

COX CLAN

NEWSLETTER



ISSUE No. 8

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1995 COX REUNION

Following will be the information regarding the 1995 Cox Reunion:

Save the dates August 11 through 13, 1995! The attractive Plaza I Hotel in Rock Island, Illinois will be our reunion headquarters. It is convenient for the several activities we have planned and provides free parking, a variety of restaurants, swimming pool, and fitness center available for our use.

Our weekend coincides with the fourth annual *Ya.Maka.My* Weekend immediately across the street from our hotel in what is called *The District*. This gala event is a Reggae Music Festival and Sand Volley Ball Classic incorporated in a Caribbean Carnival of music, food and fun. Children's activities relate to Caribbean food and culture. This will be available during any free time we might have.

Late afternoon on Friday Al and Jean Frankenburg Walgren have invited us for an informal gathering on their beautiful secluded grounds. You are in for a treat as you stroll through peaceful gardens generously planted with shrubs, ground covers, hosta and flowers, all interspersed with intriguing sculpture.

After dinner on your own our hospitality room at Plaza I will be available for renewing friendships, making new ones, perusing the genealogy tables, and exchanging information. The facilities of the hotel, the business district, the casino boats, and *Ya.Maka.My* Weekend will be in full swing.

Saturday morning a bus or busses will pick us up at Plaza I. Our first tour will be Rock Island Arsenal where a visit to the museum will recall our veterans of the many wars, with special emphasis on the 50th Anniversary of the ending of World War II. Then we will drive to the Overlook above the Interchange of I-80 on the Illinois shore. From there we will look down to where Joseph and Mary Rue Cox's homestead once stood in what is now a vast highway interchange. From this overlook we can also look across the Mississippi River to see the Mississippi Valley Welcome Center high on the Iowa bluff where we will soon share our box lunches. From the latter we will enjoy a panoramic view of the Mississippi looking back to Illinois.

We will then drive to the Davenport Art Gallery. Along the way we will see some historical Iowa sites as well as some of the Illinois sites we will already have seen,

but now from across the water. After touring the art gallery with its' famous Grant Wood Collection and well stocked gift shop we will return to Plaza I to freshen for dinner.

For dinner on Saturday evening reservations have been made on the Effie Afton, a river boat docked a block from Plaza I. Special prices have been made for children. After dinner those who wish to utilize the nearby casino boat may do so. Time should be available to browse the genealogy tables in the hospitality room or enjoy the many features of the town and hotel.

Sunday morning will be free for church or exploring the area. The actual reunion will take place in the newly air conditioned lodge in Blackhawk State Park where a catered picnic dinner will be served. The lodge contains a museum of Indian artifacts. Several of the Cox clan participated in the Black Hawk War and their exploits will be explained. Playground equipment is near the Lodge in a beautiful setting where Chief Blackhawk once ruled and roamed.

The Quad Cities U.S.A Convention & Visitors Bureau will provide brochures for Bishop Hill and other nearby attractions. Those arriving from the west could stop at Living History Farm or many other features in Des Moines, The Amana Colonies, and The Hoover Museum in West Branch. The things to do in Chicago are limitless. As a pre or post reunion extension two day excursions from Le Claire, Iowa to Galena, Illinois on the River Boat Twilight are available at \$200.00 per person. All meals are included on board both days and overnight lodging is included at the prestigious Chestnut Mountain Lodge. Departures are scheduled at 8:30 AM on both Thursday and Tuesday. Call 1-800-331-1467 for further details and a brochure.

The Reunion officially closes following the Sunday picnic, but hopefully Ruth Anna Hicks, Christine Cox Lage, Jean Walgren and others can provide instructions to visit the various homesites, cemeteries, and court houses of interest to the genealogy buffs who often stay an extra day to gather information.

