



Schweitzer Salt

Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association

January 2017

SMCHA Membership Letter —from the President

To all Descendants of 1874 Swiss Mennonite Migration

Farmers know that healthy plants need good roots, roots that go down deep into the soil in search of water and nutrients. Strong roots help them withstand drought, wind and stress. Roots are important! Remember that a tree without roots is just a piece of wood. Trees stand strong not by the beauty of their fruits but by the depth of their roots.

So it is with people. People like plants have roots. People find comfort in knowing who they are. They ask questions about who their ancestors were, where they came from, and what was their past. During this past year I have been contacted various times by people who wanted to know about their past. They know some things and want to fill in the blanks. I always try to help. SMCHA is and has been active in this effort.

As a people, our roots go deep. They reach back into the 1500's. They are roots that have been shaped by the winds of time, by the challenges of environment, by waves of persecution, by forced migrations, by life's struggles and hardships, and by successes. Offspring of these 1874 immigrants have excelled in religion, agriculture, academia, science, medicine, business, government, the professions and more. Their hard work has helped them to become successful upper middle class. Much of this has been documented but there is much more that needs to be done. SMCHA needs your help in this effort.

SMCHA is unique among Mennonite groups. We believe that the Swiss Volhynians are the only Mennonite sub-group to have an organization whose purpose it is to preserve its unique history and to promote its culture. That in itself should be a source of pride to all who share a relationship to this heritage. SMCHA is fueled by your membership dollars, charitable donations, ideas and help. SMCHA needs you. I certainly hope we can count on you.

Memberships are still \$20 per year or \$100 for six years. Check your renewal date on the mailing label. Please complete the membership form on page 3 and send with your check to SMCHA, Box 93, Moundridge, KS 67107. We want you to be a part of our group.

With regards, LaVern Stucky, President, SMCHA



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SMCHA Mission:

- * Collect and disseminate information concerning the spiritual and cultural history of Anabaptists of Swiss Volhynian origin.
- * Offer scholarships to qualifying college and seminary students.
- * Relate in a meaningful way the faith of our Mennonite forebears to present and future generations.
- * Maintain the Hopefield Cemetery and Swiss Mennonite 1943 Marker and Centennial Monument.

Annual Meeting - Sunday, March 12, 2017, 2:30 p.m. at First Mennonite Church, Newton, KS. Speaker—Curt Goering, formerly with Amnesty International and now with Victims of Torture. SMCHA Board has lots to report to the membership and friends. Cemetery booklets and Schweitzer program DVDs sold there. Reservations not required. Refreshments, too. Bring a friend to hear a great speaker. Open to all.

Family Roots

(From presentation made to Descendants of Elder Jacob and Anna (Waltner) Stucky at the Jubilee Reunion at Bethel College, North Newton, KS, July 18-19, 1981)

Though referred to as Anabaptist or Schweizer, note the variegated nature of the ancestral lineage of Elder Jacob and Anna Waltner Stucky:

Jacob's maternal grandpa, Joseph Mundelheim, son of Count Phillip Mundelheim, was born into the wealthy German Catholic nobility. While possibly studying for the priesthood at Munich, Joseph encountered Anabaptist doctrines, succumbed, was converted and joined the Anabaptists. He became an elder in the Amish community. Joseph's parents had disinherited their wayward son but later forgave him and asked him to return home to claim his inheritance.

Jacob's maternal grandma, Elizabeth Mauer, was possibly of the Swiss Amish who migrated direct to the Palatinate.

Jacob's paternal grandparents, Christian Stucky and Marie Kaufman migrated to Russia from the Alsace area.

Anna's paternal grandparents, Andreas Waldner and Katherine Schrag, represent a comingling of Hutterite and Amish blood. Andreas' father, Johannes, the noted Hutterite historian of German-speaking Lutheran descent, invited a Swiss Amish group (including Katherine's parents) living in Galacia to join them in Russia in their Bruderhof. The Amish accepted the invitation but were not able to adjust to the Hutterite communal lifestyle and soon left. Probably the only lasting aspect of this abortive Amish-Hutterite union was the marriage of Andrea to Katherine who stayed with her Hutterite husband at the Bruderhof. Upon his death, Katherine, with her children, left to rejoin her Amish family [the beginning of the Waltner name in Schweitzer story].

Anna's maternal grandpa, Peter Krehbiel and Charlotte Nahrgang, emigrated to Russia from the Palatinate. Peter, of Swiss-Anabaptist descent, was a member of the Amish group which experienced the brief, bittersweet Hutterite union.

Anna's maternal grandma Charlotte Nahrgang's background was probably of German Lutheran or Catholic descent.

