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# The Thrasher Newsletter

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Front row: Albert A. Thrasher Jr., Chere Thrasher Athey, Hershel Thrasher, Nancy Thrasher Cherry & John E. Thrasher III. Second row: Peggy Thrasher, Alice Thrasher, Dr. David R. Thrasher, Angie Grooms, Joe Grooms, Karen Thrasher. Third row: Judy Aleman, Janie Mosley, Glenda Thrasher, Eleanor Thrasher, Jim C. Moule, Vicki Mills, Connie Thrasher Jaquith. Fourth row: Bonnie Thrasher Bolin, Robert "Buddy" P. Thrasher, Juanita Thrasher, Celestea Sharp, Ken Sutherland, Andrea Ferrara. Rear: Dr. Peggy Thrasher McCulloch, Donnie McCulloch, John Paul Thrasher, Dr. Susie Thrasher, Don Athey, Bill H. Thrasher

## The Wonderful Reidsville Reunion

by John E. Thrasher III

I hate to say it, but having not been able to attend the Thrasher Family Reunion last year was perhaps a good thing for me - it made me realize how much I missed it and how much I appreciated being with those who attended this year! It was a wonderful gathering. Our hosts, Joe and Angie Grooms, had everything so well planned and prepared for our pleasure, interests and comfort. A simple "thank you" to them just doesn't seem like enough. (Joe is already considering hosting another reunion in, oh, I can't tell you yet!)

I will not try here to talk about everything that went on, as you will see that Nancy Cherry has covered it all in the Minutes, which are included in this Newsletter. However I do want to say a heart felt thanks for all who attended and for your participation - from the presentations to just plain sitting around talking, discussing Thrashers and getting acquainted with the newer attendees and members. It was a wonderful gathering and I am so sorry more of you all could not attend.

At the reunion in Athens, Georgia last year, the members of the TFA voted to invite the members of the Mid-Atlantic Family Association to merge with us. We were honored to have several members of that group with us this year! As you will see in the Minutes, Nancy, speaking on behalf of the Mid-Atlantic group, accepted the invitation. Welcome, Mid-Atlantic members of the TFA!

During the coming year the committee named in the Minutes will discuss and work out the details for dealing with membership, moneys, possible changes in the TFA bylaws and managing the Newsletters.

## The Thrasher Family Association Meeting of June 21, 2014 Reidsville, North Carolina

**Attending:** (List includes those attending the Friday and/or Saturday dinners, and/or the business meeting): Judy Aleman of Sherman, TX; Cheré Thrasher Athey and Don Athey of Cumberland, MD and Sanibel, FL; Bonnie T. Bolin of Fayetteville, GA; Nancy Cherry of Beltsville, MD; Joe and Angie Grooms of Davidson, NC; Connie Thrasher Jaquith of Louisville, KY; Peggy Thrasher McCullock and Donnie McCullock of Rossboro, NC; Janie Mosley of Rockwell, TX; James C. Moule of Berkeley, CA; Celestea Sharp of New York City; Ken Sutherland of Jacksonville, FL; Albert and Peggy Thrasher of Tiger, GA; Billy H. and Juanita Thrasher of Live Oak, FL; Buddy (Robert P.) and Glenda Thrasher of Columbus, MS; David R. and Alice Thrasher of Montgomery, AL; Hershel and Karen Thrasher of Shelbyville, TN; John E. and Eleanor Thrasher of Micanopy, FL; John Paul Thrasher of Newnan, GA; Sue Q. Thrasher of Athens, GA. Vickie Mills, a guest of Bonnie Bolin, and Bonnie's daughter, Andrea Ferrara, also attended.

**Pre-meeting Programs:** Early arrivers had enjoyed a fine meal at the Celtic Fringe pub in Reidsville on Thursday. On Friday evening, June 20, some of the group returned there while others sampled delicious barbecue at Short Sugar's. On Saturday morning, June 21, Joe and Angie led a caravan to visit the Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church in Ruffin, N.C. where the group toured the church and were welcomed by the pastor, his brother and a local historian. Some members chose to continue their exploration by visiting the Guildford Courthouse National Military Battlefield or the Museum in Danville, VA.

**Call to Order:** The annual business meeting of the Thrasher Family Association (TFA) was called to order by Chairman John E. Thrasher at 3:10 pm, on Saturday, June 21, 2014 in the Reid room of the Holiday Inn Express, 101 Expressway Drive, Reidsville, North Carolina. The room was lined with members' displays, photo albums, research notebooks, and interesting memorabilia of Thrasher families.

