

Coward Family Newsletter

September 2002

The Coward Family
Newsletter September
2002

September 2002

111th Coward Family Reunion Held in Cullowhee

The 111th Coward Family Reunion was held in Cullowhee on June 11, 2002. Needless to say, there was plenty of food and fellowship and, though the afternoon was hot, it was a wonderful time to enjoy scenic western North Carolina and get together with friends and loved ones.

Forty seven people signed the register, but it looked like there were more than that there. We even had some first time attendees (Connie Goforth and her husband, Ken). The following Coward families were repre-

sented.

Clara Coward Smith (5)

Dave Coward (15)

Oscar Bowman Coward (1)

Sally Norton (15)

Robert Coward (5)

Benjamin Coward (3)

James Coward (2)

The oldest Coward was Elise McGuire Meeks who is 88 years old and looking good, good, good! The youngest was Kate-lyn Riggsbee (yes, MY granddaughter) who was 20 months at the time and the world's cutest grandchild!

Bill and Brenda Meeks came lots of miles (from Phoenix, Arizona) to join us for the celebration.

We were sorry that many of you couldn't attend, but the next reunion is scheduled for June 15, 2003 at the same place...the campus park in Cullowhee. There is some disagreement within the family regarding the scheduling of the reunion. We can schedule it on the Sunday closest to Nathan Coward's birthday (June 12) or the second Sunday in June. Let me know your preference, please.



**EVERYBODY LIKES
TO EAT!**



Become a Fixture!

The State Capitol continues to seek sponsors for the restoration of the 1840 House of Representatives desks. These beautiful desks were hand-crafted between 1838 and 1840 by Raleigh cabinetmaker William Thompson. The restora-

tion of each desk space costs \$500. Donations are tax deductible and sponsors will be recognized in donor books located outside the legislative chambers and on brass plates affixed inside the drawers of each desk. Jo Smith is spearheading a drive to

have a desk restored in the name of Oscar Bowman Coward, a relative who served as a State Senator from 1918-1920 and as a State Representative from 1922-1924. Coward descendants have donated \$450 already. Help us make up the rest.

Send your contribution (checks made out to State Capitol Foundation) to JoAnn Smith, P.O. Box 30093, Raleigh, NC 27622.

**CELEBRATE
YOUR FAMILY!!**

Congratulations!!! New Cowards Arrive!

Joshua Mathew Cox was born in Carpinteria, CA on April 27, 2002 to Lee and Kathryn Bell Cox. He is the grandson of Curtis Bell, the great grandson of Dorothy David Bell and the great great grandson of Laura Bell Coward Davis. Congratulations to the new arrival and his family!

granddaughter of Dan Coward, great granddaughter of Nathan Allen Coward, and the great great granddaughter of Robert Rogers Coward. Congratulations to Carissa and her family!



Carissa Rose Barnett was born March 14, 2002 in Cobb County, GA to Terry Coward Barnett and her husband. Carissa Rose is the

Don't you think we need some more babies in this family?

Congratulations!!! New Cowards Join Us!

Kathleen Kennedy Brothers and Robert Hunter Smith, both of Asheville were married on June 22, 2002 in Lee Chapel, Washington and Lee University, Lexington, VA. The groom is the son of William Young Smith, the grandson of Nell Smith Hughes, the great grandson of Robert Nathan Smith and the great great grandson of Clara Coward Smith. Congratulations to the newly weds!



**...AND THEY LIVED
HAPPILY EVER AFTER...**



Family News: Clara Coward Smith

Patrick Anderson Smith

graduated with honors from Sanderson High School in Raleigh on May 30th. Patrick is the son of Douglas and Betty Smith and the grandson of Jack and Jo Ann Smith. Congratulations, Patrick, where are you enrolled in college?

Cara and Diedre Smith (twins) are both graduates of East Carolina University. They are the daughters of Tommy and Jan Smith and granddaughters of Frances Smith Payne. Congratu-

lations, ladies!

The Lewis J. Smith Association held its annual meeting on Saturday, June 8, at Ryan's Steak House in Sylva. Several years ago this organization set up a scholarship fund at Western Carolina University for students majoring in history or education. WCU recently notified Ariel Keener of Knightdale, NC that she is the recipient of the Lewis J. Smith Scholarship for 2002-2003.



Family News: Dave Coward

The Honorable David Russell, chief judge of the Western District of Oklahoma made a very short trip to Cullowhee this June. It was his first visit since 1946! David was attending a judges conference in Winston-Salem and took the time to visit the place of his roots. While there he saw a picture of his grandfather, Dave Coward in the Robinson admin building. David's mother was Florence, daughter of Dave Coward. He also visited with Keith Coward in Sylva. We hope David

will return for the next reunion!