Jacob and Anna Waltner Stucky were born in 1824 and 1830 respectively, in Edwardsdorf, Volhynia, Russian Poland. They were married in 1849. Eight of their children were born in Russia. In communities where several people had identical given and surnames, familial nicknames served to sort people into their respective lineages. Children:

Katrina (Schrag) - "Schrag-Daniel"

Tobias - "Tobiasfetter"

Joshua - "Landkoenig"

Anna (Wedel) - "Wedelfetter"

Maria (Goering) - "Goering-Peter"

Freni (Kaufman) - "Napoleon"

Elizabeth (Schrag) - "Krickehannes"

Jacob - "Hagen."

In 1862 Jacob was ordained elder of the Swiss-Amish congregation at Edwardsdorf. That year his

congregation moved east to Kotosufka and Neumanovka. Within a decade they would move again—this time to America. New policies of Russification and militarization threatened their way of life; emigration loomed more and more as the most viable option. In 1873, Anna died. One year later, on August 6, 1874, Elder Jacob led his congregation out of Volhynia nach America.



The congregation settled around Moundridge, Kansas, and organized under the name Hoffnungsfeld. Elder Jacob found a new wife, Barbara Kaufman Voran, whom he married in 1879.

Elder Stucky served his congregation faithfully until his death in 1893, but his work extended far beyond the boundaries of the Hoffnungsfeld community. From Pawnee Rock, Kansas, to South Dakota, Jacob ministered to the newly-transplanted Mennonites. He also helped establish the Kansas (Western District) Conference of Mennonites and signed the Bethel College Corporation charter in 1887.

Spring Central Kansas Bus Trip

The SMCHA sponsored 2017 edition of the Local Sites Tour through parts of Marion, Harvey and McPherson counties is scheduled for May 6, 2017. The Tour brings to life the history



of the area from the Indians, to the frontier days and to the more recent groups including the Mennonites who settled and developed the land. Brian Stucky is the tour guide. Participants have given the past tours very positive reviews; tours tend to fill quickly. If you would like to go or just get more information, contact LaVern Stucky 620-983-2348.

Summer Bus Trip to Freeman

A bus trip is planned July 18-20, 2017 to the Freeman, South Dakota community to learn about the history and culture of three Mennonite groups, Swiss, Low German and Hutter that are a part of the Freeman Community.

Places of interest will include churches, cemeteries, historical sites and the Freeman Museum and Arboretum. Also featured will be a visit to the area where five Mennonite school children perished in the January 12 blizzard of 1888 and a visit to a Hutterite Colony including a noon meal there.

On the return trip we will stop at the Henderson Mennonite Heritage Museum and Park at Henderson, Nebraska and also see Bethesda Mennonite Church. Contact LaVern Stucky at 620-983-2348 soon for reservations and further details regarding this trip.

Join the Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association (SMCHA) 2017

Membership dues for 2017 are \$20.00/individual or \$100 for six years. The SMCHA Newsletter "Schweitzer Salt" will be sent only to members 3-4 times/year. Complete the information below and send with dues to Membership Chairperson Kathy Goering at Swiss Mennonite Cultural and Historical Association, P.O. Box 93, Moundridge KS 67107.

Name _____ Address _____
Phone _____ Cell phone _____ E-mail _____
Spouse _____ Spouse e-mail _____ Cell phone _____ Church _____
_____ \$20 for 2017 _____ \$100 for six years _____ check or _____ cash is attached/enclosed
Suggestions for the Board: _____

Cemetery names on gold.

SMCHA Trustees researched an updated system of displaying the names of people who are buried in the Hopefield Cemetery. They have worked countless hours preparing the backing and name holders. You are invited to check out the new look that will aid in locating friends and relatives buried there. You can reserve a place for you to be buried so that your name will be displayed along with many of our ancestors.



Eldon & Tillie Zerger, Schweitzers

Married in 1948 right out of high school, Eldon and Tillie Stucky Zerger rented and shared the house with Grandmother Mrs. Joseph J. Wedel. Tillie felt lucky to have a kerosene stove with several burners and a potbellied stove in the living room to keep warm. Tillie remembered 80-year old Grandma Wedel going out with her cane to milk the cow; Grandma milked one half and the calf got milk from the other side. Eldon and Tillie drove a 1937 Chevy on their honeymoon to Colorado which they shared with Harv and Erna Stucky. Tillie worked at Elyria Grocery Store and Eldon did field work for two years.

Eldon, son of Dan and Mary Wedel Zerger, was born in 1928 and grew up on a farm west of Moundridge, Kansas. These were days when parents didn't want their children to be boastful and love words were not frequently expressed. Eldon knew his parents loved him, usually. He attended Peaceful Grade School. Sports didn't get much attention for farm boys; Eldon spent his energy in band and music. He hated Saturdays because his chore was cleaning the chicken house.

