
LIMERICK TOWNSHIP HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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Monthly meetings take place on the Second Monday at 7:30 p.m. at Limerick Township Building

Limerick Township Historical Society Officers

President: Martin Witte

Vice Pres: Alexandria Sasek

Treasurer: Robert Moses

Secretary: John Perry

Historian: Doris Callow

LTHS Board Members

Helen Christman

Millie Moses

Anita Rogers

Mattie Ebling

Newsletter Editor

Mary Ann Dailey

The Mission of LTHS is to:

1. Preserve the history, lore and historical heritage of Limerick Township
2. Create an interest in Township history and heritage, especially among Township youth.
3. Restore buildings and areas within the Township to original character,
4. Provide a repository for Township memorabilia, and
5. Advise persons, firms, or entities seeking assistance on restoration projects.



A few Witte Comments...

Several years ago, Arlene Borneman Umstead gave the Society a family history composed by her father, Herbert Walker Borneman (26 May 1903 - 21 Dec 1999). The story is about Arlene's grandfather, Harvey Moyer Borneman, but it also mentions her great-grandfather, Daniel Borneman, and her father. The family



farm (barn pictured above) was passed down from her great grandfather and still remains the residence of Arlene. The

Borneman Family business was a working farm that produced meat, poultry, fruits and produce that were sold at the Philadelphia Farmers' Market. Transporting eggs to market required a wooden crate with inserts that held 36 eggs per section. This box, which is branded *Harvey Borneman*, was also donated to the Society by Arlene. The story that follows provides an historical overview of this long-time Limerick family.

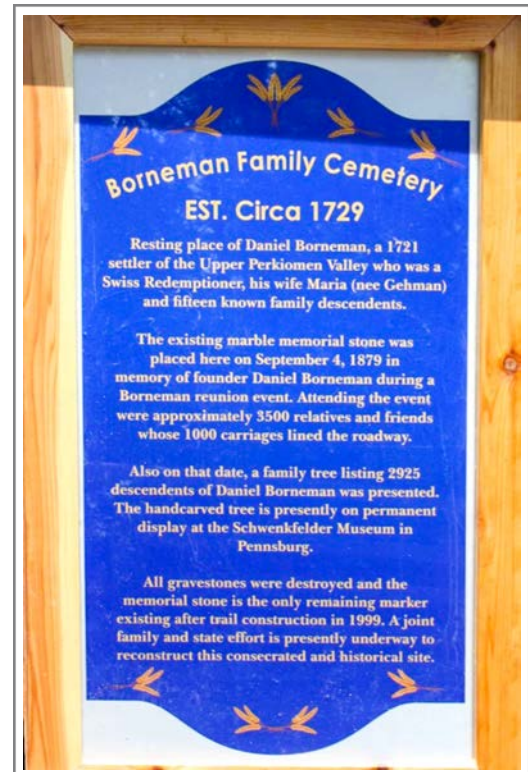
Martin Witte, LTHS President

The Borneman's of Fruitville

By Mary Ann Dailey

The Borneman Family trace their transatlantic origin to Ober Rhein Thal, Graubunden Canton, Suisse (Switzerland), where the first **Daniel Borneman** was born in 1703.⁽¹⁾ Following service in the Swiss Army in 1721, he obtained passage on an English merchant ship, *The Adventure*, bound for Philadelphia. Emigration laws for those without money for passage created 'redemptioners,' who were essentially indentured to the ship's captain for two years (25 pounds passage fee paid over two years). Rather than comply with his agreement, the captain tried to convince the passengers to disembark at Jamestown, where he could sell them as slaves. To appease them, the captain attempted to sail up Delaware Bay by day, so the passengers could see land. When the passengers were asleep, he sailed down bay towards Jamestown. The passengers revolted and threatened to place the captain in chains. In retaliation for his thwarted plan, the captain wrecked the vessel, boarded the long boat with his pilot and crew, and left the passengers in the sinking ship within three miles of the New Jersey shore. Using the distress flags, the passengers were rescued by local citizens but lost all their possessions. Because the captain had reneged on his agreement and did not provide safe passage to Philadelphia, the law freed all the passengers from their indenture. Eventually, Daniel arrived in Philadelphia and settled on a farm in Upper Hanover Township, Philadelphia County (near the current borough of Pennsburg in what is now Montgomery County).⁽²⁾

