



## THIRTY YEARS OF THE YODER NEWSLETTER



RACHEL KREIDER AND ESTHER YODER

Used with Permission South Bend Tribune, Photo by Greg Swiercz

Many years ago, as I visited my grandparent's home in Elkhart, Indiana, I read my great-grandfather's copy of Descendants of Jacob Hostetler. It contained only a few paragraphs that talked about my Yoder ancestors. It also told the story of our common ancestor Jacob Hostetler, how he and sons were captured and held prisoner by Indians, and of his escape and return to civilization. One of the most memorable parts for a teenage boy told how the starving Jacob came upon a ripe dead opossum and ate it. From then on, my interest in family history was firmly fixed.

As a newlywed in the early 70's, my job took us to Harrisburg, PA, the state capital. We discovered the state library and the land records bureau. We were able to gather information about the early Yoders of our line. My wife and I were also able to drive over to Somerset County, PA where we did some exploring and research there with the help of several local residents. When the 1976 Bi-Centennial came around, I put my notes together and shared them with members of my immediate family.

After two children and an overseas assignment in Germany, we found ourselves settled in Battle Creek, Michigan. I had read of a Yoder historian named Rachel Kreider, who had written about the St. Joder Chapel, and who had studied the Yoder family. She and her husband Leonard, a retired chemical researcher with B. F. Goodrich, were in the process of moving from Bluffton, OH to Goshen, Indiana, not too long a drive from us. So I wrote her a letter introducing myself and telling her of my interest in things Yoder. She quickly wrote back explaining that two of her great-grandmothers were sisters of my great-great grandfather Reuben Yoder. He had been the origin point for the Yoder family information collected by her uncle John Weaver. She knew of another Goshen Yoder, a retired teacher and school principal named Ben, with a similar interest in collecting and sharing the Yoder story. Soon after Rachel was settled into their home at the Greencroft retirement community, the three of us sat down at her kitchen table to talk things over.

30 YEARS- CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

## WHAT WE KNEW THEN AND WHAT WE KNOW NOW

When we began the Yoder Newsletter in 1983, we were able to stand on the shoulders of many great family historians. Bits of family lore, Bible records, and public documents had come together over the years to paint the pictures of the different Yoder branches. Our readers helped us identify, gather, and begin to share this information. Over the past 30 years, many people have been a part of this work. "Lost records" (that were really there all the time, had we known where to look), have revealed themselves. In the past 59 issues of the Yoder Newsletter, we've been able to share our discoveries and analyses of them. Now seems to be an appropriate time to try to summarize the "facts" which have evolved and give a baseline of what we know (or think we know) today.

In our first issue, we outlined the various branches on the American Yoder tree. Only one of them, the Oley Yoders, was clearly linked to its European origins. Other lines, like those of the Mennonite, Amish, and North Carolina Yoder families, stopped at the water's edge.

### WHAT WE KNEW THEN- 1983



The Oley Valley Yoders, Hans and Yost, (our codes "OH" and "OY") are still recognized as America's "first family" of Yoders, leaving Germany in 1709. Early historical works by Dr. Peter Bertolet, a Yoder descendant, give a sketch of the Yoder family, as did the 1886 History of Berks County by Morton L. Montgomery. In YNL5, we were pleased to present an article by Dr. Don Yoder in which he described how one of his contacts in Germany, Karla Mittelstaedt-Kubaseck, had, sometime after 1974, come upon and provided him with a record from the Schwetzingen Reformed Church that tells of Johannes (Hans) Joder and family departing "to the island of Pennsylvania." This was to be the first confirmed link between the American Yoders and the Joder family of Steffisburg, Switzerland. YNL contributing editor Dick Yoder of Bechtelsville, PA has researched these Yoders extensively and has contributed much information to the YNL since our early days.



DR. DON YODER



RICHARD H. YODER

German researchers Karl Joder (died 1984) and Otmar Jotter traced back their own lines to the town of Steffisburg, Switzerland. They dug through and copied the local church records and also have done extensive research in several German locations. Over time, they compiled their information into books which were photocopied and shared in different versions with their American cousins. They focused their interest on the families of two 17th century Steffisburg Joders- Yost (b. 1607) and Niclaus (b. 1609). The Oley Yoders, our

WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

The Yoder Newsletter- Founded 1983 by

Ben F Yoder (1913-1992), Chris Yoder & Rachel Kreider  
Chris Yoder, Editor, Saugatuck, MI; John W. Yoder, Circulation  
Manager, Middlebury, IN; Rachel Kreider, Senior Contributing  
Editor, Goshen, IN; Esther E. Yoder, Mail Manager, Goshen, IN;  
Donald Kauffman, YNL Webmaster, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.  
Other Contributors: Richard H. Yoder, Bechtelsville, PA; Dr. Don  
Yoder, Devon, PA; Neal D. Wilfong, Cleveland, NC.; and Ann  
Balderrama, Reading, PA .

\*\*\*\*\*  
Over the past 30 years, subscriptions have allowed us to support  
advertising of national reunions, to provide funding for many of the  
DNA tests, and to pay for new research into Swiss records. All of  
our staff members are volunteers.  
\*\*\*\*\*

**SEND YNL CORRESPONDENCE:**

-FOR CIRCULATION ISSUES ONLY such as new or renewed  
subscriptions, changes of address, orders for back issues to: Yoder  
Newsletter, P.O. Box 594, Goshen, IN 46527-0594.

