

AAFA Annual Meeting: Summary of Minutes

Welcome & Opening

The meeting was called to order by AAFA President, Captain Lodwick "Wick" Alford at 9:00 AM on Saturday, October 15, 1988, in a meeting room at the Perimeter Center Guest Quarters Hotel in Atlanta, Georgia.

The opening was preceded by the playing of a tape recording of the "Colonel Bogey March," composed in 1916 by British bandmaster Kenneth J. Alford and famous as marching music for soldiers in World War II. Later it was used as the theme in the popular motion picture "Bridge On the River Kwai."

The president welcomed those present and expressed appreciation for the work done by Roberta and Milton Folds in making all the arrangements for the meeting and for a lovely dinner at their home on Friday evening. The president also recognized and expressed his appreciation for the work done by the officers and by Gil Alford in getting the Association started.

Finances

The president called upon the treasurer, Julius M. Alford, for a financial report. He reported the following for the period Jan 1-Aug 31, 1988:

Receipts	\$1,069.57
Expenses	1,169.03
Cash in Bank	1,147.42

Gil Alford presented the 1988 and 1989 revised budgets which had been recently updated. It was recommended that until we get better established with our annual operations (revenue and expenses), Gil be given some latitude and flexibility in execution of our budget. The budgets

were approved as submitted. It was pointed out that officers were not asking for reimbursement for their expenses. It is their right to do so, and it is easier to make realistic financial plans if we know what is actually being spent to operate the Association. Gil encouraged members to question or challenge expenditures or other financial data when they had a question about same.

Ray Alford made a very substantial donation and emphasized that we should never fail to perform a task that needed to be done just because funds were not available. He said that when such a situation develops, the officers should make the need known to the membership as there were probably those who would be happy to donate enough to cover the need.

Publications

Pam Alford Thompson, the publications editor, talked about the inter-related roles of the newsletter, *AAFA ACTION*, and Gil Alford's *ABOUT ALFORDS*. It was recognized that the two would be merged at some date in the future when Gil is no longer able to continue his work. Pam indicated that she did not include extensive genealogical data or inquiries in the Association newsletter because *ABOUT ALFORDS* is almost all genealogical data. The president suggested that *AAFA ACTION* continue with coverage similar to the first two editions, gradually adding genealogical data based on projects initiated by AAFA.

Both Julius and Ray Alford suggested including as much as possible in the way of human interest subjects pertaining to Alford's. Gil Alford pointed out that Pam needed input from officers and members of AAFA and emphasized that he would be

happy to assist any of the members in their preparation of articles for use in *AAFA ACTION*.

Family Emblem

President Wick Alford showed our family emblem which was commissioned by AAFA. He mentioned that there was additional work that was supposed to be done by Mr. Haynsworth, the designer, to provide the "Alford" identification on the larger version of the emblem.

Pam Thompson suggested that we do something commercial with the emblem. Afterthought: Do any of our attorney members know if the emblem can be registered as a trademark and protected? As it is, there is nothing to prevent some company from making pins, patches, etc. and selling them.

Membership

In the absence of Nancy T. Alford, AAFA Secretary, Gil passed out an updated membership list. Total membership was 163 in 92 different families. Only two from the first year have failed to renew.

Registration Fees & Dues

There was considerable discussion concerning the \$10 registration fee and whether it should be reduced to something lower, like maybe \$5. Gil stated that at the present rate a member could not be serviced on even \$15 per year, and that we were dependent upon donations to supplement registration fees and dues. The members voted to continue, for the present time, the registration fee of \$10 and annual dues of \$8.

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Articles of Incorporation & Bylaws

The articles of incorporation (constitution) and bylaws were presented and discussed. The bylaws were approved with the stipulation that the the amounts of fees and dues were to be deleted so that the board of directors could establish them. It was agreed that at the 1989 meeting a committee will be named which will review the articles of incorporation and bylaws and make recommendations for changes in the 1990 meeting. In the meantime, if members feel there is a need for change at the 1989 meeting, notice must be given to the membership 4 weeks in advance of the meeting.

Corporate Status

The state of Missouri, in which the Association is incorporated, has given it exempt status, which means it need not pay taxes. Application has been made to IRS for a federal exemption, and that is still in process. If approved it will mean the Association does not have to pay income taxes, although an annual report will be required. **IMPORTANT:** It does not mean that the Association is considered a charitable organization and that donations to it are deductible on tax returns.

Donations

There has been no request for donations since the request for sent out with the initial membership solicitation. Gil pointed out that the budget and planning for the Association assumed some revenue by donation. It was agreed that there should be an annual solicitation of donations for research and operations made in the newsletter as determined by the board of directors.

Research

Research and research projects were discussed extensively. Nancy Dietrich, who could not attend the meeting, sent the recommendation that the Association back off the research in Virginia based on our experience with the professional research and from the report made by Henry Alford after a visit to Virginia. She recommends that we concentrate more on North Carolina.

It was further recommended that we do all possible to encourage members to do research using local archives, LDS facilities, libraries, etc., and that we use paid researchers only as a last alternative. It was pointed out that as a group of non-professionals, we had already gathered an awesome collection of Alford information. Wick Alford stressed the point that if it is necessary to employ professional researchers, they are to be given a very well defined and specific task.

