

Top Seven Accomplishments: What The Dillman Family Association (DFA) has taught us about Dillman ancestry

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Ancestry is about much more than biological inheritance.

- Yes, it is about our DNA (Deoxyribonucleic acid) the main constituent of chromosomes that carries our genetic information.
- But it's also about:
 - Our surnames.
 - Languages we learn.
 - Geography of where we live.
 - Physical features from eye color to ear lobes and hair.
 - Cultural behaviors—from country and religious values to how we talk to one another.
 - Family experiences that teach us to be who we become.

I am not a genealogist!

- But, I am a curious person.
- I think of myself as someone who enjoys putting pieces together, and while trying hard not to get lost in either the clouds or the weeds.
- I have learned a lot from the DFA, and would like to describe what I see as the Top Seven Accomplishments of our organization.
- And, I'll do that by relating it to my personal journey to understand my family ancestry.

Here is what I now know about my paternal line of descent:

1 Germany, Johannes Conrad	~1651-
2 Germany, Hans-George Sr.	1682-1732
3 Germany → Pennsylvania, Hans-George Jr.	1724-
4 Pennsylvania → Kentucky Andrew Sr.	1753 – 1823
5 Kentucky → Indiana , Andrew Jr.	1790 – 1872
6 Indiana → Iowa , Andrew III.	1827- 1866
7 Iowa George Washington	1853-1934
8 Iowa Glenn Andrew	1892-1989
9 Iowa Floyd Andrew	1913-1983
10 Iowa → Washington Donald Andrew	1941-

My personal journey probably started with Memorial visits to this cemetery, two miles from the Iowa farm where I was raised. Andrew Dillman was the first of five generations of Dillmans in Lucas County Iowa



Dillman, Don A. August 2018



Growing up, I knew virtually nothing about the previous four generations except they lived in Indiana and perhaps Pennsylvania

1	Germany, Johannes Conrad	~1651-
2	Germany, Hans-George Sr.	1682-1732
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5	Kentucky → Indiana , Andrew Jr.	1790 – 1872
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7	Iowa George Washington	1853-1934
8	Iowa Glenn Andrew	1892-1989
9	Iowa Floyd Andrew	1913-1983

A Chance Encounter in 1967

- At a work-related conference at the University of Utah, a woman asked me if I was related to a Dillman who moved to Vernal Utah.
- I knew, that my great grandfather's brother (Simon Peter Dillman) had moved there and said yes! She responded by saying that I should call his daughter-in-law, (Mildred, wife of his deceased son, Ray).
- Mildred sketched out the parents and children of the three previous generations from notes she had taken during visits to descendants
 - 3 Germany → Pennsylvania, Hans-George Jr. 1724-
 - 4 Pennsylvania → Kentucky Andrew Sr. 1753 – 1823
 - 5 Kentucky → Indiana , Andrew Jr. 1790 – 1872
- Her records, which she had placed in the LDS Genealogical Library indicated the immigrants had come from Prussia.
- That was the end of what I knew until 1988.

Help from German friends in 1988

- I made multiple trips to Mannheim, Germany, for work at a “survey methods” research center, and people there told me Dillmann was a German name.
- I explained that we had heard that Dillmann’s had lived in Illigen, only an hour from Mannheim. Hans-Jeurgan and Gabi Hippler (a genealogist) said they would take us to the village to “look around”.
- We saw a Dillman School and street with the Dillmann name before going to the cemetery and looking for tombstones.

The church, and other old buildings in Illigen



In one corner of the cemetery was some very old Dillmann grave markers with (annual) begonias planted in front of them; someone was taking care of the burial plots.



Dillman, Don A. August 2018

A passerby took us to a “YMCA” picnic and we would find Emil Hoss whose mother was a Dillmann. He was maintaining the graves so they had not been recycled



Dillman, Don A. August 2018

Emil Hoss gave our friend a phone number (or called) Erich Dihlmann., a well known genealogist

- Erich, said that he didn't think we were related
 - “But the French and Germans often fought over this area, and records may have been destroyed.”
- We left, not really knowing more than we had known before, but to us it seemed like a tantalizing possibility.
- Nothing else happened until I got a strange letter in the mail 24 years later.

