

We're Family Park Newsletter

Dedicated to the family of James & Amanda Dennison Issue 3, 2003

WWW.WEREFAMILY.ORG

Bethlehem

Written by Scott Shaver 05s

In Bethlehem of Old Judea
Many, Many years ago
Christ was born to save the people
For the Bible tells us so.

He was born within a manger
Made his bed upon the hay,
For there was no room for Jesus
Like many homes we find today.

There was shepherds then a watching,
Watching over flocks by night.
When suddenly a light was shining
Shining all around so bright.

Then the shepherds they were frightened
It must have been a wondrous sight.
To see a light a shining brightly
On a dark and lonely night.

Then an angel said, "Fear not,
I bring good tidings of great joy"
Then the angel told the shepherds
Where to find the baby boy.

Then they heard the voices praising
That is when they listened there,
Glory to God in the highest
Peace on Earth, Good will toward men.

Then the shepherds did not tarry
But they hastened on their way,
And they found the baby Jesus
In a manger on the hay.

The staff and the supporters of the We're Family Newsletter want to wish each of our readers and their families a blessed Christmas season full of good health, contentment, and more than enough love to share with friends and family..... Garywayne

Current News

At the reunion of 2002 a call went out for each family branch to select a volunteer to gather current information for the purpose of posting it onto the web site for everyone's general benefit. During the past 15 months there has been only one such volunteer – Jessica Ware, from the Tilford clan. We are looking for someone to gather information on weddings, birthdays, decade anniversaries, and finally of the sad news of deaths. These current news events can be posted to the web site directly by the chosen volunteer or sent to me. For those who have died, an obituary article for this newsletter would seem appropriate as well. The old saying "many hands make light work" also applies to the gathering and arranging of printable information.

Obituaries

At this past reunion a question was asked that only highlighted a problem I have experienced with this family - a lack of communication. The question was "How is Burnell getting along these days?" Marlin Burnell is my dad, who has been dead for more than 15 years. Since these newsletters are going to be stored in book form in the permanent archives of the Park, it is only fitting to give at least another final salute to those who passed down their heritage to us. If you send us a picture we will put it in the newsletter along with basic information about that person.

Family Riddle # 34

I was not born in the month of December, but the twelfth is an important day, while I am not saying that I was adopted, my genealogy number has an "A." I am one initial off from something in common with a popular forensic show. Being a nurse and a parent of two children are clues you might want to know.

Who am I ?

Clues and Answers from Issue 2, 2003 Riddle # 33

Clue #1 My husband was born May 13 (Charles)

#2 I was born Jan 18, 1966 (24 days after Christmas)

#3 My last name is not like the soup company "Progresso"

#4 Mean pet owners do not like the initials S.P.C.A.

Answer: Sharron Page Campbell 05-9-2





The Christmas Goose

by Christina Dennison 02-2-4-3

The kid's song goes, "O be careful little tongue what you say," but I think it should also say, "O be careful little tongue what you sing." Christmas is my favorite time of the year, and I love to sing Christmas songs. One of my sister's favorite songs says, "Christmas is coming. The goose is getting fat." She made the mistake of singing that song around my dad, and he got the brilliant idea of getting a goose for Christmas as opposed to the regular turkey or ham. We all thought it was a good idea--at first.

The first trial came with getting the goose. Instead of just getting a dead, frozen goose, my dad got a live one. He brought it home from work, thinking he would kill it. He said that he couldn't; it just kept looking at him. To deal with this, he put a sock over its head. He still couldn't kill it, so he had to take it to the neighbor's to have him do it.

Once it was dead, it was up to my mom to pluck the feathers out, prepare it, and bake it. My mom took it down to the basement, and feathers were everywhere! This whole ordeal lasted a long time--but not as long as the goose took to bake. We normally eat Christmas dinner in the early afternoon. Well, we put the goose in the oven early that morning, so that it would be done in time. We kept checking the oven. The more our stomachs growled, the more frequently we checked to see if the goose was done. It did eventually get done, but not until after 10 o'clock that night! The meat was rather tough and flavorless, but we choked it down. It was the least we could do after all we'd been through.

Well, everyone has their own set of Christmas memories, and although when we were going through the goose "experiment" I didn't appreciate it nor think I would be telling it years later, I am glad that I can look back and laugh. This may not be one of my favorite Christmas memories, but it is one of my favorites to tell.

