



DreibelbisCousins.org

May 2026

REUNION 2026

Join Us on Sunday, August 23 Double the Fun at the Farm!

We're thrilled to once again host our **Dreibelbis Cousins Reunion** back-to-back with the beloved Annual Farm Festival at the Historic Dreibelbis Farm!

That's right—not only will we be reuniting on Sunday at the farmstead we hold dear, but the day before (Saturday) you can step back in time at the **Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society's Farm Festival**. This yearly tradition features 40+ artisans showcasing old-time farm life—from candle-making and butchering to horse-drawn wagon tours, house tours, Bluegrass music, and much more!

REUNION PRESENTATION

The Life & Ledgers of Dr. Perry Dreibelbis

Presented by Jean Davis, DCOA VP



Dr. Perry Dreibelbis

There was a recent auction at which a number of journals and notebooks from the Dreibelbis family were purchased, with many of them specifically from Dr. Perry Dreibelbis. He is famous within the family for operating as a veterinary surgeon in the latter part of the 1800's until his death in 1932. In perusing these materials, it was interesting to discover the timeline of his practice, education, and activities regarding the various farm animals and what treatments he provided. In looking at the genealogy, we discovered that he was one of 10

siblings, of which only 3 others lived a to ripe old age. The records we looked at showed that Perry was very active in running a farm, and the details about that were quite explicit, including prices of some crops being only 17 ½ cents per bushel! The charges for many of his veterinary services mostly ranged from 25 cents to \$1.50, and a two-year accounting of his charges totaled \$600 (worth about \$20,000 today). In perusing these records, there were more questions than answers, and many surprises were discovered. There will be a presentation about Perry and his life, with multiple twists and turns and a few revelations! Be sure to attend to find out all about Perry and his life as a veterinary surgeon and dentist!

FEATURE ARTICLE

Celebrating a Legacy

by Jacob Dreibelbis, President



Dr. Eric Dreibelbis

There is a passage from the writer and conservationist Aldo Leopold that I think about often. In *A Sand County Almanac*, he writes that there are two spiritual dangers in not owning a farm: supposing that breakfast comes from the grocery, and that heat comes from the furnace. His point is that we too easily forget our reliance on the natural world. But every time I return to that quote, I think of something broader. So much in daily life is made possible by work we rarely see—the

systems, institutions, and traditions we move through without a second thought, trusting that someone, somewhere, is keeping them going. The fact is, our institutions are not maintained by abstractions. They are held together by individuals willing to step in and hold things together. The Dreibelbis Cousins of America is no different, which is why I wanted to write this piece about **Eric Dreibelbis**.

- Legacy, continued on page 3

REUNION SCHEDULE - RAIN OR SHINE

10:00am	Registration Opens
10:00am - 3:30pm	Tour Property
10:45 - 11:30am	1 st House Tour *
11:30am - 1:00pm	Lunch Served
1:15 - 1:45pm	Family Meeting
1:45pm	Presentation
After speaker	Activities and Visiting
3:00 - 3:45pm	2 nd House Tour *
4:00pm	Clean Up

Back for a repeat performance: Raffle baskets and prizes!

* Please indicate your interest on the registration form — this helps us make sure we have enough volunteer guides ready and waiting for you!

Don't Miss Out — Register for Lunch in Advance!

Lunch is catered and portions are planned based on pre-registrations. We love seeing walk-ins, but **we can't guarantee a meal without advance notice. Register by August 14** to make sure your plate is saved!

- Reunion Highlights, continued on page 6

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What to See, Do & Explore!

Two days of fun, history, and heritage — what's not to love?

To help pull off this weekend double-header, we could use a few helping hands—especially right after the Festival ends on Saturday. We'll need to move tables and chairs to the barn, set up tents, hang signs, and get everything ready for Reunion day. Whether you're local or coming from out of town and staying overnight, we'd love your help making it all come together.

Thanks to your support, we're able to keep this special weekend going strong—for everyone near and far!

Interested in Helping?

When you register online or when completing registration form on last page, you'll have the opportunity to let us know!