Circa 1729, Daniel married Maria Gehman (b. circa 1702 in Bern, Switzerland - d. 12 Nov 1756 Upper Hanover Twp.) and they had the following children: 1) **Susannah Borneman** (b.1730 Upper Hanover Twp - d.1777 Berks County) who married Herman Zimmerman; **Christian Borneman** (b.1735 Upper Hanover Twp. - d. Jan 1809 Limerick, PA) who married Mary Hiestand (b.1747 - d.1817 Limerick, PA); **Barbara Borneman** (b.1737 - d.1806 Perkasio, PA) who married Michael Dieterle of Haycock Twp., Bucks County; and **Henry Borneman** (b.1740 Upper Hanover Twp. - d. 2 Dec 1828



Upper Hanover Twp) who married Margaretta Siesholtz (b.1746 - d.1795). Daniel died on 2 Jun 1766 and is buried with his wife, Maria, in the Borneman Family Cemetery in Upper Perkiomen Valley.^(2,3) A marble memorial stone was placed on site in 1879 to mark the grave of Daniel and his wife. Today, only the memorial stone and a sign describing the Borneman's origins in America (see previous page) remain, as all original gravestones were destroyed during trail construction in 1999.⁽⁴⁾

The eldest son of Daniel was **Christian Borneman** (1735 - 1809). As a young man, Christian worked as a

A Patriot's Legacy
As proven in DAR records

Patriot Name: BORNEMAN, CHRISTIAN Patriot # A216209

Service: PATRIOTIC SERVICE, SOLDIER

Residence: UPPER HANOVER TWP PHILA CO PA

Born: 1735 /

Died: a 2-6-1809 / LIMERICK TWP MONT CO PA

Service Source:
CAPTS JOSEPH SIEGFRIED, ISAAH DAVIS; PAID
SUPPLY TAX, 1779-1783
PA ARCH, 3RD SER, VOL 15, PP 171, 561, VOL 16, PP 52,
254, 712; 6TH SER, VOL 1, PP 769, 785, 787

Spouse #1: MARY HIESTAND

Spouse #2:

Spouse #3:

Proven Children: JOHN

carpenter and married Mary Hiestand, with whom he had 7 children – 5 sons and 2 daughters. According to a membership application for the Sons of the American Revolution, Christian served as a Private, 8th Class, 4th Battalion, 1st Company of Capt. Joseph Siegfried.⁽⁵⁾ From 1772 until 1794, Christian and Mary lived near his parent's home along the Perkiomen Creek. Then, in 1794, they moved to Limerick Township and remained there until their respective deaths in 1809 and 1817. Both were interred in the Limerick Church Burial Ground, which is still an active cemetery located next to the current New Apostolic Church at Lewis Road and Ridge Pike. Through probate as noted in PA Wills and Abstracts book N, Christian's Will provided for equal distribution of his property among his surviving children.⁽⁶⁾

In 1769, **Henry Borneman** (1740 - 2 Dec 1852) married Margaretta Siesholtz. They had 14 children, but 7 died in infancy. After the death of his father, Henry purchased the 159-acre Upper Hanover homestead from the other heirs and continued

to live there until his death in 1828. His will stipulated that subsequent owners must keep the burial ground in perpetuity.⁽²⁾ Henry was the 5th great-grandfather of Arlene Borneman Umstead.

Subsequent generations of Borneman's include **Harvey Moyer Borneman** (1877 - 1955), the grandfather of Arlene. Harvey was the son of Daniel (1839 - 1923) and Rebecca Moyer Borneman (1841 - 1926). Per the 1880 US Census for New Hanover Township, Daniel was listed as a huckster.⁽⁷⁾ On 3 Nov 1900, he married Ella M. Mensch (1879 - 1958), daughter of Amandus and Mary Mensch of New Hanover Twp., and they had two children, Laura and Herbert. Harvey died at his home in "rural Limerick Township, Schwenksville R.D.," [actually 411 Swamp Pike in Fruitville] and is buried at Faulkner Swamp Reformed Cemetery, New Hanover Twp. Per his PA Death Certificate, Harvey was described as a "retired, self-employed produce dealer".⁽⁸⁾ Alternatively, he is described as "a merchant of farm produce" (his father, Daniel, was listed as a farmer) per the 1900 Limerick census, a "huckster" per the 1910 Limerick census, a "retail merchant of butter and eggs" per the 1920 Limerick census, and a "market man selling produce" per the 1930 Limerick census.⁽⁹⁾ His obituary provided limited information about his life, but his son, **Herbert Walker Borneman** (1903 - 1999), provided an unassuming yet personal glimpse into the hard life of a farmer.