- ALL OTHER CORRESPONDENCE - dealing with ancestral  
queries or contributions for future YNLs or archives (such as  
reunion notices, Letters to the Editor, copies of Bible records or  
other historical information) to: Chris Yoder, 551 S. Maple St.,  
Saugatuck, MI 49453 or email at [cyoder@tds.net](mailto:cyoder@tds.net) .

**- YNL PRICE INFORMATION**

-Annual YNL subscription (published Apr. and Oct.) for \$5.

-BACK ISSUES of the YNL are \$2 per issue. (or you can  
download them free about 1 yr after publication from the Yoder  
Newsletter web page: [www.yodernewsletter.org](http://www.yodernewsletter.org) - ).

Visit: <http://www.yodernewsletter.org/subscribe.html> for mail-in  
subscription form.

\*\*\*\*\*  
YODER DATA ON DISK- Includes back issues of YNL text, census  
and county records, family group data and pictures and scanned  
images. The price for our "Yoder Data on Disk" is \$10 (postage  
included). Send to YNL address in Goshen. (Most of this info is also  
available free at the YNL Homepage and changes VERY slowly.)  
\*\*\*\*\*

## ST. YODER DAY CARD CONTEST



It's been over 9 years since we last had a St. Joder's Day Card  
contest.! It's time to have another one!

Angela Ann Yoder (YR234681151) submitted two card designs  
in 2003 (above) which have been posted to the Yoder Newsletter web  
page, and have been used ever since by many who send Aug. 16  
greetings to friend and family. These are still great designs, but we  
need to increase the choices for our family.

Send your designs in to Chris Yoder at: [cyoder@tds.net](mailto:cyoder@tds.net) . You  
can submit just the cover art, or a complete card design with text.  
The Yoder Newsletter assumes full usage rights for any submissions,  
including posting on the web, making available for free download by  
Yoders everywhere, etc. A modest cash prize will be awarded to the  
"Best Design", chosen by public vote on the Yoder Newsletter  
Facebook page. A winner will be announced in the April. 2013 YNL.

\*\*\*\*\*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

My great-great grandmother taught me to tat. "But you are  
*only* 43 years old! How can that be?" you ask? I'll tell you.

When I was in my early 20s, I was at my Grandmother  
Elizabeth (Betty) Harrison Brunner Schroeder's house and saw an  
antique sterling silver tatting shuttle with a name engraved on it.  
The engraving was difficult to read, as it was very tarnished, and  
well used. On the flip side, it was obvious from the great amount of  
wear, that someone had used this quite regularly -- the yellow  
decorative enamel had completely worn away in some spots.



I asked Grandmother about it and she told me it was my great-  
great-grandmother Phebe Ellen Tallman Yoder's tatting shuttle  
(wife of Jocelyn Yoder-see YNL 43). Grandmother Betty said that  
*she* didn't know how to tat, and *her* mother never tatted, but she  
would pass the tatting shuttle along to me on one condition: that I  
learn how to tat.

I had a friend at work who tatted, which is how I knew what a  
tatting shuttle was, so I asked her to show me how to do it. For those  
of you who don't know, tatting is a very old way of making lace  
using a unique shuttle that holds the small thread (or a very long  
thin needle) and is made by passing the shuttle in and out of the  
thread making slip knots that create a pattern.

As I worked to get better at tatting, I finally tatted my very first  
snowflake and presented it to Grandmother Betty as a Christmas  
present. She was very pleased (even though it was not very well done  
at all), and promptly handed me great-great grandmother Phebe's  
beloved shuttle. I have displayed it with pride since then. When  
grandmother Betty passed on, my aunt sent me Phebe's crochet  
hooks as well (see photo), which were all very much used. She had a  
very nice sheath for them, and she wrapped her tatting thread  
around the sheath. They are very delicate hooks, so I'm guessing  
that Phebe also enjoyed cro-tatting, a combination of using crochet  
and tatting to create unique patterns and designs. These tiny hooks  
are also used to connect the tatting, and I know she used them for  
that, at the very least.



There was only one actual piece of tatting, a small medallion,  
among my grandmother's sewing notions, and I assume that it was  
her grandmother's. I am very grateful to my grandmother and her  
grandmother for teaching me, and encouraging me to tat, and for  
helping me find the lost art of tatting and bringing it back into that  
part of the Yoder family traditions.

If anyone else in the Yoder family tats, please email me  
at [steph@the-jlb.com](mailto:steph@the-jlb.com). And if anyone has any more of Phebe's actual  
tatting, I'd love to see photos! -- Stephanie Smith Wyllyamz

\*\*\*\*\*

**WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1**

first American Yoders, were identified as sons of Niclaus's son Adam Joder b. 1650 and his wife Barbara Ochsenein. By interpreting Steffisburg and other Swiss records, Karl and Ottmar constructed a Joder tree going back several hundred additional years, which in some versions ends with Ulli Joder, born about 1340 in Huttwil. In other versions it goes back two more generations to a Peter Joder, b. about 1260, supposedly on Joderhuebel (YNL2).



