

OFFICERS

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Dues - \$7.00 per year

1995 VVV REUNION IN VIRGINIA

The VVV Reunion is held in Virginia every five years, and this time we meet in Ashland to rediscover our roots. VVV's from throughout the country will join those who have remained or returned to Virginia, and will learn more about the area where our ancestors lived.

Hanover County, the location of Ashland, was formed in 1720, and is north of Richmond. Prior to English colonization in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Pamunkey Indians populated the area. They maintain a reservation in neighboring King William County.

During the 18th century, Hanover was the center of the "Great Awakening" in Virginia led by the Reverend Samuel Davies who founded the Hanover Presbytery. Two great orators, Patrick Henry and Henry Clay were born in Hanover County.

19th century Hanover was a county of farmers. With the arrival of the railroad in mid-century, many villages began to spring up along the tracks, including the town of Ashland which developed as a health resort convenient to Richmond. Its location north of Richmond made the county the site of numerous battles and skirmishes during the War Between the States.

Today, Hanover County is filled with reminders of its past. Many 18th and 19th century homes have been preserved. Sites and battlefields have been marked and many are included in the Richmond National Battlefield Park.

Enclosed with this newsletter is a brochure from the Ashland Comfort Inn. This brochure gives the telephone number for making reservations, as well as the locations of nearby attractions. Be sure to reserve rooms soon, mentioning that you are attending the reunion. All rooms are \$50.00 plus tax for 1-4 people.

Some VVV members have never been to a reunion, some attend occasionally, still others try to attend every year. Whatever the case may be for you, this is a year to not miss! Make plans now to be in Ashland, Virginia, August 3-6 to learn more about your Vawter ancestors.

COVERED-DISH, PICK-UP, PITCH-IN, POT-LUCK

Early registration begins Thursday, August 3, at 3:00 p.m. in the conference room of the Comfort Inn. From 6:00-9:00 p.m. there will be a supper known variously as "covered-dish, pick-up, pitch-in, or pot-luck." What it's called depends on the area in which you live. Everyone should bring something to contribute to the meal, or if that is not possible, send a contribution to Ellen Cummings to help purchase drinks, paper plates, plastic ware, napkins, etc. Ellen's address is 4708 Bradston Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455. Videos of past reunions will be shown during the evening.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 4

Registration continues on Friday, beginning at 8:30 a.m., followed at 9:30 a.m. by the official opening of the reunion by President Lowell Vaughters.

Lunch is "on your own", and then there is an afternoon trip by car caravan to Scotchtown, home of Patrick Henry during his most active political years. It was from this home that Patrick Henry rode to Richmond in March 1775 to the Second Virginia Convention at St. John's Church where he made his famous "Liberty or Death" speech.

At 6:30 p.m., a catered dinner will be served in the conference room. Cost of this is \$12.00 for adults, and \$6.00 for children ten and under. The program for the evening is to be presented by Congressman Roger Wicker.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 5

Saturday begins with a car caravan at 9:30 a.m. to Vauter's Church where a slide presentation of the church and its history will be shown. We will tour the church and view the 200 year old Bible and communion silver. Lunch will be served at the church, and the cost is \$8.00 for adults, and \$5.00 for children ten and under.

At 1:00 p.m., we leave to tour Linden House Bed and Breakfast, owned by Vauter's Church members, Kenneth and Sandra Pounsberry.

The annual banquet is at 6:30 p.m. on Saturday. Cost of the banquet is \$15.00 for adults, and \$7.00 for children ten and under. This will be followed by all the usual activities, including the Memorial Service, special recognitions, roll call of states, and election of officers. On this night, we will hear the premiere performance of The Vawter Family Singers, directed by Ellen Cummings.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 6

Those who can are invited to travel to Vauter's Church on Sunday for the 11:00 a.m. Communion Service, followed by light lunch compliments of the church.

