



OUR NAME'S THE GAME
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SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

P.O. BOX 1824

YORK, PA 17405-1824

WWW.SCPGS.ORG

Please enjoy your March-April Newsletter!

APRIL PROGRAM MEETING

Sunday, April 3, 2022 – *“The Challenges Facing the Continental Congress in Yorktown”*

Note: Held at the York History Center Colonial Courthouse on West Market Street in York, at 2:30 p.m.

Presenter: Tom Gibson

Description: It was a difficult time for our German-speaking ancestors in York when the congressional representatives and their families crowded into our small town, resulting in insufficient housing and a shortage of basic necessities. While George Washington and his Army were at Valley Forge, the Congress in York completed the drafting of the Articles of Confederation, our nation's first Constitution. (Please bring the kids to this family friendly, interactive program at the Colonial Court House. Leave your inhibitions behind and join Tom as we travel back in time to the year 1777, when the Continental Congress was meeting in our community.)

Biography: Tom Gibson is a retired educator and thoroughly enjoys volunteering at the History Center. With significant colonial ancestry, he is a longtime member and officer of the Continental Congress Chapter of the United States Sons of the American Revolution. Tom is a Vietnam veteran, thirty-year Boy Scout leader, bicycle enthusiast, and radio engineer

MAY PROGRAM MEETING

Sunday, May 1, 2022 – *“Researching the History of Institutionalized People in Pennsylvania”*

Presenter: Tyler Stump

Description: Since the early 19th century, the state of Pennsylvania has operated nearly 50 different state institutions for people with intellectual and mental disabilities. Hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvanians lived in these institutions. Today, the Pennsylvania State Archives holds some of the historical records created by these institutions, which are invaluable resources for researchers and genealogists. Join archivist Tyler Stump to explore this important part of Pennsylvania's history and to learn more about what kinds of information can be found in the archives' collections.

Biography: Tyler Stump has been an acquisitions archivist at the Pennsylvania State Archives since 2016. He mostly works with historical PA government records. He has published several pieces about the history of Pennsylvania's prisons and state-run institutions, most recently an article in *Pennsylvania*

History about Fairview State Hospital, an institution in Wayne County. Tyler grew up in the Baltimore area, but his family has lived in the York Township/Dallastown area since the mid 18th century. He currently lives in Camp Hill, PA with his wife Andra (who is also an archivist at the PA House of Representatives Archives).

Reflections on My Family's Connections to Ukraine
by Richard K. Konkel, Esquire, SCPGS President

A turbulent confluence of current events and history arising from Vladimir Putin's unprovoked war on Ukraine have caused me to deeply ponder my own family's connections with the Ukrainian nation and its history. My late grandmother, Rosa Konkel nee Stelz (1925-2009) was a native of Hochheim, Zaporizhzhia Oblast, Ukraine. Her Roman Catholic Ethnic German family lived in that country from 1810 to 1944. The early part of that period saw my grandmother's ancestors as German colonists granted substantial privileges under the Czars. The time period after the Russian Revolution in 1917 saw her family face Revolution, Civil War, murderous anarchy, property confiscation, repeated famines and starvation, Soviet purges, and world war with deportation, imprisonment, and death. It is much to take in, but I now see it all a bit more clearly as part of the fabric of Ukrainian history.

Before 1810 nearly all of the ancestors of my grandmother lived in a relatively small area in villages between Heidelberg, Mannheim, Bruchsal, Karlsruhe, and Sinsheim in the northern part of the Baden portion of the modern German state of Baden-Württemberg (territories formerly belonging to the Bishopric of Speyer and the Electoral Palatinate), and in northern parts of Alsace in France. Interestingly some of my mother's Pennsylvania German ancestors came from the same or neighboring villages. I have Reformed ancestors named Ritter in the 1600s on both sides of my family from the former Palatine town of Eppingen, indicating that my parents may be distantly related.

My grandmother's ancestors at the time of emigration to Ukraine were largely devout Roman Catholics with sons of age for military service. Napoleon, one of history's great war mongers, was making all of his collaborating German princes supply his army with soldiers to feed his war machine. Russian Emperor Alexander I (ruled 1810-1825) by Imperial Edict of 1804 extended an invitation for Germans to settle as colonists in the southern part of Ukraine, then known as Novorossiia. This area was largely uninhabited lands conquered in 1783 by Alexander's grandmother, Catherine the Great from the Ottoman Empire. The colonies where my grandmother's family settled and lived were the Catholic colonies of Heidelberg, Kostheim, Leitershausen, Waldorf, Blumental and Hochheim.

