



Report on the 2022 Benefit Auction held May 5th

The weather on auction day was wet, rainy, cold and damp. There was mud, raincoats and umbrellas. We improvised to manage the soggy grass by laying down sheets of plywood. However, inside the tent of the auction there was warmth among the camaraderie with the family members, friends greeting each other and folks enjoying good food. As the auction progressed, the donated items gathered for the auction sold well, the collection of quilts prices were reasonable and 120 lots of books did well. We feel blessed by the presence of interested friends and supporters of the Homestead.

At the end of the day when the final tally was taken, the Preservation Committee was pleased by the support of the people who braved the weather who came to be part of the Annual Benefit Auction.

A big thanks to the many volunteers who helped set up the tent, tables, chairs and assist in getting everything ready for auction day. Many hands were involved in preparation of food, serving the goodies to the customers and many hours of service to keep the process running smoothly. Parking was challenge for the parking attendants and people's desire to park as close the tent as possible. What was amazing, when the sales and bills were compiled, we felt blessed, even in spite of a rainy cool day.

The displays and vendors in the upstairs barn were a successful activity and chance to be inside from the wet climate. This is a great way to share books, historical information and learn about our genology.





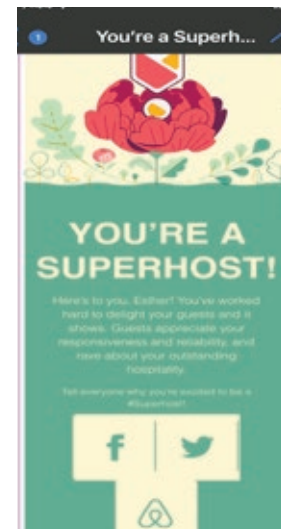
Seasons clearly mark the passing of time and we read in Ecclesiastes that there is a time to plant and a time to harvest.

Do you have favorite seasons? I know I do, and I especially love the fact that seasons change. Snows melting into spring, summer suns turning into the blazing colors of autumn, once again becoming the “bleak midwinter”, which is the necessary hibernation time for our plants and animals to take a rest. This cycle of seasons continues, along with seasons of life, marked by inevitable change. This year of 2022 marked the passage of significant life events: There was the auction season and the wedding season (our son Nicholas, named for our ancestor Nicholas) got married and had a reception here. Then there was the family reunion and company picnic season. Interwoven through all of these seasons is my favorite one of all: Flower season! From February through November, there are flowers blooming at the homestead. (I’m still working on December and January!). If you have a few minutes to come by, I would love to give you a garden tour.

One of my long-time dreams -even when I lived in Florida—was the idea of opening a bed and breakfast of some type. This summer that dream became reality when we officially opened the Barn Loft Air BnB in the upstairs barn apartment. And yes, this has ushered in another season. Our goal was to have an additional revenue stream to support the mission and vision of the Homestead. The board provided loyal support as we knocked out walls and added a shower in the bathroom. I poured my energies into decorating the space and then making sure it was clean. (Elam said it was so clean he thought he should move up there. :). One by one, guests started to book. Guests have continued to book and we are full now through Christmas! Every penny goes back to the homestead (except the cleaning fee) and we have been thrilled with the initial success. I just heard from Air BnB that we have earned the coveted “Super host” designation which made me very happy. Our guests say they love the air BnB Space with the personal touches, the flowers and the grounds; one guest said it was the best vacation she had experienced in 60 years. We hope this continues.

To all of the family who enjoy this space, we love to have you come and want to give you first dibs at scheduling but spaces are going fast for 2023. Please let us know as soon as possible if you want us to hold a date for your event. Thank you again for entrusting us to take care of this special place. We feel so very fortunate to live here and we are grateful for your interest and support in maintaining your family home.

- by Esther Stoltzfus





This summer was busy time with plenty of activities, weddings, family reunions, meetings and lots of tours through the historical house. Including the wedding of Nic and Jen Stoltzfus.





2023 Stoltzfus Homestead Calendar Fund Raising Campaign

Collection of 12 photographs of the
Homestead by Elam Stoltzfus

Support the ongoing efforts to maintain
the Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead

8.5 x 22 inches

Instructions: Please fill out the form below and enclose your check, written out to "The Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead," include a check and mail it to this address:

The Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, 1700 Tulpehocken Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

Orders will be processed weekly for the 2023 calendars.