A favorite Christmas Memory by Valerie Long 02-2-3-1

When I was 13 I asked for a tape recorder for Christmas. I wanted one soooo bad, because my friend had one. I was looking for something one day and found a tape recorder, still in its box, in mom's cedar chest. I was so excited I ran and told mom I found it, and she told me that it wasn't for me. She said that she was holding it for my aunt to give to my cousin for Christmas. I was crushed. But on Christmas day I opened that tape recorder and the excitement returned.



CHRISTMAS MEMORY

By Wanda Coen (02-7)

When my twin daughters, Dale and Gail, were about 2 years old, we lived just outside Wilmington, Delaware. This particular Christmas we had gotten doll babies and rocking chairs for the girls. Christmas morning came and the girls got up and went into the living room where we had the Christmas tree set up. The girls were so excited to see the gifts under the tree! As we watched, they each ran to a rocking chair, picked up the baby doll and simultaneously, without saying a word, ran over to the opposite rocking chair, sat down and starting rocking their babies. It was the funniest thing!

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES Written by Dale Inman (02-7-1a)

When I was asked to write an article about my favorite Christmas memory, at first I didn't know what I was going to write. How can you pick one memory out as being extra special? Was it the time when I got a much-requested toy? Or when I got a new outfit that my mother made herself? Or perhaps it was when my grandparents were there to celebrate the holidays with us. One occasion does not stand out alone in my mind. Each and every Christmas as a child was wonderful, and I mean that sincerely. My parents did a wonderful job of keeping Christmas real. I want to say "thank you and I love you" to them both. Christmas is one of my favorite times of the year. Many things come to my mind when I think of Christmas – decorating the tree, wrapping presents, homemade goodies, wonderful smells coming from the kitchen, laughter, music, but most of all time spent with my family. May God bless each and every one of you and give you a wonderful Christmas to remember. Take time to make memories with your family and cherish all the excitement this holiday season has to offer, but also remember why we celebrate Christmas in the first place.

Homecoming 2003

It was a thrill seeing and visiting with all the Family that made it to the 2003 Reunion at "We're Family Park." For those who didn't make this years reunion, we missed you and you missed a great weekend. Please put the Family Reunion in your plans for next year. It is always held the last weekend in July.

If you haven't seen our Family Park lately, you'll be pleasantly surprised by the progress we have made to enhance the facility. Thanks to all who helped with the hard work and support of the following projects; Lena's Kitchen - Lena & Scott Shaver; Family Chapel - Tilford & Lucy Dennison Family; Gazebo & Wishing Well- Virginia & Vaughn Shaver Family; Arched Bridge- Burnell & Geraldine Dennison Family. These projects have been completed and dedicated. Martin Dennison, Vice President, had the placards made and installed. A sign that reads "Generation Gap Lane" was made and placed at the end of the road that leads to the Park, by Martin as well. Pearl Coen made six benches that he and Rondal Dennison placed along the road to the Chapel. Jerry Shaver completed the fireplace with gas logs in the Pavilion.

The annual auction and other proceeds brought in about \$2000 this year. Eugene Dennison, Chairman of the trust fund, was given \$1025.00 for the trust fund. Future Projects include a recreation area in memory Gareth Dennison by his wife, Helene, and son Gareth in the amount of \$5400 to date, and a storage building has been promised by the Byron and Jessie Dennison family. We also still need furniture for the foyer and living quarters. If you would like to donate please contact Martin Dennison, Vice President.

The Pavilion was dedicated to Clifford & Jeanette Dennison with a marble marker placed on the front entrance in a brick display. If you are not aware of this "Brick Fund Raiser", I'll explain. We are selling engraved brick for \$50 two names, \$35 for one name.(see example below) Jerry Shaver is doing the grouting of the brick and Calvin Shaver is over seeing the engraving of the brick. Send orders and money to our Treasurer, Kathy Shaver. We need to complete this project as soon as possible in order to complete the porch, steps, and wheelchair ramp.

