

Coward Family Newsletter

April 2007

116th Coward Family Reunion To Be Held in Cullowhee

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The 115th Coward Family Reunion will be held in Cullowhee on June 10, 2007. For those of you who have not attended before, we usually gather around 11:30 or so at the park in Cullowhee. It is near the new track. Bring some food and we'll put everything together. Nobody ever leaves hungry!

My mother found this picture in her things. It was taken on June 10, 1962, at the 69th Coward Family Reunion. I believe that it was taken at the "Old Place" in Norton, NC. It is of the children and grandchildren of Nathan Coward. I was probably at that reunion since my grandmother (Edna Bird) thought that the year was not complete without a visit to the Coward Family Reunion. I loved the mountains and going was certainly not a chore. It was an opportunity to see some of my more distant cousins. I miss them to this day.



Left to right: Willie Norton, Annie Hampton, Beulah Henson, Frances Coward, Minnie Wilde, Davie Sutton, Emma Hooper, Dixie English, Edna Bird, Woodie Hooper, Jane Coward, Lyndon Coward, Frank Coward, Glen Coward, Oscar Coward, Lee Coward.

New Family Members

Landon Andrew Hunter, son of Adam and Erikka Hunter was born June 23, 2005 in Lakeland, FL.

Matthew Talvin Anderson, son of Oscar and Carin Anderson, was born January 30, 2006 in Orlando, FL. His middle name is an old Coward name, first name of his great grandfather and middle name of his grandfather and father.

Gracen Elise Riggsbee (my 4th grandchild) was born on May 9, 2006 in Chapel Hill, NC. She is so cute and is the most pleasant child I have ever known. Her father was quite pleasant also, but she takes the cake!!

Austin Michael Coward, son of Michael Coward and Rebecca Levins, was born May 25, 2006 in Lakeland, FL.

Ava James Wells, first great grandchild of Ruth and Jack Cunningham, was born in Portland, ME on November 25, 2006.

Don't we LOVE this? Little Cowards all over the place. George Coward was getting a little worried that the younger generation was naming their children after movie stars. But...we still keep seeing these old family names pop up. As George says, "Keep the faith!"

Ruth Coward Cunningham and her husband, **Jack**, celebrated their 65th anniversary in August 2006. Sixty-five years with the same man! What a wonderful testament to love and loyalty.

Ruth's and Jack's oldest granddaughter, Erin Cunningham, who is junior at BYU, is in Romania with a group from the school. They are at an orphanage/hospital helping with abandoned babies, some of whom are ill. The "team" wears blue scrubs, and they are readily recognized by the little ones as someone who gives them love and attention.

Glenda Conley reports that she got a little tired of retirement and now is working at the local Curves. She'll look good even if the rest of us don't!

Her daughter and son-in-law, **Gene R. and Susan Wynne**, moved from Columbus, GA to Laramie, Wyoming where she is cataloguer at the University of Wyoming and he is working toward enrolling in law school there.

David Coward from Minnesota, spent some time in Belton, SC researching some of his Coward roots. David, get in touch with John Tayloe. His addresses and phone number are on the back page of this newsletter.

New Marriages

Robert Charles Coward married **Susan Gail Adams** on August 12, 2006. They were married on the beach at Longboat Key, FL. They both have grown families by previous marriages. George Coward was proud to be the officiating officer.

Robin Ricker married **Ralph Johnson** in Greeneville Tennessee in the First Baptist Church on April 15, 2006. Robin was the caregiver for her grandmother, Ruth Brown Coward who died on July 31, 2005. Robin is the daughter of Joy Coward Anderson and George Carol Anderson of Suwanee, FL.

Avery Wilson, daughter of Bob and Betsea Wilson, married **Kris Young** in Gatlinburg, TN on October 15, 2006. Aren't they a pretty couple? I believe the older woman is Kris's grandmother, Granny Young.



We wish for all of you the happiest of futures,
and we welcome the newcomers to the Coward
family.

