

*Teacher's Guide for  
Lower Elementary School Tours  
At Historic Bethabara Park*



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## Background

*Bethabara* is the birthplace of Winston-Salem and Forsyth County. On November 17, 1753, fifteen Moravian settlers arrived in Bethabara, having traveled south along the Great Wagon Road from Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. The Moravians were German-speaking Protestants. When they arrived at Bethabara, they found an abandoned cabin that served as a temporary home and as the first structure of their settlement. They gave their settlement the name *Bethabara*, a Hebrew name meaning “house of passage.”

The Moravian Church had its beginning in 1457, in what is now the Czech Republic, and is regarded as the oldest Protestant denomination. The Moravians were followers of the reformer and martyr Jan Hus, who was burned at the stake in 1415. In 1457, the Moravians formed the *Unitas Fratrum* or the “Unity of the Brethren.”

Bethabara was established on a tract of land consisting of approximately 100,000 acres. The tract was named *der Wachau* (Wachovia) in honor of the ancestral estate of Count Nicholas Louis von Zinzendorf, a friend of the Moravians that offered them refuge and upon whose estate they built the congregation town of *Herrnhut* (“under the care of the Lord”). Herrnhut became the principal Moravian town in Europe.

The Moravians prospered in Herrnhut, but decided to relocate to the New World to establish autonomous Moravian communities and undertake missionary work among the Native Americans. When the Earl of Granville, one of the original Lord Proprietors of the colony of North Carolina, offered to sell the church a large tract of land in the Piedmont, the Moravians agreed and decided to establish a large, self-sufficient community in North Carolina.

Bethabara was established on a communal living plan that enabled the Moravian settlers to build a community in the wilderness. This was not typical of 18<sup>th</sup> century frontier life. Pooling their labor and resources allowed for rapid settlement of the frontier, where they established a mixed economy of agriculture and trades (such as pottery, blacksmithing, joinery, and more). The Moravians established trades-oriented communities on the frontier, where virtually no trades existed. In this way, they were able to provide goods and services for trade with their neighbors as well as produce commodities for export.

## The First Settlers

The men chosen were selected carefully for their talents and professions, to fit the needs of their pioneer work. The first colonists included the following men:

1. **Bernard Adam Grube**, a German by birth, aged 37 years, Ordinarius (full professor), Pfleger (minister), and upon occasion cook and gardener.
2. **Jacob Loesch**, born in New York, aged 31, their Vorsteher (business manager).
3. **Hans Martin Kalberlahn**, born in Norway, aged 31, surgeon (doctor).
4. **Friedrich Jacob Pfeil**, born in Germany, age 28, shoemaker, nurse, and moreover willing and skillful in many things.
5. **Erich Ingebretsen**, born in Norway, aged 31, millwright and carpenter.
6. **Henrich Feldhausen**, born in Holstein, aged 38, shoemaker, carpenter, millwright, cooper, sieve-maker, turner and also Pennsylvania farmer.
7. **Jacob Lung**, born in Germany, aged 40, gardener, washer, and skillful in many things.
8. **Hans Petersen**, born in Holstein, aged 28, tailor, grubber, woodcutter, skillful in many things and willing in all.
9. **Johannes Beroth**, born in Germany, aged 28, a Pennsylvania farmer.
10. **Christopher Merkly**, born in Germany, aged 39, baker, and good, true dependable farmer.
11. **Hermannus Loesch**, born in Pennsylvania, who we will be recalled in the spring.
12. **Johannes Lischer**, who shall study the road, the country, etc., and make himself known that in the future he can be our messenger to North Carolina.
13. **Nathaniel Seidel** (minister in Pennsylvania), who will conduct them to the place and return in December with Br. Lischer with a report.
14. **Gottlob Konigsdorfer**, Chor Junger (group leader) of the Single Brethren.
15. **Joeseph Haberland**

- Adapted from *Records of the Moravians in North Carolina, vol. 1, ed. Fries.*

Note: The last four men listed returned to Pennsylvania after one month.

*Suggested activity:* children could take on the identity of the original pioneers. Think about why each pioneer would be important to the group.

## Names and Terms

- **Bethabara – *House of Passage*** – the first Moravian colonial town site established in the Carolina Piedmont, settled in 1753. The name Bethabara was given in September 1754 when Bishop Peter Bohler visited the community. Bethabara was the administrative center of the Wachovia tract until the early 1770s.
- **Salem – *Peace*** – the central town for the Moravians' Wachovia tract, begun in 1766.
- **Wachovia** – from *der Wachau* – the name of the ancestral Zinzendorf estate located on the Danube River in what is now Austria.
- **Herrnhut – *under the care of the Lord*** – the congregation town that the Moravians established on Count Zinzendorf's estate in June of 1722.
- **Earl of Granville** – the last of eight English Lord Proprietors of Carolina. On August 7, 1753, Earl Granville conveyed the Wachovia tract to the Moravians.
- **Bishop August Gottlieb Spangenberg** – Moravian bishop who brought the Moravians to the British colony of Georgia in April 1735. In 1752, he led a group of Moravians from Pennsylvania to Carolina to survey a new Moravian settlement.
- **Oeconomie** – system by which people contribute to the common good according to their ability and receive according to their need.
- **Choir System** – system organizing the community into groups according to their age, sex and marital status. The Moravians had many choirs that represented different stages in life (such as little girls and little boys choirs, single brothers and single sisters choirs, married men and married women's choirs, and widows and widower's choirs). Note that these are not "singing choirs" as we think of the word "choir" today.
- **Love Feast** – a simple meal eaten together on occasions of spiritual significance, generally consisting of coffee and buns.
- **Gemeinhaus** – (pronounced *Ga-mine-house*) – a house belonging to the congregation with living rooms for the minister and his family.
- **Gemein Saal** – (pronounced *Ga-mine Zahl*) – meeting hall for church services.
- **Hans Martin Kalberlahn** – the first doctor in Bethabara, 1753 to the time of his death in 1759. Dr. Kalberlahn established a medical garden for his pharmacology and a humble isolation room in a separate log building for his patients.
- **Christian Gottlieb Reuter** – the surveyor who lived in Bethabara from 1759 to 1771 (he died in Salem in 1777). Reuter drew detailed maps of Bethabara and its surroundings and listed plants and animals he observed in the Wachovia Tract.

