

2007 Vicksburg, MS Meeting Report

Submitted by Ramona Alford Darden, AAFA #0715, Member AAFA Hall of Fame

Registration began in the pre-function hall at 8:00 AM on Friday morning and the meeting began at 9:00 AM with a welcome by Lynn Shelley Friday program chairperson. Lynn began the morning on Alford Migration to Mississippi tying the families who attended the meeting with Mississippi ancestry. She showed the areas in the state where they settled as each migrated, discussing the trails which they took to Mississippi.

Cemetery Research was the next topic for discussion. Lynn discussed the importance of information contained on head stones. Sometimes, if the information is faint and difficult to read, you can obtain the information by doing a rubbing. A rubbing consists of placing a sheet of paper over the area that contains the information that is of interest to you and then rubbing the paper with a pencil lead or chalk. In most every instance, the writing will appear on the sheet of paper.

Peggy Schuster presented a discussion of land records and understanding land survey mapping, which included the Meridians and Base Lines, the Rectangular System of Surveys (from the NGS Home Study Course), a township showing the numbers of the sections and the surrounding sections, a whole section on graph paper divided into quarters, with a sample land purchase by John W. Alford of four tracts located in the same meridian, same county, same range, same township and the same section.

If you are interested in any of this mapping information, contact Peggy in Richardson, TX, or you may also request this information from Ramona Darden, RDa6983707@aol.com.

The last presentation on Friday afternoon, using the new AAFA video projector, Max took every one on a tour of the AAFA web site, www.alfordassociation.org. He showed them a sampling of the updates that have been done by Gil and Pam such as members ahnentafels (with any reference to living individuals deleted), obituaries, a new section on works of others, and genealogies from members in the DNA Group I (all share a common ancestor) as well as lots of other Alford Data. Max then discussed the Alford DNA Project. Although the AAFA is not directly involved in the DNA project, it is very interested in the outcome.

Currently, there are thirty-one individuals who have submitted or ordered a DNA test kit. There are twenty-nine males and two females (females, of course, had the mtDNA test and the males had the YDNA test) who have either had their tests completed or have ordered test kits or are awaiting their test results. These thirty-two individuals have been divided into Alford Lineage I , Alford Lineage II , Alford Lineage III , and Unassigned Results. These are non-scientific divisions that merely lump together those that have matching or close to matching DNA results. There are sixteen individuals in Alford Lineage I who represent eight different branches of AAFA family branches. A relationship between these branches has never been documented to date. However, DNA testing proves that all these individuals share a common ancestor and DNA says most are tightly (closely) related. Unfortunately, DNA testing cannot tell us exactly when this ancestor lived with any degree of accuracy. Again, via the video projector, the Alford surname Group DNA Test Results page at www.worldfamilies.net/sumames/a/alford/results.html was displayed for all in attendance to view. Questions were taken from those in attendance and a lively discussion followed.

Friday evening was a mix and mingle dinner. After the meal and dessert the crowd was asked to move around the floor to visit and get to know members attending for the first time. The board of directors excused themselves to attend the AAFA Board of Directors meeting which lasted into the night.

The Saturday session began with a welcome to the City of Vicksburg by Sherrie Jones from the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Sherrie told a story about her connection with an Alford. Continuing with her story, when she was in Middle School, a County Agent named Earl Alford came to her school to lead the students in a tree planting with some ceremony and included a lesson on how trees help the environment. Evidently it was a memorable experience for her, each time she would go to the school, she would take time to go by and look at the tree to see how much it had grown. After her welcome, Ramona Darden asked if she had seen Earl Alford since that time, she said no. Earl is a member of the AAFA Board and is also at this meeting, would you like to reacquaint with him. She was extremely surprised, and had no idea Earl was there. It is a small

world. This is an example of how the small things we do impact people and leave lasting impressions.

The morning session started with the introduction of the members of the AAFA Board and the Officers. Those nominated for the four Board positions that would become available at the meeting were introduced. Vesta Bowden, and Walt Smith were the only ones present at the meeting. Jim Adams, Frieda Shepherd, Sherry Handfinger, and John Rogers were not present.

Eligibility rules for inclusion in the AAFA Memorial Album were explained. The members who are eligible for inclusion in the Album are basically those members, their spouses, and any child who passes away after the member joins the AAFA. The child must be under the age of twenty-one at the time of passing. If the member has a spouse who passes away prior to that person joining the AAFA, then that spouse is not eligible for inclusion in the Album. The same applies to a child who passes away prior to the parent joining the AAFA or after reaching the age of 21.

Reports were given by Doris Vetri - Treasurer's Report, Evelyn Mistich - Meeting Treasurer's Report, Lynn Shelley - Research, Master Book List, and AAFA Library, Janice Smith - Photo Archive and Wills Project Report.