Mark you calendars! Call or write to the following if you have questions or comments. Exact costs will follow in a later news letter:

Jerry Cox, 2658-B Reed Ave. Marshalltown, Ia. 50158, Telephone 515-752-8218

The Plaza I Hotel is in downtown Rock Island at 3rd Avenue and 17th Street

COX GENEALOGY IN PREPARATION

Ruth Anna Hicks, Family Historian, and Bill Utermohlen are collaborating on the preparation of a genealogy of the descendants of John Cox and Catherine Cull. At present, Bill is typing up a first draft, incorporating all the family data Ruth Anna and her correspondents have accumulated over the last 25 years. This information covers hundreds of the descendants of John's son, Joseph Cox. Michael Cox of Centerville, Indiana has also contributed extensive information on the descendants of Joseph's brother James Cox. Much more limited information is available concerning the descendants of the other Cox siblings-- John, David, Moses, Israel and Anne--and research is underway to try to fill in such blanks.

In order to produce the best possible product, the assistance of other family members would be welcome. It would be most helpful if everyone would send updated information on their immediate families, including the date and place of births, marriages, deaths and divorces, directly to:

William J. Utermohlen
1916 Windsor Road
Alexandria, VA 22307-1105

In many cases, the information in our present files is 10 to 20 years out of date.

It would also be helpful to have short biographical summaries (space limitations are unlikely to permit more than 2 to 3 paragraphs per person) on present adult members of the family and their parents and grandparents. Those willing to prepare such sketches may want to include, to the extent significant, such information as education, occupation, places of residence, religious affiliation, military service, organizational memberships, public offices held and leisure interests.

Despite the amount of information previously collected on the descendants of Joseph Cox, there are many branches of such a large family where 20th Century information is lacking. Volunteers willing to pursue the missing branches most closely related to themselves would be gratefully accepted.

In addition to family records, it is hoped that stories relating to now-deceased family members, charts, old family letters and documents, maps and photographs can be included in the eventual book.

BLUE RIDGE FARM

This story of a visit to Blue Ridge Farm is in the nature of an apology to Jean Frankenburg Walgren. That will require a bit of explanation. Some years ago Jean and I greeted each other warmly at a Holiday party. We were asked how we knew each other so well. After we explained we were second cousins and that Jean and Bette, my wife, were garden club and sorority friends the group broke up into two smaller ones. I found myself telling of my background, Indian fighters, running gauntlets, life on the frontier, that sort of adventuresome stuff, tales my Dad had told to me. Nearby I could hear Jean telling her listeners of a great Virginia plantation, grand balls, and gracious life style. Could we be talking about the same family?! I thought then, and thought all these years, what an utter fabrication she was feeding those unsuspecting friends!

Now, about our experience at Blue Ridge Farm, the ancestral home of Sarah Lamb Epperson, wife of Richard Rue Cox, eldest son of Joseph and Mary Cox:

Bette and I had tickets to fly to Franklin, Virginia to spend Thanksgiving with our daughter, Ann Cox Correll, and her family. Because of the strike by the American Airlines flight attendants we drove instead. Our route took us through Charlottesville, Virginia. I recalled that Edna Epperson Brinkman's book, *The Story of the Epperson Family of Albemarle County, in Virginia*, gave general locations for Blue Ridge Farm as being about twenty miles southwest of the city of Charlottesville. Armed with the book, I spent a morning searching Albemarle County records to find the location and current owner of the property. It seemed of no avail. I was folding my scanty notes to leave when a gentleman across the files in another aisle asked if it was Blue Ridge Farm we were seeking. He searched his memory and gave us a name and a specific location. He explained that we were not just looking for a simple farm, but a mansion of wide renown. I felt my first pang of remorse for questioning the veracity of Jean Walgren.

The morning had passed and we had to be on our way. I copied the address in order to write to the owners indicating that we would like to stop on our return trip.

We did return a few days later. Exiting Interstate 64 at Crozet a few miles west of Charlottesville the short drive south then winding on highway 691 and Ortmann Road to the estate was in itself a pleasure. After we passed by the service gateway the mansion soon broke into view through the trees to our left. We eased the car to a stop in a large motor court and drank in the beauty and grace of what was before us. The court was softened by a circular planting edged with boxwood. Beyond rose flights of wide blue-stone steps to an open terrace and faultlessly proportioned front entrance centered in the imposing main block of the house. Though the original structure remains formal in its symmetry, asymmetric wings ramble from both ends. The effect of these wings seems to anchor the whole composition to its site in a sensitive way, clearly designed by an architect intent on maintaining the integrity of the original design. These thoughts raced through my mind as I mounted the steps and approached the door. I could see light sparkling from the chandeliers within, but could rouse no one.