These colonies were known as the Lutheran and Catholic Molotschna colonies. Molotschna (meaning milk) is the name of a small river running through the area. The Lutheran and Catholic colonies were on the west side of the Molotschna, a large group of Mennonite colonies were on the east side of the river. The colonists lived in villages and were granted large tracts of land of about 660 acres. They were exempt from military service, property taxes, and had freedom of religion. The Roman Catholics were originally served by Jesuits priests, but they were banished from Russia, after which the colonists were served by Polish priests. Southern Ukraine is a vast steppe (like the American great plains) the topsoil is several feet deep and very fertile. The German colonists became adept at growing cereal crops and livestock and became very prosperous farmers. By the 1870s their special status as colonists was largely revoked by the government, but that was only the beginning of their troubles.

maternal grandmother, Rosalia Eppinger nee Hardock (1875-1944) was a lay member of the Third Order of St. Francis and helped to keep the faith alive in the community during these dark years.

True wickedness descended upon Ukraine and the entire Soviet state under the brutal dictatorship of Joseph Stalin (1923-1953). My grandmother's native colony of Hochheim was turned into a collective farm in 1930 and about five other unrelated families were crowded into the family home. As a result, my great grandparents left Hochheim to live with the Eppinger family in Blumental. In 1931, my grandmother was sent to live with her godparents and childless aunt and uncle August Stelz and Rosalia Stelz nee Eppinger in the Ukrainian town of Orikhiv.

In 1933 Stalin caused another even more devastating famine to occur in Ukraine than the one in 1922. This famine is known in Ukrainian as the *Holodomor* or the Terror-Famine. Stalin perpetrated this cruel sadistic punishment on the people of Ukraine for their independent views and attitude to him and the Soviet dictatorship. Unlike 1922, no foreign or outside help from anywhere was allowed. All crops were taken from Ukraine leaving the people with nothing to eat. An estimated four million (4,000,000) Ukrainians died from starvation during this famine. Among the victims was my grandmother's father, Josef Stelz (1890-1933) who starved to death on August 15, 1933, during the harvest. His wife Elisabeth Eppinger and her mother had to bury him themselves and Elisabeth preached his funeral sermon. My own grandmother living in Orikhiv with her aunt and uncle nearly perished. Her uncle August managed to hide some grain under a floor and a haystack which they only used under the cover of darkness. The Soviet officials could not understand why they did not die.

The late 1930s saw Stalin's purges. This was a time when anyone who was educated or suspected of holding views contrary to the state was arrested and following a brief secret trial murdered or maybe exiled to Siberia. I remember my grandmother telling me how her teachers would be there one day and gone the next, never to be seen again.

My grandmother Rosa Stelz's 16th birthday was on June 22, 1941, which was the beginning of the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union known as Operation Barbarossa. She was initially sent to the Western front in the area around Odessa with other Soviet youth to dig ditches for the defenses against the Germans. Over the summer the German Wehrmacht advanced, and by September they had secured and occupied most of the area around my grandmother's home. My grandmother's mother, and aunt and uncle with whom she lived as well as many other relatives were deported by train by the Soviets to Siberia and Kazakhstan a few days before my grandmother returned home to Orkhiv.

Rosa's Eppinger relatives in Blumental managed to not get deported because the train track had been bombed and they were told to return the next day for deportation by which time they were under German occupation. My grandmother and her relatives lived in Ukraine under the German occupation and as ethnic Germans were treated much better than they had been by the Soviets. The same cannot be said for the Jewish and most of the Slavic population. With the defeat and retreat of the Germans, the ethnic Germans from Ukraine were resettled in Poland. Nearly all of my grandmother's relatives were repatriated to the Soviet Union at the end of the war by the allies. This meant many long years of exile in prison camps in Siberia and Kazakhstan. Rosa avoided repatriation by being married to my German grandfather. Only a cousin, Christian Eppinger, had also managed to remain in the West after the war.

