

216-YEAR-OLD ZION LUTHERAN CHURCH
OLDWICK, SETTING FOR FALL SESSION

Some fascinating results of 12 years of delving into the early history of Zion Lutheran Church, Oldwick, will be described by our President, Norman C. Wittwer, on Saturday, Oct. 30, at 2 p.m., in the 216-year-old church in Oldwick, N.J.

The story of Mr. Wittwer's painstaking research into the beginnings of the Zion Church makes an intriguing footnote in itself.

Mr. Wittwer has long been absorbed in the early German settlers, especially in their migration to Somerset and Hunterdon Counties. When he began to dig deeply into the origins of the church, he found himself back in Somerset County, amid the German migrations that largely were responsible for the existence of the church.

At the same time, about 3,000 miles away in Redwood City, California, John P. Dern was researching into the early German settlements and migrations in North Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maryland.

In his "scratching" around Mr. Dern "discovered" Mr. Wittwer and the two joined forces in their study of the historic church, which may well boast of having one of the first Lutheran ministers to be regularly ordained in America.

The Revolution was 62 years in the future when the first service of the Zion Church was held in the home of a freed Negro in Franklin Township, Somerset County, Aug. 1, 1714.

Making up that Sabbath gathering was a group of men, women and children, mostly from the 1710 Palantine migration. The minister who travelled by boat and horseback for long miles from New York to conduct the service was the Rev. Justus Falckner.

With once-a-year visits from Falckner - one of the earliest regularly-ordained Lutheran ministers in the country - and a lay reader who took over the pastoral duties for the rest of the year, the congregation flourished

When Falckner died in 1723, he was succeeded by his brother, Daniel. Partly because of dissatisfaction with Daniel and because the open lands on the Jersey frontier beckoned, many members moved to the area around Potterstown, then called Rockaway.

The Rockaway Church served over 20 yrs until 1750 and was one of the charges of the notorious Magister Johann Augustus Wolf (a story in himself). This congregation and, (by this time) three other congregations which had managed to survive the "vexations of Wolf's 11-year-incumbency" joined in building a centrally-located church in what is now Oldwick.

This beautiful, white stone church, constructed with sturdy hands in 1749-'50 stands today, although it was changed somewhat in 1831, '54, '83, and in 1950.

Come see for yourself how the church has weathered the years and hear Mr. Wittwer recreate the rich heritage of one of Hunterdon's landmarks. There will be a short business meeting. Refreshments will be served at the home of Mrs. J. Seward Johnson.

OUR SOCIETY SALUTES

The trustees wish to express their appreciation of the services of Miss Catherine L. Large of Flemington, a student at Emory University, for her assistance in aid aiding the Deats Fund Cataloging project during July and August.

OUR COUNTY NEWSPAPER COLLECTION

One of the earliest projects of our Society was assembling a complete file of every Hunterdon newspaper. We still lack many; the Whitehouse "Casket" is particularly wanted.



THE HUNTERDON COUNTY HISTORICAL
SOCIETY

President Norman C. Wittwer
 Vice-President Charles T. Deats
 Vice-President Frank E. Burd
 Secretary Edward H. Quick
 Treasurer Kenneth V. Myers
 Assistant Treasurer. Miss Edith L. Jones
 Corres. Secretary. . . Mrs. Ray C. Wilsom
 Ass't Corres. Sec. Edwin W. Huff
 Trustee Frs. Fred A. Abegg
 Trustee Edwin K. Large, Jr.
 Librarian B. A. Sorby
 Editor Mrs. Marian B. Godown

The library of the Society at 1 Maple Ave., Flemington, N.J., is open each Tuesday and Thursday from 1 - 3 p.m.

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The time has come for our Society to take another step forward by beginning the regular publication of a newsletter - Hereafter spelled with a capital N.

Recent increases in the scope of our activities and in the degree of participation of our members makes necessary such a two-way communication medium.

Present plans are to publish three issues each year - autumn, winter, and spring. Each Newsletter will include an announcement of the forthcoming meeting, plus an abstract, if available, of the paper to be presented at the meeting.

News of activities of the Society, recent acquisitions, names of new members, lists of newly-published books, and similar announcements will be reported in the Newsletter. This will reduce the length of the business portion of the meetings.

A "Notes & Queries" Column should prove interesting and valuable to those with particular questions concerning Hunterdon history or genealogy. Recent books with a special Hunterdon significance will be reviewed occasionally.

