

A Publication of the Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Committee

## *No Ordinary Barn*

The excitement surrounding the initial opening of the Nicholas Stoltzfus House will soon be reborn. The Nicholas Stoltzfus House Preservation Committee is pleased to announce that plans are underway to build a barn adjacent to the house.

The mission statement for the Preservation Committee includes the following objective: *The Stoltzfus House and other artifacts of the Stoltzfus family are being restored and preserved as an example*

*of the humble attitude of obedience, forgiveness and their willingness to share and help others in need.* As a fulfillment of that portion of the mission statement, the Preservation Committee purposed to build a barn.

The barn will be re-constructed in location and architecture to replace the barn structure that would have been on the property with the home. It will serve as a museum and public rest area for visitors of



the Nicholas Stoltzfus property. The barn will also provide living quarters for the property's caretakers. To best serve its purpose, the barn will have to be a historically accurate structure as well as provide the necessary climate

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## *Way to Visit the Stoltzfus House!*

Each year Mose Riehl has arranged a wagon train for his family to an interesting site. Well, Mose Smucker suggested the NSH, so they together took the 22 miles from Churchtown to Wyomissing Monday, Aug 20.

Christian Stoltzfus made similar trips in his lifetime (ca1770 to 1810). But then the roads were crude. Yes, he did not have to contend with big

trucks and fast cars. After living in Cumru Township (now Wyomissing) he moved beyond New Holland in the Mill Creek area, without the help of a jeep escort like Carl Good.

*Will these children reflect on this as they remember their wagon ride*



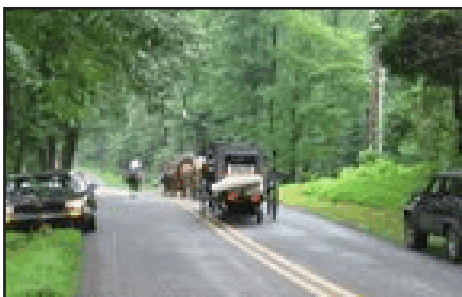
*to the Nicholas Stoltzfus House? Will they be able to connect their past to their future? What will the Stoltzfus House mean to them? Will it be a place to which they would bring their children?*



About 20 horses, 10 wagons, and 60 people came to spend three days, intending to put up tents and camp. But it rained, and rained, continuously so as not to allow this. Many slept in the House. Mose said they could not have chosen worse days for this.

Some facilities were available, two porta-johns were rented for the occasion. The fireplace provided some warmth. The Brunks living in the house trailer next were most gracious. Yet there must have been a

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# Heritage of the Gospel Among the Stoltzfus Family

When the first Stoltzfus deed was obtained in Cumru Township, Nicholas and Christian both signed the agreement. Most of what we know of Nicholas is found in the Germany side documents requesting marriage to the Anabaptist woman. This deprived Nicholas of civil rights, thus he sought permission to emigrate. His new-found faith meant that much to him.

Christian also left evidence of a devoted life. We have his Bible. We know he served as bishop in the Amish brotherhood. His family carried on the Gospel way. Even today we see varied illustrations of such devotion in the work and life of so many descendants. We hope to depict illustrations, not to praise anyone, but to value the faith of Christian and Nicholas thus to honor our God who has been so gracious to us. We praise God that He would have mercy upon us.

Calvin pushed the idea of collecting Stoltzfus Influence stories. We have a room which could be dedicated for this purpose. Marie E. Cutman, (her book: *We sat where they sat: Ada and Ida Stoltzfus: thirty-seven and one-half years in the ancient city of Hebron*. Morgantown, PA: Masthof, 1996) agreed to prepare a tribute to be placed in the House.

This follows the urging of Merle Stoltzfus (Ammon & Barbara) that we present a Gospel emphasis through the preservation. We have the books—Bible, Martyrs' Mirror, Ausbund—that nurtured the faith in these ancestors. The next step is to portray how this has formed lives among descendants. Ada and Ida could be the model for this as they persisted in God's work to keep the Palestine orphanage open. Many other similar effects from the lives of descendants may emerge.



## Way to Visit the Stoltzfus House!

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somewhat refugee feeling.

Now we know better what is needed to accommodate visitors. When the Preservation Committee met August 30 plenty of improvements to the developing "Barn" plans came out. We need showers in bath areas, tie ups for horses, meeting space indoors so we will not "pressure" the house. What an opportunity to provide for such unusual events as a wagon train. Then there have been businesses here with a day off, family reunions, and many drop-ins. As well as a stop for the Berks Heritage tour (October 20).

## No Ordinary Barn

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control to preserve its artifacts. The end result should be a practical and beautiful structure to compliment the Nicholas Stoltzfus House and provide a large part of the facilities necessary to fulfill our mission.

