



OUR NAME'S THE GAME

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SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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WWW.SCPGS.ORG

Dear SCPGS members,

Here is your genealogy newsletter for July and August 2021 with new programs announced for the rest of the year!

From the President Richard K. Konkel

Since the June SCPGS meeting on the Henry James Young award and its recipients, I have been thinking about many of those individuals and am being inspired anew by their great works. About twenty years ago, the recently departed Annette Kunselman Burgert (1930-2021) gave us a presentation where she encouraged us to look up and consult the original church records for our Pennsylvania German ancestors even though these records may have been transcribed and translated. After all these years, I have finally gotten around to doing this and it is very interesting.

Largely through efforts of our webmaster and board member Lynn Nelson, the library of the York County History Center has become an affiliated library of the LDS Family History Center. This means that nearly all of the records on familysearch.org can be accessed at the York County History Center. Among these records are digital images of many original German Church records that had been microfilmed by the Historical Society of York County in the 1930s. The original microfilm are also at the York County History Center, but I find that the digital copies from the LDS are a bit cleaner. While Annette Burgert's admonition to genealogist to consult the original records was in part because there could be errors in the transcriptions and translations, I have found a high degree of accuracy in the translations by Henry James Young, Pastor Frederick Weiser, and others. We owe them a great debt of gratitude, as their work has unlocked these records and made them known to countless genealogists and historians.

A large part of the reason these records were not very accessible to researchers is that the originals are in Kurrentschrift later called Sütterlin script. Kurrent and Sütterlin are the old form of German cursive handwriting which is quite different from the Latin cursive which is the basis of English and American cursive handwriting, including the Spencer and Palmer methods many of us were taught in school. The old German script was banned by the Nazi Party in 1941 as it was thought there were Jewish elements in it, and it was seen as chaotic. As a result, most older handwritten German documents are not understandable to most people. Most modern Germans cannot read or understand this older German

script. Henry James Young had taught himself to write in Sütterlin script as a child living in the Hoffman Orphanage in Adams County. Since I have so much German ancestry, Dr. Young encouraged me to learn to read the script as well. It has been a great benefit to my research for many years and has enabled me to read many records others are not able to read. I am somewhat distressed to find that many younger Americans cannot read or write standard cursive handwriting. This being the result of many schools abandoning the teaching of cursive handwriting. In my work as an attorney, I have encountered more than a few young people who do not know how to write their name. I find this shocking because nearly all of our historical documents are in some form of cursive handwriting. Without some knowledge of basic handwriting many of our historic documents become totally inaccessible to most of the population.

As Annette Burgert did many years ago, I encourage us all to seek out the original records about our ancestors, and if needed to learn a bit about and familiarize ourselves with old forms of German and English handwriting. Opening up the past through original documents can be very rewarding.

Programs through to the end of 2021

Reminder: Our programs are held at the York County History Center, starting at 2:15 p.m. Additional details about time, location, and registration can also be found on our website:

<https://www.scpgs.org/meetings.html>, at <http://yorkhistorycenter.org>, or on our Facebook page.

August 29, 2021 - How to Navigate the Pennsylvania State Archives' Online Resources

Aaron McWilliams is head of the Public Services Section at the Pennsylvania State Archives. He is responsible for handling research inquiries at the Archives and frequently represents the agency at genealogical events. His areas of expertise include Pennsylvania state land records, Pennsylvania's Revolutionary War militia, and genealogy. He has appeared on WITF's Radio Smart Talk and contributed to both "Who Do You Think You Are?" and "Finding Your Roots." Prior to joining the Pennsylvania State Archives, Aaron worked as a reference archivist at the Maryland State Archives and as a professional genealogist.

His presentation, "How to Navigate the Pennsylvania State Archives' Online Resources" provides a detailed overview of the Archives' finding aid, research guides, and online records. The presentation will cover how to use the new finding aid and research guides to explore the collections and find specific records. It will also cover the Archives' digital collection and how to navigate them.

October 3, 2021 – Genealogical Resources of the York County History Center's Library and Archives

Nicole Smith, Director of Library & Archives, will give a presentation on useful resources in York County genealogy research available through the History Center. Nicole Smith began as Assistant Director of the Library & Archives in 2017 and became Director in 2019. She is a graduate of the American Studies Master's Degree program at Penn State Harrisburg and has been working in historical organizations, museums, and archives for over 15 years.

The York County History Center's Library & Archives houses an extensive and varied collection covering a wide range of topics, including genealogy and family history, local history, decorative arts, community organizations, historic sites, and military history.