Here are several excerpts from Herbert W. Borneman's Memoir ⁽¹⁰⁾:

"Up until 1914 the produce was hauled to Collegetown with 2 horse teams. On a Friday morning they would get up at 2 o'clock in the morning and haul the produce to Collegetown and load the produce on a freight car that would be standing on the siding. Around 7 o'clock the passenger train would come along and back into the freight car and take it to third and Berks in Philadelphia. Then a drayman by the name of Cahn, who had a stable behind the market at 9th and Girard, would haul the produce from 3rd and Berks to 9th and Girard, [then an open air, unroofed market'. It was a law of the market not to sell anything until 12 o'clock on Friday."

"In 1918 Frank Smith was a hired man and he was here working for Dad and me for 32 years. A hard working honest man. He was put on a truck on Monday's to gather eggs. He had a regular egg route up and around Sassamansville. I had a regular egg route back of Gilbertsville. Tuesday's we would gather calves in the morning and kill them in the afternoon. Often times we would have twenty or twenty five calves. It was no regular amount. We generally took what was ready at the time. Wednesday's we killed chickens. We got most of the chickens from the people we got eggs from, so it was never a dull moment."

In Muriel Lichtenwalner's book (p. 256), life on the Borneman farm is described as follows: *"(Harvey) took eggs, chicken, and calves to a Philadelphia market. The calves were slaughtered and taken to a cave in the barn. This was cooled by having a room above the cave filled with ice in the winter and insulated with sawdust. While it wasn't the best, it served until about 1916 when Mr. Borneman installed an ammonia cooling system. This was run by an engine until electricity was available"* ⁽¹¹⁾

This story is but a glimpse into the rich genealogical history within Limerick Township. The Hunsberger House Library has many books, documents, and genealogies that are available for members and residents to explore. Please consider a visit to our Society Home!

References

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8. Pennsylvania (State). *Death certificates, 1906-1963. Series 11.90 (1,905 cartons)*. Records of the Pennsylvania Dept. of Health, Record Group 11. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Harrisburg, PA.
9. *United States Census Records, 1900, 1910, 1920, 1930*. Washington, DC.: National Archives and Records Administration. [ancestry.com](#) Operations Inc. 2004.
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11. Lichtenwalner, M. (1987). *Limerick Township: A journey through time 1699 - 1987*. Limerick Township Historical Society: Kalil Printing.

New Bookcases 2022

The new bookcase project started with a request for storage racks for our second floor storage room. For months Barbara Witwer, Mattie Ebling, Bunny Dempsey and others have been organizing many donations that had been stored in various locations throughout the Hunsberger House. These volunteers cataloged, boxed, and stored items under or on tables. It was decided to use racks in the storage areas and to purchase bookcases to replace them, as it created a more attractive library.

Barbara Witwer and Martin Witte visited a woodworking business in Lancaster County, where they obtained a quote on bookcases based on a sketch drawn by Martin. Then, at an Executive Board meeting the quote was discussed and determined to be too expensive. Searches for local woodworkers was suggested and three shops around Limerick were sent requests for prices. Two shops responded with prices higher than the Lancaster bid while the third did not respond. Jack Perry suggested Bean's Lumber outside of Royersford. With plans and specifications in hand, Jack and Martin visited Beans, obtained a reasonable price, and the Board approved the construction. However, the Society would need to paint the completed bookcases.

Secretary John Perry inspected the completed bookcases at Bean's Lumber and accepted them. Then, he transported the bookcases to Bryan Gottshall's garage where they were painted. Member Susan Perry selected the paint to color match the trim in the library and purchased two gallons of paint as a gift to the Society. Painting of the four bookcases was completed by Bryan Gottshall and John Perry, then they were transported and installed in the Hunsberger House Library. Bryan and John also relocated the existing metal racks from the library to the second-floor storage room. Barbara Witwer, Mattie Ebling, and Bunny Dempsey organized and filled the new bookcases and the storage racks in the second-floor storage room.

