

# Oley Valley Heritage Association

## NEWSLETTER



March, 2014

### PENNSYLVANIA GERMAN

# FRAKTUR:

## FROM A TO Z

*Presented by* **Lisa Minardi**

### What is fraktur?

Fraktur are colorful documents made by the Pennsylvania Germans during the 1700s and 1800s. Often decorated with flowers, hearts and birds, most are birth and baptismal certificates or teaching pieces.

#### *Lisa Minardi*

Lisa Minardi is an expert on PA history and decorative arts and is currently writing a book on fraktur for the Philadelphia Museum of Art and helped re-catalog the fraktur collection of the Free Library of Philadelphia. She is an assistant curator at Winterthur Museum and is currently pursuing a Ph.D. in the History of American Civilization at the University of Delaware.



#### **Everyone is invited to attend!**

The program is FREE and membership is not required.

*Complimentary light refreshments will be provided after the program.*



**When:** Monday, April 7, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.  
**Where:** Oley Fair Centre Building  
26 Jefferson Street, Oley, PA

## Civil War Program

On November 18, 2013 Mark D. Grim, Jr., an Oley native, presented a program entitled "Major General John F. Hartranft: Soldier and Pennsylvania Statesman." The program chronicled Hartranft's life as a soldier with emphasis on the contribution he made during the Civil War. His political life as the Pennsylvania Auditor General and Pennsylvania Governor was also discussed. Approximately 150 people attended.



## PHOTOS

The Oley Valley Heritage Association  
needs

# Old Photos of the Oley Valley from the 1950's and earlier.

Oley Township, Ruscombmanor Township,  
Alsace Township and Pike Township.

We will scan your photos, save them for our photo archives and possibly use them  
in a second book.

Your photos will be returned to you.

Please call one of these people if you are willing to share:

Darlene Dillon (610) 944-9503

Doug Wegman at (610) 944-8437

Doris Lorah (610) 987-6167



## **Board Member Resignation**

The Board of Directors accepted the resignation of **Elizabeth Magovern** at their board meeting on February 17, 2014. Although Elizabeth will no longer serve on the board, she plans to remain active in our organization.

## **New Board Members**

**Carl A. Brown** was approved to be a member of the Board of Directors on February 17, 2014. Born and raised in Amity Township on the Brown's Dairy Farm, Carl graduated from Daniel Boone High School in 1963. He holds a BS degree from Penn State in Dairy Science, a Master's degree from Virginia Tech in Dairy Genetics, and a Ph.D. from Virginia Tech in Ruminant Nutrition. He is currently Treasurer of F.M. Brown's Sons, Inc.

In 1984, Carl and his wife, Thelma, purchased the Fox Farm on Cassel Road. Their son, George, grew up in Oley and is the 6<sup>th</sup> generation of Browns involved in managing the family business. Carl is active in many Oley and Berks County organizations.

Carl's position on the board was previously held by Robert Lesko.

**Kelly Spatz** was also approved to be a member of the Board of Directors on February 17, 2014. Kelly worked for many years as a designer and design director for a sportswear company. Kelly and her husband, Jeff, moved to Oley in 1993 and began work on restoring their brick house on Main Street in Oley. They are passionate about the deep history and beautiful architecture of the Oley Valley. Jeff has served on the Oley Township Board of Supervisors for 12 years. Kelly is active in many Oley organizations.

Kelly's position on the board was previously held by Elizabeth Magovern. We welcome Carl and Kelly to the board.

## **You are invited!**

Members are invited to attend our board meetings which are held at the Oley Township Municipal Building at 7:00 p.m. the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of every month except December. If you are in doubt about a meeting being held, please call Darlene Dillon at (610) 944-9503. You are always welcome to join us!

## **Facebook**

In the near future, Oley Valley Heritage will be on Facebook! Kelly Spatz has agreed to create a page for us. If you are a Facebook fan, look for us in the future, friend us and comment on interesting posts.

## **What is Oley Valley Heritage Association?**

We have often had people confuse us with another Oley Valley organization, the Historic Area Review Board (HARB) of Oley Township. **OVHA is not HARB.** Hopefully, this article will clear up the confusion. While we share a similar love of the rich tradition and historic significance of the Oley Valley, there are distinct differences.

The Oley Valley Heritage Association is a non-political group of people who are very proud of their heritage in the Oley Valley and share a common interest in keeping the history of the Valley alive by creating and selling books, sponsoring educational programs and promoting the history of the Oley Valley.

