



The Family Tree



The Newsletter of the Sauvage/Sowash/Soash

July 1995

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The 1995 Berks County Pennsylvania Reunion

The 1995 Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family Reunion was held at the Holiday Inn in Reading, PA. on June 30, July 1 & 2. On Friday morning, the group traveled to Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (formerly known as Mertz Church) where Heinrich Sowasch married Anna Esther Schneider on 27 Nov 1749. This was the son of Johannes H. Sauvage, the original immigrant. The group was able to view the original church book which recorded their marriage. The book also records the baptism of Johanna Elisabeth Sawash, born 13 Jan 1751 and baptized 26 Jan 1751. This was probably their first child. No other records have been found in the church record books to date. Church members also provided a brief history of the church and the region and then served refreshments.

The group then headed west about two miles to the land that Johannes H. Sauvage purchased on 20 March 1743. Amazingly, the present tract of land retains basically the same shape as it did when Johannes purchased it (see map p. 3). Just before Johannes' death, the land went to Heinrich who owned the land until the late 1780's when he sold it and moved to Westmoreland County, PA. Some plat maps show a cemetery on the property, but it was vacated about 1865. This cemetery may have been the burial site of Johannes Sauvage and his wife Susannah.

At one o'clock, the group met at the Berks County Courthouse to hear Michelle Lynch, Preservation Specialist for Berks County, speak on early Berks County, especially Rockland Township and what life would have been like when the family lived in the county. The group then viewed the original German will of Johannes H. Sowas, dated 16 Feb 1761 and proved 11 May 1761. Johannes made his mark, which appears to be **JHS**. Also still in the court records are the estate papers which list the items he owned and their value. It was indeed a remarkable experience that we were looking at the very paper that Johannes signed 234 years ago.

An excellent dinner was served at the Holiday Inn, followed by the craft auction. The auction raised \$339.25 for the project fund (see the list of donors and purchasers p. 4)

On Saturday, the group headed to Philadelphia on a tour arranged by Merwin, where they visited the Liberty Bell, Independence Hall, Christ Church, and Penn's Landing where Johannes & family probably first landed in America on 05 Sep 1738. Lunch and shopping were next at the Reading Terminal market before going to the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

The Saturday evening meal was followed by the annual business meeting. Merwin welcomed everyone. Jane Brown won the 50/50 raffle, with the proceeds going to the project fund.

Richard Soash reported on the cemetery projects. The stone for Susana Sowash (2C/W/) and several of her descendants has been installed at St. Clair Cemetery in

Greensburg, PA. The stone of Michael and David Sowash (1F1F & 1F1E) in Brush Creek Cemetery in Irwin, PA. is currently being reset after it was broken. The group discussed engraving a large family plot marker stone at Union Cemetery in Irwin with the names of George and Elizabeth (Bankart) Sowash (1J). The cost of putting two smaller stones in the cemetery would be \$1440. Moving, cleaning and engraving the plot marker stone would cost a total of \$744.20. Joan Sowash agreed to contact some family members in the Greensburg area to see how they felt. The group also discussed putting a marker on the original land of Johannes H. Sauvage/Sowash. Maxine Cornwell suggested attaching a bronze plate to a stone, which gave Rockland Township its name. Richard will investigate the possibility with the current owner of the land.

John Hamilton suggested that the group try to erect stones at Brush Creek Cemetery in Irwin for Daniel Sowash (2) and his father Henry/Heinrich Sowash, both veterans of the Revolutionary War, since the Dept. of Veterans Affairs will provide new stones. Richard will investigate the option with Brush Creek Cemetery.

After a long discussion on how often to hold reunions, it was decided to hold reunions every year. Every third year, the reunion would return to Pennsylvania, probably either Westmoreland or Berks Counties, although other sites may also be possible. These reunions would emphasize the history of our family. The reunions in other years would be spread geographically across the United States to allow people to attend more easily. These reunions will tend to be social reunions rather than family history reunions.