**KARL JODER**



**OTMAR JOTTER**

The second identified American Yoder immigrant was Hans Joder (identified by the YNL with the code "YB"), a Mennonite, who bought 99 acres in Lower Milford Township, Bucks Co., PA (then known only as "The Great Swamp") on January 17, 1720 "for fifteen pounds current silver money." This family spread through Bucks and Lehigh counties in Pennsylvania and a century later into Mahoning, Columbia, Medina counties in Ohio and on into Indiana. Local historian Ken Hottle did a yeoman's job in separating out the early Hans Yoder generations, and we presented articles by him in YNL 3 and 12. One of the grandsons of this immigrant adopted the spelling "Yothers," and in 1984, Richard J. Yothers published his wonderful book Descendants of Jacob Yothers of Bucks County, Pennsylvania. In the 40s and 50s, Leonard and Lester Yoder put together and shared information on the Ohio part of the family.



**RICHARD J. YOTHERS**

The best documented of the early Amish Yoders arrived in Philadelphia on Sept. 21, 1742 on the ship Francis and Elizabeth. They had sailed from Rotterdam, by way of Deal, England. The two families of Christian Yoder ("YR2"- using the coding in the classic book by Dr. Hugh Gingerich and YNL co-founder Rachel Kreider-Amish and Amish Mennonite Genealogies, 1986) and his believed sister-in-law "The Widow Barbara" (whose husband (YR1) had died on the journey). Both lines produced generations of prolific Yoder farm families, and from all indications make up a plurality of people in the U.S. with the Yoder surname today.

Conrad Yoder ("Con"), who initially came to Pennsylvania, was part of a Pennsylvania German settlement in North Carolina.

Early family historian "Col." George Yoder (1826 -1920) laid the groundwork for the publication History of the Yoder Family in North Carolina in 1970 by his grandson Dr. Fred Roy Yoder. This book focuses on the branches of Conrad's family that remained in North Carolina. Later work by Hubert Yoder of Charlotte, NC, Anne McAllister, and the Yoder Newsletter, helped document the families of Conrad's sons who moved west to Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Georgia, Tennessee, and Oklahoma. Anita Nail has been working hard on the line of son Adam whose male descendants seem to have all taken on the spelling "Yother."



**FRED ROY YODER & HIS G-FATHER GEORGE**



**HUBERT A. YODER**

A line which we knew nothing about when we started the YNL is that of Melchior Yoder "M.". Dorothy Yoder Coffman introduced us to Melchior (YNL3) (Thanks to Dorothy also for gathering much of the Yoder census data now available on our web site). The late Carl Yoders brought us his own "Yoders" line of southwestern Pennsylvania, which we confirmed (YNL24) was descended from a son of Melchior. Donald Honeywell took on the task of being "line coordinator" for the Melchior family, and today has probably assembled the most complete and current descendant information of any of the 18th century Yoder immigrants. Unlike most of the information on the YNL web site, Donald's Melchior data brings forward both male and female lines.



**DONALD HONEYWELL**

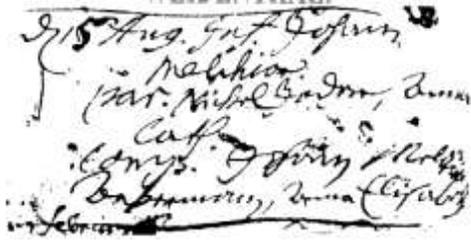
In the 1800s there were a number of Alsatian and German Yoder immigrants. We have presented articles on several of these families over the years, but perhaps most noteworthy have been a review of the Yotters of Eppstein (YNL10) and a general review of the Alsatian immigrants (YNL28).

It is very appropriate that Dr. Don Yoder, whose contacts of almost 40 years ago unveiled a part of the Oley Yoder European migration and their Steffisburg links (YNL5), was also in the middle of two other major discoveries. He found in his notes and in correspondence with Karl Joder a reference to a christening record

**WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED ON PAGE 4**

**WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3**

that placed Melchior as a son of a Nicholas Joder in Weidenthal, Germany. The YNL got copies of the records through the LDS archives and presented the details. (YNL40 and 41).



**MELCHIOR BAPTISMAL RECORD**

More recently (YNL58) Dr. Yoder discovered an article in a 1986 German historical journal that provided key church records from Mussbach, Germany. These make clear the lineage of Conrad Yoder of North Carolina, establishing his birth year and helping not only to define him as the nephew of the Oley Yoders Hans and Yost, but also as the uncle of Melchior!

When you work from church marriage, birth, baptismal, and death records, as did our German researchers with the records of the Steffisburg Church, it is necessary to make assumptions when you try to define families. At the suggestion of one of our readers, Bruce Stahley, who had experience using death and contract records, the YNL enlisted the aid of a professional researcher, Theresa Metzger, familiar with Swiss data. The information she copied about deaths and estate settlements changed our thinking on several major aspects of the immigrant generation of Steffisburg Joders. Most significantly, it clarified that the Caspar Joder who married Verena Stauffer WAS NOT the Amish Caspar Joder. This Caspar lived and died in Steffisburg. The Amish Caspar interacted with Jakob Amman, moved to Germany and became the great-great grandfather of two 19th century Amish immigrants, Michel Yoder (YRC8) and Joseph Ioder (D). The two were second cousins, once removed. This estate data also identified a Hans Joder b. 1677 (son of Caspar who married Anna Zaug, son of Nicolaus b. 1609) who had "gone to a foreign land before 1724." Our "Hans of Great Swamp" (YB) is the only other known Yoder in America by that early date, and the only American Yoder to have had children and grandchildren using the name "Caspar." It seems VERY likely that this was he.

