



Backenstoss

FAMILY ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA

Est. 1927

“For the perpetuation of the history and traditions of the family and its social enjoyment”

Summer 2012

**Plan to attend our 80th Reunion Sunday, August 5,
And celebrate the
Family's first 269 years in America!**

This year's gathering will be held Sunday, August 5, 2012 at the Pennsylvania German Cultural Heritage Center, located on the campus of Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA.

Our schedule will be:

- | | |
|-------------------|---|
| 12:00 Noon | Relaxation/Meeting of old and new friends
Registration |
| 12:30 P.M. | Opening ceremonies followed by lunch, games and socializing |
| 2:00 P.M. | Program – Tour the buildings on site at your leisure. A guide will be available to answer questions. |
| 3:00 P.M. | Business Meeting
Call to Order of Annual Meeting, Invocation, brief reports of Secretary, Treasurer, Historian and President, and New Business |
| 3:45 P.M. | Adjournment of reunion, followed by a meeting of the Board of Directors. |

This year's reunion will be catered through services provided by Kutztown University. The cost of the luncheon will be paid by the Backenstoss Family Association, although a voluntary contribution from participants will be appreciated. Full details and directions concerning the reunion and luncheon can be found on Page 3 of this newsletter. (The only thing you need to bring is your favorite lawn chair!)

Recognized
Family Spellings:

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

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Esther(Backenstoe)Schiavone
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Dawn Rosenbaum

Newsletter Editor

Brian W. Bagenstose

President's Message

It is my great pleasure to extend this annual greeting to members of the Backenstoss Family Association. I hope you have had an enjoyable year and are looking forward to an even better 2012-2013. Our family organization also has high hopes for the coming year.

If you have read this newsletter in recent years, you are aware the board of directors has been focused on increasing the number of members who attend our annual reunion. While rising costs have put a hold on our plans to move our reunion to a major amusement park, the board of directors has voted to provide a catered luncheon for all participants who attend this year's reunion at the PA German Cultural Heritage Center, located on the campus of Kutztown University. There will be no charge for the luncheon, although voluntary contributions will be gratefully accepted. All you need to do to attend this year's reunion is get your family in the car and bring them to Kutztown University! Full details concerning the reunion and luncheon can be found on the following pages of this newsletter.

As I speak with members of our association, I am heartened by the appreciation so many of you have for the unique nature and scope of the Backenstoss Family Association. These attributes are the result of the dedicated work of many who have gone before us. My involvement in our association began over twenty years ago when then President Henry "Hank" Backenstoss cajoled me into becoming an active member. Those of you who knew Hank will doubtless remember that, despite his gentlemanly demeanor, he rarely took "No" for an answer! My newfound interest in our organization soon led me to realize how complete the documentation of our family history and genealogy actually is. First published in 1949 by historian Albert H. Gerberich, Ph.D., then lovingly and comprehensively updated for over 50 years(!) by retired family historian, Elwood "Woody" Backensto, our family history has been ably maintained and converted to CD format by our present historian, the Honorable John E. (JEB) Backenstoe.

Even though there are dozens of Backenstoss/Bagenstose, etc. listings in my local phone book, it is not uncommon for people to ask me the derivation of our family name. When I tell them it is of Swiss ancestry and there is a national family organization established in 1927; that we possess a two volume family history and genealogy recently converted to CD format; that we distribute an annual newsletter to over 800 members in practically every U.S. state and many foreign countries; and that we hold an annual reunion dedicated to "the perpetuation of the history and traditions of the family and its social enjoyment," the most common response is a wistful, "Wow, I wish OUR family had something like that."

What I do NOT say, for fear it would damage their newly established respect for the Backenstoss Family Association, is that attendance at our reunions has been gradually declining. If we do not reverse that trend, we will be in danger of losing the rich tradition that has been passed on to us.

If you have not attended previous reunions, please make this the year you give it a try. For those of you who have attended in the past, we need your continued support. One of the items on the agenda of our business meeting will be the date and locations for future reunions. Please come and give us your thoughts about how we can carry our proud family traditions through the 21st Century!

Brian W. Bagenstose

HISTORIAN'S REPORT

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 through 2002, and include 60 pages that have been updated as of December of 2011. 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 Hans Ulrich Backenstoss, information about the passenger lists from the ship St. Andrew that arrived in Philadelphia in the fall of 1743, 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. The material is readable and printable on any computer able to read the PDF format.

To order our popular "Backenstoss Family Compact Disc," please use the order form found in the Treasurer's Report on page 7 of this newsletter, or contact our Historian, John E. Backenstoe, directly at 2310 Kirkland Village Circle, Bethlehem PA 18017 or through e-mail at Johnedwin1@msn.com. "JEB" will also have copies available at this year's 2012 reunion. The cost of each disc is \$20.00, which includes shipping.

If anyone is aware of copies of our original history or addendum that are no longer used, the family association would prefer to reclaim those volumes rather than have them discarded. Please contact our historian if you would like to donate these volumes to the family association.

GREETINGS FROM MINNESOTA!

On June 25, 2011, the Minnesota Baggenstoss Family Organization enjoyed their 39th Annual Reunion at Becker Park in Becker Minnesota. They found they had an unplanned John Deere (Green) vs. Allis Chalmers (Orange) theme that brightened the occasion! Their day was "magical" with old fashioned games for the adults and a fish pond and face painting for the kids.

This year, they will have the BIG ONE!, their 40th annual reunion, on Saturday, June 23 at North Park (Jaycee Shelter) in Albany, MN. Their theme will be "Let's Get Vintage," which will be celebrated by wearing something from a past "Baggy Reunion!" Contact Leah Baggenstoss Rodriquez, MN Branch President (phone: 507-345-6851 or LKRDZ@hickorytech.net) for more information.





Veronica "Ronnie" Backenstoe
as
"Rosie the Riveter"



Honorary "Swiss Shepherd"



Where's the on/off switch?



Treasurer's Report



Wait a minute...there were six when we started...



Hear ye, Hear ye!

TREASURER'S REPORT

The generosity of our members continues to sustain current B.F.A. operations. The annual newsletter, reunion and other family association activities are dependent on our members' annual contributions. The directors of the Backenstoss Family Association ask that each member contribute \$5.00 annually. Please support our association by returning the following form along with your 2012 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. Family members who wish to order Backenstoss Plates or Family Histories may use the following form:

To: Kenneth C. Bagenstose, Treasurer
1015 Conifer Road
Leesport, PA 19533

Enclosed is my check payable to B.F.A.

_____ 2012 contribution (\$5.00) Name(s)_____

_____ Additional Contribution _____ Street Address_____

City, State and Zip_____

Phone_____ Email_____

_____ Amount included for _____ Backenstoss Plates (\$35.00 each)

_____ Amount included for _____ Backenstoss History CD's (\$20.00 each)

_____ Total Submitted

Please include your shipping address, if different from the address listed above:

Name(s)_____

Street Address_____

City, State and Zip Code_____

Backenstoss Plates

Last year's sale of our newly created Backenstoss pewter plates was very successful. Seventy plates were purchased by family members located throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries. Additional plates can still be made and purchased for the original price of \$35.00. (This price primarily covers the cost of manufacture and shipping and is offered as a service to our members.)

Backenstoss CD's

As noted in the Historian's Report, our family history has been converted to CD format. Copies may be purchased for \$20.00, which includes the cost of mailing the CD's.



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

Thank you for your continued genealogical support!