With camera in hand I circled the house taking pictures along the way. A young man emerged through the boxwood and introduced himself and greeted me warmly. He was William Dittmar, owner of Blue Ridge Farm, whose family had moved into the residence just one month previously. The prior owner had received my note and called Mr. Dittmar to tell him to expect visitors. We were invited into the house, told of its history and background, and allowed to roam many rooms at will.

The original house was built by David Epperson from brick made on the site sometime after 1757. By 1782 the plantation consisted of five outer buildings and two residences. A smoke house, also made from brick of onsite clay, and an ice house built of stone and dirt mortar, weather proofed with plaster, both remain from those early years. Battered windows of one area in the cavernous basement indicate where unruly slaves were confined. Two ponds were developed, one for making ice, and one to supply fish for the kitchen. Drip irrigation was a remarkable early feature. Water was pumped from a pond into a tank concealed in a silo. Gravity then fed the lines. Many changes were made to the main house over the years and between 1923 and 1927 the wings were added at each end. The additions have mellowed over almost seventy years and blend well with the old. A landscape architect has been hired to supervise the site restoration. A consulting architect advises regarding the decoration and any work on the several structures on the compound. The owner understands that an historic treasure is where his young family resides. The Eppersons would be pleased.

Across the lane from the residence is a sweeping view of the Blue Ridge Mountains and the old ponds. Off in the distance is a small clump of trees marking a little graveyard. We walked south on the lane to the show barns and found a gate over which I could climb. My heart quickened as I approached the graveyard and climbed the rickety fence which surrounds it. David Epperson's stone marker is there, showing that he died in December, 1799. Two uncarved stones mark the grave of a grandson, Isaiah, and probably one other Epperson. Three other stones mark the graves of later owners, James and Nancy Durrett and their beloved pastor. Back across the field the sunlight flickered upon the mellow brick walls and gleaming white trim of David and Hannah Epperson's house. What great anguish the recently widowed Hannah must have felt when she departed this beautiful place to follow her family to Tennessee, then to Kentucky, from where some would wind their way through Indiana, to Illinois and beyond. When I reflect back at Jean's and my parallel descriptions of our family history I am convinced our tales of adventure on the frontier might never have happened if the likes of Hannah Epperson had not dared to strike out from her secure and gracious home toward the great unknown. Hers was truly a life of adventure and it started at Blue Ridge Farm.

Gerald B. Cox December 31, 1993

From: Omaha (Ne) World-Herald
Sunday; 5 Sept. 1993

MARRIAGES



Mr. and Mrs. England

England-Naviaux

Nicole Naviaux of Ralston and Gary England of Orlando, Fla., were married Saturday at First United Methodist Church in Omaha.

The Rev. Ken Rood performed the 7 p.m. ceremony. A reception was held at Karen's Fireside Room.

The bride graduated from the University of Kansas in Lawrence, where she was a member of Kappa Kappa Gamma Sorority and the swim team. She is employed in group sales at Westin Hotels and Resorts.

England graduated from the University of Alabama in Montgomery. He is a sales representative and designer for Boathouse Sporting Goods.

The bride is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William E. Naviaux of Ralston. The bridegroom is a son of Mr. and Mrs. Gerald England of Indianapolis.

Honor attendants were the bride's sister, Krish Naviaux Nishi of Oxnard, Calif., and the bridegroom's brother, Steve England of Indianapolis.

The newlyweds will live in Florida.

Claudia Smith of Shelbyville, Tenn has sent word of the marriage of her son, Winthrop S. Smith and Susan Leigh Clay on 26 June 1993, Shelbyville, TN.