There was some discussion of the needs for census information, and Gil pointed out that he, with the help of others, had collected much of the census information for the censuses before 1860 and from the 1880, 1900 and 1910 soundex. He also commented on the need to purchase as much data as possible that has already been compiled and is available, such as marriage lists, therefore not requiring any research expense.

Pam Thompson recommended that Nancy Dietrich develop a research plan with specific tasks and that we then go about getting someone to do them. The tasks would be designed to gather data which AAFA does not already have. Gil reported that Nancy had considered this, but until he can convey to her information on all he has, or doesn't have, it is difficult for her to develop such a plan. Ray Alford said that, acting as a director

of research, Nancy should serve as a control point to coordinate all research activity and to advise members what research is needed, what is under way, and to make requests and assignments. There was considerable discussion about reimbursing members for expenses incurred in doing research for the Association. While this may be done, it will be necessary for the person doing the research to obtain prior approval from Nancy Dietrich if they expect to receive any reimbursement for expenses other than making copies and postage. Afterthought: But what an easy way to make a valuable donation to your Association!

It was emphasized that when any research assignment is being given, it should be very clear and specific.

Alford Cemeteries

Julius Alford led a discussion on Alford cemeteries. Gil mentioned that D. L. Alford, Jr. had requested that the membership consider the subject of Alford cemeteries or burial sites. He had related an experience where he found a couple of ancestors' graves in a cow lot in Georgia. The owner of the property was willing to give the burial plots to an interested person or the Association. Other similar situations were mentioned. There was considerable discussion as to the Association taking on ownership of Alford cemeteries. It was decided that the president would appoint a cemetery committee. [See "Alford Cemeteries," p. 11, in this issue.]

Records & Library

In the absence of Nancy Dietrich, Gil Alford provided information on AAFA records and the library. He described how copies of much of his information were being made and sent

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to Nancy for the library. There was a lively discussion concerning books which mention Alford's. The consensus was that AAFA needs a plan which will provide for the review of as many sources as possible. [See "The Alford Library," p. 7, describing the plan which was later formulated.]

Annual Meeting

Gil Alford recommended that it be the policy of AAFA to hold the annual meeting in the state that had the greatest number of members as of the day 30 days before the meeting in the previous year, and that we not repeat in a state

for at least ten years. According to a survey of the membership, about September 15 there were more members in Texas than in any other state. Therefore, after much discussion, it was agreed that the meeting would be in east Texas in the fall of 1989. [See "Texas Here We Come," p. 6, in this issue.]

Ray Alford suggested that our long range (ten year) plan ought to be to have our own building which housed all our Alford records and that we have our meetings there. [See "Building Plans," p. 6, in this issue.]

Association Purposes

AAFA Articles of Incorporation contain nine purposes, of which eight are well defined. While they are well defined purposes, they do not state specifically what work will be done to achieve the purposes.

To really serve our purposes we must describe specifically what work or tasks are required for each purpose, how and when it should be accomplished, who will be responsible and what it will cost. For instance, our genealogical effort thus far has been

rather happenstance as we have been, more or less, just doing what came naturally.

If we cannot provide such a work statement, or set of work statements, for a purpose, then we should consider deleting the purpose or revising it so that it can be dealt with.

We plan to establish planning groups to deal with the above during the next year, and we need suggestions and recommendations from you and your support in both the planning and execution.

Officers for 1989

The plan to continue with the same officers for the next year was discussed. At their request, comments from Weston Adams, Vice-President, and Nancy Dietrich, Genealogist-Historian, concerning their inability to make the meeting(s) was passed to the membership. Notwithstanding their situation, the members present voted to continue all the officers through to the 1989 meeting.

Further Organization

Gil presented brief plans for further organization of the Association. The articles of incorporation provide for various divisions within the Association. As membership increases and there are enough members in one branch of the family, then it is planned that a family division will be formed. For example, all the descendants of James Alford born about 1687 in Virginia would constitute a division. It would be headed by an Association division vice-president with a division secretary, reporter, and researcher-historian, who will be the "keeper" of the division lineage and the "expert" on the history of that branch of the family.

When membership in any state is

large enough to justify a state division, a geographic division will be set up with the same type officers and functions, except the researcher-historian would be the "expert" on the Alford's of the particular state.

Expansion Efforts

Expansion success stories as well as some disappointing results were discussed. New ideas for more aggressive promotion of AAFA were introduced. It was also determined that the 1989 expansion effort be coordinated with the annual meeting in Texas. [See "Expansion Efforts," p. 12, in this issue.]

The meeting was adjourned by Capt. Lodwick Alford at 12:00 noon.

Alford Family Reunions

The importance of reunions within the various divisions and branches of the family cannot be stressed enough. All groups are encouraged to establish a plan for regular meetings. If you are meeting or planning meetings, please keep AAFA advised so your reunion can be announced in the newsletter. The Association will also provide support to the reunion if practical.

Known Alford reunions are:

Descendants of William L. H. Alford (1863-1931)
Sylvester, GA, annually in April

Descendants of Jephtha Martin Alford (1862-1948)
Percy Quin State Park, MS, annually in April

Descendants of Julius C. Alford (1808-1899)
Gallman, MS, every other year (August 5, 1989)