

Motto of the Threefold Hershey Community:

**'Made on the Farm'**

Golden Eagle and Golden Rule Define Golden Age as  
Corps de Michael Celebrates Threefold Centennial!

Three Kings' Day 2010  
Hershey, Pennsylvania USA



### Friends of Stonehaven and The Corps de Michael,

The defining Stonehaven moment of 2009 – perhaps the decade – arrived in the early morning hours of September 13<sup>th</sup>. As the aurora (rosy light before the dawn) gradually illumined the starry eastern sky, Jordan Eric Minium discovered the miracle of new life on the Templar Meadow. Rushing back to the Widow Logan House, the inner city youth could barely contain the joy, wonder and excitement of his discovery: a newborn calf of chocolate brown hue! Born on the birthday of Milton S. Hershey, the philanthropic “Chocolate King”, Stonehaven’s first calf in well over 33 years was promptly dubbed, *Milton I.*

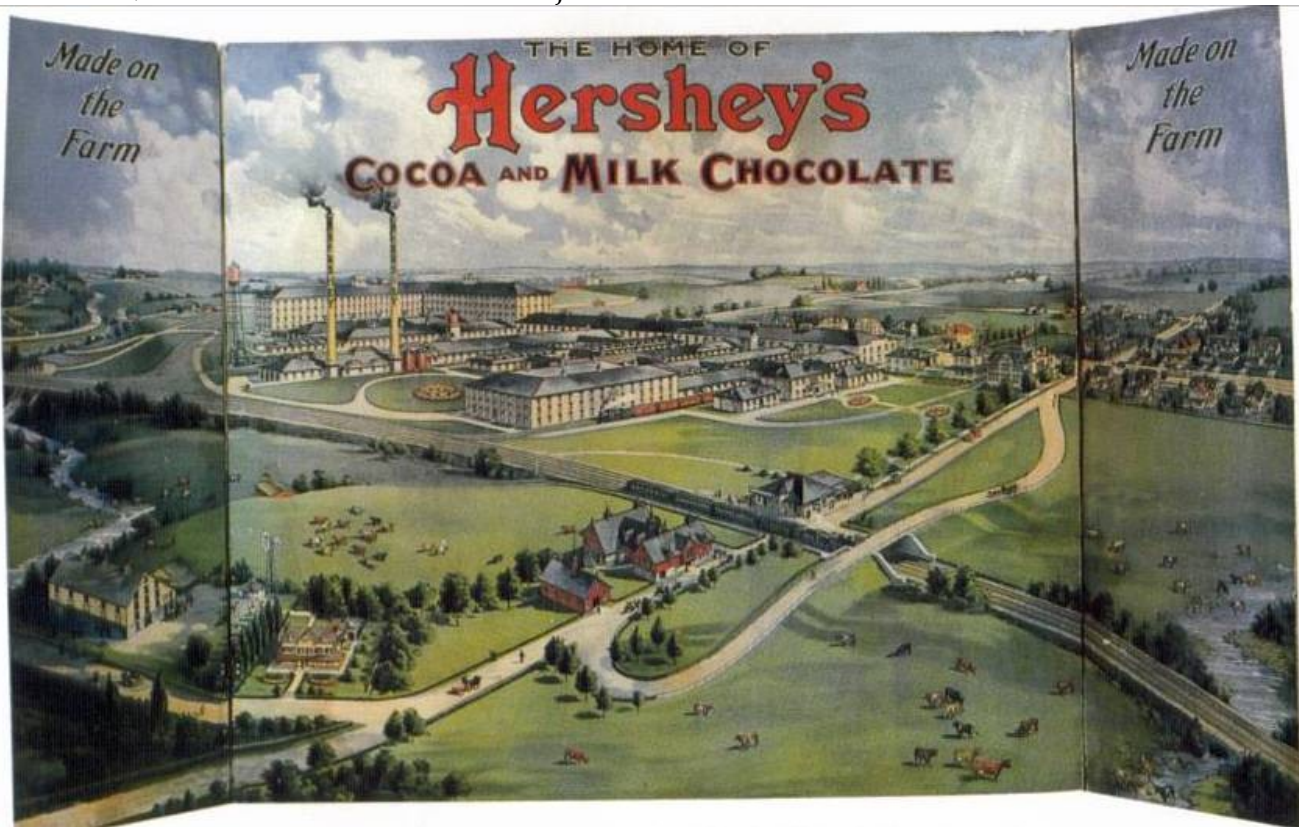


“Milton” heralds a new era at Stonehaven Farm (Founded 1737). Since August, organic heifers (adolescent cows) have grazed the meadow and woods adjoining the Widow Logan House. The return of dairy animals follows a 33+ year hiatus and signals an organic coming of age of the far-sighted vision of the late proprietress, Ruth Ellen Eshelman Lenker. In 1958 (heyday of DDT and TV dinners), Ruth acquired Stonehaven for the purposes of organic agriculture. Crowning the first decade of the new century, the heifer initiative offers some measure of the practical work arising out of the Michaelic Deed which opened the third millennium. On Whitsunday 2000 over 33 friends arrived at Stonehaven for the founding celebrations of the Susquehanna Corps de Michael – *Anthroposophical Society in Hershey*. Five months later, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, Class Lessons of the School of Spiritual Science were inaugurated for the first time in the Susquehanna Valley.



Some forty years ago, fresh Stonehaven cows’ milk was retrieved from the Farm’s milk house via daily visits of the Hershey Milk Truck. As a key ingredient of the *Great American Chocolate Bar*, Stonehaven milk was shipped a stone’s throw to the world’s largest chocolate factory – heart of the Hershey Farm Community. Boldly

begun in 1903, the farm community included: an enormous factory, model utopian town, and thousands of acres of adjacent lush farmland.



