

1996 Annual Meeting in Springfield, MO

By Max Alford, AAFA Secretary

The 1996 Annual Meeting in Springfield was a real joy. The weather was beautiful—temperature ranged from upper 30's to the 60's and 70's with beautiful clear skies. For the first time, there was a "greeter" at the hotel on Thursday to welcome those attending the meeting. JoLynn Long, #718, was in the hotel lobby for most of Thursday to welcome the members and guests as they arrived. It was a very nice touch and something that hopefully can be continued at future meetings.

The official meeting kicked off Friday morning as the Genealogy Workshop got underway with Alicia Houston, Lynn Shelley, and Gil Alford presenting topics dealing with researching genealogy and local history where you live, the Family History Centers, census records, etc.

Sheila Wright, Springfield City Council member, was scheduled to attend on Saturday morning, but due to a mix-up, she appeared Friday morning to issue an official welcome of the Association to Springfield. She was so impressed with what we were doing that she stayed on after her welcome to see what the meeting was all about!

Peggy Taylor and Betty Braden, owners of Dogwood Printing, the company that prints *AAFA ACTION*, attended part of the Friday afternoon session. They gave a presentation on publishing not only your family history but other genealogical books as well. It was nice to be able to meet the people that play a vital role in getting the quarterly to our members.

Over 90 people attended the reception on Friday night. The food was great and everyone enjoyed renewing old acquaintances and making new ones.

At the Saturday morning business meeting, members elected next year's Board of Directors. Five newly-elected members will be joining the Board: Jimmie Alford, Cecil Alford, Robin Sterling, Gil Alford, and Lodwick Alford. Re-elected returning members are Pam Thompson, Max Alford, Janice Smith, Doris Vetri, Lynn Shelley, and Paul Alford. This was the first Board elected under the new by-laws which were adopted in early 1996 by the membership.

AAFA thanks all outgoing Board members for their service: Benjamin Alford, Raymond Alford, Nancy Dietrich, Marian Hodges, and Alicia Houston.

The new Board then elected AAFA officers for the 1996-97

term. Officers elected were: Gil Alford, President; Lynn Shelley, Vice-President; Doris Vetri, Treasurer; and Max Alford, Secretary.

The states for the 1999 and 2000 meetings were selected. It was suggested that we return to the state of Texas which has more members than any other state. Texas was approved by those attending as the meeting site for 1999. It was also suggested that we start the new millennium in the state where the first meeting was held, Georgia. This was also approved by the membership. The exact meeting place in each state has not been decided yet.

The Saturday afternoon Alford Family Forum was, as usual, the event that had the largest attendance with the exception of the Saturday night buffet. But everybody knows Alford's would rather eat than do almost anything else. The food was excellent. After dinner, there was an awards program. Three members were inducted into the Alford Hall of Fame: D.L. Alford, #054, TX; Lucille Mehrkam, #032, TX; and Haidee Reeves, #210, LA. (Further coverage of these Hall of Fame awards will be published in future *AAFA ACTION* issues.)

Photo awards were also presented Saturday evening:

1st Place — Old Group Category

Submitter: Julia Alford Duke
Roy Stephen Alford Jr. in Ty Cobb's Arms

2d Place — Old Group Category

Submitters: Frankie Alford Penny & Nolan David Alford
Cleanup of John Seaborn Alford Cemetery, Mt. Hermon,
LA

1st Place — Old Portrait Category

Submitter: Lodwick H. Alford
Col. George Benton Alford

1st Place — Scenes Category

Submitter: D.L. Alford
Lee Alford's Confectionary, Caldwell, TX

1st Place — Cemetery Scenes Category

Submitter: Nolan David Alford
After Cleanup at John Seaborn Alford Cemetery, Mt.
Hermon, LA

1st Place — Cemetery Head Stones Category

Submitter: Nolan David Alford
John Seaborn Alford Headstone

Plaques were presented to outgoing President, Ben Alford, recognizing the outstanding job that he has done while serving as our President these last several years; and, belatedly, to Ray Alford, who retired as Vice President last year after having served since October 1991.

Seanne Carrigan, #335, who is the on-site contact for the 1997 meeting in Pleasanton, California, gave a short presentation on Pleasanton and the areas around it—what there is to do and see. After seeing Seanne's presentation, several members were ready to sign up for the meeting on the spot!

For the first time, there was entertainment provided by Posey Alford, #021. Posey gave a short talk on "Stress." The members of the audience were practically rolling in the aisle with laughter as Posey recounted things in our life that stress us out. Everyone enjoyed Posey's program and it provided an upbeat ending to the Saturday night buffet.

Throughout the meeting, the AAFA Store was open for business, operated by Sally Stoewer (ably assisted by her husband, Dick, and her sister, Jeanne Singleton). New items this year were ball point pens emblazoned with the AAFA name and the first AAFA cookbook. There were also the old familiar items such as T-shirts, golf shirts, pins, framed Alford mementos, caps, coffee cups, etc.