2025 REUNION FLASHBACK

Awards & Raffle Winners

Oldest Man

Jim Dreibelbis
81 years

Oldest Woman

Patsy Danley
81 years

Youngest Child

Lily Dreibelbis
4 years

Most Recently Married

Jacob & Rachel Dreibelbis
2 years

Longest Married

Terry and Diane Michael
61 years

Greatest Distance Traveled

Elliot Smith & Family
North Carolina

Registration Raffle #1

Nicholas Perry

Registration Raffle #2

Waylon Smith

Chip & Dip Basket

Chaz Pozzi

DCOA Merchandise Basket

Chaz Pozzi

DCOA Photography and Artifacts Booth

We will continue, with permission of the Cousins, to photograph anyone that is attending the Reunion for the first time or if you haven't attended the Reunion recently. We will continue to take photographs, which will document the Dreibelbis Cousins and eventually will correspond with our genealogy in Ancestry.com. Caveat: Your photos will not be used on social media. It is solely for genealogical purposes.

The Artifacts Booth will display several of the Dreibelbis family artifacts including mill items, dishes, certificates, photos, and other acquired artifacts. Please note: these artifacts purchased by or donated to the DCOA are to be shared with the entire Dreibelbis family. The Board will continue to protect them for future generations. Please stop by!

Dreibelbis Store

If you'd like a little memorabilia to commemorate the DCOA reunion, stop by the store! We will be offering flour sacks, t-shirts, magnets, coasters, and more.

Kid's Corner

This will be organized and supervised by Dreibelbis Cousin and volunteer, Diane Dreibelbis. Activities will be determined as we approach the Reunion. Feel free to let your kids enjoy these activities while you take in the history of the Farm or just enjoy some peace and quiet. Older children will be available for walks on the Nature Trail.

Genealogy Station

Fred Polaski will have his computer at the Genealogy Station at the Reunion, so bring your updates and watch them be added to the genealogy. Or just stop by to say hi and to ask genealogical questions.

Connection to our Swiss Ancestors

If you are interested in your ancestry, you won't want to miss the display at the Reunion. Among other things, you can see several items family members brought from Switzerland from the exact region where our ancestors lived. In addition is a large photo from the DCOA "first ever" reunion on September 3 - 5 in Kutztown, PA, that hosted some 400+ participants!

DCOA ORGANIZATION

Questions Worth Asking by Jacob Dreibelbis, President

Shortly after becoming president, we learned that a collection of family artifacts from the late 1800s and early 1900s had gone up for auction. There were journals recording financial transactions, educational records, bibles, photos, and even two antique firearms (they weren't antiques to their original, Dreibelbis owners). These were the kind of objects that make a centuries-old family history feel immediate and real. The items ultimately fetched surprisingly high prices, and in the end, we spent more than I anticipated for very little of the overall items up for auction.

But even setting cost aside, a series of considerably harder questions quickly became attached to these

Believing in the mission and having the infrastructure to carry it out are two different things.

items. Where would we keep them? How would we preserve them properly for the next generation? I believe strongly that handing a young Dreibelbis cousin an artifact from the 1800s — something their ancestors actually touched — is one of the most powerful things we can do as an organization. But believing in the mission and having the infrastructure to carry it out are two different things.

So what do we do when something like this comes up again? Because it will. Family estates get settled. Attics get cleaned out, and objects that are of interest to our family end up in private collections or on the open

market. Do we use our limited resources to compete for them? Do we have a safe place to keep them? Do we have relationships with historical societies or libraries who might help us preserve and house them properly? To be clear, much of what the organization currently cares for is in the custody of our officers. What isn't, Mark and the Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society graciously allow us to store at the farm. But the farm's focus is on the people that lived there. When we look ahead, we have to think about whether the farm might need that space back — or, just as likely, whether we will outgrow it. Deciding what we even want to pursue and preserve is another critical question.

I don't have clean answers to any of those questions yet. But they point toward a common need: legitimacy, infrastructure, and the kinds of partnerships that aren't always available to an informal family organization. That's what's led me to explore whether formal nonprofit status — whether a 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(7) designation — might help open some of those doors. It may. It may also be that the more immediate need is simply a conversation about what we want DCOA to be capable of, and what we're willing to do to get there. In any case, I'd love to hear what the cousins think at this year's reunion.