Plans also call for including an article of local historic interest, with each issue, perhaps as an insert. We will welcome members' contributions of short historical papers.

These are our plans, which are only partially fulfilled in our first issue. We

have great hopes for the Newsletter and for the benefits it will yield to the Society.

This is Your Society. This is Your Newsletter. A few of us can start the Newsletter rolling. The 230-odd members of the Society can make it grow and succeed.

WELCOME TO THESE 31 NEW MEMBERS
(Since January 1965)

J. Neil Arrington Hopewell
 C. Robert Brown Morristown
 Edward J. Fisher Philadelphia
 Palen Flagler Stockton
 Mrs. James H. Harger Annandale
 James C. Johnson..... Clinton
 James R. Johnson..... Clinton
 Mrs. Wm. Kelly Whitehouse Station
 John W. Kuhl Pittstown
 Robert M. Lunny Far Hills
 Mrs. Robert A. Pretlow Franklin, Va.
 Anna V. Ramsey Lebanon
 Janet Eliz. Rittenhouse Clinton
 Eleanor Louise Romaine Chatham
 Marquis E. Shuttuck Detroit, Mich.
 Frank Sheriff III Ringoes
 Kenn Stryker-Rodda Brooklyn, N.Y.
 Mrs. Seely Thomas Flemington
 Mrs. Wm. K. Vaughan Plainfield
 Mrs. Leola Williamson Flemington
 Mrs. Ira. M. Williamson Orange, Texas
 Henry Young III Stockton
 Henry Young V Stockton (student)
 Mrs. Wm. E. Humphreys.... Stockton (Contrib.)
 Mrs. Wm. H. C. Jackson.. Ossining, N.Y. (")
 Helen B. Large..... Flemington (Contrib.)
 George Lazzlo Stockton (Contrib.)
 W. Burton Salisbury, Jr. Metuchen (Contrib.)
 Peter J. Prince Stockton (Life)
 Hunterdon County Democrat* ... Flemington
 Frank W. Bohren Engineering
 Associates, Inc.* Flemington
 *Institutional

LACKING IN OUR LIBRARY

***History of Sussex & Warren Co., N.J.
 By J.P. Snel Phila., 1881

***The Society has frequent need of a copy. Any help in procuring one will be appreciated.

Pre-Revolutionary Dutch Houses & Families in ... N.J., By Rosalie F. Bailey, N.Y.: 1936

NOTES & QUERIES

- COXE, Tench "Detained in Flemington because of a court case, Aug. 11, 1792. What Court was sitting?" (Cara Miller, Ass't. Ed., Alexander Hamilton Papers, Columbia University, N.Y.C. 1-1-14)
- BOWLBY, Hannah, wife of Edmund Palmer, son of John Palmer, Revolutionary Vet. (Mrs. Jane Barckman, 3302 W. University Ave., Chicago, Ill.) 1-1-1
- PYATT, Dr. James (Jay Thornall, 74 Sears St., Metuchen, N.J.) 1-1-2
- OPDYKE, Wm. A. miller at Hunt's Mill, Clinton, N.J. (Mrs. Margaret McConnell, 5130 Greene St., Phila., Pa.) 1-1-3
- VAN HORNE, Abraham & Matthias, (Mrs. Harold O. Horton, Sr., 597 Egan Dr., Orlando, Fla.) 1-1-4
- NEIGHBOR Family. (Dale R. Baker, R.R. 3, Shoals, Indiana) 1-1-5
- LUCAS and ATEN Families. (John F. Valentine, Univ. of Nebraska, North Platte Exper. Station) 1-1-6
- SHAFER Family of Lebanon Township (Mrs. Leslie W. Burch, 213 Christine Dr., N. Sacramento, Calif.) 1-1-7
- LITTLE, Robert of North Branch, Rev. soldier. (Mrs. Mary M. Worrell, 84 Joan St., Wheeling, W. Va.) 1-1-8
- CHAMBERS, Col. David (Dr. Frank L. Griffin, 3419 N.E. Oregon St., Portland, Ore. 32) 1-1-9
- TOMSON (Mrs. A. D. Clark, 12 Garrison Rd., Glen Falls, N.Y.) 1-1-10
- WRIGHT, Eliz. Hazlett, daughter of Wm. Hazlett of Lebanon Township (T. B. McDivitt, 1470 S. Jasmine Way, Denver, Col.) 1-1-11
- BOWLBY, John, who m. Catherine Hornbacker, and
- BOWLBY, James, who m. Catherine Mayberry (Mrs. S. K. Brookmire, 240 South Ave., New Canaan, Conn.) 1-1-12
- SERVIS, O. H. (E. Shattuck, 18115 Oak Dr., Detroit, Mich.) 1-1-13

FAMILY BIBLE RECORDS

Photocopies of family records from Hunterdon County family Bibles is solicited. We have over 100 photocopies in our files as well as over 80 original Bible records. May we have the loan of your family Bible so a record of your family will be preserved in our file?