Name: _____ Address: _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Ph# _____

Your Donation Amount: \$15.00 Per Calendar \$12.00 for 5 or more - Amount _____

*Every order includes FREE Shipping



We value everyone who has been part of the Homestead journey and want to hear from you! Its been over 20 years since the first newsletter was mailed out. We are updating the mailing list. Please let us know that you want to continue to receive the newsletter and tell us how you want to receive the newsletter. We can send the newsletter by USPS mail or send a digital copy by email.

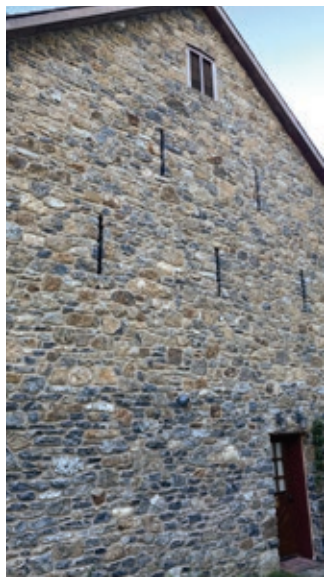
Your interest in the homestead means so much to us and we want to be good stewards of the resources available to us. Our goal is to publish 2 to 3 newsletters a year.

Please fill in the form below and mail to us with your address and information or send an email to us at NicholasStoltzfusHomestead@gmail.com

The Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead, 1700 Tulpehocken Road, Wyomissing, PA 19610.

Name: _____ Address: _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____ Ph# _____



The upper level of the stones on the side of the barn had never been pointed, since the construction of the barn in 2011. Cambridge Masonry and crew came to finish the stone work on the barn. This is great relief to have this completed. Thanks for the hard work and commitment of your fine craftsmanship.



Stoltzfus Structures, Gid Zook donated a 12 x 16 shed to us for bike storage and collection of yard games for our guests. We are very appreciative of this generous gift.



In the beginning of this year, Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead worked out an agreement to have a Gruber Wagon, owned by Berks History Center to be featured here on the Homestead grounds for the summer. Later this summer Berks History Center informed us that they want to donate the Gruber wagon to the Homestead. We feel honored to have this peice of history on the grounds. The wagon has been a draw for artists and photographers.

Stoltzfus family sailing, sailing away to a new World.....

By Nic Stoltzfus, excerpts from "German Lutherans to Pennsylvania Amish: the Stoltzfus Story"

We don't know for certain what drove Nicholas and Anna Elisabeth to leave his home behind and travel to an unknown land. After all, Mennonites in Zweibrücken were granted full citizenship rights in 1759; he had family living nearby; and he was actively managing and renting a set of mills. Perhaps he felt burdened by taxes or debt or lingering prejudice against Anabaptists. Perhaps he was drawn to the chance to provide new opportunities for his children and the promise of religious freedom.

Whatever the case, in the summer of 1766, the family was ready to leave Zweibrücken for good. Nicholas and Anna Elisabeth and their children began making preparations to leave. Of their seven children, we are not certain how many made the journey, but by the time of Nicholas' death in 1774, only four were still alive: Barbara, Christian, "Anna," and Magdalena.

The family loaded up their household goods and belongings in a wooden chest — small enough for the eight-year-old Magdalena to fit inside — and began the first leg of the journey: to the Rhine River and then 300 miles to Rotterdam.

The family likely took a wagon to a port on the Rhine River, where they would have loaded up their trunk and headed down the Rhine River bound for the port city of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. Like a toll road, the river had various toll booths along the way. At Schenkenschanz, the border fort to the Netherlands, the Stoltzfus family showed their passports to the border authorities.

Once in Rotterdam, they boarded Polly, a near 150-ton wooden ship captained by the British captain Robert Porter, an experienced captain who had ferried German immigrants to Pennsylvania the previous two years. If they arrived in Rotterdam early, the Stoltzfus family may have waited on board the ship for a few days while the remaining 175 passengers assembled. Inside the ship, the immigrants crammed into the tight quarters they were provided. After everyone boarded, a pilot guided the wooden vessel out of the Dutch port and into the North Sea. It then continued past the ports of Dunkirk and Calais, through the Strait of Dover with the white cliffs standing tall in the distance, and into the port of Cowes on the Isle of Wight where it anchored.

