

We're Family Park Newsletter

Dedicated to the family of James & Amanda Dennison Issue 5, July 2004

WWW.WEREFAMILY.ORG

We look forward to your presence at our next Family Reunion – July 24th and 25th

Who Will Give Me 20?

Attending the family reunion may catch us off guard unless we prepare for it now. Part of that preparation is deciding on what to donate for the auction. The Park, as an organization, is very dependent on the proceeds of the auction to cover the cost of insurance, utilities, maintenance, and other costs associated with making our family reunion an enjoyable affair. Please come and bless our fundraiser with your creative projects such as homemade jams, and other donated treasures. Come and enjoy the fun, fellowship, and the competition of bidding.

"Family Riddle" #22

Clue and Answers from Issue 4
#1 resides at Graceland.(buried at Graceland Mem. Gardens, Loveland,Oh)

#2 was a carpenter /painter (at GE)

#3 I had six children. (Marlin, Stanley, Linda, Garywayne, Martin, David)

#4 I was married to the same women for 40 years... 1/13/1946 to 6/12/1986

#5 marriage started in the same place. (CLAY, West Virginia)

ANSWER: Marlin Burnell Dennison
02-2 (deceased)

HOME COMING DAY

Written by Elizabeth Hobbs, July 7, 1990

Here we are folks, for our homecoming day,
Welcome everyone and we hope you can stay,
For we have lots in store as the day goes on,
Games for the children, then some music and songs.

Let's all join in and we'll have lots of fun,
Talking and singing until the day is done.
We have family and friends who have come a long way,
To visit with us all and enjoy our special day.

Along about noon, we'll all have a feast
Of the many foods prepared and just waiting to be eat.
There's breads and meats, and vegetables a plenty
Fruits and salads and desserts, there are many.

We have kool-aid, lemonade, coffee, and tea,
To satisfy the thirst of everyone you see,
Best of all is the fellowship sweet,
For God is here with us as together we meet.

It seems every year as we all get together
There are loved ones who have gone to be with God up in Heaven.
It leaves our hearts sad as we look around and see
A spot by our side where a loved one should be.

It's a vacant spot now and it makes us so sad,
But God knows best and He can make us glad.
Then someday soon in Heaven we will be
With our Lord and our loved ones we are waiting to see.

We'll soon be facing Heaven's great homecoming day,
If we're ready to go when God calls us away,
Where all will be peace and joy and love,
With all of our loved ones in that home up above.

We will hear a welcome and then a well done,
When we gather around God's great white throne,
May God bless each one that has come here today,
And may He keep you in His care as you go on your way.

...but still remembered

Lena and Scott Shaver

written by Janet Shaver Oliver 05-11

As we walked to the garden to plant our seeds and plants I kept telling my daughter, Lisa Davis and her daughter, Amber, how my mom and dad, Lena and Scott did things to make the garden produce better. Daddy would tell me to just dig the hoe into the rich soil and kind of pull it across the ground to dig up the weeds, not leaving much soil on their roots. That way they die more quickly. The most important thing is to drag a hoe full of that rich clean soil up to the corn or tomato plant and mound it around the root. "You've gotta keep those weeds away from the plants or they will take over the garden," he'd say.

Once as I was in the garden pulling weeds with Daddy, a big cloud came up and I was anticipating with great delight that I would be rained out of the garden. When a couple of drops of rain hit my head I began saying, "Thank the lord for this little bit of rain." Well, as Dad and I were much of the time clowning around, he felt that I wasn't as sincere with my gratitude as I should have been so he began to scold me. He told me that he never failed to thank God for every drop of rain that fell on the garden, no matter how little or how great. By the time he finished lecturing me on the importance of appreciation of God's goodness to us and to our garden, the little shower had finished and I was truly thankful from my heart. We worked right through the shower and finished weeding all those carrots.

Mom always helped in the garden as well. She was always teaching us that whatever we were doing we should do it right the first time then we wouldn't have to redo the task. Rules I tried to instill in my own children and grandchildren.

