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THE ARCHIVES AT BETHANY

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November 1918 - 100 Children and Five Employees Ill with Influenza

A little over 100 years ago, the world was reeling in the wake of the deadly Spanish Flu pandemic. It was the deadliest flu pandemic of the 20th Century and lasted from 1918 to 1920, killing over 50 million people.

Bethany Orphans' Home was dealing with the Spanish Flu in her own way while working to keep the children and staff healthy. They made a call out for assistance when their numbers reached 100 children and five staff members down with the illness.

Please take a moment to go to the Berks History Center's article on the Spanish Flu, <http://www.berkshistory.org/multimedia/articles/flu/>, "But something else that was invisible was in the air, also. In days it would affect thousands of households, especially in the city and the bigger boroughs, and bring lasting grief to many.

That *something* were the germs of the Spanish influenza, which had been gradually spreading across the United States after having earlier devastated Europe and Asia. There had been reports of outbreaks across the United States throughout the summer, especially in the military camps, but the disease seemed far away."

Their advice during this time was, "Stifle your cough or sneeze if you can. If you can't, bury it in a handkerchief."

Reported in the Reading Eagle during this time and revisited by Bill Uhrich on the 100-year Anniversary of the pandemic was this:

100 Years Ago, Monday, Nov. 25, 1918 100 Bethany Orphans Ill with Influenza

Need Cocoa for Convalescent Patients- Womelsdorf Has 40 Cases

Womelsdorf, Nov. 25 (Special) – At Bethany Orphans' Home, 100 children and five employees are ill with influenza. There are 170 boys and girls at the home, and at no time in the history of the institution did such a calamity visit it. None of the patients are critically ill. Dr. J.H. Horne has charge. Rev. W.F. More, superintendent, and his wife are working day and night to give the tots relief and to comfort them. Five Reading nurses assist Dr. Horne.

"We need cocoa for the children who are convalescent," said Rev. More, when asked whether the management of the home desired help from the public.

Womelsdorf proper has 40 cases of influenza at this time, and one death was reported during the past 24 hours. At no time was the epidemic more serious here.

We wish you and your families all the best and hope you remain at home safe and sound. Blessings to you all from your Bethany family. Spring to shall find you, a verse from Rev. W.F. More, "Oh green are the Bethany trees that bend O'er the Spring below, where the beeches grow and the children that hither wend."

Bethany Word Search

Bethany Children's Home

E	R	A	Y	O	R	P	H	A	N	S	C	A	H	REV WILSON MORE
I	R	E	S	A	E	C	I	A	S	A	A	I	I	REBER COTTAGE
E	C	O	B	B	D	E	G	C	V	P	R	N	R	MAY DAY
E	H	E	M	E	R	Y	H	T	L	P	P	E	E	SEWING
G	E	G	S	N	R	I	A	I	T	L	E	R	V	APPLES
D	R	T	N	K	O	C	D	M	E	E	N	D	H	SPRING
G	R	S	S	I	A	S	O	E	E	S	T	L	E	REV HENNING
E	I	P	E	O	W	T	L	T	S	E	R	I	N	CHERRIES
K	E	R	R	G	P	E	I	I	T	B	Y	H	N	EAGLES PEAK
G	S	I	S	D	C	M	S	N	W	A	U	C	I	BRIDESBURG
I	T	N	E	D	T	C	A	E	G	V	G	R	N	CHILDREN
R	N	G	Y	R	R	W	D	L	E	O	E	E	G	ICE SKATING
K	A	E	P	S	E	L	G	A	E	R	R	R	N	ORPHANS
S	N	C	L	E	G	R	I	N	E	L	R	N	I	CARPENTRY
														LAMPOST

Bethany Trivia

(Find the answers to the questions in previous issues of the Archives Newsletters)

1. What year did Bethany open its doors? _____
2. Who was the 1st Bethany Orphan? _____
3. Who was the 1st Bethany superintendent? _____
4. Where was the 2nd Bethany Home located? _____
5. Who was Joseph Christ? _____
6. What year was Bausman Memorial Church originally dedicated? _____
7. What year did Bausman Memorial Church burn down? _____
8. What year was it that our young ladies met the "Commodity Queens"? _____
9. Who is the oldest living Bethany boy? _____
10. Who was John Engelhart? _____
11. What years was Rev. Ray Vandevere at Bethany as an orphan? _____
12. What year did Rev. Ray Vandevere return to Bethany as superintendent? _____
13. What years did Rev. Garnet O. Adams serve as superintendent? _____
14. Which cottage had a visiting spectator as related by Kelly Reppert? _____
15. What was the name used for our property before Bethany came? _____

A Poem by one of our past Bethany Girls...

(Although, not history yet, this was a recent submission to our archival records, I cannot release the writers name, but wanted to share it with each of you. Bethany may not be today, as you remember, however, we still have much work to do and many lives to touch and change.)

I've wanted to change but never knew how

But I came to Bethany and I'm learning now, I've been beaten, raped, and betrayed

And the whole time I've just been trying to get away,

I've put it all behind me and I'm starting new.

I've only become stronger because of what I went through

I'm going to school and getting good grades

And because of everything positive all that was negative is starting to fade

I'm about to graduate and go to college

All this because Bethany gave me the knowledge

Bethany is helping me to become a woman who is grown

And it's become the closest thing for me to call home

When I leave here, I'm going to be a new woman who's going to succeed in life

And all that Bethany has taught me is what's going to make me a wonderful mother & a fantastic wife.

Although some people's pasts have been inflicted by pain

Sometimes all it takes to turn them around is a helping hand

That's what Bethany has been to me, my hand to help make my life pleasant

Always remember "never let your past predict your present because your future depends on you."

Reading Corner

With all this extra time on our hands, I personally have caught up on a good deal of reading. I clearly have a fondness for the stories and history of orphans, and a focus for me lately has been the subject matter. I wanted to share with you some excellent reading if you find yourself with time and want to connect with stories of others, whether they be historical fiction or the very real and true stories and memories of other orphaned children in the world.

Lisa Wingate wrote the historical fiction – *Before We Were Yours* and then followed up with the stories of those who were affected and survived the Tennessee Children's Home, *Before and After*. Have your tissues ready, both are amazing and very well written. Do you have a reading suggestion for me? Send it to my email: jkoch@bethanyhome.org.

House Parent Photo Collection Discovered

1965-1967

Max & Kay Lienhard
Leinbach Cottage Girls, Etc.



