



The House Of Yoder Newsletter Winter 2019

THE HOUSE OF YODER CELEBRATES ANOTHER YEAR!

As we near the end of 2019, we would like to reflect on the year that was at The House of Yoder. After the spring clean-up was finished, the House opened for the hosting season on Monday, June 3, 2019 with John H. and MaDonna Yoder, from Catonsville, MD as our hosts. Serving again as hosts were: Mil-



dred (Micky) and Sanford King, Bellville, PA; Ben and Carol Yoder, from Grand Ridge, FL; Tim and Mary Moyer, Bethlehem, PA; Alton and Lois Longenecker, Elkhart, IN; Tom Yoder, Wichita Falls, TX; Steve Yoder, Elgin, IL; Val and Sandy Dzwonczyk, Baltimore, MD; Ken Seitz and Audrey Mets, Harrisonburg, VA; David and LouAnn Kanagy, Archbold, OH; Robert Swartz, Waterford, MI; Marian Sumpter, Farmington, NY; Jeanne and Brad Yoder, Noblesville, IN. We welcomed four new host

couples; Sanford and Mildred King, Ben and Carol Yoder, Tim and Mary Moyer, and

Jeanne and Brad Yoder. Serving as our day hosts were: Cora Anna and Marvin Yoder, Springs, PA; Lowell and Verna Bender, Accident, MD; Jane Brocht, Berlin, PA; Kathy Yoder Mostoller, Boynton, PA; Ray Yount, LaVale, MD.

Our most sincere Thank You to all of hosts. With out you, the doors of The House of Yoder would not be able to be opened. The House closed for the hosting season October 12, 2019. Approximately 4,711 visitors toured The House, from 44 States and Washington D.C. Visitors came from 17 Countries: United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland, Australia, Holland, Venezuela, France, Germany, Morocco, Belarus, Mexico, Brazil, Thailand, New Zealand, Scotland, South Wales, and Indonesia.

House of Yoder Hosts doing "double duty" as authors!

As members of a writing group in their retirement community, hosts Audrey A. Metz and husband, Ken Seitz volunteered to write their story.

By Audrey A. Metz

"I WANT A HOUSE LIKE THIS"

"While serving as volunteer hosts for two weeks at The House of Yoder in Spruce Village at Penn Alps, Grantsville, Maryland, husband Ken Seitz and I were often to hear those wistful words. Of course, on further consideration of the back-breaking cleaning job that the walk-in-stone fireplace would entail, a little of the envy would be tempered with "Well, I just love it-the fireplace, the wide wooden planks in the floor, and yes, even the dangerous stone steps going down to the root cellar!" The root cellar served as refrigeration for root vegetables and other perishables; thus, those steps had to be traipsed up and down for each meal of the day! Nonetheless, I was one of those who exclaimed, more than once, from my seat at the registering table: "I would LOVE to have a house like this!"

The House of Yoder is a replica of a family home built in the 1700's by the first Yoder families to emigrate from Europe to America. Areas of the house of special interest, besides the magnificent fireplace and the root cellar serving as the "icebox" are the waste window, the smokehouse in the attic, and the soul window.

Waste water from washing hands or dishes was poured into the thick stone slab under a kitchen window, the dirty water then spilling outside into a barrel where it was saved for watering the garden and/or providing water for the livestock to drink.

The smokehouse in the attic, at "the top of the house", provided smoked products for the table, especially during the long winters.

Perhaps the most unusual, most commented on, place on the first floor was "the soul window". This was a window in the living room area where the beds of people close to death were placed in order for the soul to be released to "the next realm". While we were hosting visitors to this remarkable house, we were fascinated to have a nurse come through the house and comment that the nursing home where she currently works does that when a patient is nearing death. When we heard that current story of having a soul window, we felt a whole new fascination with that feature of The House of Yoder!