Cay (Carol) Leitschuck Lacey to James Ecklund on 4 Sept. 1994 at her home in Lincoln, Nebraska

BIRTHS

Brandon Thomas Hastings on 27 July 1993 to Tami and Harold Hastings of Seffner, FL

Michaela Lee Bunke on 17 August 1993 to Terry and Scott Bunke of New Hope, MN

Paul McKale Arent on 1 October 1993 to Christy and Craig Arent of Lincoln, Ne

Seth Michael Hicks on 9 March 1994 to Douglas and Debra Hicks of Lincoln, Ne

Noah Robert Armfield Scott to Kim and Paul Scott, on 9 May 1994 in Adelaide, Australia. Paul is a Major and stationed near Adelaide.

The above are descendants on the John Washington Cox line

Stephanie Elsie Cox, born 8 Dec. 1993 to Art and Nancy Cox. Art is our Cox President.

A descendant of the Richard Rue Cox line.

The Pawnee Republican, Thursday, June 16, 1994

Wehrbeins celebrate 60th anniversary

Mr. and Mrs. Vernon Wehrbein celebrated their 60th Anniversary Saturday evening, June 4.

Mr. and Mrs. Boyd (Barb) Wehrbein were hosts at a supper at their home. Joining them were his parents Audrey and Vernon, Boyd's sister, Janet Griffin and her son Gilbert of McCloud, OK; grandson

Boyd Wehrbein Jr. and wife Kristine and children; Boyd III, Christopher and Jessica of Beatrice, NE and Audrey's sister Maude Sejkora of Burchard.

Vernon and Audrey Pojeet were married June 6, 1934 at Marysville, KS. They reside on Vernon's home place at rural Steinauer.

AK-SAR-BEN Countess

From: Omaha World-Herald
Sunday 14 August 1994

Rebecca Jean Tunncliff

Rebecca Jean Tunncliff, 21, is a daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joseph "Bob" Tunncliff of Clarinda, Iowa. She is a senior in education at Drake University in Des Moines.

She is a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority, the Student Senate and PEO. A fifth-generation Iowan, Miss Tunncliff has been involved with Drake's Student Activities Board and the Drake Theatre. She has been on the Dean's List.

Tunncliff is the owner and manager of Opitz Motor Co. in Clarinda. He is past president and committee chairman of the Clarinda Chamber of Commerce and is a board member of the Clarinda Community Theater. He also is a member of the Page County Conservation Commission and is a trustee and past president of the Clarinda Library Board.

Mrs. Tunncliff, the former Merrily Newton, is owner of JB Parts and Supply/NAPA Auto Parts in Clarinda. She is a past president of her PEO chapter and is a third-year officer and executive board member of the Iowa State Chapter of PEO. She is a member of the Clarinda Chamber of Commerce. She has served as chapter officer and southwest Iowa area placement coordinator for AFS Intercultural Programs, a student foreign exchange organization.

Miss Tunncliff's maternal grandfather, the late John Edward Newton of Ponca, Neb., served as a Nebraska Supreme Court judge from 1967 to 1977.

Miss Tunncliff's sister, Bonnie Johnson, was a countess in 1988.

The Oregonian

THURSDAY,
JUNE 24, 1993



Dorothy Hemphill: She's a good neighbor to Newberg

In the past 13 years, George Fox College has awarded its Good Neighbor Award just three times. The most recent winner is Newberg resident Dorothy Hemphill.

Hemphill, who points out she's only 89, has long had a hand in college affairs. When she and her late husband, F. H. Hemphill, owned a working berry farm on Chehalem Mountain, it was staffed in the summer by George Fox students. Now Hemphill lives near the college's student housing area. She has been a supporter of Newberg Community Hospital, George Fox College and her church, Newberg First United Presbyterian.

She has invested not only time but money, donating to scholarships, building construction campaigns, the hospital and the Quaker college's Center for Peace Learning.

Dorothy is 90 this month,
September 1994

I am so sorry that I have been so late in getting this done. But keep sending me clippings and information about our extended Cox family.

Send to

Ruth Anna Hicks
6703 Holdrege St
Lincoln, NE 68505