

SWACKHAMER-DUFFORD GENEALOGY SOCIETY



FOR THE DESCENDANTS OF SAMUEL SWACKHAMER (SCHWACHHAMMER), WHO IN 1732 SETTLED IN LONG VALLEY, NEW JERSEY, AND PHILLIP DUFFORD (DUFORD), WHO SETTLED THERE IN 1738.

WINTER 2024 BULLETIN

Dear Friends:

An old adage says, “one can never go home.” Another is “out of sight, out of mind.” These proverbs or short statements are meant to reflect a general truth about life, and they also are applicable to the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogy Society. By not holding an assembled summer meeting in Long Valley, New Jersey in 2023, the Society saved some money, gained time to more fully assess the effect of the Pandemic, to evaluate a significant drop in donations, and to understand more clearly what members value in the Society.

Not many members will travel over 100 miles on the last Saturday of July to a genealogy meeting, even if it is to a place of their ancestry and provides information on their Dufford or Swackhamer lines. It would take considerably more to motivate their attendance.

The Bulletin is the glue of attraction, the value from membership, and the major link to the extended family. Many of the current generation feels the printed Bulletin is a waste of time and money, which can be put economically online; whereas a majority of the membership like to hold the Bulletin, read parts of it more than once, and even keep past issues. Officers see the Bulletin as the best official record of the organization through time. We do put each issue of the Bulletin on the Society web site and will be happy to move your copy from postal delivery to email upon your request.

On Saturday, July 27, 2024, we will hold our 76th meeting in Long Valley, New Jersey. While it may be literally true that one cannot go back in time to recapture the emotions of the past, it is possible to gain insight and understanding of those times and places of one’s ancestry. The large family reunions of cousins, nephews, and nieces are mostly gone due to family dispersion, but parental efforts to introduce children to earlier times are often recalled and fondly remembered later in life by adult children.

On behalf of all who help get the Bulletin to you, we hope your Christmas was wonderful and the New Year is kind to you.

Gene Swackhamer, President

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Current and past *Bulletins* are located here. Put your comments or questions in the "Guest Book." The site is monitored, and you will get a response. Throughout this issue (D) represents a Dufford connection, (S) for Swackhamer, (S & D) both families, and (F) for friend of the Society.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL REUNION MEETING JULY 27, 2024



Members and Friends of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogy Society will gather in the education building of Zion Lutheran Church in Long Valley, New Jersey, for an annual meeting. This will be the 76th gathering, a process that is changing from an assembly of related aunts, cousins, and nieces to friends with the same name but uncertain ancestry.

Genealogy interests for many years focused on "from where did the Duffords and Swackhamers come?" Now that the origin question has been mostly answered, interests and research has shifted to locating domestic ancestors in the U.S and Canada. Our annual gathering is one of the best opportunities to find others with similar interests or useful stories to tell.

The meeting will begin at 9:00 am, or sooner, if you are interested in a continental breakfast, and will conclude by 3:00 pm. A noon buffet luncheon will be served and a modest registration fee of \$15.00 will help cover meal costs. The summer Bulletin will contain a registration form for this event, but registrations the day of the meeting will be welcome.

DONATIONS TO THE SWACKHAMER-DUFFORD GENEALOGY SOCIETY

12-1-22 through 12-30-23

The following donors have made contributions since the winter 2022 Bulletin. Donations include in-kind gifts, contributions from solicitation envelopes, from a portion of the purchase price of Nancy Schane's book, *Voyage of the Love and Unity*, and from Gene Swackhamer's book, *The Emigration of Samuel Swackhamer*.

If we missed recognizing your gift, please forgive us. We truly appreciate every dollar received; your voluntary gifts have sustained the Society since 1951.

Family symbols included, if known, are (D) for Dufford or (T) for Tufford, (F) for friend of the Society and (S) for Swackhamer.

Laura and Robert Almond (S), (NY), a donation in memory of Ruth Swackhamer Almond for Bulletins

Mr. and Mrs. Michael A. Apgar (F), (DE), a gift to the Society for whatever is most needed

Joni Bakum (S) (NJ), a donation in memory of Byron and James Swackhamer, her father and uncle, for operation of the Society

Patricia Barber (NJ), a gift to the Society for its general operating fund and in memory of Steve Firtko

John Lawrence (Larry) Brasher (S), (AL), a gift for operations in memory of Lois Watters Brasher

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Cramer (D), (NJ), a generous gift for Bulletin postage in memory of Olga Cramer

William (Bill) N. Cramer, Jr. (D), (NJ), a donation for Bulletin production

Anita Davis (S), (PA), a generous gift in memory of her father Frederick Q. Swackhamer for Society operation

Ellen Freeman (D) (NJ), a gift in memory of Stanley C. Dufford

Steven Firtko (F), (PA), a generous gift for the operation of the Society

Shelley Heretyk (F), (NJ), a donation for S-D Society operations

Ms. Judy K. Meenach (S), (OH), a gift in memory of her husband, Robert Meenach

Ms. Diane S. Ptak (S), (NY), a gift for Bulletin production

Barbara Schinkel (NJ), a donation in memory of Ruth Hartman and Freeda Trebilcock