Host Joe Grooms welcomed the group to Reidsville. Chairman John E. also welcomed the group and thanked Joe and Angie for hosting this year's event and leading the tour to Ruffin. John E., who had been unable to attend last year's meeting, expressed appreciation to the hosts of the 2013 reunion -- John Paul Thrasher, Grady Thrasher, and Celestea Sharp -- for the planning of the reunion, including last minute changes because of rain, and the coach tour of the Thrasher family historical sites in Oconee County, Georgia. He thanked Nancy Cherry for chairing the 2013 meeting and Bill H. for the wonderful photo of the group. New members Hershel and Karen Thrasher of Shelbyville, Tennessee, were welcomed. Hershel is from the Mid-Atlantic Thrashers. John noted that two other Mid-Atlantic Thrashers, Connie Jaquith and Peggy Thrasher McCullock, had been with the group on Friday but were unable to stay for the Saturday meeting.

**Program:** The program preceding the business meeting consisted of short presentations. Al spoke of his brother Roy Conway Thrasher, now deceased, and the role he had played in national security and global history. He also spoke of his son Albert Americus Thrasher III who had been critical in a military situation that could have changed history. Billy added to Al's account of Roy's story by saying that his outfit at the University of Texas had supplied data to Roy who used it in his work, and Jim, whose work had brought him into contact with Roy, seconded Al's description of Roy's eccentricities but said that he had liked and respected the man. Roy is the person who introduced Jim to Vessie Thrasher Rainer.

Al also made a short presentation on stagecoaches and drivers. Jim Moule described how the Mid-Atlantic Thrashers spread to Tennessee. Jim showed a picture he had taken the day before from above the clouds over Mount McKinley, as he flew in a small plane on the first leg of his trip from Alaska to get to Reidsville by Friday evening.

**Minutes:** Minutes of the 2013 Thrasher Family Association's reunion, which had previously been published in the newsletter, were distributed. The minutes were approved unanimously. The Chairman thanked Peggy Thrasher for taking on the task last year of writing the minutes while the usual secretary filled in for him as Chair in his absence.

**Treasurer's Report:** Buddy distributed copies of the treasurer's report. He reported a balance of \$3260.07 in the treasury as of May 31, 2014. The report was approved, and a copy is attached. Buddy distributed membership renewal forms for the 2014-2015 year.

**Election:** John Paul moved that the current officers be retained for the coming year. David seconded, and the motion was approved unanimously.

### **Committee Reports:**

**Newsletter:** John congratulated Sue on her first few issues of the newsletter and noted that they have already built a very good working relationship. Sue asked that readers send her stories of weddings, births, graduations or other noteworthy events. She emphasized that she likes to include pictures with the stories. John also spoke of special thanks to Barbara Eger, for producing a newsletter of consistent quality during the eighteen years she served as editor.

**Directory:** John distributed directories for 2014-2015. Barbara will continue to publish the directory every other year. Everyone is reminded to send her name, address, e-mail and phone number changes.

**Website:** Susie's new website is already impressive, but she has improvements in mind. She wants to password part of it to include a Members Only section that could contain the directory. She also wants to put items such as Celestea's article on the Salem Church on the site. [thrasherfamilyassociation.wordpress.com](http://thrasherfamilyassociation.wordpress.com).

**DNA:** There are now 77 individuals participating in our DNA study – some of them for mtDNA or atDNA tests. During the past year we have enrolled two men in our Y-chromosome study: Donald Ray Thrasher and Kenneth Daniel Thrasher. Last year we had four men join the study: Harold Austin, Grady Thrasher, and Samuel M. Thrasher and John Nelson Thrasher. Nancy emphasized that although Ancestry.com is getting out of the Y-chromosome testing business and will destroy their samples and databases, our testing company FTDNA is thought to be secure.

### **Old Business:**

**Salem Church:** Celestea has sent flowers to the owner of the Judge B.E. Thrasher house as a way of saying thanks for allowing us to visit during our tour last year. She has also created a certificate designating the owner as an honorary member of the Thrasher Family Association. She would like to erect a plaque at the Salem Methodist Church, since it is the last vestige of the town of Salem. She estimates costs would begin at \$1600.

David suggested that something similar be done for the Primitive Baptist Church in Ruffin that the group visited this year. John Paul estimated that we could go through the state government and the cost would be less than \$2000. Bonnie suggested inquiring of the DAR, the UDC, or the Colonial Dames. In any case, we would want some say in the wording of the plaque – it must mention John Thrasher. Jim reminded us that we should check with the pastors or those in charge of the churches before initiating any plaque projects.

John E. encouraged those interested to collect all the data and put it in the form of written proposals, which would be published in the newsletter prior to the next TFA meeting.

