fund raising campaign, and Old Annville Day while, at the same time, setting up both our sales tax and vendor licensing with the Pennsylvania Department of Revenue.

Finally, our sincere thanks go out to our rank-and-file members who so faithfully renew their annual memberships, purchase their FOOA raffle tickets each year, and come out to attend our events. Your support is our strongest encouragement. On behalf of the FOOA Board of Directors, we wish you all warm and happy holidays.



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Help out from the comfort of the home. Scan interesting materials from the Friends of Old Annville archive. No deadline; no pressure. Serve as you are able. For more information contact Paul Fullmer at 867-4640.



## FOOA ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Held on November 12th

From the opening wine and cheese social, to the tasty buffet meal by Chef Mike Folmer, to the newly unveiled game of *Annville Jeopardy*, to the final presentation and readings by Phil Billings, the 2011 Friends of Old Annville Annual Dinner Meeting was lively and enjoyable. The annual event, held at the Annville American Legion from 6-9 PM on Saturday, November 12, drew 50 people, including FOOA members from as far away as Mechanicsburg and New Jersey.

Over dessert and coffee, Paul Fullmer unveiled his new game, *Annville Jeopardy*, which tested our knowledge of both historic and current Annville trivia. Unlike regular Jeopardy, everyone who answered a question correctly (or not) won a prize.

Owen Moe then provided a pictorial review of FOOA activities in 2011. After a report by Paul Fullmer on the sales of the *Annville Township* book and the re-election of five board members, Dennis Flake presented **Facade Improvement Grant** checks to two of the four 2011 grant recipients. Owen Moe then presented FOOA's **2011 Historic Building Award** to Nevin and Eileen Hoover for the restoration of their home at 125 West Main Street.



Phil Billings (on left) then presented his talk, "**How I Discovered Annville**," in which he used readings from *Porches*, *Porches 2*, and *When We Talk About War*. We thank Phil for his presentation and for the perspective and insights his work provides about the people of Annville. FOOA made available that evening Phil's three books, Annville maps, the *Annville Township* book, and *Old West Annville*, and sales were brisk. All in all, it was a good way to end the year.

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## 2011 Historic Building Award

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Nevin and Eileen Hoover were awarded Friends of Old Annville's 2011 Historic Building Award for their restoration of their fire-damaged historic home at 125 West Main Street. The award, consisting of an engraved bronze plaque, is given annually for a major restoration/rehabilitation of a historic building in Annville. The Hoover home, a log home built in the early 1800's, was extensively damaged in a fire in April 2010. The



renovation work was carried out by Reynolds Restoration Services of Harrisburg. (Picture shows Owen Moe awarding the plaque to the Hoovers at the annual dinner meeting of FOOA.)

The first owner, John G. Marshall was born in Annville in 1793 to Dr. David and Elizabeth Marshall in a large wood-frame house which once stood at 21 W. Main Street. His grandfather, Didier Marshall, was one of the first settlers to come to Annville, arriving around 1740. Shortly after his marriage to Elizabeth Behm in 1823, John signed a deed

dated April 3, 1824, to purchase two lots at 125-127 West Main Street. It is unclear, however, whether he built the present house or moved in to the home of Steven Rigler listed on the property in the 1820 Census. Like his father before him, John served as a physician in Annville, conducting his practice from the home, which also housed 11 people in 1840. The home also served as the offices of another Annville physician, Dr. Warren Brubaker, in the mid 1900's.

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## OUR PRICELESS HERITAGE

by Della Herr Thomas

*Editors Note: This brief history of the Meyer family in the Annville area was written by Dell Herr Thomas in 1986 for the twenty-eighth annual reunion of the Meyer family, and was published in a booklet written for that reunion. This history of the Meyer family, as you will see below, also relates to the history of Annville and North Annville.*

We, of the Meyer Family in America, can trace our families to that Pioneer Couple, Rudolph, Jr. and Anna Light Meyer, who settled in North Annville Township, Lebanon County, Pa. What hardships and struggles they must have met and overcome!



Their desire to locate in an uninhabited region and to survive, demanded much ingenuity, tolerance, and trust in their Christian Faith.

They had lived on a tract of land in the Tulpehocken area (Berks Co.) Pa., which "Rudy" inherited from his father. They wanted to move closer to Anna's parents, Johannes Light and Mary Greider Light, owners of Lights Fort, a stockade built to protect them from the Indians.

About 1750 they sold their property and came to the Lebanon Township area. Traveling westward along the ridge of the Lebanon Valley from Anna's

parent's home, they came to a desirable location. A story handed down through the generations is that with all their possessions they walked along the ridge until Anna became very tired, sat on a tree stump to rest, then refused to go any farther, declaring. "This is the place." A log cabin was built by a spring of water, and application was made to buy the land.

In the Department of Internal Affairs, Harrisburg, Pa., in Patent Book A. A-5, the Patent to Rudolph Meyer is recorded.