Jeanne Sheppard (D), (TX), gifts for Bulletin production in memory of Harold Apgar Dufford

Gene L. Swackhamer (MD), a donation in memory of Marie and Paul Swackhamer for Society operation and in memory of Steve Firtko

Richard and Catherine Swackhamer (NJ), a gift for Bulletin production and distribution in memory of Richard Michael Swackhamer

Clyde M. Verbryck (NY), a donation for general operations in memory of Karen Verbryck

George and Karen Williams (CA), a gift for general operation of the Society

NECROLOGY



Word has been received that Stefan F. Firtko, author of the History of Middle Valley and a regular participant in meetings of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogy Society, died of cancer on November 16, 2023, at Genesis Healthcare in Easton, Pennsylvania.

The following obituary was provided by Naughtright-Scarponi Funeral Home in High Bridge, New Jersey.

“Stefan F. Firtko (b. February 8, 1955; d. November 16, 2023) was born in Morristown, NJ, and lived in Bethlehem, PA and Kunkletown, PA, before moving to Easton, PA. He was the son of the late Frank J. and Margaret A. Hunadi Firtko. Stefan worked as a Librarian at Lehigh University in Bethlehem, PA until his retirement.

He was an avid reader. He was also a member of the Middle Valley Historical Society and wrote a book on the history of Middle Valley. Survivors include two sisters; Suzanne Firtko of New York, NY, and Margaret Trimmer of FL. Several nieces

and nephews including Lisa Schneider of Easton, PA and John Trimmer of Harpers Ferry, WV.

A graveside service was held on Monday, November 27, 2023, at 12:00 pm at Lower Valley Cemetery in Califon, NJ.”

Gene Swackhamer, President of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogy Society said, “Stefan was a generous donor financially and of his time to the Society. He often did research for Society members and discovered several items of early Swackhamer history. One of his significant discoveries was a Janeway store ledger of transactions of farm and household items for Samuel Swackhamer of Middle Valley in the early 1700s.”

Pat Barber of Glen Gardener, NJ, recalled “a really sweet, kind man always to be remembered for his love of history, and (he will be) missed at the Hunterdon County Historical Society and of course the Swackhamer-Dufford reunion.”

It is important to preserve family legacies and records. If you have items from loved ones such as obituaries, pictures, journal entries, or other creative work to share, please contact President Gene Swackhamer, ggswoff@cs.com, or Bulletin Editor Teryl Cartwright, cartwrightteryl@gmail.com, for submission details and upcoming deadlines for the next edition. Thank you for your help!

TREASURER'S REPORT

by Robert L. Swackhamer

In the absence of an assembled meeting in 2023, when a treasurer's report is typically given, Robert Swackhamer was asked to provide an update of financial activity for the past year. Below is his report for 2022-2023.

Our Bulletin editor is currently paid for two issues each calendar year. Postage for mail distribution of the Bulletin has been donated for several years, representing an understatement of the total cost of production.

Donations to four charitable local Long Valley area organizations on behalf of the Society has averaged \$150.00. These organizations are Zion Lutheran Church which has provided the Society a meeting place since our beginning in 1953; The Washington Township Historical Society, which has helped preserve historical items and minutes; The Mt. Amwell Project, which helps care for the "Old Swack Church" of Lambert Swackhamer and the Middle Valley Cemetery Association, final resting place of numerous Duffords and Swackhamers.

SWACKHAMER-DUFFORD GENEALOGY SOCIETY

2022-2023 TREASURER'S REPORT

Month/Year	Beginning Bal.	Receipts	Disbursements	Ending Balance
06/30/22				\$3,444.29
07/31/22	\$3,444.29	\$230.00	\$0.00	\$3,674.29
08/31/22	\$3,674.29	\$189.06	\$625.00	\$3,238.35
09/30/22	\$3,238.35	\$25.00	\$0.00	\$3,263.35
10/31/22	\$3,263.35	\$0.00	\$497.92	\$2,765.43
11/30/22	\$2,765.43	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,765.43
12/31/22	\$2,765.43	\$0.00	\$589.00	\$2,176.43
01/31/23	\$2,176.43	\$525.00	\$0.00	\$2,701.43
02/28/23	\$2,701.43	\$75.00	\$0.00	\$2,776.43
03/31/23	\$2,776.43	\$25.00	\$58.10	\$2,743.33
04/30/23	\$2,743.33	\$0.00	\$3.00	\$2,740.33
05/31/23	\$2,740.33	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$2,740.33
06/30/23	\$2,740.33	\$0.00	\$285.00	\$2,455.33
Total		\$1,069.06	\$2,058.02	

Net change year over year (2022-2023 VIS-A-VIS 21-22)	-\$988.96
Percentage Change	-28.71%

MAJOR EXPENSES DURING THE 22-23 OPERATING YEAR	
WINTER BULLETIN PRODUCTION	\$339.00
WINTER BULLETIN EDITING SERVICES	\$250.00
SOCIETY DONATION TO SUPPORTING ORGANIZATIONS (4 x \$150 EA)	\$600.00
JULY 22 ANNUAL MEETING EXPENSES	\$497.92
TOTAL OF EXPENSES FOR 2022-2023 OPERATING YEAR	\$1,686.92

THE FIRST TWENTY YEARS OF THE SWACKHAMER-DUFFORD GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, 1953-1973

from Gene Swackhamer

Having just read the first twenty years of Society Bulletins, I am surprised by how similar the concerns of the past were to those of the current era. In spite of new technology, the introduction of color, and photographs (only one in the first twenty years) into the Bulletins, the officers and Bulletin editor continually pleaded for meaningful content, typed versus handwritten submissions, and more genealogy research material. Many of these laments have continued to exist.

