



NEWSLETTER

FAMILY ASSOCIATION

October 2002

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Dues - \$7.00 per year

IF A RENEWAL FORM IS ENCLOSED, YOU NEED TO PAY DUES

REUNION THANKS FROM JIM VAUGHTERS

The 2002 reunion in Elbert County, Georgia, probably more than any other, took an army of people and a mountain of work to put together. The reunion host has sent out 40 thank you letters, and highlights of some are given here:

John Vawter, his wives and their children, for settling the area, staying, preserving property, and leaving a paper trail.

The State of Georgia for accepting the land, agreeing to the dedication during our reunion, and paying for a first-class ceremony.

The dignitaries: U. S. Senator Max Cleland, U. S. Representative Charlie Norwood, State Representative Tom McCall, and County Commissioners Tom Allgood and others for honoring us with their presence.

Former Governor and cousin Ernest Vandiver and his wife, Betty, for their encouragement, ideas, influence, speech and reception.

Tom and Pam Allgood for the tour of their historic house.

Doug Vaughters for remembering what Swift and Julian told him about the family cemetery, for purchasing the contents of the buildings, and for honoring the Confederate and Revolutionary soldiers.

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Judson Barton and the Sons of Confederate Veterans, and Debra Denard and the United Daughters of the Confederacy for the dignified ceremony honoring Confederate veterans.

Larry Wilson, Stuart Lyle, and the Sons of the American Revolution for the beautiful ceremony honoring Revolutionary soldiers.

Richard Greene for his thoughts on plans and programs, his constant research, his many days of physical labor clearing the cemetery and house site, his parts in the ceremonies honoring soldiers, and his providing water on those hot trips.

Gilbert Adams for purchasing the marker for the Franklin County cemetery, for his perspective on Georgia history, for obtaining the records of Hunter's Creek Baptist Church, for introducing us to 102-year-old Tom Austin, and for bringing more cousins.

The Dawson County Vaughters for venturing out and seeing the "old Georgia Vaughters."

Glenn Herndon for his sermon relating to family history and for loaning his photocopier.

Ellen Cummings for her beautiful rendition of the national anthem and for the sing-along of patriotic music.

Bill Clark for his presentation at the S.A.R. ceremony on Lt. William Vawter, the only known VVV officer in the Continental Army.

Lynn Kellum and Harmony Baptist Church for the prayers at the ceremonies, the lovely framed sketch of the church, and the delicious lunch.

Silvey B. Vaughters for his stories and for giving away his autobiography book.

Cheryl Kelley for loaning the CD player so that we could listen to the official Georgia state song, "Georgia on My Mind."

Kristy Glasgow for her skillful playing of "Taps" at both the Confederate and Revolutionary ceremonies.

President Ken Wicker for his leadership and speaking at all the activities.

All those who honored their Confederate ancestors.

Connie Bugos for the appropriate colorful T-shirts. (Please order one from her now.)

Fred and Wordna Wicker for their solemn memorial service.

Probate Judge Susan Sexton for her intense interest and unwavering support of this project.

Everyone who came and appreciated and enjoyed what we had put together.

ASSOCIATION THANKS TO JIM VAUGHTERS

Only those who have planned and hosted a reunion can understand the amount of time and effort it takes to have a successful event. Jim Vaughters made several trips from his home in Colorado to Georgia to insure that we would have a reunion to remember. This reunion truly was a learning experience as we heard the stories and saw the land of our ancestors. It helped us realize the purpose of our association: to learn of and preserve our heritage. To all of those involved with the planning, especially Jim, we say "Thank you!"

REUNION PROGRAMS

Jim Vaughters is receiving requests for additional copies of the 2002 reunion programs. He has extra copies of the programs for the land dedication ceremony and the Confederate and Revolutionary ceremonies, but none of the basic program for the reunion. This is the one with the picture of Vauter's Church on the front. If someone picked up the box containing those programs, please let Jim know and arrange to have them sent to him. Or, if you have extra copies, please send them to Jim so they can be forwarded to those who have contacted him.