Only six years later, in 1909, Milton and Catherine Hershey effectively threefolded their far-reaching social experiment by founding a school for orphans on a 12,000 acre farm campus. When the *Deed of Trust* was executed on November 15<sup>th</sup> 1909, the Chocolate King and Queen offered a permanent home to the dregs of society: homeless orphan boys fending for themselves on countless American streets. At the heart of the new school was the transforming power of Nature. Boys and (later) girls experienced firsthand the rhythms of the seasons along with the character building traits of farm chores. Countless Milton Hershey School alumni credit farm life and chores as building the "values of a lifetime." Influenced by his own farm upbringing in Central Pennsylvania, Milton Hershey referred to the chocolate factory as the 'barn' of the Hershey Farm Community. Factory or 'barn-workers' lived in the 'farm-houses' which comprised the surrounding model town. Just beyond the 'farm-houses' was the 12,000 acre farm campus of the school – home of the orphan boys, who milked the cows, which supplied the 'barn' with its key ingredient. In turn, the profits of the *Great American Chocolate Bar* afforded a free independent school education, clothes, food, medical care, college tuition, and all incidental needs of the formerly vagabond orphans.

An early, though mostly forgotten, motto of the Hershey Chocolate Corporation effectively conveys the threefold character of the interlinked and sustained community: **'Made on the Farm.'** This motto first appears on corporate

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posters and promotional literature in 1909, the very year the farm community was threefolded! Posters depict the factory (barn) at the heart of the community, surrounded by the town (farmhouses), then cows, and lush green pastures. Voltaire's idealistic portrayal of the farm as *the best of all possible worlds* (*Candide*) was put into practice through a social impulse known as "The Hershey Idea." However, owing to his Mennonite instilled humility, Milton Hershey quashed attempts to showcase the threefold communities he founded in Hershey and later, Cuba.

Beginning in 1918, without fanfare, Milton S. Hershey quietly transferred his personal fortune and ownership of the Hershey Chocolate Corporation to three community trusts, the largest of which was earmarked for the orphans' school. The gift, kept secret until November 1923, insured the school's perpetuity with a trust fund that today exceeds the endowment of the wealthiest independent schools, as well as most colleges and universities. One year later, in 1919, Rudolf Steiner published *The Threefold Commonwealth* delineating the free beneficent working of economic, cultural, and political spheres – a threefold social organism represented in Hershey by factory, school, and model town.

