

# Schmucker • Smoker • Smucker



John Schmucker Homestead

Family Association Newsletter Winter 2012

## 2011 Family Gathering

The 2011 SSS Family Association Gathering was held in Kidron, Ohio from July 8th through 10th at the Central Christian School. A special thank you to the members of the planning committee for their efforts resulting in a very successful family gathering. 2011 Planning Team members included:

- Willeane Beyeler Schrock** – Secretary and Registrar
- Pauline F. Smucker** – Food Coordination
- Bruce Smucker** – Co-coordinator
- Barbara Steiner** – Auction Coordinator
- Arlene Moore** – Food Coordinator
- Ken Smucker** – Co-Coordinator
- Helen Ault** – Bus trips Coordinator
- Jerrold Smoker** – Membership/Mailing Lists Database Administrator
- D. Richard Miller** – Genealogy Database Coordinator
- Art Smucker** – Genealogy Database Coordinator
- Ralph Smucker** – Bus Trip Narrator
- Reid Smucker** – Bus Trip Narrator
- Susan Kindt** – SSS Family Quilts and Memorabilia Exhibits Coordinator
- Darrell Smucker** – Treasurer
- Stan and Marlene Smucker** – Sunday Worship Leaders
- JD Smucker** – Sunday Service Music and Song Leader

A special note of thanks is extended Tim and Richard Smucker of the J M Smucker Company for inviting all pre-registered SSS Family Gathering attendees to participate in a wonderful evening of music, food, and family-centered activities at the J M Smucker Store and Café. Musical entertainment was provided by Rhonda Vincent and the Rage.

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### Newsletter Expense

These newsletters are our largest expense second to our family gatherings. To help defray the costs of our newsletters, please:

- Send an e-mail to Jerrold Smoker, our mailing list registrar, at [jsmoker@msn.com](mailto:jsmoker@msn.com). When e-mailing Jerrold, please include your full name and address to assure that the mailing list database is up to date.
- Send a contribution to Darrell Smucker, SSS Family Association Treasurer (see mailing information in the membership article on page 2).



# Family Association Officers & Board Members Elected

During the business meeting held at the Kidron Gathering, the following individuals were elected to office.

**James M. (Jim) Smoker** – *President*

**Eber Rice- Smucker** – *Vice President*

**Marie (Smoker) Brenneman** – *Secretary*

**Darrell Smucker** – *Treasurer*

**Alvin Smucker** – *Board Member*

**Helen Smucker-Ault** – *Board Member*

**Sue Kindt** – *Board Member*

**D. Richard Miller** – *Genealogy Database Coordinator*

**Art Smucker** – *Genealogy Database Coordinator*

**Jim Smoker** ( Christian – John- Daniel – David Renno – Joshua S. – John M.) was raised in Lancaster County, PA and served as the convener of the planning team for the 2005 Lancaster County SSS Family Gathering. He served as the Interim President following the resignation of Joe Smucker. Jim has held a keen interest in the SSS family history and was influenced by his attendance at several of the Family Gatherings held in Lancaster County, by his father, John Melvin Smoker, and his cousin Jane Louise Smoker Davidson. Jim retired from a 39 year career with WellSpan Health (2010), a three hospital, 70 sites of care, health system located in York and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania. Jim holds a BS in Business Management (York College) and a Masters in Public Administration (Penn State). Jim served as the system-wide leader of WellSpan's purchasing, logistics, and support services during the last 20 years of his healthcare career. Jim married Joanne E. (Good) Smoker in 1968. Jim and Joanne later learned that they are distant cousins through their Hans Herr Heritage. They have been blessed with three daughters, Jennafer Seeley, Amy Sipe, and Jessica Schumer, and four grandchildren. Jim and Joanne reside in York, PA.

## Eber Rice-Smucker

I have roots in the SSS family from both my mother: Christian (immigrant), John, Christian III, Jonathan, Amos, Emma (Smucker) Rohrer, May Katherine (Rohrer) Smucker and from my father: Christian (immigrant), John, Christian III, David, Jonas, Simon, Francis, Eber. As their Great Grandfathers were half brothers that made them half-third cousins.