God richly blessed our garden and the produce we collected from it. That food fed us and many friends and neighbors all year long. Mom seemed to be continually working in the garden either planting, hoeing and weeding, or harvesting it. Although she was so busy, she seemed to always have enough time to pick, can and prepare the garden foods. She always seemed to be working with a song on her lips. I'm so thankful for that wonderful rich heritage I came from. I'm also so very thankful for my parents, Lena and Scott who instilled strong God fearing and God loving values in all their children.

The Rope Of Threads

written by Garywayne

Many years ago I was asked to contribute to the making of the book "Carry Me Back." There was a lot of pressure to write something for the book even though I had never lived in West Virginia. Piggging out at homecomings didn't seem like the basis for a great story. In asking people for stories for the newsletter or the website, I run into the same resistance that I dished out back then.

My request has little to do with West Virginia. If you grew up in central Florida, I want to hear about life in central Florida. The newsletter isn't about location; it is about being family. We are each a thread that finds its way back to the bloodline of James and Amanda. They are the ones that tie us together, but we are the ones that must weave our threads into a rope in order to pull this fragmented family together.

Great strides have taken place for that weaving process to happen. We have the We're Family Park in functioning order with the pavilion, gazebo, and the chapel. There is now a permanent place for large gatherings, for those that are able to attend homecomings. We have the We're Family website (www.werefamily.org) in order to stay connected with the happenings of the family on a 24/7 basis. The website also has entertaining, thought provoking, genealogical, and things simply informational. We also have the newsletter that by design can be more personal and reach everyone who wants to stay in contact with the family as a whole. We have the vehicles in place to make a very strong rope that can bind us together. We just need the individuals wanting to be woven in by sharing their memories, experiences, and a glimpse of themselves being known.

Staff Memo

written by Garywayne

Some concern has been expressed regarding the content of the articles I have chosen to publish. Let me clarify my style in answer to questions that have been raised.

Much of my writing is creative. I talk to family members, asking for childhood memories or other tidbits of family history that might be interesting for others to read about. When I get these ideas they are usually very short thoughts – sometimes only one or two sentences long. Then I go to work, and as I am sitting on my sweeper, my mind begins to think ‘what would make this an interesting story for someone else to read?’ As thoughts come to me I begin writing them down. These thoughts often raise other questions, and I usually call the person that gave me the original inspiration to help me get a realistic perspective and clarify what might have happened. So although this becomes a fictitious story, the things I write about could have happened given the people, places, and time it occurred. My intent is to try to dig out family history and share it in a humorous way. I am hoping that by doing this others will desire to learn more about the events and the people in my stories. I don’t ever mean to make anyone look foolish thus making them feel bad. I want my writing to show a positive spin on things. And finally, I want my words to be appropriate for anyone of any age to read.

My poetry is most often inspired by a comic strip. I try to use words to create a picture. I like to match up a characteristic of the comic strip character with someone I know. Although I may use real names or titles at times (my wife, etc.), there is little or no truth to my poems. They are basically written as an expression of my sense of humor in a short story style format. I know that some of you may not share my sense of humor, but I hope that you will not be offended by it. I hope that my poetry will bring a smile to someone’s face by catching them off guard, much like the comic strip did for me.

One goal that I have is to put a poem in every issue to capture the creative spirit in our family. I have a notebook full to choose from, but I’d really like to publish those written by you or other family members as well.

Work Week:

The tradition continues with the workweek being the 5 days preceding the reunion. (M-F, July 19-23) No special skills are required, except the willingness to be helpful. Please bring your own hand tools and your favorite paintbrush. It is a great time to bond with distant cousins of like minds.

