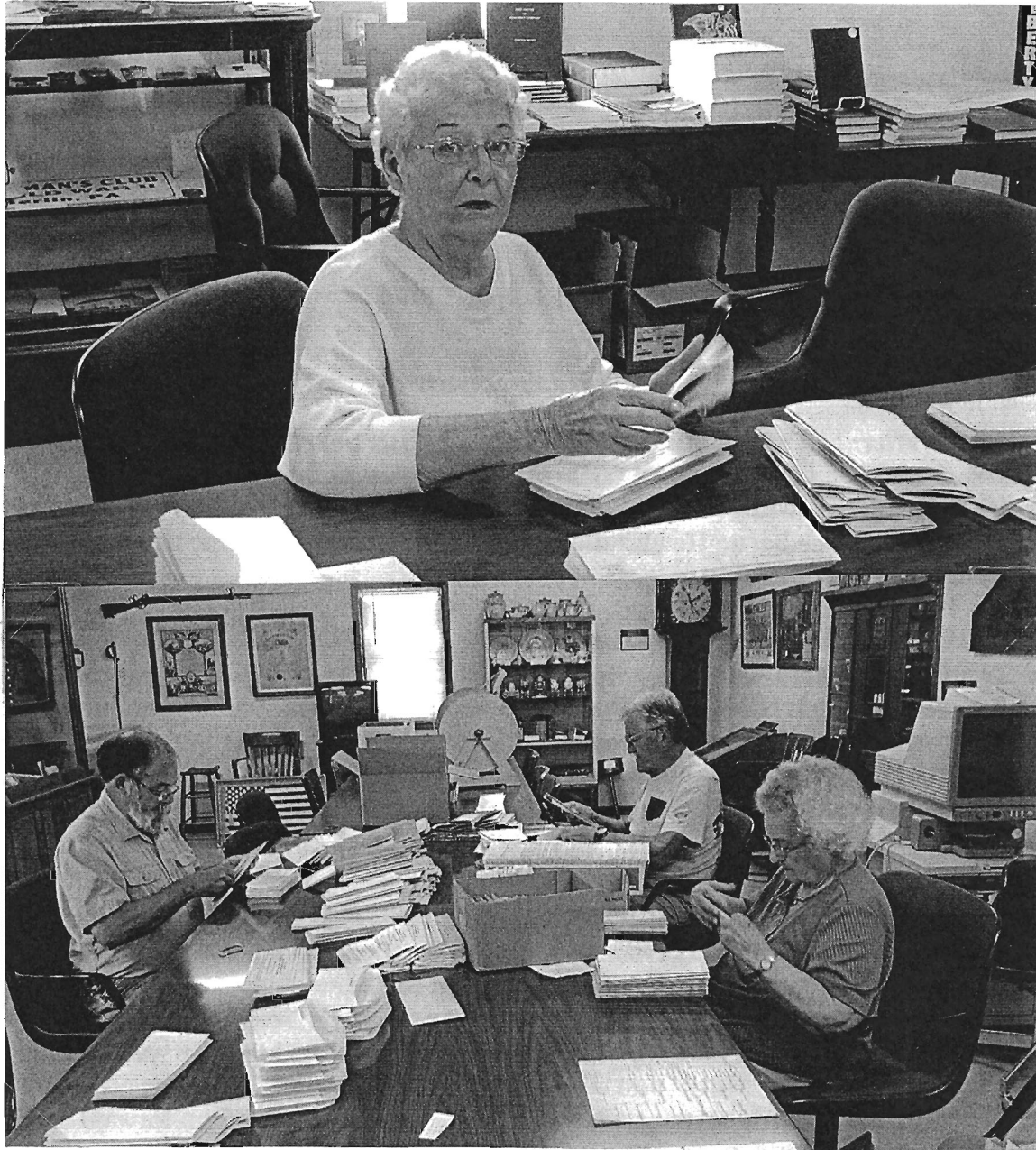


CURATOR'S REPORT

THE BERLIN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

AUGUST 11, 2015

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING INVITATIONS!



It's been a bee-hive of activities for BAHS volunteers during recent volunteer days as the crew worked to get the letters and raffle tickets printed, folded, inserted into envelopes, addressed and labeled for mailing. Assisting with the folding, envelop stuffing, and labeling were Barbara Miller, top, Richard Berkley, Gary Estnick and Anna May Weighley. Assistants not pictured are Kathy Grimm, Stew Saylor, Jim Suder, Bob Platt and David Hay.

