

ARCHAEOLOGY PROPOSAL FOR THE  
**HENRY MELCHIOR MUHLENBERG HOUSE**  
TRAPPE, PENNSYLVANIA  
LOUIS FARRELL, SITE DIRECTOR

For six weeks, during the summer of 2010, members of the Anthropology Department of Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, intend to conduct an archaeological excavation at the Henry Melchior Muhlenberg House in Trappe, Pennsylvania.

**Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711-1787) is a significant figure in the history of the nation and the American Lutheran Church. In 1741, at Gross-Hennersdorf in Upper Lusatia, Muhlenberg was called to serve the spiritual needs of several German Lutheran congregations in the New World as a missionary.**

**He arrived in Pennsylvania in 1742 and by 1748 had organized the first Lutheran synod. Before settling in Trappe in 1776, Muhlenberg had ministered to congregations from New York to Georgia.**

**He supported the patriotic cause in the Revolutionary War. Muhlenberg's sons were a minister, a major-general in Washington's army and the first Speaker of the United States House of Representatives.**

The dig will be unique in that all of the labor to excavate the site, and clean and catalog the artifacts recovered will be done by volunteers trained by Louis Farrell. The volunteer corps includes high school youth members of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod.

This public Archaeology project is intended to tie the site more closely to the community, leading to a greater appreciation of history and local historic sites. More specifically, the project will help connect the regional and national Lutheran community to the story of its growth in the colonial era.

The dig at the Muhlenberg House will be supervised by faculty and students of the Anthropology Department of Temple University. Participants will be:

Director: **David G. Orr, Ph.D.**  
Site Director, Volunteer Coordinator: **Louis Farrell**, a member of St John's, Ambler  
Research Assistant, Site Supervisor: **Megan Hess**  
Liaison to Trappe Historical Society: **Emily Sicher**

Other members of the supervisory and technical staff will be added as needed.

In the months preceding the excavation, Louis Farrell will recruit and train local high school archaeology clubs in the ethics, methods and documentation of the discipline, in preparation for their inclusion in the work crew. Over fifty trained volunteers will assist on site after completing a training program lasting approximately fifteen hours.

Mr. Farrell has already conducted a training session with some of our Synod youth, thanks to the assistance of Synod Youth Ministry Specialist, Molly Beck Dean. It is also hoped that a number of adults from Lutheran congregations can undergo similar training and participate in the dig.

This project will have three objectives.

**First**, an Archaeological Base Map will be prepared, locating all previous work.

**Second**, the stone outline of the summer kitchen on the east side of the building will be excavated to show the outline and determine whether there are features which should be studied further.

And **third**, the site of the previous redware kiln excavation on the south side of the building will be completed.

All recovered artifacts will be cleaned, cataloged and stored so that they can be analyzed at a later date. Further research objectives will be developed working by with the Trappe Historical Society.

The Henry Melchior Muhlenberg House is an important structure, with links to significant figures in American history, and particularly Lutheran history. In the past, excavations have been conducted by university researchers, largely working alone.

Dr. Orr and Mr. Farrell are including well-trained amateurs in all aspects of the planning and excavation of the site. Further, interested students and adults will have the opportunity to continue their contribution by working in the laboratory as the project moves to the interpretive phase.

The dig proposed for the 2010 field season provides an exceptional opportunity for Lutheran engagement with our history at points where it intersects our national history.

**The public component will increase local and regional interest in Henry Muhlenberg, increase awareness of the history of the Lutheran Church in Colonial Pennsylvania and will ensure a wider interest in archaeology and historic preservation.**

Additionally, the intimate contact between participants and the artifacts, the site and the people invested in the work, will increase the sense of pride that the diggers have in their history. There will be a greater connection between the people of today's Montgomery County and those who lived on the same landscape in earlier times. Lutherans will have a unique opportunity to present their history to the public.

RESOLUTION FOR  
THE MUHLENBERG HOUSE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION PROJECT

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Whereas, God blesses humankind with the arts and sciences as tools of learning; and

Whereas, Louis Farrell, of St John's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Ambler, a doctoral candidate in the Department of Archaeology of Temple University, has proposed an archaeological excavation in 2010 at Trappe, Pennsylvania, at the site of the home of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711-1787), a figure of general historical, and of particular Lutheran, significance in North America; and

Whereas, the project involves active participation of Lutherans, especially the youth of this Synod; and

Whereas, the project will increase public knowledge and appreciation of Lutheran history, and deepen our Lutheran sense of identity and heritage; and

Whereas, the Department of Anthropology of Temple University, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, under whose aegis and funding the excavation will be conducted in accordance with the standards and methodology of the relevant academic disciplines, has approved the proposal:

Therefore, be it

Resolved that this Synod extends its appreciation and encouragement to Louis Farrell and those professionals, students and volunteers who undertake the proposed archaeological excavation at the Henry Melchior Muhlenberg house.