The 1996 Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family Reunion will be held 19, 20, 21 July 1996 in Grand Island, Nebraska. It will be hosted by Charles & Edith Soash and Hugh & Catharine Miner. A postcard will be sent to all names on the mailing list in January 1996 with a second letter sent to those who join the association. The 1997 reunion will be hosted by Elinor Parish and Ruth Thomas in the northern Ohio area. The 1998 History Reunion will be held in Greensburg, PA. We need a host for this reunion. Any volunteers? We will be looking for hosts for the 1999 reunions, perhaps in northern or western United States. Please consider hosting a get-together.

The oldest member attending was Nellie Soash (1F6C4/W/) at 88. The oldest male attending was William Harold Sowash (2C1B1A2) at age 85. Amanda Sowash (1J7E4A2B) was the youngest attendee at age nine. Maxine (Soash) and Robert Cornwell (1F6C4A) had traveled the greatest distance from California.

Donations to the Project Fund

Jean H. Churchill
Glenn V. & Janelle Sowash
Donald & Shirley Combs
Charles E & Edith Soash
John O. & Dorothy Sowash
David G. & Harriette Soash
Mary Slack
G. William & Katherine Sowash
Elizabeth & John Gray
Albert & Christine Sowash

Special thanks for their generous donations of:

William Harold Sowash
Laurence "Larry" J. & Diane Sowash

Emmett James Van Nostrand (2B2A5A) 04 Jan 1995

1995-1996 Officers

President - Edith Soash
Vice-President - Elinor Parish
Secretary - Maxine Cornwell
Treasurer - Richard Soash

Deaths

Reva (Robinson) Haitbrink (1F2A3A) 13 Apr 1995
James R. Soash (1J7E4D) 11 Apr 1995
Ellwood Glenn Soash (1B4A3) 27 May 1995