HARB is a group of people that serve as an advisory board to the Oley Township Supervisors and regulates historical properties in Oley Township.



## DAIRY FARMERS OF THE OLEY VALLEY



As many of you know, the history of the Oley Valley was on display at our Oley Fair booth this year. To showcase its historic importance, a timeline was created of major events. Included was a list of Oley Township dairy farmers from approximately the 1940's to the 1970's. Some of you may have added names to that list. We were able to identify 63 dairy farms in Oley Township during that time. Surprisingly, we can only identify 10 dairy farms remaining today.

Why has the number of dairy farms decreased in Oley Township? We asked several former and current dairymen and women and here is what they said:

- The children did not want to continue to run it.
- Financial obligations.
- Lack of support from a spouse and other family members.
- Good market value of land for building homes.
- Lack of free time as a dairy farmer's workday is 24 hours, 7 days a week.

To be successful today, a dairy farmer needs among other things management skills, finances to update equipment and procedures, a true love of dairy farming, and a work ethic second to none.

<b>Oley Township Dairy Farmers 1940's to 1970's</b>	
Each line of names indicates one dairy farm. Names were listed in chronological order of ownership and/or dairy farmer or herdsman. <b><u>Underlined and bolded</u></b> name indicates the current dairy farmer at that location.	
Daniel Angstadt	Paul Lechner
Luther Angstadt/Rodger Wagner/ <b><u>Dean &amp; Brandan Wagner</u></b>	Herbert Levan
Paul Angstadt	Warren Levengood/Daniel Levengood
William Angstadt/Ray Mast	Daniel Mast
Leon Berndt	Samuel Mast
Rea Berndt	Victor Miller/Gordon Miller/ <b><u>Steven Miller</u></b>
Daniel Brumbach	Elmer Petersheim
Sylvester Bower/Eugene Moser/ <b><u>Ed Pollock</u></b>	Andrew Peifer/Alan Peifer
Elmer Eyrich & son	Harry Renninger
James Fox	Charles Rhoads/Earl Rhoads
John Glick	Ralph Richard/Ronald Richard/Vernon Burkholder/ <b><u>Orin Moyer</u></b>
William Gotwals	Walter Richard/Wilmer Richard/Robert Richard
Carl Griesemer	Woodrow Rothenberger
Arthur Haas	Charles Schaeffer
Elam Hartman/Lloyd Hartman	Edwin Schaeffer
Jacob Hartz	George Schlegel/Daniel Schlegel/Jerry Krone/Bruce Zuber
Martin Heffner	Paul Schlegel/Richard Schlegel/ <b><u>Kevin Schlegel</u></b>
Carl Herbein	Frederick Shirey/Randall Shirey
Harold Herbein	Conrad Sittler
Clair Hetrick/Merrill Hetrick	Robert Sittler/Dana Stoudt/Todd Schroder
Harold Hetrick	David Snyder
Elwood Hoch	John Snyder/Harold Snyder/Grover Snyder
Gideon Hoch/John Hoch/Mark Hoch/ <b><u>Steven Brubaker</u></b>	Elmer Stoltzfus
Webster Hoch/Francis Rush/Daniel Schlegel/David Reichert	Frank Stoltzfus/Don Aloan
Earl Hoffman/Barry Hoffman	Rudy VonDohren
William Hoffman/Harold Hoffman/Herbert Hoffman	Henry Wagner/Charles Wagner
Paul Hoppes	George Whitaker
Charles Houp/Lawrence Houp	Amos Yoder/Terry Bashore
Elmer Howard/Leroy Howard/Glenn Howard	George Youse/Paul Youse/ <b><u>Andrew Youse</u></b>
Earl Keller/Jackson Keller/David Hauseman/ <b><u>Harlan Hoover</u></b>	Jacob Zook/Grant Zook
Omar Kurtz/ <b><u>Russell Guntz</u></b>	Omar Zook/Kenneth Zook
Paul Labe/Kevin Hertzog/ <b><u>Ronald Kelchner</u></b>	



2014 Oley Township Dairy Farmers	
Steven Brubaker	Orin Moyer
Russell Guntz	Ed Pollock
Harlan Hoover	Kevin Schlegel
Ronald Kelchner	Dean and Brandan Wagner
Steven Miller	Andrew Youse



The Oley Valley Heritage Association would like to thank everyone who helped to identify the dairy farms. Ella Richard, a retired dairy farmer's wife, deserves a special thank you for compiling the original list that was on display at the Oley Fair.

