

## 2021 DCOA Minutes

Minutes of the John Jacob Dreibelbis Cousins of America, Inc. annual family reunion held August 15, 2021 at the Dreibelbis Homestead in Virginville, Pa. This reunion celebrates the 289<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our ancestor's arrival on American shores. The register was signed by 64 individuals. Cousins were in attendance from New Jersey and Pennsylvania.

We enjoyed a fine sunny reunion day. House tours were again available. The Dreibelbis Store offered many items for sale. Cousins visited with Fred Polaski at the genealogy station where they could research family records or provide new family information. Jean Davis led cousins in playing games. Diane Dreibelbis provided games and entertainment for the children.

Due to Covid restrictions, everyone brought box lunches which were enjoyed from 11:30 AM to 1:00 PM. It may be noted here that after the meeting all were treated to ice cream by DCOA volunteers.

After lunch President Eric Dreibelbis opened the meeting with the pledge of allegiance and the singing of Proud to Be an American. Prizes were awarded to the following:

Greatest distance traveled – Donna Blatt, State College, Pa.

Oldest man – Paul Miller, Shoemakersville, Pa.

Oldest female – Eleanor Dreibelbis(91), Mertztown, Pa.

Youngest child – Lily Dreibelbis, Downingtown, Pa.

Most recently married – Randy and Desira Rickenbach, Mohrsville, Pa.

We also welcomed Wayne and Katie Dreibelbis, Nescopeck, Pa. on their first attendance at the reunion.

Fred Polaski presented a list of departed cousins. He suggested sending information on births, deaths and marriages via email. His email address is listed in the newsletter. Fred asked for a volunteer with computer skills to assist with data entry into the genealogy system.

Amy Langman offered remarks on artifacts and indentures including an 1844 classroom book from Jacob Dreibelbis. Also cousins' photos can be taken for a genealogical record. Eric invited us to share artifacts for future generations.

Mark Dreibelbis covered DFHS(Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society) activities for the year. As an educational, environmental and historical entity, the society held a farm festival in August, a Halloween fun day in fall and a spring peeper and wild flower walk along the two mile nature trail by the Maiden creek River. Plans this year include a rehab of the milk house with the help of the Miller brothers. Mark also reminded us that DCOA and DFHS are two separate organizations.

Eric asked for volunteers to design a new background for the Dreibelbis Farm sign. He mentioned that 2020 was the first time since the late 1950s that the reunion was cancelled. After thanking all cousins for attending today, he introduced Vice President Jean Davis, who presented a very interesting program on John Jacob Dreibelbis family history.

Among noteworthy items are the name Dreibelbis is Swiss in origin and translates to "he who bites the devil" or "devil boar". John Jacob lived in Germany till age 23 and emigrated to the colonies where he fathered seven children. He died at age 47, whereupon the Merkel family took in his wife and children. Facts on the Dreibelbis Homestead: the house was built in 1868 by Joel Dreibelbis. In 1998 Parker Dreibelbis sold its 180 acres to Mark and Janine Dreibelbis under a 5013C agreement.

Jean also mentioned distinguished Dreibelbis forefathers, among them Simon Dreibelbis, who hauled logs to the sawmill to build the Dreibelbis Covered Bridge and who later sold his Perry Township farm and mill to his son Cleophus; Martin Dreibelbis, who founded Schuylkill Haven; Abraham Dreibelbis, who pwned Dreibelbis mill north of Fleetwood; Manassas Dreibelbis, whose son Jacob built the sawmill; and again Simon, who built the bridge. The Dreibelbis bridge was dismantled and rebuilt in April 2019. In June 2020 it was reconstructed on site with new stone abatements and steel beams underneath. Two arches from the bridge were given to DFHS by Penndot.

At the conclusion of the program the 50/50 drawing prize went to Marlin Dreibelbis, Gratz, Pa. who donated it to DCOA. Amy Langman, Morgantown, Pa. and Carol Kosmel, Shoemakersville, Pa. won the registration drawing. President Eric Dreibelbis closed the meeting with the song "Blest Be the Tie That Binds".

Respectfully submitted,

Carolyn Hollenbach, Secretary