Five non-member attendees decided to join AAFA at the meeting: Lib Scheuermann of Franklinton, LA; Estelle "Dock" Alford of Mt. Hermon, LA; Sam Walker Wilson, Jr. of Desoto, TX; Raymond Alford of Sedalia, MO; and Mary Belle Miller of Maryville, MO. We want to welcome these new members to AAFA.

The Sunday morning meeting in the research room gave people probably the first real chance to just visit with one another. Some people took the opportunity to do some research in one of the many volumes that Gil and Mary Alford hauled to the meeting from AAFA headquarters. Then before you knew it, the 1996 meeting was over.

There were several familiar faces missing at the meeting. Doris and Sebastian Vetri were unable to attend due to Sebastian's illness; Don and Joan Alford were not there due to Don's surgery; Ella Alford was unable to attend; Elroy and Jan Alford were not there due to Elroy's illness; Hollis and Arliene Alford were not there due to illness; Marian Hodges missed due to an injury; Margaret Wilson also had to cancel out. Those who could not attend were truly missed and we hope all illnesses or injuries are cured or healed by now and everything is back to normal.

Make your plans now to attend our first West Coast meeting next year in Pleasanton, California, when we'll be celebrating the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Alford American Family Association. Please register early—and to encourage you to do so, there will be a substantial prize for the 25th person to register. Let's make the 1997 meeting the largest yet!

Attendees listed by family branch:

ann790ga Lynn Shelley, MO
Pat & Paul L. Davidson, Jr., LA
(Lynn Shelley's parents)

BAI781NC Robert B. & Maxine Alford, TX
BAL784GA Jean & Paul W. Alford, AL
John & Janice Stogsdill Smith, TX

BEN619EN R.M. "Dick" & Connie Alford, ID
Deborah & Fred Anderson, IA
Charles E. Boulson, MO

BRI781NC Myrtice Alford Edwards, GA
Celeste E. & Richard Furr, GA

CUL775NC Roberta A. & Milton Folds, GA
Robert & Pat Cook Thorn, TX

DAV785VA Janet Alford Hemby, TX
EDW792NC Edwin V. McMillan, MS
Robert & Kate Hollingsworth, MS
Helen McManus, MS
Will & Carolyn Alford Saunders, TX

ELB897MS Frances Franklin, MO
JoLynn Long, TX
Claudette Taylor, MO

GEO838NC George W. Alford, OK
HAY780GA Harold G. & Freda Alford, TX
ISA78-NC Posey & Mary Alford, TX
Raymond & Helen Alford, MO
Cynthia Alford Hopper, MO
Deborah L. Sanders, MO
Ray Alford, MO

JAM764NC Elizabeth Hazlip, MS
JAM791VA Mary Belle Miller, MO
JOH763VA Ruth Eager Moran, OK
JOH787NC Ben & Ruth Alford, PA
JOH801NC David Alford, TX
Max R. & Earline Alford, TX
Roy L. Alford, TX
Samantha K. Alford, TX

JOH807LA Estelle "Dock" Alford, LA
Gil & Mary Alford, MO
Murray L. & Mary Ruth Alford, LA
Nolan David & Mary Alford, LA
Vesta G. Bowden, TX
Vesta Alford Giddings, TX
Josephine Carrigan, CA
Seanne Carrigan, CA
Steve & Mary Alford Davis, TX
Jack & Fran W. Harry, LA
Don & Deane A. Nelson, AK
Frankie Penny, LA
Jeanne B. Singleton, LA
Patricia Smith, MS
E. Sally & Dick Stoewer, LA
Betty A. Wall, MS

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Staffing the registration table on Friday morning: Samantha Alford, #836, TX, JoLynn Alford Long, #718, TX, and Alicia Houston, #001, PA. New member Samantha is Secretary Max Alford's daughter—it looks like she's gotten right into the AAFA spirit! JoLynn volunteer efforts for AAFA also include typing and computer input. The Census Project is Alicia's brainchild; whenever census reports are printed in AAFA ACTION, say thanks to Alicia!



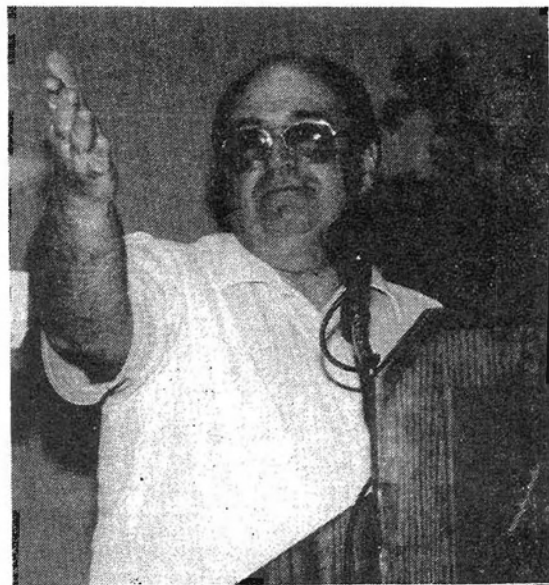
Paul Alford, #455, AL, and Lynn and Jim Shelley, MO, visit Friday night at the reception. Lynn is AAFA's Vice President and chairs the newly formed Research Committee. Paul Alford is on the Board of Directors and also chairs the newly formed Finance Committee.