Donations for the Craft Auction	Reunion Notes & Addresses	Reunion Attendees
<p>Teresa Anderson Jane Brown Myra Schroeder Edith Soash Richard Soash Christine & Albert Sowash Dot Sowash Joan Sowash John Curtis Sowash Ruth Thomas</p>	<p>Many people made the 1995 reunion possible. If you enjoyed the reunion, please write to thank them. Their good will and good work will make our future reunions in Berks County easier.</p> <p>Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church (Mertz) 16 Fleetwood Road Fleetwood, PA 19522</p>	<p>Forty-four people attended the reunion from the following eleven states: CO, CA, IA, IL, KS, MI, MD, NJ, OH, PA, and VA. (* indicates this was their first reunion)</p> <p>Teresa Anderson* 2E4C7A1 Jane Brown 1F6E2B Jack Brown 1F6E2B/H/ Maxine Cornwell* 1F6C4A Robert Cornwell* 1F6C4A/H/ Doris Hamilton* 5C7B1A2 John Hamilton* 5C7B1A2/W/ Marijean Hawthorne* 5C7B1?? Gail McQuigg 1J7E4A1 Thomas McQuigg 1J7E4A1B Madeline Metzger 1F6E2/W/ Elinor Parish 1B4B1A1 Anne Savage* ??? Mary Savage* ??? Wilbur Savage* ??? Doug Schroeder* 2B2A5B1 Myra Schroeder 2B2A5B Edith Soash 1B7E6/W/ Eric Soash* 1B4A3A3 Merwin Soash 1B4A3A Michael Soash*1B4A3A4 Nellie Soash 1F6C4/W/ Peggy Soash 1B4A3A/W/ Richard Soash 1B7E6B Amanda Sowash* 1J7E4A2B Ann Sowash* 1J7E4A3 Cara Sowash* 1J7E7D6 Diane Sowash 2C12L3A2/W/ Don Sowash* 2C1B1A2A Dorris Sowash 2D4J4 Dot Sowash* 1J7E7D/W/ Harold Sowash* 2C1B1A2 Jessica Sowash* 1J7E4A2A Joan Sowash 1J7E4A/W/ John Charles Sowash 2D4J4 John Curtis Sowash 2D3C4A John O. Sowash* 1J7E7D Krista Sowash* 1J7E7D? Larry Sowash 2C12L3A2 Mary Sowash 1J7E4A4 Nancy Sowash 2D3C4A/W/ Kathleen Teter* 5C7B1??? Ruth Thomas 1B4B1A Eric Whitehair* 1J7E4A1A</p>
<p>Purchasers at Craft Auction Teresa Anderson Jane Brown Marijean Hawthorne Gail McQuigg Thomas McQuigg Mary Savage Myra Schroeder Edith Soash Peggy Soash Dorris Sowash Dot Sowash Joan Sowash Mary Sowash Nancy Sowash Kathleen Teter</p>	<p>They preserve the church book with the marriage of Heinrich Sowasch and Anna Esther Schneider.</p> <p>Michelle Lynch Historic Preservation Specialist 815 Washington Street Reading, PA 19601</p> <p>Our afternoon speaker.</p> <p>Ernie Miller, Anthony Carabello, Glenn Reber Berks County Commissioners 633 Court Street Reading, PA 19601-3581</p>	<p>These men are probably unaware of the efforts to preserve the estate papers of Berks County. Encourage them to continue the efforts to preserve historic documents in Berks County.</p> <p>Merwin & Peggy Soash 2 Ridgway Drive Chadds Ford, PA 19317-9398</p>
<p>Thanks to all who donated and purchased crafts. Please let Richard know if we omitted anyone.</p> <hr/> <p>Thank You! Thanks to all who donated to the collection. I appreciate it. I plan to buy the Mertz Church records that Christ Evangelical Church is publishing. Richard</p> <hr/> <p>More Thanks! We missed Jack & Reo Sowash at the reunion. Reo started her next chemotherapy and will be half done. Reo would like to thank everyone for the greeting from the reunion. Their address is: 607 E. Colorado, Windsor, Mo 65360.</p>	<p>Organizer of the great 1995 reunion. Thanks, Merwin & Peggy, for all your work!</p>	

Support the Work

Membership dues help pay for the costs of produce and mail the newsletters. Please check the mailing. If **MP** appears below your name, you haven't yet paid your dues this year. Please consider renewing your membership.

T-shirts, Cassettes, Books, Etc.

The 1995 Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family Reunion T-shirts which include a copy of the original 1761 will of Johannes Sowash are \$25.

If you would like an audiocassette of the speakers at the reunion, they are available for \$7.50 each. The cassette includes the two speakers from Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, plus Richard Soash's notes on the family's history, as well as the presentation by Michelle Lynch, Preservation Specialist for Reading, during the afternoon.

There are several reprints of Book 1 and Book 2 available for \$42.00. There are also two copies of the updates for Book 2 and one copy of Book 1 for \$7.50 each. These updates include copies of the 1761 estate papers of Johannes H. Sowash from the Berks County Courthouse. Please send orders and payment for books, updates, cassettes, and T-shirts from Richard Soash, 5723 N. Charles, Wichita, KS 67204 *by September 1.*

Welcome to New Lines

This year descendants of Maria Catherina Sowash (5, born 30 Dec 1759) who married Johann Jacob Gaumer were in attendance at our reunion for the first time. She was a sister to Daniel Sowash (2) and John Sowash, Sr. (1). John & Doris Hamilton, Marijean Hawthorne and Kathleen Teter are all descendants.

We also had descendants of the Savage families that remained in Berks County at the reunion. Johannes H. Sauvage apparently had more sons than just Johan Heinrich. The Savage lines that stayed in Berks County were descended from this as yet unknown son.

Thanks to the Christ Lutheran Church in Fleetwood, we have just found descendants of Johanna Elizabeth Sowash (3, born 13 Jan 1751) who married Christopher Faulk. We look forward to learning more about this line.