

A Publication of the Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Committee

## Donations are tax-exempt

Richard V. Grimes, Jr., Esq., of Hartman Shurr located in Wyomissing, with offices very near the NSH, received approval dated May 20, 2008 for the application he had filed granting The Committee non-profit status, effective December 23, 2005. That was the same time we incorporated separately from the TriCounty Heritage Society of Morgantown. The Society provided the non-profit status from the time of the initial agreement with The Country Meadows of the Gov. Leader family, son Michael in particular.

The Preservation has been the beneficiary of generosity shown by Pam Shenk, who prior to her death was executive director of The TriCounty Her-

itage Society. She enabled us to proceed with the preservation by doing legal and paper work so we could start in 2000. Now Mr. Grimes has been guiding us on a pro bono basis. Congressman Joe Pitts endorsed the application. Where would we be if these, and others, had not been of support?

The Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Committee, Inc., is now on the IRS list of non-profits. Our employer identification number is 20-4095793, DLN 17053094331038. The Public Charity Status is 170 (b) (1) (A) (vi) under section 501 (3) (c). This information is essential for donors to the barn project as well as for general donations.



## Successful Auction May 10, 2008

The food committee began the day with a breakfast offering. The House was open with Carol Kissinger at the fireplace, Claudia Esh on the spinning wheel, Jack Parmer and Chris Stoltzfus telling the story . . . and singing from the Sanger Chor and The Uncles.

*(continued on page 2)*

## Roots in the Stoltzfus House?

The Nicholas Stoltzfus ancestral home on the Tulpehocken has been a gateway that housed a number of Swiss Amish family names who came and lived in Berks County, then migrated to other parts of the country. When Nicholas came to America he lived in Lancaster County before buying land in Berks County where his son Christian married Catherine Gerber, also spelled Garver and Garber.

*(continued on page 3)*

### Will this

### lead to this . . . ?



#### HELP FILL THE SCOOP

**We have \$40,000 cash** in the barn fund.

**We have \$40,000 in committed labor and materials.**

**\$80,000 more in hand enables building.** Additional will fully complete the barn.

The Nicholas Stoltzfus Preservation Committee has formed an Advancement Committee to plan for building a barn, 35 x 45, on the property. This will provide a climate controlled building to preserve Stoltzfus artifacts, facilities for visitors and living quarters for the caretakers.

There was a barn on the property, but it is long gone. It will be

*(continued on page 3)*

# Connecting the dots!

Did you notice how well the team pulled together as the slip-scoop took up the soil? Now we “Stoltzfuses, Stoltzfooses, Smuckers, Smokers, Lantzes, Kings, Fishers, Eshes,” etc. need also to keep pulling. Who will take the reins?

Well, several have. We call them “connectors”. They are the ones who reach out to their circle to tell of the opportunity we have right now. This summer.

If you are in the Freundschaft, what is your closest circle linking to Nicholas? Hitch them up so they will help pull. It won't take much if each circle pitches in. So far about 10 circles have contributed between \$1,000 and \$3000 each, plus pledging labor and materials. This is in addition to major gifts and pledges. If we have 50 such additional circles led by a connector we would be able to see the

project through. Not too bad considering there are about 500 such circles!

Remember this as an opportunity. It goes beyond merely saving the Stoltzfus House. It brings to us and to future generations the story of a family laying foundation for faith and life. It makes possible a place to meet by the Tulpehocken Creek, quite alone, near the Berks County's trails, the Gruber Wagon Works, and the Canal Museum.

Businesses find this a retreat for employees. Family groups meet here. Few other spots combine a hand pump for water with buzzing traffic guided by GPS. Here you can sit in quiet contemplation with airplanes overhead and trucks roaring on the side. Here think of Nicholas, Christian and Barbara amidst the squirrels, foxes, and deer, in wooded terrain, holding their Froschauer Bible, their Ausbund and prayer books. Here Christian would mount his horse and ask the Lord to take the reins.

We want all descendants of Nicholas to be a part of this opportunity. Send your contribution to Nicholas

Stoltzfus Barn Project, 1700 Tulpehocken Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610. Write checks to NSHPC and designate to the Barn Project. And thanks to the many who have done so already.

## News Notes

The **permit to build** requires variances for our purpose. Merle Stoltzfus is seeing this through - we owe him a deep debt of gratitude for his skill and time. If every Stoltzfus descendant were into this project as he is, we'd soon be there. Do your share.

Merle, David Esh (builder), and Ben Riehl (Committee member) laid out the **exact spot for the “barn”** on June 23 so the request for the permit can be complete.

David Esh is prepared to present a schedule of activity as soon as the permit is granted. We expect there will be **“barn raising”** days as well as work-days. Leave a message with your interest to help at 610-373-6206, 717-367-3906, or psku04@embarqmail.com.