Jeanne B. Singleton, #249, LA, was the lucky member to have her number drawn to win the lovely Alford Emblem cross-stitch, which was embroidered and donated by AAFA's Treasurer Doris Vetri. AAFA's newly-elected President Gil Alford presented it to Jeanne. Jeanne helped her sister Sally Stoewer run the AAFA Store, where attendees could buy AAFA items from inexpensive mugs and pens to elegant framed plaques.



On Saturday morning Janice Smith, #152, TX, addressed the group about AAFA's Wills Project. In addition to being the Associate for the Wills Project, Janice and her husband John record our annual meetings on film, catalog the photographs, and provide copies for AAFA ACTION publication—including all the meeting photos in this issue!



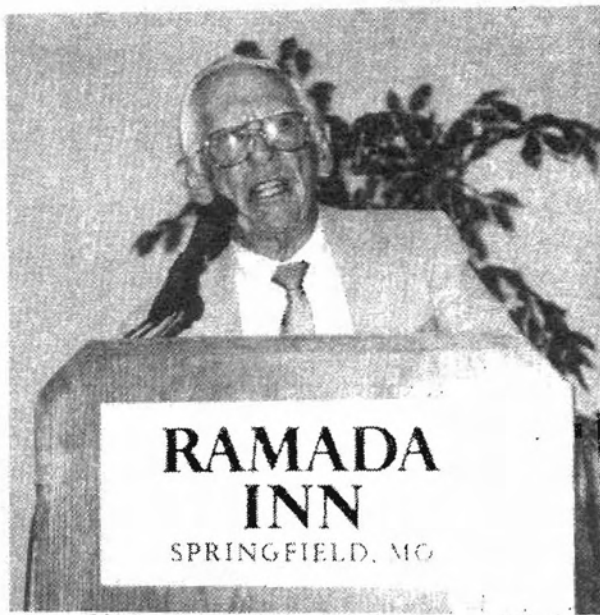
Max Alford, #230, TX, AAFA's Secretary, speaks to the group on Saturday morning. Max is the hero who has been getting AAFA ACTION into the mail each quarter, and he keeps all our membership records accurate and current. Beginning with the Fall 1996 issue, Lynn Shelley took over the mailing task, picking up the finished quarterlies from Dogwood, which is not far from her home. This will save AAFA shipping costs too!



Dogwood Printing is located in Ozark, MO, not far from Springfield, so we invited the owners, sisters Betty Braden (l) and Peggy Taylor (r), to the meeting to explain how AAFA ACTION is printed and put together—and to meet all the wonderful AAFA folks!



Alicia Houston, #001, PA spoke on Family History Centers and Census Research at the Genealogy Workshop on Friday. Alicia was the very first member to join AAFA when its formation was announced in 1987, and she's been an active member ever since.



On Saturday night, James P. "Posey" Alford, #021, TX, gave a very entertaining and hilarious talk, "Dealing With Stress." Although Posey is retired, he continues to speak at banquets, meetings, etc. We were lucky that he volunteered to be our banquet speaker!



On Saturday night, a personalized Alford tote bag hand-painted by Sally Stoewer was presented to Vesta Alford Giddings, #233, TX, an attendee at every AAFA meeting except the first. Vesta's new bag will help her keep her "things" in one place!



Three members were added to the AAFA Hall of Fame in Springfield. Although none of them could be present, their awards were picked up by members who lived near them and who graciously agreed to present the awards to the recipients in person. The awards were presented to D.L. Alford, #054, TX, accepted by Posey Alford; Lucille Mehrkam, #032, TX, accepted by Vesta Alford Giddings; and Haidee Reeves, #210, LA, accepted by Sally Stoewer, pictured above.



Gil had a special part of his family present this year, his son-in-law and daughter. Steve and Mary Alford Davis, #270, came up from TX to participate in the annual meeting with Mary's parents, Mary and Gil Alford.



Gil Alford, President, presented certificates to Ben Alford and Alicia Houston who went off the Board of Directors this year. Also departing from the Board are Nancy Alford Dietrich, Marian Alford Hodges, and Ray Alford, who were unable to be at the meeting. All departing Board members are heartily thanked for serving AAFA during their tenure.