

OVERHOLSER FAMILY ASSOCIATION  
111th Annual Reunion  
August 5, 2017

The 111th reunion of the Overholser Family Association convened at St. John's Center United Church of Christ on Saturday, August 5, 2017. Twenty-seven people were in attendance.

The day began with a social time and lunch and a group photograph.

Michael Martin, President, welcomed the group to the 111<sup>th</sup> reunion and thanked Gordon Gerhart for taking minutes for the 2016 reunion.

He noted that Jim and Kathy Overholser were currently on a trip to Switzerland. Before they left, Dennis Oberholtzer asked for their assistance doing some research and Michael asked Dennis to explain his request. Dennis came across a letter from John Overholt referencing a 1939 letter saying the Consul to Switzerland had been told that the Overholsters originated in the Lake Constance area on the border of Switzerland and Germany. It mentioned the existence of family literature going back to 900-1200 A.D. Dennis asked Kathy and Jim to try to find a contact who might help locate this literature.

Michael asked the group to sign a 100<sup>th</sup> birthday card for Ruth Overholser (Spencer's wife). Ruth always led the singing of the OFA reunion song at reunions. Earline Oberholtzer read the lyrics to the song which was written in 1919 by Edwin L. Watts. Ruth added verses to it in 1986 celebrating Spencer's 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as president of the association.

The deaths of four OFA members since the last reunion were noted: Ruth Overholser, who also ran the Culp Family Association; Earnest Weinholt, a past president of OFA; Chet Carroll, husband of Carol Carroll, current secretary of OFA; and Barbara O. Munson, Michael Martin's aunt, who introduced him to OFA.

Members present then introduced themselves.

Dennis reported that the OFA book on the first five generations in the United States will be reprinted. One hundred copies will be made; after that it will be printed on demand. An addendum will be added to the new printing. Will Overholtzer, who was a member of the original book committee, has been sending his archives to Dennis who has begun going through them. They contain a great deal of new material including information about the original Swiss family members and Overholsters in Canada. There is also a notebook from the **Kretcher** family about a family member who served as a doctor on the first Union submarine during the Civil War. Dennis has created an index guide to the contents of OFA bulletins to be posted on the website and also on Facebook.

Geoffrey Martin, Treasurer, reported a balance in the checking account of \$50.00, savings account \$2736.20, book account \$12,606.53 and special (lunch) account \$2,000.35. He urged members to reach out to more family members to join the association. He also suggested trying to cut down on the mailing of physical copies of the bulletin to save on printing and postage by getting members on the e-mail list to receive the bulletin. Reminders about the reunion can be sent that way as well. Kris Overholt is working on creating a Google forum where members can discuss and share with others information on their family line.

Dennis discussed our immigrant ancestors' journey and settling in Lancaster County, PA. In 1710, the first and second (or possibly second and third, as records are unclear) Overholser came to America and settled in Lancaster County. There is debate about whether they came from Newcastle, Delaware, or from Germantown, Pennsylvania, via Penn's Landing. Dennis has concluded that they arrived via Germantown.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned and Ella Rydzewski presented a program on her book *Starting Over in the Past*, which is set in Juniata County, PA, where many Overholser family members have lived.

Respectfully submitted,

Carol Carroll, Secretary

Presentation by Ella Rydzewski

Ella has written for 40 years for religious publications, but *Starting Over in the Past* is her first work of fiction. She noted that Jesus used stories sometimes to make a point and she hoped her book did so as well.

It is the story of a woman named Catherine who is a seminary professor in Washington, D.C. After the sudden death of her husband, she accepts a teaching position at a small Bible college and returns home to PA to be with her aging mother. Catherine becomes friends with a former colleague at her new job, and the relationship blooms into a romance. At the same time she finds that there is some mystery surrounding her husband's death.

The book is set in Juniata County, PA, where Ella lived for four years. Many of the places mentioned in the book really exist, such as the Mennonite Museum, county seat, State College and the singing bridge. The experience of Catherine's husband's relocation to the United States from Japan is very much like that of a personal friend of Ella's. Profits from the sale of the book will be donated to a scholarship fund for young women in third world countries.

Attendance – OFA Dinner at Yoder's Restaurant  
August 4, 2017

Abe & Nora Ashby

Carol Carroll

Vivian Doran

Hylde & Danny Hendrikson

Mike & Nicole Johnson & children

Dorothy Loomis

Geoffrey Martin

Michael Martin

Bob Molitor

Dennis & Earline Oberholtzer

Jack Overholser

Eileen Overholser

Laurie Overholser

Ella and Walter Rydzewski

Mike & Nancy Shraderr

Attendance – OFA 111<sup>th</sup> Reunion  
August 5, 2017

Abe & Nora Ashby

Carol Carroll

Vivian Doran

Gordon & Elaine Gerhart

Mike & Nicole Johnson & children

Dorothy Loomis

Geoffrey Martin

Michael Martin

Bob Molitor

Dennis & Earline Oberholtzer

Noah Oberholtzer, Jr.

Jack Overholser

Eileen Overholser

Laurie Overholser

Ella and Walter Rydzewski

Jean Schaffer

Mike & Nancy Shrader

Celina Wolf