REUNION T-SHIRTS

If you were unable to attend the 2002 reunion, or failed to get a T-shirt while in Georgia, Connie Bugos still has a few remaining. She has four xx-large, five x-large, ten large, one child size 14-16, and one child size 10-12. These are being sold at \$12.00, \$13.00, and \$14.00 each, depending on the size, plus \$4.25 shipping for one shirt and \$1.00 for each additional shirt. Connie is making these available at her cost, and would like to recoup her expenses. Her address is: 480 E Pearl Street, Farmington IL 61531. Connie's e-mail address is: buggram@att.net.

REUNION TAPES

Video tapes of the 2002 reunion, made by Bob Vawter, are available at a cost of \$20.00 including postage, with all proceeds going to the association. The two-tape set can be ordered from Norma Jean Vawter, and her address can be found with the list of officers. Please make your check to the VVV Family Association.

REUNION HANDOUTS

Jim Vaughters prepared several handouts for the reunion, and has offered to send them to anyone interested. His address and phone number can be found at the beginning of this newsletter with the list of officers.

WISHES FOR SPEEDY RECOVERIES

Robert L. "Bobbee" Vawter, 1121 Bayview Road, Middletown DE 19709, and Richard Greene, P. O. Box 1792, Cartersville GA 30120, have had health problems since the reunion. Our best wishes for speedy recoveries are sent to both.

(state seal)

STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
ATLANTA 30334-0900

Roy E. Barnes
Governor

August 2, 2002

Mr. James C. Vaughters
The Vaughters Family Association
5981 South Lima Street
Englewood, Colorado 80111

Dear Mr. Vaughters and Members of the Vaughters Family:

Today is a very special occasion for both you and the state of Georgia. I regret very much that my schedule does not allow for me to be here with you personally. I want you to know just how much we appreciated the generosity of your family, as evidenced by the donation of 850 acres of land in Elbert County through the S. Julian Vaughters Estate. This property will forever be managed as a public recreation and wildlife management area in Georgia.

Georgia has been blessed over the years with outstanding public servants like Ernie and Betty Vandiver. As our 73rd Governor, Ernest Vandiver served with distinction and continues to give of his time unselfishly to benefit Georgia. His participation in today's celebration is an honor to the Vaughters family and to our state.

On this special day as members of the Vaughters Family Association gather to commemorate the outstanding gift to the State of Georgia, which easily exceeds \$2 million in value, this letter is to express my sincere appreciation for this magnificent donation that will mean so much for future generations of Georgians.

Warmest regards to each member of your family. I sincerely hope that your visit to Georgia will be memorable and enjoyable as you meet as a family to enjoy fellowship and to celebrate your family's legacy.

Sincerely,

Roy E. Barnes

REB:fv

REVOLUTIONARY MARKER TO HAVE NAMES ADDED

Memorial Park in Elberton, Georgia, is a unique tribute to veterans. Each war has its own monument, and each is a different design, style, and color. The monument for the Revolutionary War has inscriptions of the names of veterans who were buried or had estates in Elbert County.

As the result of the work and ceremony by the VVV Association, and by Richard Greene in particular, two new names are being inscribed. Richard did the research and made contacts in the Elbert County Historical Society and the Sons and Daughters of the American Revolution. They have promised to add the names of John Vawter and his brother-in-law, William Ward. (The will of Jacob Ward in Virginia names William Ward and Frankey Vawter, John's first wife, as two of his many children.)

Thank you, Richard, for honoring those soldiers.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Thelma Jeane Vawter died September 18, 2002 in Bandera, Texas, at the home of her grandchildren, Daria and Jason William. She was 88 years old.

Born Thelma Jeane Johnson in Wagoner, Oklahoma, March 28, 1914, she was the daughter of Edward Asa and Bessie Sheppard Johnson. Asa and Bessie married October 1907 in the Indian Territory, about a month before Oklahoma became a state. The family moved to Texas in 1916 in a covered wagon.

On December 7, 1936, Thelma Jeane married Edwin Vawter of Pipe Creek, Texas and they were married for over 65 years. He preceded her in death in April of this year.

Survivors include daughters Patricia and husband Thomas Renton and Joy and husband Thomas Richter, all of Pipe Creek. The Vawters were blessed with five grandchildren, Jordan, Daria, Marcus, Susan and Tommy; four great-grandchildren, Frances, Kaitlin, Krista and Luke; and one great-great granddaughter, Brooklyn.

