



NEW LONDON, CONNECTICUT

From Your SFA President, Roger Swetland

It's Reunion Time!

The new year is here already and it is time to get serious about the SFA reunion at New London, Connecticut on July 17th-18th of this year. We have had some inquiries from newer contacts on the reunion, which is very encouraging, and would be glad to hear from more of you. Why should you be interested in a family reunion? You get the chance to meet new members of your family line and hear stories of how SFA relatives have contributed to this country and sometimes to the world. There are stories of happy times, sad times, and contributions by many of our older and current generations. We have traced out heritage back to about 1560, possibly in Sussex County, England.

We have ancestors and relatives that are or were ministers, doctors, ship captains, entrepreneurs, inventors, farmers, and some who have served their country in most all the wars and conflicts.

Whether your name is spelled Swetland, Sweatland, or Sweetland, we are all related. Some think that there was a dispute and three brothers decided to change the spelling. However, I am more confident that it has more to do with literacy and educational levels of the years past. The diaries of Joshua Hempstead show the name he spelled phonetically as Swetland is spelled Switland, Swetland and possible others depending on the day. Also, as an example, Adam is spelled "adm". Military records will lead you to about twenty-seven different spellings. So are there other relatives out there with different spellings that we haven't tied to ourselves? If you go back to generation two, (Thomas, James and John), we don't have any lineage for James or Thomas, do we?

Food for thought for now. Please join us at the reunion!

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Pier at New London

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- **PRESIDENT ENCOURAGES REUNION ATTENDANCE**
- **OUR PRESIDENT'S LIFE AND INTERESTS**
- **NEW LONDON PROMISES INTERESTING REUNION EVENTS**
- **WRITING AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY**
- **REGISTER FOR REUNION!**

Mary Lou Robinson Thomas
1931-2008

Mary Lou Thomas from Portville, NY passed away on November 12th after a bout with cancer at the age of 77. She attended many SFA reunions with her husband Bill, whose mother was Ruth Swetland.

Her daughter, Michele Grandusky, writes, "She had a true passion for our family history and many hours were spent together. Although we are sad that she is gone, she is at peace with my dad and all of those she searched for." She is missed.



Editor's Note: From time to time we invite an SFA member to tell us about themselves so we can become better acquainted. This issue features our SFA President, Roger Swetland.



Roger Swetland at the
2007 Reunion

Getting to Know Roger Swetland

I grew up on the family farm in Lawton, PA. My parents, Elmer and Dolores Swetland, moved onto the farm the year I was born. I am the second oldest of five, 3 boys and 2 girls. Our farm grew to 70 head of dairy cows on 250 acres and was the last farm in business on the 10 mile road we lived on. After high school I attended Williamsport Area Community College and was recruited by General Electric Co. of Westover, NY. From there I was drafted into the Army and received my AIT training at Ft. Belvoir VA in Special Electronic Devices. They kept the top five of us to be instructors, and from there all five were infused to Vietnam.

There I was a Senior Searchlight Repair Tech for B Battery 29th Artillery at Anke, Vietnam, along with other duties. There I received the Bronze star for meritorious service and was a Spec. 5 with Sgt. Stripes. Upon returning home, I went back to work at GE.

In 1970 I married Priscilla Green (your treasurer) and in the fall I went to work for Proctor & Gamble Paper Products as an Electrical and Instrument Controls Tech. I worked there for 29+ years on paper machines and led training, taking an early retirement in 2000. We have three sons, Tim, Brian and Jamie (your vice-president). Also we have 3 granddaughters and 2 grandsons. We enjoy all of them tremendously.

I became interested in SFA history and reunions from attending reunions as a child with my family. Being a descendent of Luke Swetland and living near his homestead added to my interest. I remember my great aunt reciting the genealogy line at 94 years of age and as a young child I thought she was just senile. Too bad someone never wrote it down!

I remember my grandparents referencing the prestige that the Swetland name held in the community and I felt a sense of pride in it. I decided to start researching my family line, partly influenced by the movie "Roots." Other relatives helped me, including my grandmother, who collected and saved information and wrote things down on envelopes or the back of wrapping paper, which started me doing the same thing.

One time our family traveled to the Swetland Homestead in Forty Fort, PA, where Luke Swetland had lived. We asked about the tour fee and were told that direct (continued on p. 3)

I became interested in SFA history and reunions from having attended reunions with my parents and grandparents as a child.

Donation Form (Please make checks out to Swetland Family Association)

My name is _____
Enclosed is my donation for the scholarship fund for _____

_____ I will arrange to have the newsletter emailed by simply doing the following:
Send an e-mail to Mark Harrison at mark@genesistems.com and ask to be placed on the S/S Lore email list.

MAIL TO:

Priscilla Swetland, Treasurer
RR #4, Box 121 A
Montrose, PA 18801-9437

descendants were free, but there were none living. Imagine the guides' surprise to see four generations of descendents come through the door!

My hobbies include restoring John Deere Tractors (15 at present), carpentry, history, antique autos, and helping friends and neighbors. I recently became interested in hydrogen as a supplemental fuel for vehicles. I designed and built our home in 1973, which is located on part of the farm I grew up on. We own 40 acres of the original farm. Priscilla and I enjoy the winter months in Davenport, Florida.



View This Newsletter,
Past Issues and more
at the SFA Website:
www.swetland.org

S/S Family Organization

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Treasurer: Priscilla Swetland

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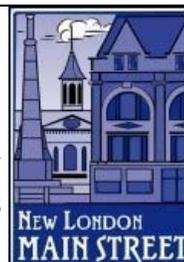
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SFA REUNION 2009,

by Jamie Swetland, Reunion Chairman



Make plans today to attend the SFA reunion on Friday and Saturday, the 17th and 18th of July. The location is New London, Connecticut.