November 7, 2021 – The Churches and Chaplains of York County During the Civil War

Scott Mingus is a retired scientist and executive in the global pulp & paper industry. The Ohio native was part of the research team that developed the first commercially successful self-adhesive US postage stamps. He has written 23 Civil War and Underground Railroad books. His biography of General William "Extra Billy" Smith won multiple awards, including the Dr. James I. Robertson, Jr. Literary Prize for Confederate History. He has also written several articles for *Gettysburg Magazine* and other historical journals. Scott has appeared on C-SPAN, C-SPAN3, PCN, and other TV networks.

Mingus and his wife Debi live in York County, PA. For more than a decade, he has written a blog on the Civil War and Underground Railroad history of York County (www.yorkblog.com/cannonball). He has written six scenario books for Civil War miniature wargaming. A maternal great-great-grandfather was a 15-year-old drummer and rifleman in the 51st Ohio Infantry in the Western Theater, and a paternal great-great-grandfather marched with Sherman in the 183rd Ohio. Other family members fought at Antietam and Gettysburg in the 7th West Virginia of the Army of the Potomac.

Description: Faith traditions played a strong role in society during the Civil War, both on the home front and among the military forces. York County's many churches provided moral and religious support for soldiers and civilians, shelter for the sick and injured, and, at times, political rhetoric for or against the Lincoln Administration. After the president authorized the chaplaincy early in the war, several well-known York County preachers signed up to serve local regiments. Join multiple award-winning author and longtime blogger Scott Mingus as he presents a PowerPoint slide talk on several churches and chaplains with local ties.

December 2021 – No Meeting

Overview of the York County Archives Offerings, by Christy L. Depew, Director of Archives

The York County Archives is an office of the York County Government. The archives holds government records for varying periods of time from the formation of the county in 1749 until the present. Available records and their inclusive dates can be found on our website under the "Records Available" link. Several of our early record series can provide helpful information for genealogists.

Estate files are the richest source of genealogical data since they may contain a last will and testament or orphans' court papers which often list the names of children or other heirs. Indexes to estates files and orphans' court papers can be accessed by visiting the archives.

Early deed records are another great source of genealogical information. In addition to documenting land transactions, miscellaneous transactions such as estate land releases to heirs are also recorded. The deed index is available to search on our website at www.yorkcountyarchives.org, or by visiting www.searchIQS.com. Copies of the deeds can be obtained by visiting the archives, or by e-mailing us with a deed reference.

Marriage applications are great records for making family links since the name of parents and existence of other marriages or divorces are often provided. Marriages are recorded by the Orphans' Court of the county. The archives holds marriage records from 1885-1949 (marriages before 1885 were not recorded) and these indexes can be found on the website. Marriages 1950 and later can be found by contacting the office of the Orphans' Court.

Birth and death records (though not required to be recorded) were recorded by the county between 1892 and 1906. These records are indexed on the archives website. After 1906, birth and death records were required to be kept by the State of Pennsylvania and are available through the Pennsylvania Department of Health www.health.pa.gov.

Clerk of Courts records, assessment records, and civil court records can also be helpful sources of information. The clerk of courts records are indexed on the website. Assessment records and civil court records must be searched as they are not indexed at this time. Please visit the Records Available portion of our website to see a more extensive list of our available records.

The York County Archives has scanned our Prothonotary Common Pleas dockets from 1785 through 1842, thanks to a Historical and Archival Records Care (HARC) grant funded by the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission (PHMC). This grant also funded the purchase of archival boxes for storing the dockets since they will no longer have to be pulled for regular use.

The archives staff welcomes researchers to request copies of archival records using our online cart function. Researchers can also e-mail archives@yorkcountypa.gov to request materials. Be sure to provide names and references from our online database when you are requesting specific items. Archivists are also available to answer general questions about our record series by phone, but all requests for materials must be made in writing either by e-mail, website, or letter.

The archives is open for research to visitors from 8-4:30 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday. Free parking is located at the front of the building along Pleasant Acres Rd. A short registration process will occur upon entrance, during which you will be asked to lock up your personal items in nearby lockers. Research is conducted in a large reading room just beyond the front door. Computers are available to access the website and online indexes, but we encourage users to search the online indexes before their visit and arrive with a list of desired records. Archivists are always available to answer questions about record retrieval and to facilitate access to information. A full list of information for visitors can be found on the archives website at www.yorkcountyarchives.org.

We look forward to assisting you with your genealogical research!

May 2, 2021 - Review of our May 2 visit to Muddy Creek Forks

Our May meeting of the South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society was a tour of the **Maryland & Pennsylvania Railroad Heritage Village at Muddy Creek Forks** which included a short train ride which followed the winding banks of the Muddy Creek. We were blessed with a lovely day and a cheery group of around 35 participants, divided into two groups, half taking the 4-tenths of a mile train ride and the other half starting the village and store tour and then swapping. Craig and Jean Sansonetti were our guides.

