

Wordna Wicker, Editor
P.O. Box 360
Pontotoc, Mississippi 38863

The first Nation-wide Vawter/Vaughter Family Reunion is now history. 99 names were recorded during the 3-day gathering on Brady Mountain, August 8, 9 & 10. Of the total, 65 were blood relatives, 26 were in-laws, and 7 were guests. Also, there was Commodore Vaughters, Airedale, who shared a room with Jim Vaughters, and registered as being from the Tribe of K-9. Credentials on the latter are still being checked.

The V/V came to the mountain partly from family interest and partly from curiosity. There were all ages, all shapes and sizes. They brought food; they talked; they showed pictures; they snapped more pictures; they pulled K.P.; they showed up for breakfast, as well as lunch and dinner; they got acquainted; they liked each other; the weather was perfect. When Ellen Wicker sang "There's A Sweet, Sweet Spirit In This Place" at the close of Devotional Service on the last morning, she echoed the theme of the reunion. It was that kind of an encounter.

In attempting to highlight the reunion, the food must be mentioned. The V/V had been admonished to keep the menus simple. They did not. It was never possible to do justice to all of the goodies at a particular meal. Bread was the only item ever in short supply, which shortage was corrected by the renowned custom of substituting cake. There was no shortage of cake.

Singling out culinary offerings would be a hazardous, as well as near impossible task. Nevertheless, a few must be mentioned.

Who could forget:

Bill Vawter's salad made with vine spinach, kale, and cherry tomatoes, transported via ice chest from his garden in Houston, and tossed with his own special recipe dressing;

or

The thermal chest of hot buttered corn from the gardens of Patsy Vawter Poole and Charlotte Vawter Tillman of Hot Springs; or

The wine punch, with the main ingredient from the cellar of Bill Wiley, Nettleton, Ms.;

or

The six pecan pies (I counted them) baked by Clarice Vawter Mayer, Hickory Flat, Ms.;

or

Vernon Vawter's peanut brittle, of which it is impossible to eat a single piece; or Sorghum Molasses Cookies, famous from the Vawter Plantation in Louisiana, baked by Mrs. Willard Nixon of Iuka, Ms.; or the bushel of peaches provided by Paul and Carolyn Vaughter as an eye-opener at breakfast; or

The watermelons grown and provided by Emery Mayer; or

The casseroles, salads, ham, chicken, barbecue, desserts, ad infinitum.

"He who spends three days at honorable family reunion will gain new connections, but lose waistline".

Wednesday night's open-air "banquet" was climaxed by the presentation of awards:

OLDEST PERSON: The youthful Hattie Vawter Herron, Hot Springs, age 81. The equally youthful Willard Robinson Nixon, Iuka, Ms., also age 81, registered during the reunion, but left prior to the time awards were made.

YOUNGEST PERSON: Wendy Vawter, Brownsville, Tn., age 3 mos., daughter of Robt. L. and Mary Vawter; granddaughter of Robt. M. (Pete) and Norma Vawter of Milan, Tn. Wendy registered by mark (not the first of the V/V ever to do that), and confessed to growing a bit restless during the after-dinner speeches (not the only V/V to do that either). Nevertheless, she reports this is the outstanding honor of her life. According to grandfather Pete, Wendy is the 12th generation of Vawters in the U.S.

TRAVELED GREATEST DISTANCE: In the absence of an atlas, a tie was declared between Ron Vawter of New York City and Dave Vaughter of Sunrise, Florida.

MOST ROUNDABOUT JOURNEY: Wm. Michael Vawter, who with wife Judy, and children, Michele and Chris, were en route from Keesler AFB, Biloxi, Ms. to their new assignment at Brussels, Belgium.

MOST DETERMINED: Hal Vawter of St. Louis, brother of Michael (above), who flew from St. Louis to Little Rock Thursday morning, and was rushed to Brady Mountain by his brother in time for the farewell breakfast.