The youngest of three children, Thelma Jeane was preceded in death by sister Faye Ivy and brother Edward Johnson.

T. J. loved to play card games, especially bridge, and she loved to travel. With her husband, Edwin, she traveled to Hawaii, Europe, Alaska and to Las Vegas many times, and yet she was happy sitting at the kitchen table beating her family in a card game. She will be greatly missed by a loving family and many friends.

Services were held Saturday, September 21st at 11:00 a.m. at Grimes Funeral Chapel, with the Rev. Sheryl Owens officiating. Mona Thaxton, a long time friend of the family delivered a touching eulogy. Music was by another family friend, Aleta Domingue.

Daughters Patricia and Joy are members of the VVV Family Association.

THANK YOU

Several members send information for this newsletter. Your continuing help is greatly appreciated!

NEWSLETTERS, BICKNELL AND RUCKER

As reported in a previous newsletter, Patricia Vawter Renton has completed a project for the association by creating a CD. This CD, which is in Microsoft Word format, contains the VVV Family Association newsletters from 1977 thru 2001, the entire *Vawter Family in America* by Grace Vawter Bicknell, and excerpts from *The Rucker Family Genealogy* by Sudie Rucker Wood.

Patricia brought several of the CDs to the reunion and quickly sold all of them. She will make additional copies for those interested and donate the proceeds to the association. The Executive Committee has set the price at \$20.00.

Please order from: Patricia V. Renton, 2372 Bear Creek Road, Pipe Creek TX 78063. Patricia's telephone number is 830-510-4625, and her e-mail is pvrenton@evl.net.

IN REMEMBRANCE

Duncan Carlyle Brown, 82, of Tulsa, Oklahoma, died at his home 30 June 2002 surrounded by family and friends. He was born in Bemiji, Minnesota, on 31 December 1919. He graduated from Central High School in Tulsa in 1936, and from Tulsa University with a degree in business in 1943. There he met Sara Jane Kerr, who would be his wife for the next 58 years.

Duncan served in the Marines during World War II in the South Pacific. After leaving the service, he worked in the oil fields and for Bryan & Sons. In 1956, he started working for Marsuco, and retired as Vice President and Treasurer in 1980.

Duncan was active in the community and the Episcopal Church. He was Senior Warden at Trinity Episcopal, chairman of St. Crispin's Conference Center, member of Diocesan Council, and Oklahoma delegate to the National Episcopal Convention four times, and was a long time member of St. Dunstan's. His community work included being Master Counselor of DeMolay, a 29-year member and Paul Harris Fellow of the Downtown Rotary Club, a 50 + year member of the Men's Forum of Tulsa, and helped with Troop 20 of the Boy Scouts of America when his sons were members.

He is survived by his wife, Sally; his daughter, Susan and husband, Doug Haas and their children, Sara and Kim; son, Stephen and wife, Barbara and their children, Clint, Mark and wife, Anne Marie, and Scott; son, Jim and wife, Nancy and their children, Jennifer and Amanda; and daughter, Mary and husband, Mike O'Meilie and their children, Christopher and wife, Merrilee, and Jacob; and brothers, Bill and wife Joanne, and Jerry and wife, Jane.

Duncan loved his family and friends, enjoyed traveling, listening to music and writing poetry and limericks about his grandchildren and life experiences. He had a wonderful sense of humor, sterling qualities of character and a capacity for friendship.

Duncan was a longtime member of the association and attended many reunions. He and Sally hosted the 1983 reunion in Tulsa.

GLEBE UPDATE

Robert L. "Bobbee" Vawter has sent this information to update us on the Glebe project in Virginia.

The committee has made contact with Mr. Gordon Lohr, the director of the Historic Property Revolving Fund operated by the Association for the Preservation of Virginia Antiquities. Mr. Lohr visited the property on Cloverleaf Farm during the summer, and is interested in the preservation. He will be talking with the present owner, James R. Hundley, Jr.

Mr. Lohr is of the opinion that there are industries and businesses in the area that would contribute to the restoration of the building, and he will investigate those possibilities. The most important thing now is to get the building stabilized to prevent further deterioration. The new roof has been a great help in preventing continuing damage, but there is a need for stabilizing parts in the brick work.

