

## 2011 Meeting

### 2011 ALFORD FAMILY REUNION REPORT

By Ramona Alford Darden, AAFA 0715, Meetings Chair

The 2011 Alford Family Reunion was held in St. Louis, Missouri at the Westport Doubletree Hotel. Several members arrived early for St. Louis tours to begin our fellowship and fun visiting with each other. Set-up for the meeting began on Thursday evening for the library and family photo collection, wills and estate papers.

Friday morning our meeting began with registration after which the AAFA genealogy workshop began. Lynn Shelley welcomed those in attendance. She was joined by Gil Alford.



Pauline Alford looks on as Earline and Max Alford and Robert Alford set up for registration on Friday morning.



Gil Alford made a presentation on the History of AAFA Friday morning as Lynn Shelley assisted him. Max Alford with back to camera is operating the computer.

Gil presented a history of how he began *About Alford's* newsletter that ultimately was the early stages of his recording Alford family genealogy. The association was formed in 1987 and in 1988 a group met in Atlanta, GA to discuss the future of the Alford American Family Association thus here we are almost 25 years later.

A short report on the DNA Project was given by Max Alford, the AAFA DNA Project Officer. A spreadsheet showing the latest DNA matches was displayed on the video projector. The need for more Alford surname Y-DNA tests was explained. With only about 80 tests done so far, it is difficult to make

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judgments in some instances on which numbers are the primary numbers and which are mutations.

The cost savings to be gained by ordering through a Surname Group rather than directly from Family Tree DNA was explained. The following cost comparisons were offered:

	Family Tree DNA	Alford Surname Group
12 Marker Test	N/A	\$99
25 Marker Test	N/A	\$124
37 Marker Test	\$169	\$149
67 Marker Test	\$268	\$238
111 Marker Test	\$359	\$339



**Max Alford presented a talk on DNA on Friday afternoon.**

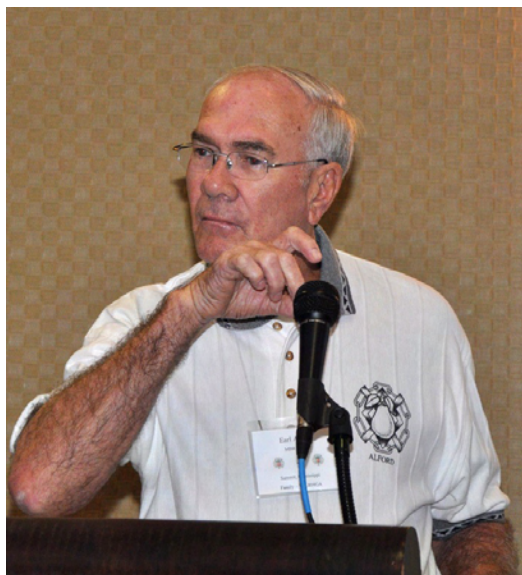
It was pointed out that similar savings could be had on most but not all of the other tests available.

The importance of the Alford surname was explained. Since we all descend from a single man many thousands of years ago, there are bound to be matches between surnames. The tricky part about hoping to confirm these matches with written documentation is the fact that before surnames came into use, there is no written documentation (unless you count the cave dwellers' wall paintings). Limiting it to matching surnames at least gives one hope that written documentation may exist. It just has to be found.

A test kit purchased by the AAFA was displayed. The various parts of the kit and their use were explained. A question and answer period followed.

On Friday evening we held our meet & greet meal, which began with a meal of flat iron steak, and herb gilled salmon with Chardonnay cream sauce enjoyed by all. After dinner each one in attendance was asked to stand and introduce themselves and tell something so others could know them better, such as their current family, about what AAFA means to them and how they began attending the annual meetings. It was very interesting to learn more about each person.

Saturday morning activities began with a welcome to St. Louis by President Earl Alford. The following reports were given: Minutes of the 2010 New Orleans meeting were not available but the report which was in the *AAFA ACTION* was available for those to read. The budget report was given by



**Earl Alford opened the meeting on Saturday morning.**

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**Robert Alford gave the Treasurer's report.**

Robert Alford. Janice Smith followed with a report on wills, estate papers, and photos in the Alford archives. The photos are kept in three safety deposit boxes at a bank in Plano, TX. The Smiths take pictures during our annual meetings of those in attendance and on our tours. All of the pictures that are submitted for the photo archives are recorded and placed in the safe deposit box. This has become a very valuable asset for families who want to either share with others or in case of a disaster where valuable family photos can be replaced; otherwise they would be lost forever.

