



The Steere Family Newsletter

The year 2020 marks the beginning of a new year and a new decade. The Steere Family Executive Board is excited to announce our 90th Annual Family Reunion! A lot has changed in the past 90 years; the first reunion was in 1930 during the Great Depression. Gas was .20 a gallon, eggs were .18 a dozen and a loaf of bread was .08. It was also a time of inventions, the first car radio, color cartoons, scotch tape, chocolate chip cookies, and the frozen food process that would lead to a Steere Family favorite Ice Cream. During the 1930's any distractions from the reality of the great depression was welcomed, and iconic figures such as Henry Ford, Babe Ruth, and movies like Gone with the Wind and The Wizard of OZ became larger than life. Our ancestors would be proud to see the continuation of the Steere Family Reunion tradition that they started back in August of 1930.

The Steere's survived over the years because of the diverse skills each branch of the family learned. As the harvest season came to a close, our family was able to come together for a day relaxation, fun and food. Some branches of our family owned apple orchards, corn fields, vegetable farms and were cattle farmers. Many were also talented with turning the local berries into sweet desserts.

There is one very special Steere member, Kenneth Wade Steere. He has been the reigning champion of the oldest Steere present for the past three reunions. In 1930 he was 8 years old at the time of the first reunion, this year he will be celebrating his 98th birthday. Raised in Ohio, his dad was actively involved in the Steere Family Association and made sure that his family made the long trip to Rhode Island for reunions. Back then the speed limit was not what it is today so that trip would take over a day to complete. Having Kenneth at the reunion is appreciated and he is someone that many of us look forward to visiting with each year.

Your executive board is composed of many generations of Steere Family. Each of us has fond memories of reunions that we have attended. Food seems to be a common memory, whether it was a basket lunch, potlucks or sometimes catered meals allowed us to spend time and stories together. Many remember reunions being held at the Basa Club in Foster, the apple orchard in Greenville or the farms in Chepachet. We looked forward to touring different family landmarks, mills, and cemeteries around Rhode Island that all tie back to our heritage. A past president of the executive board was

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Anthony Steere. He is remembered because he used to own a flower shop and presented the winners in each category a thoughtful gift. Kathryn Steere who invented many tasty punches (which are still used today) would make batch after batch for those hot summer days. Another more recent fond memory is one of Buster Steere allowing us to fill a dunk tank one year which caused the well to dry up; all of these memories are treasured. Some of us remember as children the boring speakers that were at the reunions and now as adults are dedicated to providing informative lectures with lots of laughs and interesting topics for all to enjoy. Many of us remember bobbing for apples, hayrides, making cider, visiting all the farm animals and of course enjoying the ice cream.

Some years are met with harsh summer temperatures, pouring rain, tornado warnings, and some years are just beautiful. No matter the weather, the reunions go on. Each year new special memories are created for the attendees. It has been a way to connect with all branches of the family and meet 2nd, 3rd or even 4th cousins from all over the world. Just as Kenneth traveled to some of the first reunions, today many travel from Greece and all over the United States to attend. Technology today allows a person to find anyone, but this is not a replacement for sharing a meal and a good story in person with family.

This year we are excited to take a family trip to England and visit Ockley where our ancestry began. Anyone is welcome to come, please see the attached flyer with more information.

The 90th reunion will be held July 31st – August 2nd 2020, in Chepachet, Rhode Island. The theme of the reunion this year will be: Following in John Steere's Footstep's. On Friday night we will have photos and a trip review. We will bring our travel experiences from Ockely, England to Chepachet, RI for everyone to enjoy. On Saturday we will have a group bus tour; more details will be following. Saturday afternoon we will gather at the George Steere SR. Farm with lots of activities, food, and fun.

Each year there are new family and friends that come to meet each other and we encourage you to join us and start to make some memories with your family!