

Wolfensberger

Newsletter of the WOLFENBERGER FAMILY ASSOCIATION

January 1997, Vol. 1, No. 1

The American Family Forms An Association

The Wolfensberger family — in all its diverse spellings — has formed a family association to broaden communications among family members in the U.S. who descend from a Swiss knight whose origins are traceable to 13th Century Switzerland.

In a telephone conference call in December, eight members of the family formed the Wolfensberger Family Association to promote interest in the family's 700 year history.

In the conference call, the directors elected Larry Jones of Oklahoma City the full-time, unpaid director of the association, named 12 people to a Board of Directors, and unanimously named Heini Wolfensberger of Bauma, Switzerland, site of the family's ancestral home, an honorary Association trustee.

The association is open to anyone who is a descendent of the Swiss family Wolfensberger.

In the United States, the family names include such spellings as Wolfensberger, Wolfersberger, Wolfersperger, Wolfensperger, Wolfenbarger, Wolfenberger, Wolfinbarger, as well as Sparger, Spargur and other variations.

The earliest U.S. descendent, according to family historians, arrived in America in 1730 aboard an English ship, *Thistle of Glasgow*, bringing immigrants to Pennsylvania from a Rhine River port in present-day Germany.

Currently nearly 1,000 families with variations of the family's diverse names are listed in the nation's telephone directories. Even more families are descended from the Swiss forbears, of course, although their family names reflect countless marriages.

Membership is open to anyone descended from the family's Swiss ancestors. Dues are \$8 a year. New members receive a seven-color Wolfensberger Coat of Arms badge. All members will receive this association newsletter, to be published four times a year.

Call Association Director Larry Jones at (405) 721-4383 for information.

Family's Swiss Roots Date to 13th Century Knight

The family's early history is spelled out in the "Deutsche Schweizerisches Geschlechterbuch", a 4 1/2" by 6" book published in 1929. A copy of the book was given by the Wolfensberger family of Bauma, Switzerland, to Bob Wolfenbarger, an Association Director from Summit, New Jersey, in 1962. An introduction to the family history in this book was translated in the 1960s and edited by Larry Jones in 1994.

The 1929 family history was underwritten by Jakob Wolfensberger, late father of Heini and Robert Wolfensberger, of Bauma, who have preserved the family's history. Following are excerpts from the introduction:

The numerous and widely scattered Wolfensberger family derives its name from the settlement of Wolfesberg near the villages of Baretswil and Bauma in Switzerland. These villages are 20 to 30 miles northeast of Zurich.

"The word Wolfesberg means "Mount of the Wolf". In

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'95 Reunions Scheduled In Two States

Following a Wolfenbarger Family Reunion in Grainger County, Tennessee, in June, a 1995 reunion gathering is planned in the same location this June.

The 1994 reunion was attended mainly by descendants



of Huey Walter Buck Wolfenbarger, born in October, 1898, in Washburn, Grainger County.

Last year's reunion was coordinated by Edna Dyer. The 1995 reunion is tentatively planned for June 24 at the same location. The date will be confirmed this month. If interested, contact Mrs. Dyer at

Route 3, Box 454, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861. Call (615) 828-8299.

Families attending the event:

Charles W. and Grace Phipps, Route 2, Box 196, Powder Springs, Tennessee 37848.

Tony and Linda Wolfenbarger, 30015 Lonnie Drive, Westland, Michigan 48185.

Ruth Harding, Route 4, Box 207, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861.

Wawona Moody, Route 1, Box 163, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861.

Rev. Carl and Jenny Wolfenbarger, 1403 River Road, New Market, Tennessee 37820.

John Wolfenbarger, 533 Ensley Drive # 29, Knoxville, Tennessee 37920.

Jack Sharp, 6507 Flint Gap, Tennessee 37914.

Rev. Oliver and Carrie Wolfenbarger, 1316 Spring Hill Road,

Knoxville, Tennessee 37914.

Scotty and Julie Wolfenbarger, Maynardsville, Tennessee.

Stella Beason.

James, Kay and Ronnie Wolfenbarger.

Louise and Roy Loueday, Stomer Road, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Rick and Tammy Wiggs, 55376 Jerico Lane, Knoxville, Tennessee.

Bruce and Easter Wolfenbarger, 195 Morris Dr., Cedartown, Georgia 30125.

Jerry and Joyce Vinyard, Route 4, Box 389A, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861.

Harold and Rebecca Moody, Route 1, Box 162, Rutledge, Tennessee 37861.

Bobby and Shelia Wolfenbarger, 4727 Lakeview Road, Louisville, Tennessee 37777.