The results of the voting for the four Board of Directors were announced. Evelyn Mistich, Paul Davidson, John Smith and Matt Alford are the four members who were rotating off the Board. The four that received the most votes for the four positions were: Vesta Bowden, Frieda Shepherd, Jim Adams, and Walt Smith. The membership owes a debt of gratitude for their service to those leaving and a hearty Welcome Aboard to those who were elected. All the present officers, with the exception of the president, agreed to stand for re-election. Nominations for any of the four officers were called for from the floor. MaryLee Alford nominated Carl S. Alford for President. After Carl verbally agreed to the nomination, the board of Directors held a quick meeting and all four nominees were elected by unanimous vote. The new officers are: Carl S. Alford - President, Matt Alford - Vice President, Doris Vetri - Treasurer, and Evelyn Mistich - Secretary.

Ramona Darden, Meetings Chair person, then led the

John Smith honored retiring President Max Alford as follows:

membership in selecting a state in which to hold the AAFA meeting in 2009. After a lively debate, Virginia was chosen as the meeting state for 2009.

The official business of the meeting was adjourned.

Saturday afternoon, Max presented Gil's Power Point presentation on new members. There was a list of those attending for the first time, a list of the branches represented by the attendees, and pictures and a short bio of those new members who submitted photos at the request of the AAFA Corresponding Secretary.

A Power Point presentation with narration was then presented. It covered the movement of the Alford's from the east coast down through the South all the way to Texas and beyond.

Saturday evening Buffet Banquet and awards presentation was our next program. After dinner, Ramona Darden and Earline Alford recognized those members who have died over the past year or those members who passed away and the AAFA was only notified this past year of their death. Those honored were as follows: Angelia Bland Alford, Anna Louise Alford, Delmar Ray Alford, Eva Frances Alford, Floyd S. Alford, Harold Alford, Jerry W. Alford, Joseph L. Alford, Juanita Johnson Alford, Katherine S. Black Alford, William Russell Alford, Jr., Robert S. Barrows, Norma Berke, Ann Calloway, Susan S. Herring, Elizabeth Price, Thomas Wayne Robinson, Christine Schnitzler, Robert J. (Bob) Stevens, Vonceil Alford Strong, Patsy Sue Robb Waters, and Walter M. Clerihew.

Ramona Darden presented an honor program for Gil Alford from birth to current time. It also included pictures of his life from cradle, toddler, school days, college, military and marriage, birth of his children and grand and great grand children. It would not have been complete without pictures of his father, grandfather and great grandfather. It also included his and Mary's beginning with AAFA with pictures through the years and the awards they have received over the years, including Hall of Fame, and Alford Man and Woman of the 20th Century Award that he and Mary received in Augusta, GA in 2000.

PROCLAMATION

Hear ye, hear ye, mat it be known to all AAFA Members and all Interested Parties:

The time is now appropriate to publically declare and recognize the contributions of our out going President:

MAX RAY ALFORD

To wit: Max Ray joined the Alford American Family Association in the fall of 1989 and attended his first meeting in Jackson, Mississippi in 1991. He served admirably, conscientiously and faithfully as secretary of AAFA from 1991 until 2001. He became a member of the Official Board in 1993 and has remained a member until the present time. He, with the support of his wife Earline, has attended every annual meeting since that time with the exception of the reunion in California.

Whereas, in 1993, Max was elected President of the Official Board, a position over which he has effectively presided until this year, 2007.

And Whereas, at the Augusta, Georgia meeting in 2000, Max was inducted into the prestigious AAFA Hall of Fame.

And Whereas, at the Raleigh, North Carolina meeting in 2001, Max was duly elected to the position as President of AAFA, a position he has admirably served until the present. No other President of AAFA has served so long and so well. In addition to fulfilling the challenges of President and presiding at the board, Max has continued some of the Secretarial duties and has maintained the Brother's Keeper files for his Branch, John 1801 of North Carolina.

It is therefore agreed, th at his outstanding contributions to the operations of the Alford American Family Association are exemplary and are in the highest and finest traditions of the ancient, honorable proud and illustrious name of ALFORD.

I therefore set my hand and seal this Sixth day of October in the Year of Our Lord Two Thousand and Seven.

Gilbert K. Alford
AAFA Co-Founder &
Recording Secretary

John Smith then honored Earline Alford with a proclamation certificate as follows:

SPECIAL RECOGNITION

EARLINE ALFORD

Special recognition of significant contribution to the purposes of The Alford American Family Association is often made by the spouses of Alford's. This is certainly true of Earline Alford, wife of Max Alford. Her service goes beyond the call of duty. Here are some of her notable and outstanding achievements:

She is to be commended for her excellent management and organization of the Memorial Albums. She acquired pertinent information including photos and obituaries and assembled same into an impressive collection of books dedicated to the memory of our deceased members.

She accepted the difficult job of coordination the Saturday night raffle for many years. She also encouraged others to donate door prizes to be given out during AAFA meetings. She utilized her special talents to make creative and beautiful prizes to be awarded to attendees at the annual meetings. It has always been extra special to receive one of Earline's handmade creations. And who can forget the dedication and cheerful enticement to purchase not one, but many raffle tickets.

Earline was inducted into the prestigious AAFA Hall of Fame at the Baton Rouge meeting in 2004.