Craig Sansonetti, the organization's president, gave a fascinating overview of the village beginning with the start of "Dennys" mill, built along the fork of branches of the Muddy Creek in 1759, thru a series of various millers whose enterprises for a while seemed to inevitably end in bankruptcy. The present mill was rebuilt in 1847 by James P. Maffet who specialized in milling and selling buckwheat flour and who first operated a store on site which continued until the purchase by Alexander M. Grove in 1888. As Craig made clear throughout his presentation, A. M. Grove was a man with big ideas, and the village, with its remarkable level of historical integrity and preservation, displays all of it. The tour included walks through the first and second floors of the 1899 four-story general store complete with historical displays, original furnishings, old-time merchandise, the post office, Ma and Pa railway station, and platform. The railroad, active from 1901 to the 1950s connected York and Baltimore and passed through Muddy Creek Forks. Across the road was the mill and mill race where Grove started production of his good quality white flour, marketed as "Harvest Queen," which eventually grew into a flour sales' contract for 30-35 box carloads per year with commercial bakeries. There were stories of the grain elevators, the fertilizer warehouse, the icehouse, coal bins, farmhouses, the cannery, the mill pond and dam, and the machine hall, all which provided livelihoods for local farmers and necessities for the community. Most prominent though, and perhaps most haunting, are the old, larger than life rail cars, vestiges of days when the village and station were a bustling hub and the railroad came through delivering and picking up goods, people, and mail to Baltimore, the York Fair or even distant New Mexico. For further information about this wonderful historical site visit:

<http://www.maandparailroad.com>

June 13, 2021 - Review of our South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society

Henry J. Young Award Winners, 1993 – 2018

- 1993** Alice E. Haner Starner, Landon Charles Reisinger, Ralph S. Cannon, Edith Beard Cannon, and Alice B. Cannon
- 1995** Schuyler C. Brossman
- 1997** Dr. Charles H. Glatfelter and Samuel Saylor
- 1999** John Heisey and Arthur Weaner
- 2001** Annette Kunselman Burgert and Albert Rose
- 2003** David Hively and Rev. Dr. Neal Hively
- 2005** Gloria Williams Aughenbaugh and Betty E. Eichelberger Brown
- 2007** Ruthetta Naomi (Bunny) Reachard Jacobs and Patricia Ann Amspacher Gross
- 2009** Rev. Frederick Weiser and Alfreda Patton Davidson
- 2011** Barbara Wolf Rudy, June Burk Lloyd, and Leonard Heilman
- 2013** Gerald Shermeyer, Donna Potteiger Shermeyer and Glenn Zech
- 2015** Richard Konkel
- 2016** Kathryn Brown Jordan and Franklin Grove, Jr.
- 2018** Lila Fourhman-Shaull and Robert Shaub

The Genealogical Society has been fortunate, since its inception, to have devoted members and friends of the Society who have contributed to improve and carry on the Society's purpose and mission. The

Henry James Young Award Winners listed above have all enriched the Society with their interest in genealogy.

Several of the Award winners have served as officers on the Board of Directors of SCPGS. Ralph and Edith Cannon, Samuel Saylor, Albert Rose, David Hively, Gloria Aughenbaugh, Betty Brown, Ruthetta Jacobs (the first president of SCPGS), Patricia Gross, Alfreda Patton Davidson, Barbara Rudy, June Lloyd, Richard Konkell, Kathryn Jordan, Franklin Grove, Jr. and Lila Fourhman-Shaull have all volunteered their time to ensure the success of the Society through the years.

John Heisey, who taught classes about genealogy suggested to a group of students who were in one of his classes that they start a genealogy group to carry on after the classes were over and that led to the formation of SCPGS.

Gloria Aughenbaugh, Annette Burgert, Schuyler Brossman, Dr. Charles Glatfelter, David Hively, Rev. Dr. Neal Hively, Leonard Heilman, Robert Shaub, Arthur Weaner, and Rev. Frederick Weiser have all contributed extensive research and genealogical material to SCPGS and York County historical and many genealogical entities for preservation.

Several honorees have served as volunteers in the Library of the York County History Center over the years. They include Gloria Aughenbaugh, Betty Brown, David Hively, the Cannon family, Alfreda Patton Davidson, Pat Gross, Frank Grove, Kathryn Jordan, Al Rose, Barbara Rudy, Gerald and Donna Shermeyer, and Glenn Zech.

Landon Reisinger, John Heisey, June Lloyd and Lila Fourhman-Shaull served as Librarians for York County's History Center as did Henry J. Young. Alice E. Starner was an associate director of the Historical Society of York County, working for there for 42 years.

Deceased Members

Arlene Miller, who along with her husband, Jacob Miller, was a Life Member of SCPGS. Born in Pleasureville, New Jersey, she died at age 77 on 27 August 2020 in York, PA. She was predeceased by her parents, Archibald Thomas and Alice Thomas (Jones); and her sister Lynn Salisbury (Thomas). She is survived by her husband Jacob L Miller, Jr.; her children, Jacob III (Emily) and Alissa (Eric Barshinger); her grandchildren, Alden, Ada, Scarlett, Gwenyth, Zephaniah and Ingrid; and her sister Carol Nichols (Thomas).