Officers & Committee Chairs

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*"Legacy is not leaving something for people.
It's leaving something in people."
— Peter Strople*

OBITUARIES

These obituaries are those reported since the 2025 newsletter or not previously published.

Rebecca Ann Bausher

J-08-03055-08 • Died April 23, 2024

Daniel Cleophas Dreibelbis, Jr.

J-08-06746 • Died February 3, 2026

Lisa M. Yahn Dreibelbis

wife of Neil B. Dreibelbis • A-10-06264-02 • August 21, 2025

Ralph Lando Dreibelbis, Sr.

A-08-06271 • Died September 1, 2024

Marlin Robert Erdman

A-09-00160-01 • Death date unknown

Timothy Kenneth Fry

A-J-09-06351-02 • Died November 29, 2023

Melanie Ann Dreibelbis Grimm

J-07-02631-01 • Died January 8, 2024

Marvin P. Heffner

J-08-06644a • Died February 12, 2025

Daren Morgan

A-07-04115 • Died May 23, 2024

Robert Noone Zava

M-10-00172-05 • Died March 17, 2019

William Shaver Zava

M-10-00172-07 • Died October 19, 2014

Ways to Stay Connected

The Dreibelbis Cousins of America organization has been successfully operating since 1932. During this time we have continued the annual Reunion to promote branches of the family meeting others, provided representation to County and State representatives to refurbish the Dreibelbis Covered Bridge, and had 1966 and 1990 editions of our Genealogy produced. Most recently, we have successfully transitioned to an online Genealogy which continues to grow into a 39,000+ person database.

Submit Your Articles

Let us know what is happening in your family so we can include it in next year's newsletter! Submit your articles to Jacob Dreibelbis at JacobD@DreibelbisCousins.org no later than April 1 each year to be included in that year's newsletter.

Volunteer

- Submit birth, marriage and death information for cousins in your area of the country
- Reunion setup, cleanup, sales, or registration help
- Submit newsletter articles
- Newsletter preparation and mailing
- Reach out to Jacob Dreibelbis if you would like to help.
JacobD@DreibelbisCousins.org

Donations are Always Needed and Appreciated!

If you are interested in supporting Dreibelbis Cousins of America (DCOA), there are several areas to which you could contribute!

- DCOA Newsletter Printing/Postage (to 840+ addresses)
- Genealogy Research/Artifacts/Ancestry.com
- Website Fees
- John Jacob Dreibelbis Cemetery Maintenance

Contributions can be mailed to Fred Polaski, treasurer:
32 Georgian Circle, Newark, DE 19711-2552.

Dreibelbis Cousins of America Social Media Pages

To follow DCOA, please check out @DreibelbisHistory on Instagram and @DreibelbisCousinsofAmerica on Facebook. Posts include updates on Reunions, Historic Dreibelbis Farm activities, family and building history, and genealogy. Inquiries are answered as efficiently and accurately as possible.

Please note: even if you are not a Facebook member, you should be able to see the Facebook page and its updates regarding Reunion dates and other items (only comments cannot be viewed).



Facebook

@DreibelbisCousinsofAmerica



Instagram

@DreibelbisHistory

Every Branch Matters - Help Us Grow the Family Tree

If you have factual information about John Jacob Dreibelbis' siblings or cousins, please let us know so it can be preserved. More importantly, if you have information about descendants of John Jacob Dreibelbis, please let us know so that the family tree can be updated. There are almost 26,000 recorded direct descendants of John Jacob Dreibelbis, and over 13,700 spouses in Ancestry.com, but the family tree shows many branches which end after only a few generations. There are likely many more Dreibelbis cousins who have not been identified, so if you would like to have an interesting hobby, one that can be both challenging and rewarding, let Fred Polaski know and he will direct you to locations in the Dreibelbis family tree that need work.

