FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

German Delegation Visits Historic Trappe, Pennsylvania

Trappe, Pennsylvania— On Monday, May 14, the small town of Trappe, Montgomery County, Pennsylvania, hosted a group of German dignitaries headed by Stephan Dorgerloh, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in Saxony-Anhalt. The delegation is here to visit important sites in Lutheran history and to build international relations in advance of the upcoming 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation, sparked in 1517 by the posting of Martin Luther’s 95 Theses in Wittenberg, which is located in the state of Saxony-Anhalt. Although 2017 is still five years away, Trappe will play an important role as it was the home of Henry Melchior Muhlenberg (1711–87), a German immigrant who initially organized the Lutheran Church in America and thus forms a critical link in celebrating the spread of Lutheranism and the Reformation to America. 2017 also just happens to be the 300th anniversary of Trappe’s founding. The German delegation’s tour included stops at Augustus Lutheran Church, built in 1743 under Henry Muhlenberg’s direction and known as the Shrine of American Lutheranism; the Henry Muhlenberg House, in which he lived from 1776 until his death in 1787; and The Speaker’s House, home of Henry’s son Frederick Muhlenberg who in 1789 became the first Speaker of the U.S. House. The latter house was rescued from demolition in 2004 and is currently undergoing research and restoration. The Germans’ tour was led by Lisa Minardi, a Montgomery County native and president of The Speaker’s House. A graduate of Ursinus College and one of the foremost Muhlenberg scholars, Minardi traveled to Germany last year to share research from her new book Pastors & Patriots: The Muhlenberg Family of Pennsylvania at a conference hosted by the Francke Foundations in Halle. Founded in 1695, the Francke Foundations are a renowned center of education and philanthropy from where Henry Muhlenberg was sent to America and where, one generation later, his sons received their education.
Caption: The German delegation gathers in front of The Speaker’s House. Stephen Dorgerloh, center, Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs in Saxony-Anhalt, with Lisa Minardi, President of The Speaker’s House, and Dr. Glenys Waldman, also of The Speaker’s House, who provided translation assistance.

About The Speaker’s House

The Speaker’s House is a non-profit organization dedicated to restoring and preserving the historic Frederick Muhlenberg house while promoting community revitalization and providing hands-on educational opportunities in archaeology and historic preservation. Tours of the house are currently offered by appointment in addition to during the annual archaeology field school that runs June 6 to 24 this year. There will also be special tours offered of Trappe’s historic sites on Saturday, September 22, when Trappe hosts the Montgomery County History Fair. To learn more, visit www.speakershouse.org.

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