- **Gottfried Aust** – Master Potter in Bethabara and later in Salem. Pottery was probably the most significant trade made by the Moravians of North Carolina. Aust's pottery was a major source of revenue for the Moravians and in great demand by the colonists.

## German Vocabulary

Gemeinhaus	( <i>Ga-mine-house</i> )	church or meeting house
Saal	( <i>Zahl</i> )	hall used for church services
Schrank	( <i>Sh-ronk</i> )	clothes cabinet
Guten Morgen	( <i>Goo-tun Mor-gun</i> )	good morning
Guten tag	( <i>Goo-tun tabg</i> )	good afternoon or good day
Bitte	( <i>Bit-ta</i> )	please
Danke	( <i>Don-ka</i> )	thank you or thanks
Knaben	( <i>K-nob-in</i> )	boy
Madchen	( <i>Maid-chin</i> )	girl or maiden
Ja	( <i>Yah</i> )	yes
Nein	( <i>Nine</i> )	no

### Numbers:

Ein	( <i>I-ns</i> )	one
Zwei	( <i>Ts-iy</i> )	two
Drei	( <i>Dry</i> )	three
Vier	( <i>Fear</i> )	four
Fünf	( <i>Fun-ph</i> )	five
Sechs	( <i>Zex</i> )	six
Sieben	( <i>Zee-ben</i> )	seven
Acht	( <i>Aub-cl</i> )	eight
Neun	( <i>Noin</i> )	nine
Zehn	( <i>Tsan</i> )	ten

## Suggested Activities



*Fact: Bethabara was a colonial community established in 1753.*

- Discuss the homes in which the colonists lived. Compare homes then and now. Draw side-by-side pictures to compare. Compare construction materials then and now.
- Draw pictures of, or make clothespin dolls dressed, in clothing typical of people in colonial America.
- Make a collage using magazine images of neighborhoods today and neighborhoods of colonial America.
- Locate Germany on a map and globe. Show students how the colonists crossed the ocean from Germany to settle first in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, and later in Bethabara. Make sure to see the model of a Moravian ship, the *Irene*, in the Bethabara Visitor Center.
- Discuss the Great Wagon Road used by early settlers traveling south through the Blue Ridge from Pennsylvania. Trace the route on a map. Make shoebox wagons.
- Review map skills. Explain the purpose of a map scale.

## Further Suggested Activities



- Discuss the term “pioneers” and who the pioneers were.
- Discuss “oeconomie” by telling children that each member of the community produced according to his or her abilities and received according to his or her needs.
- Have students pretend to be settlers in Bethabara. Discuss the things needed to establish this community. Discuss the talents and trades of the first settlers, who were skilled tradesmen.
- List trades in Bethabara and explain why each was needed. Make a list of the tradesmen in Bethabara, such as the potter, shoemaker, blacksmith, tailor, gunsmith, weaver, silversmith, and baker.
- Have children make a list of the work children did (for example, working in the garden, making butter, milking cows, sewing, making maple sugar). Compare those chores to the chores children do today. Which were more difficult to do? Which sound like “fun” chores?

## Even More Suggested Activities



*Fact: Neighborhoods have changed over time as people have found new ways of meeting their needs.*

- Discuss the concept of homemaking and the skills needed to be a homemaker. Compare homemaking then and now.
- For an art project, make a paper house or a log cabin.
- Discuss the education of pioneer children.
- Ask students what the “three R’s” meant.
- Compare our communities today with the communities in which pioneers lived.
- Have an “antique” show. Have children bring in “antique” objects. Display objects and invite other classes to visit
- Invite the school principal to talk about how schools run today in contrast to times past, i.e. bringing a lunch bucket vs. cafeteria, central heat vs. wood stove, paper vs. slate.
- Invite a long-time resident of the neighborhood to talk about changes that have taken place
- Make a mural showing an old neighborhood. Use cutout pictures depicting the changes.
- Discuss why changes in a neighborhood take place. Make a chart of changes and/or improvements being made in your community now.

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† Usually available at Historic Bethabara Park Gift Shop

‡ Available only through used-book outlets

§ Available at most book stores

\* Relate specifically to Moravian life and customs