

# THE MENNONITE COMMUNITY



*OCTOBER, 1950*

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS



*History surrounds you as you worship on this old meetinghouse ground.*

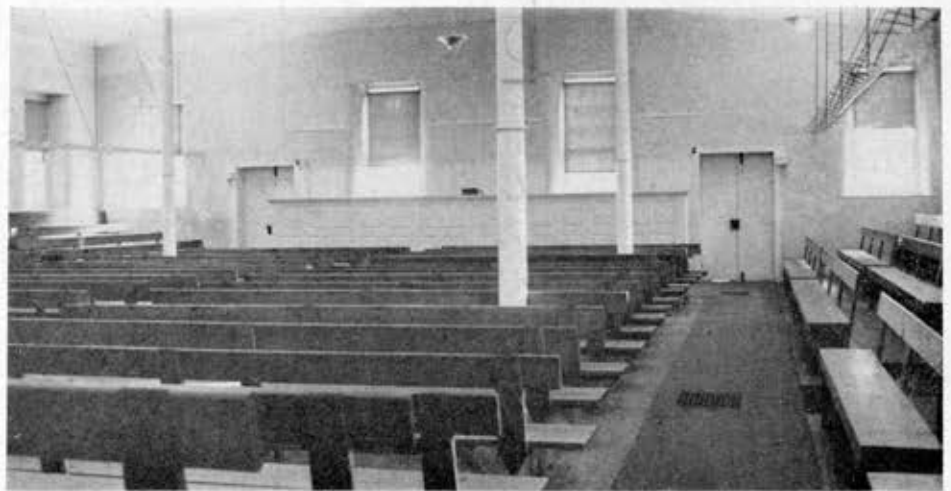
# The Deep Run Meetinghouse

## THE DEEP RUN MEETINGHOUSE OF 1872

This meetinghouse was the third to be built by this congregation and was 50 x 65 feet in size. The porch to the right was built some years after the main building was erected. Following 1900 there was a tendency to build porches on meetinghouses in the Franconia Conference.

**I**N 1746 A handful of people dedicated a log building as a place to worship God. They had cut trees from the heavily wooded areas of what is now Bedminster Township in Bucks County, Pa., and hewn them into logs for their first meetinghouse. The deed for the ground had been granted by William Allen of Philadelphia to the "religious Society of People called Menonists."

On April 17, 1949—more than two centuries later—descendants of the Kolbs, Friends, Oberholtzers, Swartzes, Landises, Leathermans, Detweilers, Kulps, and others dedicated a new brick meetinghouse. This new meet-



## INTERIOR OF THE 1872 BUILDING

This view is typical of other old meetinghouses of this area. Note the long white pulpit, the back rests on the benches, and the simple, chaste appearance of the interior. On the pulpit is a German Bible that was printed at Germantown by Christopher Saur in 1743. For two centuries this Bible with its heavy back and brass clasps occupied this place. It is now kept inside the new pulpit.

inghouse was the fourth one to be built on the brow of an elevation over-

looking a small tributary of the Deep Run Creek. The log building of 1746

## TRIBUTE TO THE DEEP RUN MENNONITE MEETINGHOUSE

*Alyce E. Stocklin.*

*Crude were the tools that hewed the rock,  
Only an ax that felled the trees;  
But a steadfast faith and willing hands  
Made a monument of these.*

*Simple the structure, sturdy and strong,  
As the lives your fathers knew,  
Unshaken by storms of time,  
Unchangeable and true.*

*More than a century it has stood  
Though the builders long are dust;  
A symbol to posterity  
Of their everlasting trust.*

*Babes in arms and youth and aged  
Gathered together there;  
To consecrate, to wed, to bless,  
Or breathe a thankful prayer.*

*And now the cornerstone must go,  
The pegs and old joists torn;  
No more to hold those sturdy walls  
Or the benches so well worn.*