Shane and Staci Wolfenbarger, 4620 Gillcrest Drive, Knoxville, Tennessee 37938.

Christopher L. Rupert, 1817 Whittle Springs Road, Knoxville, Tennessee 37917.

Edna and Carl Dyer.

Beulah L. Sharp, 2801 Calloway Road, Apt 708, Tyler, Texas 75707.

Stewart and Deborah Thorpe, 10408 Arnold Lane, Mascot, Tennessee 37806.

Mary Deloris Winkler, 7000 Tazwell Pike, Corryton, Tennessee 37721.

Lawrence (Larry) M. and Izora Jones, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Rondy and wife Wolfenbarger, Cloud Switch, Route 2, New Tazwell, Tennessee.

Texas Reunion for Wolfenbergers Planned for July 1995 in Bastrop

The Wolfenberger family came together in east Texas last July, bringing together descendants of Samuel Wolfenberger, a young Virginian who came to the sprawling Mexican territory in 1831 with waves of adventurous Americans in search of prosperity.

Fifty-one descendants came to the Wolfenberger Family Reunion in Bastrop, Texas, on July 30 1994, and plans are being made to hold a 1995 reunion in Bastrop this

July. The 1994 reunion was coordinated by Billie Jo Moncure

Plans for a 1995 reunion are being coordinated by Vernon Osborn, a member of the Wolfenberger Family Association Board of Directors. Osborn lives at 10123 Caddo Drive, Magnolia, Texas 77355. His phone number is (713) 356-3211

The family descended from Samuel Wolfenberger, who

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Tracing Family's 700 Year-Old Roots

(Continued from page 1)

the earliest written word, the form of the name is Wolfensberger. The name later took on many forms, including Wolfensperger, Wolfersperger, Wolfesberger, Wollfersparger, Wofisberger and Wolfsberg.

Today most of the Swiss family spells the name Wolfersperger or Wolfensberger.

Castle Wolfesberg

"The Castle Wolfesberg stood on a steep hill in the Village of Ober-Wolfesberg, near present-day Baretswil and Bauma in northeastern Switzerland. It was the home of the Noble Knight of the

same name, Knight Baldebert of Wolfesberg from 1233 to 1259. Knight Baldebert and probably others of the family endowed the Monastery at Ruti, where the Coat of Arms was displayed and where many of the family now lie buried. This castle is listed in the Book of Zurich Castles.

"A descendent, Hermann von Wolfesberg, was slain in the Battle of Morgarten fighting the Swiss while serving the Duke Leopold of Austria.

Dorothea von Wolfesberg was married to Walter von Schalsen in 1316. Noble von Hinwil leased his estate to the sons of von Wolfesberg for a rental of 2 pounds annually from 1393 through 1394, and from then on for 2 mutt and 1 malter.

"The estate, the hof Wolfesberg, was leased from 1432 to 1438 by the Monastery

Ruti. In 1439, it appeared that hof was freed from the monastery since no further tax entries appear in local tax books. A few years later, the "Old Zurich War" broke out. Inhabitants of the region attempted to protect the City of Zurich in order to gain rights of citizenship in the city.

Among those admitted to citizenship during that time was Hans Wolfesberg, a weaver, who was admitted to citizenship on June 22, 1446. At about this time, traces of the von Wolfesberg family name became more and more difficult to find. Replacing it was Wolfensberger.

"The Wolfensberger Coat of Arms was established before 1500. It was red and showed a silver wolf on three green hills. A silver wolf's head with red and silver cape was on a blue helmet."

The Wolfensberger Coat of Arms Badge Is Free With '95 Dues



The family's 500 year-old coat of arms is depicted in this cloth badge.

Was There a Family Castle? Yes, But Nothing Remains of Swiss Fortress

Larry Jones visited Bauma, meeting with Heini and Robert Wolfensberger in Switzerland in March of 1994. There he looked for the forgotten site of the family castle:

"The castle location was probably on a fortified hill where the Wolfensberger ancestors would probably go in times of attack. Heini and I went to the Village of Ober

Wolfesberg, which is about three kilometers southeast of Bauma. This castle probably was located on a flattened hill-top with steep sides all around. Nothing remains of the castle or fortress. The flat area was about 96 feet in the north-south direction and about 66 feet in the east-west direction. The steep slopes along the sides are now heavily wooded."

