

CURATOR'S REPORT
THE BERLIN AREA HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NOVEMBER 11, 2025



THE ORIGINAL
SOUTHAMPTON ONE-ROOM
SCHOOL HOUSE
CARTER HILL ROAD IN
NORTHAMPTON TOWNSHIP

THE ORIGINAL SOUTHAMPTON ONE-ROOM SCHOOL HOUSE

The original one-room school house stood along Carter Hill Road after the bend in the roadway from the hunting camp, which once was owned by the George Cook family. The village of Southampton Mills was also located in this area. Many years ago this structure burned to the ground and a second school house was constructed between Southampton Mills and Glencoe. Glencoe children attended the second school which was known both as the Northampton School and sometimes Southampton School.

The late Cloyce G. Coughenour was a former student at the original Southampton one-room school. He recalled fire destroying the school house. He showed Curator David Hay its former location where a few stones of the foundation were still in existence. Since then the foundation has been hidden by undergrowth. A little farther along Carter Hill Road, Dibert Road bears off to the left and travels up hill to the residence of Keith Dibert.

PUPILS AT THE ORIGINAL SOUTHAMPTON SCHOOL



NELLIE (POORBAUGH) KEIDEL WAS THE TEACHER

THESE PICTURES OF THE SOUTHAMPTON SCHOOL HOUSE AND PUPILS WERE DONATED BY KAREN (HAY) GLESSNER FROM THE COLLECTION OF HER MOTHER, THE LATE MARJORIE (MEYERS) HAY



THE ORIGINAL SOUTHAMPTON SCHOOL

LEFT TO RIGHT: GRACE BROADWATER, MABEL POORBAUGH, THELMA MILLER, HAZEL MILLER, AND PEARL BITTNER. BACK ROW: MARY DeLOZIER (HARTMAN).

Monday,
Wednesday,
and Friday,
11:30- 2pm



BERLIN'S CHESS CLUB INVITES THE COMMUNITY TO JOIN THEM. CLOCK WISE BEGINNING ON THE LEFT BOTTOM: ROBERT ANELL, ELMER ALTFATHER, DAVID McQUADE, AND MICHAEL MERRILL.

HAPPY THANKSGIVING



CURIOUS LITTLE SELENA ROSE CIOCI

AT 9 MONTHS. OCT. 2025
PARENTS: BRIAN & LINDSEY
(STOTLER) CIOCI.
GRANDPARENTS:
DON & MARY (HAY) STOTLER



THE COLORFUL MUMS BEFORE THE FROST HIT THE PUMPKINS

CORNERSTONE PANTRY AND
DISCOUNT FOODS

STONYCREEK TOWNSHIP

WHEN THE FROST IS ON THE PUMPKIN!

DONATIONS

The Ruby (Wills) Miller Estate donated a large collection of brass items that she and her husband, the late Neil Miller collected as well as a large frame featuring four pictures of the Eastern Continental Divide and a large collection of almanacs. **Ira "Bunk" Harding** provided a shelf for one of our display cases to display the brass collection. **Bonnie Miller** of Lonaconing, Md. won the featured quilt at our annual meeting raffle. Being that the quilt was too large for her beds, she donated it back to the society. **Gwen Ottaviano** donated sheet protectors.



Larry Pritts models the man's brown dress hat that was donated by Carley Suter.

LaVerne Coslic donated an old-fashioned wash board that belonged and was used by her mother Nora (Shumaker) Suder. The society hosted the first annual Pioneer Days on October 11, 2025 at the Humble House and our barn with demonstrations on making apple cider and sauerkraut. There were many persons involved including **Tammy Rohrs, Darlene Beachley and Cheryl Hay**. Local church had delicious food items to sell and were pleased with their sales. **Carley Suter** donated a man's brown dress hat, a composition by William Gross entitled "Somerset County Paths Through the Roof Garden" and a Beers Atlas of Somerset County.

LuAnn Bush donated an advertisement for Bowser's Garage (David R. Bowser, Proprietor). A special thank-you to all our volunteers for helping make 2025 another successful year for our society. The Pious Springs garden, our barn, and the Humble House were settings for numerous group pictures this summer and fall.