My parents grew up attending Oak Grove Amish Mennonite Church, where they had services both in English and in German. May and Francis were baptized in the creek behind the church. After attending Goshen College, they were the first couple to be married in a special wedding service in the church building, reluctantly approved by the Bishops after an appeal to a higher power, their wives. Francis died in 2006 and my mother joined him last month at age 93.

I married Rebecca Rhae Rice in 1978. Beckie and I both use each other's last names going by Rice-Smucker. We traveled from Phoenix, AZ, in 1981, with our 6-month-old son Noah James Smucker, to Oak Grove Mennonite Church for our first SSS family reunion. From Goshen College Beckie earned her BSN and I my BA in Religion. In Arizona, I earned my Master of Social Work. I also studied theology at Assoc. Mennonite Biblical Seminaries and completed a Clinical Pastoral Education program. I have worked as an adolescent and family therapist, an executive director of a small church agency and am now employed managing the program, staff, facilities and therapy for clients in five adult psychiatric group homes.

When we moved back to Goshen with our children Noah, Nathan and Naomi, we all helped my second cousin, John Robert Smucker process the SSS Newsletter mailings. From D. Richard Miller, I am now beginning to learn the software and editing process for uploading the information that John R. had accumulated so I can help carry on that immense project.

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## On Membership in the SSS Family Association

Our SSS Family Association was duly constituted with the creation of our constitution in March or 1985. Article IV (Membership) states that, " Membership is granted at one of the five year meetings, making a contribution, or paying for a subscription to the Newsletter. One of these acts must be continued every five years to be a member.

If you did not attend the 2011 SSS Family Gathering in Kidron, Ohio, please make a donation of at least \$10.00 payable to the SSS Family Association. Mail your donation to:

Darrell Smucker, Treasurer, SSS Family Association, 1497 Morgan Street, Wooster, Ohio, 44691-1541.

### **Marie (Smoker) Breneman**

Marie (Smoker) Breneman's family line is Christian, John, Daniel, Joshua (Smucker) - David - Joshua (Smoker) - David Renno Smoker (my Dad). For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has been laid; that foundation is Jesus Christ. 1Cor. 3:11 (Menno Simon's favorite passage).

Menno Simons and Jacob Ammon, the Mennonite and Amish namesakes and our forefathers, laid the foundation for our family in the 1500 and 1600s. I work at the Mennonite Information Center in Lancaster, PA. I enjoy conversing with people all over the world about we Mennonites and the Amish. It fits quite nicely with our family legacy. Marie serves as the Group Sales Coordinator for the Mennonite Information Center, Lancaster, PA and served on the 2005 Lancaster SSS Family Gathering Planning Committee. Marie and husband, Gene, have three adult children and four grandchildren and reside in Lancaster, PA.

**Darrell Smucker** – Family Lineage - Christian-the immigrant, John, Christian III, David Smoker, Jonas Smucker, John Smucker, J Mervin Smucker, Ralph Smucker (father).

I was raised as the fifth generation on a family farm just outside of Orrville, OH on Smucker Road. Currently residing in Wooster OH with my wife Brenda & son Andrew. For the past 31 years I've been employed in the banking industry – currently serving as Vice President, Business Banker at First National Bank in Orrville. My “hobbies” consist of serving as a volunteer on various community and church related Boards or committees.

My uncle John R Smucker, was a role model and encouraged me to have an understanding of one's heritage. I've served as treasurer of the SSS Family Association ever since being “drafted by Uncle John” approximately 15 years ago. The involvement in reunions and “Smucker Heritage Tour” across Europe were highlights. My experience of gaining new friendships with family and learning about the lives or events of the past have been a joy and privilege.

