

## Chairman's Message

Good Morning,

To all the Stoltzfuses, Smuckers and all good people concerned and interested about our history and heritage!

I know that all of us are not bitten by the historical bug in the same way. My wife probably knows what family you come from and who all your relations are. I on the other hand know more about the early days of our ancestors coming over from the old country into the unknown, rough and new world of America.

I have often wondered how strong the urge must have been to better themselves and to make a new and better life for the next generations. William Penn promised freedom of religion and the freedom, to own property and the freedom to do business without being harassed by the government and by church.

We are now in the year of 2018 I am concerned that we take all our liberties for granted and are we truly thankful for all our blessings.

Elam Stoltzfus and his son Nic just came back from an exploratory trip to Germany researching Nicholas Stoltzfus's life and family history.

They will be telling their story along with Rose Beiler at Fairmont Homes in the Farm Crest Room on Friday, Sept 21, 2018

We are truly thankful for all the funds you have shared with us as we have come a long way!

We still need some funds and/or some volunteer help!

For more more information contact Paul Kurtz 717-808-7785 or Ben Riehl 717 768-8218

May God Bless You

Moses Smucker, Chairman

Benefit Banquet - Sept 21, 2018 - 6 PM  
1100 Farm Crest Drive, Ephrata, Pa.

## GERMANY TO PENNSYLVANIA THE STOLTZFUS FAMILY STORY



Ringweilerhof where Nicholas Stoltzfus lived in Zweibrücken, Germany



Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania



Elam Stoltzfus, Nic Stoltzfus, Lucy & Zach Stoltzfus and Rose Beiler

Elam, Nic, Lucy, Zach and Rose spent time in Germany this summer to document Nicholas Stoltzfus's early life. At the banquet, Rose, Elam, and Nic will show engaging images and documents they found while researching the archives in Germany. They will tell interesting stories about people they met and discoveries they found about Nicholas Stoltzfus and his forbearers. They have more information on the family tree with Paul Stoltzfus, Johann Adam Stoltzfus, Christoph Gottlieb Stoltzfus, Sr. and Christoph Gottlieb Stoltzfus, Jr. They have records on births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, education, siblings, children, etc. They found several prayers given at public funerals from Johann Adam Stoltzfus. They stood in the pulpits where Johann Adam Stoltzfus and Christoph Gottlieb Stoltzfus, Sr. preached. They have photographs to tell the story. Come be inspired by the journey of the Stoltzfus family.

Make Reservations before September 18. (Tickets \$25.00 each)  
Contact: Vivian Beiler, 243 Fulton Street, New Holland, PA 17557

# Charley Fowler's Grandmother visited Dutch Cousins, the "Shade Tree"

By Charley Fowler

This is my story of how I came across the Stoltzfus Family Tree, in my Grandparent's house in 1999.

Back in the early years my granddad Clark Fowler and his wife Elizabeth Stolfus had purchased a ranch, which my grandma named the Cedar Cliff Ranch. In those days in Colorado the depression was better known as the "Dirty Thirties".

At this ranch unknown for a long time my grandma had been working on her family history, genealogy. My father, Donald H Fowler, and his sisters had come to this ranch when he was seven years old. When they were little my grandma had this back room – it was off limits to us children – no one was allowed in there!

I was born in Lamar, Colorado, 1949. When I had gotten old enough to play my parents moved into the ranch house. Later on my father told me she wouldn't allow them in that back room. Then too, Grandma told her three grandsons they were not allowed in that backroom.

No one in my dad's family knew why!

After my air force career I had a job with SEMCO. My father had cancer, so I would spend weekends taking care of the farm, the cows my dad owned. That Spring of 1999 we had a lot of rain the first week of May. I had gone to the ranch to check on the cows, and check out things at the house and barn.

Well, that weekend I found that the north wall of the ranch house had fallen in. So I would spend most of the summer cleaning that mess up. After a number of weekends I got the kitchen cleaned up, the part of the house that had fallen in.

Then I decided to check out this back room. Grandma passed away in 1977, so it wasn't until August, 1999 that I opened that door. In there was a lot of things: a big pile of weeds, sticks corn cobs – you name it – on the floor of this room. In some shelving were jars of odds and ends that grandma had kept, some canning jars, old gallon vinegar jars, and a host of cans and what not!

