

Expansion Efforts

Free Inquiries

As Wick said in his comments in the September newsletter, we want "MORE! MORE! MORE!" Alford. A nationwide source just begging to be tapped is the 100+ genealogical columnists in the country. Practically all of these will publish free inquiries.

There are also thousands of genealogical and/or historical societies which allow members to publish free inquiries (usually a limit and some geographical restrictions).

We need information on thousands of Alford; we also need to get our surname, and AAFA, mentioned in print as often as we can—the publicity will generate more Alford data and new members. Even when inquiries do not produce the requested information requested, they frequently cause general "Alford" responses.

We will be asking all members for information about their (1) membership in local societies, (2) local newspapers, especially those with genealogical columns and (3) desires for an inquiry to be published. Those who have access to inquiry publishing who have no need for inquiries will be fed inquiries to submit for publication.

Individual Effort

While we're on the subject, here's a great success story—and the best news is that you can duplicate it!

Walter W. Alford of Laguna Hills, CA, sent the following letter to 33 Alford whose names appeared in the Orange County, CA, telephone book:

Dear Mr/Mrs ALFORD:

Perhaps you have already become a

member of "ABOUT ALFORDS", or have at least received material about it. Mr. Gilbert K. Alford, a distant cousin, is engaged in a massive genealogical search of the family, its history, and its origins. I, for instance, am a ninth generation American, and Gilbert and I share a common great grandfather, John Seaborn ALFORD, who was the twin of Seaborn John ALFORD. No, they were not born at sea—Seaborn was their mother's maiden name. Gilbert needs all the information he can get to flesh out the family history, so we would appreciate it if you would fill out the enclosed form and mail it to:

*Gilbert K. Alford,
1403 Kingsford Drive, Florissant,
Missouri 63031-2422
For further info, I can be reached at
(714) 830-6696.*

*Walter W. Alford
23465 Caminito Salado
Laguna Hills CA 92653*

Walter enclosed a blank family group record with his letter. Gil has already received three responses, two containing extensive Alford information!

Walter also plans to call the 11 Alford in the phone book without an address, but there has not been time for a report from him on that.

If all AAFA members would follow Walter Alford's lead, we could expect a significant informational response as well as an increase in membership.

The only change we would recommend is that the first sentence in the letter mention becoming a member of the Alford American Family Association instead of *ABOUT ALFORDS* since the only real membership involved is with AAFA.

As a member of AAFA, you are

encouraged to do all possible to reach the Alford in your geographic area. As you can see, the personal touch is sometimes more appealing than an organized effort on a larger scale by the Association office. The cousin you find could be your own, so let's get the word out. Thanks for the idea and the work, Walter!

State Expansion Projects

Our effort to reach Missouri Alford was less successful than expected. Our president signed letters that were addressed to about 200 Missouri Alford families. As expected, about 25% of those were returned because of bad addresses. We expected to get responses from about 20 of the families in the state. Thus far there has been one response, and no new Missouri members.

In addition to the letters to specific Alford, news releases were sent to 230 Missouri newspapers, and as part of our meeting promotion another 280 were sent to Georgia newspapers and genealogical columnists nationwide. The releases to the genealogical columnists seem to be the most effective and have resulted in 13 (probably more) new members.

Because of the expense and problems with the Missouri effort, the Mississippi expansion has been temporarily suspended. However, we are still receiving responses to our effort, so it is much too early to judge.

For expansion coordinated with our 1989 meeting in Texas, we plan to concentrate on media releases in Texas. We also plan to contact every Texas Alford soliciting their help to add to the voluminous Texas data already in our file. As an aside they will be invited to attend our meeting and/or join AAFA.