Today, the former motto of the Hershey Chocolate Corporation is mostly consigned to commemorative tins and souvenir shops at Hersheypark. But on Milton Hershey's birthday, the enduring spirit of **Made on the Farm** lived again in the Templar Meadow at Stonehaven Farm. The timeless wonder of the miracle of new life experienced by Jordan, a city youth feeding heifers in the rosy light of the aurora, renewed the vision and deed of the Chocolate King. Just as cow manure enlivens the self-sufficient farm organism, so did Milton S. Hershey enliven the threefold farm community when he brought the dregs of American youth to *the sweetest place on earth*. Bereft of blood family, the boys here forged ties of brotherhood which are today as much a part of the sacred geography of Hershey as Spring Creek and the lush rolling countryside.

The sister-brotherhood aspect of Hershey's sacred geography afforded a perfect venue for The Corps de Michael's third annual Knights Templars Inter-branch Conference and St. John's Festival. As modern 'Knights of Michael' arrived from Baltimore, Buffalo, the Hudson Valley of New York, and six counties of the

Susquehanna Valley, the spirit of sister-brotherhood was much in evidence! John Charlton mowed grass and prepared the bonfire site as Bard Franklin conserved

grass clippings and together with Mark Peura, artistically pruned a weeping cherry to reveal its true Grace. Lynn Charlton arranged picnic tables with linens and fresh flowers as still others spontaneously pitched-in with final preparations. (Photos on pp. 3 & 4 courtesy of Richard Swerling, Raphael Branch)



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The 2009 festival conference included: branch reports and recognition, study



and conversation of a reading, "The Lost Temple and Its Restoration", singing, potluck picnic, Bard Franklin's magical Arthurian legends, a Class Lesson of the School of Spiritual Science, field trip to the model town, Palace of Art, and 'Hershey Temple' (also known as Founders Hall at the Milton Hershey School), and, of course, gargantuan bonfire-on-the-meadow! David Lenker's keynote, "Knights of the Temple – Defenders of the Rose Cross" explored the

Templar/Rosicrucian impulses at work in the founding and threefolding of the Hershey community. We also considered the 2002 Michaelic Triumph of the community over a Wall Street-backed proposal to rip asunder the threefold community by selling the Hershey Chocolate Company to the highest bidder.

At the close of the conference, representatives of the Aurora Group of the Anthroposophical Society presented an immense golden eagle sculpture to Stonehaven and The Corps de Michael. Symbol of Saint John, the golden eagle offers a visible emblem and confirmation of 2008 celebrations commemorating the 50<sup>th</sup> golden anniversary of 'Vision in Action at Stonehaven.' Additionally, the golden eagle commemorates the golden age of Michaelic sister-brotherhood ignited in the flames of the 2008 St. John's Bonfire; when representatives of seven spiritual communities experienced the highlight of the '08 Knights Templars Inter-Branch Conference. The golden eagle is the gift of Franklin LaVoie and Martin Croes. En route to Hershey from Buffalo, the two visited the Bald Eagle sacred geography formations in Central Pennsylvania and later stopped at a sale along the banks of the shining Susquehanna. A golden eagle, not intended for sale, caught the eye of Bard Franklin, who quickly persuaded the owner of a new mission for the eagle!



Within a day or two of the Templar Conference, work promptly resumed on enclosing the Templar Meadow with a fence for grazing organic heifers. Together with mother cows at Kingfisher Dairy Farm, this initiative produces organic milk shipped to natural food stores in Philadelphia, metropolitan Harrisburg, and Central Pennsylvania. A fence had to be built around 5.6 acres of meadowland, portions of which were overgrown with brush and trees after decades of disuse. Fence-lines had to be planned, brush cleared, trees cut, posts erected, and wire strung. My partners in the heifer initiative were David Fisher of Kingfisher Dairy Farm and three Amish boys: Ennis, David, and Amos. Eventually, a gate was hung by the Widow Logan House to allow admittance of farm machinery and vehicles. David Stephens and I helped Michael Dowdrick hang the handsome metal gate with ornamental scrolls.