Since returning to "real life", I find myself anticipating next August when Ken and I will again be docents in The House of Yoder, a house not only of historical detail, but one of stories

about brave people who chose to come to a land of unknown dangers, not knowing when they would see their loved ones from their communities of origin again. It's possible to build another house "just like this"; a little more difficult to find such courage and daring as those for when the original was built in the 1700's!

A comfortable , attractively-furnished apartment adjacent to the root cellar is provided for volunteers."

Ken's turn:

By Ken Seitz

"Two Weeks in the Alps; Penn Alps, That Is"

"As visitors come up the stone steps to enter Yoder House through the sturdy wooden doorway and begin to size up their surroundings.....

Welcome to The House of Yoder, a replica of a 1750s home. Prepare to step back in time some 250 years to visit a home in early America. No one has ever lived in this house; it was not moved here from elsewhere. It is a model built by Yoder clan initiative (and there are many Yoders living right here in this community) built over a 5-year timeframe and opened to the public in 2000.

And although the house is new, we see that it contains many recycled materials, such as these beams and floor-boards you're looking at, salvaged from old barns and churches in this community. There are four floors: root cellar in the basement, then this floor where you are standing with its huge fireplace in this the kitchen area and over there the living space. Above us is the bedroom floor and above that the attic, which includes the smokehouse,

We're set up with plenty of helpful signs explaining things plus we also have these laminated papers with further explanations—all so you can move around according to your own curiosity and interest. When you are finished and ready to leave we ask that you sign our guest registry. And we're happy to answer any questions. Maybe you want to begin in the basement with the root cellar. Be careful as you go down and hold the hand-rail, something we tell the young and old.

Audrey and I just returned this Sunday past from a two-week experience living in the basement apartment of that 1750s recreation—in—the spruce forest on the Penn Alps campus along the banks of the Casselman River, under the shadow of a stone arch bridge built in 1813 that once carried US Route 40 (the National Road) traffic until 1933 when the new Route 40 went in. (Just down the 2-mile grade from Hilltop Fruit Market to the east and half a mile down the grade from downtown Grantsville to the west.)

We spent our days as hosts for the Yoder House, opening in the morning and closing in the afternoon; available to help visitors appreciate what the house represented. We got many reactions; I could live here! This house is so big (4,000 sq. ft. all floors)! These people must have been wealthy! How many people lived here? How beautiful!

Continued on page 4

Although we had intended to host only one week, we were invited by Mayla Yoder, the schedule coordinator, to serve a second, which suited us just fine. Thus we hosted over Labor Day weekend, open to the public Saturday (95 visitors and Monday, Labor Day, (100 visitors).

As people moved about in the house, particularly on the first floor, the kitchen-living area, we had several features to point out, things they'd surely not want to miss: how they then disposed of waste water pouring it out by means of a large shaped stone lodged in the kitchen window draining into a barrel outside. How the latch string—in or out—functioned as a welcome signal or lock up at night. And then there's the soul window. The soul window, in the south end of the first floor, 26"x26", about six feet up, with four panes, is explained by the following sign.

"The soul window, also called the escape window, is an example of the superstitions of some of the early Germans, but long since abandoned. The sick were moved to the open window so that the spirit could escape in case of death. Otherwise the house could become haunted."

So much for back then, old superstitions, long ago put aside, no doubt. But one day, in calling attention to the soul window, one of the visitors, a woman who works as a nurse's aide in a nursing home about 50 miles north, across the Mason-Dixon Line in Pennsylvania, took us aside at the soul window to tell us how amazed she was to see this feature in the Yoder House, because at the nursing home where she works they now make a practice of moving dying residents to an open window for the very purpose stated. She added how meaningful it was for dying residents and their families to do so.

Well, we were just amazed as she was to learn about a current soul window practice, moving it from a past superstition to what in some cases is carried out beneficially today. The visitor learned something and so did we. I don't know that VMRC includes any soul windows; we're too up-to-date for that, but perhaps we should have them, particularly in the Woodlands Houses. But now lets transition from the infirm and dying to the very young and curious coming to Yoder House.

