



Haydn Zug was a “crusty old fellow” with a kind streak running through him.

So says David Johnson, president of the East Petersburg Historical Society. Johnson, an East Petersburg native who now lives in Oxford, recently presented a talk on the Haydn Zug Restaurant property at the corner of Main and State streets.

A log house stood on the restaurant site from about 1811 until John Stauffer built a brick storehouse there in 1853. Levi Gochnauer took over the store after Stauffer died in 1878. Zug replaced Gochnauer as owner in 1925.

After Zug died in 1969, the place became a well-known area restaurant. The restaurant closed at the end of 2013. The building is being renovated for retail and office use.

The part in all of this that the Scribbler is most interested in is Haydn Zug (1876-1969). What a character!

Readers with good memories will recall the Dec. 2, 2014, Scribbler column that discussed Haydn Zug’s reason for arranging his large granite monument kitty-corner to other stones in the East Petersburg Mennonite Church cemetery. His large, oddly-placed stone covers two burial lots — his and one that had been set aside for his wife.

“She wouldn’t sleep beside me while we were living,” Zug explained of his unusual gravestone arrangement. “She’s not going to lay beside me when I’m dead.”

What else?

“I’ve heard stories about Haydn that I’m not sure are completely true,” Johnson says. “Every time you talk to somebody, there’s a new story.”

For example?

“He was a mess with the ladies.”

Well, yes, that’s why his wife wouldn’t sleep with him.

Instead, he slept with a shotgun by his side. One might expect such behavior of a man whose store had been burglarized three times and who had been the victim of an armed robbery and a beating.

His store carried mainly hardware, but Johnson remembers some dust-covered soup cans.

“Nobody ever bought the soup,” he says.

When one customer asked where something was in the store, Zug told him to go find it himself. Meanwhile, he gave candy to the man’s daughter.

Workers were building a thick [cement sidewalk](#) in front of the store, but Zug said he wished it were thinner. He reportedly said, “Then I could be buried face down and everyone could kiss my _____.”

But Zug had a softer side, Johnson says. He did give candy to that little girl. He took care of his sister as she aged.

And he donated the bell to the old East Petersburg Elementary School. It moved to the new school. Johnson likes its sound.

The ‘Dutch Cleanser’

Leonard Stoltzfus, of New Holland, the youngest living grandson of Ezra Stoltzfus, has just completed a book that should settle some of the more vexing questions about his grandfather’s life.

The Scribbler featured Ezra Stoltzfus (1867-1944) most recently in Nov. 8 and Dec. 6 columns exploring, among other things, the Salisbury Township resident’s affinity for progressive politics and driving automobiles on solid dirt highways.

Leonard Stoltzfus's book, published by Masthof Press, clarifies several points that previous sources had muddled.

Ezra Stoltzfus never was a member of the Old Order

Amish Church. He was excommunicated from the Millwood Amish Mennonite Church because he sought political office. He ran for the state legislature on the Bull Moose Party ticket.

Former President Teddy Roosevelt, running as the Bull Moose candidate for president, appeared with Stoltzfus in Lancaster in 1914. Roosevelt reportedly said voters should elect the "Dutch Cleanser" to help clean up Harrisburg.

That reference was not only to the fact that Stoltzfus came from the "Dutch" area of Lancaster, but also to his primary reason for running for office: to cleanse state politics of corruption.

Stoltzfus lost the election.