You will meet and greet your near or distant relations first and foremost. Additionally, you should expect to learn more about the Swe(e)/(a)tlands and other colonialists in the Connecticut area in the early days of America. Since New London was one of the first well-established seaports for trade, whaling, and privateering, and we have maritime ancestors, I plan to work in some discussions, presentations, and/or a maritime tour.

A Call for Newsletter Articles and Photos

Send to: Anne Kirby, editor

3482 Concomly Rd. SE
Salem, OR 97306-9826
anne.kirby9@gmail.com

Friday, 27 July		Saturday, 18 July	
	Safe Travels and Journeys from your home location.	9:00 AM	Meet and Greet in Conference Room (Radisson Inn – New London)
	Check-in and Settle-in at your accommodations.	9:15 AM	Meeting comes to order and formal introductions made.
2:30 PM	Congregate at the lobby of the Radisson Inn, New London, CT	9:30 AM	Morning Discussion and Presentations (Volunteers Wanted)
3:00 PM	Visit to the Public Library of New London and Presentation on Genealogical Research	10:45 AM	Presentation of Scholarship Award
5:00 PM	Walk by the Joshua Hempstead house. A capitalizing entrepreneur of sorts, diarist, and a neighbor to Benjamin Swetland.	11:00 PM	Luncheon served in Conference Room
6:00 PM	Dine together at a local establishment (\$)	12:00 PM	Business Meeting & Election of Officers
7:30 PM	Stretch the legs after dinner for a walk through Ye Antientist Burial Ground to find Swe(e)/(a)tland headstones.	2:00 PM	Meeting adjourns and depart for possible maritime tour —details still being worked on. (?\$?)

We are working with the library to accommodate a tour of the library and a how-to presentation on extracting genealogical data from old manuscripts, records and newspapers. We plan to see the house of Benjamin Swetland's neighbor, Joshua

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Hempstead, plus the oldest colonial cemetery in New London Country and home of several of our ancestors, Ye Antientist Burial Ground.

The Radisson Inn in New London, CT is the site for our meeting and luncheon. If you plan to stay at the Inn, you may wish to receive our group discount. SFA members, the O'Connors, suggested going through Hotwire.com and booking a 3 star in New London. The Radisson will probably come up as the hotel, with a final room rate of about \$80 per night.

Please fill out the form on the next page and follow the instructions for payment to attend the reunion. We hope to see you there!



How I Wrote my Autobiography by Dale Z. Kirby

I had always planned to write my life's story some day, and so I kept journals, photos, and other memorabilia for that purpose. Last week I completed the book, *Dale Zollinger Kirby, My Life and Labors*. This five hundred page autobiography contains over one hundred eighty photographs and illustrations. The primary source for the book was my almost fifty-five years of personal journals. Beyond that, I kept a file folder each year of my life containing letters, cards, and memorabilia of all types gathered from the travels and adventures of my life. I chose pictures for the book from my collection of nearly 3,000 photos.

With these many resources I began the writing task by creating a list of possible chronological chapter titles. I then decided that these chapters should contain what I looked upon as important events, episodes, and individuals that influenced my life.

With these basic, outlined ideas I began reading through my journals and searching through my files to find stories, events, photos and illustrations to give life, interest and meaning to the written narrative.

As the writing process began with editing and re-reading taking place, some unrecorded events came to mind. My wife, Anne Sweetland Kirby, edited the text and recalled for me some additional meaningful stories and events. More information came from my five children and seven siblings.

The process has taken about sixty months. The book is written primarily for my posterity. Former colleagues from work and public service have requested copies. Libraries at universities, churches and genealogy centers likewise seek copies. So I made a list of these people and places which would receive a copy; thus I knew how many books to publish.

Books with indexes of names and genealogical information such as a pedigree chart are more likely to be accepted by genealogical and historical libraries, so I made sure to include those.

Writing my autobiography brought back many memories and I am pleased to have all the elements of my life's story in one place for interested persons and future generations.

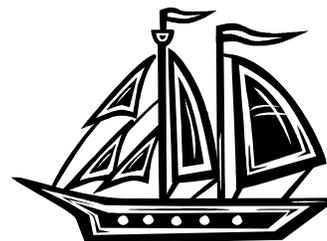
Sweetland/Swetland Family Association 2009 Reunion Registration Form

My payment of \$26.00 per person for the luncheon and meeting is included, made payable to Sweetland Family Association.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____



Total People Attending: _____ X \$26.00 = Total Money Sending in:

\$ _____

My name and the names of the other people attending with me are listed below.

* Please print clearly the names(s) as you would like them to appear on name tags.

Additional Information to help us size our Reunion needs.

1. I/We would like to take photos at the reunion and share with the SFA for publication on the website and/or newsletters and/or memory albums.

Yes/No _____ Digital/Film _____

2. I/We will arrive on Friday in time to go to the events. Yes / No _____

3. I/We will be attending the Friday night meal and gathering.

Yes/No _____ Number Attending: _____

4. I/We will be interested in a guided maritime tour Saturday afternoon.

Yes/No _____ Number Attending: _____

5. I/We would like to be on the agenda to speak on Swe(e)/(a)tland ancestors or topics.

Yes/No _____ Person Presenting: _____

Person(s) or topic you will be speaking about? _____

Please return form with appropriate payment to:
Priscilla Swetland Phone: 570-934-2187
RR #4 Box 121A (May to Nov.)
Montrose, PA 18801-9437 Phone: 570-498-9943
E-mail: rpswetland@epix.net (Dec. to April)

* A reunion map will be mailed to the person who fills out and sends in the form.

* Please note that the money you are sending in covers Saturday's lunch ONLY.

* You will be responsible for your supper on Friday night and IF we decide to attend a guided tour, then that may be an additional cost.