Great care was taken in making this list as complete as possible. If you know of someone who we neglected to list, please let us know by calling Mary Williams at (610) 987-3179.

### Memories of the Oley Valley

We're always looking for new Memories and are interested in nostalgia or memories of out-of-date practices (those things typically not done today). Do you have any memories to add? We'd like to hear from you, our members. Please email or write to us and include your phone number in case we have any questions. Your memory may be included in the next newsletter. Please be brief.

#### **The Oley Valley. I remember when...**

#### Wayne and Helen Readinger's Memories

*We were able to get these memories from Wayne just a few days before his passing on Dec. 10, 2013.*

Wayne went to Stimmel's School and Keller's School, both located in Rockland Township. He had perfect attendance. He played tag at recess. During the winter, all the kids brought their sleds to school and would go sledding at recess. After school, they would sled across the road in the woods. Wayne said that the school bell rang at 8:30 followed by devotions, then English, Reading, Geography and Math on the blackboard. His teachers were Wayne Heist and Solon Breidegam. The school had 8 grades.

Helen went to Fry's School on Houck Road in Ruscombmanor Township.

When Helen and Wayne were first married, they would get up at 4:00 a.m. to check their trap line they had set on the family farm in Pleasantville. Ralph Richard lives there now. At that time a good muskrat pelt sold for about \$3. The hides were sold to a man named Mest who was from Pleasantville.

Helen and Wayne went roller skating on their dates.

Wayne ran track in high school. He ran to get away from the girls. In high school the team would go to Philadelphia to compete. In the half mile, he won second place.

Helen was raised in Ruscombmanor Township. Her parents were charter members of the Fleetwood Grange. She was taken to grange activities from the time she was an infant.

Wayne started going to the Fleetwood Grange when he was 13. This is where Helen and Wayne met.

Wayne's father hoed corn by hand. Wayne hoed a lot of corn by hand. This was not his favorite job.

Helen, the youngest of 6 girls, lost her mother when she was 11. She had the job of harnessing the horses to make hay or cultivate corn. She also helped fork rings of hay into the mow for winter storage.

Benjamin Sheetz had a saw mill in front of his house on Keller Road.

Jean Readinger Reinholz, Helen and Wayne's daughter, remembers going to Keller's School. The children went out in the woods at recess and enjoyed playing on a seesaw she made out of a board and fallen tree.

## Mabel Yoder's Memories

The Levengoods had a patch of tomatoes in the field across from Mabel's house on Lake Road. Harold Rothenberger cultivated the patch for weeds and applied side dressing. When he went to work for the Chafeys, Butch took over cultivating the patch. Mabel liked to be outdoors or in the barn, so when she was about 12, Butch taught her to cultivate the tomatoes. Mabel used a riding cultivator pulled by horses, Pearl and Maude. The cultivator had two pedals. If you pressed on a pedal, it would change the direction of the cultivator. The horses knew where to go. Mabel didn't. As she went down the first row, she got nervous, pushed on the pedal and pulled out tomato plants. She had to stop and replant the tomato plants. When it happened the second time, Butch said if it happened again, she was going back to the house and wash dishes! She never messed up again.

One time after being out in the field for several hours looking down while cultivating, she got sleepy, so she went up the fence row. While the horses mulched on poison ivy, she took a nap.

Later, she used a Farmall A tractor to cultivate the tomato patch.

Mabel cultivated corn with Pearl and Maude as well.

The Levengoods raised digitalis which looks much like tobacco. To harvest the digitalis, you pulled it out with a twist and cut off the roots. The leaves were taken to the Drug Farm to be dried.

Peas were another crop. Peas were planted by the acre. They were harvested with a swather. The swather cut and rolled the pea vines which were then taken to a pea vinery that was set up in Oley by Campbell Soup.

Penny bingo and free movies at the Oley Fire Company on Wednesday nights.

Sledding in the big field facing Oley Furnace Road.

Hitching Pearl and Maude to the sleigh and going for a ride down Lake Road into Oley.

Going out in the woods and cutting down a cedar tree to decorate for Christmas. Cedars were the most common tree locally.

Helping with milking. Mabel washed the milk bucket in the evening. Her sister, Polly, did the morning washing. A man named Seidel picked up the milk cans and transported them to St. Lawrence dairy. The milk truck driver stopped at Heffner's and Wayne Reider's. Heffners shipped milk in 20-quart cans. Milk cans were used to carry water to the free-range chickens.