Donations from the Memorial Fund honoring deceased charter member and longtime board member, Bill Miller, as well as memorial donations for Pat Miller were used to defray the cost of the bookcases. Thanks to all involved in completing this project.



The old metal shelving



On October 5, 2022, the Miller Sisters (L - R: Amy, Robin and Lisa. Jen is not pictured) visited the Hunsberger House and admired the new wooden bookcases, which were constructed with contributions to the memory of their parents, Bill & Pat Miller.

Recent visitors to the Hunsberger House included:

* The four daughters of Bill and Pat Miller - Amy, Lisa, Robin, and Jen

* Richard Landis and Louis Geiser

We enjoy when visitors drop in with their inquiries, their donations, and “just look around.”

Upcoming Meetings	Program
December 12, 2022	Annual Christmas Party. Speaker, Nathaniel Guest: Holiday on Wheels - Colebrookdale Railroad
January 2023	No Meeting
February 2023	No Meeting
March 13, 2023	Speaker from Murphy Organ Company

Museum/Library Donations

We offer a special 'thank you' to each of our donors

<p>Ruth Borneman</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising coaster: <i>"Have A Cup on Smola's Sunoco, Limerick, PA"</i> • Obituaries, past and present, of Limerick residents; family notes; and, newspaper articles with connection to Limerick Township and area. • A notebook filled with information about the Truckenmiller, T'Miller, and Miller family of Limerick, who were ancestors of Bill Miller. Ruth has compiled this over many years for her personal collection and has now given it to the Society.
<p>Arlene (Borneman) Umstead</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family History written by her father, Herbert Walker Borneman (26 May 1903 - 21 December 1999). • Wooden egg crate with multiple sections that is branded <i>HARVEY BORNEMAN</i>.
<p>Barbara Gottshall</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Two First-Day Postal Issue envelopes</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 30, 1993 - <i>Valley Forge Station, National Historical Park 1893 - 1993</i> • June 19, 1993 - <i>Park Centennial</i> with 29-cent stamps • <u>One First-Day Postal Issue envelope</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inaugurating the United States Postal Service - July 1, 1971</i> • Two 1-cent postal cards • Six 4-cent postal cards • Two 14-cent postal cards: <i>George Wythe</i> picture • Two 15-cent postal cards: <i>America the Beautiful buffalo</i> picture • Two 20-cent postal cards: <i>Lighthouse</i> picture
<p>Limerick Township</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual year Township-marked file folders <u>2010 - 2019 Real Estate Transfer Tax</u> records.
<p>William Miller</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of REPORTER newspapers; miscellaneous pamphlets
<p>William & Patricia Miller's Family</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Montgomery County PA History - 1884 • Colonial-style clothing including dresses, skirts, and blouses for adult ladies, various sized dresses for children, prairie bonnets, mop caps, other caps, a Colonial men's shirt and trousers, & miscellaneous items • Three complete sets of Commemorative LTHS Christmas Balls
<p>Herbert & Connie Moyer</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Copies of deeds for property at 1129 Main Street, Linfield, PA

Condolences

Martha Heffentrager, who was born on May 12, 1928 in Limerick, PA, daughter of the late R. Harold and Ida Moses, passed away at age 93 on December 12, 2021 at her Gilbertsville home. Martha grew up on her on the Moses Dairy Farm. Following her marriage to the late Earl S. Heffentrager, she and her husband operated their own farm with their children. Later, she was also the owner of Dawn's Restaurant in Limerick. Martha is survived by her son, Craig, four grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. The Society extends sympathy to her family.

George A. Hane, Sr., who was born on Sept. 4, 1931 in Pottstown to the late John E. and Emma W. (Auman) Hane, passed away at Parkhouse Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Upper Providence Twp., on Sept. 4, 2022, which was his 91st birthday. He formerly resided at North Lewis Road with his late wife, Dorothy (Williamson) Hane. George retired from Occidental Chemical Corporation in Lower Pottsgrove Twp. During the Korean War, he served with Co. K, 224th Infantry Regiment of the U.S. Army. George is survived by his son, George, Jr., two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. We offer the family our deepest sympathy.