Another discovery based on documentation resulted from the 2010 donation by an Indiana family of a property release from the estate of Yost Yoder (OY) of the Oley family. While the early histories gave some detail on his brother Hans (OH), Yost's family

seemed incomplete. This document, gifted to the Berks County Historical Society, helped spell out Yost's children. Dr. Don Yoder detailed this information in YNL57.

**YODER DNA TESTING**

Also worth noting are the significant findings revealed through the DNA testing we began in 2006. Profiles of the male determinant chromosome (the Y chromosome) from over 90 Yoder family members show:

1) that there are two basic profiles in our Yoder family, distinguished by a one marker variation at marker **DYS19**.

	DYS393	DYS390	DYS19	DYS391	DYS385	DYS426	DYS388	DYS439	DYS389I	DYS392	DYS391I
<b>Non-Amish</b>	14	23	15	10	15-16	11	13	11	12	12	30
<b>Amish</b>	14	23	16	10	15-16	11	13	11	12	12	30

**Non-Amish Profile:** Shared by the Oley Yoders; Hans of Great Swamp; Conrad Yoder; Melchior Yoder; and the present-day Steffisburg Joders; the newly discovered line of Andrew Yoder (YNL53) of Lycoming County, PA; and the descendants of the "Jotter/Yotter" family of Epstein, Germany.

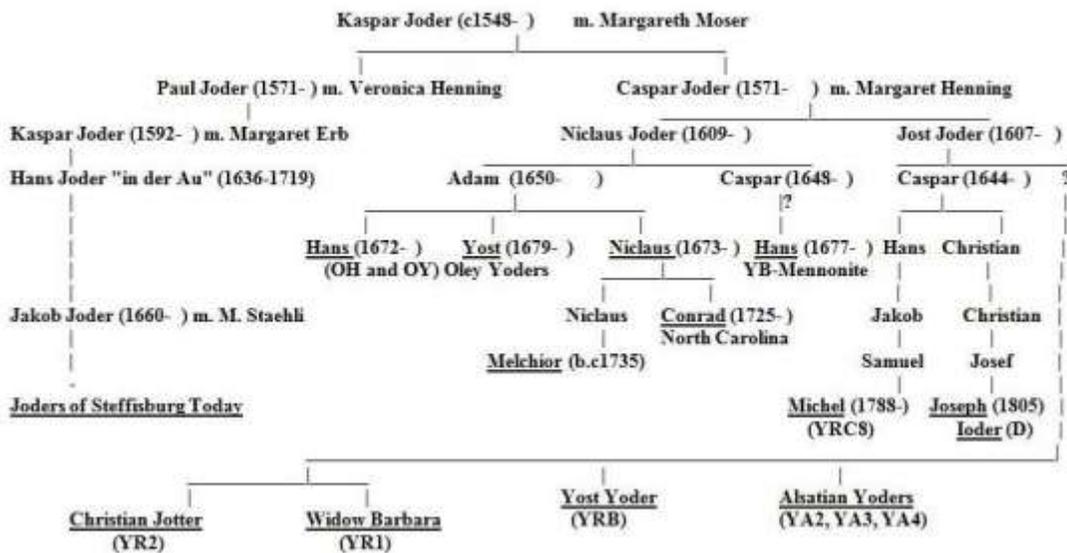
**Amish Profile:** Shared by the 1742 Amish immigrants (YR1 and YR2); the other 18th century Amish immigrant, Yost (YRB); two 19th century immigrants - both known descendants of Jost Joder of Steffisburg (b1607), namely, (Michel (YRC8), and Jacob Ioder (D); and three different lines of Alsatian immigrant Yoders (also Amish background).

2) Two unique profiles enter the family with an early generation of the Oley Yoders, showing that the listed male children were not the natural children of the father in the family. These two unique profiles have allowed us to identify several "missing links" among later Yoder generations, (YNL50, 51, 56)

3) Other findings of note include: a similar profile between the Yoders and the early "Yorty/Yotty" immigrant families (implying a possible common male ancestor at some point many generations back) (YNL49); and deciphering of the Frederick Yoder line of Centre Twp, Berks Co (YNL59).

**WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED ON PAGE 5**

**WHAT WE KNOW NOW**



Jost and Niclaus Joder, sons of Caspar Joder and Margret Henning of Steffisburg, Switzerland

Y61	Y62	Y63	Y64	Jost Joder (Y6) b 11/20/1607 m. Oct.14, 1642 Anna Trachsel		Y67	Y68	Y69	Y6a	Y6b	Y6c
Hans	Anna	Verena	Peter	Jakob	Anna	Barbara	Christian	Anna	Jost	Caspar	Catherin
b. 4/21/1644	b. 4/19/1646	b. 9/12/1647	b. 1649	b. 4/4/1652	b. 7/17/1653	b. 10/28/1655	b. 5/10/1657	b. 5/1/1659	b. 11/17/1661	b. 5/22/1664	b. 7/8/1666
m. 7/17/1671	dy	m. N. Rupp	m. 12/13/1684	m. 1/9/1685	dy	m. N. Berger	m. 3/10/1684	m. 12/13/1680	m. 1/9/1685	in Weiler	m. 1/9/1685
Catherine Risser			Stahli (?)	Verena Kaufmann			Barbara Gerber	Christian Blank	Barbara Rupp	Pfaltz	Hans Rupp
										m. ?	