### DOOR PRIZES

Always something to look forward to is the awarding of the many door prizes. Be sure to bring an example of your handiwork or anything else that you would like to contribute. Ken and Norma Wicker, assisted by many of the children present, will be distributing the door prizes at the conclusion of the Friday and Saturday night meetings.

### OFFERING FOR VAUTER'S CHURCH

As told in the April newsletter, our offering this year will go to Vauter's Church. If you would like to make a donation, but are unable to attend the reunion, your contribution can be sent to the VVV treasurer, Charles Burt, whose address is at the beginning of this newsletter. It should be mailed in time to reach Charles before July 31. Our offering in 1990 was \$1400, and was greatly appreciated.

### A LETTER FROM ROBERT L. VAWTER

4/25/95

Robert L. Vawter  
6171 E. 52nd St.  
Newaygo, MI 49337

VVV Family Association  
Secretary: Beth Melton  
1211 Casa Vale  
Dallas, TX 75218

Dear Members of the VVV Association,

It is with regret that I write this letter. Because of continuing health problems which the doctor diagnoses as anxiety, and stress related, I feel that in the interest of my health, it is necessary for me to resign as president of the VVV Association. I am looking forward to the coming reunion this year, but feel the responsibility of the presidency is too great for me.

I would also like to thank the members of the VVV Ass'n. for their concern and prayers at the time of my father's illness and death, and for their expression of sympathy.

Sincerely,  
Robert L. Vawter

[In accordance with the VVV Bylaws, Article V, Section 3b, former Vice-President Lowell Vaughters, has advanced to the position of President.]

### THE VAWTER FAMILY IN AMERICA

The reprint edition (1969) of *The Vawter Family in America* will be available at the reunion in August. We are still selling the ones with only minor defects, such as one or two pages missing or having faint print. As before, you are reminded that when these are gone, it will be necessary to have the remaining books repaired and that will add to the present cost of \$20.00.

The books are softbound and have 442 pages including an index, plus a supplement update of the O'Conner family. If ordered by mail, please add \$2.00 for shipping.

Order from: Bonita Welch, 4145 N 900 W, Scipio, IN 47273.

### CONGRATULATIONS

Summer Beree Taylor graduated from the International School of Kenya 1 June 1995, where she completed requirements for an International Baccalaureate degree. She is the daughter of Tom and Diana Taylor Of Nairobi, Kenya, and niece of VVV news editor, Bonita Welch. Summer has returned to the States, and will attend Ohio University in Athens, majoring in Spanish.

Joe and Karen Vawter of North Vernon, Indiana, are the parents of a daughter, Emily Maxine, born 15 March 1995. Paternal grandparents are Delbert and Linda Vawter, also of North Vernon. Many VVV members will remember Joe from the 1982 reunion when he was 14 years old and joined the group at the picnic to learn about his Vawter ancestry.

### FAMILY INFORMATION WANTED

From: Stewart Hedges, 1298 S Stage Road, Medford, OR 97501

....My great grandfather, Levi Marion Hedges, married Samantha Jane Vawter, daughter of Pascal Vawter and Eliza Mavity. Levi Marion's brother, (my great uncle) Peter Thompson Hedges married Mary Ann Vawter, sister to Samantha Jane. I believe that Samantha Jane and Mary Ann were both from the Jefferson County, Indiana, area. Samantha Jane moved to Vermilion County, Illinois, and that is where she died and is buried in Fithian, Illinois. My grandfather, Walter Grearson Hedges, was born in Muncie, Illinois.

Also of interest is that a branch of the Vawter family moved here to Oregon and settled in the Northern portion and settled a community of Crawfordsville, Oregon. Here in Medford, a Vawter settled and was involved in the starting of a bank during the late 1800's. I live a block from an early road named after the Vawter family ....

[Ed. note: Pascal Vawter was the son of Beverly and Elizabeth Crawford Vawter; and grandson of Philemon and Anne Vawter. This family can be found on page 324 of *The Vawter Family of America*.]

