

Alfords in the News

JUDY ALFORD

Sent by Lodwick Alford, AAFA #11

BRUNSWICK NEWS

Brunswick, GA—3 December 1993

State Employee Given Pay, Pension

ATLANTA (AP) — An employee of the state Public Service Commission who was demoted from confidential secretary to entry-level clerk has been awarded back pay, attorney's fees and a pension.

Judy Alford, chief administrative aide to former Commissioner Ford Spinks, was granted the award this week after the state declined to appeal a Fulton County judge's verdict in her favor.

To comply with the order, the state provided Ms. Alford with \$7,500 in back pay, a \$27,000 annual pension and \$57,000 for her lawyer, Amy Totenburg. In addition, she received \$15,000 to drop a civil suit in which she claimed the PSC had punished her for her relationship with Spinks....

When Spinks left office at the end of 1988, Ms. Alford was given a job stamping mail in the PSC's Hapeville office. Her annual raise, approved by the commission, was rescinded. She filed suit, saying she had been effectively fired.

JOSEPH BENJAMIN ALFORD

THE ERA-LEADER

Franklinton, LA—Wed., 10 Nov. 1993

Twenty-four descendants of Joseph and Rosa Alford gather

Joseph Benjamin Alford and his

wife, the former Rosa Ann Burch, had eight children, eight grandchildren, twenty great-grandchildren and nineteen great-great-grandchildren. Of these fifty-five descendants, twenty-four attended a family reunion and potluck supper on October 3, 1993, at the Denham Springs home of Charlotte Alford and her husband, Randy. Eleven friends and spouses were also present.

Mrs. Myrtha Alford Magee of Franklinton is the only surviving child of Joseph and Rosa Alford. She was unable to come to the reunion, although she had recently celebrated her ninetieth birthday at a reception at First Baptist Church in Franklinton. Her generation was represented by her brother Audel's widow, Mrs. Revia Henley Alford of Bogalusa, who brought a number of interesting items of family history to the reunion.

The third generation was represented by Carolyn Magee Honeycutt of Baton Rouge; Joan Alford and Jimmie Nell Alford Weick of New Orleans; Babs Alford Winburn of Ponchatoula; the Reverend Richard Alford of Wetumpka, Alabama and the hostess, Charlotte Owens.

Joseph Alford's great-grandchildren present were Kay Lewis; Wayne Weick; Marc, Sandra and Bruce Alford; Michael and Dirkie Winburn; Deanna Graham and Rebecca Owens.

Great-great-grandchildren present were Brittany Metrejan; Christopher Weick; Jonathan and Jared Alford; Travis and Rachel Messina; Cory Winburn; Benjamin Joseph Jones and Ilene Graham.

Family pictures were shared, and gaps in the family history filled in, while old memories were recalled.

Another reunion will be held on Sunday, October 2, 1994, also at Owens home in Denham Springs.

ANITA ALFORD

Sent by Mildred Richbourg, AAFA #542

THE NEWS HERALD

Panama City, FL—Thur., 23 Sept. 1993

Search for woman's killer continues

"Master of disguise" loose two years after Holmes County woman's death

BONIFAY — Two years ago Wednesday, police said, a Holmes County woman was gunned down by the former mayor of Westville, a man described by authorities as both the victim's stepfather and boyfriend.

Today, the search continues for Kenneth Stripling, who Sheriff John Braxton called a "master of disguise." "He's still out there on the loose," the sheriff said.

Braxton said Kenneth Stripling, 41, killed Anita Alford, 33, with a single shot to her head as she stood beside his car in 1991.

Witnesses told investigators Alford and Stripling were "partying" in his car when they began to argue. Stripling warned Alford not to get out of the car, but she did.

Braxton said Alford was shot with a .357-caliber Magnum revolver by Stripling, who was still in the white 1982 Cadillac Coupe de Ville.

Authorities have been looking for him ever since.

The sheriff said that after the shooting, Stripling called his wife, Jackie Stripling. Jackie Stripling is Alford's mother. She was living with her own mother in Defuniak Springs.

"He told her that the daughter had been injured and she needed to go to the hospital with him," Braxton said. "(Jackie Stripling) jumped in the car

with him and that's the last anybody's seen or heard from any one of them."

Exhausting every lead, investigators turned their information over to the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and the FBI.

"Locally, we're still keeping in touch," Braxton said. "They're still running down leads, when they get them in."

Sightings have been reported as far away as New Mexico and Arizona.

Braxton said Stripling likely has eluded authorities because of his knack for disguising himself.

"He's a master of disguises," the sheriff said....

[Editor's note: On 10 Jan 1994, the television program "A Current Affair" aired a story about this incident.

Apparently Stripling had been caught while living with his wife's mother in SC. The program gave these additional details: Anita Joyce Alford was born in 1958 and died in 1991. Her father was Tom Alford. Stripling left his wife to live with Anita.]

