

Inspiring Through the Stoltzfus Story

You might go to the Pequea Bruderschaft Library next to the bookstore in Gordonville to see the Nicholas Stoltzfus Chest. You might come to the benefit auction at the Stoltzfus House on May 10, 2014, and see the chest.

“This was my ancestor” you can say as you enter his door, and look into the chest that brought their things to Philadelphia on October 18, 1766 on the ship Polly. It had sailed from Rotterdam, with Robert Porter as captain, then from Cowes, England on August 20, 1766.

Next time you can’t wait ten minutes for the bus, let Nicholas inspire you.

Next time you shop in Boscov’s and can’t decide which coat to buy, let Nicholas inspire you.

Next time you are in an archive, opening a Froschauer Bible, let Nicholas inspire you.

Remember he chose to worship with those who read these words, “For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”

Isaac Beiler (his Stoltzfus score is seven) traced the ordained Amish ministers named Stoltzfus across the generations. How could Nicholas have had such a legacy? Too bad we don’t know how they were helped by their mothers.

They could not do it alone. King, Lapp, Miller, Lantz, Fisher, Rickenbach, Zook, etc., welcomed Stoltzfus through many marriages. The Fisher brothers came to realize this as they compiled the Fisher genealogy. It was so pronounced they attached a history of the Stoltzfus family. Today Stoltzfus is the most frequent Amish surname in eastern Pennsylvania.

In a recent internet search, Stoltzfus businesses were found in every State except eleven. Descendants of Nicholas could well exist in every continent among mission efforts. Who has adequate words to express the effect of looking into the Stoltzfus Chest? What went into it? What has come out?



If you would like more information or are interested in donating, please contact Paul Kurtz by email at psku04@ptd.net, by phone at 717-808-7785, or by visiting nicholasstoltzfus.org. Photo credits by Richard Patrick.

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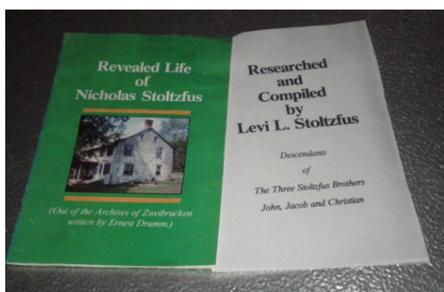
Inspiring through the Stoltzfus Story

The purpose of Stoltzfus House is to inspire. Descendants and others come to the House, so we need workers on site who can keep the grounds and explain to visitors. The upper level of the barn will house the Heritage Story for families and other groups, with public restrooms. In a letter to the nearby Home Depot Michael Leader, CEO of Country Meadows, wrote:

“It is the intention of the Leader family eventually to convey the deed to the tract, now known as the Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, to the Preservation Committee as a charitable contribution.

“We look forward to the day that all the preservation efforts are complete and the Nicholas Stoltzfus homestead is open for all the Stoltzfus descendants and all other visitors who wish to learn more about the Amish heritage in Berks County.”

Levi Stoltzfus (1924-1991) was inspired. Much of his life he pursued his Stoltzfus roots, and in 1986 published this book:



And how could he be otherwise? Nicholas' son, Christian married Catherine Gerber (Garver), they had three sons and one daughter before she died. Levi descended from all three of their sons! Levi also was devoted to the Amish faith which Nicholas adopted in Zweibrucken, Germany, in the 1740s.

The Barn Sits Empty

Before it was determined the code prevented even a qualified use of the barn, descendants gathered in the barn to sing. What sound the frame structure seemed to long for! But now the barn sets empty until the occupancy permit is issued.

And we have a couple wanting to move in to the apartment in April. Can we miss this opportunity?

The Advancement Committee, headed by Merle Stoltzfus, has made April as the time to have the barn completed. Send check to: Vivian Beiler, Treasurer
243 W Fulton Street, New Holland, PA 17557



Designate what you will do:

- I will send a \$20 check designated to NSHPC to add my name to the Wall
- I will be on call to volunteer for _____
- I will donate \$_____ for _____

	1st Floor	2nd Floor
Apartment HVAC	\$8,000.00	\$8,000.00
Electric	\$2,500.00	\$2,500.00
Plumbing and fixtures	\$8,000.00	\$2,000.00
Insulation, 1st floor	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
Dry Wall	\$5,000.00	\$1,000.00
Painting	\$3,500.00	\$500.00
Trim	\$4,000.00	
Cabinets	\$8,000.00	
Carpet, Vinyl Flooring in kitchen & entrance	\$4,000.00	
Kitchen Appliances, microwave, dish washer, ref.	\$3,000.00	
Sprinkler System	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00
Drop Ceiling	\$1,500.00	
Labor	\$20,000.00	\$10,000.00
	\$78,000.00	\$34,500.00

Work to be done: Drilling of wells, walk to be installed from 1st floor entrance to the 2nd floor entrance. Paul K is working with Home Depot.

