

Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society
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Lancaster Roots 2018
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

“Voices of Conscience” Exhibit Comes to Lancaster

- “Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War” will open with a reception beginning at 2 p.m. on Sunday, August 19, in the Crossings Meeting Room at Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Rd, Lititz, Pa. It will continue daily 2 to 7 p.m. through September 26.
- Complimenting the exhibit are educational meetings looking at conscientious objection on Monday, August 27, and Thursday, August 30.

Lancaster, Pa., July 6, 2018—A century ago, the United States had just entered “The Great War.” While many wholeheartedly endorsed this effort, there were persons who could not in good conscience be involved in the killing of other humans. Often at great cost, even including death in a few cases, they spoke through their words and actions of a different path.

As Americans commemorate this anniversary, will they remember those whose peace witness challenged the call to war? “Voices of Conscience: Peace Witness in the Great War” is a traveling exhibit developed by Kauffman Museum, North Newton, Kansas, which remembers the stories of people of faith who opposed the war. The exhibit examines key questions such as: Who speaks for peace in times of war? What am I willing to fight for? Is paying for war participating in war? and Who are the voices of conscience today?

The exhibit will be held in the Crossings Meeting Room at Landis Homes, 1001 East Oregon Rd, Lititz, Pa.. Entrance is via the main entrance of the new Calvin G. and Janet C. High Learning and Wellness Center at Landis Homes from August 19 to September 26. It is open from 2 to 7 p.m. daily, with other hours by appointment. There will be an opening reception at 2 pm on August 19.

A series of educational meetings will be held alongside the exhibit, focusing on conscientious objection to war.

“Voices of Conscience: The Witness of Conscientious Objectors in WWI” will be at 7 pm on Monday, August 27, at Martindale Mennonite Fellowship Center, 352 Martindale Road, Ephrata, Pa. The evening will feature a dramatic reading of the court martial trial of Elbert Hostetler. Dr. Steve Nolt, senior scholar at the Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College, will speak on peace churches and WWI, and the Conservative Anabaptist Service Program will make a presentation.

Take a broader look at the conscientious objector experience at 7 pm on Thursday, August 30, at Lancaster Brethren in Christ Church, 1865 Fruitville Pike, Lancaster, Pa. Anne Yoder, peace collection archivist at Swarthmore College, will share from her work collecting the accounts of conscientious objectors. She expands the narrative to include nonreligious views in our understanding of conscience in WWI. Beth Hostetler Mark, librarian emeritus at Messiah College, will present the E. J. Swalm story. Swalm was drafted by the Canadian military but refused to enlist and was imprisoned. He was later paroled through the intervention of Samuel F. Coffman and other Mennonite leaders. He became a minister and bishop with the Brethren in Christ Church and was well known for his active support of the peace position.

This Exhibit created and toured by the Kauffman Museum, Bethel College, North Newton Kansas.

“Voices of Conscience” is part of over forty Lancaster Roots 2018 events. Lancaster Roots combines the events of the Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society and the 1719 Hans Herr House & Museum. Through public presentations, food, music, field trips, and classes, these events reveal Lancaster and its people: their stories, culture, and history.

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