In order to have year round use of the Pavilion, air conditioning as well as heating was installed. We did a lot of shopping and found an installer that would do the job for \$11,500. This would be two five ton units with the duct work hidden in the attic. Reta and Tim Cogar have started the fund by generously donating \$1000. The Park can contribute another \$1500, leaving a balance of \$9000 to be raised. Reta & Tim Cogar have agreed to "Loan" the Family Park the \$9000 until the Family can pay them back. So Please give generously to this cause. Mail your checks to our Treasurer, Kathy Shaver, 201 Enterprise Dr, Gassaway, WV 26624, home phone (304) 364-4657. When sending in money designate what the money is for.

A special Thanks to our Director of Food, June Knight, and her helpers, Elizabeth Hobbs, Donna Butler, Jane Murphy, Reta Cogar, Karen Mowery, Donald Dennison and all those who contributed to the food supply. You have all made it work smoothly. While we all slept soundly Sunday morning, Donald and his brother Doug Dennison were busy roasting the pig we had for lunch. Thanks again to Donald for keeping the grounds looking their best.

What better way to give at Christmastime than to give a gift towards our Family Park which can be passed down through the years. Janice and I would like to wish each one a Merry Christmas and God Bless you all. Good health for the New Year. Robert Shaver, President

Example:

Shaver 10-2
Robert J.
Janice D.



A Musical Gift

For those that didn't know, "Olive Lloyd" played and taught music on her piano for various singing groups in the community and churches. Her piano has a lot of sentimental value for all those who knew her. Many family members of several generations have gone to "Olive" for lessons. Upon her death, she willed Loraine Cogar, Tim Cogar's mother, the piano. Loraine, Tim and Reta Cogar no longer have room in their home for this nice piano. They have graciously donated it to the WFP. I have accepted this donation as it will be a wonderful asset to the Park. A name plate will be placed on the piano in recognition of this gift.

Robert Shaver, President

A Memory

What a nice gift! I remember Olive from my summer visits to my grandparents, Tilford and Lucy. Grandpa used to sing in a quartet and Olive played the piano for them. She taught me a little on the piano and I still remember some of what she taught me. I know that my Grandpa would be proud of this addition to the park. Love, Gail



CELEBRATING SIXTY YEARS!

by Jim Burns 11-1s

The hills were alive with the sound of music and celebration on Sunday morning of the Dennison Family Reunion this past July 28, 2002! Following a wonderful devotional time of hymn, worship choruses, and special music by Karen Mowery, and the Shaver girls, the atmosphere turned festive as we anticipated the celebration of Clifford and Jeanette's 60 years of marriage. And what a productive marriage it has been! Four handsome, talented, intelligent sons--Denny, Jimmy, Jerry and Jeff—

and a beautiful, creative daughter--Doris. Bob Moore, Patty's husband, shared some beautiful thoughts on marriage and on the positive influence of Clifford and Jeanette. Then Doris and Jim sang a wedding song which Jim wrote at the bottom of the hollow for Janet Shaver Oliver's wedding a few years back entitled "Our Love Is." Jim declares it was inspired while Cliff and Raymond were discussing the love life of the queen bee! We all wanted to hear the story once again of how Jeanette "snared" Cliff with her singing and her mother's banana pudding. To this day, Clifford hasn't confessed which had the greatest effect on his decision! You recall that Cliff had just about determined that he needed to distance himself from this adventurous city-woman, but when Jeanette called him and began singing "I'll try to understand, dear--I won't mind," all of his West Virginia resolve melted like the butter on Jeanette's biscuits. We were able to talk Jeanette into singing the entire song for us, with a little accompaniment by Jim and Doris. The highlight of the morning came at the end of the anniversary ceremony, when Robert Shaver announced on behalf of all present that the ruggedly beautiful pavilion with its multi-functional rooms has been officially named the Clifford and Jeanette Dennison Pavilion of We're Family Park. The park and pavilion were Cliff's dream for years. He was able to communicate this dream to all of us and see the dream become the beautiful distinct reality it is today. Congratulations to Clifford and Jeanette. And congratulations to the generations of Dennison-Carder descendants and friends who will have use of this commodious facility through generations to come, should the Lord tarry.