My great grandmother Elisabeth Stelz nee Eppinger (1900-1944) died in a Soviet forced labor camp in Semipalatinsk, Kazakhstan. My grandmother's uncle August Stelz (1893-1942) was shot and killed by the Soviets near Perm, Russia for "speaking his mind." Stelz uncles Franz and Adam died in captivity from being fed a poisonous diet of salted fish and insufficient water. Other relatives of my grandmother survived the war but were held in gulag prison camps for years until after the death of Stalin in 1953. They were set free in 1955 by Khrushchev and were able to be discovered by their relatives in the West. After World War II my grandmother had remembered the address of her uncle Johannes Eppinger in Argentina. She wrote to him to see if he had news of any family. He had not heard from anyone because they were either dead or imprisoned. My grandparents Konkel worked tirelessly for the International Red Cross attempting to find friends and relatives lost in the Soviet Union. It was only after my grandparents' emigration to America in 1956 that contact was made with her brother and sister and numerous aunts and extended family members. They lived in Siberia, Kazakhstan, and Kirgizstan. Cousin Christian Eppinger worked hard to get many of the older relatives and their children to emigrate to West Germany in 1974. My grandmother's nieces and nephews managed to emigrate to Germany in the early 1990s. No relatives remain in Ukraine, and very few in Russia.

As a genealogist I initially had hardly any records beyond oral histories to research the family. There were published lists of the first colonists to Ukraine from about 1811, but nothing to fill in the intervening years. During the Revolution and Civil War, the communists were known to have destroyed church records as well as murdering the priests. In the 1990s precious Consistory Records of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Tiraspol which covered most of the area of the Russian Empire came to light in the Russian State Archives of Saratov on the Volga. This city had been seat of the Bishop, and yearly the parish priests sent complete transcripts of the baptisms, marriages, and deaths to the Consistory. Thoughtful archivists in the Soviet period preserved these records and they document the lives of thousands of individuals. The records for the parish of Heidelberg, Ukraine where most of my ancestors lived exist for the years 1839 to 1917. It has been wonderful to learn more about the lives of these almost forgotten ancestors.

My ancestors' history in Ukraine has been a difficult one. My grandmother often spoke fondly of her native steppes of Ukraine and the fields of sunflowers. She was an avid gardener and grew sunflowers in her garden among many things. A tribute to her farming ancestors. Putin's war on Ukraine is yet another reminder of this difficult history checkered with brutal dictators, of which he, God willing, will be the last. May the words of Romans 13:12 come to pass: "The night is far gone; the day is at hand. So then let us cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light."

REVIEWS OF PRIOR MEETINGS, by Becky Anstine

February 6, 2022 - Presentation by Charles "Chip" Kauffman - Pennsylvania's Celtic Heritage

Chip's presentation was a whirlwind tour through history! He started with the question – "What is Celtic?" Then answered the questions: who, what, when, where, and why to understand PA's Celtic Heritage. The Celts were not limited to the British Isles. Celts were prominent in the European continent from Spain to Italy to Gaul to Turkey and even China (early cave paintings and mummies have been found with red hair – a Celtic feature). They appeared as early as 4000 BCE. By 4000 BC, there were 3 major languages spoken: Greek, Latin and Celtic. The word "celt" comes from the Greek word

meaning “outsiders”. They had no written language but used that of the Greeks. Their legacy is that of providing us with place names – for towns, rivers, valley, and hills – such as Paris, Avon, Glendale and Renshaw.

Early Celts were pagans and when the Romans wanted to convert them, the Celts fled from the west and then north to what is now Britain. This “tribe” was not actually given the name of “Celt” until the early 1700’s. Eventually, descendants of the Celts came to America- primarily to get away from the English for religious and political reasons. By then they were known as Welsh, Scottish and Irish.

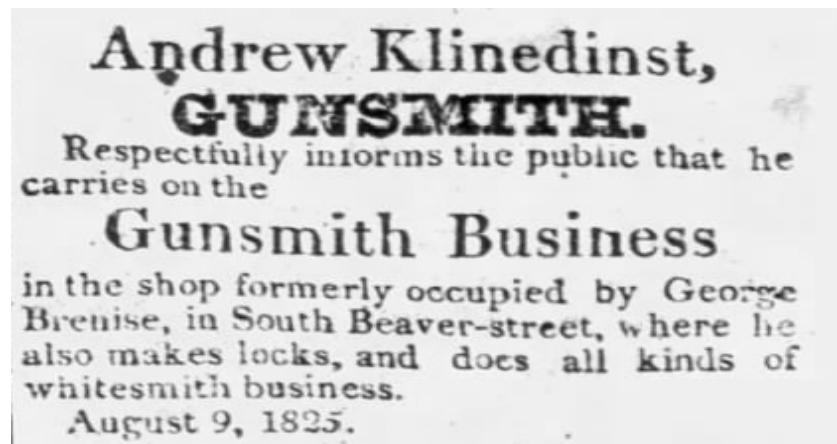
Celtic words are still used in our everyday language – pet, plaid, slogan, glen. Common family names such as McCandless, Lawson and Burns came from the Celts. They assimilated themselves among the various cultures that were settling America. Some fought on both sides in the Civil War – the 116th was at the Battle of Gettysburg. Generally, in central Pennsylvania, they kept to themselves – the relationship between the Germans of York County and the Scotch-Irish was one of respect towards each other, but not intimacy.