Frank Miller, age 90, husband of the late Elizabeth (Brimmer) Miller, passed away at his residence in Boyertown, PA on Sept. 10, 2022. He was born in Pottstown on Oct. 7, 1931 to the late Frank S. and Lois (Swinehart) Miller. Frank graduated from Royersford High School, served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, and worked as a foreman at Superior Tube. He is survived by his daughters, Beth Miller and Amy Dawson, three grandchildren, and his brother, Robert Miller. We extend our sympathy to his family.

Kudos

Recently, **Anita Rogers**, longtime member and current board member, had her poem entitled, "My Happy Place," published in "Best Poets of 2021." The book of poetry was published by Eber & Wein Publishing.

Thank You, Volunteers

Board Member **Helen Christman** alphabetized old obituaries, checked them for duplicates against ones in the obituary albums, and prepared them to be copied and filed in the albums.

Most Wednesdays, Historian **Doris Callow** faithfully comes to the Society Home. With her wealth of information, she is available to answer our many questions.

Lifetime Member **Lorraine "Bunny" Dempsey** has meticulously inventoried the contents of thirty (30) archival boxes and labeled many photos.

Our newest Board Member, **Mattie Ebling**, and **Barbara Witwer** changed the LTHS display case at the Township Municipal Building to Honor Veterans. Also, they cleaned the Bake House not only in preparation for the Christmas Open House but also "because it needed cleaning."

Mattie added a new display in the Museum: "*Remembering the Old Barns of Limerick*," The pictures she included were photographed by Bonnie Groff and printed by Martin Witte. After cleaning the glass cases in the Museum, Mattie redesigned some of the other displays. Also, **Mattie** and **Millie Moses** cleaned the chandeliers in the Museum and Library and the hanging light in the hallway. COME AND SEE!

Secretary **John "Jack" Perry** accurately records and presents the minutes each month for the Executive Board Meetings and the Monthly Monday Night Membership meeting. Jack has also willingly taken time to hang more pictures and move and carry heavy items for the ladies; he is truly our "Jack of all trades."

Our ever-present President **Martin Witte** answers the phone, locates and prints photos for the displays, checks the mail, answers emails, opens the House for the cleaners, repair persons and window cleaners, meets the visitors and often gives house tours, and collects materials for the newsletter, all while attempting to do research to answer queries.

We always want to extend a big "THANKS" to **Mary Ann Dailey** for composing each newsletter and to **Martin** for printing it.



**Alumni of the Linfield School
Doris Callow and Richard Landis
September 13, 2022 LTHS Meeting**

The Linfield School Reunion - 2022

Doris Callow's comments at the Linfield School Reunion sponsored by the Limerick Township Historical Society and held at the Township Municipal Building on Monday evening, September 13, 2022.

Nice things Mr. Charles B. Shoup did for his students:

On Monday mornings, he would talk about something he had read over the weekend. He knew we were not ready to settle down. He worked at the PA Game Farm in the Township. He could become teary eyed when he told us about the baby chicks, and how hard it was when they grew up and were released and shot by hunters!

For kids who came on the bus and had to bring their lunch, he would let the 7th and 8th graders eat in the basement where the big coal heater was located. He let us toast our sandwiches over the coals - which was especially nice if you had a cheese sandwich. Later, he made a wire toaster that we could take turns using. It was much better than the make shift holder we brought from home.

In spring, Mr. Shoup would start tomato plants. When grown enough, he would let us take some home, if our Mothers told him they wanted some.

He bought boxes of candy to sell in the 8th grade room. He did this so kids didn't go down to the store on Main Street (too dangerous with traffic). He used the money made from selling candy and gave it to the school board to buy playground equipment, baseballs, swings, etc.

Sometimes the girls would complain to him that boys were teasing them. He would laugh and say, "Girls you know if they tease you, it means they like you."

For opening exercises in November, we would start singing Christmas songs from our "Golden Song" book.

On Christmas Eve after the Christmas program at the Church, all the kids would gather around a big tree on the Brownback Mansion lawn. The tree was decorated with lights. Santa came and gave each kid a box of candy and an orange. I thought the rich Brownback family did this for us, but I later found out that "Pappy" Linderman dressed as Santa. The convertible he arrived in belonged to a resident who owned a car dealership. The ladies of the Linfield Fire Company bought candy in bulk and put it in cute boxes to give the kids.

After the tree ceremony, we left for home and went to bed. My parents decorated our tree. Surprises on Christmas morning? No, not much else. With 6 kids in the family it took careful shopping.