I went out to my pick-up and got a scoop shovel to clean out this room, these pack rats had piled the trash. Had been taking out several shovels full, when I noticed this burlap sack, an old gunny sack in the middle of this mess. It had an old binder twine string tied around the open end of the sack. It looked like it had been hanging on a nail in the ceiling rafter in this room, for how long no one knows.

I picked this sack up and untied the old string – whatever was in there I really didn't know. It was about 32" long and rolled up in old newspaper. I took this thing out of all the papers and that was what I discovered, what I really found. I was pretty excited about the situation.

Got back to the farm in Wiley that Sunday evening, told my Dad what I had found!! He says, So.....! I couldn't believe it! Like he didn't care, wasn't his family history – but it was his mother's side. She had never spoken to her grandkids of her side of the family as far as I can remember. To me I was pretty excited about that.

My dad had told me when I was around 6 years old: I'd ask him, "where's grandma?" "Oh, she went back east to see those Pennsylvania Dutch". That's all I ever knew, then I always wondered who they were.

I let my job in 2015, and in the last three years I would visit with Alberta Stoltzfus Brinkman in Emporia, Kansas. My dad is first Cousin to Alberta.

So I reckon this all comes full circle now!! My grandmother had completed this family tree in 1936, I found in 1999. Finally took it back to her family in May of 2018. It's been a long time coming. I feel my Grandma Fowler would appreciate my effort in her endeavor. But how long had she spent researching that history with the technology in her day compared to that in 2018.

So in short, it's been a very interesting trip back to Pennsylvania to find my grandmother's family. But more important to return what she had spent so much time and work on. No wonder the back room was off limits!

So 22 years after she passed I came across this history from 1766!

I hope the Stoltzfus family enjoys this part of the family history, and I enjoyed my visit there the first week of May, 2018.





# Auction 2018



Annual Auction at the Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, held every first Saturday of May. There were plenty of auction items for fundraising and to support the property maintenance. This gathering is about meeting family members, tasting good homemade food and having good fellowship. Annual Auction for 2019 will be held on May 4th. Mark your calendar.



Photos by Elam Stoltzfus and Nic Stoltzfus



# In The Land of Pioneers

by Scott Stoltzfus

I was born in the Reading hospital in West Reading and in 1967 my family moved to Wyomissing Hills, now part of Wyomissing. My friends and I called it the Hills. From the homestead looking southwest it is the small mountain range that has the water tower on the west end. I was born and lived in the land of my pioneer ancestors but would not begin to know of this for many years.

I was fortunate to have as my 6th grade teacher at Wyomissing Hills grade school a well known Berks County Historian Mr. George M. Meiser IX. Our year long class project was a Berks County historical notebook. I acquired an appreciation of history from Mr. Meiser. I had no idea of the local history that my last name implied nor that I was an eighth generation descendent of an Amish pioneer. So my notebook was displayed at the historical society at the end of the year for its penmanship not its content.

In my vacant lot days my buddies and I would ride our bikes down from the Hills and take Broadcasting Road through the farmland to the Tully to spend an afternoon catching catfish, sometimes on the homestead property. Long before the dam was built, we would take our canvas rafts to the source of the Tully as far up as you could go to float without scraping the rocks in the creek bed. We would spend a lazy day floating down stream and we would end up at the homestead to make our way back to the Hills.

In the winter I ice skated at The Stone House community center on Parkside Drive in Wyomissing which now has a modest stone monument dedicated to the pioneer residents John Schmucker and Barbara Stoltzfus. That land was part of the second track of land that Nicholas and Christian owned and passed on to their kin. That monument was placed after I moved away to college so I missed that clue.

When in high school I worked at the Highlander Cafeteria in the Berkshire Mall. I parked my car and worked in the short order kitchen flipping bacon, eggs, and burgers on the land my forefathers tilled for food and income. I too was working that land for food and income as appropriate for the time. In my Penn State days I heard of an Amish tack shop, Fishers Shoe & Saddle Shop, in Madisonburg, east of State College. In 1982 I was visiting friends and went out to the shop to get a pair of boots. I mentioned my name to a young Amish man behind the counter and he eagerly replied that we were related because he was married to a Stoltzfus. He proceeded to retrieve a copy of the Fisher book from the elders across the street. I was surprised to find information about my father in the book.

I contacted the publisher, Janis Egeland, and obtained a copy of the book. And so began my path for knowledge of Nicholas Stoltzfus and his decedents.