To summarize and capture this presentation is almost impossible. The best way appreciate this interesting and informative presentation is to view the online recording available through the York History Center.

March 6, 2022 – Presentation by Brad Emig - 18th Century Gunsmithing

The Pennsylvania long rifle gave the American Revolution Army a military advantage over the British soldiers. It allowed the American soldiers to fight a guerilla war against a well- trained army with a weapon that had range and accuracy. Without the long rifle, the colonists might not have won the war. As Col. George Hanger of the British Army said “I never in my life saw better rifles, or men who shot better, than those made in America.” Brad started his presentation with this quote. Taking us through the steps of making a long rifle, he explained what made this rifle different from others being manufactured at the time. He talked about the various cultures that settled American influenced the development of the rifle and how the move from the guilds of European gunsmiths affected the change in making the rifle in America.

York Gazette (York, Pennsylvania) • 09 Aug 1825. Tue • Page 3



Andrew Klinedinst,
GUNSMITH.
Respectfully informs the public that he
carries on the
Gunsmith Business
in the shop formerly occupied by George
Brenise, in South Beaver-street, where he
also makes locks, and does all kinds of
whitesmith business.
August 9, 1825.

The Kentucky Long Rifle Foundation lists 24 men known as rifle makers in York County, PA. In addition to the two individuals in the ad above; the list included Philip Hecker, Ignaitus Leitner, and George Schreyer.

Many of the 18th century gunsmiths who immigrated to America, had learned their trade through the guild system in Europe. Gun manufacturing had consisted of seven individual divisions, with a smith specializing in one of those divisions. The divisions consisted of blacksmiths, whitesmiths, gunstocking, foundry, machinist, metal engraving, and wood carving. Once in America, the guild system, the equipment, and shops were no longer. Each gunsmith not only had to set up his own shop but build his own tools and whatever equipment he needed to construct a gun. Between each European country, there were also differences in the gunsmith business – depending on culture, available materials, etc. The Germans were the largest group, followed by the English. The Scotch-Irish had not been allowed guns in their homelands. When they arrived in America and moved to Virginia, the Scotch-Irish hired the German gunsmiths to move to Virginia and build guns for them. The German smiths adapted to the Scotch-Irish desires.

Gunsmiths manufactured other items in addition to guns. They had to make their own stocks, molds, powder measures, files, ladles – anything needed for the manufacturing of guns. Their skills lead to making knives, belt axes, forks, kitchen utensils, coffee mills, pewter spoons, butter molds, and strings. Some of the smiths also made instruments and pipe organs. They made the tools that were needed by a variety of other trades.

A gun could take between 500-600 hours to make. Some smiths could have a dozen guns in different stages in process. Many only made 1 or 2 at a time. Brad walked us through the steps in making a gun and showed how a gun barrel was made. He talked about the various woods that were used for the stocks. The gun was the most expensive item a colonial man would own, besides real estate. Guns could cost about 1/3 of the yearly income. They were passed down through generations as a greatly prized possession. Today they can run between \$1500 and 76,000 for an original.

This presentation surprised several of us – we didn't expect to find the topic of gunsmithing as interesting and informative as it was. The program was recorded and can be viewed through the York History Center on YouTube or through the Center's website.

Local History Books Acquired by the York County History Center 6/8/2021—2/28/2022

- Acker, Jon Charles, *To These Parents: A Compendium of Pennsylvania German Taufscheine*, Pennsylvania German Society, 2020.
- Bohleke, Karin J., *Nineteenth-Century Costume Treasures of the Fashion Archives and Museum, 1800-1900*, 2010.
- Colley, David P., *The Folly of Generals: How Eisenhower's Broad Front Strategy Lengthened World War II*, 2021.
- Ditzler, Francis W., Jr., *From Lickdale, Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, into the Swatara Gap*, 2004.
- Fortier, Malcolm Vaughn, *The life of a P. O. W. under the Japanese; in caricature*, 1946.
- Kurtz, Benjamin, *The serial catechism, or progressive instructor for children adapted to their gradual growth in years and knowledge*, 1856.
- Leiphart, Walter E. [presumed author], *The Libbart Leibhart Leiphart Families in Pennsylvania*, 1950s.