MOST DELIGHTED: Robt. M. (Pete) Vawter and Brooks Vawter, cousins, who came to the reunion knowing only the name of their g.g. grandfather, but left safe in the Tribe of Edward, Builder of Vauter Church, thanks to the records of Bettie Nash, Killeen, Texas, also a descendant of Edward the Builder. This also takes care of the Virginia roots of Vilas and Elliot Vawter of Memphis, Marvin L. Vawter of Champaign, Ill., and a host of Others. Happiness is finding a new grandfather.

MOST APPRECIATED GUEST: Mrs. Inez Cline, genealogist and writer for the Hot Springs Sentinel-Record, who brought greetings from the local historical society, took pictures for the paper, and presented complimentary copies of the History of Garland County Arkansas.

MOST CONFUSED: Mary Wicker Reese, who called home to touch base with husband Gene, and remind him that she was at Bushy Mountain. (For the benefit of V/V outside the Deep South, Bushy Mountain is the location of Tennessee State Prison) Fortunately, Gene is not easily excited.

MOST OPTIMISTIC: Carolyn (Mrs. Paul) Vaughter and Ebeteen (Mrs. Silas) Vawter, who were overheard making plans to get together with their husbands in Oklahoma City. If memory serves, the last meeting between Paul and Silas was less than harmonious. Perhaps the presence of the ladies will keep down friction this time.

MOST AUTHORITATIVE: Col (ret) James S. Corbitt, who, faced, with the prospect of hosting breakfast with no coffee cups, drove to Hot Springs at daybreak and commandeered the early opening of a store. Col. Corbitt has recommended that at the next reunion one set of eating utensils be issued each V/V at registration.

MOST ARTISTIC: Vernon and Traudl Vawter, who painted the large welcome sign, as well as the family tree with its many branches.

The family tree, incidentally, was transported to Oklahoma for use at next year's reunion by

MOST OBLIGING: Ray Murray, whose van was a life-saver in carting food, chairs and people around the mountain. Along with Vernon Vawter's pickup, the van was a favored vehicle. Before the next reunion, care should be taken to recruit a sufficient number of V/V who own vans and pickups.

MOST NONPLUSSED: Wordna Wicker, who following the accolade by Dave Vaughter at the banquet, could think of nothing more profound to say than "aw, shucks". Two months after the fact, and in the privacy of home, let me say to Dave and to the many others who have said kind things about the newsletter that it has been a pleasure to help the V/V discover themselves. In the words of Tom Sawyer, "If you like to do it, it ain't work".

At a business session a steering committee composed of Paul Vaughter, Vernon Vawter, Dave Vaughter, Jim Vaughters, Marvin Vawter, James Corbttt, LaVerna Murray, Bill Vawter, Hazel Mc Candless, Silas Vawter, Shirley Vawter Byler, and Bettie Nash made the following recommendation for the future of the family organization:

1. Beginning Jan. 1, 1979, dues be set at \$5.00 per year, per household, which will include subscription to the newsletter.
2. The newsletter be published 3 times per year.
3. The reunion be held at Murray State Park, Ardmore, Ok. in 1979, tentatively on the last week end in July. Definite announcement to be made via the newsletter in early 1979.
4. The reunion be held in the Hot Springs area in 1980.
5. Possibility of holding the reunion at the Vauter Church in Essex Co., Va. at some future time be given consideration.

The recommendations were presented to the assembled V/V following the banquet, and were duly ratified. In addition, the following slate of officers for the family organization were nominated and elected:

President: James C. Vaughters, 1233 Elmira St., Aurora, Colorado 80010.

Vice President: Marvin D. Vawter, 11205 Wornall Rd., Kansas City, Missouri 64114.

Secretary-Treasurer: Hazel Vawter McCandless, P.O. Box 366, Cushing, Texas 75760.

Editor: Wordna Wicker, P.O. Box 360, Pontotoc, Mississippi 38863.

