



# GRAVE HAPPENINGS



Photo by Kevin Cannon

The Hoch/Deturk/Shenkel burial ground was one selected for the GPR project for 2018. Lead by Dr. Laura Sherrod, students from Kutztown University used ground penetrating radar to try to establish burial patterns and help determine the placement of stones. See page 6 for Sean Brown's interpretation of the data presented. The burial ground was prepared by Kevin Cannon for the project.

Contributors Staff/  
Photos this issue

**Sean Brown**

**Betty Burdan**

**Kevin Cannon**

**Karla Hummel**

**Les Rohrbach**

**Keith Schaffer**

**Anne Wagner**

**Rod Wagner**



## Hoch



**The second wall of the Hoch Family burial ground has been in progress all winter. While some of us were hibernating in our footie pajamas, others were out in the cold getting this wall torn down and ready to be put back together when the weather is warmer. (I will let you guess who was which).**



## Reber



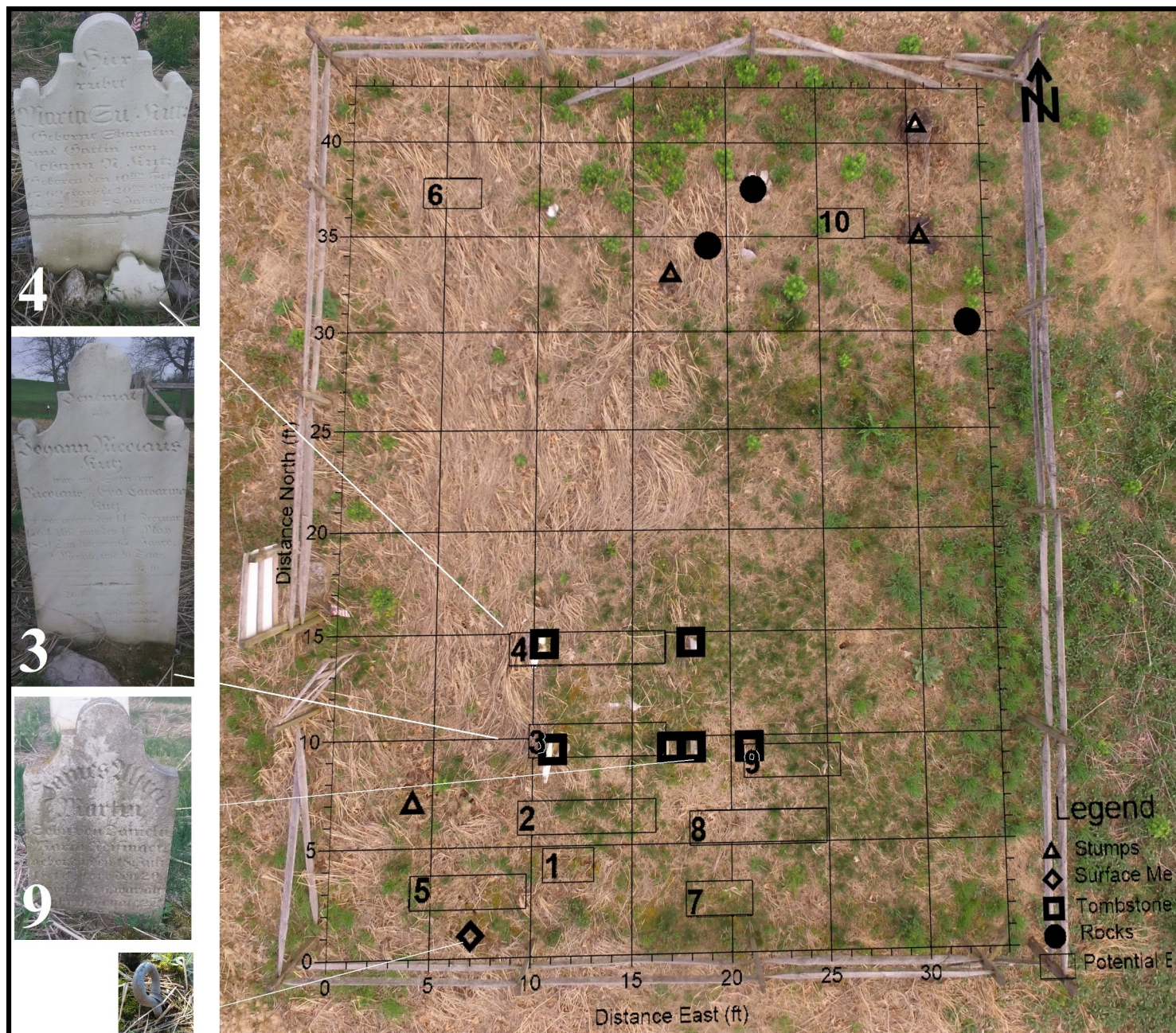
**We are working with the Reber Family Association to get started on some serious repair and rebuilding work before tombstones are damaged by crumbling walls. The family takes care of the grounds maintenance and we hope to assist them in preserving the stone wall. Donations have started coming in for this and we hope to be able**

