

Schmucker • Smoker • Smucker



John Schmucker Homestead

Family Association Newsletter

Summer 2015

2016 Family Gathering— Our 40th Anniversary

Mark Your Calendar!

2016 Family Gathering—
Our 40th Anniversary 1

Who is Jim Smoker—
SSS Family Association
President? 2

So How Did the Surname
Smucker Become Smoker? 2

A Brief History of
SmokerCraft 3

Who was Isaac “Ike” Smoker
Who Invented a Hay
Elevator? 4

Newsletter Expense

These Newsletters are our largest expense, second to our family gathering. To help defray the cost, please:

- Send an email to Jerrold Smoker, our mailing list registrar at jsmoker@msn.com. When emailing 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*).

Hello Family members! Planning is underway for our 2016 Family Gathering in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, on July 14-17, 2016! Tradition holds that every other *Gathering* is held in the Lancaster, Pennsylvania, region.

We are planning a program and entering into final agreement with the site facilities director at the Lancaster County Christian School, 2390 New Holland Pike, Lancaster, PA 17601.

Current members of the Lancaster *Gathering* Planning Team include, Marie Breneman, Emily Beidler, Jerry Smoker, John Smoker, Sue Smoker, Roy Smoker, Mose Smoker, Jim Smoker, and Joanne Smoker. We hope to recruit a few more members to assist with on-site activities.

Currently, we are in the process of planning bus trips of local and regional heritage sites and businesses of “plain people.” Initial planning for our *Gathering* is based in large part upon feedback received from previous Family Gatherings. We are working to put a full day of programming together.

- **Thursday afternoon and evening** will be registration with a time for family members to mingle.
- **Friday** will be bus trips and a special evening activity.
- **Saturday** will feature a full day of presentations, a short business meeting, and an auction to benefit the Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Fund.
- **Sunday**, we will again hold a worship service and songfest, and then we will adjourn for another five years.

Should you wish to volunteer for this *Gathering*, please email President Jim Smoker at jismoker@verizon.net and share your interests. Registration information will be mailed early next year.

Who is Jim Smoker—SSS Family Association President?

(Christian I – John – Daniel – Joshua – David Renno – Joshua S. – John Melvin)

I was elected at the 2006 Lancaster Gathering to serve as the SSS Family Association President following the able and long standing work of Rev. John Smucker who was followed by Joe Smucker. At the Kidron Gathering in 2011, someone wrote on their feedback form that it would be “. . . nice to know who you are.” Well, that is a really good question.

I could start by saying that I have been the husband of Joanne G. Smoker for the past 47 years and that I am the father of three grown daughters and the grandfather of three granddaughters and three grandsons.

I could share that I retired from a regional healthcare organization in which I held various

positions, the last that of the Chief Supply Chain Officer (we purchased whatever the healthcare providers required . . . at the right price . . . and delivered to the right place . . . on time). I hold a Master’s degree in Public Administration/Healthcare.

My hobbies and interests are numerous and range from camping, hiking, backpacking, gardening, bowl turning, rustic wood working, grand-parenting, to restoring a 1961 MGA and maintaining a 1972 MGB. I am a Christian Unitarian–Universalist (with Religious Naturalism “leanings”) and have been a member of a UU church for over 40 years. Joanne and I were both raised in the Church of the Brethren.

I entered healthcare via alternative service (1-W) in 1967 as I



Jim Smoker

was registered as a conscientious objector (CO) and sought non-military service options. This decision was influenced by my father, John Melvin Smoker, who served as a CO-medic in the European Theatre during WWII. My father shared that he hoped none of his sons would have to experience what he had experienced. Joanne and I enjoy traveling and family times. We are especially looking forward to the October 6-18, 2015, Family Heritage Tour to Germany, Switzerland, and France, and will extend our tour of Europe to include several days in Wales to take in regions inhabited by my maternal ancestors.

Membership in the SSS Family Association

Our SSS Family Association was duly constituted with the creation of our constitution in March of 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.

So How Did the Surname Smucker Become Smoker?



?

Here is the story as I know it.

It might be a myth, but if so, it has been carried for several generations.

Let’s start with Christian Schmucker “the immigrant” and add four generations until we reach David Renno Smucker.

The story goes that David Renno had a cousin who bore the same name and they attended a one-room schoolhouse on “Molasses Hill” in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. To avoid confusion, the teacher asked the one David Renno (the editor’s great-grandfather) to spell his last name “Smoker.”

If you have another version of how our surname changed from Smucker to Smoker, please share it with jismoker@verizon.net.