Not many families with young children visit The House, but there are some with those in strollers and 3-4 year olds, prone to want to touch. The House is furnished with many old pieces, utensils, and furnishings that invite touch. We hear parents say, "Now don't touch!" while we hold our breath. For the older children and adolescents we are well equipped. Some years ago, one of the hosts came up with a capitol idea, the "House of Yoder Treasure Hunt." Interested kids, and parents in some cases, are given a clipboard with a sheet listing 20 items found throughout the house, on all floors, bearing a white tag with a number. At the top of the sheet is the following paragraph:

Continued on page 5

"Can you locate the following items in the Yoder House? Each article was probably used by early settlers here in Grantsville. A number is displayed on each item listed. Place that number on this paper after guessing what it is. But please do not handle any of the items, as some are very fragile. Thank You, have fun and good luck!"

Most of the youngsters are determined to get all of the items—without help from parents. For others, it's a family project, maybe with some help from older siblings. Here's a few of the items: grinding wheel, bed warmer, dutch oven, ice tongs, potty chair, butter churn, bread box, Betty lamp, wash basin and pitcher.

At the conclusion, we check their work and in every case, by one means or another, they've been successful. In any event, each receives a lead pencil imprinted with "House of Yoder." This is an especially attractive feature of a Yoder House visit for the home schoolers.

Visitors to the Yoder House come in all shapes and sizes with varying degrees of interest and appreciation. Those into woodworking and construction marvel at the handiwork that went into building the place. We talk about the volunteering of time and talents, the labor of love many contributed over the 4-year course of building. While some are deeply interested and impressed, wanting to linger, others rush through, in-and-out fashion.

Visitors sign their names and where they're from: D.C., Pittsburgh, Morgantown, Baltimore, New York City, to name a few. Others are local and say they watched the place go up, but never stopped in. Sometimes we hear, "We've been by here often and never found it open. Finally we get to see in." Others, "Oh yes, we know (of) Yoder. I went to school with Yoders. I have a cousin married to a Yoder. Nope, never heard of them?"

And why did the clan, Yoders by name, clustered around Grantsville and Bittingner, Maryland, and Springs and Salisbury, Pennsylvania, take on a project like this? We tell visitors that any family/clan in America could do something similar, but not many have the vision and appreciation of their heritage, and the skills, to the extent demonstrated here at the House of Yoder, in the spruce forest adjacent to Penn Alps Restaurant and Gift Shop and the Artisans' Village—in the shadow of the 1813 stone arch bridge over the Casselman River.

We've already signed up for 2020."

Thank you Audrey and Ken for your contribution of your stories to The House of Yoder Newsletter!!!

Audrey was born in eastern Pennsylvania, a member of a small church where her father, Abram Metz, was the first minister. In her high school years and after graduation from high school, Audrey taught summer Bible School in Estella, PA. and Bridgewater Corners, Vermont. A very special volunteer assignment was three weeks in India in 1996 helping to care for the dying that Mother Teresa and her volunteers had brought in off the streets. Audrey says "My favorite bragging rights are that I was hugged, kissed, and blest by Mother Teresa! When she died the year after I'd been working in her homes for the dying as well as orphanages she'd started in three major cities of India, I felt that I had lost a special mentor." In 2011 I reconnected with a school friend with whom I'd started first grade and he in second grade-Ken Seitz. It didn't take long to become reacquainted and we were married on New Year's Day 2012. Together we volunteer as docents in the House of Yoder and look forward to that repeat-assignment in August 2020.