**Alvin Smucker** - Alvin J.M. Smucker is the son of Paul Smucker, son of Peter Smucker, son of Jonas Smucker, son of David Smoker, son of Christian Schmucker III, son of John Schmucker, son of Christian Schmucker I. Although we have not changed the spelling of our Smucker name since 1923, my parents saw fit to match my middle name with founder of the JM Smucker industry in nearby Orrville, Ohio. Alvin married Betty Voran in 1967, both completed graduate school at Michigan State University. In 1971 they moved to Argentina to establish a new graduate school in agricultural sciences. We have three children who are married with 8 delightful grandchildren. The majority of our professional career was teaching and research at Michigan State University. Alvin's research included the training of multiple dozens of graduate students and numerous visiting scientists. His lecturing and research took him to more than 53 countries including four sabbatical leaves to Wisconsin, Western Australia, Argonne National Labs near Chicago and to Kiel, Germany. Betty has retired and Alvin continues research and teaching in the biophysical and physical sciences of soils including the development and distribution of a new water and nutrient saving membrane technology that greatly increases the production of food and cellulosic biomass converted to liquid biofuels.

**Helen Smucker Ault** - My Smucker lineage is Christian III, John, Gideon Y., Jephtha, Melvin, Glenn (my father), Helen Smucker-Ault(Me) and Christian III, David, Nancy Smucker-Burkholder, Amanda Burkholder-Hartzler, Nora Hartzler-Smucker-Kohler, Glenn Smucker, Helen Smucker Ault (Me)

I was born and raised in the Wayne County, Ohio area. I presently live 20 miles from Kidron, the 2011 SSS Reunion site with husband, 3 dogs and 1 cat. My husband and I have a combined 7 children and 7 grandchildren. I have attended the 2001 Goshen and the 2006 Lancaster Reunions and was a committee member for the 2011 Kidron reunion. My father tried to get me interested in family history for years, but I was too busy raising my 4 children and working as an LPN. In 1998, as my father's eyesight was fading, I began helping my father with the family history. I soon became passionately involved and have been ever since. I started with one notebook and a few genealogy books. Now I have 40 notebooks and a library full of books with an office dedicated to my projects. I have over 20,000 individuals in my computer data base. I am currently one of the Ohio contact persons and a boardmember for the SSS Family Association. I am looking forward to the next reunion in 2016 but will have much to keep me busy until then, as the 1940 census will be released this spring.

**Sue Kindt** - I belong to the SSS family in this way: Christian, the Immigrant; John Schmucker, Christian III, Joseph Smoker (16th son of Christian III), Purl Zook, Helen Zook Lawrence, and then me, Susan Lawrence Kindt. I live on a beautiful lake located near a small town here in Michigan, am married and my husband is a part time maintenance person and full time farmer. We have two adult children that each have two children of their own. I still am working full time for a country attorney in our town of Marcellus, MI. My passions are grandchildren and sewing. I have made many, many quilts and various other sewing projects and sell them out of our small farm market during Spring, Summer and Fall. I have attended the Goshen, Lancaster, Kidron reunions and God willing will be in Lancaster for the next one. I am excited about being a part of the next reunion committee and will do all I can to be of help.

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**My work with the Schmucker-Smoker-Smucker database** sometimes feels like an exciting commitment that could swallow the rest of my life. And sometimes I think I could enjoy that. Ecclesiastes 12:12b (Today's New International Version) says "Of making many books there is no end, and much study wearies the body." The same kind of thing can be said about collecting genealogy information and working with it. There is no end of data. There are always births, deaths, marriages and other changes. And sometimes I can become weary. But there can also be much excitement.

Arthur A. Smucker began the SSS database about 1993, with the goal of entering into the database all of the information that John R. Smucker had gathered in his searching over many decades. Of course, while Art started his work, John kept on searching. Our files have evidence of John's work during the summer of 2006, just prior to his September 1 death.

About 2004, John invited me to assist Art. Eventually, Art suggested that we change places, and now he helps me. We still have the original goal: enter all of the information John gathered. Today, the database includes 47,306 names, and we are still not close to being done.

In addition, I am also on the lookout for the new information—marriages, births, deaths, etc. And we would welcome others who would join our team in a variety of ways.

Our first goal: Complete entering information compiled by John. Are there one or two persons who would join our team? Persons who come closest to enjoying this pay attention to detail, and have access to a computer which can handle the database. There would be several advantages if the persons would be reasonably close to Goshen, but we are willing to consider other options.