Ways to Update Your Genealogy Record

- Complete the form on this page and mail it to Fred Polaski
- Email your updates to Fred Polaski
- Update your info online at DreibelbisCousins.org/genealogy
- Visit the genealogy station at the Reunion



Contact Information

Fred Polaski

32 Georgian Circle
Newark, DE 19711-2552
FredP@DreibelbisCousins.org

Accessing Ancestry.com

To gain access to the John Jacob Dreibelbis genealogy in Ancestry.com, please email Fred and he will "invite" you. This will provide access to dates of birth, death, and marriage; town of residence; and Dreibelbis genealogy numbers.

Cut out and mail to Fred Polaski.

Dreibelbis Family Record Form

Full Name: _____ Nickname: _____

Address / Place of Residence: _____ Dreibelbis Number: _____
(only city or town will be listed in the genealogy) (if a number has been assigned)

Name of Parents: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Location of Birth: _____

Date of Death: _____ Burial Location (e.g. cemetery name): _____

Name of Spouse: _____ Date of Marriage: _____
(include maiden name for wives, indicate if divorced)

Spouse's Date of Birth: _____ Spouse's Location of Birth: _____

Spouse's Date of Death: _____ Spouse's Burial Location: _____

Note: If the Dreibelbis cousin was married more than once, complete the spousal information for all spouses.

Name of Children: _____

(For each child, please include date of birth, and if applicable, date of death and burial location.)

Any information that identifies Dreibelbis relatives and any information on occupation, where they lived, military service, or anything else of interest.

Information provided by: Name: _____

Address: _____ Phone Number: _____

_____ Email Address: _____



Historic Dreibelbis Farm

by Mark Dreibelbis

Twenty-eight years have flown by since the Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society (DFHS) was founded to preserve and protect the Jacob B. Homestead farm and present it to the public for historical, educational, environmental, and family purposes.

We are working to increase programming, and over the past year we added classes for quilting, basket making, and cleaning and caring for historic wooden items. We held four hikes. A first time New Year's Day hike, a hike to clean out our wood duck/screech owl nest boxes, a spring peeper (chirping frogs) walk, and a spring wildflower identification excursion. We also offered monthly house tours throughout the summer. We had a first-time barn dance hoedown with local celebrity caller, Lester Miller. We continued with our usual events such as the ice harvest demonstration in February, the farm festival in August (with over 1500 visitors!!) and a Fall Family Fun Day.

The Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society was represented at the Berks County Museum Council open house and the Reading Museum tree decorating contest. We hosted a Native American Lenape spring

celebration in cooperation with the local archaeology club and chapter of the Lenape Native Peoples.

As you can see, this was a busy year! Our volunteers are a dedicated and hard-working group and are vital to make all of this happen. Maintenance of building and grounds continue to require a lot of work. Our big accomplishment this year is the restoration of the ice house. Using a photo from the 1950s, it was restored to original appearances. All the wood for the rafters, roof deck and sill plate were custom sawn from trees on the farm. Special thanks to Alice Slisher for financial support and Bachman's Roofing for donating the cedar shake shingles and the labor to install them!

This year we are also in cooperation with IHeart Potato Project which is a local non-profit that grows and provides potatoes to local food banks. They are using seven acres of the farm to grow potatoes this season.

We can always use help. Opportunities exist to help with maintenance and historic research, as well as working as a tour guide or volunteering at any of our farm events. All financial support is greatly appreciated and is tax deductible. We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

14th Annual Farm Festival

August 22, 2026 | 10am - 4pm

Demonstrators • Exhibits of PA German Farm Life • Music Lectures • Hayrides • Hiking • House Tours • Food

NOTE: As last year, the family reunion (August 23) is scheduled for the same weekend as the farm festival (Saturday August 22). This allows cousins from out of the area to attend both events in one trip. While we work closely with DCOA, the DFHS is a completely separate entity.

Please flag me down at the reunion. I would like to meet you!

Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society Contact Information

Mark Dreibelbis, President, DFHS
(484) 340-9974 | mjdrei@verizon.net
www.dreibelbisfarm.org
Like us on Facebook!