Barry L. Sowers, 70, the husband of Melinda Sowers (who served as a treasurer for SCPGS), died on Saturday, May 8, 2021. Both he and his wife held SCPGS family memberships for a long time. The couple celebrated 40 years of marriage on December 13, 2020. Born August 12, 1950, in York, Barry was the son of Pauline D. "Pete" (Bortner) Sowers of York and the late Charles J. "Jake" Sowers. He graduated from Dover Area High School in 1968 and was a U.S. Army veteran of the Vietnam War. He retired in June of 2019 following 50 years of service as an expediter for Glen-Gery Corporation. He was an active member of Union Fire & Hose Co. #1 in Dover where he had 55 years of service as an EMT and fireman, as well as fundraising. He was an avid NASCAR fan and followed the career of Cale Yarborough. In addition to his wife and mother, Barry is survived by his son, Matthew A. Sowers of Hershey.

Local History Books Acquired by the York County History Center 2020-April 2021

- Bartholomew, Ann, ed., Dale Eck, and Greg Huber, *Guide to the Singmaster Family of Macungie* (2010)
- Brenner, Allen Lewis, and Bertha Ann Brenner Fleming, *Brenner - James genealogy* (1949)
- Brilliant, Joseph Peter, *The Beckers of Prospect* (2020)
- Cramer, Clarence E., *The Family of Johan Helfer Cramer with Historical Background* (1944)
- Cushing, Thomas, ed., *A genealogical and biographical history of Allegheny County, Pennsylvania* [reprint] (2007)
- Fritz, James, *The Pennsylvania Dutch experience: 1681-1783* (2019)
- Gilbert, Melvin Lester, *Gilberts of the Conajohela Valley* (1980)
- Grenham, John, *Tracing your Irish ancestors: the complete guide* (2019)
- Harlacher, Donald S., *Harlacher Family Genealogy: The Life and Descendants of Charles Harlacher (1703-1762) (born Johann Carl Horlacher)* (2020)
- Heitzenroder, David A., *Annie Kate Yessler and her Ancestors* (2019)
- Irwin, Anne Elizabeth, *William Erwin (before 1716 - 1774) of York County, Pennsylvania: a search for the parents of Archibald Irwin* (2018)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of John Auchey, 1796-1868* (2020)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of Hans Adam Bittinger, 1698-1768* (2020)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of Johannes Casparus Fahs, 1718-1747* (2020)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of Anthony Gunnet, 1752-1836* (2020)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of Peter Oberlander, 1745-1780* (2020)
- Lau, Michael W., *Descendants of Andreas Swartz, abt. 1720-* (2020)
- Merrick, Barbara Lambert, John Bradley Arthaud, ed., and Peggy M. Baker, pre., *The Descendants of Elder William Brewster through His Son Jonathan, Part 2, Generations 5 and 6* [Mayflower] (2019)
- Merrick, Barbara Lambert, John Bradley Arthaud, ed., and Peggy M. Baker, pre., *The Descendants of Elder William Brewster through His Children Patience, Fear, and Love, Part 3, Generations 5 and 6* [Mayflower] 2019
- Paton, Chris, *Tracing your Irish family history on the Internet: a guide for family historians* (2019)
- Peden, Henry C., Jr., *Inhabitants of Cecil County, Maryland 1649-1774* (1999)
- Roulston, William J., *Researching Scots Irish Ancestors: The Essential Genealogical Guide to Early Modern Ulster, 1600-1800* (2018)
- Schmeiser, Cora, *The Smyser Family in America - Its Origin in Germany - Its Immigration - Its Life in America - Reuniting with Its German Ancestors* (1988)
- Schmeiser, Paul, *A Widow's Dream: Smyser - Schmeiser Family Reunion* [1986] (1988)
- Sneider, Paul, *Descendants Chart for Christian Meckel* (2019)
- Soule, John E., Milton E. Terry, and Louise Walsh Throop, *George Soule of the Mayflower and His Descendants in the Fifth and Sixth Generations* [multi. vols.] (various)
- Tempera, Anne Boyer (comp.), *Descendants of Nicholas Anstein* (2020)
- Wakefield, Robert S., *Richard Church and His Descendants for Four Generations* (1998)

The time is overdue to renew your membership for the fiscal year July 2021 to June 2022. Any member who does not pay their dues by September 1st will automatically be dropped from the mailing list. Please note that there will be an additional fee accessed to cover the postage for back copies of our newsletter and any special publications. See <https://www.scpgs.org/membership.html> for further info.

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DATED MATERIAL – DO NOT DELAY