The 2002 Dillman Mega-Reunion

- Four organizers—**Earl Dillman, Phil Dillman, Margueritte Dillman and June Riccio** had sent letters to everyone named Dillman that they could find.
- About 70 of us met in Indianapolis in the midst of an area where many Dillmans had lived.
- Copy machines ran continuously in order to create a CD with as many Dillman materials as possible.
- The sharing had begun!

Earl Dillman kept us on task. “This mega-reunion is not about hotdogs and t-shirts.” Can we answer the questions about who we are and how we are related?”



Dillman, Don A. August 2018

Margueritte Dillman inspired us to share the materials we had and see what we could learn. (See CD from first 2002 Conference for a recording)



Dillman, Don A. August 2018

And that's what we did for the next two days!



Some of the attendees at The 2002 Dillman Mega-Reunion



Dillman, Don A. August 2018

I met Toby Hurley

- Each of us got a few minutes to explain who we were and what we knew about our ancestry.
- When I explained to the group who I was and how my Andrew Dillman got to Iowa, Toby interrupted me.
- “You are the reason I’m here. My great-great grandmother, Julia, was your Andrew’s sister. She and her husband, David Finley, moved to Iowa with him. He died in the Civil War, and she moved the family back to Indiana.”



After our meeting an 1856 Iowa Census record took on a new meaning; the Finley's had land next to my ancestor!

44	44	DILLMAN, Andrew	27	M	1	0	Kentuc	Farmer
		Eliza	24	F	1		Indian	
		Harriet	6	F			"	
		George	4	M			"	
		Peter'	2	M			"	
		Mary	3 mo	F				
45	45	FINLEY, David	22	M	1	0	Indiana	Farmer
		Julia	19	l			"	
		Emmey	10 mo	F			"	

Three years later

- I found a story in a newsletter from my home town Geneological Society; it published a letter from the commanding officer of David Finley, explaining his suddent illness and death.
- It's doubtful that Toby would have found that information without our encounter in Indianapolis in 2002.
- DFA is about helping one another understand our heritage!

Louise Dillman McKinney

- She took an interpreter and visited Erich Dihlmann in Pforzheim, Germany.
- The connection seemed not to be there.
- She obtained his published genealogy (1536-1986).
- She too was stymied by the possible connection to Illigen



A feeling of success and disappointment from Mega-Reunion 2002

- Small mysteries were solved
 - E.g. I learn about other family members that moved to Iowa--Andrew's sister (Toby's ancestor)
 - Others had explored the Illigen connection without success.
 - A 4th cousin explained that his relatives were buried in a "Dillman" cemetery 30 miles from my home.
- But, it was clear there were different Dillmans in the room and we didn't know whether or how we might be related.
- But, we had a good time in Indianapolis, at some point we began talking about "cousins by choice".
- And then, Frank Dillman suggested DNA testing.
- My response: What's DNA testing? And, you want us to do what?

Frank Dillman suggested Y-DNA testing because information on the Y chromosome is passed intact from father to son

- Family Tree DNA
- What's a marker?
- Only direct-line male descendants can be evaluated because the Y chromosome stays intact, except for mutations?
- A cheek swab that you mail in and could do 12, 25 or 37 markers (and now much more)
- Hey, why not? I requested a test kit and waited for Frank's email.



We continued to explore by scheduling more mega-reunions and explorations in Germany

- 2002 Indianapolis, Indiana
- 2004 Cincinnati, Ohio, airport (in Kentucky)
- 2006 Harrisburg, Pennsylvania
- 2008 Indianapolis, Indiana
(2009 Mini reunion in Germany to search for connections)
- 2010 Roanoke, Virginia
- 2012 Ft. Wayne, Indiana
- 2014 Plainfield, Indiana
(2015 Follow-up visit to search additional connections in Germany)
- 2016 Ft. Wayne, Indiana
- 2018 Plainfield, Indiana

Top Seven Accomplishments of the DFA

1. DNA showed revealed 16 different genetic lines with name variations.
2. DNA has produced connections that otherwise would not otherwise have been made, pushing genetic lines to older generations.
3. European contacts were made, revealing new Dillman lines, and extending North American connections to specific locations in Germany and elsewhere.
4. DFA stimulated searches of written records and artifacts that have also extended ancestry lines.
5. Phil Dillman has maintained a DFA Library with ancestry trees, books, artifacts and Dillman memorabilia, that has been part of all nine of our biennial conferences. Additions continue to be made each year.
6. Since 2008 our quarterly newsletter, created by Phil Dillman is providing a permanent record of our discoveries. Thirty issues are now on the DFA website: <http://dillmanfamilyassociation.org/newsletter/>
7. DFA web site provides a visible presence to others, helping Dillmans throughout the world understand more about their ancestry.