Chuck Bird of Corpus Christi, Texas, was chosen as "Safety Professional of the Year" by the American Society of Safety Engineers, Coastal Bend Chapter. Chuck does something with mold. I tried to figure it out when he was recently in NC and we had lunch, but it escaped me! Sorry, Chuck. As a child Chuck's favorite Movie was "The Alamo" and he memorized all 13 verses of the "Battle of the Alamo". He, in turn, taught all of these to me,

but, of course, I no longer know them!

As we speak, **Lee Tayloe** is traveling through Europe. Lee's itinerary is not mapped out and he goes wherever the wind takes him. He keeps up with us through e-mail. Have fun, Lee!!

David Tayloe has been accepted in the High School program at the NC School of the Arts where he will study piano. Admittance at the School of the Arts is quite an honor. Good job, David!

Family News: Sally Coward Norton

Samantha Anne Hyatt Cabe was awarded a Juris Doctrate in Law from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill on Sunday, May 19, 2002. She received the Order of the Barristers Award and was recognized for her pro bono work. Samantha is the daughter of Jake Hyatt of Bryson and Diane Hyatt of Cherokee. Samantha is the great great granddaughter of Sally Coward Norton.



Isn't this the greatest picture?

A Daughter's Eulogy: Ray Lowell Hooper

March 24, 1914—December 5, 2001

If you were fortunate enough to be a family member or friend of my father's, then you know what kind of man he was. If you were not lucky enough to have known him, you would have been able to form a good personality profile of him if you had been with my sister and me as we cleaned out his apartment at Croasdaile Village in Durham, NC these past two weeks. What people have chosen to keep around them after several down-sizing moves can say as much about them as the friends they chose throughout their life. What they read, what they save, and what they kept close at hand can tell you so much about a person's life, values, and interests.

What They Read: My dad read two newspapers, the daily Raleigh News and Observer, and his beloved Transylvania Times from the small town where he lived for almost 55 years. He read Newsweek magazine each week, and the AARP publication Modern Maturity, which he called "Geezer Monthly". He read tool catalogues like many of us read novels, and saved them forever. He read his Spanish textbook and prepared for the weekly lesson he attended each Monday, still learning at the age of 87. And he read his Bible and his World Atlas—with equal devotion.

What They Save: My dad loved to travel, and he saved maps—both to revisit in his memories where he had been, and to plan new travel adventures. He had a list of places in his head that he wanted to visit in his lifetime, and things to do—and he was

planning trips up until his final illness. He made it to the Canadian Rockies and Mexico, took a helicopter ride through Wiamea Canyon in Hawaii, and visited the Grand Canyon—twice! He traveled in Europe. He walked on the Great Wall of China. Still unfulfilled was a trip to the one U.S. state he had never seen in person—Alaska. He had the trip mapped out, though, and thought that next June would be the perfect time. He also saved cards and letters from friends, neighbors, and family scattered over the years and the miles. They meant so much to him, perhaps even more so since my mother's companionship has been lost to him for these past 4 years due to her descent into the fog of Alzheimer's Disease. Finally, in the back of a dresser drawer, we found a yellowed copy of a newspaper he had saved from July 1969—when mankind first walked on the moon.

What He Kept Around Him: He treasured family photographs, particularly of his three grandchildren, and kept many of them out where he could gaze at and show them to company often. He kept what he considered necessary items in a close by drawer, sometimes several drawers, in every room. So far I have found seven sets of these necessities: Kleenex tissue, pocketknife, flashlight, measuring tape, slide rule (He was an engineer by profession), hammer, screwdrivers, scissors, safety pens, and rubberbands. And, of course, lots of other tools. My dad was the

original "Tool Man", and in addition to the workshop he had set up at our house, he had put together a large workshop in a corner of the Maintenance department at Croasdaile Village, where he continued to make woodworking items to share, repair things for friends, and spend his happiest hours at the plane and the lathe. When he died, he still had projects in progress on his workbench, and others in the planning stages. There was a T-shirt I once saw in a catalogue that read, "The man who dies with the most tools wins." Opa, you won!

So this is a portrait of my dad—a man who loved his wife, his daughters, his grandchildren, and his friends. He loved his church, his community, and his country. And from the deepest part of his being, he loved his North Carolina mountains. So we have brought him back to them for his final resting place—under a tree in the town he lived in and loved for so many years, with a view of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Rest in peace, Opa. We love you so very much!

by

Marianne Hooper Osolin-Putnam

12/26/2001

Brevard First Methodist Church

Brevard, NC

Other News

Jule Coward tutored second grade reading at Blue Ridge School, Cashiers, NC. He was assigned to a little girl, Desire Newman who later passed her reading test just fine! Good for both of you!