John Paul stated that the cousins are more certain than ever that what Celestia identified last year is John Thrasher's property; it is likely that he is buried on it, but they do not know where.

**Tombstone Projects:** Sandi's project, to find out about the cost and placement of a tombstone for Theresa Thrasher, is still on hold. John has had a tombstone placed for Wilson L. Thrasher, CSA, in the Lakeview Cemetery in Sanford, Florida. Wilson was the major topic of the article, "My Day with Joe" which was included in the last issue of newsletter.

**Newsletters:** John E. has not completed indexing the four or five years' worth of issues of the newsletter which needs to be done before he sends the stack of issues, with their index, to the Allan County Public Library in Fort Wayne. Celestea

suggested that the newsletters and index also be placed in the University of Georgia library. There was discussion of how to get the indexing done: Bill S. Thrasher's great granddaughter Jade, who lives in San Jose and is now a member of TFA, is familiar with digital work; John E. will talk with her. John Paul suggested that we hire a commercial vendor. Jim pointed out that organizations are looking for things like this – Google or the LDS. He will follow through on this.

**Merger of TFA and Mid-Atlantic Thrasher Association (MATA):** Last year the TFA voted unanimously to invite the MATA to join them in a single association. Over the past year, MATA has been invited to comment to Nancy or Jim, and with one exception, the response has been favorable. Therefore, the MATA accepted the TFA's invitation, including the change in name to Thrasher Family Association, with the caveat that some sense of identity of MATA not be lost. There was discussion about whether MATA people would travel to the south for reunions. John E. appointed a committee -- Buddy, Susie, Nancy, Jim, and Sue Roose – to be chaired by himself, to work through merger issues such as coordination of the newsletter format, treasury, and bylaws.

## **New Business:**

**Hosting Reimbursement:** Buddy recognized that the expenses of hosting the annual TFA reunions have risen, and he made a motion that the reimbursement to the hosts be changed from the current \$200 to \$250. Peggy seconded, and the motion carried.

**DNA Scholarship Policy:** Buddy requested a clarification of the DNA "Scholarship" policy. John E., Nancy and Buddy, as TFA officers, make the determinations when a buy-down of the cost of a DNA test (a "scholarship") is requested. Buddy and Nancy believed that the policy adopted in St. Augustine some years ago, to set aside up to \$300 a year for scholarships, meant that the set-asides were cumulative – what was not spent in one year would be added to the next year's allocation. In any case, the money stays in our treasury until it is used to pay for a test.

After quite a bit of discussion David put Buddy's proposal into a motion that we supercede the policy developed in St. Augustine and instead allow up to \$1000 to be spent in the coming year for partial or full scholarships. Peggy seconded the motion, and it carried. John E. stated that except in unusual cases, the scholarships are to be used for Y-chromosome testing. He urged everyone to find new candidates for the testing. Nancy knows of one request that will be coming in for a scholarship:

**World's Smallest Airport Videos:** Judy relayed a message from Grady. He had sent a stack of DVDs of his World's Smallest Airport movie. They were available to TFA members for a contribution to the TFA.

**Tee-shirts:** Several people liked Nancy's tee-shirt which carried the message "It's a Thrasher thing – you wouldn't understand." The shirt is available online and it is now on sale for \$17.00. [www.inkpixi.com/you-wouldnt-understand](http://www.inkpixi.com/you-wouldnt-understand).

**Next year's reunion:** David Sumner's booklet on Cousin John Thrasher has been reprinted and is being handed out by the Norcross (Georgia) Chamber of Commerce to tourists. The city is working with David to facilitate arrangements for the 2015 TFA meeting in Norcross on the weekend of June 12-13. David moved to accept the arrangements in progress; his motion was seconded by Bonnie and approved by unanimous vote.

**Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church in Ruffin:** Contributions to the church should be made as individuals, just as we did for the church we visited last year. Susie will put the address in her newsletter. She commented that the people in that church have "really kept their charge." Others commented that the church seemed very Quaker-like or Shaker-like.