(Auction, continued from page 1)

Merle Stoltzfus and Chris Stoltzfus spoke. Then as they gathered for groundbreaking the team of horses came pulling the slip-scoop to a ceremony for groundbreaking. The slip-scoop broke the ground, as the old song “We are building every day” rolled across the lawn.



This newsletter is written and compiled by Paul Kurtz. Questions and concerns should be addressed to him at psku@aol.com or 717-367-3906. Layout and production by Masthof Press. Photos by Carl Good.



# The Nicholas Stoltzfus Barn

(adapted from Ben Riehl's presentation to the Bruderschaft)



(continued from page 1)

located on the same location where we found the old foundation of the barn, also some old artifacts - cow chains, old barn hinges, horse shoes, etc. Our plans are a typical barn - Sweitzer type - which dates back to the late 1700s or early 1800s.

There will be an apartment, restrooms, a small office and utility room. The history of our ancestors will be on display, as well as Stoltzfus artifacts\*, so that our children can learn or get information on our forefathers and the long voyage across the ocean — why we are living here in the USA- then next take a tour through the Stoltzfus house.

Actually, 1,500 sq. ft. or 35x45 is not a very large barn. Most Lanc. Co. barn built in the 1800s are 40x80 or larger.

We know not every Stoltzfus descendant is in favor of this idea, but there are a lot of people very excited and want to help and be a part of this project. Some ask how would Nicholas or his son Christian have felt about it. For most of us, we would be glad if our descendants would want to preserve our old home places for future generations. There are over a million descendants from Nicholas. 98% of the Lancaster Co. Amish descend, as well as many of other denominations. The Advancement Committee is doing their best in letting the Stoltzfus descendants know about this project to

see if you want to be a part of this project.

Dave Esh Builders is the main contractor, and the post and beam work will be done by Riehls Construction. Other parts will be done by various other sub-contractors. We are hoping we can get a lot of donations of materials and labor and even have a barn raising at the old homestead beside the Tulpehocken Creek.

When finished the barn will be owned by all the Stoltzfus descendants and friends that helped fund it or provided labor to build it. If not interested in becoming a part of this project, you are still welcome to stop by and see it. Spread the word to your friends, your Freundshaft, and to your children if they want to be a part or help with this interesting project to help preserve our Stoltzfus heritage.

We look back at our Amish historians - Abner Beiler, Levi Stoltzfus, Amos Fisher and others that helped get the Stoltzfus House Restoration started. Also thanks to George Leader, former governor of Pennsylvania, now in his 80s, who helped us get this project underway.

*\* If you have interest in the project as a museum, contact Calvin Kurtz at (610)286-9574. We expect the next issue of The Homestead will detail those plans.*

(Roots, continued from page 1)

Next was Barbara, the daughter of Nicholas who married John Smucker. They also lived in the Stoltzfus house. They are the progenitors of all the Amish and Mennonite Smuckers. John Stoltzfus, the grandson of Nicholas married Veronica King, the daughter of Samuel King (Koenig). It has been assumed they began housekeeping at the Stoltzfus house. After John was ordained as Bishop in the Millcreek, he organized the first Amish Congregation in Canada. After Catherine, the first wife of Christian died, he married Elizabeth (King) Lantz, the daughter of Samuel King, (Koenig).

Here it appears that Christian and his son John were married to sisters. The second wife of Christian had first been married to Samuel Lantz, with whom she had two sons. Therefore those two stepsons of Christian partly grew up in the Stoltzfus house. Samuel Lantz Jr. became known as the founder of the Buffalo Valley Amish Church. His daughter Susan was married to the deacon Christian Stoltzfus of Union County. Here we see that the Stoltzfus house was the gateway for five Amish family names. Thus we have Stoltzfus, Gerber, King, Smucker, and Lantz.

*submitted by Chris P. Stoltzfus*

## ***These descendants of Nicholas:***

*They pop up all over the place.*

*Should they care?*

I met one, she gave me the echocardiogram. Just before I left she asked, "What are you doing the rest of the day?" I told her I was mailing packets. "What is that about?" I told her the Nicholas Stoltzfus House. Then I learned her mother Rose was a niece of Mabel Stoltzfus who had willed their family Bible to the House.

Then there are the e-mails. People see the site on the internet - Stoltzfuses from any place.

Many do care. "I am so grateful what you are doing."

***Next Benefit Auction:  
May 9, 2009***

At 10:00 a.m., the 2008 auction began, on a day sandwiched between two rainy ones.

The “Tree of Life” quilt, donated by Priscilla Herr of the Gideon and Nancy Fisher Stoltzfus clan, brought top price. Her heart was in her quilt!

*Eat*



*Bid*



*Buy*



*Pay*



*Call (610)373-6206 or  
(717)367-3906 for information  
or appointments.*

***The Nicholas Stoltzfus House  
Preservation Committee  
1700 Tulpehocken Road  
Wyomissing, PA 19610***