WHAT WE KNOW- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

THE AMISH YODER MYSTERY: There are certainly many Yoder mysteries yet to solve, but the biggest one has to be figuring out the lineage of the Amish Yoder immigrant lines. You would not know this if you went out on the internet and looked up what people have written on genealogy sites. There you'll see multiple conflicting claims, but no evidence. Our German researchers, in their documentation, also presented several different claims, but again no firm evidence.

The Steffisburg records have clearly pointed at the family of Jost Joder (b. 1607) for the likely origins of our Amish Yoders, with court records in 1690 referring to his children, Peter, Jakob, Christian, Anna, Jost and Casper, as suspected or known Anabaptists. All of these children and their families disappear from the Steffisburg records during that decade. In YNL 11 and 12, Rachel Kreider gave her analysis of the candidates to be parents of 1742 immigrants YR1 and YR2. At this time, we have European lineage for only two of the Amish immigrants. Both Michel Yoder (YRC8) and Joseph Ioder of Bureau Co, IL(D) are descended from sons of Jost's son Caspar (b1644) (see YNL 54 and 55)- (Y6b in the chart above). The DNA results clearly show that Caspar had the variant DNA marker (a "16" vs a "15" at marker number 19) common to the other Amish immigrant Yoders. From the Karl Joder/Ottmar Jotter presentation of the children of this Caspar, it is clear that he could not have been the father of YR1 and YR2, and that the "Amish marker" must have entered the family a generation earlier (with Jost b. 1607 himself) and thus be shared by each of his male children. So what male siblings of Caspar are the ancestors of our Amish Yoders?

There were two "Jakob Joders" of about the same age, and in various versions of their notes, the German researchers have listed each as possible the possible son of Jost. The clarifications to the Jost family growing out of the estate records, confirm that Jost's son Jakob (Y65) was the one who married Verena Kaufmann.

The DNA testing for the Eppstein Jotter/Yotter line (which shows the "non Amish" marker in that line) brings into question the claim by the German researchers that Jost's son Christian's family (Y68) ended up there.

Details are missing for the families of brother's Hans (Y61) Peter (Y64) and Jost (Y6a) and any of these could also be the ancestor of some of the American Amish Yoder immigrants.

Unlike the Reformed branches of our family, for whom we have been able to find clues in various German church records, it is not likely that we will find a missing record in a German church somewhere to solve our Amish puzzles. Even before leaving Steffisburg, the Anabaptist Joders were getting in trouble for refusing to bring their children in for infant baptism. (In 1690, Anna Joder Blank's (Y69) baby daughter Barbara was brought in for baptism by her disapproving father-in-law, while husband Christian (a co-minister of Jacob Ammann per *Letters of the Amish Division*) was away at an unknown location.)

Amish historian Leroy Beachy makes what seems to be a most reasoned argument for Jakob Joder and Verena Kauffman as the parents of YR1 and YR2 in his recent book Unser Leit. (Goodly Heritage Books, 4324 State Route 39, Millersburg, OH 44654, phone (330) 893-2883.) He's held to this view for some time as it was

discussed by Rachel Kreider in her YNL11 and YNL12 assessment. Verena's first cousin Isaac Kaufmann (b. 1653) was a prominent and unrelenting Anabaptist leader. His son Isaac settled on property in Berks County, PA next door to that of the Widow Barbara.

Jakob Joder and wife Verena had the following children recorded in the Steffisburg church records:

Hans b. Nov. 19, 1685  
 Christian b. Feb. 6, 1687  
 Anna b. Sep. 16, 1688

p Francis and Elizabeth, September 21, 1742, List 94 C

Based on comparison with old signatures in religious books handed down within the Christian Yoder (YR2) family, Beachy believes that the first two signatures in the ships' list are those of the older sons of "Widow Barbara" (YR12 and YR14), and the third is of their uncle Christian (YR2). Others have assumed the elder Christian signed first. He also believes that the next signature in the ship's list, Frederick Meyer, could have been a brother-in-law, married to Anna Joder, of this same family.

This is certainly one reasonable hypothesis, but as Rachel Kreider pointed out in her 1988 analysis, it would have meant that both YR1 and YR2 would have been in their 30s when their first children were born. That is older than most men in the day would marry; however, in the prior generation, both Jost (Y6) and his brother Nicolas (Y7) were over 30 when they married and began their families.

The discoveries in the past few years that have tied together the major family lines, and the DNA results which give us a clue to the Amish Yoders, offer hope that this mystery will also be solved.

OTHER MYSTERIES REMAIN: Over the past 30 years, we have found answers, or suspected ones, to many of our "Yoder mysteries". We also discovered, along the way, new mysteries to ponder. Who was the Andrew Yoder of the Lycoming Co. PA line (YNL53)? How about the Michael Yoder of Oley Twp. who married Mary Young (YNL44)? Was there an American Caspar Yoder killed in an Indian attack (YNL31)? There are many more questions out there, and certainly more records to unearth!

REUNIONS: One final word of thanks to those who have hosted the National Yoder Reunions: the North Carolina Yoders (1995 and 2000 and 2012) and the Oley Yoders (1996 and 2001), and the House of Yoder (2006). These are a lot of work, but they have been a special and treasured gift and a blessing for all of us Yoders across the nation.

