

2014 Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family Reunion June 13, 14 & 15, 2014

Friday, June 13 Berks County PA

9:00 am

Meet at the Berks County Courthouse, Register of Wills 2nd floor, 633 Court Street, Reading, PA

Brief history of the Sauvage/Sowash family in Berks County

View the original 1761 German will of immigrant Johannes Sauvage

Lunch on your own

1:00 p.m. Visit [Christ \(Mertz\) Lutheran Church](#) 16 Fleetwood Road, Fleetwood, PA Latitude 40.464492° Longitude -75.751146°

We will have a brief history of the area and view the church record book which records:

- 27 Nov 1749 marriage of Heinrich Sowash (son of Johannes) to Maria Schneider
- 26 Jan 1751 baptism of their daughter Johanna Elizabeth Sowash

2:30 p.m. Visit the David Bitler farm 290 Ruth Rd, Fleetwood, PA Latitude 40.466695° Longitude -75.776837°

Visit the nearly intact tract of land that Johannes purchased in 1743 as well as the cemetery, vacated in 1865, where Johannes, his wife Susanna and other family members were probably buried.

Dinner on your own

You can either stay in the Reading area or make part of the drive to Greensburg in the afternoon.

Saturday, June 14 Westmoreland County PA (Greensburg area)

A.m. Travel to Greensburg

Noon – Meet at [Hannastown](#), 809 Forbes Trail Road, Greensburg, PA - Group admission & box lunch - \$14

We will have a box lunch and hear about life in the area around 1790 when many of the family moved to Westmoreland County. We will visit the Hannastown Village as it might have appeared at the time of the Sowash family's migration to Westmoreland County.

2:00 p.m. Visit [Brush Creek Reformed Church](#) & Cemetery, 178 Brush Creek Rd, Irwin, PA This church was completed in 1820 and many births, marriages and funerals were conducted here. The funeral for John Sowash Sr (died 1827) would have been conducted here and he is buried right outside the front door.

View the gravestones of [Henry](#) and his son [John Sowash Sr](#)
Approximate grave locations - Latitude 40.319514 Longitude: -79.657082

On your own self-guided tours of Westmoreland County. As soon as I know who is coming, I can prepare appropriate tours related to your family.

- John Sowash land tour
- Daniel Sowash land tour
- Abraham Sowash family graves
- George Sowash land & graves

6:00 Social time and dinner – Ramada Inn 100 Ramada Inn Drive, Greensburg, PA
Buffet dinner - Chicken Marsala & Roast Chuck Filet Gorgonzola, Herb Roasted Red Potatoes, Green Beans Almondine, Tossed and Caesar Salad, rolls & butter, dessert, tea & coffee. \$30 per person. Children under ten \$15

For room reservations, call Ramada Inn 724 836-6060 and mention the Sowash reunion. Room rates \$94 per night double occupancy for reservations **before May 10**.

Sunday, June 15

Attend services at Brush Creek Church if desired

If you have other family members who would be interested in attending the reunion, please email me (rsoash@att.net) with their email addresses and I will add them to the email as I send out final details.

You can also join the Sowash/Soash Facebook group at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/124647080920275/>.

Check out the family website at <http://www.soash.org/soash.htm>. I have just added a new feature so that you can find your family connection at <http://www.soash.org/sowash/index.html>. Click the **Help** link to learn how the site works. The site should list no information on living descendants so if you find anything, please let me know. I would be grateful for any additions or corrections. If you have original documents such as Bible records, birth, marriage or death records, obituaries or similar documents, I would appreciate copies to add to the archives. I am in the process of scanning over 5,000 source documents to create a digital archives to better preserve our family's history.

Hope to see you all at the reunion.

Thanks,
Richard Soash
rsoash@att.net
316 215-5118

**2014 Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family Reunion
June 13, 14 & 15, 2014**

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____ Cell phone _____

Friday, June 13

I plan on attending activities in the Reading Yes _____ No _____

Saturday, June 14

Admission to Hannastown & box lunch

Number attending _____ x \$14 _____ Total

Ramada Inn Banquet

Number adults _____ x \$30 _____ Total

Number children under 10 _____ x \$15 _____ Total

Total Enclosed _____

Please return this form to Richard Soash, 6827 Redbud Dr, Manhattan, KS 66503 by May 1.
Please make checks out to Richard Soash.

If you have questions, call Richard at 316 215-5118 or rsoash@att.net

Brief Sauvage/Sowash/Soash Family History

Johannes Sauvage (French for “of the woods” or “savage”) was born about 1698, probably in the area of Alsace-Lorraine area of France. This area is on the French-German border and has changed hands many times during wars in the area. Johannes is the German version of French “Jean” and Sauvage is definitely French. At the time, France was a Catholic nation so many Protestants fled to Germany to escape religious repression.

Johannes Sauvage, his wife Susannah and at least two children sailed for America on the "Winter Galley". The ship left from Rotterdam, Holland, making a stop in Deal, England. Only English ships were allowed to make the trip to the new colonies. They arrived in Philadelphia on 05 Sep 1738. Most of the passengers were listed as Wurtembergers, Hannoverians, Saxons and Alsatians.

Johannes apparently could not read or write as he put his mark rather than signing his name. He also put his mark on his will, which was in German, rather than signing his name. This is important as much of the Anglicization of the Sauvage name probably would not have happened had he been able to write/spell his own name. The French pronunciation of Sauvage (sō vāj) is very close to Sowash, especially in the German speaking community. Johannes settled in Berks County where he purchased land in 1743. Today that tract of land is still nearly completely intact.

Johannes died in 1761 in Berks County, PA where his will (in German) was proved. He was probably buried on his land in a family graveyard that was vacated in 1865.

The two proven children of Johannes are Anna Elizabetha and Johan Heinrich/Henry Sowash. Nothing is known of Anna Elizabetha. It is probable that there was another son as there is a branch of the family that remained in Berks County and retained the Americanized Savage name.

Henry was born about 1731 in France or Germany. He was naturalized in 1761 after the death of his father. He married Maria Anna Esther Schneider on 27 Nov 1749 in Mertz Church, Rockland Twp., Berks Co., PA. Their marriage and the baptism of their daughter Johanna Elizabetha (26 Jan 1751) are recorded in the Mertz Church book.

Both Henry and his oldest son Daniel served in the Revolutionary War, allowing descendants to join Sons or Daughters of the American Revolution.

After the death of his wife about 1783 (probably buried in the family graveyard), Henry moved to Virginia with his son-in-law and by 1785, he had moved to Westmoreland County, PA. His will was proved 10 Jun 1799. No record of his burial has been found, but the family association erected a memorial stone in Brush Creek Cemetery.

Henry and Maria had four known daughters and two sons. Most Sowash/Soash families in America today are descended from these two sons [Daniel](#) and [John Sowash Sr.](#)