*Crude were the tools that hewed the rock,  
Only an ax that felled the trees,  
But God was there when willing hands  
Made a monument of these!*



**THE DEEP RUN MEETINGHOUSE  
DEDICATED IN 1949**

Nearly 800 persons can be seated in this house of worship which has over 455 members and a Sunday-school enrollment of 530. During the year of building members worshiped at other churches and in the near-by township schoolhouse. The congregation has members in missions and relief work in Belgium, Puerto Rico, and Ethiopia; it also supports missionaries in India and Argentina.

was replaced in 1766 by a stone one which, though enlarged and repaired in 1795, continued until it was torn down in 1872.

The meetinghouse of 1872 served till April 4, 1948, when the last services were held in it, with Abram W. Yothers preaching the final sermon. On April 5 men of the congregation gathered to raze the old building and begin the new one. By another year the present Deep Run Mennonite Meetinghouse stood ready for dedication and use. Hundreds of automobiles crowded the large parking ground on the day of dedication and the auditorium overflowed with people.

When the meetinghouse of 1872 was being razed to make room for the new one a stone was found in the wall with

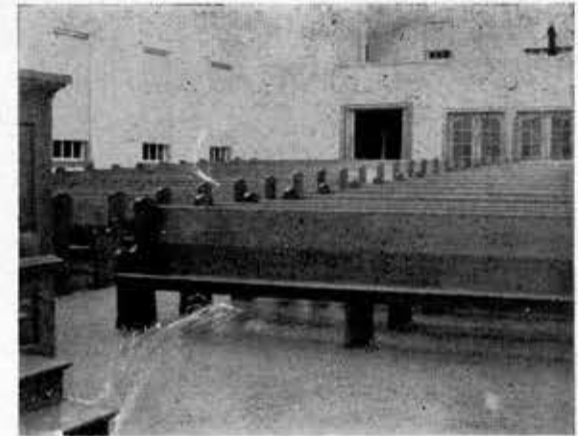
this inscription: "Matthias G. Melin, May the 28th, 1766." Melin is believed to have been a stone mason. This stone was placed in the wall of the new church.

The 1872 building of stone-stucco finish cost \$4,019.94. The 1948 brick meetinghouse cost approximately \$86,000.00.

Present ministers are Wilson Overholt, Abram Yothers, and Erwin Nace. Daniel Gahman and Harvey Meyers are deacons. Enos B. Wismer, retired, is a guest at the Eastern Mennonite Home at Souderton.

**INTERIOR OF PRESENT DEEP RUN MEETINGHOUSE**

This view shows the main auditorium from a front anteroom. In the rear is the gallery. This large new meetinghouse is used for summer and winter Bible schools, with enrollments of 270 and 200 respectively. About 65 young people are active in youth mission projects. Recently a junior sewing circle was organized. Local mission outposts are located at near-by Groveland and Bristol.



**STILL STANDS THE SCHOOLHOUSE**

When the Deep Run Schoolhouse was built in 1842 teachers were paid three cents per day by each pupil. The three R's were taught and the pupils furnished their own supplies.

The schoolhouse fell into disrepair for some years only to be repaired by the Bucks County Historical Society and the Deep Run congregation. The women's sewing circle used it for packing relief clothing and canned goods before the new meetinghouse was erected.

**INSIDE THE OLD SCHOOLHOUSE**

The old desks and benches were taken recently from the loft of the schoolhouse for a special occasion when this picture was taken. Besides the three R's, music was taught and portions of songs and hymns were written on the exposed ceiling joints. These may still be seen.

In this old school the Mennonite minister, Samuel Godshalk, taught. Enos Wismer, retired minister of the Deep Run congregation, has in his possession a slip of paper that is over 100 years old and reads as follows:

**REWARD**

This is to certify that Abraham Wismer obtained Head in my School Fry-day the 10th A D 1843. Deep Run School. Given by Samuel Godshalk Teacher Bedminster Bucks County State of Penn.