MEMORIAL MUSIC LIBRARY IS DEDICATED

The Evelyn Vawter Stoltz Memorial Music Library was dedicated Sunday, February 26, 1995, at Chapman University School of Music in Orange, California. Evelyn Vawter Stoltz was a 1948 graduate of the school. Funds from Evelyn's husband, Jack, and other family members, along with contributions from friends, were matched by Chapman University to establish the library.

In honor of the dedication, a recital was presented by Evelyn's daughter, Catherine Stoltz, a mezzo soprano who holds a Bachelor's Degree, cum laude, in Music Education from Chapman University.

Catherine made her operatic debut in *The Magic Flute* at the Carmel Bach Festival in 1980, and since has added more than sixteen operatic roles to her repertoire. She was a national finalist in the 1987 Metropolitan Opera auditions in New York City, and a first place winner of the Rocky Mountain Regional Metropolitan Opera auditions that same year. She has received many other awards, and in 1993 served a semester as Artist-in-Residence at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

Catherine Stoltz lives in Colorado with her husband, airline pilot Kent Hammon, and their two daughters, Cassandra and Christine.

Evelyn Vawter Stoltz died 6 June 1994 at her home in Santa Barbara, California. Her obituary is in the Fall 1994 VVV newsletter.

VAWTER CEMETERY TOURS

The Vawter Cemetery located in Selmier State Forest in Jennings County, Indiana, has been the site of two tours in recent months. Both tours were led by Bonita Welch. The cemetery is on land once owned by William and Frances Vawter, pioneer Jennings County settlers, and their home was very near the cemetery on a bank overlooking the Muscatatuck River.

The first tour was sponsored by the Friends of the Jennings County Library to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the state forest.

The second tour was for the Jennings County Genealogical Society, and was to help the society members learn how to record or read a cemetery. One technique not tried by the group before was to "toss" flour on the monument and then use a soft brush to remove the excess flour, thereby allowing the letters to be filled with flour. This method was very successful. Since the cemetery was recorded in 1982, some monuments have deteriorated to the point where they cannot be read without difficulty.

William and Frances Vawter are buried in this cemetery, as are many members of their family. One of the earliest graves is that of Jesse Vawter Burns, a grandson who died in 1831. Also buried there are Philemon and Anna Vawter, parents of Frances. (William and Frances were first cousins.) Philemon died in 1814, and was first buried near Madison, Indiana, being moved to the Vawter Cemetery following the death of his wife in 1845.

WILLIAM SNYDER VAWTER GENEALOGICAL PAPERS

William Snyder Vawter, Sr. spent many years collecting material with the hope of updating information found in *The Vawter Family in America* by Grace Bicknell. Unfortunately, he died before his work could be completed. It is interesting to remember that this was done before copiers, computers, fax machines, e-mail and all the other things we rely on today. What follows are three letters written to him in response to his questionnaires.

These first two letters were sent to William Snyder Vawter in 1928 by William Henry Vawter of Virginia, son of William Calvin and Mary Jane Estes Vawter. Punctuation has been added.

"William Calvin Vawter was born about 1820. Married Mary Jane Estes 1852, resulting in three children, Agnes Elizabeth, William Henry [and] Mary Jane. Mary having died in infancy. Wm. Calvin enlisted in the army in 1861 in defense of the South. Having contracted mesels, in Aug 26 came home and died in a few days, leaving his wife with two little children to raise. All of his personal possessions having been destroyed by the northern army, this left quite a burden on his wife. Then came the liberation of his slaves. However with untiring energy his wife strove to success, living to be 77 years old when she passed away and went to receive her reward, and was layed to rest in the family burying ground at the old home in Louisa County, Virginia."