Address Change:

Robert & Janice Shaver have moved-Twice! Summer home: Rt.#1 Box 95C Ravenswood, WV 26164, phone (304) 273-2825 Winter home: 616 Lake Shore Dr., Polk City, FL 33868 phone (863) 984-8177

The Mouse Nibbler

written by Robert Shaver

One day Cecil Shaver and Daddy were getting ready to butcher a hog. While they waited for the water to heat for the scalding, they ran out of chewing tobacco. Dale was around five years old, so they decided to send him to Herman and Mable Barkers Grocery Store to get some. When he got back he handed them a bag with plugs of Browns Mule chewing tobacco. When they opened the bag they found the corner was chewed off of one of the plugs. They said, "I wonder what happened here"? Dale said, "I guess a mouse ate on it. " They looked back at the mouse; he was pale and sick. That didn't stop him from using tobacco as he used it for years after he grew up.

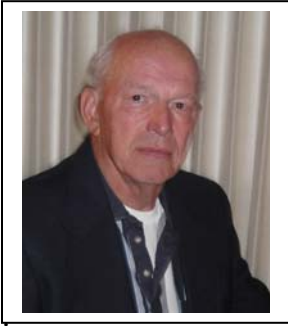


WFP Newsletter Staff: Garywayne & Ro Dennison, Robert & Janice Shaver
Special thanks to Dale Inman



Whose license plate?

"A Biographical Sketch" (May/2002)
by James Eugene (Gene) Dennison (1931- 20??)



I was born at the head of the Perkins Fork hollow. I was the 6th of eventually 12 children, mostly if not all, delivered by a midwife. The date was July 28, 1931. I was very young then and do not remember the details. I do remember that when I was four, I began learning the alphabet by reading names on feed sacks and gasoline cans. It was an early home schooling project. I was named after my grandfather, James Elijah.

By the time I started school, we had moved into the "Home Place". It was a wood frame building with no insulation and very drafty and heated only by a single coal-burning fireplace and the kitchen stove. I remember being cold much of the winter. We had enough food, mainly chicken, pork and homegrown vegetables.

My formal schooling began at the one-room Perkins Fork School, a two-mile walk, reached by a passable dirt road. We moved to Middle Fork later during World War II when I was in the fifth grade. I attended the Scott's Fork School where I was the janitor for two years, lighting the fire in the morning about seven o'clock, sweeping the floors after school and other duties as required. In the winter, I would leave home about 6:15 AM, before dawn and when I had only starlight to see by, sometimes at sub-zero temperatures. The pay was \$15 every three months. No wonder I looked to higher education as a way out of manual labor!

I attended Gassaway High School, graduating in 1949, the 5th in a class of 55 and the top male. Even then, girls were smarter. At GHS, I played football and basketball, the only sports available, and was in several class plays. My father never did attend a single game because he did not approve of me playing sports. That was until I got a college scholarship, but my mother was always supportive. The memories of those days are dear to me, although I still regret that we did not live closer to town where girls other than my sisters lived.

I worked for a year after high school to earn money to help pay for college. I then enrolled at Potomac State Junior College in September 1950. My choice was predicated on the cost (cheap) and the availability of a football scholarship. In my sophomore year at PSC, I was selected to the all-conference team. Scholastically, I was still the top male in my class.

After attending Potomac State, I enrolled at Miami University in Oxford, Ohio. My schedule was full since I was in the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps and studying for a BA in chemistry. Upon graduating from Miami in 1954, I went on to Oregon State University for a Masters degree and to complete my navy training. I was there two years, with navy cruises in Europe and aviation training in the summers. After graduating in 1956, I was commissioned in the US Navy for a three-year tour of duty. I served as Communications Officer on the USS Snowden, a destroyer escort based in Newport, Rhode Island. I was there for 18 months, but then was transferred to the Navy School in Brunswick, Georgia, to teach communications.

During a ship-overhaul period in Boston, I met Helen Adams, a registered nurse at the Joslin Clinic, and we were married a year later in Boston's Old South Church. The wedding was on August 31, 1957, a few days before I shipped out for a European tour of duty. It is a date I had best never forget. Our first child, Jane Elizabeth, was born in Brunswick, Georgia on September 27, 1958.