Does anybody know where **Kenneth Justice** is? His last newsletter was returned to me and the last address I have is a post office box in Copperas, TX. If you can help me get up with him, I will be grateful.

David Tayloe spent the summer of 2006 in Salzburg, Austria celebrating the 250th birthday of Amadeus Mozart in a 5 week study program through the University of Miami, Salzburg. In early December his parents (**Judy and John Tayloe**) had an opportunity to see what he had learned when they traveled to Baton Rouge and Louisiana State University to watch him perform in the 2 person opera, "Mozart and Salieri" His older brothers, **Lee** and **Nathan**, wish they were still in school...that work thing is getting old!

In February, **Mary Elaine Bird Nichols** and **Judy Nichols Tayloe** made a trip to Charlotte, NC to attend a 6th grade band concert in which clarinetist **Zachary Diaz** performed. They returned to Charlotte in April to see **Ana Diaz** perform in a 6th grade play. The whole family is extremely proud of the talented twins!

Many thanks to those of you who provided financial support to the Coward Family Newsletter this year: **Fred Murphy, David McCann, Ruth Cunningham, and the attendees at the 2006 Coward Family Reunion.**



Clara McGuire Wendt

September 23, 1910 - November 13, 2006

Clara McGuire Wendt died peacefully at the age of 96 in her Banks County, GA home Monday evening, November 13th, 2006. By her side were her ever faithful and loving nurse of over 12 years Ilse Rodriguez, her son Fred and his wife Judie. Her husband, Frederick William Wendt, preceded her in death by 60 years. She is survived by daughters Johanna Winzenread of Alameda, CA and C Nan Rideout of Raleigh, NC, a son Fred Wendt of Banks County, GA, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. She was the sister of Florence McGuire Thompson of Haysville, NC and Elise McGuire Meeks of Ft. Lauderdale, FL, both also deceased.

Clara was born in Cullowhee, NC on September 23, 1910, the daughter of Nannie Smith McGuire and Frank Walker McGuire. She was the granddaughter of Clara Coward Smith and Lewis Jesse Smith, a founder of Western Carolina University in Cullowhee. Clara was an educator all of her life. She started at age 17 as the only teacher in a one-room schoolhouse in Horse Cove near Cashiers, NC. She went on to earn her teaching degree at Western Carolina and continued to teach in several western North Carolina communities. In 1937, while teaching in Andrews, NC, she met and married her husband, Fred, who was an engineer with the Tennessee Valley Authority. Because teachers at that time were not allowed to be married, they eloped over to Tennessee to secretly marry. Clara left teaching following the school year in 1937 to be with Fred, as he traveled to the many dam project sites throughout North Carolina, Tennessee, Alabama and Kentucky.

With two children and one on the way, Fred decided in early 1945 it was time to settle down. He retired from the TVA and, having an agricultural background from his roots in Alabama and the Alabama Polytechnic Institute (now Auburn University), he looked for a farm where he could settle his growing family. He found the right place in a farm sale advertisement in the Atlanta Constitution. It was for the sale of the Jolly farm in Banks County, GA, then owned by Joe Brown Wood of Commerce, GA. Unfortunately, he died less than a year after purchasing the farm, leaving Clara and her three children alone in a strange community where she had no relatives and knew few people. The blessings of friendship and consolation of the fine people of Banks County surrounded her and she resumed her career in education following Fred's death in 1946. She was hired by then Banks County school superintendent Clarence Tucker to teach at the old Davis Academy School. She then went on to become the Home Demonstration Agent (now known as Home Economist) for Banks County for nine years. After being mentored by Dr. Jesse Mize (also of Banks County) at the University of Georgia, Clara went on to gain advance education degrees at UGA and Cornell University in Ithaca, NY. Clara finished her career in education at the university level, teaching at Cornell, Purdue University and West Virginia University, always keeping her family close with her. She retired back to her beloved home in Banks County in 1973, where she remained until her death.