"William Henry Vawter was born Aug 16, 1856. Married Ella Silom Terril Oct 28, 1878. This union resulted in four children, Willis Hawthorn, Mary Anne, Clifton Henry and Erniss Linwood. His career has been a very embarrassing one, many difficultys to confront him, having his store a[nd] dwelling twice destroyed by fire. Twelve years ago, lost the use of both feet, since which time has been almost an invalid. Nearly five years ago his wife was paralyzed, loosing the power of [..?..] and locomation. Not withstanding all of this, the all wise Creator has blessed them with fifty Summers together. They are still hopeful and trusting."

In an accompanying note, William Henry Vawter states: "I am sending you such information as I am able to. All of our family records were distroyed during that dreadful war between the states. I was then six years old, therefore my information is limited and not far reaching. If worth anything to you, you can use it. If not put it in the wast basket. I dont see how I could use your blanks, in other words dont know how to fill them up. Please excuse pencil. I am 71 years old, nervous and cant write with pen. Would like to have one of your books when out, let me know and price."

Virginia State Library  
RICHMOND, VA.

September 21, 1927

Mr. William S. Vawter,  
Army and Navy Club of America,  
30 West 44th Street,  
New York City.

My dear Sir:

I take pleasure in sending you the following notice which appears in THE RICHMOND WHIG for May 3, 1830:

"Lynchburg, April 29.

Suicide.--On Sunday morning the 25th inst. Mr. Benjamin Vawter, of this place, terminated his mortal existence by cutting his throat ! He was, it seems, at the time of committing the fatal deed, in a high state of intoxication."

Very truly yours,

H.R. McILWAINE  
STATE LIBRARIAN

IN REMEMBRANCE

Gladys Wray Cross, 97, died 28 March 1995 in St. Petersburg, Florida. She was the widow of Carl J.B. Cross. The funeral service was conducted by The Masonic Home of Florida, and burial was at Memorial Park Cemetery in St. Petersburg. She was born 13 November 1897 in Leesville, Indiana, the daughter of John Oscar Wray (27 January 1873 - 16 May 1945) and Etta May Douglas Wray (3 August 1879 - 23 February 1921). Both parents are buried in Erie Cemetery, Lawrence County, Indiana.

Parents of John Oscar Wray: Silas Wray and Sarah Vawter

Parents of Sarah Vawter: Julius Vawter and Phebe Holland

Parents of Julius Vawter: Boulware Vawter II and Sally Davis

[Contributed by Doris Wray Eschliman of Boone, Iowa.]

\* \* \* \* \*

Lydia Vawter, 87, died 15 May 1995 in Thornton, Colorado. She was born 16 September 1907 in Quicksand, Kentucky, and was the widow of Theodore Roosevelt Vawter. Burial was at Crown Hill Cemetery in Wheat Ridge, Colorado.

[Sent to Beth Melton by Lydia's daughter, Lorene Graham.]

IN REMEMBRANCE

Robert Marshall "Pete" Vawter, 67, died Friday, 7 April 1995 at his home in Milan, Tennessee. He was born 7 June 1927, the son of the late Andrew Minor Vawter, and Edna Bell Vawter of Milan. He married Norma Jean Lowry, and she survives.

Pete was a World War II Marine veteran who enlisted early and came home to complete his high school education. He later became a Certified Public Accountant. He was a member of the Milan Utility Board; Veterans of Foreign Wars; American Legion, where he served as Past Commander; Tennessee Certified Public Accountant Association; Sons of Confederate Veterans; and was a lifetime member of the Marine Corp Association. He was a Past President of the VVV Association.

Surviving with his wife and mother are a son, Robert L. Vawter of Cordova, Tennessee; a daughter, Barbara Vawter DeFur of Germantown, Tennessee; a sister, Syble Culbreath of Trenton, Tennessee; a brother, Sonny Vawter of Memphis; and five grandchildren, Wendy Vawter of Savannah, Tennessee; Katelyn and Andrew Vawter of Cordova; and Emily and Jake DeFur of Germantown.