(3)

SOME RECENT ACQUISITIONS

- Historic American Building Survey.
Hunterdon County Landmarks. 66 photos & captions; 125 blue-print measured architectural drawings, 51 history data sheets.
(Gift of Clinton Woman's Club)
(Include Trimmer House, Califon; Fleming Castle; Reading-Large House, John G. Reading House & Union Hotel, Flemington; Holcombe House, Lambertville; Williams House, Larison's Corner; Clifford-Williamson House, Pattenburg; Saxtonville Tavern, Raven Rock; Amwell Academy & Dawliss Grist Mill, Ringoes; Covered Bridge and John Opdyke Farm "millers" house, Sergeantsville.
- Historical Sites of Warren County
196 p. illus. "Prepared by the Warren Co. Tercentenary Committee".
(Gift of Warren Co. Bd. of Freeholders)
- The Joseph Smith Family by Elmer G. Van Name. Haddonfield: 1964
(Gift of the author)
- Umpleby Family Bible (John M. Umpleby & Jane F. Stout. mar. March 7, 1864
(Gift of Mrs. Bessie Danley, Flemington)
- MS. Bill of Sale for a slave "a certain black boy called Abraham", owned by Wm. Ketcham of Hunterdon Co., dated 1 Apr. 1817
(Gift of Henry W. Shoe, Langhorne, Pa.)
- Biographical Data on Mahlon Fisher (1810-1874) Master Builder of Flemington.
(Gift of his great-grandson, Edward J. Fisher, Phila.)
- Deeds: Bethlehem & Kingwood, 1768 (Unrecorded ?) & Lebanon, 1815 (Recorded)
(Gift of D. Stanton Hammond, Paterson, N.J.)
- Parsons, Lemuel H. Address of a teacher to his pupils. Lambertville: Printed by John R. Swallow. 1846.
(Gift of Mrs. Bessie Danley, Flemington)
- Broad-axe which belonged to John Tinnes
(Gift of his son, Hans, of Croton)

DEATS CATALOGING FUND REPORT

Accessioned to date: From
Deats bequest - 2053 vols.

HISTORIC HUNTERDON HOSTS STATE CONFERENCE

For the first time in our 80-year-old history, our Society had the honor of playing host to delegates from all over the state at the 15th New Jersey Historical Conference.

The three-day "extremely successful" conference from Oct. 8-10, is now history. A total of 135 visitors viewed Hunterdon during a four-hour guided bus tour. Comments were heard praising Hunterdon's natural beauty and its part in preserving the past. Enthusiastic delegates said they were impressed with the historic heritage of our 251-year-old county.

The tour group visited the home of Colonial Governor John Reading at Flemington, now the home of our members, the William C. Walkers, where Charles T. Deats, Mrs. Marian Waldron, Miss Helen Waldron, Mrs. William Kail, and Mrs. Lois Earle served as guides. Librarian B.A. Sorby and Mrs. Ray C. Wilson were on duty at our Society's library during the tour. Mrs. James H. Harger, Mrs. Rose Marie Brower and Vincent Abraitys arranged the tour and acted as guides.

The visit to the Old Red Mill, - the home of the Clinton Historical Museum - was spotlighted by the dedication of the James Randall Marsh Historical Park, stretching along the South Branch of the Raritan River, in the heart of Clinton. Members of our Society took part in the short impressive ceremony.

Our Society was represented in the varied program by Kenneth V. Myers, Mrs. Albert E. Blomquist, and Norman C. Wittwer. Miss Edith L. Jones was registrar, assisted by Mrs. John A. Baky, Mrs. George F. Brightenback and Mrs. Marian B. Godown.

The conference also included seven workshops, a buffet dinner, followed by a panel discussion, a tea, and a meeting devoted to plans for a federation of N.J. historical societies. Sessions took place in Lambertville School and the New Hope-Solebury School.