Texas Reunion Planned in '95 For Wolfenberger Family

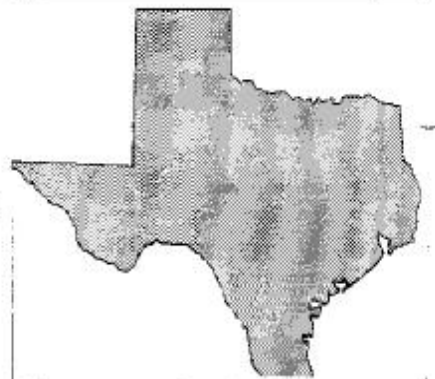
(Continued from page 2)

was born April 8, 1804, in Wytheville, Virginia. He migrated to Texas in 1831, five years before the establishment of the Republic of Texas. Honorees at the reunion were Frank Wolfenberger, Georgia Moncure and Velma Shirley, brother and sisters, all in their late 80s.

1994 attendees

Attending the 1994 reunion:
Billie Jo Wedlund, 9530 Quail Village Lane, Austin, Texas 78758
Clodie and Calvin Wyatt, Route 1, Box 5B, Bastrop, Texas 78602
Lawrence (Larry) M. and Izora Jones, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma
Marilyn and Glenn Leonard, P. O. Box 262, Edmond, Oklahoma 73083.
Debra and Louis Lloyd, 1402 Spanish Moss, Lufkin, Texas 75904.
Lois and Gordon Smith, 1902 North Highway 95, Little River, Texas 76554.
Frank and Annie Wolfenberger, 1814 Wilson, Bastrop, Texas 78602.
Fannie Merle and Don C. Welch, 402 Neal Road, Wharton, Texas 77488.
Brenda Fehlker, 104 Short Street, Smithville, Texas 78957.
Lisa Osborn and Elvin McCarty, 10123 Caddo, Magnolia,

Texas 77355.
Walter Hoffman, Cedar Creek, Texas 78612
Anne Carrington, 7 Tanglewood, San Marcos, Texas.
Woodie and Betty Wolfenberger, 15813 Elwood, Houston, Texas 77040.
Clifton Malmay, Conroe, Texas.
Lula Mae Wolfenberger, Cleveland, Texas.
Mark Wedlund, 9515 Bluecreek, Austin, Texas 78758.
Daniel Smith, Bastrop, Texas.
Gary and Karen Osborn, 18214 Almonte, Tomball, Texas 77375.
Rebecca Mason, 128 Del Mar, Port Lavaca, Texas 77977.
Nolan and Lucille Murchison, P. O. Box 551, Manchaca, Texas 78652.
Velma Shirley, P. O. Box 363, Manchaca, Texas 78652.
Denise and Keith Ralph, 603 Clyde Court, San Marcos, Texas 78666.
Durie Mason, 1013 Chestnut, D-4, San Marcos, Texas 78666.
Ken O. Murchison, P. O. Box 9, Cedar Creek, Texas 78612.
Nola Provost, 6 Gate Hill Drive, The Woodlands, Texas 77381.
Janice Thomas, 5404 FM 973, Del Valle, Texas 78617.
Jimmy and Sandi Moncure, 12214 Zavalla, Houston, Texas 77085.
Vrai and Jacob Moncure, 7015 Neff, Houston, Texas 77074.
Dot and B. J. Davis, 6508



Westover, Granbury, Texas 76049.

Ruby and Earl Braden, 315 Church Street, Eagle Lake, Texas.

Eleanor and Ray Brasseaux, 2915 Oak Drive, Bay City, Texas.

Vernon Osborn, Magnolia, Texas.

Georgia Moncure, Bastrop, Texas.

Wolfenbarger Reunion Set In Kentucky in September

A Wolfenbarger Family Reunion was held in Irvine, Ky., in September, 1994.

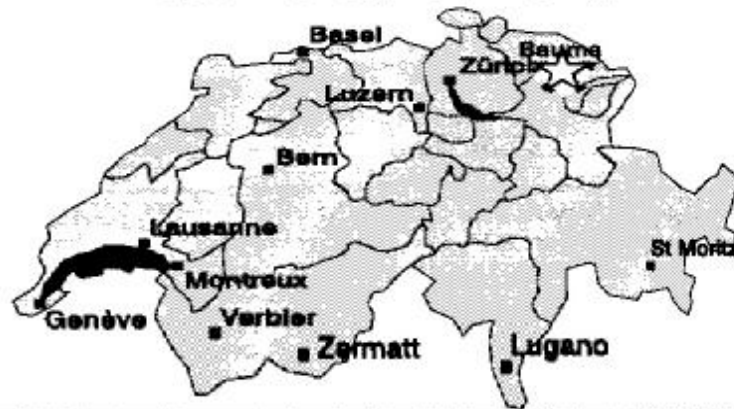
Attendees were mostly descendants of Peter Amos Wolfenbarger, born in 1796 in Greenbrier County, Virginia (now West Virginia).