WARNER ALFORD AAFA #241

Sent by Julius Alford, AAFA #13

McCOMB ENTERPRISE-JOURNAL
McComb, MS—Fri., 23 April 1993

Warner Alford to be cited Saturday

OXFORD, Miss. (AP) — Athletic director Warner Alford and football coach Billy Brewer will be honored by the University of Mississippi Chapter of the National Football Foundation and College Hall of Fame Saturday night in conjunction with the Rebels' spring game.

Alford will receive the Distinguished American Award while Brewer will be honored with the Contribution to Amateur Football Award prior to the annual spring

football game at Vaught-Hemingway Stadium.

Alford, a McComb native, is in his 15th year as Ole Miss athletic director and serves on the 44-member NCAA Council. He is chairman of College Football Association Athletic Directors Committee and is a member of the CFA Board of Directors.

A three-year offensive lineman with the Rebels, he co-captained the 1960 team which shared the national Championship.

DAVID ALFORD

Sent by Pam Thompson, AAFA #30

METROPOLITAN HOME, April 1992

"Walden West"

It's vacation heaven. An ardent gardener re-creates Eden for guests in his own private Colorado

By Mindy Pantiel

BLUE LAKE RANCH, outside of Durango, Colorado—where the mile-high state meets New Mexico, Arizona and Utah—can best be described as a cross between the Cotswolds of England and Walden Pond with amenities. Nestled into God's own outback (guests are mailed maps to chart their course to the Highway 140 turnoff), this cozy bed and breakfast is the kind of slow-moving, breathtaking place that embodies the very essence of a vacation getaway. "The only light we can see from here," says proprietor David Alford, "is in a gold mine up there in the mountains."

Built on a hill called Fort Lewis Mesa, site of the area's original Indian outpost, the former homestead offers thrilling views of the La Plata mountains' snow-capped San Juan range. And then there are the gardens: Flowers fill the landscape as far as the eye can see. Depending on the time of

year, the Blue Lake Ranch Bed and Breakfast Inn's property brims with tulips and daffodils (as many as 30,000 flowers bloom each spring), towering hollyhocks, fields of poppies and petunias, and seemingly every other variety imaginable. Says Alford, "I make maps every spring and plant more bulbs in the fall to fill in any gaps."

It's difficult to believe that just 15 years ago the welcoming yellow country house where guests now clamor to stay was a ramshackle farmhouse set in fields stripped bare by cattle. But Alford, a former psychiatric social worker from Buffalo, NY, saw the potential for paradise and set about creating Eden in his own private Colorado.

The air in this heartland of the Old West is as pure as the water. The placid, three-acre lake after which the ranch is named is fed by seven underground springs that gurgle and gush out of nearby Spring Gulch. A regular angling guest stocks the lake with brook and rainbow trout that breed and grow to five or six pounds—unless the loquacious Alford is telling fish tales. Everywhere, a merciful peace reigns. What sounds like gentle wind chimes in the distance is actually the music of the Alford sheep grazing, each animal wearing a different toned Swiss bell.

Occupying a hundred acres at the edge of a 6,000 acre agricultural station and the Southern Ute Indian Reservation, Blue Lake Ranch supports a small flock of sheep (about 20 ewes) and maintains close ties to the wilderness: The animals are mated in fall and give birth in winter to allow the newborn lambs time to grow before setting them out to pasture—and such possible predators as coyotes and mountain lions.

Originally a turn-of-the-century homestead of Swedish immigrants, the inn has been in operation for 10 years now. Accommodations include four rooms in the year-round main house, each with private bath and vista; a three-bedroom log cabin near the lake

with two baths, two fireplaces and a kitchen; and a one-room cottage with bath and kitchenette that is surrounded by piñon trees and Alford's edible-flower garden. This variety of accommodations encourages a diverse mix of guests: Singles, couples and families (yes, kids are welcome) mingle easily.

Yet visitors are likely to find themselves sitting for hours watching the gardens grow, and the Alford family, ardent gardeners all, have made this activity extremely convenient. Here and there, Adirondack chairs are placed just so—one immersed in a sea of poppies, another offering unobstructed views of the lake and mountains. These are favorite places to meditate with afternoon tea or enjoy a picnic dinner brought back from town. "I've tried to create 'rooms' of gardens with lots of winding paths to explore," Alford enthuses.... And although he began his gardening career "by the book," Alford's approach to horticulture is now founded on a far looser philosophy—bulbs and beets grow side by side here....

When he isn't otherwise engaged, Alford actively pursues his private passion: heirloom flower seeds. The relentless gardener admits to boldly knocking on doors or hanging longingly over picket fences to get his hands on new varieties. "Fortunately," he notes, "gardeners love to share...."

"Old Mr. Coon" had been growing two-foot high hedges of petunias in his front yard for 62 years when Alford stumbled upon them and very likely saved them from extinction. "Turns out he had the original perennial variety that current hybrids are made from," says Alford, who now markets the re-seeding petunias. In fact, as the result of constant guest requests for seeds, the Alford family now offers eight varieties and a cottage garden mix (which are available by mail order from the address below), along with a line of homemade honey, jams and jellies, holiday gift baskets, and even fresh lamb.