Mr. Wittwer greeted guests at the dinner on behalf of our Society. Participating in the panel on historic preservation were: James R. Marsh, president of Hunter-

don County Art Center; Dr. Richard P. McCormick, history professor at Rutgers, moderator; Director Robert M. Lunny, of the N.J. Historical Society and Thomas A. Hyde executive secretary of the N.J. Federation of Planning Officials.

Our long-time treasurer Mr. Myers welcomed guests with a colorfully illustrated talk on opening nite. Mrs. Blomquist described the Greek Revival in Flemington to a "full house" at Lambertville School. The conference ended delightfully at an Open House in Oldwick. Visited were the Zion Lutheran Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the beautifully-restored homes of Mrs. J. Seward Johnson and Mrs. David Boies. Tea was served at the home of Mrs. Boies with Mrs. Marian Waldron and Mrs. J. R. Fisher pouring.

RECENTLY-PUBLISHED BOOKS

*Old Lawrenceville, 124 p. illus.
By Donald H. Tyler, Box 265, Lawrenceville, N.J. (\$5.95) Documented history of 57 noteworthy old homes of Maidenhead, the name of Lawrenceville for 119 years.

The Glassboro Story, 1779-1964, 300 p. by Robert D. Bole and Edward H. Walton, Jr., published by Glassboro Tercentenary Committee, 401 Univ. Blvd., Glassboro, N.J. (\$5.25). Traces history of Glassboro from its beginning as a glassblowing center.

Under Four Flags, illus., published by Gloucester Co. Bd. of Freeholders, & reprinted by Gloucester County Historical Society. (\$6.00). Order from Gloucester County Tercentenary Committee, P.O. Box 501, Woodbury, N.J. History of Gloucester County since 1686.

*In our library.

SPEAKING OF BOOKS

LUTHERAN CHURCH IN NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY 1722-1760. 418 p., translated by Simon Hart & Harry J. Kreider. (United Lutheran Synod of New York and New England, 1962.)

This publication is of value to a much wider audience than its title suggests. It is a translation of a group of documents long thought lost, that were preserved in the Ministerial Archives of the Staatsarchiv at Hamburg, Germany. Most of them are communications from the Rev. Wilhelm C. Berkenmeyer to the Lutheran Ministerium at Hamburg.

The mere transcription and translation of these letters and reports was no mean task, for 18th Century German script is not easy to read, Berkenmeyer's handwriting (as anyone who has read his Loonenburg Church records can testify) was as crabbed as his disposition and his style as subject to fer-vid fluctuation as his temperament!

Drs. Hart and Kreider succeeded in making most of the translation intelligible without losing its flavor.

Although some of the documents pertain to New York and other parts of New Jersey, most of them are concerned with the Lutheran Churches of northern Hunterdon County during the famous controversy between Pastor Wolf and the congregation.

Up to now, only the viewpoint of Muhlenberg and the Pennsylvania divines, who sided with the congregation, have been available, popularly through Honeyman's account. Now, we have Wolf's - or, more properly, Berkenmeyer's side presented.

This reviewer feels that Wolf and the congregation would have reached an amicable disagreement had not Berkenmeyer insisted, for almost a decade, on Wolf's remaining, in order to preserve the authority of the clergy.

Even if you are not concerned with this historic struggle, you will be fascinated by the bignettes of life in Mid-18th Century Hunterdon and especially the dozens of thumbnail sketches of church members, most of them pungent, none of them flattering.

-By Kenn Stryker-Rodda
(several of whose ancestors received severe treatment from Berkenmeyer's pen).

EDITOR'S NOTE: Dr. Stryker-Rodda is president of the Genealogical Society of New Jersey and a descendant of the Rev. Daniel Falckner.

NO COMMENT

In his 1831 application for a tavern license, Jacob H[olcombe] Lanning gave the location of his tavern as "Mount Aira" in Amwell.

That this was not in error but was intended is indicated by the identical spelling in the 1832 application of John Lanning.

Webster's American Dictionary of 1850 states: "Aira, hair-grass, a genus of plants".

HOW TO JOIN

Please enroll me as a _____ member.

Annual, \$4.00 per year; Contributing, \$10.00; Sustaining, \$25.00;
Institutional, \$25.00; Life, \$100.00; Patron, \$1,000.00;
Student, \$1.00 (18 years old or less)

For which I enclose \$ _____



HUNTERDON HISTORICAL NEWSLETTER
Published Autumn, Winter, Spring
by
HUNTERDON COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
1 Maple Avenue
Flemington, New Jersey