Ellen Cummings and Bob are following the progress and developments of this project and will keep the association informed.

LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT:

October 20, 2002

Dear Cousins,

First of all, I would like to thank Jim Vaughters for the time and effort which he put into the 2002 reunion. The family history is important to remember as a part of our heritage. The Confederate and American Revolution ceremonies were impressive and memorable, and the land dedication ceremony was unforgettable. Thanks again for a job well done.

While reading the 2002 survey responses, I was shocked at one anonymous comment "I do not feel there is a complete commitment to continue the VVV Association." Our goal is to change this attitude. The four main concerns voiced by the 2002 survey were (1) there were no children, there were not enough for Ellen Cummings to have VVV Family Singers as entertainment on Saturday, (2) keep the cost down, the expenses were too much for young families to bear, (3) without younger people, the VVV Association will cease to exist. The survey also pointed out the desire (4) to have the annual reunion in a locale which could be used as a scheduled family vacation. Pensacola certainly addresses the 4th concern.

Ralphe and Caroline invited Laniel and I to come to Pensacola to see what possibilities existed for the 2003 VVV reunion. On the weekend of September 26-30, between Isidore and Lili, we drove from Houston to Pensacola to visit with them and to review and visit the places which Ralphe had scheduled.

We visited several hotels, and saw typical rooms. The one we agreed on was clean and neat, not luxurious, had in-room amenities, a large swimming pool, and will include a hot breakfast. Their conference room accommodates over 60. We can set up the VVV archives there, and when we are not there, the room can be locked. It is large enough for us to all stay under one roof, which was another survey concern.

Results of the survey suggested an informal get together on Friday rather than a formal dinner. Ralphe's Condo has a large pool where we could have an around-the-pool party. We visited several establishments which could cater such a party. We ate meals at several, and agreed on one. Several VVV'ers have volunteered to bring desserts for Friday night. This will save us about \$2 each and will give us a chance to sample our cousin's specialties.

As a possible VVV Group activity, Ralphe took us to the National Museum of Naval Aviation. Excellent!! We found it to be at least as good as the Air and Space Museum in Washington DC. And it is free, the IMAX Theater (\$5.75 for groups of 20 or more). The feature film, 'The Magic of Flight' was filmed as if you were flying with the Blue Angels. Awesome!!

Ralphe has planned for a genealogy session at the Family History Center, and one at the hotel. If you're interested in genealogy you need to go to one or both.

For the Saturday night banquet, we visited several places, and selected one which has a glassed in dining room at a Country Club overlooking the golf course. The owner said he could provide us a good meal for a budget price.

For those that want to stay on the beach, there are several hotels, but they cost about three times as much. The beaches are public. We will have a list of restaurants and fun activities in the area for our free time and to help you plan a fun vacation. The food places we selected for Friday and Saturday nights serve good food, at a reasonable price.

For individual budget concerns, we have firm prices as follows: Hotel room (1 to 4 people) - \$54 a night; Friday night meal – about \$8.25 ea; Saturday night meal (buffet) with dessert - \$13 ea. These figures are all inclusive.

Ralphe and Caroline have done an excellent job at organizing the 2003 reunion. But we must each tell lots of people about it or it will all be for naught.

As we parted on the 29th, we pointed out to Ralphe and Caroline that they had treated us like royalty. To which they replied, "But you're Vawters." That is the way we should all feel about each other. After all, we are cousins and friends, too.

This reunion is being organized around the idea of attracting more families, younger families and families who have not attended a reunion in several years. We are not excluding the older or retired family members. But as we look around each year, we miss those who are no longer with us. We see the empty places that they leave. When enough of us die, so will the VVV Association if we don't attract our young cousins.

Using these ideas and other information, Laniel and I plan to interest as many other Vawters as possible.

After spending a weekend in Pensacola, we plan to spend some extra time there next year doing those "fun vacation things". There are lots of affordable attractions in the area. Plan to spend some extra time in Pensacola before or after the 2003 reunion. Watch for the next newsletter, we will have a list of things to see and to do, good places to eat and all sorts of good ideas, and a tentative schedule, and some other special promotions.

Jesse L. Vawter
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Email: JessVawter@aol.com

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