A 1995 reunion is planned for September. If interested, please contact Dick Gault, P. O. Box 295, Trenton, Ohio 45067.

**See '95 Schedule
of Family Reunions
Page 6**

Where the Wolfensberger Family Began

*The Family's 13th Century Roots
Lie In The Foothills of The Alps*



The small village of Bauma in Switzerland, shown at starred site east of Zurich, is believed to be the ancestral home of the Wolfensberger family. It is also the family

home of Heini and Robert Wolfensberger, who have maintained the rich history of family. The family is said have descended from, Baldebert, a 13th Century knight.

12 From N.J. to Washington Chosen To Head Nationwide Wolfensberger Family Association

Bonnie Aspenson

11205 Leaning Elm Road,
Oklahoma City, Okla. 73120
(405) 751-5491

Lawrence M. Jones

6400 N. Ann Arbor Terrace
Oklahoma City, Okla. 73132
(405) 721-4383

Myrna Liddell

2747 East Parkwood Drive
Langley, Washington 98206
(206) 321-4798

Ivylyn Martin

4588 West Pine
Mt. Airy, NC 27030
(910)352-4180

Vernon Osborn,

10123 Caddo Drive,
Magnolia, Texas 77355,
(713) 356-3211

Weldon Parks, D.D.S.

418 Marcus Drive,
Lewisville, Texas 75057
(214) 436-5358

John W. Sparger

615 North Main Street
Marion, Virginia 24345
(703) 783-7570

James Spargur

P.O. Box 576
Waynesville, Ohio 45068
(513) 897-7491

Shirley Sutphen

2392 East Miami Road,
Montrose, Colorado 81401
(303) 249-3760

Robert J. Wolfenbarger

30 Harvey Drive
Summit, New Jersey 07901
(908) 273-7631

Wolf Wolfensberger, Ph.D

301 Scottholm Boulevard
Syracuse, New York 13224
(315) 446-2944

William W. Wolfensberger

327 Lanny Drive,
Winchester, Virginia 22601
(703) 662-2299

Remembering Benjamin Wolfenbarger, Whose U.S. Descendents Range From 4,000 to 5,000

By Larry Jones

Benjamin Wolfenbarger, third child of John Wolfersberger, Jr. and Hanna Summer, was born in Lebanon County, Pennsylvania, sometime around 1758. Children of John and Hanna included Peter; John, III; Frederick; Benjamin; Hannah; Philip; Mary; Joseph and Barbara. John III moved to Mt. Airy, NC, where he changed his name to Sparger. After raising his family he moved to Highland County, Ohio, where several of his sons had previously moved. There he changed his name to Spargur.

It is close to a tie between John Sparger-Spargur and Peter Wolfenbarger as to who has the most descendants. They each have 4,000 to 5,000 descendants.

The father of Benjamin and the rest of the family was John Wolfersberger, Jr. and his father was John or Johannes Wolfersberger and they both were born in the Alsace area of what in now France and came to PA in 1730.

Benjamin with his family moved to Shenandoah County, VA in 1770. He moved to Greenbriar County, VA, which is now WV, in 1780. He married Catherine BROWN on Au-

gust 7, 1780. It appears that Benjamin and Catherine had four children and that they all were born in Greenbriar County. It appears that Catherine died in about 1783 and probably in Greenbriar County. It appears that Benjamin and his four children moved to Wythe County, VA in about 1797. He married

It is close to a tie between John Sparger-Spargur and Peter Wolfenbarger as to who has the most descendants.

Elizabeth Miller on April 9, 1798.

Elizabeth Miller was the sister of Susannah Miller, the wife of Benjamin's brother, Peter. Elizabeth and Susannah

were the daughters of Jacob Miller (changed from Mueller) of Woodstock, Shenandoah County, Virginia. Jacob Miller was an educated man, and when he died, 15 Sep 1749, he left a great amount of money and property to his family in a will. Those mentioned in his will were Barbara, his wife; his children Ulrich; Jacob, Jr; Barbara; Christian; Susannah, wife of Peter; Mary and Martin. His last three children were born in Pennsylvania while the others were born in Zweibrucken, Germany. His will also mentioned George Decon, his male servant, and Elizabeth Smith, his female servant. Curiously, there is no mention of a daughter Elizabeth. Perhaps his daughter Mary's middle name was Elizabeth. Jacob died in May

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Planning For '95 Reunions?