Accomplishments 1 & 2. A few of the 16 family lines established by DNA testing of 57 individual for paternal heritage

48630	3JENB	G2 G-P15	2	Conard (Germany) – DAH	14	22	16	10	14	14	11	13	11	13	11	31	15	09	0
24701		G2 G-P15	2	Conrad (Germany)	14	22	16	10	14	14	11	13	11	13	11	31	15	09	0
25672		G2 G-P15	2	Charles	14	22	16	10	14	14	11	13	11	13	11	31	15	09	0
22978	NCGQY	G2 G-P15	2	John (KY)	14	22	16	10	14	14	11	13	11	13	11	31	16	09	0
34763		G2 G-P15	2	Conrad (Germany)	14	22	16	10	14	14	11	13	11	13	11	31	15	09	0
79636	ZWZUQ	I1 I-M170	7	Jacob Dillman (VA & PA)	14	22	14	10	13	15	11	14	11	12	11	28	15	08	0
99999		I1 I-M170	7	Jacob Dillman (VA & PA)															
83073		I1 I-M253	9	Peter Dillman (Russia)	14	22	13	10	13	14	11	14	11	12	11	28	15	09	0
70658	PN9J9	I2b I-M223	8	Mathew(Mathias) (MD)	14	23	15	10	14	15	11	13	11	14	12	32	14	08	1
5643	8V9ND	I2b I-M223	3	Michael Dhyllmann (Germany)	15	23	12	10	15	15	11	13	12	13	12	31	16	08	0
166287		I2b I-M284	3	Michael Dhyllmann (Germany)	15	23	12	10	15	15	11	13	12	13	12	31	16	08	0
55841		I2b I-M223	3	Michael Dhyllmann (Germany)	15	23	12	10	15	15	11	13	12	13	12	31	16	08	0
6676	W856J	I2b I-M223	3	Michael Dhyllmann (Germany)	15	23	12	10	15	15	11	13	12	13	12	31			

Thank you Andrew Stillman!

- A DNA connection was made with Andrew Stillman.
- His “6th great grand father was captured in the Battle of Long Island by the British and mustered out in Nova Scotia.
- A brother of my ancestor with the same first name, was assumed to have died in the Battle of Long Island.
- We concluded they were the same person.
- This connection was confirmed by a church record revealing the first Andrew Stillman’s daughter married as a “Dillman”.
- A key result of this finding for many Dillmans in the U.S. was it redirected our search away from a different Dillman line mentioned to me by Mildred Dillman in 1967.
- Andrew continues to lead our DNA testing.



Accomplishment 3. European connections; finding new Dillman lines, and extending previous ones. DNA connection between Wurmberg Dihlmanns and the U.S. Virginia Dillmans. Thanks to Erich Dihlmann and his grand daughters. VA Dillman Family tree now goes back to 1500



In August 2010, DFA visited VA Dillman reunion at Hungry Mother State Park. Rod Dillman and Betsy Dillman Ross helped share the connection with their relatives.