It was announced by Ramona Alford Darden that the next Alford Reunion which will be the 25th, will be held in Houston, TX. Ramona also thanked those who have helped her with the annual meetings since she has been meeting planner. She extended a special thank you to Max Alford, Earline Alford, Janice Smith, John Smith, Walt Smith, Evelyn Mistich, Earl Alford, those who have given presentations, and those who have attended meetings while she was planner. She gave a special thank you to Gil for his Alford dream and letting us share and plan these meetings to continue support of his "Alford dream".



**Ramona Darden discussed the meeting location for next year, and it was decided that the meeting would be in Houston, Texas.**

Several weeks prior to the meeting, proposed amended Bylaws were sent either by email or USPS to the membership for their review and vote. Of those who returned their decision, 55 approved, and 4 disapproved out of 270 ballots sent out. There will now be three members on the board of directors of the association: Gil Alford, Pam Alford Thompson and Max Alford. However, any board member who still has time on their term will continue on the board until their term expires in 2012 and 2013 unless they resign. Max has been appointed the new President of AAFA.

About Alford's began on Saturday afternoon. Milton Folds gave a very informative presentation on the line of his wife Roberta Alford. She was a descendant of Lodwick through his great grandson Wiley Alford who was born in 1811/12 in Georgia. Milton has done a great deal of research on the line of Lodwick Alford and his wives and descendants. He wanted to stress how important it is in research not to forget about the wives and their maiden names and the fact that those maiden names may have been used to name some of their children as well. Also, some of those families possibly moved along with your family as they moved to a new location. He also dealt with terms used to identify a person such as "esquire" and "ordinary," which could help you in identifying your



**Milton Folds gave a very interesting and informative presentation on his wife Roberta's line from Wiley Alford born 1811/12 in Georgia.**



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ancestor.



**Gil Alford presented a talk on the line from William Alford born 1794 in North Carolina stressing the information that was collected by Guy Alford.**

After the break, Gil Alford spoke on the collection of Guy Alford's notes and research and how he was able to acquire the boxes of information for AAFA. Guy Alford did a significant amount of research on the early Alford families in Virginia, North Carolina and Georgia. His main focus was on the line of William Alford born 1794 in North Carolina.

Earl Alford talked about some family pictures as they were shown on the screen that he had just received from a family member, and gave some information about the people in the pictures and how they were related to him, Earl is from the line of William Alford born 1804 in Georgia.

Pat Thorn, who is a cousin of Roberta Alford Folds, told something about her family line as her family pictures were shown.

During the last year, Kathy Schultz received two special photos of people in her line from William 1780 in Virginia. She had received a much better copy of a photo of Thomas Jefferson Alford. She had also received a photo of Mary Vanhoy Alford and her daughter. Mary was the wife of George Washington Alford.

LaDonna Alford gave a short talk on her husband Winfred's line from Salvatore Alford born 1816 in Virginia through his descendant Jessie Claude Alford. She also told how she met her husband and how she came to Texas.

Gil Alford told a story about a portrait of his mother that was taken when she was young. The photo meant a lot to him, and it had been lost for several years. His daughter found it recently, and brought it to him.

Photos are an important part of family history. We should try to record time and place of your photos and name those in the pictures. Another suggestion would be to ask other family members to help identify them if possible and to tell any family stories they might know about the ones in the pictures. You could also make a Xerox copy of the pictures and include a story or information on the back of the page. Be sure not to write on the original picture.

After a couple of hours break we once again gathered for the Saturday evening banquet, a meal of baked chicken, roast rib beef with mushroom Bordelaise, rice pilaf, seasoned vegetables, mixed salad. Deserts were an assortment of delicious cakes.

The first item on the program after dinner was the memorial program to honor those who have passed away over the past year since we last met or for those who we just were told of their passing. The program was presented by Ramona Alford Darden and assisted by Earline Alford.