**Family News:** Happy Birthday today to John Paul and belated wishes to David who celebrated his birthday yesterday. Elizabeth Thrasher, widow of Roger, had hoped to attend this reunion but is having back problems. George and Gloria had also planned to attend, but Gloria is seriously ill and in hospital at this time. Jim and Mary are overwhelmed sorting out the household of Mary's late mother. Rick Davidson is still recovering from oral surgery. Hershel expressed his pleasure at finding the TFA so welcoming as a group. Joe and Joan Stine are in England. Nancy listed at least 7 couples in the TFA who have celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries: Dale and Trudy (Feb. 19, 1949), John and Eleanor (June 26, 1955), Jim and Kathryn Moule (June 22, 1957), Buddy and Glenda (June 28, 1959), Charlie and Shirley Brewer (Aug. 29, 1959), Al and Peggy (Sept 13, 1959), Billy and Juanita (July 21, 1961). John mentioned that in addition to Hershel, we've had other new members: Al and Peggy's daughter Julielynn Stuckey, William Rhodes of Atlanta, Frank Rhodes of Napa, California, and William's daughter Ivy Darnall of Atlanta, and Warren A. Thrasher, Jr., of Vienna, VA. We've also been saddened by deaths in the past year: Emmitt Thrasher of Birmingham, Roger Thrasher of Roswell, GA, and TFA founder and compiler of OUR THRASHER HERITAGE, Dorothy Sturgis Pruett.

### Wrap-up:

**Door prizes:** Door prizes were awarded to the person coming the greatest distance, attending the most reunions, the oldest and youngest members, and to the newest member. Winners included Jim Moule, Eleanor Thrasher, John E. Thrasher, Al Thrasher, Bonnie Bolin and Hershel Thrasher. Some of the door prizes were from Angie and Joe; three were from Barbara Eger, who had contributed them last year.

**Close of Meeting:** The meeting was adjourned at 5:10 pm so that the group photograph could be taken.

**Group picture:** Billy took the group picture in front of the hotel. He will create a composite photo, inserting photos of those not available at the time the group picture was taken.

**Saturday dinner:** The group reassembled at the Farmers' Table restaurant, which was open only for our party, and enjoyed a fine buffet of southern food complete with hush puppies, corn fritters, and banana pudding.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Cherry, Recording Secretary

Attachment: Treasurer's Report

THRASHER FAMILY ASSOCIATION FINANCIAL REPORT		
04/01/2013 THRU 05/31/2014		
<b>FINDS AVAILABLE TRUSTMARK NATIONAL BANK COL. MS 04/01/2013</b>		<b>\$2,927.49</b>
<b>DEPOSITS 04/01/2013 THRU 05/31/2014</b>		<b>\$1,510.00</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS AVAILABLE 04/01/2013 THRU 05/31/2014</b>		<b>\$4,437.49</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS 04/01/2013 THRU 05/31/2014</b>		
1. NEWSLETTER EXPENSE	\$669.42	
2. FAMILY TREE DNA 2 SCHOLARSHIPS	\$308.00	
3. 2013 ATHENS GA. REUNION EXPENSE (JOHN PAUL THRASHER)	\$200.00	
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES 04/01/2013 Thru 05/31/2014</b>	<b>\$1,177.42</b>	<b>\$1,177.42</b>
<b>FUNDS AVAILABLE TRUSTMARK NATIONAL BANK COL. MS 06/01/2014</b>		<b>\$3,260.07</b>
<b>"NOTE"</b>		
<b>INCLUDED IN GENERAL FUND \$300.00 FOR YEARLY DNA SCHOLARSHIPS</b>		

Robert Thrasher Treasury





## Dr. Margaret “Peggy” Pleasants Thrasher Receives Iuventus Award



The ***Iuventus Award*** is presented annually by Young Harris College in Georgia to an alumnus or alumna who has made significant contributions to the education of our youth. The Latin “Iuventus” is taken from the Young Harris College motto: *Hic Iuventus Incenditur*, meaning “Here Youth Are Inspired.” The recipient is an individual who has made exemplary efforts to enlighten youth not only through empirical knowledge, but also through the education of the whole person in the tradition of Young Harris College. Highly honored among alumni, recipients of the Iuventus Award are exemplary models of the Young Harris College experience.

This year our delightful cousin, Peggy, was presented with this coveted award by Cathy Cox, president of Young Harris College. Margaret “Peggy” Thrasher, PhD, '59, is a third generation educator. She followed in the footsteps of her parents and maternal grandparents. After graduating from Rabun County public schools, she chose to attend the same alma mater as her mother, Clyde Arrendale Pleasants English and her brother, James V. Pleasants. After completing her studies at YHC, she earned her bachelor's degree in 1961 from Oglethorpe University and her master's degree in 1975 and PhD in educational leadership from Georgia State University in 1987. Seeing students succeed has been her primary objective and reward. She served 46 years in public education – 19 in the classroom and 27 in administration. Over her distinguished career, she has been a teacher, principal, gifted education coordinator and central office administrator, mostly with Griffin-Spalding County School System. When she retired in 2008, she and her husband, Albert, moved back to her hometown of Tiger, Georgia. The couple's son, Al, is a graduate of Vanderbilt University, and their daughter, Julielynn T. Stuckey, is a graduate of Georgia Tech. Peggy and Albert have six grandchildren and are, needless to say, very active in family, college and community affairs. Congratulations cousin! The whole Thrasher clan is proud of you.