**to help repair the crumbling walls. When you send your donation for this project please make sure you mention it is for the Reber. If you have questions, Patricia Reber is the driving force and can answer your questions. Email her at:**

**[patriciareber@hotmail.com](mailto:patriciareber@hotmail.com)**

The **Kutz** burial ground was selected to be part of the ground penetrating radar (GPR) project done by **Dr Laura Sherrod** and Kutztown Students. We will be working in what was learned from the GPR and some family history in upcoming newsletters as space permits. **Sean Brown** worked up a graphic based on their results. This one was pretty clear as far as results and we hope to do some further probing to see if there are more tombstones to recover based on their findings. We talked about this in the 2018-July newsletter, Page 2 when the survey was done and prior to having results.

If you would like to see the full report done by the students, and the full analysis of that report done by Sean, you can email one of us for that. Look forward to more about the Kutz in the July 2019 Grave Happenings.



## Letter from Les

Where are they buried? That is my question after Kutztown University's Ground Penetrating Radar evaluation of the Kutz (43'x 35'), Hoch/DeTurk/Shenkel (HDS, 62' x 62'), and Fetterolf/Bittenbender (40' x 54') graveyards. These were large, well off families with numerous colonial members. Even considering that some of them would not be interred in a family graveyard, the need for or use of multiple graveyards for the extended family is quite likely.

Still, what amazes me is the relative paucity of burials in these three graveyards. Not only are the numbers small, the area of the graveyards consumed by graves is small. GPR results are qualified as being potential burials, i. e., the readings indicate dimensions and depth that could be a burial. Thus, the GPR results give an upper limit to the number of burials detected. Using 5' as an arbitrary minimum for the length of an adult grave, that places 6 adults and 4 children in the Kutz graveyard, 2 adults and 16 children in the HDS graveyard, and 9 adults and 29 children



in the Fetterolf/Bittenbender graveyard, these numbers encompassing multiple generations. The numbers we had before the GPR from tombstone readings and past records were 2 adults, 1 child at the Kutz, 7 adults, 5 children at HDS, and 2 adults, 5 children at Fetterolf/Bittenbender.

Wealthier, more prominent individuals, from families like these, are those who typically have larger, higher quality tombstones. I would expect their burial locations to have a greater chance to survive and have walls built around them. Where are they? Instead the very impressive stone wall surrounding the Fetterolf/Bittenbender graveyard contains a mere 9 adults. We know of just the Kutz and Fetterolf/Bittenbender graveyards for these families. There are few Kutzes, Fetterrolfs, or Bittenbenders in other historic Berks graveyards. Where are their graves? Why have their locations been lost when these have survived but with few adults?

While the HDS graveyard has the same characteristics - few burials, few adults, and much unused space - the question of the location of other family members is less relevant. There are many Hoch and DeTurk graveyards in Berks, and the Shenkel family had mostly daughters. There is also a 'story' that the HDS property contains another graveyard, though its location if it once existed is speculative.

In the end, obtaining a GPR analysis of these locations has given us more knowledge and pinpointed places where unknown graves and buried tombstones may exist. It did not find as many as I expected. It has also produced questions that may have existed before, but have greater relevance now.

Les Rohrbach is President of BCAGP and very active in both the organizational aspects and the hands on "down and dirty in the graveyard" activities of the group. Les travels from Pottstown to his "roots" in Berks and is an avid hiker and genealogist.

### *It is time for you to meet the board!*

Feb. 17th 2019 we held elections for officers and board members for the next two years. There were a couple minor changes, and also two members moved on to the board. It occurred to me that if you are not a regular participant, you may not know some of us, and I would like to make some introductions.

**Les Rohrbach** has been our President since 2009. He is the person that keeps us all on track and daily business running smooth. Les gives up hiking with his group now and then to hike through woods and fields into graveyards, to help preserve the history. Les is extremely serious and dedicated to the administrative tasks as much as the physical part. He is without a doubt our MVP! As serious as he seems, he has made me laugh the hardest.

**Karla Hummel** has moved from Secretary to 2nd Vice President. I consider her one of my best friends although we are different as night and day. Karla is a former Army officer and "college girl". She is always taking courses somewhere. To our benefit she also takes cemetery conservation courses. I knew she was going to be an asset to the group when in the first burial ground we worked in together, I found a bones, and she was able to identify as human or animal due to her unique array of classroom studies! I could never put the newsletter together without her helping with the fine points. She is the grammar queen!

**Paul Schumann** is again our Treasurer, and though he would prefer to be just working in graveyards, he has gotten to be a good keeper of the finances. Paul is constantly on the move visiting historic sites, and bicycles further than I would want to ride in a car sometimes. Paul is a member of almost every historic group in the county and would be a fabulous tour guide! He is the caretaker of the Barnet Peter burial ground in his "spare" time.

**Sean Brown** is our archivist and has now joined the board in the office of Secretary. Sean lives and breathes keeping records. He is fresh eyes for us, discovering things we have not had on our radar for a long time. Though new to P.A. he already knows more local history than many of us.

**Michael Angstadt** is the young guy with big ideas and always finagling how to make things happen. He is the tech guy. He is showing us ways to do things a bit differently to get better results. His Marine training has come in handy as he has a broad knowledge base and up for a challenge at the drop of a hat.

**Ed Gensemer** is also President of Aulenbach's Cemetery. Ed once saved baby squirrels in a nest at the Breidenstein burial ground and I have learned he loves nature and animals. Ed's sense of humor alone is worth you coming out to a work party he is attending!

**David Schlegel** is a busy guy between taking care of cemeteries and his volunteer work with American Legion. He is the guy who makes sure most of Fleetwood area cemeteries have flags for the Veterans. Most importantly he maintains probably a dozen of our burial grounds by himself. His farm experience really comes in handy for us since most of these work sites are in the middle of farmers' fields.

**Keith Shaffer** is also the stonemason who you all complement so highly when you see these burial grounds repaired. I have really enjoyed exploring with Keith for the last ten or so years and he has been the best friend ever. Keith is the guy who teaches everyone how to dowse, and he is the active member who has been around since the group began. Anything odd or unusual and Keith is on it! Keith would do anything for anyone who needs his help and he is well known for his quirky antics.

**Ron Smith** is new to the board but has been a member for two years now. Ron has been pretty dedicated to coming out to group work parties and is a really laid back, just all around nice guy. I look forward to getting to know him better! He travels from Downingtown to help keep his Berks ancestry fresh.

Anyone wishing to get to know about ME will just have to come to a work party or meeting and find out for yourself! I am a pretty open book and not hard to read.



**Anne E Wagner, VP**  
awagner615@aol.com

Hoch/DeTurk/Shenkel  
Sean Brown

GPR Analysis:

Graves are numbered 1 through 18 per Figure 20, Page 20 of the GPR Report. Based on the lengths of the graves (Table, Page 4), there are 11 adults (Graves 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, length 3 feet or more), 6 children (Graves 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 12, length 2 to 3 feet), and a young adult (Grave 16, 2½ to 3½ feet); Grave 16 could be a short adult as well.

Known Interments:

**Roman Numerals in bold** are interments, 11 inscribed headstones representing 7 adults, 4 children, known. Red text indicates possible burials; their graves have not been located. \* Refer to diagram on p.7

<b>I</b>	<b>Philip DeTurck</b>	<b>1782-May-30</b>	<b>1861-Mar-05</b>	<b>78y9m6d</b>
<b>II</b>	<b>Maria DeTurck</b>	<b>1786-Apr-24</b>	<b>1864-Jan-19</b>	<b>77y8m26d</b>
	Wife of Philip DeTurck, Junior			
	<u>2 sons, 3 daughters (from his and her headstones)</u>			
<b>III</b>	<b>Esther Joder</b>	<b>1811-Jul-20</b>	<b>1838-Nov-08</b>	<b>27y3m18</b>
	Married David Joder 1830-Nov-30; David Yoder, b. 1810-Mar-08, d. 1879-Dec-24, he is interred Forest Hill United Methodist Church Cemetery, Union County, Penn.			
	<u>1 son, 3 daughters (from her headstone)</u>			
<b>IV</b>	<b>Samuel Hoch</b>	<b>1784-Oct-10</b>	<b>1844-Mar-21</b>	<b>59y5m11d</b>
	Married Elisabeth van Reid 1808-Dec-11, 7 sons, 4 daughters			
<b>V</b>	<b>Elisabeth Hoch</b>	<b>1780-Oct-24</b>	<b>1847-Feb-18</b>	<b>57y3m24d</b>
	Wife of Samuel Hoch, Junior			
	<u>7 sons, 4 daughters (from his and her headstones)</u>			
<b>VI</b>	<b>Joseph Hoch</b>	<b>1827-Dec-05</b>	<b>1828-Feb-13</b>	<b>2m8d</b>
	Son of Samuel Junior and Elizabeth Hoch			
<b>VII</b>	<b>Sarah Anna Hoch</b>	<b>1817-May-22</b>	<b>1819-Feb-14</b>	<b>1y8m23d</b>
	Daughter of Samuel Junior and Elizabeth Hoch			
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Levi Hoch</b>	<b>1816-Mar-14</b>	<b>1816-Apr-14</b>	<b>1m</b>
	Son of Samuel Junior and Elizabeth Hoch			
<b>IX</b>	<b>Martin V. R. Hoch</b>	<b>1811-Nov-09</b>	<b>1852-Mar-04</b>	<b>40y3m25d</b>
	Son of Samuel and Elizabeth <i>Van Reed</i> Hoch, married 1838-Sep-04 to Susanna Hoch for 8y2m17d			
<b>X</b>	<b>Susanna Hoch</b>	<b>1818-Nov-13</b>	<b>1846-Nov-21</b>	<b>38y0m8d</b>
	Married 8y2m17d to Martin V. R. Hoch			
	<u>1 son, 4 daughters (from his and her headstones)</u>			
<b>XI</b>	<b>Sarah Anna Hoch</b>	<b>1840-Aug-14</b>	<b>1841-Oct-13</b>	<b>1y1m29d</b>
	Daughter of Martin V. R. and Susanna Hoch			

Speculations:

Persons with unknown burial locations, from the genealogy; possibly 2 adults and 3 children:

Lydia DeTurck—Child(?) “died young”; daughter of Philip and Maria DeTurk; it is reasonable that she be interred here; her sister Esther is and it was her father's property

Anna *DeTurck* Hoch—Adult; her husband Joseph Bertolet Hoch, b. 1770-Sep-24, d. 1835-Sep-16 is at Spies Zion and an infant son is at the Hoch Bertolet

Elizabeth Ann Hoch—Adult; daughter of Samuel and Elizabeth Hoch, unable to trace her after she reached age of at least 21 since she released her Guardian (1856-Apr-09: Miscellaneous Book K 11, Page 117)

Samuel and Elizabeth Hoch's daughter Wilhelmina married Daniel Bower; they are at Friedens' Church Cemetery but they had two young children that died:

- Rebecca Bower, b. 1858-Apr-03, d. 1862-Aug-14; her mother died 16 days later
- Samuel Bower, b. 1861-Apr-10, d. 1862-Jun-29

Grave 6 is marked nearly correctly with Philip DeTurck (I). Grave 7 is likewise marked with Maria DeTurck (II), his wife at his side.

Graves 1, 2 and 3 form a cluster of three children; Samuel and Elisabeth Hoch (IV and V) had three children die; perhaps these are they: Joseph, Sarah Anne and Levi (VI, VII, and VIII); Grave 3 is the deepest at 3.8 feet, perhaps this is Levi (VIII) who died in April during a spring thaw (Joseph and Sarah both died in February). Grave 2 is 2.0 feet and slightly interferes with Grave 1 at 2.8 feet (Figure 6, Page 10; maybe Grave 1 is Sarah Anne (VII) who died before Joseph (VI) (depths from Table on Page 4).

Graves 4, 8 and 12 are likely children, Lydia (E) and Sarah Anna (XI) and an as-yet unknown.

Grave 5 is an adult by itself, possibly Esther *DeTurck* Yoder (III) whose headstone is nearby.

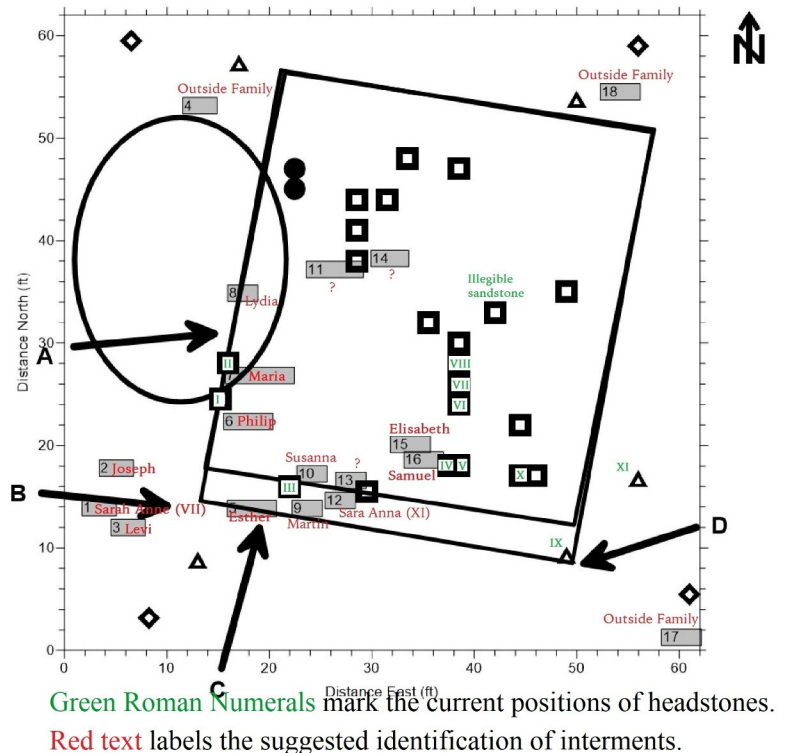
Grave 4, 17 and 18 are outside the main cluster, perhaps servants or farmhands and a child thereof. If this is so, then Graves 8 and 12 are, either one, Lydia (E) and Sarah Anna (XI).

Samuel and Elisabeth Hoch and Martin and Susanna Hoch, being married couples, would likely be buried side-by-side.

Graves 9 and 10 are a pair of adults as are 15 and 16; perhaps Graves 11 and 14 are also, but they are not really side-by-side.

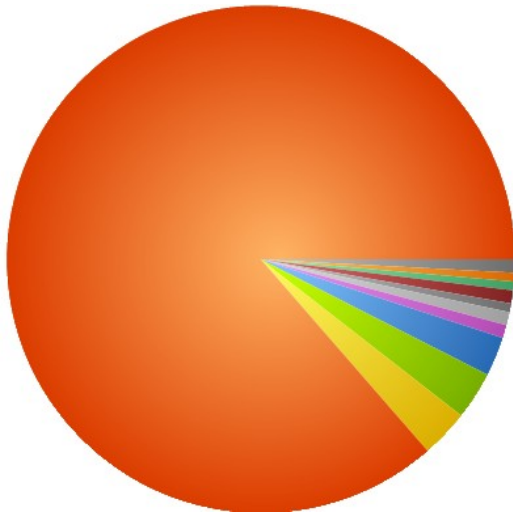
Graves 15 and 16 are near the stones for Samuel and Elisabeth (IV and V), suggesting their burial locations. This, in turn allows Martin and Susanna (IX and X) to be in Graves 9 and 10 and Grave 12 is their daughter Sara Anna (XI), leaving Grave 8 to be Lydia (E). We can assume the tradition, exemplified by Philip and Maria (Graves 6 and 7, I and II), of the husband being laid to rest on the wife's right-hand side.