By way of introduction to your new officers, the following profiles are given:

JAMES C. VAUGHTERS: Call him Jim; he's under 40; born in Texas; grew up in Georgia; served in U.S. Navy, also aboard aircraft carriers, and as instructor at Lowry AFB, Denver; an attorney in Denver since 1972; married to the former Donna Mosher of Ill.; one son, Jonathan, age 5; hobbies - U.S. Naval Reserve, hunting, Church Choir & genealogy. Tribe of James, son of John III.

MARVIN D. VAWTER: Call him Marv; he's over 40; born in Missouri; served in U.S. Navy, head mechanical engineer with Bendix; married to former Bess Ferro; three daughters, Elizabeth, Katherine and Rozanne; 2 grandchildren; hobbies - grandchildren, genealogy, and do-it-yourself handyman and carpenter. Tribe of William, son of David.

Hazel Vawter McCandless: Call her Hazel unless you are in Mayor's Court in Cushing, in which case call her, "Your Honor"; she is over 40; born in Texas, has her own insurance agency; a widow; has one daughter; a twin brother, L.G. (Bill) Vawter; hobbies - football, genealogy & visiting daughter in Corsicana. Tribe of Richard II, son of John III.

Wordna Wicker: Call her Wordna; she's over 40; born in Mississippi married to Fred Wicker, who has the Vawter blood; two children, Ellen & Roger; hobbies - gardening, bird watching & genealogy. Tribe of John IV, supposed son of John III.

Since the reunion, additional word on the identity of the Vawter Plantation in La. has been forwarded by Mrs. Allie B. Grimes of Opp, Ala. The reference is an excerpt from FERRY ACROSS THE SABINE by Bobby Sterrett, Jefferson, Texas, and mentions that Mrs. Lucinda Vawter, a widow with a large family, sold her Louisiana plantation adjoining John Craig in 1845, and purchased the ferry operation on the Sabine River at Grand Bluff, Texas. Surely there are descendants of Lucinda and her large family. We will hope to hear from them.

A new member of the V/V organization is Mrs. Edna W. Reynolds, Butlerville, Ind., co-author of the revised version of the VAWTER FAMILY IN AMERICA, published originally in 1905 by Grace Vawter Bicknell. The Bicknell book has been called the Vawter Bible, and the paperback copy is well worth the price of \$6.00, which includes postage. It may be ordered directly from Mrs. Reynolds.

The second Vawter Bible is the "Diary of Robert Rose" edited by the Rev. Ralph E. Fall, Rector of Vauter Church in Essex Co., Va. It contains many references and explanations of Vawter names, Vauter's Church, and collateral names. It will be remembered that Robert Rose was the Rector of St. Anne's Parish when Vauter's Church was erected in 1731, purportedly by Edward Vawter. The Diary covers a 5-year period and gives an insight into cultural and Church life in colonial Virginia. With the proposed pilgrimage to Vauter Church, this book will be a must in every V/V library. It may be ordered directly from Rev. Ralph E. Fall, Port Royal, Va. 22535. Cost is \$16.00, which includes postage.

AN OFFER YOU CAN'T REFUSE: This writer's favorite mother-in-law, Ora Wicker, has offered to compile a photograph album of shots taken at the recent reunion, if the V/V will forward her the negatives of the many pictures taken. She already has about 100 photos from the 1977 reunion. This album will be brought to the next reunion for viewing. Send the negatives to: Ora Wicker, 2088 Courtland Place, Memphis, Tn. 38104.

Subscription fees for the Newsletter may be mailed either to this writer, or to Hazel McCandless. The next issue will be forthcoming in January, 1979.

A word of welcome to our youngest member, Courtney Leigh Vaughter, a blond, blue eyed lass, born July 9, 1978, who came to live with Phil & Peggy Vaughter, Austin, Texas, on Sept. 8, 1978. Our congratulations to the happy parents and to the proud grandparents, Paul & Carolyn Vaughter of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

This document was created with Win2PDF available at <http://www.daneprairie.com>.
The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.