Audrey A. Metz and Ken Seitz, from Harrisonburg, VA.
Hosts at The House of Yoder

Ken Seitz, now retired, lives in Harrisonburg, at Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC) with wife Audrey Metz. He has served in a variety of Mennonite church-related ministries as service worker administrator, college Bible teacher (Eastern Mennonite University), and pastor (Burlington Vermont and Reedley, California). Throughout his career he moved in and out of the Middle East as student, development worker, and tour leader while based in Jerusalem or Beirut. Currently, he preaches and teaches occasionally and enjoys singing baritone in a VMRC men's ensemble. He and Audrey are members of Shalom Mennonite Congregation, Harrisonburg, VA

THE HOUSE OF YODER

23RD ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, November 2, 2019

Twenty-seven members were in attendance for the annual Members Meeting held Saturday, November 2, 2019 at The House of Yoder, Spruce Forest Artisan Village, Grantsville, MD.



Members enjoying refreshments before the meeting.

President, Harvey L. Yoder opened the meeting. Doris Ours led devotions and a time of remembrance for Edgar R. Yoder, a Board of Director and Treasurer for the House of Yoder. Edgar, born April 2, 1935, passed away, June 15, 2019.

Both the secretary's and treasure's reports were accepted as read.

10,000 brochures were ordered and printed by Commercial Press of Cumberland, MD.

Lowell Bender and Mayla Yoder were elected to another 5 year term as Board of Directors.

Dr. John Yoder, (YR2344321125) of Catonsville, MD was the speaker.



Dr. John H. Yoder

John was born in eastern Kansas to Tobe and Saloma Yoder; fifth child in a family of six; he moved to Virginia when he was 2 years old. He was raised Amish and Beachy Amish. John's family roots go back through Kansas, Oklahoma, Mississippi, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.

John received a Bachelors degree from Eastern Mennonite University; masters and doctorate from the University of Virginia. John has worked in both public and private schools (including five years as Superintendent of Belleville Mennonite School in Belleville, PA, (1979-84). For some 30 years before retirement, he was a professor and senior administrator in universities in Botswana, Africa, Fresno, California and Wichita, Kansas. He has traveled, consulted and lectured in numerous countries in Europe, Asia, South

Continued on page 8

America and Africa, including a Fulbright Specialist Fellowship to a university in Kazakhstan.

John and his wife MaDonna live in Catonsville, a Baltimore suburb, where he still teaches a graduate course by distance for Concordia University-Portland. He is active in several local committees and boards. John and MaDonna attend North Baltimore Mennonite Church. John and MaDonna also serve as hosts for The House of Yoder.

The title of John's topic:

"Speaking of Yoder's"

John told stories gleaned from the Yoder Research and Genealogy Library, which John played a big role in organizing and acquiring



Steffisburg, Switzerland, the ancestral home of the Yoder's. Looking towards the Alps.

family genealogies. He will trace the origins of the Yoder name and where they lived in Europe. John also focused on the Amish coming to Berks County, PA and then on to Western PA, Ohio, Indiana and further west in his own family story.

Joder, Jetter, Jotter, Joetder, Yoeder, Yother, Yothers, Yotter, Yoder, they are variations