Wilkinson-Wolfenbarger Family, September 10, Near Blue Springs, Missouri
Contact: Carmen Reed, Rte. 1, Box 189, Bates City MO 64011 (816) 625-4729

Manford Wolfenbarger Sr. Descendents, June 17 Near Wyandotte, Oklahoma
Contact: Anna Ruth Crabtree,

Rte. 2, Box 268, Neosho MO 64850 (417) 451-5427

Wolfenbarger Family of Kentucky, September
Contact: Dick Gault, P.O. Box 295, Trenton OH 45067
Samuel Wolfenbarger Family of Grainger County,

(Continued on page 7)

'95 Reunion Bound?

(Continued from page 6)

Tenn., late June
Grainger County Park
Contact: Edna Dyer,
Rte. 3, Box 454,

Rutledge TN 37861
(615) 828-8299

Samuel Wolfenbarger Descendants, August

Near Weatherford, Texas
Contact: Lorene Rothrock,
816 S. Alamo St.,

Weatherford TX 76086

Samual Wolfenbarger of Wythe Co., Virginia, Descen-

dents, July 15
Senior Citizens Building in
Bastrop, Texas

Contact: Vernon Osborn,
10123 Caddo Drive,
Magnolia TX 77355
(713) 356-3211

Sparger Family, August 17
The East home
610 W. Old Town St., Galax,
Virginia

Contact: Ray Webb,
215 Hawthorn Road,
Elkins NC 28621
(910) 835-2421

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1766.

The 1810 Virginia census showed Benjamin Wolfenbarger as the head of a family in Wythe County. This census showed the following: one male over 45, one female over 45, one female 26-36, one female 16-26, two males 10-16, one female 10-16, one female and one male under ten.

I have the record of an Adam R. Wolfenbarger, born 1807 - 1809 somewhere in Wythe County, Virginia. I can not prove that this person was the son of Benjamin and Elizabeth, but I'm willing to leave him here as one of their children. There was a letter from a Robert K. Shires or Shores to Samuel Wolfenberger, a son of Benjamin and Elizabeth that states the following,

"Mrs. Sarah Ryle, your sister is in good health and also my father, his family. " This tells me that one of the unidentified female children of Benjamin married a man by the name of Ryles and the name of the other unidentified females had the

name of Sarah. This Samuel did a lot of letter writing to his relation in Virginia.

These letters are in the vicinity of Bastrop, TX and no one has been able to obtain them from the person that has them, but I will continue to try. If I ever can obtain a copy of these letters, assembling the missing pieces will probably be easy. In an attempt to piece the known with the unknown, I have come up with the following: The children of Benjamin and Catherine were Hannah, born about 1783; Elizabeth, born about 1785; an unidentified son born between 1786 and 1793, the unidentified daughter was probably named Sarah or the one that married a Mr. Ryles and she was probably born between 1786 and 1793. The children of Benjamin and Elizabeth were the female age 10-16 shown in the 1810 census and she probably was either Sarah or the one that married a Mr. Ryles, Adam R. as shown above as being born 1807-1809 and Samuel born 8 Apr 1804.

Myrtle Wolfenbarger Braun was a great family ge-

nealogist. Myrtle's daughter, Bonnie Aspenson, is a member of our Board of Directors. In one of her documents she stated that Benjamin had five children that were not credited to him. She probably saw the same 1810 census that I saw. The information on Adam R. Wolfenbarger and his descendants came from Patricia Johnson of Oak Grove, Missouri.

I have some of the records of Hanna. She married a Furrow. Records of her descendants show that they are scattered throughout Texas, New Mexico and several other states.

I have a pretty good set of records of the descendants of Adam. He ended up in Missouri where there are still several of his descendants living. I have a very good record of the descendants of Samuel. Thanks to Vernon Osborn of Houston, Texas and several others in his family.

Join Now!

Register now to join the Wolfensberger Family Association, a not-for-profit organization whose primary purpose is to provide communications of family events, reunions and news of interest to members of the families descended from the Wolfensberger family of Switzerland.



Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Please circle the name of your family:

WOLFENSBERGER

WOLFENBERGER

WOLFENSPERGER

WOLFENSPERGER

WOLFENBARGER

SPARGER

SPARGUR

Or other variations of the family name

Please send check for \$8.00 for a full year's membership in the Wolfensberger Family Association. Make check payable to the Wolfensberger Family Association and mail with completed form to WFA, 6400 N. Ann Arbor Terr., Oklahoma City OK 73132.

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Wolfensberger

WOLFENSBERGER FAMILY ASSOCIATION
6400 North Ann Arbor Terrace
Oklahoma City OK 73132
Director, Lawrence M. Jones



See schedule of '95 reunions, p. 6

Why not plan now to attend family reunions in 1995?
They're in Kentucky, Ohio, Texas and Tennessee.
(As a courtesy, first notify the reunion organizer)

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