After leaving the navy in 1959, I returned to Oregon State to get my doctorate in Analytical Chemistry. While in Oregon, our family grew to three with the birth of James, Jr., in 1961 and Jon in 1964. My chemistry career began when I took a job with Western Electric's Engineering Research Center in Hopewell, NJ, in September 1965. I was there until 1980 when I left to form Princeton Environmental, in the heyday of the environmental movement. That lasted until the end of 1995, when the business was sold and I retired.

Since then, I have been managing the apartment buildings we purchased in 1983 in Lambertville, New Jersey. I am also working on maintaining other real estate parcels, including our "camp" on Perkins Fork, an island on Fraser Bay in Ontario, Canada, and a winter home in Dewey, Arizona. Clearly, retirement means only a change in jobs. In addition to work projects, I am trying to play better golf and studying to be an amateur geologist. Mostly I am interested in the geological history of rocks, how they were formed and how they got to where they are. And many are pretty, too.

“Forty-three Was My Lucky Number”

written by Garywayne Dennison



(Martin and Bev's
granddaughter Alicia)

I am not a hunter by any stretch of the imagination. (A bear hunt on Mt. Storm in West Virginia as a first hunting experience, is enough to discourage any further hunting.) I never get invited to go after the wild game in Adams County, Ohio, where my brother, Martin, lives. I have no gun blast noises to contend with, no spending money on license tags or shells, or no worry about doing something incorrectly while a game warden is watching. I don't own any anti-snake gear to wear if the need arose, or frostbite proof boots to weigh me down as I could have been trudging the snowy hillsides. I kind of miss not being included in Martin's invitations, especially knowing that they are having "Fun" out there.

I enjoy having good conversation with Ro while sitting on a comfortable couch with a cup of hot chocolate in my hand. While sitting there listening to the drizzling ice tapping against the windows, I think, "Yup, I kind of miss not being invited." I would love to smile and respond by saying, "Sorry, I don't hunt." I do, however, receive a delayed benefit of some of those hunts in the form of packaged venison or wild pig meat.

I am by no means a fisherman either, but I was invited, and I accepted an invitation to be a part of a 10 man fishing party. Martin and his son, Greg, formed a partnership to become hunting guides in and around Adams County for deer and turkey hunts. As part of their hunting package, Martin had a pond dug near the cabin/lodge. Although Martin had already put some bass into his newly filled pond, the fishing party's job was to catch and transfer Blue Gills into the pond to ensure fishing success to his customers as an extra perk. My brother, David, showed up with a large water tank including an aerator, in the back of his truck. There were 3 local farmer's ponds which were in easy walking distance of each other where we spent our day fishing and fellowshiping. By the end of the day we transferred 385 live fish to their new home. Forty-three fish were not quite so lucky. The fish that were going to die in transport were part of the planned evening meal.

Around the fire pit, after feasting on fried fish and venison steaks, I found it quit odd that the vast majority of our crew opted for venison only for mealtime. Maybe they didn't trust my cleaning of the fish, maybe they didn't like the fact that they were left in the water, (but not on ice all afternoon), or maybe there is an unwritten law that says, "If you want to eat fish, you have to help clean them."

A final thought of why there were not many fish eaters is that Martin had purchased wax worms as the bait for the day. Any fisherman, or a person with eyes, knows what they are when you look at them. The bottom line is that I had a great time enjoying fellowship and food, and went home the next morning with four zip-lock bags of fish to remember the occasion a little longer with a very pleasing visual aid.

Martin gave me an open invitation to use his cabin (which is vacant most of the year) whenever I wanted to really experience simple country life and get away from the evils of the city. (I didn't know that an inside toilet, running water, a telephone, and a TV were evil.) He also wanted me to extend that invitation to the rest of our larger family, primarily during non-hunting season. The cabin is located near Peebles, Ohio, just up the hill from Martin and Bev's home. There is a water faucet at the base of the hill, and the cabin has electricity, stove, microwave, and a frig. Please contact Martin for further details and then bring your fishing pole with you. You just might follow in my footsteps and catch one of the fish I did. How will you know? If you think, this one is too little to clean and eat, that's how you will know!