At Cowes, the British port authority inspected the goods on board the ship and gave Captain Porter approval to sail to Philadelphia. This process may have taken up to two weeks. In the meantime, the Stoltzfus family and other passengers lived on board the ship.

The Polly left England on August 20, 1766, bound for Philadelphia. The rocky cliffs of the Cornwall coast would have been the last land the Stoltzfus family saw for over two months. As the small ship wended its way through the vast Atlantic, August days of warm winds and blue skies were followed by September squalls and cold October rain.

And then, after weeks of only seeing ocean waves, a sailor cried out, "Land Ho!" The family clambered above deck to get a glimpse of North America. The first land they saw was the sandy tip of Cape Henlopen jutting out into the Delaware Bay. A river pilot greeted the ship and guided it up the bay into Philadelphia. As Polly rounded the final bend of the Delaware River, the passengers of the ship looked towards the city. At the time, it was the largest city in the colonies and a key port of the British Empire. The spires of the diverse churches which towered over the city were the physical manifestation of William Penn's "Holy Experiment."

On Saturday, October 18th, Polly docked at one of the wharves near present-day Penn's Landing. If it was a clear day with a large crowd gathered close by, Captain Porter may have called for the cannons to be fired in celebration of their arrival. Then, colonial officials boarded the docked ship and summoned all males over the age of 16 to come with them to the courthouse. From the dock, Nicholas and Christian — who had recently turned 17 — and the other immigrants followed the official to the courthouse.

Perhaps the official led the group up Front Street until they reached the intersection of High Street (Market Street). In front of the London Coffee House, slave traders took bids for black slaves on the auction block. From here, Nicholas and Christian and the others walked one city block west to the courthouse at Second Street. As they waited to enter the courthouse, the immigrants admired the tallest building in the colonies: the Church of England's Christ Church. At the courthouse, a translator told the immigrants that they had to affirm their allegiance to King George III and the laws of the colony and renounce the Catholic Pope. Nicholas and Christian signed the document and then left the courthouse to rejoin their family. The Stoltzfus family likely spent a few days in the city, gathering supplies and food and finding a Conestoga covered wagon or coach for hire. From Philadelphia, they journeyed westward on the Great Wagon Road, bound for Lancaster County.



Artist depiction of ship Polly 1766 - Johannes Ewers



Stoltzfus chest from 1766, currently at the Homestead.

The Ship has come in....

The Mennonite History Center in Harleysville, Pennsylvania designed and built a ship replica of 4 bunks in 2017 (on the 300th anniversary of the first large Mennonite immigration to PA) titled, "*Opportunity & Conscience: 18th Century Mennonite Immigration to Pennsylvania*". The ship compartment, along with the simulated "dock of departure", was designed by Joel Alderfer and skilled carpenter, Earl Ludwig.

The idea and purpose of the ship passenger bunks was that visitors, especially children, could experience something of what these 18th century British immigrant ships were like, and to give a sense of what life was like in the passenger compartments.

A few years later the exhibit was moved to the Muddy Creek Farm Library in Ephrata PA. Through a mutual friend and a conversation, the Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead was delighted to receive the exhibit here in the barn at the upper loft.

With a some hard work, careful planning, we disassembled the ship, and moved the pieces up to upper loft. With some re-designing and refitting we were able to place the ship exhibit in the room with some classroom space for students. This is part of our immigration theme we are implementing at the Homestead. Come by and take a tour of the replica ship bunks.



The Nicholas Stoltzfus Homestead Preservation Committee board consists of the following:
Moses Smucker, Chairman
Benuel S. Riehl, Co-Chairman
Joseph Miller, Board member
S. Nicholas Stoltzfus, Secretary
Debra Allgyer, Treasurer
Elam & Esther Stoltzfus, Executive Directors

2023 Annual Benefit Auction Saturday May 6th, 2023

Accepting donations of items to be sold at the 2023 auction, including books, new and vintage.

Call Elam at 484-878-2916.



Like and share the FaceBook page. A place to tell stories, share images, videos, and stay informed with updates.

<https://www.facebook.com/NicholasStoltzfusHomestead>



Our mission is to tell the Stoltzfus story.

A place where memories are made.

A place to bring families together.

A place to relax and relive history.

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