Judy Tayloe wants to know how many Eagle Scouts are in the family. A very small percentage of Scouts become Eagle Scouts. All 3 of Judy's boys are Eagle Scouts as are the Pratt twins and Brian and Bruce Coward. Any others? Maybe we could go for the Guinness record!

I found out that a relative, **Kathy Ann Bell**, lived down the street from me at one time. I didn't know her, but, gosh, it's a small world! **Charlotte McDonald** shared that with me. She and Kathy's mother are sisters.



Jule Coward



Elise McGuire Meeks—Oldest



Katelyn Riggsbee—Youngest



In Memoriam: Rachel Coward Wilson

Martha Rachel Coward Wilson died August 16, 2001 after a brief illness. She was born October 24, 1919 in Cullowhee, NC., the daughter of Will and Evelyn Coward. She graduated from WCU and received her B.A. in Social Work from the University of Tennessee. She earned her M.A. in Social Work from Columbia University. She worked for the Nashville/Davidson County School System for over 35 years as a School Social Worker. She received a Jefferson Award for Public Service. After retirement she worked for Alive Hospice in Nashville as a social worker. She volunteered for numerous civic organizations, serving variously as a reading instructor; parolee mentor; settlement counselor for refugees; arbitra-

tor in criminal restitution cases; and in other capacities where she saw a need. She was an active member of Dalewood Methodist Church for 50 years. She was preceded in death by her husband, Ernest Wilson; by one sister, Margaret Coward Gray of Knoxville; and by her parents. She is survived by one daughter, Rosemary Wilson of Scottsdale, AZ; by one son, Bob Wilson of Columbiana, AL; and by four grandchildren, Bryan and Avery Wilson and Tony and Tim Zollars.

Many of you knew Rachel very well and loved her very much. Her compassion and love for her fellow man will be honored and remembered in the Coward family for a very long time.

Our deepest sympathies are extended to Rosemary and Bob and their families.



Rachel Coward Wilson
1945

OH WHERE, OH WHERE CAN YOU BE?

The last Coward Family Newsletter to the following people were returned to me as undeliverable. If you can help me get the correct addresses, I will be very grateful.

Dortha Smith, Waynesville, NC

Thomas E. McClure, Sylva, NC

Helen B. Caldwell, Balsam, NC



Ken, Marinell, and Lillie Bodkin,
Royston, GA

Jo Ann Stamey, I got your street name from Dixie Saeger, but I don't know your house number. Would you send it to me, please?

Thanks for helping me keep up with as many people as possible!

GOOD JOB!!!



Thanks to all of you for being so generous in your contributions to the financial health of the newsletter. We collected \$247 at the reunion and many more of you have sent other contributions to me. The newsletter fund is in excellent shape at this time, but please don't forget your family when you have extra cash! Memorial contributions were made by Marianna Osolin-Putnam in memory of her father, Ray

Hooper; and by Dixie Saeger in memory of her mother, **Thelma Phillips Forester**.

Other contributors were James Parsons, Phillip Queen, Curtis Bell, Norma Robertson, Carolyn Coward, Betty Barrow, Edna Earle Sutton, and Evelyn C. Allen.

Thanks to one and all for all your support!

Reach the Coward Family Newsletter!

EDITOR

Lynn Riggsbee
3308 Champaign St.
Charlotte, NC 28210
Phone: 704-554-8765
Fax: 704-552-8449
Email: jbrlnr@bellsouth.net

GENEALOGIST

Trudy Adams
2140 Marion Street
Birmingham, AL 35226-3012
Phone: 205-882-2446
Email: Trudyhadams@aol.com



**CELEBRATE
YOUR
FAMILY!!!**

Notes From Lynn's Desk

*I hope that you all have enjoyed the pictures of the reunion. My technology skills, being what they are, mean that I have had to play and play with them to get them to do what I want (and not always particularly successfully). I apologize for not being able to identify everybody in the photos. Next year I will take notes as I take pictures! At any rate, a good time was had by all and we hope to see YOU at the next one! That will be **June 15, 2003** at the same place...the park on the WCU campus.*

All good wishes to you and yours for a happy rest of the year and a joyous holiday season. Don't forget to send me your news. The next newsletter will come out in late April or early May.

Relatively Yours,

Lynn

9/02