*David Sumner has volunteered to host our next Thrasher Family Reunion in Norcross, Georgia. We will have an article in each of the next few newsletters featuring a different aspect of the upcoming reunion. Below is the first installment.*

## Mayor to Speak at 2015 Reunion

By David Sumner

Bucky Johnson, mayor of Norcross, will be the keynote speaker for the 2015 Thrasher Family Reunion, which will be held June 12-13 in Norcross. The Saturday dinner where he will speak will be at “The Crossing,” a restaurant in the renovated Norcross Railroad Station. It was built in 1909 adjacent to the railroad originally built by Cousin John Thrasher in 1870.

The reunion hotel will be the Atlanta Hilton Northeast, which is two miles from historic downtown Norcross. We have a special “Thrasher rate” of \$79 per night. The Saturday afternoon business meeting and social gathering will be held in one of the hotel’s conference rooms.



This reunion has a story behind it. In June of 2013, I visited Tony Callaway, a friend in Decatur whom I had not seen since the 1970s. I told him about my research on John Thrasher, the first mayor of Norcross, and gave him a copy of the little book I wrote called *Railroad Man: John J. Thrasher and the Early Years of Atlanta*.

My friend Tony said, “Oh, one of my best friends, Bucky Johnson, is mayor of Norcross.” So I gave him another copy of the book to give to Mayor Johnson. A few weeks later, I received an e-

mail from Cate Kitchen, director of the Norcross Visitors Center. She said, “Our mayor really likes your book, and we would like to purchase 100 copies to give away at our Visitors Center.” At that point, I only had ten remaining copies and had to order an additional printing for a second edition.

In the process of e-mailing Bucky, he invited us to hold a Thrasher reunion in Norcross. So I started bouncing the idea off other Thrashers, including John E. Thrasher in Micanopy, John Paul Thrasher in Newnan, Susie Thrasher in Athens and Celestea Sharpe in New York City. Everyone thought it was a great idea. In May, I traveled to Athens on business, so I stopped off in Norcross to begin making arrangements for this reunion. I stayed at the Atlanta Hilton Northeast, which has wonderful facilities and gave us an excellent price. Although Bucky was out of town, I had a fruitful meeting with Cate Kitchen who promised hers and the city’s cooperation in making it a great event for us.

Bucky Johnson has been Mayor of Norcross since 2008. Mayor Johnson is currently the Chairman of the Metro Atlanta Mayors Association. Gwinnett Magazine named him Gwinnett County Man of the Year for 2011. A native of Atlanta, he was Director of Bands and Head of the Music Department at Georgia Tech until he retired in 2002. Bucky currently works part-time in the music ministry at Oak Grove United Methodist Church. He and his wife, Janet, own and produce the Southern Star Music Festival in Atlanta and are part owners of the Southern Star Festival of Champions in Panama City.

Here is the address of the pastor who was so hospitable to our group during the 2014 reunion for those who want to send their thanks or make a donation to the church:

***Lick Fork Primitive Baptist Church  
c/o Pastor Elder David Underwood  
2079 Grooms Road  
Reidsville, North Carolina 27320***

### **Editor's Corner**

I continue to expand our Thrasher Family Association website, and have added a PASSWORD PROTECTED Member Directory. If you would like the password, please email me and I will be happy to send it to you. I also want to add a section on *Family Stories* and *Special Places*. We are not constrained by space on the website, and I know from personal experience that Thrashers love to tell family stories. I would especially like to add the story Al told at the reunion about his brother, Roy, and his amazing contribution to ending the Cold War with "star wars missile defense." John Paul's great story about his Dad's assignment to "baby-sit" Patton during WWII would make a great addition, too.

I am also making progress on getting permission from Athens Magazine and Morris Publishing to put an abbreviated and updated version of Celestea Sharp's story about Old Salem on our website.

Thank you for sending items for the newsletter to John E. and me. I would especially like some pictures to go with stories. Please continue to share your news with your "cousins by the dozens"

by letter to: 1101 Christian Drive, Watkinsville, Georgia 30677

or by e-mail to: [drsuethrasher@gmail.com](mailto:drsuethrasher@gmail.com)

Also be sure to visit **our Thrasher Family Association** website  
at: <http://thrasherfamilyassociation.wordpress.com/>