# 2011 Meeting Tours Report

*Ramona Alford Darden, AAFA #0715, Meetings Chair*

Tours began early on Wednesday morning which started at the St. Louis Arch where we saw a movie on Louis and Clark's adventure from St. Louis to the west coast. Thanks to [www.lewisclark.net](http://www.lewisclark.net) where most of the following information was found. [Those interested might also check Bernard DeVoto's *The Journals of Lewis and Clark* (New York, NY: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1997)]

In the spring of 1803 Lewis was picked as commander of the expedition. He then wrote to ask William Clark to join him and share command, Clark accepted. On July 4, 1803 the Louisiana Purchase was announced. In the summer of 1803, the construction of a large keelboat was overseen by Lewis. After construction, Lewis took it down the Ohio River picking up Clark and recruits along the way. In the fall/winter of 1803, Camp Wood was established upstream from St. Louis. On the May 14<sup>th</sup>, 1804, the expedition began, and by July 4, 1804, the expedition marks its progress west of the Mississippi by firing the keelboat's cannon, and naming Independence Creek.

On August 30, 1804, a friendly council with Yankton Sioux was held. Further along the way, confrontation with Teton Sioux, who demanded the expedition's boats as a toll to travel further upriver. Chief Black Buffalo resolves the situation before any fighting. The expedition stays with the tribe for three more days. The expedition discovers earthlodge villiages of the Mandan and Hidatsas Indians. The captains decide to build Fort Mandan across the river from the main village.

Toussaint Charbonneau, a French Canadian fur trapper living with the Hidatsas, is hired as an interpreter. His wife, Sacagawea, a Shoshone who had been captures by the Hidatsas and sold to Charbonneau, is also considered helpful as the Shoshones are said to live at the headwaters of the Missouri. On Dec. 24, 1804 with Fort Mandan completed, the expedition moves in for the winter.

Sacagawea gave birth to a baby boy names Jean Baptiste on February 11, 1805. On April 7, 1805, Lewis and Clark send the keelboat and approximately a dozen men back downriver with maps, reports, Indian artifacts and other scientific specimens for President Jefferson. The remaining party head continued west.

On April 29, 1805 Lewis and another hunter kill a large grizzly bear, which had never before been described for science. Clark names the Judith River in honor of a girl back in Virginia he hopes to marry.

The expedition comes to a fork in the river on June 2, 1805, Lewis and Clark believe the south fork is the Missouri, while all of the other men believe it is the north fork. Although they are not convinced that the south fork is the Missouri the captains recount: "they were ready to follow us any where we thought proper to direct."

Scouting ahead of the rest of the expedition, Lewis comes across the Great Falls of the Missouri. He also discovers four more waterfalls farther upstream. The expedition will have to portage over eighteen miles, taking nearly a month, to get past them.

In late July, 1805, the expedition reaches the three forks of the Missouri River, and name them the Gallatine, the Madison, and the Jefferson, after the Secretary of the Treasury, Albert Gallatin, the

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Secretary of State, James Madison, and President Thomas Jefferson. The expedition continues southwest, up the Jefferson.

Sacagawea recognizes Beaverhead Rock and says they are nearing the headwaters of the Missouri, and her people, the Shoshones. Lewis and three others scout ahead.

The shipment sent from Fort Mandan arrives in the East and is delivered to Jefferson. Lewis ascends the final ridge toward the Continental Divide expecting to see plains and a river flowing to the Pacific, but he finds even more mountains.

Lewis discovers a village of Shoshones and tries to negotiate for horses. Clark and the rest of the expedition arrived and it is discovered that the Shoshone chief Cameahwait is Sacagawea's brother. Lewis and Clark name the site Camp Fortunate.

The expedition camped at present day Missoula, Montana. This spot was named Travelers Rest by Lewis and Clark. It was at this spot that they prepared for the mountain crossing. After nearly starving in the mountains, the expedition emerged near present-day Weippe, Idaho on September 22, 1805. The expedition reached the Columbia River on October 16, 1805. On October 18, 1805, Clark sees Mount Hood, named by a British sea captain in 1792, in the distance and considered the sighting as proof that they are near the ocean.

Clark who believes he can see the ocean writes his most famous journal entry: "Ocean in View! O! The joy." The expedition is actually still 20 miles from the sea. Terrible storms halted the expedition for nearly 3 weeks. On November 24, 1805, by majority vote, the expedition decides to cross to the south side of the Columbia River to build winter quarters.

In January 1806, President Jefferson welcomes a delegation of Missouri, Oto, Arikara, and Yankton Sioux chiefs to Washington. These chiefs had met with Lewis and Clark more than a year earlier.

On March 7, 1806, the expedition ran out of tobacco. They had run out of whiskey rations the previous fourth of July. Fort Clatsop was presented to the Clatsop Indians, for which it was named, and the expedition begins the journey home on 23 March 1806.