- Lender, Mark Edward, *Cabal!: the plot against General Washington*, 2019.
- Manbeck, Beverly, et al., *Lebanon County in the French and Indian War: A Compilation of Stories*, 2006.
- McClure, James & Scott L. Mingus, Sr., *'The Dogs of War in Our Midst' -- Civil War Perspectives from York County, PA*, 2021.
- Metzler, Ralph & Carolyn, *Valentine Metzler & Anna Nissley Genealogy* - 3 volumes, 2018.
- Mingus, Scott, *A Carnival of Grief Abraham Lincoln's Funeral Train in Pennsylvania*, 2022.
- Moffitt, Lynne Frances, *Descendancy Report of Henry Foster Boyd (1833-1886) and Agnes A. Love (1838-1922) of Chanceford, York County, Pennsylvania*, 2021.
- Moore, Mary Ann Shank, *Family History of Robert Jacob Hershey (1868-1954) & Agnes Janetta Fair (1870-1959)*, 2018.
- Munro, Joyce C., *Finding God's Story: Christ Reformed Church at Indian Creek, 1746-2021*, 2021.
- Myers, Daisy D., et al., *Sticks 'n stones: the Myers family in Levittown* - 2nd edition, 2021.
- Ness, Dennis, *The Militia of the County York*, 2021.
- Resh, Richard G., *Tunnels Below Hanover, PA: Fact or Fiction*, 2021.
- Seaver, J. Montgomery, *Martin family records*, 1920s.
- Shoemaker, Alfred Lewis, *A check list of imprints of the German press of Northampton County 1766-1905*, 1943.
- Staab, Michael Joseph, *A History of our James and Frances Baker Family*, 2021.
- Stein, Gloria Sananes, *Country Legacy: Lancaster County One-Room Schools*, 1994.
- Taylor, Sharon, comp., *The Amazing Story of the Hammes in America*, 1984.
- Westlake, J. Willis, *Common-School Literature: English and American*, 1886.
- Williams, Robert L. and Scott Mingus, *Northern Central Railway and Heritage Rail Trail Guidebook*, 2021.
- Das Neue Testament unsers Herrn und Heilandes Jesu Christi*, 1866

RESEARCH REQUEST POLICY

Fees are nonrefundable regardless of research results.

MEMBERS

First hour free, includes up to 20 "free copies". Additional research will be charged by the hour at the rate of \$25.00 per hour. Additional copies will be made at the rate charged by the institution where they are obtained. Researcher will contact member with the results found during the first hour, so that the member can decide how much additional research they desire. Payment must be made before the research is done and the results emailed or mailed to the member.

NONMEMBERS

A fee of \$40.00 prepaid for the first hour which will include 10 "free" copies. The results will be emailed or mailed to the nonmember. If the nonmember desires more research, they can contact SCPGS with a request for more research with the understanding that payment will be prepaid for additional hours. Additional copies will be made at the rate charged by the institution where they are obtained and must be paid before copies are emailed or mailed to the nonmember.

PHOTOCOPY SERVICE

Requester must provide complete citation of desired record, article, book, etc. which must be in the Library at the York History Center. Copies will be billed at rate of \$.50 per page and must be prepaid. No more than 25 pages can be copied from a copyrighted publication.

SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY SERVICES TO MEMBERS

WEBSITE & EMAIL – SCPGS maintains a website (SCPGS.org) and a Facebook page to keep members and nonmembers informed of upcoming programs and publications. The website contains information on Special Publications for purchase, membership benefits and other information of interest to our members. Members can contact us by email at SCPAGenSociety@gmail.com or by mail at PO Box 1824, York, PA 17405-1824.

MEETINGS – Membership meetings are held the first Sunday of October-November and January-May, the last Sunday of August and the second Sunday of June. There is no meeting held in December. Meetings are usually held in the meeting hall at the York County History Center on 250 East Market Street, York. Meetings can also be attended by Zoom or through the York History Center Facebook. Meetings are recorded and can be viewed. Occasionally the meeting will be held at an alternative location. The location of each meeting is announced in our newsletter, on our website, the York History Center website, and our Facebook page. When a holiday falls on the first Sunday of the month, the meeting date is moved either forward or back a week. Monthly meetings begin at 2:30 P.M. and start with a brief business meeting prior to the presentation.

Ideas and suggestions for future programs, events and activities are always welcome. The time before the meeting is an excellent time to socialize, network, and “catch-up” with the genealogical activities of other members.

