

OUR HISTORY AT ST. STEPHEN'S

By Nevin Yeakel, St. Stephen's Archivist

Laying the Cornerstone

In 1897, Harvey Snyder, a building contractor from Third Avenue in the Borough of West Bethlehem, was hired to construct St. Stephen's Church on a newly-purchased lot on Center Street in the village of Hottlesville. The cornerstone was laid and included church records, copies of *The Globe Times*, *The South Bethlehem Star* and *The Daily Globe*, a Bible, communion wine and wafers, as well as a few other miscellaneous items.

As I researched St. Stephen's history, I discovered that the original cornerstone was removed and a special service was held on May 7, 1922, to re-lay it. Puzzled why a second laying, I dug deeper and found out it had been removed because of a major building improvement project. In 1913 and 1921, the church basement was expanded to its maximum and current dimensions to accommodate a growing Sunday School. St. Stephen's was so proud of this improvement, that they wanted a new cornerstone laying ceremony. Before laying it in place, a few items from 1921 were added.

The original cornerstone was moved one more time—in 1963 to our new church at our present location of Main and Washington. A second cornerstone was also laid that included a 1962 yearbook, 1963 proof coin set, honor roll of church members who served in World War II, copies of *The Globe Times* and *The Morning Call*, and a few other period items. The cornerstone laying service was held on September 29, 1963.

Will the cornerstones ever be moved again? I can only answer with, "Heaven only knows."