May – Late June 1806, the expedition reached the Bitterroot mountains, but then they must wait for the snow to melt before crossing them. During this time, the expedition again stays with the Nez Perce. Lewis describes them as "the most hospitable, honest and sincere people that we have met with in our voyage."

By July 3, 1806 having crossed the Bitterroots again, the expedition broke into smaller groups in order to explore more of the Louisiana Territory. Clark and his group head down the Yellowstone River, while Lewis takes the shortcut to the Great Falls, and then heads north along the Marias River. Near present day Billings, Montana, Clark names a sandstone outcropping Pompey's Tower, after Sacagawea's son, nicknamed Little Pomp. On the rock face Clark inscribes his name and the date 25 July 1806.

During July 26-27, 1806, while making their way back to the Missouri, Lewis' party encounters eight Blackfoot warriors. They camped together, but the morning of the 27<sup>th</sup> the party caught the Blackfeet attempting to steal their horses and guns. During a fight two of the Blackfeet were killed.

During the 12<sup>th</sup> of August, 1806, all of the parties are reunited downstream from the mouth of the

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Yellowstone River. On August 14, 1806, the expedition returns to the Mandan village. Charbonneau, Sacagawea, and Jean Baptiste stay, while John Colter is granted permission to return to the Yellowstone to trap beaver.

With the current of the Missouri behind them, they were able to cover over 70 miles per day. The expedition also began meeting boats of American traders heading upriver. On September 23, 1806, Lewis and Clark reach St. Louis. In the fall of 1806, Lewis and Clark are treated as national heroes. They return to Washington, D.C. The men receive double pay and 320 acres of land as reward, but the captains get 1,600 acres. Lewis is named governor of the Louisiana Territory and Clark is made Indian agent for the West and brigadier general of the territory's militia.

After this wonderful, historical movie, we boarded the gondola cars to ride up into the arch. It is a lovely view of St. Louis, also the Mississippi Riverfront. The Gateway Arch, or Gateway to the West, is an arch that is the centerpiece of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial in St. Louis. It was built as a monument to the westward expansion of the United States. At 630 feet, it is the tallest man-made monument in the United States and is Missouri's tallest accessible building, as well as the largest architectural structure designed as a weighted or flattened catenary arch.



**At the Arch: Back row: Max and Earline Alford, Robert Alford, Walt Smith, Ramona Darden and Jim Shelley. In front: Gail Alford, Lynn Shelley and Janice Smith.**

The Arch is located on the west bank of the Mississippi River where Pierre Laclede, just after noon on February 14, 1764, told his aide, Auguste Chouteau, to build a city. The Gateway Arch was designed by Finnish American architect Eero Saarinen and structural engineer Hannskarl Bandel in 1947. Construction began on February 12, 1963, and ended on October 28, 1965 costing \$13 million. The monument opened to the public on June 10, 1967. It serves as a suitable and permanent public memorial to the men who made possible the western territorial expansion of the United States, particularly President Jefferson, his aides Livingston and Monroe, the great explorers, Lewis and Clark and the hardy trappers, frontiersmen and pioneers who contributed to the territorial expansion and development of these United States.

Our next tour was the Cathedral Basilica, workers began clearing ground for the building on May 1, 1907, but the dedication of the Cathedral and its first mass did not take place until October 18, 1914, when the superstructure was complete. The church is known for its large mosaic installation (which is the largest in the world), burial crypts, and the addition of an outdoor scripture to promote racial harmony.



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In 1912, installation of mosaics in the interior began. Completed in 1988, the mosaics collectively contain 41.5 million glass tesserae pieces in more than 7,000 colors. Covering 83,000 square feet, it is one of the largest mosaic collections in the world.

While the mosaics in the side chapels and sanctuary walls were designed and installed by Tiffany Studios, the mosaics in the main cathedral areas were designed by August Oetken. The installation of the mosaics was completed by dozens of artisans, including Heldreth Meiere, Ravenna Mosaic, Inc., and Emil Frei, Inc., of St. Louis. The north interior side of the church depicts the life of King Louis IX of France,



**Ramona Darden, Robert and Gail Alford, Earline and Max Alford, Walt Smith, Lynn and Jim Shelley and Janice and John Smith.**

namesake of the city and church. The rear dome includes mosaics of significant archdiocesan events. The main dome is by Jan Henryk de Rosen and depicts Biblical scenes from both the Old Testament and New Testament. Don't miss seeing this if you are in St. Louis. You won't believe the beauty before your eyes.