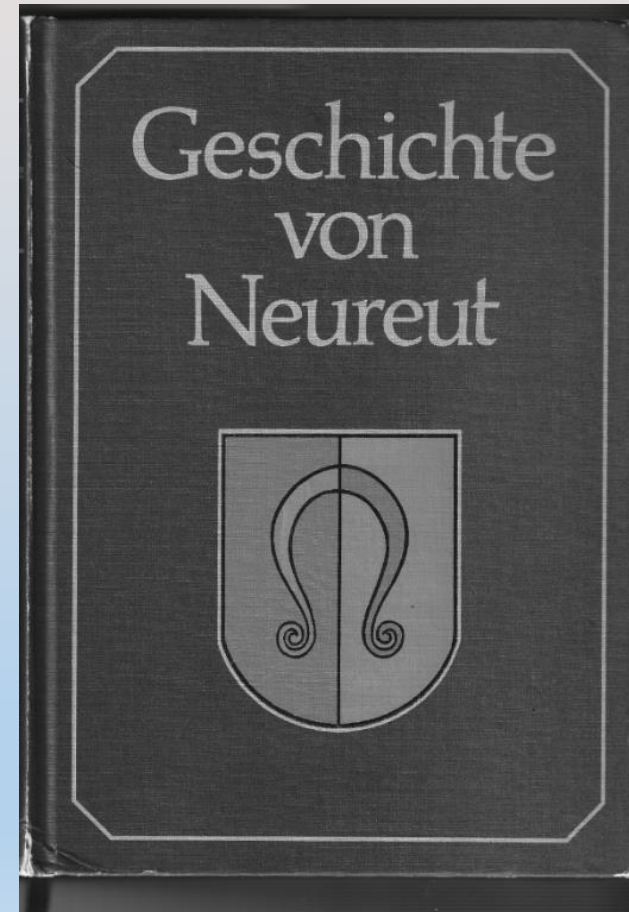


Accomplishment 4. DFA has stimulated additional kinds of searches that have extended ancestry lines.

- Our German friend, Gabi Hippler who took us on the “failed” Illigen search for connection in 1988 found a book—the history of Neureut, a village near Karlsruhe.
- Hans-Georg Dillmann’s request to leave the community in 1751 was approved

Brunner (Brunn), Florian	1750	Amerika
Braun, Jak. Flor.	1752	unbekannt
Bruns (Brunn), Florian	1798	Westpreußen
Braun, Friedrich	1798	Westpreußen
Dillmann, Hans-Georg	1751	unbekannt
Doll, Jakob	1767	unbekannt
Gimpel, Johann	1783	Westpreußen
Forler, Jung-Jakob	1750	unbekannt

- In Salt Lake City Andrew Stillman found library records “in old German” showing birth of the immigrant’s father and grandfather
- **Ancestry searches depend upon more than DNA!**



Accomplishment 5. The Dillman Family Association Library, created by Phil Dillman, has been expanded and has been at all nine of our biennial conferences.

- Ancestry charts, notebooks on each family line, pictures, artifacts and other memorabilia.
- Collecting and sharing happens everywhere Phil goes—in this picture the VA Dillman reunion.



Accomplishment 6. Since 2018 our quarterly newsletter, created by Phil Dillman is providing a permanent record of our discoveries. Thirty issues are now on the DFA website: <http://dillmanfamilyassociation.org/newsletter/>



Dillman*

Descendants and Ancestors

(*Including other known variations of Dillmann, Stillman, Tillmann, Dielman, Dhyllmann, Dihlmann, Dillaman, Tighlman, Dieleman, etc.)

The Official Publication of the Dillman Family Association – Published Quarterly

www.dillmanfamilyassociation.org

“Cousins by Choice”

We are a member of the Guild of One-Name Studies.



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Volume 7, No. 1
September 2014

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Andrew Stillman – Co-Editor

Germany Excursion 2015

By Andrew Stillman

Following up our excellent 2009 German experience, the planning has begun for a 2nd trip to Germany to visit the locations of origin of several of our group's Dillman ancestors. The proposed dates are Sept 9, 2015 (leave the US and arrive in Germany on the morning of the 10th) - Sept. 23, 2015 and will include visits to Alsace, France; Wurmberg, Stuttgart, and Knielingen, Germany. We aim to meet as many local Dillman's as possible on this trip to collect family stories, genealogies and potentially find further European participants for the DNA project. Time permitting, we may be able to take in some sights such as Trier and Strasbourg. A visit to the Dillmann Organic Farm (operated by Klaus Dillmann) in Eberdingen will likely be arranged. The Franzfeld Association is planning their 2015 bus trip to Banat for the 4th-8th of September, 2015 and interested people can take in this excursion as well.