All this so we can accommodate our benefit auction, reunions, singings, weddings, campouts, tours, youth events, worship services, etc., and with all this promote the Story.



Digging into the Past

Under the guidance of archeologists Barb Lessig and Dara McMcur, the Berks Penn State class of Dr. Randal Fegley is exploring the east side of the Stoltzfus House. Chris Stoltzfus found an old foundation, so can we find artifacts that will shed light on east side history?



Dr. of the University of Delaware explained to the class how that artifacts complement recorded histories. When was the house built? Our guess has been about 1740. Five-hundred acres had been warranted to the Philadelphia Quaker Anthony Morris, then about 250 acres were deeded to Thomas Youngman in 1759, from whom the Stoltzfus' obtained the land.



Artifacts then could mesh with documents from these land transactions and death records. Old fencing and nails are among findings so far. Dr. Fegley is planning to display the various items at Penn State Berks in the spring. Items will be labeled for the show. Pics by Mary Leader and Richard Patrick.

“A Penn State Student’s Account of the Archaeological Dig at the Nicholas Stoltzfus House”

by Austin McCue, December 10, 2013

This semester I had the opportunity to learn about Pennsylvania’s greatest quiet culture, the Amish. I had no idea that what is likely the first Amish homestead in America is a stone’s throw from Penn State Berks, where I spend the majority of my time.

We were allowed to wander and check out the house at our own leisure so I spent some of the time reviewing the literature, which was appropriately placed on a portable church bench. After looking around for some time, I walked across the deceptively clean floor to a shadowy doorway. I leaned in and, down to my left, led a crooked smile of dirty stone steps. I could smell the damp from the cellar and decided to simply know that there was a cellar was enough, for now.

I walked up the winding wooden steps. The second floor of the house was even simpler than the first. There was a small bed with rope instead of wooden slats and a quietly decorated blanket chest at the foot of the bed. I made my way back down the stairs and the group gathered again to tour the barn.

The barn was new and smelled of cedar or pine. It was built on a hill so that there were two floors, yet the top floor was equal to the ground of the top part of the hill. There was a loft area with enough natural light to provide a keen glow. Mr. Kurtz pointed out a series of marks along the floor. He said they were the of Amish teenagers volunteers.

We went to work the next week, but only after roughly learning the proper way to go about setting up a dig site. We gridded out the intended map after establishing and declaring the datum point—the northeast side of the house. We were to dig test pits. Our resident archaeological expert, Barb Lessig, chose a point and left it to the class to choose the next. It had already been established that I was to do the digging, mostly because I enjoy it, so I figured I ought to choose the square. It only made sense.

So I chose a point. East 3 by North 3. We used a circular screen to mark the spot and we removed the sod and finally dug. At this point in the dig, we were still doing things the crude way: on our knees digging through that foot-wide pit with our bare hands. No one seemed to mind and we didn’t know any better but I’m glad because the find was that much sweeter. First was a chunk of what looked to be clay with a fire-treated outside. A discovery! My first archeological find! I was glowing.

You could see it in my peers’ eyes. The same students that dragged their feet through the dirt on orientation day were ready to dig. We had it down to a science at this point. Now it’s time to wash the caked dirt from my hands.

Berks 12th Benefit Auction

Nicholas Stoltzfus House
Bring Something, then Buy Something
May 10, 2014 ...1700 Tulpehocken Rd, Wyomissing
Moses Smucker - AU4088 717-278-6532...Auctioneer
"Call it a big reunion!"



above: The Edna Stoltzfus Ebersole
Quilt for the Auction

EVENTS:

Breakfast at 7:30
5K, 3-mile run/walk 8:00
Sangor Chor at 8:30
Children run 8:45
Dove release at 9:15
Auction at 9:30 - Quilts at 11:00
Stoltzfus Story from 7:00 in the House
Jack Parmer's DVD on the preservation
Gov Leader and the Amish, by Pud Sam
Vendors



above: The goal is to finish
the Barn before the Auction!

Send Barn donation, write check to NSHPC (visit: www.nicholasstoltzfus.org)
Mail to: Vivian Beiler, Treasurer, 243 W Fulton St, New Holland, PA 17557

Return Address

*Place
Stamp
Here*

Address

Send a copy to a friend.