NEWSLETTERS – Members receive a bi-monthly newsletter – “Our Name’s the Game.” Included in the newsletter are announcements of future programs and events, notices of events and publications by other organizations, and articles related to genealogical research.

Members can receive our newsletters through email either by checking this on their renewal form or sending a request to SCPGS by mail or email (SCPAGenSociety@gmail.com.)

SPECIAL PUBLICATIONS- Each fiscal year, members receive Special Publications of varying lengths that contain genealogical resource materials, most of which are from previously unpublished primary sources. Earlier Special Publications are available for purchase.

Members are welcome to submit ideas and/or suggestions for future Special Publications. Contributions of articles, materials, etc. for inclusion in future Special Publications are also welcome.

QUERIES – Members can submit queries to be published in the newsletter – free of charge. Queries will be published as they are received. There is no limit on the number of queries that can be submitted, but SCPGS has the right to limit the space provided in the newsletters for queries from one individual. Queries will also be posted on our website.

There is no special format for queries – but they should be brief, legible (if handwritten) and include approximate dates and locations if known.

RESEARCH REQUESTS – SCPGS uses the Library and Archives of the York County History Center to answer requests from members. Research requests may be submitted by email or mail. There is a Research Request Form on our Website with information about research and member fees.

SOUTH CENTRAL PENNSYLVANIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

RESEARCH REQUEST FORM

Patron Information

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: (please be legible) _____

Preferred method of contact: Mail: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

SCPGS Member: _____ Nonmember: _____

Payment enclosed (if by mail): _____ Pay Pal Payment: _____

Please complete this form. Form and payment can be mailed to SCPGS (P.O. Box 1824, York, PA 17405). Form can be emailed to SCPAGenSociety@gmail. Use "Research Request" in Subject line. Payment can be made through paypal.com. Please use one form per request. The research fee is not refundable if no information is found.

RESEARCH INFORMATION

Name of individual to be searched (one name, alternate spellings per search)

Birth date and location _____

Death date and location _____

Name of spouse(s) and dates _____

Names of children and dates _____

What is your expected outcome of search (please be as specific as possible)?

Please attach copies of additional information (family group sheets) that could be useful to the researcher.



South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION & RENEWAL FORM (effective January 22, 2022)

NEW MEMBERSHIP - Please complete the form below. You will receive a New Member packet in two to three weeks. We operate on a fiscal year from July 1 to June 30 of the following year. If you are applying for membership during January, February, or March your membership will not expire until June 30th of the following year.

How I learned about SCPGS _____

RENEWAL - Renewals for the July to June fiscal year are due by July 1. 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 assessed to cover the postage for back copies of our newsletter and any special publications. Please return this form with your renewal and note any address corrections.

Make check payable to SCPGS (in U.S. funds only) and mail to:
South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society, PO Box 1824, York, PA 17405-1824

Or pay via PayPal to: SCPAGenSociety@gmail.com

PLEASE WRITE LEGIBLY

Name _____

Street Address / Box # _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code+4 _____

Phone _____ Email Address _____

Please send my newsletter by USPS mail _____ Please send my newsletter by E-mail _____

REGULAR MEMBERSHIP: 1 year \$35; 2 years \$60

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP: 1 year \$40; 2 years \$70 (two adults sharing a household & dependent children)

Second Adult and Children's names _____

LIFE MEMBERSHIP: \$500 (individual *only*)

FAMILY LIFE MEMBERSHIP \$750 (two adults sharing a household *only*)

OUR NAME'S THE GAME
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P.O. BOX 1824
YORK, PENNSYLVANIA 17405

DATED MATERIAL – DO NOT DELAY

New on the Library & Archives webpage

Now available on the York County History Center website is an index to the over 9,000 Family Files in the Library & Archives. This is a useful tool whether you are planning a research visit or researching genealogy at home. Our Family Files contain obituaries and announcements clipped from local newspapers and materials contributed by researchers and volunteers, which could include research queries, family charts and group sheets, research notes, photocopies of legal documents, and other materials collected by researchers.

To search the Surname Database, please go to “Explore” on the top menu and click on “Genealogy Research” at yorkhistorycenter.org. Enter your surname in the search field and the results will show the Family File control spelling and number that are used in the Library. You can also enter the control spelling to see a list of all the variations of that surname currently in our Family Files. Please see the [Genealogy Research](#) webpage for more information. To make a reservation to visit the Library & Archives, please [click here](#).