Byron's Red Pine Squirrel

written by Marlin Dennison 02-2-1

Uncle Byron loved to squirrel hunt with his 22 rifle. One time he went up on the pipeline on opening day (as if that made any difference to a man with eight children to feed). He went into a wooded area where he always heard squirrels barking. Everyone knew he was a good shot. Not long after he got into the woods, he got his first squirrel, and dropped it into his pouch. Soon he saw another one running away from him - another shot, another squirrel, and into the bag it went. A few minutes later he saw another climbing a tree, and as a shot rang out, it was no longer climbing.

He was thinking this was sure a great spot to hunt squirrels. He had gotten 3 in just a few minutes! He was waiting for the 4th so he could go home and show everyone what a good shot he was, even though they had all heard it before. It wasn't long before he saw his fourth one of the day, but there was something very different about this one. It was a crafty little fellow. In the end, however, it ended up in Uncle Byron's pouch, but only due to his persistence, observation skills, and great marksmanship.

This squirrel was a real prize, for it was a red pine squirrel which was so elusive that no one had ever shot one, until then. As he sat down on the ground up against a tree with his pouch close to his hip, he thought about how to retell that day's hunting experience in proper fashion. As he pondered, he heard a noise in the leaves near where he was sitting. In his excitement he overlooked what all West Virginians know. When in the woods always look out for snakes, especially when you sit down. Well, this time he hadn't. All of a sudden he realized he had been bitten by what he supposed was a snake. He jumped up, and as he did he realized that there was a red pine squirrel clinging to his backside. The weight of the other three squirrels pulled the pouch away from the red pine squirrel as Uncle Byron stood up. This action freed the squirrel from the pouch, and in the blink of an eye the squirrel was up the tree and gone forever.

This story didn't come to light until the next family Homecoming when all the brothers were together and the bragging started. No one had ever gotten a red pine squirrel, or even knew if there was such a creature. Uncle Byron swore he was the only person that had almost gotten one, but the squirrel was the one that had gotten him in the END!

Thirty Years And Counting

written by Garywayne



Jason and Greg organized and almost surprised their parents, Martin and Bev Dennison for their 30th anniversary. When a man has grown sons who suddenly become interested in his comings and goings it causes one to become suspicious. In needing to do some finishing work on the chapel at the We're Family Park, Martin called the bluff of his tight-lipped boys by announcing that he was going to West Virginia to work on the chapel the weekend of the "Big Surprise." As usual, Martin got the information he was looking for, but it did turn out to be a surprise for Bev.

A rough estimate was between and 50 - 56 people that attended the celebration, which was held on Saturday, July 12, 2003, at Rocky Fork State Park not far from their home in Peebles, Ohio. Several of the original wedding party did return to witness what has become so rare in this day and age - a first time couple staying together for 30 years. When asked what the secret to their longevity was, it was promptly pointed out in their anniversary video (made by their daughter-in-law in cooperation with her brother). The video showed numerous snapshots of Martin sleeping. Obviously, it takes 2 to argue, so there is a sense of peace when one is not awake. Martin was quick to point out that every single photo showed him sleeping on the couch and NOT in the bedroom.

After the anniversary cake was cut, and the potential weapons in each of their formerly bride and groom hands, Martin thought it was wise to distance himself from Bev, in case memories of 30 years over took her sanity. Having placed the former maid of honor and best man between them, Martin told this story. Thirty years ago, in a youthful state of mind, both the maid of honor and the best man strongly encouraged the smearing of the cake as a tradition to follow. Martin and Bev vowed to each other before the wedding, that was not going to happen then, and it was not going to happen to each other now. Martin and Bev then lifted their piece of cake, as if to lift a wineglass as a toast, then turned and smeared the cake into the faces of the non-expecting couple between them! As the laughter filled the air, I heard Bev apologizing to her sister (and former maid of honor), so I think it is safe to conclude that it was totally Martin's idea.

They received several gifts along with a variety of cards. The card that received the most public attention was from Martin's aunt, Evalee Oggy. It was a card with a picture of 2 older bunnies wearing glasses. It read something like this, "In order to feel young after 30 years of marriage, do what rabbits do." After opening up the card it read, "Continue to eat carrots. They are good for the eyesight at your age."

The week preceding this event was filled with rain showers every day. It was a welcome relief that the forecasters predicted sunshine, and sunshine we did have, except for about a 10 minute downpour before returning to sunshine once more. In having great food and fellowship, the rainfall was unable to dampen anyone's spirits on a day with such a glorious reason to celebrate.