Second, I also dream of having a group of persons, mostly across the United States and Canada, who would forward information about Christian's descendants. People continue to be born, marry, raise families and die. This may include persons you know or read about in newspapers. But this can also be a fascinating way to initiate contact with persons whose personal story may be very different from your own.

Third, I also dream of finding one or two persons who would coordinate the ongoing gathering of information. Probably no one would gather information exactly like John did it. But here would be a core group who pass information on to those working with the database.

And finally, because Mennonite Church USA Archives has revised their guidelines, the information gathered by John is no longer stored there. Currently it is at an interim location. Preferably we will find another place which can provide archival quality environment. Access by those working with the database is also a consideration.

The earliest dreams were that information could be gathered on all of immigrant Christian Schmucker's descendants. John eventually discovered that this is a monumental task, and eventually he focused on the descendants of Christian's grandson son, also named Christian. This Christian was John's great-great-great-grandfather, and my great-great-grandfather. But we have added information about other branches to the databases as we have been able to find it.

*And the dream goes on.*

**D. Richard Miller**  
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Goshen IN 46526-5161  
d.r.miller@maplenet.net

## Elected *(continued from page 4)*

**D. Richard Miller** - My connection in the SSS family goes this way: Christian, the immigrant, John, Christian III, David Smoker, Jonas Smucker, Effie (Smucker) Miller. Christian III moved to Wayne County, Ohio, and that is where my Smucker ancestors continued to live. But my wife, Marilyn, and I lived in Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, and nearly 41 years in Fort Dodge, Iowa. Marilyn and I moved to Greencroft, Goshen IN in June 2003, where she died about two months later. I have four children and four grandchildren. Fifteen years I served as a Pastor, followed by 26 years as a family counselor and supervisor with a not-for-profit multi-service social work agency. Not long after we moved to Goshen, John R. Smucker got me involved in the SSS genealogy database, assisting Arthur A. Smucker, who worked with it for many years. Within the first year or so, Art requested to switch roles, so now he has been helping me. He also provides an historical perspective on the database challenges.

Some will remember the lady who accompanied me to last summer's SSS Gathering in Kidron. Pat and I announced our engagement over Christmas weekend.

## Have an Interesting Story to Share?

Do you have a story you would like to share about a family member or a piece of SSS family history? Please share your story or information with Jim Smoker, SSS Family Association president, and we'll include it in our next newsletter. Jim can be contacted through:

**jjsmoker@verizon.net or,  
3435 Bull Road, York, PA 17408-9755.**

Some stories in the making for the next issue of our newsletter include:

*Just what did Ike Smoker invent and how did he secure his patent?*

*Who was Captain John Smoker and why did his portrait hang in the Museum of Louisiana History, New Orleans, LA?*

# Going to Switzerland? Don't Skip France! ~by Suzy Wert

**Montbéliard, France was a stop for Christian Schmucker** as he worked his way to Pennsylvania and is very much worth a visit if one travels to France or Switzerland. Montbéliard is easy to get to and is a straight shot from Basel, Switzerland, plus it's only about an hour away. Basel is one of the least expensive European destinations from the US and the Basel airport, despite its name, is located in France, and is known in France as the Basel-Mulhouse Euroairport.

Montbéliard is in the Doubs Valley, Franche-Comté region, and is not a common place for tourists which we found delightful. For the most part, no English is spoken here, so either brush up on your French, or don't plan on conversing with the locals (they will make an exception if you are a paying customer, though you should expect to be pleasantly corrected in your pronunciation).

One travels on a highway from Basel (or the airport) through Mulhouse, France in the Alsace region, where there is a nice State Automobile Collection Museum, and then through Belfort, a charming town where there is a huge stone statue, the Lion of Belfort, by Bartholdi, the creator of the Statue of Liberty. We were there on a Saturday, and they had a huge farmer's market selling everything from flats of flowers to Paris fashions to hot pretzels. Don't spend too long in either place, though, because Montbéliard is the next stop and it is a gem! And it's lively and cosmopolitan which was something I didn't expect. There is an enormous downtown which not only has plenty of parking on the perimeter of a walking concourse; there are flowers everywhere and lots of non-touristy activity. We were told you couldn't get a bad meal in Montbéliard, and so we walked into the first restaurant we saw and were bowled over by the great food and wine. There was only one waitress in the whole staff that spoke a modicum of English, but we managed just fine.