The best thing that happened was the invention of the electric fence. On Sunday, Butch tended cows in the pasture with the help of the Sunday newspaper to pass the time. Polly and Mabel tended the cows during the week to keep them out of the apple orchard. To pass the time, Polly and Mabel would sing to the cows, pretending they were singing on a radio show.

Taking apples from the orchard to Nel Snyder to crush for cider and vinegar. Nel Snyder and John Lendacki had feed mills. Dry ground feed was called chops or silage.

They got a Huber tractor and a threshing machine. Butch would go around threshing for local farmers such as the Heffners and Shearers. Mabel helped load the grain sheaths on a wagon with a two-prong fork.

Early round bales were called cigarette rolls.

Johnny Shade took the tomatoes to Camden, New Jersey, for processing. A tomato basket is a 5/8 basket where as an apple basket is 4/8, a true half bushel. When the baskets were stacked on the truck and it was full, the rope was tied around the uprights on the truck to secure the load.

One time Mabel went with Johnny Shade to take tomatoes to Camden to see the processing. You only were paid for firsts and seconds, nothing for culls which were not good quality. Three baskets were taken off the load and graded. Three baskets weighed about 100 pounds. Dick Muntz was also a driver for Johnny Shade.

Mabel met her husband, Carl Derr, on a blind date. After they met, he asked her to go to the movies. When he came to pick her up, her siblings were all in the kitchen waiting to meet him. She introduced him as “Earl Derr.” When they left, he said, “Mabel, my name is Carl.”

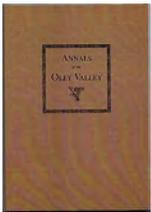
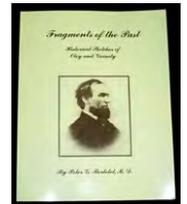
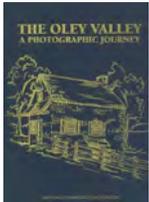
On another early date, they went to the Trexler Game Preserve to see the buffalo. They got lost eventually arriving in time to turn around and go home so Mabel could help with the milking.

### Items for Sale

#### **Books:**

- *The Oley Valley: A Photographic Journey* \$35 (includes tax)
- *Annals of the Oley Valley* by Rev. P.C. Croll, D.D. \$22 (includes tax)
- *Fragments of the Past* by Dr. Peter G. Bertolet \$20 (includes tax)

**30th Anniversary Ornament \$15 (includes tax)**



#### ITEMS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE AT:

- Christa's Country Creations, Oley
- Charming Country Crafts, Oley
- Evelyn & Harriette's, Pleasantville
- Riverview Nursery, Pricetown Road
- [www.oleyvalleyheritage.com](http://www.oleyvalleyheritage.com)

### Home for OVHA

Do you have any suggestions about a home for us? We are still interested in finding a home for our organization. Why do we want a home? Currently, we have our board meetings at the Oley Township Municipal Building and have artifacts and other items stored elsewhere. Our goal is to have a place where we could hold board meetings and programs for the public, to have a place where people can donate antique Oley Valley items, and to create a museum to display these antique Oley Valley items. The Oley Valley has so much history, and we'd like to save these treasures.



### Collectibles \$15 (includes tax)



DeBenneville Barn



Oley Valley Inn



Hunter Bank Barn



Fisher Home



Knabb-Bieber Mill

Collectibles only available for purchase at Christa's Country Creations, Oley and on our website: [www.oleyvalleyheritage.org](http://www.oleyvalleyheritage.org).

**OLEY VALLEY  
HERITAGE ASSOCIATION**  
P O Box 401  
Oley, PA 19547-0401



**Visit our new website!**  
**[www.oleyvalleyheritage.org](http://www.oleyvalleyheritage.org)**  
Full of amazing photos of the Oley Valley and  
information on Oley Valley Heritage Association.

Email address: [info@oleyvalleyheritage.org](mailto:info@oleyvalleyheritage.org)

### **Mission Statement**

The Oley Valley Heritage Association is dedicated to promoting education, publishing information and encouraging preservation of those subjects that reflect the heritage of the Oley Valley.

### **OVHA Board Members:**

Darlene Dillon, *President*  
Steve Fisher, *Vice President*  
Judith Merkel, *Secretary*  
Debra Pook, *Treasurer*

Carl Brown  
Patricia DeGrazia  
Lucille "Susie" Harvan  
Mary Ellen Lash  
Doris Lorah  
Margaret McCloskey  
Eugene Richard  
Richard Shaner  
Kelly Spatz  
Doug Wegman  
Mary Williams

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