

Tornado Devastates Historic Farmstead

THE LAST OF THREE TORNADOS to roar through Somerset County, Pa. did major damage on June 2, 1998 on the historic 1784

John Hochstetler [DJH 2] farm one mile southwest of Summit Mills, now owned by the Wendell and Darlene Yoder family.

#1. While the main house suffered some damage, all the other buildings were ruined beyond repair. This included the second house on the left which was recently sold and remodeled, both barns and outbuildings except the silo, as well as the 1800 "little house" of John Hochstetler (DJH 2) which was to the right of the main house.



June 1998 Photo by Alta Unzicker-Rockgers

#2. This 1800 "Daudy Haus" of John Hochstetler (DJH 2) had been partially rebuilt in late 1991 through the efforts of Paul V. Hostetler (See NL Sept. 1992). Finally in 1996 the JHFA installed a plaque to mark the historic site (See NL Mar. 1997). The tornado left the building roofless, twisted, splintered, off the foundation and sinking into the basement whose south stone wall was partly broken down.



June 1998 Photo by Alta Unzicker-Rockgers



June 1998 Photo by Aliz Urzadker-Fodgers

#3. Since it was not believed feasible to consider rebuilding the 200-year-old little house, and as it was a safety hazard, it was dismantled. It has not been determined what will be done with the foundation and some of the salvaged lumber. The newsletter will report more information as it becomes available. The owner family obviously must give priority to their own dwelling and to provide for the dairy operation.



July 1998 Photo by Daniel E. Hochstetler

#4. The 1996 plaque has been recovered, but it remains to be seen what will be done with it. Seven gravestones from the nearby cemetery had been stored in the little house, six of them belonging to three couples, including the pioneers John and Catherine, for whom new granite stones had been erected. Following the tornado, Catherine's small, nearly illegible fieldstone has not been identified or recovered. We hope it will be found with further clean-up. (The seventh stone is unidentified and also not recovered.)

PICTURE REPRINTS: By request, we are making 4X6 colored reprints of the above photos available. Also available is a print (order as #5) of the restored house before the tornado, with

plaque inset. Order by number, and send \$1.00 per picture postpaid to H/H/H Family Newsletter, 1102 S. 13th St., Goshen, IN 46526.