Our next tour was the Anheuser- Busch Brewery. The tour took us through all the steps involved in the



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brewing of the beer. Founded in 1852 in St. Louis, Missouri, Anheuser-Busch has been perfecting this process, one barrel at a time. We saw some of the brew kettles, felt the cool Lager Cellars and heard the thunder of bottles and cans flying by on a high-speed packaging line. We explored the rich architecture and heritage of the oldest and largest Busch brewery.

We also learned about the extraordinary initiatives and practices Busch has in place that allow their company to recycle more than 99 percent of the solid waste they generate.

We met the world-famous Clydesdales. These majestic giants have appeared in some of the most memorable Super Bowl commercials over the years and represent a special part of Busch's history. Their size and strength will astound you and the historic stable will make for a great photo opportunity.

On Wednesday evening Oct. 5, 2011, we went to Pujols Bar and Grill in the Westport Center, where we were placed in a back room which has a TV to see the playoff game with SL Cardinals Baseball Team. Don Alford was celebrating his 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday with us, he had the house cake, the rest of us celebrated with a wine toast to him. This was a great beginning to our Alford Family Gathering.

On day two, our tour began at the Botanical Gardens. Founded in 1859, it is one of the oldest botanical institutions in the United States and a National Historic Landmark. The Garden is a center for botanical research and science education of international repute, as well as an oasis in the city of St. Louis, with 79 acres of horticultural display. For part of 2006, the Missouri Botanical Garden featured "Glass in the Garden", with glass sculptures by Dale Chihuly placed throughout the garden. Four pieces were purchased to remain at the gardens. In 2008 sculptures of the French artist Niki de Saint Phalle were placed throughout the garden.

Those attending the tour early enjoyed Chihuly's works in South Carolina where we saw a large showing of his work. This is the third time we have seen his lovely work displayed in different states.

We then toured Tower Grove House, founder Henry Shaw's restored country residence. It is located in the Lechtenstein Victorian District. The Victorian District also includes Shaw's mausoleum, the Kresko Family Victorian Garden, Herb Garden, Kaeser Maze and Piper Observatory.

Shaw decided to make St Louis his permanent home and became a U. S. citizen in 1843. In 1849, he commissioned George I. Barnett, an English-born architect and friend, to design both Tower Grove House and his townhouse, originally located at 7<sup>th</sup> and Locust. Tower Grove House is Barnett's first design with an Italianate influence, a style popular among Americans who traveled to Europe in the Victorian era. The name Tower Grove House was inspired by the house's significant tower, which overlooks a grove of oak and sassafras trees. Inspired by his last trip in 1851, Shaw decided to build a garden around his county estate.

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Shaw inhabited the west wing of the house, which boasts ceilings over 12 feet high downstairs and over 15 feet high upstairs. Authentic deep moldings and ornate woodwork are unique to the original structure. The east side was the servants' wing in Shaw's time. Like the Garden, the house has undergone many changes over the years. In 1890, the east side was completely rebuilt, and running water and gas service were added. Electricity was added in 1912 and a stucco exterior was applied in 1918.



**At the Tower Grove House: First row: Janice and John Smith, Second row: Ramona Darden and Gail Alford, Third row: Max Alford, Earl Alford, Joan Alford, Robert Alford and Jim and Lynn Shelley, Fourth row: Walt Smith, Pauline Alford, our guide, and Earline Alford.**

After 100 years of use as a private home, school, dormitory, and office building, the house underwent meticulous renovation. Furniture and materials once belonging to Shaw were located and returned. It opened to the public in 1953. Tower Grove House was rededicated on October 29, 2005 after another period of extensive restoration. The house has been restored to reflect Shaw's original country home. Many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century furnishings belonged to Shaw, while others are of the same era.

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The St. Louis Art Museum was founded in 1879, at the close of a decade that saw the establishment of art museums in great cities across the eastern half of the United States. This Museum's comprehensive collections bear witness to the inspirational and educational goals to which its founder aspired and the moral and democratic imperatives he embraced. What began as a collection of assorted plaster casts, electrotype reproductions, and other examples of "good design" in various media, rapidly gave way to a great and varied collection of original works of art spanning fine millennia and six continents. Today the quality and breadth of the Museum's collection secure for it a place among the very best institutions of its kind'

Our docents did an excellent job of showing, and explaining a large overview of different collections housed at the Museum.