Excerpts from the Patent:

*Thomas Penn and Richard Penn, Esquires, true and absolute Proprietaries and Governor in Chief of the Province of Pennsylvania and Counties of New Castle, Kent, and Essex upon Delaware to all unto whom these presents shall come, greetings.*

*The legal contents imply that Rudolph Meyer (Jr.) paid the sum of thirty-three pounds nine shillings seven pence lawful money of Pennsylvania, for two tracts of land. 121½ acres from the Abraham Clark tract was conveyed to him Nov. 19, 1759 and 94½ acres from the Mary Clark tract was conveyed Apr. 26, 1759.*

*Yearly "quit" rent was to be paid "the first day of March which was one-half penny sterling for every acre of the same in coin, current, according as the exchange shall be between our said province and the city of London. In case of non-payment within ninety days the land will be turned back to the former owners..*

*It was witnessed by John Penn, Esquire Lieutenant Governor of the Province, affixed at Philadelphia, this twenty-sixth day of May in the year of our Lord, one thousand seven hundred and sixty-four, Fourth year of the reign of King George the Third over Great Britain and the forty-sixth year of the said Proprietaries Government.*

*Recorded: 27th day of June 1764, John Penn (Seal)*

Land owners adjoining the Meyer tracts were Mary Clark, Abraham Clark, John Clark, Adam Wagoner, Christopher Wekeman, Henry Sanders, and Adam Ulrich. The latter tract on the western border, also issued in 1759, had built on it an Indian Fort where people could seek shelter in case of an Indian attack. It had very thick walls with a flowing spring in the cellar, running through an arch in the wall. It was torn down a hundred years later and a brick farmhouse built in its place.

When the Meyer family outgrew the log cabin, a large spacious home was erected over their spring so the Indians couldn't contaminate the water. At present the spring has been sealed. Both the home and remodeled cabin are still standing. They are located along the road running north at the eastern end of Annville, Pa., just across from

Grand View Memorial Park, which was part of the original land grant.

There were twelve children in the family. Elizabeth died in infancy and is buried in Kauffman's Cemetery, N. Annville, where her parent, sister Anna Ober, and three brothers, Henry, Martin, and Eric are also buried.

When the struggle for independence came in the colonies, three sons, John, Rudolph III, and Abraham lived in Heidelberg Township and the first two sons enlisted there. Henry, Martin and Michael enlisted in their own Lancaster County militia. After the Revolutionary War was over, four sons, a daughter, and their families moved to Western Pennsylvania. Meyersdale, Somerset County, was founded by a Meyer family. When Rudolph, Jr.'s estate was settled, Martin inherited

the farm to the west and Henry the homeplace. The shares of the others were bought by Henry, who over a period of time, bought more surrounding properties, amounting to 1,500 acres. Henry was married to Veronica Light, daughter of Martin Light, Lebanon Township. They had two sons and five daughters.

Recovery from the war was rapid and a great expansion took place in the country. The Union Canal connecting the Susquehanna River in Harrisburg and the Schuylkill River in Reading, started in 1792, cut through the northern section of Henry's land, and was in operation from 1825 to 1885. The Berks-Dauphin Turnpike begun in 1805 between Reading and Harrisburg, cut through the eastern part of his farm and the middle of Annville Township.

When Henry died in 1820, three daughters and Henry, Jr. were married. and a guardian had to be appointed for the younger two daughters and son, John Light Meyer. In 1825 before the estate was settled Henry, Jr. died following an accident in building a barn on his farm. His family moved in with his mother, Veronica. Later when John L. was married he and his wife Catherine Light Meyer moved into the home Henry, Jr. built. It is located on the S.E. corner of the intersection of Hill Church Road and Thompson Ave. in North Annville Township.



About the middle of the nineteenth century the family met with adversity. Newer methods of travel and commerce caused business on the canal to decline, resulting in bankruptcy for many landowners along the canal. Among these were John L. Meyer and his two oldest sons who lost their farms, which were bought by relatives.

The country was torn apart and sections devastated by the Civil War. The two youngest sons,. Ezra & Eri enlisted in the Union Army. Eri died of disease, probably pneumonia on Dec. 18, 1863, at Knoxville, Tenn. He had written to a brother that he rode horseback in the cold rain for hours and had a high fever with a bad cough.

A year earlier the oldest son, Henry drowned in the Swatara Creek after a heavy flood. The father, John L. Meyer died in 1865. This family, once ambitious and successful in their efforts and adventures, had to recoup and start anew. *To be continued . . .*

## **Membership in Friends of Old Annville**

**Please don't forget that a membership in FOOA makes a great gift to welcome a new neighbor to Annville, to celebrate a holiday, or to honor a special occasion.**

***All gift subscriptions are acknowledged by FOOA to the recipient***



**REQUEST:** "Looking for old pictures of the Heilig House on East Main Street and of the bar behind the Batdorf building on North Lancaster Street. Please contact Lori Nalley via email, [lnalley@centurytel.net](mailto:lnalley@centurytel.net)."



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