



## Anticipating and Reflecting on Reunions

By Carol Gregoire, SFA President

Next summer in 2014 we will be celebrating another reunion. Nancy Lounsbury Graczyk is working on all the details. She has selected Cortland, New York, which will include the Freetown Corners area. The Ramada Inn was chosen for lodging, meeting, meals and activities. We are so grateful she is willing to organize the reunion. If you have any suggestions, contact her at her email address listed in this issue.

Our former president Jamie Swetland asked, "Why do we have reunions?" So many of you responded by saying you want to know history and get to know each other. I'm so thankful that I attended reunions and met "cousins."

Mark Swetland noted in Doug Swetland's book that "one thing we learn from reunions is that we come as strangers who are, perhaps, cousins, but we leave as friends. At future reunions we come back to rejoin friends we have made, who may happen to be related to us." Our editor of the Lore newsletter, Anne (Sweetland) Kirby, said, "I am confident that the Lore also helps strengthen these bonds and gives people an anchor of family ties in a world where many people would otherwise feel afloat."

I have many great memories of past reunions. The first one I attended was in Wilkes Barre, PA. We stayed at a very nice hotel and met "cousins" on Friday evening during our meal. On Saturday we visited a Swetland home turned into a museum. Then at our meeting people shared history and stories about our ancestors. Doug Swetland told us about his book on genealogy. My Aunt Ginny bought one, which I used for reference in our family book.

One year we had a reunion at our family park, Miller Memorial park, Monson, MA. On Friday evening we cruised on a river with dinner after. On Saturday we enjoyed the food our family had prepared. Activities and information and stories about the Sweetland/Swetlands followed. We enjoyed the company so much we even joined "cousins" at their motel on Sunday where Jamie shared photos of the reunion on his computer.

Another reunion was in upper state NY at Dunkirk on Lake Erie. On Friday the group toured the area visiting a Swetland home and a cemetery. The following day we had a scrumptious buffet. Then a "cousin" from South Carolina who lived in the area as a young person shared information with us. I read stories from our Miller book. Again it was a wonderful time of fellowship and getting to know everyone better.

Each time I've attended a reunion I've learned more about our ancestors. In Gettysburg it was amazing how many Sweetland/Swetlands were involved in the Civil War. Touring the battlegrounds was a learning experience.

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"Next year we expect to meet many of you who have not attended a reunion."

—Carol Gregoire

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Last year it was so nice to reunite with family from California. My Aunt Flossie, her daughter, Diane, her husband, Kelly McCann and their children Emily and Eamonn attended. My daughter, Wendy, attended her first reunion and thoroughly enjoyed it. I'm also glad my cousin, Joy Folsom, attended and you elected her as Vice President. Of course I never expected to be elected your president. This will be a learning experience for me.

Next year we expect to meet many of you who have not attended a reunion. We are looking forward to that. I'm sure many of you also have information or stories about ancestors that you could share. We want to hear them. If you cannot attend, then send them to our secretary, Jamie, and we'll share them at the reunion. We hope to see you there.

### **Sweetland/Swetland Family Association Notes Death of Founder Mark W. Swetland, Jr.**



Mark Swetland, who formed the second Swetland Family Association, now called the Sweetland/Swetland Family Association, passed away on February 20, 2013. The Sweetland "Big Book" by Doug Sweetland explains that Mark also conceived the idea of the Lore newsletter in order for SFA members to stay in touch between reunions.

The idea of a family association took root when Mark and his wife, Jean, visited Gladys Swetland at her house which her father had built in 1882, ten years before Gladys was born. He wrote, "I felt that there were many in my family who did not know Gladys and had never met her. So the thought of a family reunion arose. I made a list of some 15 people whose addresses I had and asked Gladys who else she could think of. The flood began. She sent me names and addresses of another forty people. I began sending letters to all

these people . . . With Gladys doing part of the work [she was 93 years old], we arranged to meet on Denton Hill, PA, not far from her house [in 1986]. When all arrived, we had 66 people."

Mr. Swetland, recently of Bluffton and Hilton Head, is the son of the late Mark W. Swetland, Sr., and the late Blanche Compton Swetland. Mark, Jr. is survived by his wife, Jean Sperber Swetland, and five children and spouses, Mark A. and Lynne Swetland of Westwood, MA, Paul J. and Melissa Swetland of Georgetown, TX, Diane M. and Stephen Faig of Madison, NJ, Susan J. Swetland of Derry, NH, and David W. Swetland of Julian, PA.

His obituary tells of his education, career and hobbies. "Mr. Swetland graduated from Princeton University in 1942 as a chemical engineer and began his work in Cincinnati, OH for the Vulcan Copper and Supply Company where he started as draftsman and progressed to chief mechanical engineer. In 1960, he moved to The Lummus Company in Newark, NJ for which he worked until retirement in 1983. His work for Lummus included assignments in Canada, Mexico, England, and Indonesia where he served as startup operator and project director for the largest urea fertilizer plant in the world.