Each participant is responsible for their airfare to and from **Frankfurt**. Local ground transportation, accommodations, and itinerary would be arranged and prices for these are to be determined. As a broad indication, the costs of the trip in 2009

3. Dillman Genealogical Conference 2014 - by Phil Dillman

After many Skype meetings over the preceeding months, the DFA Board members had finalized the program for the 7th Biennial gathering of Dillman family researchers. The theme was “Remembering our Early War Veterans.” The Dillman Genealogical Conference this year took place in Plainfield, Indiana, just southwest of the Indianapolis Airport, at the Cambria Inn and Suites. Many of the attendees had arrived on that Thursday and we ended up dining across the street at the Coachman Restaurant. We headed back around 7:00 PM to visit with those that arrived for the open house in the meeting room. The open house allowed for time to meet with those we are related to as well as to our “Cousins by Choice”, many of whom we hadn't seen since the previous Dillman gathering.



Thursday's dinner at the Coachman Restaurant

Friday morning started early with registration, greeting more “cousins”, and last minute preparations for the morning seminars. DFA President Christina Dillman started the session with an explanation of what the DFA is, where we began and what we



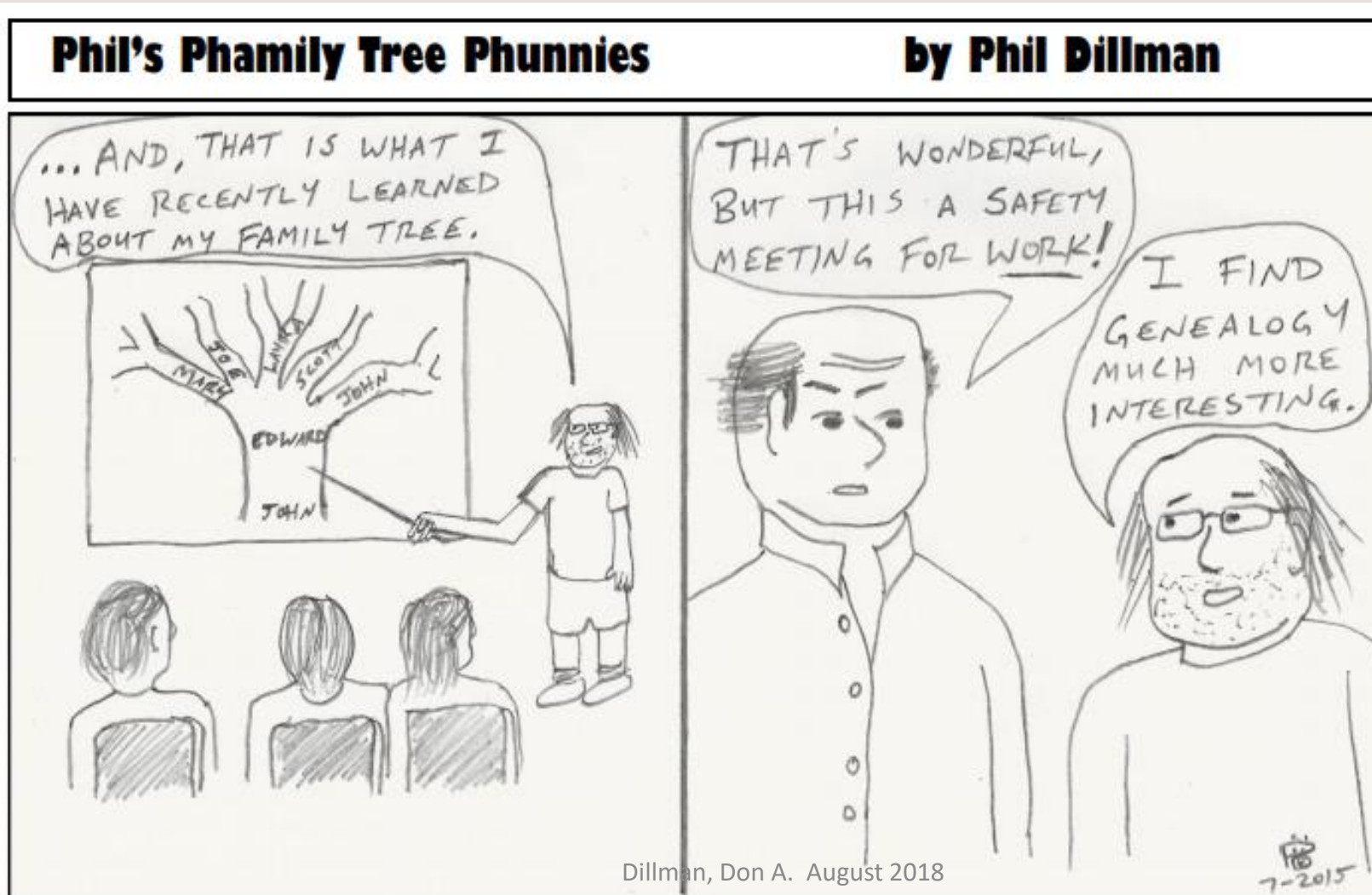
Don Dillman giving his military records presentation