In the early Bulletins there were frequent references to “the Society photo album,” “the correspondence file,” and “Society records.” I have not seen any of these records. They seem to have disappeared over time. Perhaps some are in the Washington Township Historical Society library or have just disappeared with the death of officers. In any case, if you know the whereabouts of any old Society documents, please let a Society officer know. A good example is the 12-foot-long scroll of Dufford family tree. I think it was last displayed in the barn at an anniversary meeting at the Raritan Inn. Should it be preserved? And if so, how, and where?

With few exceptions, each year since 1953 has had two Bulletin issues. Illness of the Editor or a special anniversary issue were reasons for a single issue or three.

Nearly all correspondence in the first twenty years was by letter. By counting references to a letter, it appears that up to twenty letters per year was not unusual – thus the correspondence file. A letter today is a rarity. Emails are the vehicle of choice. Most of the communication of the current era is a search for an ancestor compared to relaying information on Florida vacations, marriages, births, deaths, and family recognitions of the first twenty years.

It appears that the Historian officer position of the separate societies prior to 1953 was melded into the Bulletin Editor position and the Bulletins of the combined societies became the historical record for the new combined society. As an unincorporated society, it was easy to retain and to change officer titles and responsibilities and to utilize individual talents and availability. Each Bulletin included the names of annual reunion elected officers or individual in an acting capacity as remains the case presently.

Seven individuals served as president of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogical Society in the first twenty years as shown in the following table. Even though the Society is an unincorporated entity it surely had a constitution and by-laws adopted at one of the 1951-53 reunions, but I have never seen one.

Presidents of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogical Society 1953-1973

Majorie D. Logan	1953-1955
Norman Dufford	1956-1957
Leon Swackhamer	1957-1958
H. P. Dufford	1958-1959
Robert Swackhamer	1959-1960
Rev. T C. Swackhamer	1960-1966
Stanley Dufford	1966-1973

My summary observation of our first twenty years is that family reunions were a big annual event that drove much of the yearly effort. A mailing of nearly 300 Bulletins twice a year then remains nearly the same now. A few individuals (4-6) at any given time have provided sufficient stable leadership to ensure a solid society base for the future.

Note: The 2024 summer Bulletin will report on the 1974-2000 era and a future issue will conclude the series with the 2000-2025 period. The best official record of the Swackhamer-Dufford Genealogy Society is available in complete sets of Bulletins at three locations: The Alexander Special Collections at Rutgers University Library, The Washington Township Historical Society Museum/Library and with Gene L. Swackhamer in Maryland.

GENEALOGY RESEARCH THOUGHTS

by Gene L. Swackhamer

The search for our Dufford and Swackhamer European ancestry origins that dominated annual meeting reunion discussions for more than two decades has mostly ended. The discovery of Samuel Schwechheimer's (Swackhamer) birthplace in Altlussheim, Germany and Philip Dufford's family baptisms in Langensoultzbach, France (his last residence before departure for the American Colony in 1738) provided substantial evidence of European origin.

Documentation of these facts can be found in "Early Germans of New Jersey," by Theodore Frelinghuysen Chambers, last printing by Genealogical Publishing Company, Baltimore, Maryland, 1982 and "Eighteenth Century Emigrants from the Northern Alsace to America," by Annette Kunselman Burgert, Picton Press, Camden, Maine 1992.

Although finding the origin of our families was a significant breakthrough, it has not answered all the questions. Questions such as the following: What skills did they bring with them to America? Why did they travel to New Jersey and not stay among Germanic speaking countrymen in Pennsylvania? What formal education did they have? Did family members perish in crossing the Atlantic Ocean?

Perhaps someone will be willing to tackle one of these types of questions, but the few members interested in "family history" research seem more interested in U.S. ancestral questions and connections.

In my family's case and for several others who descended from Daniel Swackhamer in Ohio, there is a gap of documents and proof of connection to Samuel in New Jersey. To close that gap, I chose a mathematical approach and Ancestry.com.

In mathematics there is a law of association in short that says if $a + (b + c) = (a + b) + c$ then $a(bc) = (ab)c$ and these terms or factors (a, b, and c) may be associated in any way desired. In a like manner, if two or more Swackhamers have identical DNA at the 37-marker level and each have documented proof of descendancy from Samuel, then any other person with identical DNA to these descendants will also be a descendant from Samuel. Such is the case for we who are descendants from Daniel with matching DNA to three other Swackhamers descended from Samuel.

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<http://www.panaves.com/swackduff/index.html>