\*\*\*\*\*

### 30 YEARS- CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

About that time, a company had been marketing "Yoder Books" which consisted of mainly names and addresses gathered from telephone book data bases. It had little value genealogically, but it gave us a way to reach family members across the country. Ben and I quickly decided to begin a Yoder Newsletter, and to send out mailings, asking for subscriptions and also asking people to complete a family tree for our records. Rachel would lend her support and knowledge. This first issue, YNL 1, was published in April 1983 and sent out to over 1,000 Yoders across the land throughout the summer. This was the beginning.

Ben and I complemented each other. He was a jovial, gregarious fellow, and a natural story-teller. He liked to share the human interest items and the Yoder jokes. I was more interested in gathering facts and figuring out mysteries, so the early newsletters had a bit of both. Ben checked around town and found that the *Goshen News* would do our printing for us, and they still do so today. I'd drive down on a Saturday and we would spread things out on Ben's kitchen table, with typed up articles, photos, Blue-line sheets, scissors and glue, to "mock up" the newsletters. Usually his wife Nell would have something delicious prepared for us for lunch, and by early afternoon we would have our creation just about ready for the printer. Ben would find little jokes or draw small cartoons to help fill in empty spaces.

And so things went along for ten years. After I went to Saudi Arabia in 1991, we'd work back and forth by mail and he'd do the final mock up himself. Not long after YNL19 (April 1992) had been completed and mailed out, Ben passed away unexpectedly at the age of 80, on May 15, 1992. What a great loss of a friend and partner! We had been having so much fun, and now he was gone.



Ben Yoder

Luckily, a year before his death Ben had enlisted some other Goshen area locals to help out. John W. Yoder of Middlebury stepped in as Circulation Manager, keeping our address files current on his computer, and he continues doing this to this day. A couple of years later, Esther Yoder moved to Goshen from the Grantsville, MD area, where she and her husband had been active with the group that started up the "House of Yoder" at Penn Alps. She quickly became invaluable and has been busy collecting and answering the mail, depositing renewal checks, and (often with help from Rachel Kreider, still sharp as a tack at 103 years young) stuffing and address-labeling each newsletter ever since.

As technology changed, so did the YNL. The "Blue-line sheets" went away, and we began (years later than we should have) composing entirely in Microsoft Word and sending a file to our printer by e-mail. Our Yoder Newsletter web site was launched in 1997, when Don Kauffman of Edmonton, Alberta, took on the role of "webmaster" and set up our first pages. Thirteen years later, on February 18, 2010, the YNL joined the FACEBOOK world, and we now have over 580 followers.

Issue number 60 marks the end of our 30th year. We cannot begin to thank you, our subscribers, enough for your support and

encouragement. Many of you have been with us since the very first issue, and we hope that we can continue to earn your readership over the years ahead.

-- Chris Yoder on behalf of Rachel, John, Esther, and Don  
\*\*\*\*\*

## OUR WEBMASTER - DON KAUFFMAN



OUR WEBMASTER- Don Kauffman was one of those people who, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, pressed his nose against the windows of the Radio Shack stores and drooled over those new gadgets called personal computers. "Oh, I want one of those," said Don. In 1984 he bought his own Apple IIe and has never looked back.

For about 40 years Don has been a *self-appointed family historian*, with a personal computer as a tool for 28 of those years. Books, and the work that others have done, helped a great deal and Don developed the idea that he owed a debt to the family history world because of the work that others had done which helped him sort out his roots—all Anabaptist/Amish/Mennonite.

Along the way Don developed a curiosity about the World Wide Web on the Internet. He found a book, "Learn HTML in a Week," and soon was creating his own simple web site—*One Family, Forefathers*. But, there was a frustration. It was good to know that a book or record existed that might be helpful, but not good to know that he would have to travel to some distant library to read it. "Wouldn't it be great to be able to read all those books, records, and old obituaries from home," he thought. That frustration grew into the *Yoder Newsletter Website* project which began in 1996, and the *Mennobits* project which was started near the end of 1997.

In YNL28, October, 1996 the call went out for someone to volunteer to do a YNL website. "*Webmaster/Author- We'd like to convert our present text based Online archives to a formal Web Page. Need technical help!!*" Don responded with, "I can try, but if you get a better offer take it." A better offer did not happen so Don got the job. Then in YNL29, April, 1997 appeared this headline: *YODER HOMEPAGE LAUNCHED!*

Now Don had two major projects on the go, the Yoder Newsletter website and the Mennobits project website, which fed his need to tinker on his computer. Today the Mennobits project is maintained by the staff at the MCArchives in Goshen, Indiana (<http://www.mcusa-archives.org/mennobits/index.html>). The YNL website is jointly maintained by Don and Editor Chris. (<http://www.yodernewsletter.org>)

With the creation of these two major websites Don figures that his debt to all those who helped him is at least partially paid. Time to go back to the store and drool over the incredible gadgets we now have to choose from, or sit in his computer chair and search for usable information in all the websites that are now available. The world of genealogical tools has come a long way in the past thirty years, and Don is proud to have been a small part of it.