Although the serenity alone is

worth the trip, Blue Lake is an excellent base for a wider-ranging tour. Mountain towns like Telluride and Ouray are easy day trips, as are the Native American ruins at Mesa Verde National Park and the history-rich Durango-to-Silverton narrow-gauge railroad. In fact, Alford and his wife Shirley, a former physician, are developing a second guest house in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in Shirley's home there; it's less than four hours away by car.

"We try to keep everything simple and comfortable," Alford says with understated pride, but Blue Lake Ranch is far from "rustic." Rooms are furnished with Alford family pieces and others designed specifically for the inn. "I built a lot of the tables myself," says Alford, although he claims he hates carpentry, "and we made a lot of our own lamps out of pots and vases. The cabin is filled with log furniture I had handmade. My goal was to furnish the place with pieces I could fall asleep in. Since I'm almost 6'5" I figured that if I'm comfortable enough to sleep in a chair, anyone can...."

As for guests bearing seeds in hopes of trading for some of Alford's enviable blooms and edibles, he says, "I would never refuse a kindred spirit. That would be bad karma."

Blue Lake Ranch, 16919 Highway 140, Durango/Hesperus, CO 81326; 303/385-4537. Rates are \$80 to \$125 per night.

ALFORD, FLORIDA

Sent by Roberta Folds, AAFA #49

ATLANTA CONSTITUTION
Atlanta, GA—Fri., 2 August 1991

Town's attraction hard to explain; you had to be there

By Celestine Sibley

A sassy friend called up to say he

thought I had outgrown such archaic fancies as taking bus trips and going to Alford, Fla., of all places. In his younger days he traveled the Southeast as a salesman, and there are certain places that stick in his memory as beyond redemption. Especially, he added, if you travel to them by bus. He rode buses as a soldier and wants no more of them....

That's all very well, I told him, but what has he got against Alford, the little town in Jackson County founded at the turn of the century by the lumber barons, the Alford brothers, as a shipping point on the Atlanta and St. Andrews Bay railroad.

He actually never visited Alford so he backed up a bit, and I was able to tell him about its charms. It has two



notable places of interest close by—the fabulous, exotic caverns up the road in a state park in Marianna and the woods and waterfall and beautiful limestone sinks in Falling Water State Park in Chipley.

Granted, these sights and wonders are not in Alford proper. But they are close enough to have made my grandsons' visit there (after the bus ride) memorable. They had never been in the cool underground vaults of limestone caves, where glittering stalactites hang from the ceiling and strange and wondrous formations of rock surround you. It took us an hour to tour the caverns and they talked about it for days.

We took a picnic lunch to beautiful Falling Water State Park and rested in a fine grove of hardwood trees after a hike along a boardwalk through fern-

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(Alfords in the News, cont. from p. 17)

banked woodland, where the limestone sinks, deep and mysterious, kept us hanging spellbound over the railing. So many of these earthy depressions are hosts to magnolia trees and opulent stands of the prettiest ferns I have ever seen.

Aside from these delights, a small town has its own special charms. There are only two grocery stores in Alford, but they are close enough that the boys could walk to them for ice cream. There's an antiques/junk store where they could shop for small pocket-knives. And then there's the lake, the lovely, clear, sand-bottom Round Lake, which my mother knew as a girl, where I swam and their parents swam.

Fringed with cypress trees, it is prettier than it ever was and so enticing to me that I couldn't bear to sit on the bank and watch the boys splashing about. First I waded and then I swam, although I had not brought a bathing suit....

Floating on my back, lapped by cool green water, listening to the shouts of happy children, watching a long-legged bird move across the sky, I wondered if I wasn't really in the best place in the world. My picky friend might not understand.

R. ALFORD

Sent by Elizabeth Hazlip, AAFA #358

THE HAZLEHURST COURIER
Hazlehurst, MS—3 October 1907

The Famous 16th

Mr. C.E. Hartwell of Wesson, writing to the *Crystal Springs Meteor* under date of September 17th, says of this famous regiment:

“On the 17th of September, 1862, the battle of Sharpsburg, Md., was fought—just forty-five years ago. Historians call it the bloodiest battle of

the war in proportion to the number engaged. In that battle, the 16th Mississippi Regiment lost 65 per cent of the men, killed and wounded, it took into action and as Company C of that Regimaent was from your town (Crystal Springs), I send you a list of its casualties on that awful day, thinking it might be of interest to any of the surviving relatives and friends and proved of some historical value:”

Killed: privates **R. Alford**....

ELIAS ALFORD

Sent by Elizabeth Hazlip, AAFA #358

THE SOUTHERN STAR
Gallatin, MS—23 November 1839

COPIAH CO. OFFICIALS — Thomas Holliday, Sheriff; William Barnes, Clerk of Circuit Court; S H Johnson, Probate Judge; Wm W Cook, Clerk of Probate; **Elias Alford**, Assessor and Collector.... ❖