The Castle of the Dukes of Württemberg is known locally as the Château de Montbéliard, and it is definitely worth a trip to see. The schedule is odd, and the castle is divided into more than one section, so be clear on which you'd like to see to know which schedule to look at. There is a museum which is open until midnight one night a month; the castle itself; and also an out-building where the genealogical records are kept. We stayed at an old castle-like house, the Hôtel de France, which is on the outskirts of town near the castle and just walked there. The hotel was only 49.00 (\$65.00) a weekend night with no amenities to speak of, but it was just fine and our photos look like we stayed somewhere really special. If you stay there, say no to their breakfast which is way overpriced and wasn't very good.

Our final stop for this leg of the trip was 10 miles south in Valentigney where we saw the Museum of Pioneer Agriculture, or the more exotic sounding (and Google search friendly), Le Musée de la Paysannerie et des Vieux Métiers. It isn't much different than the pioneer museums here, I suppose, and once again, the hours are

odd, and once again, they don't speak any English, but you know what? We had a lot of fun there! The museum is only open M-F unless other arrangements are made ahead of time. I had contacted them a month before we left and made arrangements using Google translate, and in the ensuing emails back and forth, I could tell the man I was talking to was getting nervous about the language difference. He wrote back that he had secured an interpreter for the time we would be there, so then I started getting nervous that he was expecting something other than a middle aged American and her only-somewhat-interested husband, but it all worked out beautifully. In addition to the interpreter, her husband who acted as her driver, and the man who runs the museum, a couple of board members and their dogs were part of the package as well, so it was like a huge party. The man who runs the museum would wax poetically in French for a long time, and then the interpreter would simply say something very short such as, "the windows are wavy because they are original." Then we'd all laugh because he obviously had said something way longer than that!



Somewhere between Montbéliard and Valentigney there is a Peugeot auto museum and factory if you're looking for more to do, but we found a little town named Audincourt which was just a perfect little bustling town, and spent half a day there. There are a bunch of other things to do in the area, I suppose it depends on your interests, but a Google search of "Comte France" will bring them up in English. While there, be sure to try the local Comté cheese. One can imagine the Swiss bringing not only their cows, but their cheese making style to the area because it tastes an awful lot like a smooth Gruyère.

Car rental rates are cheapest in Germany, then France, and highest in Switzerland, (and higher still if you rent ahead of time from home) but no matter in which country you rent your car, you will save money by returning it in the same country. Eurocar in Lörrach, Germany is the closest bargain rental car place to the Basel airport, and can be easily and quickly reached by bus or train, but it takes time, so consider that France is cheaper than Switzerland for rental cars and exit the Basel airport on the French side if you are renting a car and can return it in France.

## Should the SSS Family Association plan a trip to Switzerland?

This idea was brought forward by Alvin Smucker. If you feel you would consider participating, please contact Jim Smoker via [jismoker@verizon.net](mailto:jismoker@verizon.net) or by phone 717-292-4709 and we will gather information and see if such a trip could be planned.



## Honoring Art Smucker

The SSS Family Association Board Members deemed it appropriate to honor Art Smucker with the title of SSS Family Archivist Emeritus for all his efforts in developing our SSS Family Database. The following is Art's biographical sketch to assist us in appreciating his background and efforts on our behalf.

### Art Smucker Brief Resume

November 28, 2012

**I was born on Nov. 27, 1923** in what was then British India of missionary parents, serving under the Mennonite Mission Board. I completed my schooling through HS Freshman level at Woodstock boarding

school in the foothills of the Himalaya Mts. We spent a year in the US when I was 5 during my parents' furlough, of which I have only few memories. It was at our mission station that my father baptized me at age 12. When I was 13 we returned to the US permanently, primarily because of my mother's poor health. On our way we traveled extensively through the Far and Middle East and Europe, eventually sailing from England for the US.