DICK BRANT'S CREW REMOVING THE FARM EQUIPMENT



During the afternoon of August 3, 2015, former BAHS board member Dick Brant and his crew removed the three pieces of farm equipment that were displayed in front of our barn since the structure was constructed in 2004. Dick Brant and his crew did most of the construction work on the barn. He also did the excavating work when the new addition was added to our genealogy building in 2002.

Dick was aided by a grandson and another teenager in moving the farm equipment; using two front-end loaders and two flat-bed wagons. The farm equipment was deteriorating in recent years. Dick Brant has plans for displaying the same equipment at his Stonycreek Township sugar camp. Two pieces of the equipment originated from the former Francis and Olive Maust farm and the other piece was from Dick's parental farm – both in the same neighborhood of Stonycreek Township.

OTHER DONATIONS:

Mrs. Guy (Ruth) Walker donated a 1979 Bervalon, the 1961 dedication program for Berlin Brothersvalley Elementary School and a copy of *The Berlin Area 1777-1977*. **Tim Hodge** donated a copy of his *Knepper Family History*. **Linda McClintock** donated a Johnstown newspaper from 1913 which carried a front page story about Solomon Brant's death when his house burned along White Horse Mountain. **Roy Ogburn** donated a key that was used in opening a coffee can. **Barbara Miller and Jim Suder** donated Berlin celebration CDs and DVS. **Ronald "Sap" and Gay Maust** donated two pulleys used to pull a platform forward on a hay wagon pulling a hay loader, a smokehouse hook, a third pulley, a set of cow kickers, and a log grab for pulling logs with horse-power. **Phyllis Musser** donated a written history of the former St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Roxbury. **George and Carolyn Custer** donated Lambert and Custer family genealogy.

Thanks to all who assist with volunteer operations at BAHS! **David R. Hay, Curator**

SAMUEL PHILSON ESTABLISHED THE PHILSON NATIONAL BANK IN 1866. THE BANK OPERATED IN BERLIN OUT OF THIS MAIN STREET BUILDING IN EARLIER YEARS!



THE SAME BUILDING IN MORE RECENT YEARS – CURRENTLY SERVING AS AN APARTMENT HOUSE!

SAMUEL PHILSON

DEATH OF AN AGED BERLIN BUSINESSMAN WITH A LONG AND HONORABLE CAREER. MR. PHILSON WAS ALWAYS A PUBLIC SPIRITED CITIZEN.

Information taken from Samuel Philson's obituary, which appeared in the Berlin Record weekly newspaper.

Samuel Philson, one of the oldest and best known citizens of Somerset County, died at his home at Berlin early Friday morning, July 18, 1902, from the ills incident to old age. While Mr. Philson has been gradually failing for some time, his interest in passing events kept up until the last and up until a few days before his death, he talked intelligently on the leading topics of the day. Funeral services were conducted Saturday evening by the Rev. R. S. Patterson, Pastor of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Interment followed in the Berlin IOOF Cemetery.



Samuel Philson was born in Berlin on November 11, 1812. His father, Robert Philson, was born in County Tyrone, Ireland, in 1759, and immigrated to America in 1785, settling at Berlin. For some years Robert Philson was a prosperous merchant, and his natural ability brought him into prominence in public affairs. He filled many offices, was associate judge for a period of 20 years, was a representative in the state legislature and in 1819 was elected to congress from the 16th (PA) district, but owing to a serious accident resigned in 1820. He died in 1831.

Samuel Philson, the subject of this sketch, was the last survivor of a family of 11 children. He was educated in the Berlin schools and quit school at the early age of 14. He spent two years on a farm after which he entered the store of James Platt as clerk, which he filled with such satisfaction to his employer that after five years, he was given a partnership in the business. After Mr. Platt's death, the business was conducted by Mr. Philson under the name of S. Philson & Co. Mr. Platt's widow continued on as his partner until 1839 after which Samuel Philson became the sole proprietor. He did a very profitable business and again formed a partnership in 1852, the style of the firm being Philson & Brubaker from which firm Mr. Philson retired in 1875 to give his time and attention to other affairs.

Mr. Philson will long be remembered as a public spirited citizen, one whose influence, time and money, could always be counted on to develop the resources of his native county and to give profitable employment to his fellow citizens.