taken from St. Theodore (St. Theodorus, in Greek) now known as St. Joder



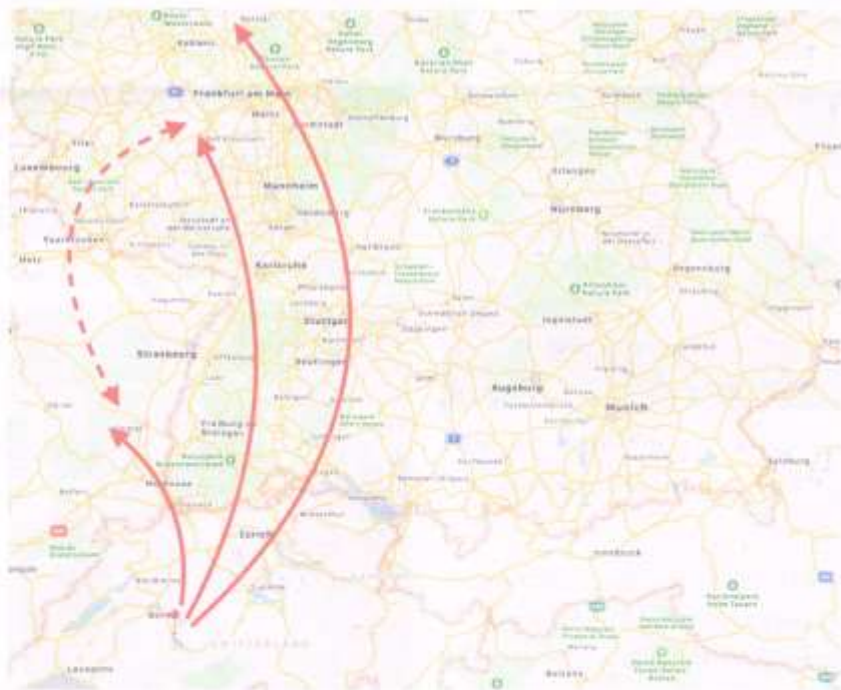
Saint Joder Chapel. Theodore (later St. Theodore) came to this region from Italy to establish a church and bishopric.



View into the valley from the front of the St. Joder chapel.



"Birdseye view of Jodershuebel. The Emme river surrounds it on three sides making it a natural fortress. There are the remains of a Celtic fortress on the landward side (the side away from the river)"



The Hidden years of Amish Joder's. There is no known record where the Amish Yoder's lived after leaving Switzerland until they arrived in America . Approximately 100 year span. Alsace? Palatinate? Germany?

CHRISTMAS IN THE VILLAGE

Friday and Saturday, December 6 & 7, 2019



Once again, The House of Yoder was beautifully decorated for the two day festival. Over sixty pounds of popcorn was popped, and over 1,100 bags of freshly popped pop corn was handed out to our visitors.



Pictured above are Esta and Keith Yoder, from Winchester, VA, popping popcorn for our guests.

Val and Sandy Dzwonczyk, from Baltimore, MD, have served as hosts for The House of Yoder for many years, but had never attended Christmas in The Village until this year. They both enjoyed seeing The House and Artisan Village decorated for the Christmas Festival.



Pictured above, Val and Sandy Dzwonczyk.



Above, Sandy Dzwonczyk, once a host, always a host!!!

Throughout The House of Yoder



Wreaths on the fireplace



Four legged visitors too!



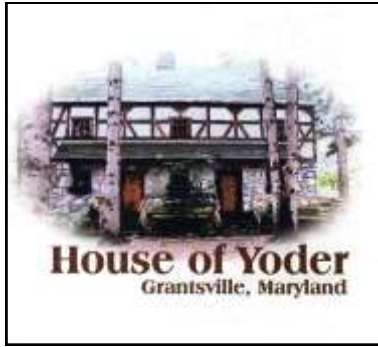
Mayla Yoder showing visitors the root cellar



Dana Bender, making wreaths



Shayla and Crystal Bender, making wreaths



The House of Yoder Newsletter is published by The House of Yoder, Inc. Grantsville, MD. 21536, located 1/2 mile east of Grantsville, MD., on Route 40 East. at Penn Alps Restaurant and Spruce Forest Artisan Village President: Harvey L. Yoder; Vice President: Doris Ours. Secretary: Mayla H. Yoder, Treasurer: Isolde Yoder Porter. Board Members: Mark H. Yoder. Esta Yoder, Keith Yoder, Lowell Bender, Associate Member: Benny C. Yoder, Editor: Mayla H. Yoder.

The House of Yoder Membership:

Make check payable to "The House of Yoder" and mail to
Mayla H. Yoder
2274 Salco Road
Berlin, PA 15530

	1 Year	5 Years	Lifetime
Individual	\$25.00	\$100.00	\$1,000.00
Couple	\$35.00	\$150.00	\$1,500.00

The House of Yoder Newsletter

%Mayla H. Yoder

2274 Salco Road

Berlin, PA 15530