We spent our first year in Tiskilwa, IL, where most our relatives on both sides of the family were; and I took my sophomore year of HS there. We then moved to Goshen, IN I think in 1937 or perhaps 1938 where I finished HS. Since I was chronologically at least a year ahead of my classes, I then spent a year working, partly with a construction crew, and partly outdoor painting with my Dad and older brother, Ernest, my only sibling.

I then entered Goshen College, from where I was drafted as a Conscientious Objector toward the end of my sophomore year. I spent 3 years in CPS, the first several months at a forestry camp (Luray, VA) in Blue Ridge National Park, VA. The rest of my service was as an attendant in state mental hospitals in Howard, Rhode Island, Poughkeepsie, NY, and Norristown, Pa. During this time I volunteered to do relief work under MCC after the war, and took a number of classes to that end, including French.

In 1946 I traveled to Wissembourg, Alsace, France along with (eventually) around 18 other young men, to do transportation and reconstruction under MCC. I served as the local director of our group there under the supervision of Orlo Goering of Kansas for a year. Then I was transferred to Amsterdam, where I served as the first full time European representative of Menno Travel Service, at that time an arm of MCC. I arranged and conducted tours for students from Mennonite and affiliated colleges, and made travel arrangements for relief workers. While there, Oma Hershberger of Walnut Creek, Ohio, whom I had met in college, and become engaged to under a tree on the campus of Poughkeepsie State Hospital, N.Y., came to join me. We were married

in July of 1948, civil ceremony in Wissembourg, church ceremony by Harold S. Bender at the Childrens' Home in Mont-des-Oiseaux, near Wissembourg; and honeymooned in Switzerland.

We returned to the US in 1949 aboard the Queen Mary, and returned to Goshen, where I re-entered Goshen College. Our first child, Douglas, was also born that year. With extra credits I had picked up during CPS, I graduated from Goshen College in spring of 1950, and we immediately moved to Champaign/Urbana, IL., where I enrolled in graduate school at the U. of Illinois. I completed my Ph.D. work in summer of (I think) 1953, when we moved back to Goshen College, where I had signed a one year contract to teach Chemistry. I completed writing my Ph.D. thesis during that teaching year and received the degree that spring; and was then offered an extended contract to teach at Goshen College.

At one time or another I taught every chemistry course offered by Goshen, and also a number of General Education science courses; and served as head of the Div. of Nat. Sci. for a number of years. I taught for 31 years, and my last 4 years before retiring I was Director of Computing Services. During my teaching years, my wife and I led a year Summer Service Term units to Guadeloupe, French West Indies, during which we had three groups of students. Later we also led one term to Poland.

After I retired, I spent a year in Akron, PA in voluntary service doing computer work for Mennonite Disaster Service. I later served in many MDS units at major and minor disasters, as Project Director of Office Manager.

I have also traveled extensively in the US and abroad for business and pleasure, having been in 53 countries. I have been privileged to raft the Colorado River, spend a summer driving Alaska, visit the Galapagos Islands and take freighter cruises in the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas. I have lived at least 3 months in 5 countries - USA, India, France, Netherlands and Poland; and at one time or another spoken at a conversational level 6 languages - Hindi, English, French, German, Netherlands Dutch and Polish.

My first wife and the mother of our 6 children (4 boys and 2 girls), died of cancer in 1994; and on Jan 1, 2001, I married Carol Schertz Oyer, widow of Prof. John Oyer of Goshen College, and a long time friend and acquaintance.

***“At one time or another I taught every chemistry course offered by Goshen...”***

## Art Smucker *(continued from page 6)*

In December of 2010 I had successful open heart surgery at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, MN to repair the mitral valve. In Dec. of 2011 I was diagnosed and treated for advanced prostate cancer with substantial metastasis to my bones, again at Mayo Clinic. I am currently receiving hormone treatment (Luprone) which has temporarily arrested the cancer and allows me to live a pain free and fairly normal life. This is palliative, not curative, and will eventually cease to have an effect.