Tillie was born at home in 1929, daughter of Siegfried

and Edna Graber Stucky, and lived on the farm east of Elyria. Her Mom was a hard worker, even working in the field when Siegfried worked at the elevator. She remembered washing the wood floor and then siblings pulling each other around on a blanket to polish that floor. The entire family ate breakfast together every morning following devotions and prayer; she sometimes worried that the eggs were getting cold. Tillie drove a Model T to high school. Once the transmission went out and she backed all the way home.

Eldon remembers some of the trauma of high school during the World War II years when pacifists were hated in Moundridge, harassed and sometimes beat up. Kids west of town (mostly Mennonites) were called Krauts. Tillie also remembers getting spit at and having her hair pulled and called names in high school. Both attended summer German School.

Their Zerger turkey farm was east of Inman. Eldon remembers working in the hot field and then looking up to see Tillie coming at noon with fried chicken, potatoes, green beans from the garden and pie. Both Eldon and Tillie were active at Eden Mennonite Church for all their years. Ask them about their favorite travels.

Four children (first child Peggy died, Christine, Greg, and Dick) were born and now have married and live far from Moundridge. Dear grandchildren don't have the fun that Eldon and Tillie had playing with many cousins who shared their values.

Recently retired to Pine Village Independent Living, Eldon said "most important is to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Not much more really matters."



Welcome new SMCHA Trustee. With the resignation of Fred Goering, Leann Toews has joined the SMCHA Board. Born in Pretty Prairie, Leann graduated from Bethel College, then taught Kindergarten, first, second and third grade and Goessel High English, forensics and drama. She has a masters in communication from Wichita State University. Leann says she loves all of the arts, antiques and reading. She appreciates her Schweitzer heritage and hopes that we can keep our story alive for future generations.





Online at:
www.swissmennonite.org

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"Only Schweitzer Spoken
Here": Norvin Schrag, Lorita
Regier

Genealogy Advisor: Betty
Graber Hartzler

Schweitzer Salt Editor

Kathy Goering, 620-345-8532
Moundridge, Kansas
kjgo@mtelco.net
Article submissions welcome.

Scholarship Policy. Start thinking who you might encourage to apply for the SMCHA \$500 Scholarship, requests due July 1, 2017. Applicants should be members of a Swiss Volhynian church or be of Swiss Volhynian descent. Applicants must send a letter of application and letter of recommendation from his/her pastor or congregation to the Scholarship Committee, % Roger Juhnke, 328 Lakeshore Drive, Newton, KS 67114 or contact him at fluhnke@southwind.net. Give our Swiss Volhynian students a boost.

Dave Ortman's Serbian sojourn.

At the invitation of Djordje Maricic, a Serbian who graduated from Bethel Collee, KS in 2007, David Ortman participated with a five-person age 60+ U.S. team in the IX Olympiad of Sport, Health, and Culture for the Third Age in Vrnjacks Banja, Serbia Sept 30-Oct 4, 2016. The Olympiad's focus is on promoting sports, health and culture for persons over 60 years of age. The U.S. Team competed in Racewalking, Chess, Darts, Air Rifle, Soccer Kicking, Basketball Free Throws and Fishing (a nonscoreing event) and finished with an overall ranking of 28th place out of 208 teams. David's Aunt Harriet Kaufman from Freeman, SD was on their team. David anchored the U.S. team in Racewalking relay and placed 16th out of 121 teams. Good job, David. Contact deortman@msn.com or www.olimpijada3d.org.



Kelsey Ortman, administrator at **Freeman's Heritage Hall Museum and Archives** announced a fundraiser for much needed new sidewalk, \$15,000 project.

Du Kannst Nicht Treu Sein

Du kannst nicht treu sein, nein, nein, dass kannst du nicht
Wenn auch dein Mund mir wahre Liebe verspricht;
In deinem Herzen hast du für viele Platz
Darum bist du auch nicht für mich der richtige Schatz.

Match Day Report.

SMCHA members raised \$2600 in Match Day 2016 that was deposited in the McPherson Community Foundation SMCHA account bringing that to \$57,798. SMCHA was third of the requesting organizations in money raised resulting in \$2,034.83 earned in the match to be used to preserve and digitize old Swiss Volhynian history and records no longer available. Check the website (swissmennonite.org) to see the books scanned there already. Some photo copies were made and will be sold at the Annual Meeting. *Thank you to those who contributed to the SMCHA Endowment Account which will support the maintenance of SMCHA properties as needed in the future.*

Brothers Keeper Software Workshop

Betty Graber Hartzler will be in Central Kansas to lead a spring Brothers Keeper Workshop for those who want to learn how to use this software to explore your ancestry. She will bring an updated jump drive of over 32,000 names for those who purchased the software previously and will work with them and new subscribers to learn search techniques. Date is Tuesday, February 21, 2:30-4:30 and 7:00-8:30 p.m. at Pine Village Wellness Center, Moundridge, KS. Contact Kathy Goering at 620-345-8532 or kjgo@mtelco.net to reserve a space.