Funeral arrangements are with the Little-Ward Funeral Home in Commerce, GA. There will be a memorial service at 11:00 AM on Friday, November 17th at the Homer United Methodist Church in Homer, GA and a graveside service and interment at 1:00 PM on Saturday, November 18th at the McGuire plot of the Cullowhee Baptist Church in Cullowhee, NC. In lieu of flowers, contributions may be made to her memorial fund at the Homer United Methodist Church, PO Box 37, Homer, GA 30547, her last church home.

“Looking Back at Coward Family Newsletters”

By John Tayloe

It is very interesting to return to the newsletters that were authored by Jo Ann Smith and Trudy Adams. So much history was gathered and through these newsletters both of these ladies kept the family advised of not only the past but also the present.

One newsletter that I was reading today helped me to understand how the Coward Family Reunion started some 115 years ago. Since I am an “Outlaw” as my mother-in-law, Elaine Nichols, refers to her sons and daughter in laws, we sometimes do not understand the family history of our spouses. Jo Ann Smith’s “The Coward Family Newsletter” dated May 15, 1976 included the following excerpt:

Dear Kinfolks,

Soon it will be time for the 95th Coward Family Reunion! I called Dale Coward on May 12, and he said the Cowards in the Norton Community, Cashiers, NC, would be looking forward to have all the kin at “The Old House” on Father’s Day, June 15.

The Coward Reunion is one of the oldest family reunions in Western North Carolina. The first reunion was held as “the big birthday party” for Nathan Coward on his 74th birthday, 12 June 1892. Six years later, Mrs. Lewis J. Smith <nee Clarissa Almira “Clara” Coward>, the daughter of Nathan Coward / Jane Rogers, addressed the reunion. Below is an excerpt for this address:

“On the 12th day of June, 1892, we set at our Father’s house (Nathan Coward) to celebrate his seventy-four birthday anniversary. There and then we agreed to meet every year during his life, rotating from one home to another beginning at my house (Clara Coward Smith), I being the eldest. This we have followed up, going on down from one home to another until today we meet with our youngest brother (Robert Rogers Coward) at his home – once our dear old home.....

Although Nathan Coward died in 1909, the Coward Family Reunion has continued each and every year since its beginning in 1892.

HELP! HELP! HELP!

The Coward and related families continue to grow and move around the world. Help in keeping the family history alive and share what is happening with your family. Please help keep our website up to date with most current information. Send information about births, deaths, obituaries, marriages, graduations and other important events in your life. Include full names, dates, locations, newspaper clippings, pictures or any other items you are willing to share.

This information can be:

Emailed to jtayloe@myfamilynames.com

Or

Visit www.myfamilynames.com and click on “Contact Us” and filled out the form

Or

US Mail:

My Family Names

2626 Monticello Drive

Winston Salem, NC 27106

Reach the Coward Family Newsletter!

EDITOR

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

GENEALOGIST

John Tayloe
2626 Monticell Dr.
Winston-Salem, NC 27106
Phone: 336-724-6714
Email: johntayloe@triad.rr.com



**CELEBRATE
YOUR
FAMILY!!!**

Notes From Lynn's Desk

I apologize for not getting a newsletter out in the fall. I (not so smartly) agreed to take a "part time" position in a Charlotte high school. Of course, you know there is no such thing as "part time", don't you? At any rate, I got overwhelmed and just couldn't devote the time to the newsletter. In addition, my husband's mother was quite ill and we were spending time with her, and we're building a new house in Jackson County. I am remedying the school situation at the end of this year; my mother-in-law, unfortunately, passed away; and the house is going well. I hope to be a permanent resident of Jackson County (near the Norton Community) by next year at this time. I should be able to publish a newsletter twice a year from now on. I hope that you will continue to send me news from your family. If you will send photos I will include them as I can scan them or copy them from a file. And...pay attention to John's request for info also. Our family records are valuable!