I was involved from the beginning (1973 ?) in the effort to enter the descendants of Christian Schmucker into a genealogical database. Originally the intent was to enter all his descendants and publish a book. We soon determined that was too much, and decided to focus on Christian III and his descendants, which work continues to this day. John R. Smucker was the primary data collector, though many others helped; and I did almost all the data entry, again helped from time to time, until several years ago, when Richard Miller "came aboard". He now takes primary responsibility for the paper records and the database, though I continue to help with checking and entering data from the records.

## SSS Family is on the WEB

Thanks to the efforts of Scott Stoltzfus, we are back on the web. Our URL address is [www.sssfamly.org](http://www.sssfamly.org). Come visit us!

I guess we've come of age. The SSS Family is on Facebook in a closed or restricted group. You must request to join by going out to [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com), then search on Schmucker Smucker Smoker Family and ask to join. Jennifer Smoker Seeley is the membership "gatekeeper".



## The SSS Family Association Loses a Key Historian

**Jane L. S. Davidson**, 73, of Glen Moore, PA, died on December 15, 2012 at the Neighborhood Hospice Center of West Chester, PA. She was the widow of the late Lester Davidson, who passed away in 2010 after sharing 49 years of marriage together.

Born in Lancaster County, PA, on April 5th, 1939, she was the daughter of David and Helen K. (Buch) Smoker. She was a graduate of Lampeter-Strasburg High School and she received her Bachelor's of Library Science from Millersville University.



Jane was employed as the Chief Preservation Officer by the County of Chester and was employed in the Historic Preservation Office. Jane's work and enthusiasm for historic preservation in Chester County resulted in the creation of "Jane's Army" which was a group of nearly 800 volunteers who monitored land use, historic buildings, historic sites. President H. W. Bush appointed her to the National Historic Preservation Trust Commission.

Jane also served as an historian for the North American Schmucker-Smoker-Smucker Family Association and wrote two books used as key resource documents by family association members. Jane taught genealogy in Downingtown and at West Chester Universities. A few of the estimated thirteen books she wrote or served as lead author included; "The Chester County Cookbook", "The History of Chester County", and "The History of Wallace Township, PA". Jane presented at many of the SSS Family Gathering and always brought forward new insights into our family history.

Jane is survived by her daughter, Christina K. Davidson of Glenside, PA and son Randy, husband of Sharon Davidson of Wagontown, PA, two grandchildren, Hunter and Blaise, and Jane's three siblings, Albert Smoker of Felton, PA, Claude Smoker and Marie Breneman, both of Willow Street, PA.

Funeral services were held on Thursday, December 20th, 2012 at the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd, Coatesville, PA followed by internment at the Oxford Cemetery.

(Portions of this obituary were lifted from "Lancaster Online" an edition of the Lancaster New Era, Lancaster Intelligencer Journal and Sunday News, December 17th, 2012)

# Early Thoughts on the **2016 SSS Family Gathering**

**The 2016 SSS Family Gathering** will be held in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. A Planning Team will be called upon in early 2013 to begin planning this event. In anticipation of this planning effort it would be most helpful to hear from SSS Family member and friends with regard to the types of activities and speakers of interest to you.



## **To “plant some seeds”, should we again have:**

Bus trips of various types:  
SSS Family-related homesteads, farmsteads and related sites  
Amish and Mennonite Places of Businesses  
Other?

## **Speakers on various topics:**

Origins of the Anabaptists  
Anabaptist History  
Amish and Mennonites: Current challenges  
Updates on the SSS Family Genealogy Database Project  
The Swiss Anabaptist DNA Project  
Updates on the SSS Family History  
Other?

## **Activities such as:**

- A large family gathering meal
- A Sunday morning worship service
- A fundraiser auction to benefit the SSS Family Association Genealogy work and the Mennonite Central Committee’s Outreach Services
- An activity center for younger children
- A display area for SSS Family-related memorabilia
- A Mastof’s Bookstore
- Other?

Please share your ideas and thoughts with Marie Brenneman via e-mail at: [rereHugs@aol.com](mailto:rereHugs@aol.com).