\*\*\*\*\*

## MAIL MANAGER -ESTHER YODER

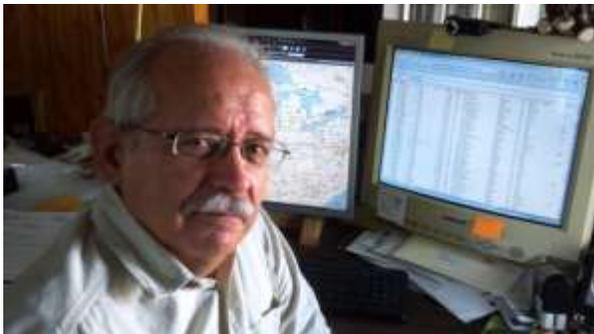


Although I do not possess Yoder genes, I am one by marriage and have produced 3 Yoder children. In addition to this for 28 years I was a teaching-principal in Yoder School, a public school the state kept for the Amish children who were not permitted to go to high school. Others in the community attended as well as Amish. This is the school where internationally known bird carver, Gary Yoder, received his first carving lessons as a 5th grader (YNL43).

During the mid-90's I did mailings for and strongly supported the building of the House of Yoder in Spruce Forest at Penn Alps in Grantsville, MD. This house was a replica of the house built in Berks County, PA where early Yoder immigrants lived. Kenneth Yoder did much research on building styles in Germany before overseeing the building project in Grantsville.

At the National Yoder Reunion in 1995 in Hickory, NC, Henry, my husband, and I met Chris Yoder. At the time after Ben Yoder's death, Yoder Newsletter was without a person to do mailings. I volunteered to do this from my home at Greencroft Retirement Home in Goshen, IN. John Yoder and I worked together since that time to see to timely delivery of the Yoder Newsletter. We update subscriptions and addresses via Skype. John does a yeoman's job of the labels, and I take it from there. I enjoy doing this and want to commend Chris Yoder for his serious and outstanding work as editor and for instigating the Yoder DNA Project. - Esther E. Yoder

## CIRCULATION MGR. - JOHN YODER



I first met Ben Yoder when I dropped by his house to pick up my free copy of YNL #1 soon after he and Chris started it many years ago. My Dad had told me about the Newsletter. At Ben's door we were very soon playing the Mennonite game, "now who are your parents, who were your grandparents, where were they from?" He invited me in to talk further. Within a few weeks I found myself helping out with the mailings. He had a unique system of index cards to keep records of subscribers, and the local bank would then print the mailing labels after he gave them a list. I knew I could do all of that on my own computer at home so I volunteered to take over that part of it. That was by no means as common then as it is now. That's pretty much been my job along with Esther Yoder ever since.

I too was among the early personal computer enthusiasts. I bought an Apple IIe soon after they came out, and have been using some kind of computer every day since. Ben passed on within a few years after I arrived on the scene. I then tried to take over his responsibilities, but found my business just wasn't allowing me to keep up. About that time Esther Yoder and her husband Henry retired to Greencroft retirement center in Goshen, and she began

helping us. Esther is the person I aspire to be when I reach her age. She is an amazingly active and efficient volunteer. She got things done then, and continues to do so to this day. For years I would go to her apartment for an evening a couple of times a year. She would serve me coffee and her excellent ginger snap cookies, and we would get the subscriptions up to date. Today we go through the mail by way of a computer video conference using Skype instead of me going over there. It's more efficient, but I do miss the cookies and spending time with Esther.

My wife and I have been married and lived near Middlebury, IN for 37 years. We have 3 sons, but no grandchildren. I was a truck driver for several years until my sons came along and I started a business selling tools. Now that my sons are grown I divide my time between a trucking business and working as an industrial sales representative. I would like someday to compile as much Yoder genealogy information as possible into one large database built from submissions from many different families.

\*\*\*\*\*

## RACHEL KREIDER - SR. EDITOR

One of the best things I ever did for the Yoder cause was to introduce Ben Yoder and Chris Yoder to each other. I am so pleased to think I could have these men meet at my kitchen table. The chemistry worked so well and the result was so productive. Thirty years later we now come to this celebrative issue. We have certainly learned quite a bit through the process! - Rachel Kreider

\*\*\*\*\*

## ST. YODER'S DAY MEETING



Photo shows (L to R) John Otto, Edna Otto, Stan Bohn, Anita Bohn, Joyce Zuercher, Bill Zuercher, James Yoder (son of Payton Yoder), Phyllis Yoder, Esther Groves, Ann Yoder Showalter. Not pictured are Jim and Doris Yoder who took the photo.

People with Yoder ancestors living in South Central Kansas endure the usual strange looks and rolling eyes when they mention their annual St.Yoder's Day potluck. That Aug 16 is St Yoder's Day is a surprise to most people. That Mennonites pay attention to a saint's day is also peculiar. But a dozen of us met in North Newton and learned things about St. Yoder and Yoders. Our meetings are for fun and fellowship and maybe learning something of our heritage.

Jim and Doris Yoder displayed copies of the Yoder Newsletter, a chart of the main immigrations, and a CD containing Yoder genealogy information. Jim and Doris have visited Yoder chapels and other European sites and inform the rest of us about the areas from which our American Yoders came.