That leaves Graves 11, 13 and 14 as unknown adult family members. Anna? Elizabeth? Schenkel daughters?



We would like to thank **Betty Burdan** for her work in formulation of budget information and doing our annual audit again for the year. Betty makes sure our finances pass audit and gives us a clear visible picture of where we stand. We can show you how the money is spent at a glance for the year. We have a 3 -way check on our finances. The Treasurer, **Paul Schumann** pays the bills, then Betty who audits, and then the paid accountant who handles tax reporting as well. Betty makes it neat and tidy so we visually can see what is happening without going through records.

**Berks County Association for Graveyard Preservation**  
**Financial Report Jan. 1, 2018 to Dec. 31, 2018**  
 by Betty J. Burdan, Auditor, BCAGP



621 Graveyard Repairs	\$28,900.00
613 Accounting	\$995.00
620 Graveyard Supplies	\$965.58
601.1 Newsletter copies	\$824.80
611 Insurance	\$344.00
612 Awards	\$250.00
601.3 PO Box	\$236.00
601.2 Newsletter Postage	\$200.00
609 Web Site	\$200.00
610 Rent	\$175.00
Other	\$260.66
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$33,351.04</b>

www.bcagp.org

Berks County Association for Graveyard Preservation

**About Us**

**Officers & Contacts**

**BCAGP**

The next meeting of the BCAGP will be on March 24, 2019 at 2 PM at the American Legion in Oley, PA

**Doug Reinert** is sort of a mystery guy, but is real important to our organization. None of us have ever physically met him, yet he is the person that keeps our website up to date! At some time before our current board was involved with BCAGP, Doug set up a website on his server for us and makes changes as needed and adds what we ask. With an organization that is volunteer run with donations, a professional website would probably have been out of the question if not for Doug's willingness to work with us for a nominal fee. Thank you Doug, and I hope we get to meet you in person sometime soon!



# SET IN STONE



## A Comparison



A broken branch, larger in diameter than many trees, was hanging precariously over a row of tombstones at the **Weiser** graveyard in Oley. Fortunately for us, **Moore Landscaping** of Oley volunteered their time and labor to remove the threatening wood before it could do damage to the precious stones.

As we were leaving the site I stopped to ponder one of my personal favorites, a child's stone that I affectionately call "the anteater" for its now

unusual carving. It once bore a proudly carved lamb. The lamb, with all its symbolism, is a common adornment for stones of children. In this case, the lamb I see is an odd looking creature with back legs too long for its body, a muzzle too long for its head, and an indeterminate tail. Hence my tongue in cheek description of "anteater."

This was never a fully realistic, sculpted lamb, but like so many of our stones it shows signs of wear. Let's offer a comparison to a lamb of the same era but located far from Berks County.

Simply by being in Berks the lamb stone was exposed to many elements including acid rain, continual damp from being under trees or shrubs, repeated freezing and thawing, and/or abrasion by roots or other contact.



Had it not been in Berks? Here is an example of a lamb on a child's stone, from the same time period, but from Alabama. It not only has clearly outlined limbs and face, it has wonderful curls of wool. Not exposed to frequent freezes, not exposed to significant industrial pollutants, it remains as intended, a beautifully carved, loving tribute to a child.

Placed with respect and love, tombstones are a heartfelt memorial that can be lost by simple neglect. This is why it is vital that we clean every stone and do whatever we can to preserve Berks' sites now. The forces of Nature – and of man – are working to alter the face of the stones. In next editions we will talk about products and processes that can be used to save our memorials.



**KARLA HUMMEL**

[BerksEpitaphs@gmail.com](mailto:BerksEpitaphs@gmail.com)

## Our Mission

We strive to preserve and maintain the historic Berks County graveyards in Eastern Pennsylvania. The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Historic Burial Places Preservation Act (1994) provides for the preservation of historic burial places, tombs, monuments and gravestones and imposes penalties for violations. Research supports the existence of over 300 historic graveyards in Berks County of which approximately 120 remain with some sort of visible surface evidence. The BCAGP is working aggressively to preserve these historic grave sites for future generations.