On Sunday afternoon we traveled to East Alton, IL to view the Melvin Price Locks and Dam and the National Great Rivers Museum. The National Great Rivers Museum, opened in October of 2003, is one of eleven planned regional visitor centers operated by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Located adjacent to the Melvin Price Locks and Dam, this 1,000 square-foot facility is the result of collaboration of the Corps and the nonprofit Meeting of the Great Rivers Foundation and tells the story of the Mississippi River. The Museum features state of the art interactive displays and exhibits that help visitors understand the many aspects of the Mississippi River and how it affects our lives.

Another theme is how the Mississippi River has been home to many people throughout the ages from the Mississippian culture that called nearby Cahokia Mounds home to the time when European settlers began to arrive. Well before the paved highways of today, rivers were the preferred means of transportation and one display explains how the Mississippi has been used as a highway, not only by humans but by migrating waterfowl. It also chronicles the different types of vessels used from canoes through keelboats and steamboats all the way to the modern day barges.

The construction of the Melvin Price Locks and Dam is explained and working models explain how the system of locks and dams make river traffic possible on the Upper Mississippi.

Every year, millions of tons of commodities pass through the Melvin Price Locks and Dam. The facility is on the Upper Mississippi River at river mile 20, two miles downstream from the original Lock and Dam No.2. The Locks and Dam help to control the flow of the Mississippi and is the means by which barges are able to navigate the river.

Bird watching at the Lock and Dam is listed on the National Audubon Society's Great River Birding Trail. They report that this is one of the best places to view more than 7 species of gulls, above and below the locks and dam.

Returning back to the Westport Doubletree, we took a few minutes to freshen up then the hotel van took eight of us to Casa Gallardo, a Mexican restaurant for our last meal before returning home. It was again an enjoyable time visiting together. We all left for our respective rooms saying "Until we meet again, we will look forward to our gathering in Houston." We hope you will consider joining us.



# Photos: Missouri Meeting 2011

*Janice and John Smith, AAFA #0152 and Walt Smith AAFA #1247*



**Descendants of John Seaborn Alford born 1807 in Louisiana: Nolan David and Mary Alford, Gail Hall, Joana Breeland, Sally and Dick Stoeber, Delfina Alford, Scott Ernst, Mary Davis, James Alford and April Ernst. Gil and Mary Alford are seated in front.**



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**Descendants of Isham Alford born 1755 in North Carolina: John, Janice and Walt Smith, Norma Sylvia and Mike Idom, and Lynn and Jim Shelley. All except Jim and John are descendants of Isham Alford.**



**Benita Magee Cartwright #1394 is a new member from Illinois. She is a descendant of John Alford born 1807 in Louisiana.**



**Myrtice Edwards, Celeste and Richard Furr, Ann Fennell and Dean Coy. All except Richard are descendants of William Alford born 1794 in GA.**



**Kathy Epps and her mother Jeanne Epps descend from Kinchen Alford born 1812 in VA.**



**Shown at left are Ramona Darden and LaDonna Alford who are descendants of Salvatore Alford born 1716 in VA.**



**Pauline and Earl Alford posed for a photo after the dinner on Saturday.**



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**Walter and Peggy Schuster and Earline and Max Alford. Peggy and Max are descendants of John Alford born 1801 in North Carolina.**



**Joana Breeland and her niece Gail Smith Hall.**



**Robert and Pat Thorn and Milton Folds. Pat is from the line of Wiley Alford born 1811/12 in Georgia.**



**Kathy and John Schultz. Kathy is a descendant of William Alford born 1780 in Virginia.**



**Shown at left are Eugenia R. Barclay and Kim Savage, both from Illinois. Eugenia "Ronnie" Barclay is a new member #1389, and this was her first AAFA meeting. She is a descendant of James Alford born 1775 in Pennsylvania. Kim Savage is a descendant of Isaac Alford born in 1782 in North Carolina.**



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Don Alford celebrated his birthday with Joan and the group on Wednesday night at a sports bar owned by a star player on the St. Louis Cardinals baseball team.



Robert and Gail Alford Robert is a descendant of Clarence Alford born 189\_ in Georgia.



Delfina and James Alford



Virginia Alford's husband Irvin Alford was a descendant of Ransom Alford born 1818 in Vermont.



Kenneth Alford is a descendant of John Alford born 1787 in North Carolina.



Wayne Alford attended the morning session on Friday morning.



Shown at left are Sally and Dick Stower