Legacy, *continued*

I came to DCOA aware of my grandfather's connection to Berks County, having visited a few times as a child, and watched the 1990 genealogy book collect dust on my family's bookshelf for years. I assumed, in the way you do when you're young, that someone out there was keeping it all going. When I finally showed up at my first reunion, Eric was one of the first people I met. His exuberance and dedication were evident immediately, and it was clear that my faith, at least in this case, had not been misplaced. He did not do this alone, and I suspect he would be the first to tell you that. But his contribution to this organization has been remarkable, a sustained act of dedication and care, carried out over decades. With nearly thirty years on the board, he is the longest-tenured president in the organization's ninety-four-year history, a living testament to the DCOA's own byline: *Our Past... Bridging to Our Future.*

In this year's newsletter, I wanted to be sure we carved out space to celebrate him. Last year, Eric stepped down from the presidency and I was elected to succeed him. He has remained a gracious presence ever since, attending our meetings and coaching me through the rhythms of the role as I find my footing. I still have much to learn, and I'm not sure I'll ever fully fill his shoes. But it is his example, more than anything else, that I hope to follow.

Beyond his work with the DCOA, Eric is a man of considerable depth. The proud son of Jason and Eleanor, he carried on their tradition of teaching, earning an Ed.D. from Temple University and

spending a full career as a school administrator in Lancaster County. He is a devoted father to his daughters Amy and Lisa, and his wife Aimee, by all accounts, does an admirable job of keeping him in line. To be around Eric is to know a man with genuine enthusiasm for life and an uncommon capacity for both hard work and joy — qualities that, in my experience, rarely travel together in such equal measure.

I won't forget the volunteer work day we spent together at the Dreibelbis Farm. I remember being thoroughly drenched in sweat and taking stock of the fact that I was being outworked by a man nearly forty years my senior. But what I carried home that day was something more than humility. I got to know Eric as a person. He was knowledgeable about our family history in ways that could fill a room, but equally full of his own stories, the kind worth sitting down for. How often do you meet someone with an Ed.D. who also worked on an oil rig in the North Sea? Or who has summited the highest peak in all fifty states? When you see Eric at the reunion this year, make sure you get him talking. I promise you won't regret it.

Eric's legacy is one of dedication, service, and joy. I hope you'll join me in celebrating everything he has given this organization and thanking him for it. And if you're willing to go a step further, honor that legacy by volunteering — at the Dreibelbis Farm, or by joining us on the DCOA board. However you choose to show up, bring the same enthusiasm and generosity of spirit that Eric has always modeled for us. **Thanks for everything, Eric.**

"A living testament to the DCOA's own byline: Our Past... Bridging to Our Future."

Dreibelbis Cousins of America
Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society
53 Fox Road
Hamburg, PA 19526

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JOIN US FOR THE
Dreibelbis Cousins Reunion
Sunday, August 23, 2026



We are looking forward to seeing you
at the Historic Dreibelbis Farm!

GPS
356 Hard Hill Road | Hamburg, PA 19526
On the Map
Route 143, south of Virginville, PA

DCOA NEWSLETTER

Straight to Your Inbox!

Go digital and save us printing costs! Email Aimee at AimeeD@DreibelbisCousins.org to sign up — we'll notify you each year when the new issue is posted at DreibelbisCousins.org.

REGISTRATION

2026 DCOA Reunion

(Online registration and payment available @ DreibelbisCousins.org/registration)

NAMES OF ATTENDEES *(include ages of children for planned activities)*

House tour preference: 10:45am 3:00pm not interested

Want to lend a hand on reunion day? Please let us know if you're available: Setup (1 hr. before) I'm unable to help this time
 Cleanup (1 hr. after)

AGES	# ATTENDING	COST	TOTAL
12 - adult		\$13.00	
3 - 11		\$ 6.50	
under 3		Free	\$0
Not eating		Free	\$0

DONATIONS

Dreibelbis Cousins of America (DCOA)
*Newsletter printing and Postage • Genealogy
Artifacts • Website • John Jacob Dreibelbis
Cemetery Maintenance*

Dreibelbis Farm Historical Society (DFHS)

Total enclosed

Mail checks payable to **Dreibelbis Cousins of America** with registration form to Aimee Dreibelbis, 1213 Bartville Road, Christiana, PA 17509. Register by **August 14, 2026**.