Wanted: A picture of the former Pike one-room school house when it was located along Route 31 prior to being moved to the Leon Knepper-Smiley Brothers farm.

David R. Hay, Curator

EARLY 1900s ADVERTISEMENT

DR. WILLIAM P. SHAW

PHYSICIAN AND SURGEON – BERLIN, PA. HOSPITAL EXPERIENCE. OFFICE IN STONER BUILDING, EAST OF S. PHILSON & COMPANY'S BANK. NIGHT CALLS ANSWERED AT OFFICE.

RAYMAN FELLOWSHIP CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN CLOSES ITS DOORS



The Rayman Fellowship Church of the Brethren has officially closed and sold its house of worship in Stonycreek Township to a Mennonite congregation. We have received a collection of the congregation's history; framed and identified pictures of the congregation in 1950 and 1962; a photograph album with pictures from the congregations 100th Anniversary in 1986; and other memorabilia.

In 1886 under the direction of Jacob Rayman, Christian Reitz, Benjamin Zerfoss and James Trent the brethren of the area raised a little white church building. Jacob and Sarah Rayman gave one-fourth acre of land from their farm. The same year a cemetery was established for the burial of the congregation's deceased. In 1935 several rods of land were added by Edward Rayman.

The congregation faithfully served the area for 139 years until officially closing its doors in 2025 at which time its house of worship was also sold.

HISTORY OF THE RAYMAN CHURCH

In the 1880's a number of families living east of Friedens had to ride rough roads, or walk to the Old Pike meetinghouse at Brotherton, which is about five miles. Thinking about this distance they had to travel, Jacob and Sarah Rayman challenged the brethren by giving $\frac{1}{4}$ acre of land from their farm. It was "to be used forever for the resting place of a meetinghouse of God." In 1886 under the direction of Jacob Rayman, Christian Reitz, Benjamin Zerfoss and James Trent the brethren of the area raised a little white church building. The same year a burial place was made for the deceased. In 1935 several rods of land were added by Edward Raymans.

The young people of the area would gather in the church under the light of the old pressure gas lamps and sing for several hours under the direction of Irvin W. Schrock. Much enthusiasm was shown by the young people in 1910, and at that time Annanias Beeghly organized the Christian Workers for the young and old.

From 1886 to 1920 the Elders of the church gave free ministry to the church. Being part of the Brothersvalley Congregation they decided in the direction of paid ministry. Ministers who served the church were; Rev. Lewis Knepper 1920-1924, Rev. Haddon Q. Rhodes 1924-1942, Rev. Roy S. Forney 1942-1947, Rev. Quinten Evans summer of 1947, Rev. Austin Cooper 1947-1955, Rev. Herald V. Seese 1955-1967, Rev. Kenneth R. Blough 1967-1974 and Rev. Owen H. Preston 1974-1975.

In 1975 the Brothersvalley Congregation voted to close the doors at Rayman. The members at Rayman felt they were not ready to close at that time. The people at Rayman along with the district officers made the decision to keep it open. In 1977 the church was granted a fellowship status. It brought independence from the Brothersvalley Congregation (Rayman's Mother Church), and the name was changed to Rayman Fellowship Church of the Brethren. At that time enough money was raised to provide perpetual care for the cemetery. With 14 charter members we organized with the help of Rev. Robert L. Hoffman who came to be our minister in 1975. Rev. Hoffman served 1975-1985. Our present pastor Rev. William N. Hay was installed June 2, 1985. The work at Rayman has taken on new hope and attendance and membership has been increasing.

Some of the other families who were active and interested in the work of the Rayman Church since it was built in 1886. Raymans, Schrock's, Reitz's, Sarvers, Rosses, Piles, Rhodamer's, Bents, Beeghly's, Zerfosses, Trents and all of the present members.

THE ABOVE HISTORY WAS WRITTEN IN 1986 WHEN THE RAYMAN FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN CELEBRATED ITS 100TH ANNIVERSARY. THE LAST 39 YEARS OF THE CONGREGATION'S HISTORY IS NOT INCLUDED.