~ Jim Smoker, SSS President

A Brief History of SmokerCraft

by **Byron Smoker**

My grandfather was one of six sons of Jacob Smoker who settled on the land now occupied by the Brick House Restaurant on the rich prairie land south of Goshen (Indiana). All of the children were given a parcel of land in close proximity to their father, and like him became successful farmers.

Not so with my grandfather—he did not like farming so he set up a sawmill and moved the operation to New Paris. He and his sons, in conjunction with the sawmill, set up a wood working plant. The principle products were single and double trees for horse-drawn wagons. Their largest customer was the Studebaker Corporation of South Bend, Indiana, who included these single and double trees on the wagons they produced for the U.S. Army during WW I.

Consequently, the Smokers named their company the Smoker Wagon Works. In 1921, a new building was built and the company changed its name to Smoker Lumber Company, Inc. The company prospered during the “Roaring 20’s” to the degree that they had 27 trucks working and delivering lumber in and around the Goshen area.

The good times did not last, however, and conditions grew quite bleak during the Great Depression. New home building ceased and the company was cash poor and overburdened with building material inventory. Seeking to reduce inventory, the Smoker family got an early and limited taste of boat building. Boats were assembled using 1” x 16” red wood lumber for boat sidewalls and 1” x 4’ fir for flooring boat bottoms. One hundred or so of these wooden

fishing boats were produced and were marketed individually by hauling them on the backs of pick-up trucks.

The one problem with the boats was that they would leak like a sieve until the boards became water-soaked which swelled them and made them water-tight; consequently, before the boat was delivered it was filled with water and the customer received a water-tight boat. This meager attempt at boat-building resulted in a very beneficial result for Smoker Lumber Company.

When the boys went to Sears and Roebuck to purchase oars for their boats, they found the quality of the oars so poor that they decided to make their own. Their ingenuity resulted in the first machine-made oars in history, producing eventually better than a mile of oars a day plus a likely number of canoe paddles. Production during the war went entirely to support the WW II war effort. Oars for lifeboats were 14’



to 18’ long and paddle production made jointed collapsible paddles for the Army Air Corps’ inflatable rafts.

After the war, a younger group came along and the company started the manufacturing of Mobile Homes. Much of the framing was supplied from the the oar and paddle production. This part of the business lasted 14 years and ended in 1962.

In 1964, Smoker Lumber Company purchased the discontinued aluminum boat company from Consolidated Metals of Elkhart, Indiana. After 12 years, of continued growth, the control of Smoker Craft Corporation was sold to Howard Schrock. In 1980, the oar and paddle department was spun off to an oar company in Oregon. Smoker Craft has had exceptional growth in the last quarter century and still has several of the Smoker family members working in the organization.

Your SSS Family Association Officers, Board Members, and Volunteers

- ~ Jim (James M.) Smoker, *President and Newsletter Editor*
- ~ Eber Rice-Smucker, *Vice President*
- ~ Marie Breneman, *Secretary*
- ~ Darrell Smucker, *Treasurer*
- ~ Helen Ault, *Board Member*
- ~ Sue Kindt, *Board Member*
- ~ Alvin Smucker, *Board Member*
- ~ D. Richard Miller, *Genealogy Database Administrator*
- ~ Jerry Smoker, *Registrar*

SSS Family Association

c/o James Smoker
3435 Bull Road
York, PA 17408-9755

PRST STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 415
Reading, PA

Who was Isaac "Ike" Smoker Who Invented a Hay Elevator?



Ike Smoker was born in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in the 1890s. He was a brother to my grandfather, Joshua Stolfus Smoker. Uncle Ike apparently had a penchant for working smarter . . . not harder and enjoyed inventing things.

The story I heard was that "Ike" developed a "hay bailer-kicker" that could be horse- or tractor-drawn. He heard that it would be good to have his invention patented and that the Patent Office was located in Washington, D.C. Not being a draftsman, Ike built a working scale model of his "contraption," boarded a train, and found his way to the U.S. Patent Office. Ike was greeted by a receptionist and questioned why he was in her office. He replied that he wanted to have his invention patented and took the model out of his suitcase to set up his demonstration.

The receptionist told him that he did not need to demonstrate his invention. Instead, he was given the forms to complete and encouraged to leave her office. Ike, apparently, was rather insistent and wanted to show his work. The receptionist rebuffed Ike, but he sat in the office until the receptionist called a senior level person in the Patent Office to view the working model of the "hay bailer-kicker."

Ike eventually received his patent and went on to found Smoker Elevator. Smoker Elevator is no longer in business under that name, although the equipment that Ike Smoker designed and built were further refined and are still in use in many farms across America. ~ Jim Smoker