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One hot July day, I invited David and the Amish boys to join me for a picnic lunch on the West Lawn. After sharing food and apple cider, I asked the boys if they would like to hear the story of Milton Hershey. "Yes," they answered in unison. The boys listened intently as I relayed the rags-to-riches story of a local farm boy...who, like themselves, was born and raised in the culture of the Pennsylvania Dutch. After several business failures, the poor farm boy came to preside over a chocolate empire until, at the height of his success, he gave away his entire fortune to those who had nothing. The inspiring story closed by recalling Milton Hershey's instruction that the Golden Rule should hang in every class and living room of the Milton Hershey School. At this, one of the Amish boys remarked that the Golden Rule—*do unto others as you would have them do unto you*—hangs to this day in his Amish classroom! Apparently, the Golden Rule contributed to the moral fiber of the young Milton by way of his Mennonite mother or a one-room school resembling the spirit of Amish pedagogy.



On 15<sup>th</sup> November 2009, the one hundredth anniversary of the *Deed of Trust*, The Corps de Michael's All Souls' Festival remembered Milton and Catherine Hershey. Their Michaelic Deed continues to serve towards fulfilling the Word of Christ to His disciples:

*Inasmuch as you have done it unto one of these the very least of your brothers, you have done it unto me.*



On Whitsunday we recalled the closely related principle of the Anthroposophical movement: *to create the heart and kernel of a sister-brotherhood based on the all-embracing human love that transcends race, sex, profession, religion, and so forth...those who work together in a sister-brotherhood are magicians, because they draw higher beings into their circle...When we give ourselves over to sister-brotherhood, this giving, this merging into the totality, is a steeling, a strengthening of our organs. When we then act or speak as members of such a community, it is not the single soul that acts or speaks in us, but the spirit of the community. This will be the secret of the progress of humanity in the future: to work through communities.* (Rudolf Steiner, Berlin, 23 November 1905)

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Later this year, in the season of Christmas/Epiphany 2010-11 we shall begin our third decade of Commonwealth Center/Corps de Michael community life. We recall with heartfelt gratitude all who have passed through Stonehaven's purple & amethyst door to build a Michaelic community fired by true knowledge of supersensible realities. Our continuing mission: to develop consciousness through service to others, support the culturally renewing endeavors of the wider region, and prepare for the sublime community that begins when we ultimately cross the threshold to higher worlds. We form an Anthroposophical Society here on earth in order that we might find one another again in the spirit:

*[When we cultivate an "Anthroposophical" society on earth], a karmic bond is created between persons who should find each other in the spiritual world, something they would be unable to do if they ran around alone here. Precisely by virtue of the possibility of sharing spiritual knowledge and wisdom with one another, immeasurably much is done for the life in the spiritual world, which works back on the physical-sensible world—for (the earth) is perpetually under the influence of the spiritual world. (Rudolf Steiner, "Geographic Medicine," St. Gallen, 16 November 1917)*

In the extended light of humble shepherds and enlightened Magi, we offer loving memory of members of our Corps/Commonwealth community who abide in us from yonder realms of Glory: Eleanor Robison Grubb Thomson, Collette Rentier, Ruth Ellen Eshelman Lenker, Thelma Barnett as well as presenters/writers: Dr. Henry Taylor Noyes Williams, Terry Neville, Dr. Ralph L. Slotten, and visitor, Dr. Ernst Katz.

David Lenker  
Susquehanna Corps de Michael –  
Anthroposophical Society in Hershey  
Commonwealth Center for Anthroposophy  
Stonehaven Farm (Founded 1737)  
22 Bachmanville Lane  
Hershey, Pennsylvania USA

[thecorpsdemichael@yahoo.com](mailto:thecorpsdemichael@yahoo.com)  
Telephone: 717-964-3376



Visit us on the web!

[www.corpsdemichael.org](http://www.corpsdemichael.org)

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