The family requested memorials be directed to the Marine Corp Association or the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

\* \* \* \* \*

Carmen Vawter James, 73, died Saturday, 15 April 1995, at her home in Memphis, Tennessee. She was a retired secretary at Kraft, Inc., and formerly lived in Humboldt, Tennessee. Burial was at Rose Hill Cemetery in Humboldt.

Survivors include her husband, Ezra James; a daughter, Donna Kimbrell of Memphis; a grandson and two great-grandchildren. [Contributed by James Corbitt of Martin, Tennessee.]

\* \* \* \* \*

Mabel Anna Haas Vawter Rowen, 90, died at Porter Hospital in Denver, Colorado, on March 16, 1995. She was born June 4, 1904, in Havelock, Nebraska, the daughter of Otto and Emma Haas. She devoted most of her life's work to the Wallace School in Denver where she worked for many years. She was the church organist for most of her life and continued to play for family members and friends after she retired.

She was married to Theodore Roosevelt Vawter April 3, 1931, in Lincoln, Nebraska. Theodore passed away in August 1990. They had three children, Norma Joan (Oct 7, 1933 -March 21, 1984); Mary Ruth (Aug 13, 1936 -March 19, 1975). She is survived by a son and daughter-in-law, Theodore Calvin and Nanci-Sioux Vawter of Phoenix, Arizona; a grandson, Noah Theodore Vawter of Worcester, Massachusetts; a granddaughter, Adrian Eileen Vawter of Norwich, Connecticut; and a grandson, Patrick McBride of Stockton, California.

Burial was at Crown Hill Cemetery in Denver, Colorado. [Contributed by Nanci Vawter.]

Thank you to all who continue to help by sending obituaries and other information.

A MESSAGE FROM YOUR VVV PRESIDENT

July 5, 1995

Dear Family:

I am looking forward to our reunion August 4, 5, & 6 and hope you are too. Ellen Cummings has been working extremely hard and I am sure a great treat is in store for all who attend. You will notice at the bottom of this letter is a form for you to detach and mail to Ellen as soon as possible so that we will have an approximate count of how many people plan to attend. We need to know how many people will be attending to make plans for the dinner Friday night and banquet Saturday night. It is imperative that we have this information ASAP! You may either mail the information to Ellen Cummings or call her at 804-464-2963 or call Lowell Vaughters, President, at 601-842-3081. If no answer, please leave a message.

Listed below is the reunion schedule:

Thursday, August 3, 1995:

3:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. - Registration

6:00 P.M. - 9:00 P.M. - Pick-up Supper

Friday, August 4, 1995

8:30 A.M. - 9:30 A.M. - Registration

9:30 A.M. - Opening of reunion and meeting

Lunch on your own and then car caravan to Scotchtown -  
home of Patrick Henry

6:30 P.M. - Dinner in Conference Room and program by Congressman Roger  
Wicker

Saturday, August 5, 1995

9:30 A.M. - Car Caravan to church. Tour and history on slides

Noon - Lunch at church

1:00 P.M. - Car Caravan to Linden House

6:30 P.M. - Annual Banquet and Memorial Service

Sunday, August 6 - Travel to Vawter Church for 11:00 Communion followed by light  
lunch at church

The Comfort Inn at Ashland, VA has special room rates for VVV @ \$50/night plus tax. The reunion will be headquartered out of the Comfort Inn. Don't forget to make your reservations soon and be sure to tell them that you are attending the VVV reunion. We have been advised by the motel when making your reservation, you should use this confirmation number - P49820-00. This will guarantee the special room rate.

Also, please remember to bring door prizes.

Looking forward to seeing you in Virginia!!

Lowell Vaughters, VVV President

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My name is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I plan to attend the VVV Reunion.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not plan to attend the VVV Reunion.

I am bringing \_\_\_\_\_ adults and \_\_\_\_\_ children.

(How many) in my party will be attending the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ Friday Night Dinner

\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday Lunch

\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday Banquet

Please mail this information to:

Ellen Cummings  
4708 Bradston Road  
Virginia Beach, VA 23455

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