Back on May 12 at the auction, the Preservation Committee introduced their plans to pursue the barn's construction. The completed historically correct design and plans express a practically stunning structure. Since May, the committee has appointed an advancement committee to invite people to invest in this worthy enterprise and also secured a general contractor and builder to fulfill this task. The fundraising is just beginning with the hopes of breaking ground in early 2008.

The completion of the barn will join the House in fulfilling the mission of the Preservation Committee. The Committee's vision to restore

and preserve the Stoltzfus heritage for the glory of God will be literally exemplified through the barn. The museum section of the barn specifically will bring to life the history of Gospel of Christ throughout the Stoltzfus line.

The heritage is one where living and sharing the Gospel has been a priority. Artifacts and plagues will relay inspiring stories of the past, where *God's* work was being done in our family. Hopefully, the stories of yesteryear will be an inspiration to both family and visitors today.

The Preservation Committee looks forward to its second grand opening. The House was a milestone in itself, but we can look forward to the barn's significant part of fulfilling the overall mission of the Preservation Committee.

—Advance Committee

This newsletter is written and compiled by Paul Kurtz. Questions and concerns should be addressed to him at psku@aol.com or 717-367-3906. Layout and production by Masthof Press. Photos by Carl Good.

## The 2007 Auction

As folks gathered they were treated to singing by the Sanger Chor, a well-known Pennsylvania Dutch singing group. Then they could enter the House and see the cook (Carol Kissinger) making dumplings, later ready for eating. The big attraction, the quilts, filled the tent with eager bidders, including Governor Leader and wife, Mary Jane. Michael and wife were also bidders. This was most encouraging to the project to see continued interest on their part.

Paintings, books, furniture, harness, tools, etc., donated, made this sale equal to last year's where we had a larger gross, but about the same net. This points to the nature of the sale, as Mose suggests, come to support the House by "Bring and Buy". Then, too, come for the experience. The Nicholas Stoltzfus Chest and his son Christian's Bible were on display as are other reminders of what they considered important.

Next year's auction will emphasize the bring and buy theme. Period reminders, like the colonial trooper we had this year will depict elements of the time. We are planning a variety of interests, as we had Jay Stoltzfus, the internationally known magician. He got quite a following of young folk, but also puzzled us all. We hope no one asks him for that day so he can keep May 10 open! And we want the Sanger Chor again, more prominently than this year.

Besides the dumplings there were all sorts of food: barbecue chicken, icecream, pretzels, and Rebecca's lemonade.

Vendors included Twin Oaks Bee Ranch, Auburn, Pa.; J. Alan Boyer, Original Paintings, Oley, Pa.; Janet Bashore, Hand Crocheted Items, Bernville, Pa.; Masthof Bookstore, Morgantown, Pa. (Elizabeth Mast at the table)



## A Very Unusual Day

Friday, Aug 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2007, was an unusual day. It began with an appointment with Eli Wenger. He had seen the writing of the Stoltzfus House in *Today and Tomorrow*. Then we learned he is a cousin to John C. Wenger, Mennonite historian.

Aug 2<sup>nd</sup>, Dwight Roth, in from

Hesston College, called to see the Stoltzfus House, along with his brother, Lowell. On the 3<sup>rd</sup> a cell phone call from Chris and Mary Stoltzfus revealed they were nearby from Indiana.

Marie Cutman and Dorcas Stoltzfus Morrow from Landis Homes were also present. All these, plus Calvin Kurtz, shared thoughts in the Stoltzfus House.

Dwight had three reasons to visit.

1) His gr-grandmother was Sarah Stoltzfus, Tenn John's daughter.

2) He wanted to take back info for the Boyts (Annabelle Stoltzfus)

3) He is writing the story of an "adoptee" of Ada and Ida Stoltzfus. This man called them Mom Ada and Mom Ida. Dwight had him as a student in Hesston. His work for peace in the Iraq situation with his high level function could be quite remarkable.



## ***Mark Your Calendar Now!***

*May 10th, 2008*

6th Annual Benefit Auction

*“Bring an item—Buy an item”*

**Nicholas Stoltzfus House**—to support the preservation of a heritage.

1700 Tulpehocken Road, Wyomissing, PA

*(see inside for info on the 2007 Auction)*

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*SATURDAY, OCTOBER 20, 2007*

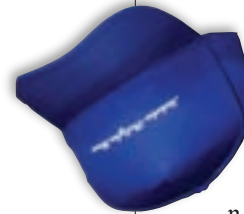
There is still time for the **Masthof Berks Heritage Tour.**

Call 610-286-0258 or email [mast@masthof.com](mailto:mast@masthof.com)

to reserve by October 15th. Cost is \$45 per person.

Registrations and money may also be sent to

Masthof Press, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown, PA 19543-9516.



*Call for your cap today!*

Your family group can reserve a time at the house for a picnic or just a visit, and we will arrange for the House to be open. Call 610-373-6206 or 717-367-3906

***The Nicholas Stoltzfus House  
Preservation Committee  
1700 Tulpehocken Road  
Wyomissing, PA 19610***

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