



Bagenstoss Shield

# Bagenstoss

FAMILY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Plan to Attend our 65th Reunion  
Berks Leisure Area  
Reading, Berks County, Pennsylvania  
Sunday, August 3, 1997  
WE'RE PLANNING A PROGRAM FOR ALL

*Come to celebrate the Family's first 254 years in America!*

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Last year's 1996 reunion at the Berks Leisure Area was a great success. We will return to the same location for this year's gathering.

Our schedule will be as follows:

- 12:00 Registration and luncheon. Sign in, get your name tag and get acquainted.
- 1:00 Call to Order of Annual Meeting, Invocation, brief reports of Secretary, Treasurer, Historian, President. Election of ten Directors.
- 1:45 Games (Fisherman may want to bring their equipment.)

Picnic fare will be provided - hot dogs, chips and assorted sodas. We suggest that it would be nice to bring some fruit, cake, or other goodies for dessert, perhaps in quantities that can be shared.

A major road construction project is still underway in the vicinity of the Berks Leisure Area. A map of the general area appears on the last page of this newsletter; however, specific information regarding the best roads to use on August 3 is not available as this newsletter goes to press. Directions to the site of the reunion will be available from family members stationed in the rear parking lot behind the Sheraton Berkshire Hotel from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the day of the reunion. The Sheraton, located next to the Berkshire Mall, and easily seen from Route 422, is within 1/2 mile of the Berks Leisure Area. The location of the Sheraton is noted on the map on page 8 of this newsletter. Directions may also be obtained by calling Brian Bagenstose (610-775-1760) during the week preceding the reunion.

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Our reunion in 1998 will be held in Hershey, Pennsylvania!

**66TH REUNION**

**HERSHEY, PENNSYLVANIA  
SUNDAY, AUGUST 2, 1998**

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Recognized  
Family Spellings:

BACASTOW  
BACKENSTO  
BACKENSTOE  
BACKENSTOES  
BACKENSTOS  
BACKENSTOSE  
BACKENSTOSS  
BAGENSTOW  
BAGENSTOES  
BAGENSTOS  
BAGENSTOSE  
BAGENSTOSS  
BAGGENSTOS  
BAGGENSTOSS

**OFFICERS**

**President\***

J. Harold Backenstoe  
1107 Ave. F, Box 177  
Riverside, PA 17868  
717-275-2417

**1st Vice President\***

D. Lee Backenstose, M.D.  
731 Sand Hill Road  
Hershey, PA 17033  
717-533-2510

**2nd Vice President\***

Brian W. Bagenstose  
117 Marie Drive  
Sinking Spring, PA 19608  
610-775-1760

**3rd Vice President\***

**Secretary\***

Ethelmae Marshak  
1495 Riverbend Road  
Allentown, PA 18103  
610-433-6623

**Treasurer\***

Warren B. Backenstoe  
7523 Stem Road  
Zionsville, PA 18092  
215-679-7736

**Historian\***

Elwood B. Backensto  
32 Holly Drive  
Woodbury, NJ 08096-3316  
609-845-4058

**Asst. Historians**

Hope Bagenstoss  
Milton A. Bagenstoss  
Lois O. Schlichting

**Chaplain**

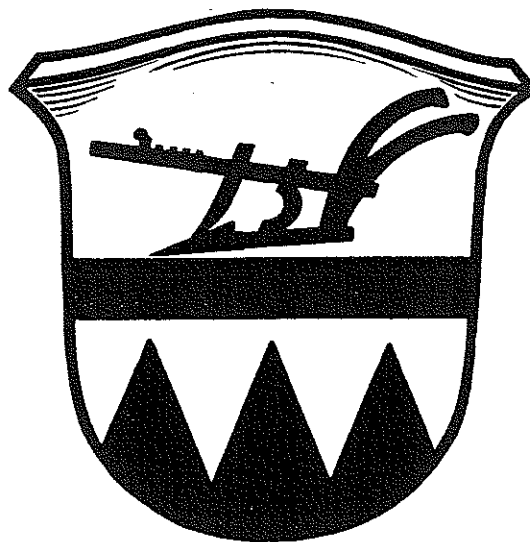
Bruce R. Backensto

**Directors\***

Russel B. Backensto  
1332 W. Broad Street  
Bethlehem, PA 18018

Ray R. Bagenstose  
Springstoe Manor Apts  
308 E. Amy Court  
Shillington, PA 19607

**Directors**



**Rafz** Das 1930 geschaffene Wappen ist zusammen-  
gesetzt aus dem seit 1833 bezeugten Gemein-  
dezeichen (Pflug) und dem Schilde der Grafen von Sulz (Spit-  
zen). Rafz kam 1496 mit der Herrschaft Eglisau an Zürich;  
die hohe Gerichtsbarkeit über die Dörfer des Rafzerfeldes  
gehörte aber noch bis 1651 den Grafen von Sulz.

In Silber ein grüner Querbalken, darauf ein roter Pflug mit blauem Eisen,  
unten drei rote Spitzen

**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

As your new president, I would like to pay tribute to our past president, the Honorable John E. "Jeb" Backenstoe, for his excellent leadership over the years, (President for the past four years, but also President for several years in the 1980's), and for the great staff of officers and directors, all working diligently to promote the welfare of our association.

Last year's reunion attracted 105 registrants, representing 16 states, in addition to our four special guests from Rafz, Switzerland. We had five from NJ, four each from FL, IN and MD, three from TN, two each from CO, DE, OH, MI, MN, and WI, one each from IA, KY, and VA, with the remainder from PA. We're on the move! Let's top that attendance figure in 1997!

Our Bagenstoss relatives from Rafz presented us with a banner of the Rafz Coat of Arms, designed in 1930 from earlier historic inferences. The shield, pictured above, is silver with a green beam; above the beam is a red wooden plow with blue iron and below the beam are three red "Spitzen" to represent the mountains. This banner, along with the Swiss flag, will be displayed at all future reunions.

We look forward with great anticipation to the coming years, and we ask for the cooperation of all who receive this newsletter. See you all at the Berks Leisure Area on Sunday, August 3, 1997.

On a sadder note, during the past year we lost two valued members of our family association. Henry B. (Hank) Backenstoss, former President (1988-95), Vice President and Director passed away on April 19, 1997. Henry was featured in the Who's Who section of last year's family newsletter. A 1935 graduate of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and a successful civil engineer whose fascinating career included negotiating important agreements between U.S. companies and the government of Saudi Arabia, Hank was always at the center of our family association activities. Earl A. Bagenstose, former Vice President and Director, passed away on January 16, 1997. Earl had been active in our family association since 1964, and we appreciate and recognize his many years of faithful service. Our family legacy has been greatly enriched by the contributions of these two fine men.

Sincerely,  
J. Harold Backenstoe, President

## HISTORIAN'S REPORT

My role, as delineated in the Constitution of our Association, is to "draw up, keep, and preserve the history and tradition of the family". This report is a capsule. Our ancestors that came here in 1743 were German-speaking Swiss. Their voyage-ship's log lacked their signatures. They verified their entry by sign, an "X".

Whenever these German-speaking emigrants told their name to an English-speaking scribe, a variety of strange spellings appeared. The spelling variations of the name were endless. Twelve variations have survived to this day from the original Baggenstoss name.

Pennsylvania became the mecca for German immigrants. The religious sects came early --- the Amish from Switzerland, Anabaptists, Brethren or Dunkards, Mennonites, Pietists, and others. Next came the "church people" (Lutheran and Reformed) and the Moravians. Then other sects such as the Schwenkfelders. By 1740 it has been estimated that Germans constituted 3/5th of the population. By the middle of the 18th century and later they comprised  $> \frac{1}{3}$  but  $< \frac{1}{2}$  the population.

Immigrants arriving before 1763 would have been here long enough to become naturalized under normal conditions. Women were not naturalized in Colonial America (from *Hopeful Journey* by Aaron Spencer Fogelman, 1996). President Judge James Henninger of Lehigh County has said:

*"A Pennsylvania German is the descendent of German immigrants, who migrated to America from the Rhenish Palatinate or from Switzerland before the Revolutionary War and who retained the characteristics --- in language, accent, character, and customs, or any of them --- of his German ancestry."*

That is our heritage --- often improperly referred to as "Dutch". Two persons of Pennsylvania German descent have served as President of the United States --- Herbert Clark Hoover and Dwight David Eisenhower.

During our election year, Ann Landers reported an essay on "How Important Is One Vote?". One item stated that in 1776 one vote gave America the English language instead of German. Subsequently, a reader write this "is a myth that refuses to die". The Congressional Research Service in 1982 determined that: In 1794, some German settlers in Virginia petitioned the US Congress to have certain federal statues translated into German and printed in both languages. This petition was referred to a committee, which voted the idea down --- by a margin of one vote.

The founding purpose of our Family Association was to further our family history and tradition. We have available a comprehensive family history. Few families can lay claim to such an extravagance.

Help spread our tradition for posterity. Our Family History resides in 42 libraries here and abroad. Does your local, county, or state Historical Society have our Family History in their library? Do you feel our history should be there? Let me know. Histories donated to libraries are tax deductible for income tax purposes. Would you consider being a sponsor? For the cost of the book, we'll send our Family History plus Addendum to the location you designate in you name. The libraries will be directed to acknowledge the donation to you at your address.

Will you help spread the word? Be proud of your family heritage! Your heritage is forever --- it cannot be denied.

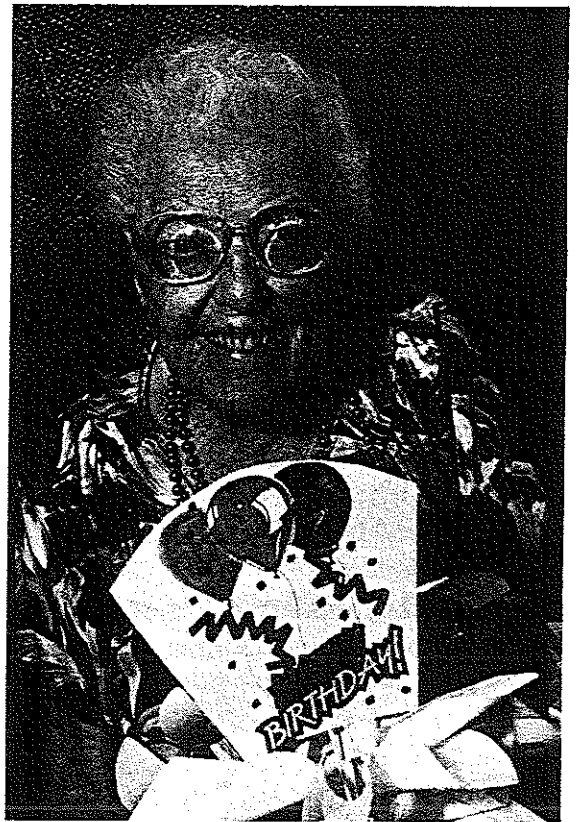
Elwood Bruce Backensto, Historian

## WHO'S WHO

MARY EVA (BORTZ) BACKENSTO celebrated her 100th birthday November 25, 1996 at the Phoebe Home, Allentown, PA. As far as we know, she is the first person with our family name to reach this milestone. A featured article appeared in the Allentown *Morning Call* on 11-29-1996. Greetings were received from far and wide, including one from the President of the USA.

She received a citation, sponsored by the Hon. Charles W. Dent, which states in part: *The House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania pays tribute to Mary Backensto upon the joyous celebration of her one hundredth birthday; notes with appreciation that she has generously contributed to the well-being of others; offers best wishes for continued health and happiness.*

Mary is the widow of Lloyd B. Backensto (1893-1972) who was one of the founders, officers, and prime motivator of our Family Association. Mary was the hostess for numerous Board of Directors meetings in her home in Emmaus, PA. She attended every Family Reunion until 1981 when a stroke stopped her active life style.



Mary gave birth to a son, Elwood Bruce Backensto, our Historian, and a daughter Madlyn Betty (Backensto) Schwanda. She has six grandchildren, three from each of her children. There are 21 great-grandchildren; 4 on the Schwanda side and 17 from the Backensto branch, including 6 bloodline, 2 adopted, and 9 step by second marriages. Her first great-great-grandchild is expected in May.

After her children left home, she learned to drive an automobile. Then for 25 years she operated a private nursery school, The Tiny Tots, for three-and-four-year olds. Her main qualifications were love for and dedication to children, with experience gained by running the Cradle Roll and Nursery groups at her church.

Aging deterioration prompted her residency at Phoebe Home in 1988. With limited physical and speaking abilities, she still enjoys satisfactory mental attributes. For those who care and help her, she always has a smile.

### DATA for BACKENSTOSS FAMILY HISTORY

	First Name	Middle Name	Last Name	Date	City and State
<b>BIRTHS</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Parents' Name	_____				
<b>DEATHS</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>MARRIAGE OF:</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
<b>TO:</b>	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
					(Birth)
Wife's Parents' Names:	_____				

Send to: E. B. Backensto, Historian  
32 Holly Drive  
Woodbury, NJ 08096-3316

Reported by \_\_\_\_\_

Page in 1993 History, if known \_\_\_\_\_

# BACKENSTOSS - BAGGENSTOSS FAMILY HISTORY

located in the following  
LIBRARIES

- |  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| <p>*Albany Public Library,<br/>Albany, NY</p> <p>Allen County Public Library,<br/>Fort Wayne, IN</p> <p>American Antiquarian Society,<br/>Worcester, MA</p> <p>American Family Records Association<br/>Kansas City, MO</p> <p>*Balch Inst. for Ethnic Studies, Swiss Collection,<br/>Philadelphia., PA</p> <p>Family History Library (Church of Jesus Christ of<br/>Latter Day Saints)<br/>Salt Lake City, UT &amp;<br/>Portland, OR Branch</p> <p>Friends of Genealogy, Inc.<br/>Shreveport, LA</p> <p>*Genealogical Forum of Oregon,<br/>Portland, OR</p> <p>The Genealogical Helper (Everton Publishers).<br/>Logan, UT</p> <p>The Genealogical Society of PA,<br/>Philadelphia, PA</p> <p>*Geneva Historical Society<br/>Geneva, NY</p> <p>Gloucester County Historical Society,<br/>Woodbury, NJ</p> <p>The Hackley Public Library,<br/>Muskegon, MI</p> <p>*Heart of America Genealogical Society,<br/>Kansas City, MO</p> | <p>*Hershey Public Library,<br/>Hershey, PA</p> <p>The Historical Society of Berks County,<br/>Reading, PA</p> <p>Historical Society of Dauphin County,<br/>Harrisburg, PA</p> <p>The Historical Society of York County,<br/>York, PA</p> <p>*Karlsbad - Auerbach Archives,<br/>Germany</p> <p>Lancaster Mennonite Historical Society,<br/>Lebanon, PA</p> <p>Lebanon County Historical Society,<br/>Lebanon, PA</p> <p>Lehigh County Historical Society,<br/>Allentown, PA</p> <p>Library of Congress,<br/>Washington, DC</p> <p>Los Angeles Public Library - Genealogy,<br/>Los Angeles, CA</p> <p>Museum in Gersau Rathaus,<br/>Gersau, Switzerland</p> <p>Museum in Rafz,<br/>Rafz, Switzerland</p> <p>National Genealogical Society,<br/>Arlington, VA</p> <p>*National Society Daughters of the American<br/>Revolution,<br/>Washington DC</p> | <p>New York Genealogical &amp; Biographical Society,<br/>New York, NY</p> <p>*The New York Public Library,<br/>New York, NY</p> <p>North San Diego County Genealogical Society,<br/>Carlsbad, CA</p> <p>Schwenkfelder Library,<br/>Pennsburg, PA</p> <p>Staatsarchiv Des Kanton Zurich,<br/>Zurich, Switzerland</p> <p>*Staunton Public Library,<br/>Staunton, VA</p> <p>State Historical Society of Wisconsin,<br/>Madison, WI</p> <p>*Swiss American Historical Society,<br/>Evanston, IL</p> <p>*Troy Public Library,<br/>Troy, NY</p> <p>*University of Illinois Library,<br/>Chicago, IL</p> <p>*West Deptford Public Library,<br/>Thorofare, NJ</p> <p>Westdeutsche Gesellschaft fur Familienkunde,<br/>Bruhl, Germany</p> <p>The Western Reserve Historical Society,<br/>Cleveland, OH</p> <p>*Since 1995 Newsletter</p> |
|--|--|---|

To Order

## BACKENSTOSS - BAGGENSTOSS FAMILY HISTORY (1993)

432-pages, includes name index, hard cover

PLUS

ADDENDUM (1995) - Dedicated to Our Swiss Roots Trip Hosts

90-pages, includes name index, paperback

No. Copies \_\_\_\_\_ at \$32.00 Total Enclosed \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Only From Family Historian: --- E. B. Backensto, 32 Holly Drive, Woodbury, NJ 08096-3316

\* \* \* \* \*

To: Warren B. Backenstoe, Treasurer  
7523 Stein Road, Zionsville, PA 18092

Enclosed is my check to B.F.A. for support in 1996 (dues contribution)

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

# BAGGENSTOSS

## Family Association of America

### Minnesota Branch

## SPECIAL NOTICE

October 1996

This is an update of the 25th Anniversary Reunion set for June 22, 1997 and also what the committee would hope you would do in the very near future. First of all, "Thank You" to all of you that have already responded with pictures, recipes and songs. The song book is already at the printers and will be offered for sale at the reunion for a price of approximately \$9.00.

The Cook Book is our immediate concern in that we need at least 300 recipes to make it a successful offering. Thus far only 19 people have responded with recipes. We know all of you have favorite recipes from your mother, grandmother or friends. Please share them with the rest of the family. Submit as many of your favorites as you wish (no limit).

The categories are: Appetizers and Beverages, Breads and Rolls, Cakes and Cookies, Desserts, Jams and Jellies, Main Dishes, Soups and Salads, Vegetables and Potpourri.

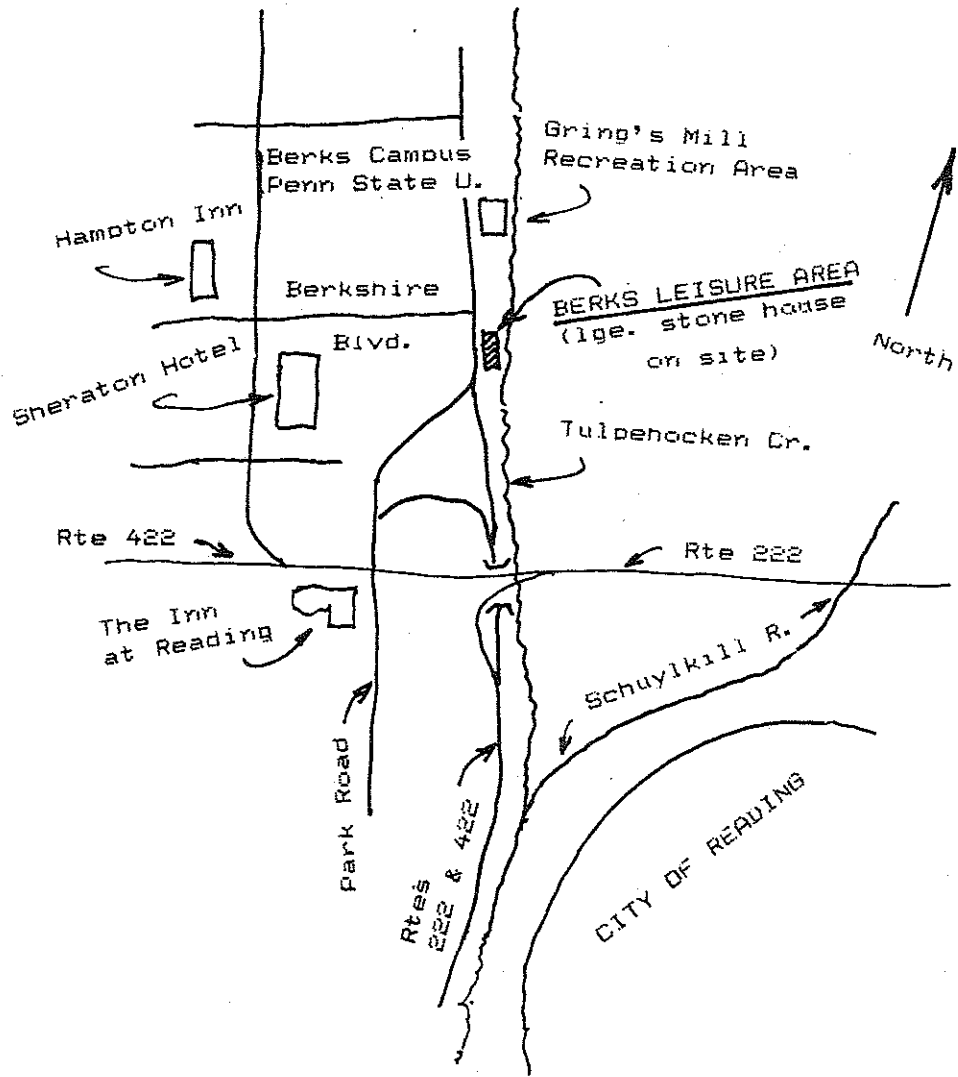
All recipes must absolutely be received by December 1st. Later than that -- you missed the boat!! NO EXCEPTIONS! (Pennsylvania and Tennessee contributions for the Cook Book will be readily accepted.)

SEND YOUR RECIPES TO: MR. & MRS. KELLY BAGGENSTOSS  
ROUTE 2, BOX 53  
GAYLORD, MN 55334

We are hopeful we can keep the price under \$10.00. Also, when you send your recipes include an approximate number of cook books you may wish to purchase. (This will help tremendously in determining the amount of books to be printed.) If you choose not to send a recipe and still wish to purchase a book, drop a note to Kelly's with your intentions to help in the count.

The reunion is planned to be held at the Community Center in Albany, Minnesota. The Home of our Roots! Bus tours are planned for a trip out to the Baggenstoss farms - the cemetery and other interesting sites in Albany. We hope all of you receiving this notice will plan to attend and be sure to mention it to other family members who are not on the mailing list. We hope to make this an eventful day with a good crowd and lots of fun activities and much good fellowship.

## MAKE PLANS NOW TO ATTEND!!



Backenstoss Family Association of America  
 1495 Riverbend Road  
 Allentown, PA 18103

Thank you for your continued genealogical support!!