Certainly not to be forgotten is the continuous support, gentle persuasion and encouragement which contributed to the successful accomplishments of her soul mate and husband Max in his job as President of AAFA for Six Years.

We are indeed indebted to her dedication, accomplishments, and untiring encouragement of comradery among members of the Alford American Family Association.

Signed and sealed, this Day, October 6, 2007.

Gilbert K. Alford
AAFA Co-Founder &
Recording Secretary

After the Proclamation and Special Recognition awards, each received a thank you gift on behalf of AAFA.

The podium was then given back to Max who presented Recognition Awards. These certificates are given to those who have contributed exceptional duties on behalf of AAFA over the last year. They were as follows: Pat Smith for the mailing of the Quarterlies, Joana Breeland who assisted Pat with the mailing of the Quarterlies,

Evelyn Mistich as meetings treasurer, also for her assistance to Doris Vetri, AAFA Treasurer. The Hall of Fame award posthumously went to Morris Myers AAFA Vice President until his untimely death was working on the upgrading our web site for www.alfordassociation.com, and group leader for the DAV785VA branch.

Below is the list of those who attended the Vicksburg, MS meeting. We were so glad to see each one of you

and hope to see you again at the next reunion in South Carolina 2008.

ASN	FNAME	LNAME	CITY	ST	FAMILY
0484	Lynn D.	Shelley	Springfield	MO	ann790ga/ISH755NC
1247	Charles Walter	Smith	Dallas	TX	BAL784NC/ISH755NC
0152	Janice & John	Smith	Plano	TX	BAL784NC/ISH755NC
1304	Mike	Idom	Georgetown	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
0768	Norma	Idom	Lenoir City	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
1305	Sylvia	Idom	Georgetown	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
0059	Don & Joan	Alford	Melbourne	FL	DAV785VA/ROB760EN
0832	Janet	Hemby	Houston	TX	DAV785VA/ROB760EN
0673	Carolyn & Will	Saunders	Georgetown	TX	EDW792NC/JAM687VA
0664	Mike & Betty	Heazel	Severna Park	MD	JOH795VA/JOH696MD
	Tom & Mary	Heazel			JOH795VA/JOH696MD
1272	Carl & MaryLee	Alford	Muenster	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
	Garry, Cameron,				
	Riley, & Trevor	Green	Santa Fe	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1270	Linda Kay Berry	Smith	Irvine	CA	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1306	Cheryl	Turner	Rescue	CA	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1296	Joan Kathleen Alford	Turner	Kelseyville	CA	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
	Anna Alford	Waddington	Marble Falls	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
	Jean Alford	Wills	Santa Fe	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
0230	Max & Earline	Alford	Mesquite	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1197	Rochelle & Tom	Brewer	Redlands	CA	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1175	Velta & Rhett	Brown	Hesperia	CA	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
0666	Peggy & Walter	Schuster	Richardson	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC

0303	Doris	Vetri	Mount Laurel	NJ	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
1054	Geraldine Jerry	Alford	Mt. Hermon	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1165	Marie	Bateman	Mt. Hermon	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0537	Vesta G.	Bowden	Houston	TX	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1142	Joana	Breeland	Tylertown	MS	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0839	Fran & Jack	Harry	Bogalusa	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1259	Lorraine Alford	Mabus	Amite	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0249	Jeanne	Singleton	Greenwell Springs	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0064	Pat	Smith	McComb	MS	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0120	Sally & Dick	Stoewer	Baton Rouge	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0651	Dezmon & Marie	Alford	Brandon	MS	JOH816NC/!!!!NC
0260	Donald	Bender	Madison	MS	JOH816NC/!!!!NC
1301	Rahye L.	Puckett	Madison	MS	JOH816NC/!!!!NC
1300	Phyllis	Raybould	Somerset	KY	JOH816NC/!!!!NC
1299	Wanda	Watkins	Bruce	MS	JOH816NC/!!!!NC
0904	Helen & Bob	Steele	Lakewood	CO	JOS816LA/JAM687VA
1019	Michael	Steele	Spring	TX	JOS816LA/JAM687VA
	Wanda	Manning			
1242	E. Russ	Williams	Monroe	LA	sar781nc/JAM687VA
0481	Evelyn	Mistich	Belle Chasse	LA	SEA807LA/JAM687VA
0568	Kathryn & John	Schultz	Germantown	TN	WIL780VA/!!!!!!VA
0715	Ramona	Darden	Houston	TX	WIL787VA/SAL716VA
1271	Mac H.	Alford	Hattiesburg	MS	WIL804/JAM687VA
0439	Earl & Pauline	Alford	Liberty	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
0606	Catherine & Bruce	Ellard	Natchez	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
0708	Frances	Herrington	McComb	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
0562	Pat & Robert	Thorn	Hitchcock	TX	WIL812GA/JAM687VA
1302	James E.	Alford	Cleveland	MS	JOH801GA/!!!!

The Alford family History Workshop concluded the reunion part of our 2007 meeting on Sunday morning. Most attending members dropped by to give hugs and

to bid good-bye before leaving toward home. With this our 20th Reunion concluded.