"Among his hobbies were photography of his family, their travels, genealogy, the stamps and postal history of Antigua, and the postal history of Cincinnati, OH. He has written extensively on philately, postal history, and genealogy. His many travels frequently had an element of philately or genealogy. His wife Jean shared his love of travel. Among his accomplishments after retirement were editing and publishing the British Caribbean Philatelic Study Journal for 5 years and the Sweetland/Swetland Lore family newsletter for 16 years. He will be remembered for his honesty, integrity, and keen analytical mind."

SFA members who knew or corresponded with Mark have great appreciation for all he did for our organization. Anne Kirby, the current editor of Lore, took Mark's place as editor in 2007. She writes, "His are big shoes to fill. I remember meeting Mark for the first time at the reunion in Tunkhannock, PA. My daughter, Ruth, and I

drove into the parking lot and a handsome, white-haired man was unloading his golf clubs from his car. Ruth said, 'He looks like a Sweetland. That must be Mark.' Indeed it was, and we found him to be bright, energetic, and gentlemanly. I enjoyed the countless issues of Lore that he put together over the years and appreciated his enthusiasm for genealogy and family history. Without him, we would not enjoy the Sweetland/Swetland Family Association and the newsletter today. He left a wonderful legacy for us to follow."

### Snap Pictures of Those Houses!

We usually remember to take pictures of the people attending family reunions, but what about the structures that are part of our family stories? Future generations will enjoy them as much as we now enjoy looking at old sepia images of our great-grandmother's house.

Do you plan a summer trip to your hometown or one of the places where your ancestors lived? Be sure and take your camera along, because it will help you preserve images of homes, schools, and other buildings which are part of your family heritage. You never know how long those structures will be there.

Before you go on your trip, ask relatives for their former home addresses and locations of other places important to them, such as where they were born, married, worked, played baseball, and so on.

When photographing homes, take someone with you and first knock on the door to see if anyone is home and ask permission to take a picture. Family Tree Magazine reminds us that "it's polite, you'll avoid arousing suspicion, and you might learn some house history. If no one's home, you can still photograph the house, but make sure you don't trespass on the property" (Family Tree Magazine, "Digital Age" by Maureen A. Taylor, March 2011, 26).

The best conditions for taking pictures occur on an overcast day. Look for the best angle for the shot and take several pictures from different vantage points. To give a feel for the neighborhood, take another photo of the house from down the street.

It's important to take digital or hand-written notes about your pictures, especially if you visit several towns or cities. When I visited three of my mother's former homes in California I recorded the date of the photo, the color and other identifying features of the home, the address, and who had lived there. I was invited inside one of them, and when I got home my 97-year-old mother enjoyed the pictures and told stories to me about living there as a child as she identified her old bedroom. —Anne M. Kirby, ed.



Mother lived here in 1923

### Journals and Collaboration

Journals and diaries open a window into the lives and hearts of their writers, reminding us that they were real people like us. Sometimes their candid entries help us in our lives. Moreover, journals often provide genealogical and other information about our families that often cannot be found elsewhere.

If you do not possess any family journals, perhaps some of your relatives do, or we sometimes can find journals through Internet genealogy sites which encourage collaboration. For example, my husband Dale is currently writing the history of his grandfather's mission experiences in the Oklahoma Territories in 1900. He is drawing largely upon the journals he found in an old family trunk. Dale found a picture of another missionary in his grandfather's journal and wanted to give it to a descendant of the person in the photo. I accessed FamilySearch.org and looked up the name of the person pictured. On that page, one of the options is "Discussions" and I opened that. In the box provided I invited any descendant of that person to contact us if they were interested in having the picture. They soon sent an email, which led to phone calls with the person on the other end saying that their grandfather also had a journal. My husband and his new friend shared pictures and photocopies of pages from the journals each had, enabling them both to learn more about their grandfathers' experiences in Oklahoma and enriching the book Dale is writing.

In addition to the free FamilySearch site, other family history websites provide similar ways to collaborate. On the subscription website ancestry.com you can write to others who have submitted their family trees by clicking on the "Comments" button. Maybe they have some journal pages to share—it never hurts to ask!

—Anne M. Kirby, ed.



## Granddaughter Preserves 113-year-old Dress

Photos Courtesy of Carolyn Hartman

Carolyn Hartman's great-grandmother, Louisa M. Chubbuck Sweetland (1853-1938), sewed this dress in 1900 for her daughter. Louisa, originally from Weymouth, Massachusetts, had crossed the plains in a covered wagon when her family moved to Nevada. Her daughter, Sarah Sweetland Cottrell (1882-1979), born in Carson City, Nevada, wore this dress for her graduation.

In 1903 Sarah, or "Sade" as she was sometimes called, wore the same dress for her wedding to Raymond Cottrell.

Later, sleeves were added and Sarah wore it last on her 95th birthday in 1977.

Sarah died in Menlo Park, California two years later.



Sarah Maude Sweetland  
Graduation from  
Nevada Business College  
June/1900 Age: 18yrs



Right: Sarah's 95th birthday, wearing her graduation and wedding gown. She's also wearing her baby locket from her grandmother, Mary Lovell Gardner.

**The current website and email addresses are currently experiencing technical difficulties. We hope to have it solved soon.**

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My name is \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed is my donation for the scholarship fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ,  
and the newsletter fund \$ \_\_\_\_\_ .

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