

August 20, 2017 Reunion Minutes

Minutes of the John Jacob Dreibelbis Cousins of America, Inc., annual family reunion held August 20, 2017, at the Dreibelbis Homestead in Virginville, PA. This reunion celebrates the 285th anniversary of our ancestor's arrival on America's shores. The register was signed by 180 individuals. At least 42 of these reported that this was their first time attending the reunion. Cousins were in attendance from Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, New Jersey, New York and Virginia.

This year we enjoyed truly beautiful weather on reunion day. There had been a heavy downpour the previous evening which made it necessary to cancel hayrides. However, house tours were again available. Strolling the grounds is always a pleasant experience, but this year we had to be mindful of puddles and other soggy areas. The Dreibelbis Store had many charming items for sale, including the barn stars, new this year, which were made from the tin which had been removed when the barn roof was replaced. As always, Jean Davis was ready to greet anyone who was interested in playing her games. Diane Dreibelbis, once again, provided games and entertainment for the children. Many people visited with Fred Polaski at the Genealogy Station where they could research family records or provide new information regarding their families.

As in previous years, the lunch, which was scheduled from 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., was provided by the Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society. Janine Dreibelbis and her workers provided a tasty lunch complete with ice cream and beverages, as well as a delicious cake.

The Dreibelbis Cousins of America yearly meeting began shortly after 1:15 p.m. with President Eric Dreibelbis presiding. In keeping with tradition, the meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance and the singing of Proud to Be An American. Eric requested a motion to accept the Secretary's report, which was posted outside the barn. The motion to accept was made by Wesely Oden of Lakeville, Indiana, and seconded by Jim Auman of Danville, Pennsylvania. Fred Polaski read the Treasurer's report and a motion to accept was made by Jean Davis of Fleetwood, Pennsylvania. The second was by Lester Miller of Kutztown, Pennsylvania.

Fred Polaski spoke about his genealogy work. He reported that there are more than 22,000 names in our genealogy. Fred also read the names of family members recently deceased. A moment of silence was observed in their memory. Jean Davis announced winners of contests and guessing games. Jean also shared some 'stupid kid jokes' with the audience.

Mark Dreibelbis, owner of the historic Dreibelbis Farm, spoke about his vision for the farm. This includes ecological, environmental and family purposes. Mark also spoke about a psychic intervention which took place in the house at Halloween. Also offered at the farm are wildflower walks, spring peeper walks, ice harvesting and many other events in which the public can participate. Of special interest is a study by Kutztown University entomologists into the native honeybees on the farm. Ned Dresher is the Vice President of the Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society, and his wife, Nancy creates historical signs. Mark requested that anyone interested in helping with the upkeep of the property, educational research or cataloging artifacts get in touch with him or Ned, since help is needed and always appreciated.

Amy Langman spoke briefly about her artifacts project and reminded us that she is always looking for people to stop by to get their picture taken. Amy's pictures will become part of each individual's online profile.

Eric spoke to the first-time attendees of the reunion. There were approximately 42 people who had never attended the reunion. It's always interesting to hear where they are from, and many can provide interesting stories of their travel to the reunion.

A motion was made to accept the resignation of the current secretary, Jane Hornberger, and Carolyn Hollanbach of Shoemakersville, Pennsylvania, was nominated as the new secretary. The motion to accept was made by Wesely Oden of Lakeville, Indiana, and Vicki Merkel of Fort Myers, Florida, seconded the motion. The motion was passed with all in agreement. Eric presented to Jane a beautiful print of the Dreibelbis farm. Sincere thanks to all for your kind words and encouragement during my twelve years as secretary of the Dreibelbis Cousins of America.

Diane Dreibelbis and some of the children displayed a piece of artwork they made at today's reunion. Diane does a truly great job of entertaining the young ones. Baskets were passed to accept donations to support DCOA organization and activities.

Eric introduced our speaker for 2017, Irvin Herring. Irvin's presentation was titled "The People, Activities and Life in Dreibelbis Station during the 1800's and early 1900's". Mr. Herring had many slides and interesting artifacts and related many delightful stories prior to his time and during his time in the Dreibelbis Station area, including interesting stories about Dr. Perry Dreibelbis, well known veterinarian of earlier days.

Awards and prizes were presented. The oldest man present was determined to be John D. Smith, of Fleetwood, Pennsylvania, age 94. The oldest woman, at age 87, was Evelyn Heffner of Timonium, Maryland. The youngest child present was Emma Dreibelbis of Downingtown, Pennsylvania, 4 1/2 months. Brian and Liz Dreibelbis of Downingtown, married in 2014, were the most recently married. The greatest

distance traveled was a little difficult to determine, but was awarded to Vicki Merkel of Fort Myers, Florida. Registration number winners were #107, Jim Auman of Danville, Pennsylvania, and #118, Doreen Mylin of Homosassa, Florida.

In closing, we formed a circle, holding hands, and sang “Blest Be the Tie That Binds.” It was time for cleanup, and any help was appreciated as chairs and tables were put away, along with all the other things brought out for the reunion. It is our sincere hope that everyone had a fun and interesting visit to the farm and that many of you will return next year on Sunday, August 19, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
Jane E. Hornberger, Secretary