Staff Memo

When I asked Garywayne & Ro Dennison to do the WFP Newsletter, they were not sure they wanted the responsibility and work involved. Let us salute them for a great job they have done and are doing. They have asked for family members to write stories or send information to them for publication.

I have sent my life stories and many other short stories to them. Aren't you getting tired of reading about me? Lets have your stories.

This is our third edition of the Family Newsletter and we want to hear about your life story or short stories. Anything of interest - we need to keep this newsletter going. Remember we have three issues yearly- March 1, July 1, and December 1.

Robert Shaver

The next deadline for articles is February 2nd, 2004.

Any stories, especially relating to Valentine's Day, would fit right into this issue.

A Birthday Flower Bed

by Garywayne 02-2-4



Geraldine Dennison turned 77 years old on August 25, 2003. A month earlier she answered the age old question before we, the children, had a chance to ask it. The question being, "Mom, what would you like for your birthday?" My mother is one of those people who has her life in order, has what she needs, and isn't interested in learning to operate all the new technical gadgets that appeal to the younger generation - age 50 or below! In talking to my siblings and me, who live within an hour and a half driving area, her birthday request was that we get together for a meal at her house and come prepared for doing various yard work projects.

My guess is that more fellowship went on than the time actually spent on getting projects done, but both are important, and both were being done. Besides the trimming of some trees and such, a few of the completed projects included: building a flower bed from decorative blocks, filling the area with dirt and finally planting it with flowers. The ground is so flat around where my mother lives that standing water is always a problem in keeping plants alive. She wanted the raised flower bed to keep some color in the front of her home. Another project was the complete removal of two fruit trees that only produced bee attracting quality of apples. The other two projects that I had hands on interaction with was the removal of a 4 foot high stump (this was a problem when it came to cutting the grass), and weeding the backyard flower bed.

My mom's children, grandchildren, and even great-grandchildren (down to Isaac, age 3), were helping with these projects. A total of 21 of us showed up. Some of the help of the little ones was a little bit of a nuisance, but seeing the joy in their faces by being a part of it all, made it a wonderful nuisance, and a cherished time of bonding.

One such bonding experience was when Rachel's son, Ethan, (one month older than Isaac) helped me push over the tall stump. I had cut around the roots pretty good so it wasn't going to take much to detach it from the ground. I looked around and saw Ethan so I told him that I needed some help from a little superman. After pushing from several angles because it was fastened better than I thought, I told him to give it a really good push. When we did, it gave way and in the process, threw both of us tumbling to the ground. We had a good laugh and he was my buddy the rest of the day.

After the stump was carried away, I asked Ethan if he could get me an empty bucket so that together we could pick up the wood chips from the grass put there by my chopping on the stump. Without a word, he ran out of sight around the corner of the house. A minute later he reappeared with a bucket and a proud look on his face, because he was able by himself to accomplish the task I gave him. Shortly after he and I began to fill the bucket, my mom came around the corner of the house asking Ethan if he was the one that dumped out the bucket of apples in the side yard. Ethan simply beamed with a smile as he pointed to me as if to say, "I only did what he told me to do." I covered for my little buddy and then we went on working together.

Mom's birthday celebration was far from being a typical party, but there was food, fellowship, and teamwork. Instead of having only an ice cream sandwich discarded on the grass by a little child, and pop spilled on the driveway (which wasn't really my fault), a beautiful flower bed is the lasting reminder to my Mom of another year of life and being loved through it.

Shared Wear By Robert Shaver

In earlier times among family and friends, if we had clothing that the other liked, we borrowed them from one another. Gareth and I had a friend "Tim Kennedy", we were all the same size in clothes as well as shoes. I had bought a light blue "v" neck sweater, light gray blue slacks and white suede shoes. A pretty snazzy outfit I might add. Gareth and Tim liked it very much as well, so we each took turns wearing it. Other friends who were not as close, thought we had matching outfits. Not only did we borrow each other's clothes but cars as well. We even wrecked each other's cars.

For a copy of the minutes of the 2003 Reunion business meeting, please see the web site or you can request a copy from staff member.

WFP Newsletter Staff: Garywayne & Ro Dennison, Robert & Janice Shaver
Special thanks to Dale Inman