1886 - 2025

THE E. D. LOWRY SIGN AND ITS INTERESTING HISTORY



JEANNE (WEBRECK) AND THOMAS LOWRY DISPLAY THE LOWRY SIGN DONATED BY TOM'S BROTHER, F. EDWARD LOWRY

On October 15, 2025, F. Edward Lowry, native of the Shanksville area, donated the above pictured reproduced sign that was painted by Charles Baltzer of Shanksville. During the summer of 1907 Charles Baltzer, a painter by trade, painted the original sign for his "older" friend, Ed Lowry to be placed on the side of the Lowry's small barn where houses now stand on the south shore near the breast of Lake Stonycreek. Some years later Ed and his wife, Mary Catherine "Kate" (Walker) Lowry built a large two-story home along Shanksville's main street with a small barn on the back part of their lot. The sign was transferred to the side of that barn in Shanksville. Sometime in early 1974 the sign was passed down to Ed and Kate's great grandson, F. Edward Lowry, who have lived in various places. Fifty years later in 2024 the sign was passed on to F. Edward and Angela Lowry's oldest grandchild, Miranda (Lowry) and her husband Steven Illius. They mounted it on the wall of their office in their two-story home in Columbia Station, Ohio.

Along with the reproduced sign, F. Edward Lowry has presented an interesting written history of the original sign and its passage down through the Lowry family. Ed Lowry, for whom the sign was built, was born in Shanksville on January 4, 1861. He died on November 10, 1940 at age 79. His son, William Welsh Lowry was the father Frank Edward "Tucker" Lowry, a Stonycreek Township farmer. Frank and his wife, Gladys (Glessner) Lowry were parents of four children: F. Edward Lowry, the donor of the reproduced sign, as well as Tom Lowry and their two sisters, Donna and Peggy.



**TIMOTHY &
SUSAN
CLITES AND
THEIR NEW
HOME
UNDER
CONSTRUCTION
AT BERLIN
SEPT. 19, 2025**



FROM THE PAGES OF THE PAST – 25 YEARS AGO

SOMERSET DAILY AMERICAN - FEBRUARY 14, 2005



(Photo by Sandra Lepley)

Berlin Historical Society designs church afghans

The Berlin Area Historical Society has designed two afghans that have all the Berlin and Shanksville area churches on them as part of a fundraiser to help replace funds used to build the Society's new storage barn constructed last year. These afghans will be available for purchase at the Society building 1 to 4 p.m. Mondays, 9 a.m. to noon Wednesdays and 9 a.m. to noon on Saturdays or by calling 267-5987. The first afghan has Trinity UCC, Berlin Brethren, Holy Trinity Lutheran, Brothersvalley COB, St. Michael's,

Beachdale COB, St. Gregory, Berlin Alliance, Abundant Life, S.S. Peter and Paul, Three Seasons and Mt. Zion/Hay UCC on it. The second afghan contains Unity UCC, St. Mark, Shanksville UM, Mt. Olive, St. Paul UCC, Shanksville Assembly of God, Rayman COB, St. John, Mt. Olivet, Glen UCC, Trinity at Roxbury and New Hope UCC. Here, Anna Mae Weighley, secretary and director of the society, and Paul E. Pritts, curator and director, hold up one of the quilts at the Society's building on Vine Street.

DONATIONS

The **Walker Cemetery Association** of Shanksville donated a copy of the burial plots in the Walker Cemetery. **Mayla Yoder** donated the original manuscript of the Keidel History written by James R. Hay. **Russell Love** donated additional maps of the West Penn Railroad. **Greg Croner** donated a wooden bench made by Joe Ferner. **Connie Slope** donated a picture of Jane (Landis) Gordon. **Barry Landis** allowed us to copy some Landis family pictures and reunion photos at the former Levi Queer home of Brothersvalley Township. **Larry Pritts** donated a program from Berlin's Musical "Catch Me if You Can". A special thank-you to our faithful volunteers. **David R. Hay, Curator**