The group had arranged a phone call to 103 year-old Rachel Kreider in Goshen, IN as part of the meeting. She has written extensively regarding origin of the Yoder name and many genealogy items. The Yoder name article is from Mennonite Life of July 1968 with all the details. Also she was co author of the book, Amish and Amish-Mennonite Genealogies with Hugh F. Gingerich. The articles she wrote and the study she has done is the reason for the Kansas group's annual meetings. During the phone call Rachel asked which Yoders were present and gave us some encouragement to continue our annual meetings.--Stanley Bohn.

\*\*\*\*\*

## KIRBY YODER IN CHINESE



Kirby Yoder of Flat Rock, NC, displays his license plate which gives his name in Chinese. Before his retirement from ALCOA, Kirby and his wife Betty lived and worked in Shanghai, China.

\*\*\*\*\*

## YODER PASSINGS

-Robert Keller, age 74, passed away Jun. 18, 2012. Born in Reading, he was the son of the late Stanley L. Keller and Mabel A. (Yoder) Houser. Bob was a founding member of the Oley Yoder Heritage Association. He played an essential role in the planning and implementation of the first Oley Yoder Reunion in 1996. During the years he served on the committee, he developed an interest in the Yoder family genealogy. He worked for many years helping to fill in the family tree and helping people find where they fit into the family relationships. Bob always gave of his time and skills to help in the upkeep of the Pleasantville Cemetery. In the last few years in particular, he helped in the repair of several of the tombstones. Most recently, he assumed the treasurer's position for the group, taking care of the financial records and the association's investments. He will be greatly missed. -- Ken & Martha Yoder.



-John Mark Slabaugh, age 82, d. Nov. 28, 2011. As a young man he was born again, accepting Christ as his personal Savior. He gave up a promising career in the tool and die trade to become a preacher of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. His study of land records for the early Northkill Amish congregation was a major contribution to the book: Early Amish Land Grants in Berks Countv, Pennsylvania. This collection of detailed, two-color maps shows where 77 Amish landowners settled in Berks Co., Pa., in the 18th century. The booklet is still available from Masthof Bookstore, 219 Mill Road, Morgantown,

PA 19543. His maps appeared in several early issues of the YNL.

- Roy Demorse Yoder, (YR2337a231) of Titusville, FL, age 100, (son of Roy Yoder and Beulah Evans), died Feb. 28, 2012.

- William E. Yoder, 93, of Kutztown, PA died Jan. 18, 2012, son of Harry B. (OY434562) and Florence O. (Esser) Yoder.

- Victor Olen Yoder, 93, of Goshen, IN (Jul. 2, 1918-Jun. 13, 2012) son of Mose (YR1257316) and Amanda (Hartman) Yoder

\*\*\*\*\*

QUERY: Who was Hannah Ann Yoder, born Sep. 1, 1823 and died Jul. 24, 1901? m. William W. Reed Nov. 23, 1843, at the 1st Pres. Church in Lancaster, PA. Moved to Danvers, IL area in April 1865  
Reply to: Al Olson, 8889 Bellina Commons, Dublin, CA 94568

## YNL HELPS HOUSE OF YODER

The YNL kitty made contributions to the initial building fund for the HOUSE OF YODER at Penn Alps. When the call went out recently for funds to replace the roof, the YNL stepped forward again and sent \$500 (matched by an anonymous donor). You, our readers, with your annual subscriptions allow the YNL to pay our costs and have a bit left over for such things as: paying for selective Yoder DNA tests; supporting the national Yoder reunions with a free mailing; and paying for some of the Yoder research done in Switzerland. Thanks so much for your continued support!!

\*\*\*\*\*

## YNL FUNDS MORE DNA TESTS

Thanks to reader donations, we have been able to fund many of the DNA tests over the years which have helped build our knowledge of the family links. These tests have slowed down as our coverage has become more complete, but when we connect with the "rarer" branches of the family, opportunities still present themselves. Now in process are tests from the following families:

1) AC- Elijah Yoder b. 7/9/1803 m1. Kitty Reed (1802- ) m2. Anna M. (Margaret) \_\_\_\_\_ (6/6/1811-2/13/1885)

d. 6/7/1880 bur. Jacobs Church, Schuylkill Co., PA.

2) A believed descendant of BZ- Jost Jotter, (Yost Jotter/Yotter) d. Bushkill Twp, Northampton Co Pa 1800-1810. Wife's given name Eva Catharine., had warrant for 65a Moore Twp 1785, dau. Anna Maria m. Henry Werner. Descendants moved into Sussex Co, NJ.

\*\*\*\*\*

## 2013 REUBEN YODER CENTENNIAL REUNION SHIPSHEWANA, IN



Rear: Moses, Levi, Peter, Daniel, Front: Menno, Elizabeth Miller, Mary Powell, Samuel

Reuben Yoder (1831-1912) (YR2337a) was the son of Bishop Christian Yoder Jr. (YR2337) of Somerset Co., PA. He married Harriet Riehl in 1851 and moved from PA to LaGrange Co, IN. In 1913, the year after Reuben died, a large family reunion was organized and held on the shores of Lake Shippshewana. A centennial of this reunion is now being planned for next July. In addition to the Reuben Yoder family, descendants of his siblings would be welcomed. If you are a YR2337 descendant, you may get on the mailing/email list for notifications by contacting Chris Yoder, 551 S. Maple St., Saugatuck, MI 49453, or email: [cnyder@tds.net](mailto:cnyder@tds.net).

\*\*\*\*\*

Creative talents? Enter the St. Joder's Day card contest. See Page 2