I visited the Berks Country Historical Society and another library in the Lancaster area to gather information. I visited the burial site of many of my ancestors in Leola. I painted hex signs for fun and gave them out as gifts. In 1988 my wife Peggy and I named our first born son Nicholas. But my wife would warn people we met not to ask me about our last name. The phrase "Oh here we go again..." comes to mind.

My research indicated to me that Nicholas owned the property on the Tulpehocken. In 1989 I visited the house with a couple historians and I met the Schlegels who were kind enough to allow us to inspect their home. The historians indicated that a deed had never been found to prove ownership by Nicholas. Nevertheless, I naively wrote a letter and mailed it to Tulpehocken Ltd. with interest in purchasing the property but never heard back.

Some time after the internet came to be, I setup a web site at nicholasstoltzfus.com and I posted information that I had found in my research. My parents knew of my interest and since I no longer lived in the area they always forwarded me any news related to the Amish that was published in local papers. I knew that the home had been taken over by the state road development and was probably doomed. But later my parents informed me of the auction event. I was amazed at the beautiful condition of the home and property. I met Paul Kurtz and we agreed to use my web site to promote the homestead and with the help of others it improved to what it is today at nichoasstoltzfus.org. It was clear that God had a plan for the house to be in the proper hands after all.

I am fortunate to have lived and played in and around the land of such great pioneers of whom I am descended. I was eventually guided to a path that led to contributing in a small way to such a large effort where so many continue to work to honor these unique and remarkable pioneers, men and women of God, who came to this country for religious freedom and humbly helped form a great nation.

Scott George Stoltzfus

Nicholas/Christian/Jacob/Christian/Jacob/Simeon/Simeon/  
Gene/Scott



Schmucker Homestead, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania

# Gring family photos

by Scott Gring

As for my grandfather's interest, all I have are old recollections of him telling me how his grandfather (Wallace R. Gring) moved the family from the farm when he was an adolescent. I can only assume that was because of industrialization and my great-grandfather's (Winfield b. 4/3/1890 - d. 5/16/1951) lack of interest in farming. Only suppositions on my end. My great-grandfather took little interest in raising my grandfather and worked all his life in construction. Much of what I know factually of the homestead is what I've learned from Paul Kurtz - that my great, great grandfather (Charles M. Gring - b. 2/10/1828- d. 4/28/1898) purchased the property, sold it to his son (my great-grandfather, Wallace - b.7/29/1862 - d. 4/9/1938) who then sold it in 1923. My grandfather, born 7/13/1911 would have been 12 years old. My grandfather did opine about "back in the days at the old homestead" - and kept a photo of the home on his dresser in his bedroom in his later years. Fortunately the last time I saw him the fall of 1995 (he passed May 25, 1996) he had me drive him to the overgrown homestead. He had fond memories and a love for that place. I hope some of this is useful to you.

Still hoping to get out to visit sometime. I'd love to meet you and others.

God Bless, Scott Gring



Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, Wyomissing, Pennsylvania - photograph around 1915.



The Nicholas Stoltzfus House  
Preservation Committee  
1700 Tulpehocken Road  
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## **GERMANY TO PENNSYLVANIA THE STOLTZFUS FAMILY STORY**

Written by Nic Stoltzfus  
Photography by Elam Stoltzfus and Nic Stoltzfus  
Including new research by Dr. Rose Beiler & Zach  
Stoltzfus

This group has retraced the steps of the Stoltzfus  
ancestors, interviewed historians, visited with people  
who live in the communities and completed extensive  
archival research in Germany.



Like and share the FaceBook page. A place to tell stories,  
share images, videos, and stay informed with updates.  
<https://www.facebook.com/NicholasStoltzfusHomestead>

## **Mast Reunion August 2-4, 2019**

### **Mast Tour August 2-2019**

Morgantown, Pennsylvania

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Masts across the U.S. and Canada (activities for all ages)  
will gather to meet each other, tour the area where the  
first Masts settled when they arrived in America in the  
1700s, and learn more about our Mast heritage.

Meet descendants of 1736 Immigrant Jacob Mast  
1750 Immigrant Johannes Mast  
1750 Immigrant Jacob Mast (nephew of Johannes Mast)  
1750 Immigrant John Mast (nephew of Johannes Mast)

For more information on registration contact:  
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