### Elected officers and board members for the 2019-2020

President: Les Rohrbach

Vice President: Anne Wagner

2nd Vice: President Karla Hummel

Secretary: Sean Brown

Treasurer: Paul Schumann

Member of the Board: Michael Angstadt

Member of the Board: Ed Gensemer

Member of the Board: Keith Schaffer

Member of the Board: David Schlegel

Member of the Board: Ron Smith

We welcome Sean Brown and Ron Smith as new board members!



The next BCAGP board meeting is March 24, 2019 at 2PM at the Oley Legion Hall in Oley. As always members and visitors are welcome to attend.

Spring

**WE ARE NOW REGISTERED IN THE AMAZON SMILE PROGRAM. IF YOU ARE AN AMAZON SHOPPER, YOU CAN SET YOUR PREFERENCES TO HAVE BCAGP AS YOUR SELECT CHARITY. PLEASE VISIT THE LINK BELOW FOR DETAILS ON HOW TO SIGN UP AND USE THE PROGRAM.**

### About AmazonSmile

AmazonSmile is a website operated by Amazon with the same products, prices, and shopping features as Amazon.com. The difference is that when you shop on AmazonSmile, the AmazonSmile Foundation will donate 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products to the charitable organization of your choice.

Every item available for purchase on [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com) is also available on AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](http://smile.amazon.com)) at the same price. You will see eligible products marked "Eligible for AmazonSmile donation" on their product detail pages.

If you represent a charitable organization and you would like to learn more about registering your organization to receive AmazonSmile donations, go to [org.amazon.com](http://org.amazon.com).

For more information about the AmazonSmile program, go to <http://smile.amazon.com/about>.

# JOIN OR DONATE TODAY!

If you're not a current member, please join us in preserving and maintaining our historic graveyards. If you do not wish to be a member at this time but you are interested in contributing support for a specific graveyard, please indicate that graveyard on the form below. We also appreciate contributions to the general fund.



## MEMBERSHIP FORM - 2019

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual Membership, Individual \$15; Family (residing in the same household) \$25

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Annual business or municipality membership, \$35

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation earmarked for the *Association General Fund*

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation to be used for the \_\_\_\_\_ gravesite

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Donation to be used in \_\_\_\_\_ municipality



Total Amount enclosed

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Mail Checks to: B.C.A.G.P., PO Box 3707, Reading, PA 19606

If you prefer to NOT receive a mailed copy of the newsletter, and only view it online please check here .

Membership runs a calendar year January to December. Membership dues paid after October 1st will be applied to the next membership year. This form is also available on our website in the internet edition of the newsletters which can be printed.

The official registration and financial information of Berks County Association of Graveyard Preservation may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll free, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Berks County Association for Graveyard Preservation is a registered 501 (c) (3). Please check with your tax advisor as to the deductibility of your contribution.



Please check our website [www.bcagp.org](http://www.bcagp.org)  
for meetings times





PO BOX 3707  
READING PA 19606

[WWW.BCAGP.ORG](http://WWW.BCAGP.ORG)

## BERKS COUNTY ASSOCIATION FOR GRAVEYARD PRESERVATION

### Officers and Board of Directors

(email addresses on the website)



**Les Rohrbach, President 610-323-1703**  
**Anne Wagner, Vice President 610-926-5036**  
**Karla Hummel, 2nd Vice President 610-987-9569**  
**Paul Schumann, Treasurer 484-529-8682**  
**Sean Brown, Secretary 610-621-0014**



**David Schlegel \* Michael Angstadt \* Ed Gensemer \* Ron Smith \* Keith Schaffer**

Newsletter contact: Anne Wagner

"Grave Happenings," is a collection of member contributed articles written to keep everyone advised of recent and on-going preservation activities, BCAGP needs, and incidental graveyard related material. We are always looking for items of interest and are open to suggestions on future content.

*Permission to reprint any materials herein is granted provided they are printed in their entirety and that BCAGP's author is cited.*

*Our newsletters are archived online on our website in full color*

Don't forget to check our facebook for updates and more photos!

Check the [www.bcagp.org](http://www.bcagp.org) website for internet edition newsletter archives in full color!