Chris Dillman explaining what the Dillman Family Association is all about as Eve Dillman explains in sign language for her husband, Dana.







can learn together as a group. She also gave an overview of what was planned for this year's reunion. That was followed by DFA Treasurer Louise McKinney who led the around the room introductions. With more than 40 attendees, it was exciting to see so many non-related groups of Dillmans represented at this event, all with the goal of learning something to help them to research their individual groups.

Did I mention that Phil's Phunnies are a nice contribution to our newsletter! Thanks, Phil!




Accomplishment 7. Our DFA web site, shown here by Google, gives us a presence that is visible to others and making a difference in Dillmans throughout the world understanding more about their ancestry.

Dillman Family Association – Helping Dillman families throughout the ... 
dillmanfamilyassociation.org/ 
"Since 2002, the Dillman Family Association (DFA) has been helping Dillman families throughout the world understand their family heritage." The DFA was ...

<p>Dillman DNA Project  Welcome to the Dillman DNA (DDNA) Project. This project ...</p>	<p>Member Login  Member Login. Username or Email. Password. Remember Me.</p>
<p>Forum  Dillman/Stillman Family Association Message Board ...</p>	<p>Newsletters  Quarterly Newsletters *** (June 2015 NOW Available ...</p>
<p>Join Us  Join the Dillman Family Association. We are a group ...</p>	<p>Members  You need to login to view this content. Please Login. Not a ...</p>

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Dillman Family Association - Home | Facebook 
<https://www.facebook.com/dillmanfamilyassociation/>
Dillman Family Association. 62 likes. Group of Family History Researchers looking to connect with others researching Dillman, Dihlmann, Diehlmann,...

Accomplishment 8? It's been a lot of fun—and I'm sure Andrew, Bob and Norm, my sixth, fourth and second cousins would agree!



It has taken a community to help us understand our ancestries

- Understanding our ancestry is about:
 - DNA inheritance
 - Our surnames.
 - Languages we learn.
 - Geography of where we live.
 - Physical features from eye color to ear lobes and hair.
 - Cultural behaviors—from country and religious values to how we talk to one another.
 - Family experiences that teach us to be who we become.
- Doing this requires different skills and strong perseverance
- Everyone of you who has come to DFA has helped us learn about various aspects of our ancestry and that makes us who we are—cousins by choice who are helping one another learn.
- And, I thank you all for being part of this journey.

For more information about the DFA

- Please go to our website:
<http://DillmanFamilyAssociation.org>
- **Since 2002, the Dillman Family Association (DFA) has been helping Dillman families throughout the world understand their family heritage.”**
- The DFA was formed to help everyone with an interest in learning about the ancestry of families that include the Dillman surname, or one of its many variations (Dillmann, Stillman, Tillman, Dielman, Dieleman, Dhyllmann, Dihlmann, Dillaman and Tighlman). [Membership](#) is open to all who are interested.
- Activities include a [quarterly newsletter](#) filled with human interest stories and the latest discoveries about Dillman heritage. A [DNA testing project](#) has helped us learn who is related to whom. A Dillman Library has ancestry records and artifacts from many family lines.
- Dillman Genealogical Conferences (formerly known as the Mega-Reunions) are held every two years in different locations (Fort Wayne, IN (2 times); Indianapolis, IN (4 times); Roanoke, VA; Harrisburg, PA; Cincinnati Airport, KY) to discuss new genealogical discoveries and plan new activities.
- **Our next Genealogical Conference is scheduled for August 2020 in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania**