



# Backenstoss

## FAMILY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Est. 1927

"For the perpetuation of the history and  
traditions of the family and its social enjoyment"

**Summer 2009**

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Plan to attend our 77<sup>th</sup> Reunion Sunday, August 2,  
And celebrate the  
Family's first 266 years in America!

This year's gathering will be held Sunday, August 2, 2009 at Belleman's Church, just off Rt. 61 near Leesport, PA, approximately 10 miles north of Reading, PA (see map on last page of this newsletter).

The schedule this year will be as follows:

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| 12:00 Noon | Relaxation/Meeting of old and new friends<br>Registration  |
| 12:30 P.M. | Opening ceremonies followed by lunch, games and socializing  |
| 1:30 P.M.  | Program - A guided tour of historic Belleman's Church (see article on Page 3) and other nearby sites of significance to the first members of the Backenstoss Family in America |
| 3:00 P.M.  | Business Meeting<br>Call to Order of Annual Meeting, Invocation, brief reports of Secretary, Treasurer, Historian and President, and New Business                              |
| 4:00 P.M.  | Adjournment of reunion, followed by a meeting of the Board of Directors.   |

Picnic fare will be provided - hot dogs and assorted sodas. We suggest you bring chips, cake, pie, other snacks and goodies in quantities that can be shared. Remember place settings for each family member and serving utensils for covered dishes. Family members are encouraged to bring a recipe to exchange and your favorite lawn chairs to use in the grove next to the church.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

### Recognized

#### Family Spellings:

BACASTOW  
BACKENSTO  
BACKENSTOE  
BACKENSTOES  
BACKENSTOS  
BACKENSTOSE  
BACKENSTOSS  
BACKENSTOW  
BAGENSTOES  
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BAGENSTOSE  
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BAGGENSTOS  
BAGGENSTOSS

### OFFICERS

#### President\*

Jonathan Hall Backenstose  
116 South 19<sup>th</sup> St.  
Arlington, VA 22202  
703-892-8422  
[jbackenstos@law.gwu.edu](mailto:jbackenstos@law.gwu.edu)

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President\*

Brian W. Bagenstose  
117 Marie Drive  
Sinking Spring, PA 19608  
610-775-1760  
[redknight67@comcast.net](mailto:redknight67@comcast.net)

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President\*

John H. Backenstose  
2478 Old Route 100  
Barto, PA 19504  
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#### Secretary\*

Ethelmae Marushak  
1495 Riverbend Road  
Allentown, PA 18103

#### Treasurer\*

Warren B. Backenstoe  
18 East Berks Drive  
Wernersville, PA 19565  
610-678-7972

#### Historian\*

Hon. John E. Backenstoe  
2310 Kirkland Village  
Bethlehem, PA 18017  
610-691-4614

#### Chaplain

Bruce R. Backensto

#### Directors\*

Judith Bacastow  
Elwood B. Backensto  
Esther(Backenstoe)Schiavone  
J. Harold Backenstoe  
Veronica Backenstoe  
Stanley P. Backenstoss II  
Dawn Rosenbaum  
Newsletter Editor  
Brian W. Bagenstose

Greetings to all Backenstoss Family Association Members and Friends,

I hope, despite the bad economy, that each and every one of you has had a good year.

Fortunately, Warren Backenstoe, our Treasurer, reports that the Backenstoss Family Association is doing well compared with previous years. Please help us to stay this way! If you haven't given a donation this year, please consider sending one in. Your help supports the newsletter and helps defray the costs of the Annual Reunion, and what is left over is saved for special expenses. For example, the Association is planning the production of a Backenstoss keepsake based on the Backenstoss family crest that will be for sale at the Annual Reunion. Most important, if you know of any family member who has a new address, please let John, Ethelmae Marushak, our Secretary, or Warren Backenstoe, our Treasurer, know so that a copy of the annual newsletter can be mailed to them. A form for sending this and other information has been included on page 6 of this newsletter.

Please plan to attend our Annual Reunion, scheduled for 12:00 noon on Sunday, August 2, at Belleman's Church. (Directions are included in the article on page 3 and a map appears on page 8.) The Annual Reunion is the main forum at which the business of the Association is conducted, and all members and friends are welcome. This year's Annual Reunion should be a special one, as we return to a site connected to the early history of our family in America, and because we anticipate that several members of the Minnesota Baggenstoss Association will be in attendance.

This year's program will consist of a tour of Belleman's Church and cemetery, presented by John Rauch, a retired history teacher and current member of the Belleman's Church congregation. A brief tour by car will also be available for those interested in seeing nearby sites connected to our family history. Further, we always have plenty of good food, a Backenstoss trait for sure.

I wish all the best of luck and hope to see you at the Annual Reunion.

Jon Backenstose  
President

## 2009 REUNION TO BE HELD AT BELLEMAN'S CHURCH

This year's reunion marks a return to one of the most important sites from our family's early years in America. Belleman's Church in Mohrsville, PA was where many of our ancestors worshiped and found their final resting place. Tombstones bearing our family name and dating from the 1700's can be found in the church cemetery. A large memorial in the original graveyard was dedicated by the Backenstoss Family Association during the 1930's. Markers in the cemetery identify the graves of soldiers from the Revolutionary War and War of 1812.

While the original church, constructed in 1746, no longer stands, the second Belleman's Church, built in 1815 and recognized as a national historic site, thankfully endures. A tour of this impressive structure, with its Early American craftsmanship and beautiful wineglass pulpit, will be a highlight of this year's reunion. Although the current congregation worships in a third Belleman's Church, special services, including an annual worship service conducted in the "Pennsylvania Dutch" dialect, continue to be held in the 1815 structure.

Not surprisingly, the area immediately surrounding Belleman's Church is rich in locations with connections to the Backenstoss name. The 2002 addendum to our family history contains a "1992 reunion handout" that notes seven such sites. The list included the original Backenstoss homestead, "located on land obtained by Hans Ulrich Bagenstose by warrant from William Penn." There were also two locations where a "Bagenstose School" had been located, and a Bagenstose Hotel also remained at that time. For family members so inclined, this year's reunion will include a brief tour by car of these nearby locations.

Belleman's Church is best reached from Rt. 61, which connects Reading and Pottsville, PA. From Reading, take Rt. 61 North toward Leesport. You will pass the intersection with Rt. 73 and, approximately 1 mile beyond that, you will pass through the town of Leesport. Shortly after you pass through Leesport you will make a left turn when you see a sign for DAUBERVILLE. This left turn will put you on Belleman's Church Road.

From Pottsville, take Rt. 61 South toward Reading. You will pass the intersection with Rt. 662 (Shoemakersville). Continue on Rt. 61 for 3.2 miles and then take the right turn at Belleman's Church Road – there will be a sign directing you to DAUBERSVILLE.

Once you have turned off Rt. 61 onto Belleman's Church Road, travel 1.4 miles to a fork in the road. Take the right fork, which is a continuation of Belleman's Church Rd. Continue for an additional 1.9 miles through the rustic farmland until you see the church property on the right. The reunion will take place in the grove located on the right side of the road at the far end of the church property (just past the main cemetery). You may wish to drive into the grove to unload passengers, food, (DON'T FORGET LAWN CHAIRS!), etc., before parking in the grassy area on the left side of the road opposite the cemetery.

### Greetings from Minnesota

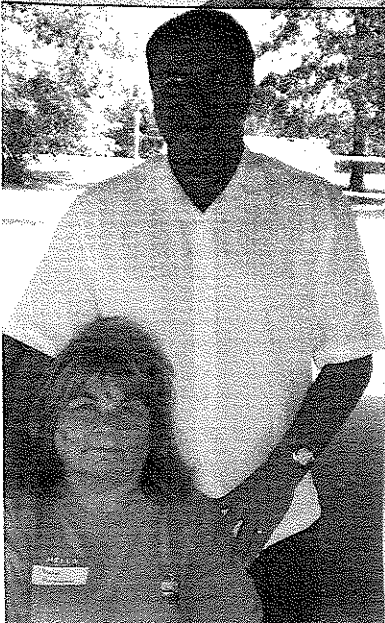
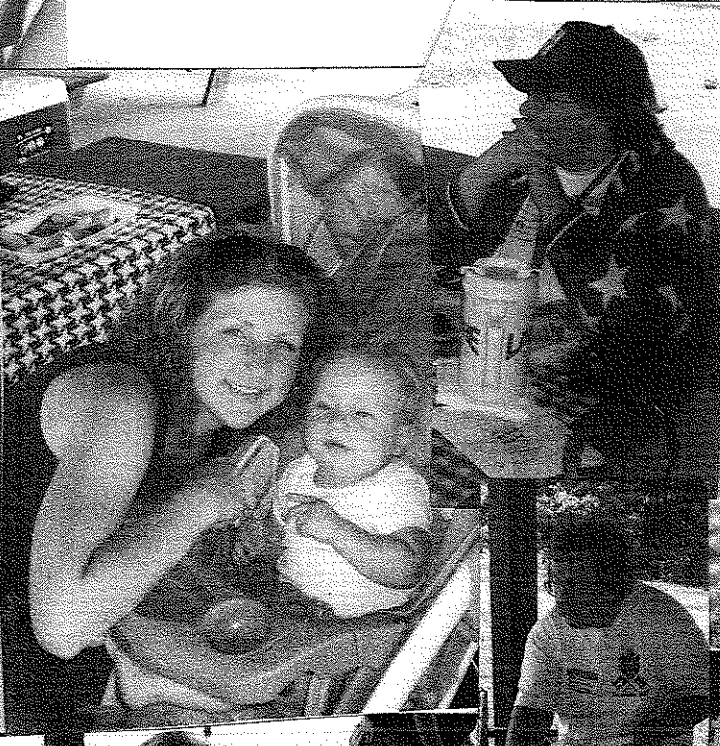
Our Minnesota (Baggenstoss Family) counterparts enjoyed another successful reunion in 2008. They met at Court Square Park in Belle Plaine, Minnesota on June 27 of that year. They focused on T-shirt themes of all kinds. Their 2008 newsletter reports that Ivan's "Compost Happens" was one of the day's favorites!

We thank our Minnesota "cousins" for their continued generous support of our annual newsletter. Their 2009 Reunion is scheduled for Saturday, June 27 at Orono Park in Elk River, Minnesota. The theme will be "Tricks-n-Treats." Any family members who have questions regarding the Minnesota branch of our family or who would like to send greetings are encouraged to contact either Lana Lewer or Leah Rodriguez at the following addresses. We wish their family another successful reunion in 2009 and hope to see members of their association at our reunion at Belleman's Church on August 2.

Lana Lewer  
12326 Zea St. NW  
Coon Rapids, MN 55433  
763-323-3078  
[Llewer@msn.com](mailto:Llewer@msn.com)

Leah Rodriguez  
23499 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Mankato, MN 56001  
507-345-6851  
[lkrdz@hickorytech.net](mailto:lkrdz@hickorytech.net)

PHOTOS FROM THE 2008 BACKENSTOSS REUNION



## BACKENSTOSS HISTORIES AVAILABLE ON CD!

The two volume Backenstoss Family History is available on a Compact Disc. The indexes list all the family and proper names contained in the history from 1743 up to and including 2002. The History is enriched with irreplaceable information about the origin and meaning of the family name, the Coat of Arms, the original homestead in America, the will of Ulrich Backenstoss, passenger lists, and a history of the Family Association. The "Did You Know" feature of the Addendum is priceless. Finally, there is information about the Oregon, Washington State, Canadian, Minnesota and other branches of the family in North America as well as Switzerland, Germany, England and New Zealand.

It is recommended that a first time viewer read the Table of Contents, the Forward and the other introductory pages as well as the explanations of the historical format used by the historian. A review of the opening pages of both books will give the reader some acquaintance with the breadth and depth of the manuscript. The history was originally contained in two printed volumes – the first published in 1993, followed by an Addendum published in 2002. Within the new CD format, the indexes of each volume are set forth separately for immediate access. Each volume is then presented in 50 page blocks, again, for easier access.

To order our popular "Backenstoss Family Compact Disc" please contact our Historian, John E. Backenstoe at 2310 Kirkland Village Circle, Bethlehem PA 18017 or through e-mail at [Johnedwin1@msn.com](mailto:Johnedwin1@msn.com). The cost of each disc is \$30.00, which includes shipping. The material is readable and printable on any computer able to read the PDF format.

### Treasurer's Report

The association wishes to thank all members for their contributions. Your generosity has enabled us to maintain our family association activities. Your continued and growing support encourages us to continue the annual publication of our family newsletter. Please continue to keep in touch. Your help is needed to keep our records up to date. Please forward any change in address, births, marriages, accomplishments and passing of family members.

Warren Backenstoe

### Contributions

The generosity of our members continues to provide sufficient resources to sustain current operations. The continuation of our newsletter, reunion and other family association activities is dependent on our members' annual contributions. The directors of the Backenstoss Association ask that each member contribute \$5.00 annually. Please support our association by returning the following form along with your 2009 contribution. The directors also ask that members consider making additional contributions and bequests of any amount to the Backenstoss Family Association. This practice is common among family associations and will help ensure the financial health of our organization through future generations.

To: Warren B. Backenstoe, Treasurer  
18 East Berks Drive  
Wernersville, PA 19565

Enclosed is my check payable to B.F.A. for support in 2009.

\_\_\_\_\_ 2009 contribution (\$5.00) Name \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Additional Street Address \_\_\_\_\_  
Contribution \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ Total Submitted

## A Tree Grows in Berks County

Cheryl Bagenstose of Sinking Spring is planning to "grow" a family tree this year. Please bring a photo of yourself or a family group photo that she can attach to the tree. There will be plenty of branches on this tree...room for all! Please limit photo size to 4X6 or smaller. The tree will be "planted" at the reunion. New "leaves" will be added at future reunions. Please label all photos with name(s) and town(s) of residence. These photos probably will not be returned so please submit extra prints.

Bacastow  
Bagenstose  
Backenstoe



Baggenstoss  
Backenstoe  
Bagenstos

### 2010 Reunion

At the time this newsletter went to press, no definite location had been chosen for our 2010 reunion. However, as always, it will be held on the first Sunday of August, which will be August 1, 2010. The location is almost certain to be in the Allentown/Reading area. Specific information will be included in next year's family newsletter.

### Additions to the Family History

Please help us keep our records current. Send news pertaining to the birth, marriage, accomplishments and passing of family members by completing the following form and including it with your contribution information. This information should also include updated addresses as family members move, children establish their own residences, etc. This page can be returned along with your annual dues. Our treasurer, Warren Backenstoe, will send the information to our Family Historian.

Name of Family Member

Address

Nature of Event & Comments

## BACKENSTOSS NIGHT AT THE "BALL GAME!!"

With your support, the Backenstoss Family Association will hold its fourth annual "Backenstoss Night at the Ball Game" at the Reading Phillies' First Energy Stadium in Reading, Pennsylvania. This event has been scheduled for Saturday, August 29, when the Reading Phillies will host the Bowie Baysox. Game time is 6:35 P.M. Gates open at 5:30 P.M.

We will reserve our seats under the covered grandstand area -- out of the hot August sun and protected from any possible inclement weather. This will also allow participants to patronize the many refreshment stands and vendors, all providing the traditional hot dogs and beer, or "peanuts and crackerjack," that make up a typical day at the ballpark. The night's festivities also include post game fireworks and a Harley Davidson Game Cap giveaway to the first 2,500 adults who attend.

Ticket prices are \$9.00 per person.

Family members who wish to attend should return the following form, along with checks in the correct amount made payable to "The Reading Phillies." The form and checks should be sent to Brian W. Bagenstose; 117 Marie Drive; Sinking Spring, PA 19608. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope so that your tickets may be mailed to you. At the time this newsletter was printed, many tickets for the August 29 date remained. However, forms should be returned ASAP, but no later than July 10, as the section will sell out at some point. Questions may be referred to Brian at the above address or by phone (610-775-1760) or e-mail ([redknight67@comcast.net](mailto:redknight67@comcast.net)).

\* \* \* \* \*

YES! Sign us up for Backenstoss Night at the Ball Game!

Name of your group's contact person \_\_\_\_\_

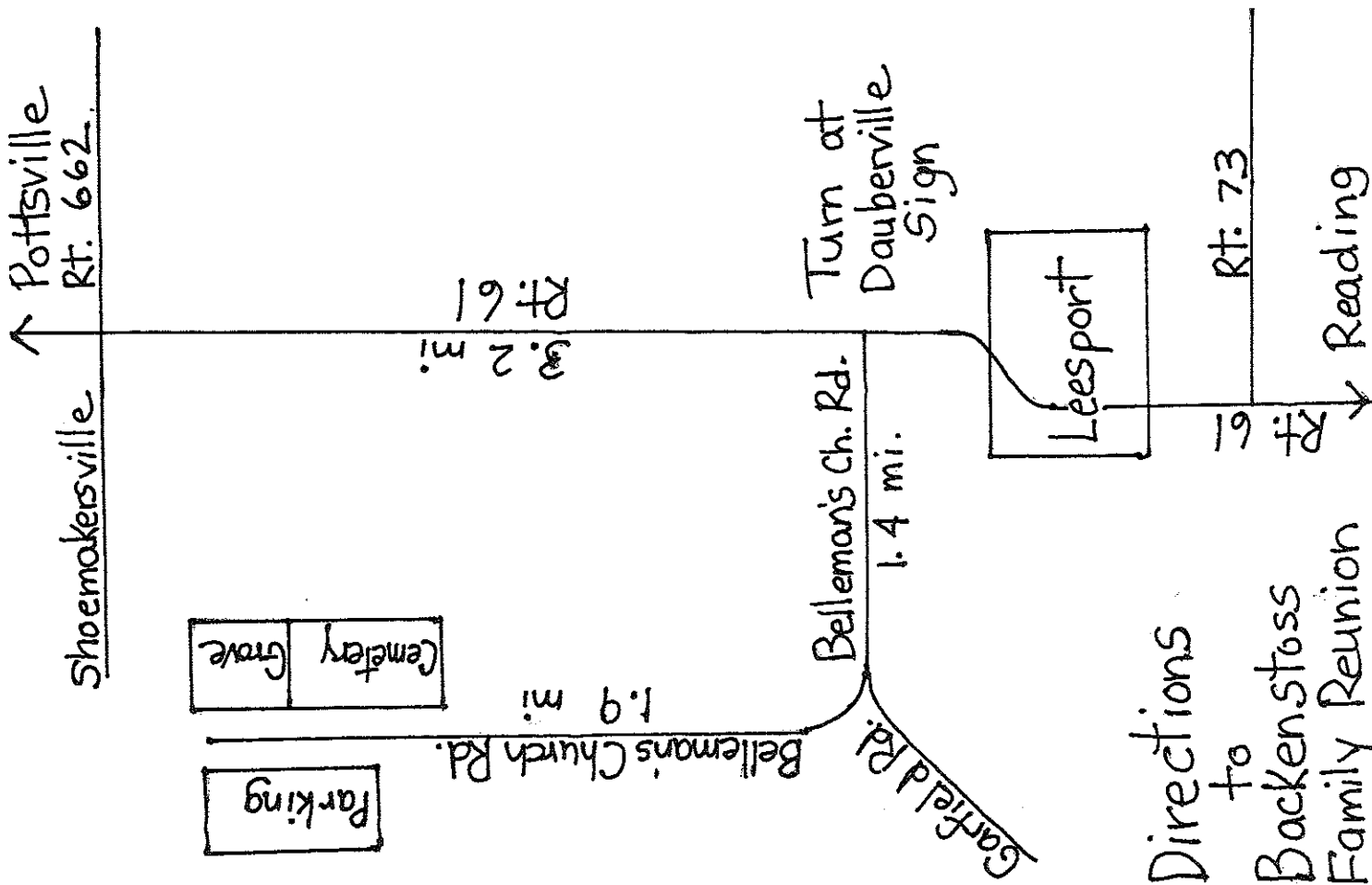
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Tickets at \$9.00 \_\_\_\_\_

Total Amount Enclosed (checks only) \_\_\_\_\_

Return form and check(s), payable to "Reading Phillies," no later than July 10, to Brian W. Bagenstose; 117 Marie Drive; Sinking Spring, PA 19608.  
(Please remember to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.)



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

Thank you for your continued genealogical support!