As early as 1857 he began operations in the lumber business in the south-eastern portion of Somerset County, which he pursued for more than a quarter of a century. In 1866 he established the well-known banking house of S. Philson & Co., which is known better than any other financial institution in this section. The Citizens' Bank of Meyersdale was established by Mr. Philson in 1876 and is still conducted by S. B. Philson, a son of the deceased. Mr. Philson was instrumental in building of the Buffalo Valley Railroad, which is today (1902) known as the Berlin Branch, and is one of the famous coal roads of this section.

There are scores of young men, some of whom have achieved success in the learned professions, who were helped in a material way by Mr. Philson. Many of his acts of philanthropy are little known because Mr. Philson was little given to ostentation.

Deceased was twice married – his first wife being Elizabeth McGowan of Westmoreland County, who died in 1837. Some years later he married Elizabeth Brubaker of Berlin. To this union nine children were born, six of whom survive: Belle C., widow of C. A. M. Krissinger of Berlin, Miss Ella Catherine of Berlin; Julia Ann, wife of Dr. Fisher of Shamokin; Robert, who conducts the bank at Berlin; Samuel B., cashier of the Citizens' National Bank of Meyersdale, and Horace Bunn, who is in the insurance business in Berlin and later became a teller for the Philson Bank in Berlin.

Mr. Philson always prided himself on being a Democrat of the Old School, having cast his first presidential ballot for Martin Van Buren in 1834. He invariably declined to become a candidate for public office, always preferring to give his undivided time and attention to his business.

Mr. Philson united with Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church at Berlin in 1838 and has always been very active with church and Sunday-

school work. In his death, Somerset County loses a man who by his industry, honesty, and Christianity furnished a shining example to all men.

BAHS IS THE RECIPIENT OF A COLLECTION OF CENTURY-OLD PHOTOS, OBITUARIES AND OTHER MEMORABILIA

During the past month, **Joyce Beachley and family** have presented BAHS with a collection of century old photos, obituaries, and other memorabilia that was stored in an old building on the former Dalton and Marie Beachley farm in Brothersvalley Township. Two velvet photo albums from the 1890 era (possibly representing Philson and Heffley families) were presented as well as many loose pictures, including the below shown photo of the Rev. R. S. Patterson, of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church. Unfortunately the majority of the pictures remain unidentified. The pictures and obituaries of Samuel Philson and his daughter, Miss Ella were among the collection and are being shared because of their historical significance with the early history of Berlin. -----



MISS ELLA CATHERINE PHILSON

Ella and her brother, Horace Bunn Philson were two well-known Berlin residents. They were both midgets – small in stature but tall in their civic and business activities. Ella was 3 feet 3 inches in stature and weighed approximately 35 pounds. Much of the following information was taken from Ella's obituary, which was printed in the Somerset Daily American at the time of her passing at the age of 88 years.

Miss Ella C. Philson, (1847-1935) Berlin octogenarian, passed away at her home along Broadway in Berlin last Thursday evening, the day following the celebration of her 88th birthday anniversary. Many important visitors were present and joined Berlin residents Sunday afternoon at the last rites for Ella Philson. She had been in ill health for many weeks and for the past few days preceding her death she was in a series condition.



Funeral services were conducted last Sunday afternoon at 2:30 at her home along Broadway in Berlin by the Rev. Dr. C. P. Bastian, pastor of Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Berlin. Interment

followed in the Berlin IOOF Cemetery under the direction of Johnson and Son, local morticians.

She was a life-long resident of Berlin borough and a faithful member of the Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Berlin for almost three quarters of a century. She was the daughter of Samuel Philson and Anna (Brubaker) Philson, both deceased. She is survived by two brothers: Samuel B. Philson of Meyersdale, and H. Bunn Philson of Berlin. One other brother, Ben Philson, preceded her to the grave many years ago.

Miss Philson was always an exemplary citizen of Berlin and very active in civic enterprises as well as religious activities. She had the remarkable honor of attaining a record in Sunday school attendance having been a constant member and teacher in attendance regularly for over 80 years. According to old Sunday school record books, she became a member of the school in 1851 and continued in attendance until 1931 when ill health forced her to remain at home frequently.

Ellie was an active member of the Women's Missionary Society and other women's organizations in the church, lending her aid to every forward move made by any organization. The beautiful chandelier in the center of the church auditorium was a gift to Holy Trinity Evangelical Lutheran church from Miss Philson at the time the present church edifice was built.