

# *The Thrasher Newsletter*

*CoEditors: Sue Q.Thrasher & Nancy T. Cherry Circulation: John E. Thrasher III Volume 34 No.1 February 2016*

## **It will be exciting to be in Virginia in the Spring!**



*Sweet Briar College, founded in 1901*

I hope you are as excited about the up-coming reunion in Virginia as I am. We were so close to Virginia two years ago when Joe and Angie Grooms hosted the group in Reidsville, North Carolina, just a stone's throw across the State line from where we will be in May. Joe and Angie are great hosts so we already know this reunion will be special.

The location of the reunion is perfect. Most of the Thrasher family lines that have been traced, originate in Virginia or next door in Maryland or North Carolina. To the best of my knowledge, none of the Thrasher family lines within the TFA have proven a connection with a European line. So Virginia is a major jumping off point for our family research.

Vessie Thrasher Rainer was our TFA pioneer researcher in Virginia. Her loving husband suffered through a number of research trips taking Vessie around in Virginia in the 1950s and 60s where she did amazing research by finding the earliest records of the family of John and Ruth Cloud Thrasher. This information was published in Vessie's two publications: "Thrasher-Barton Descendants of Georgia" (1977) and "Henry County, Georgia, The Mother of Counties" (1971). Most of these early findings were incorporated into Dorothy S. Pruett's "Our Thrasher Heritage" (1986).

Dr. Helen Thrasher-Long did three things: She became a member of the TFA in 2006, attended the memorable reunion in Tiger, Georgia hosted by Al and Peggy Thrasher and surprised us all with the news of her research trip with a friend to Virginia that spring and the never before known Thrasher material she located. It's this information that will help make the reunion in Amherst County, Virginia special.

John Thrasher was an early pioneer and land owner in this area of Virginia. "Thrasher's Creek" was named for him. In more recent days Thrasher Lake was created from Thrasher Creek. There is also a Thrasher Street and a Thrasher Park. Joe tells me that the early Thrasher land records will be available for viewing while we are in Amherst. There is much research yet to be done in Virginia!

The TFA's DNA project has opened a Pandora's Box of possibilities and knowledge. We know now that the Benjamin (and son Thomas/Martha Lee) Thrasher family line from Maryland, the Benjamin/Sarah White Thrasher line from Virginia and the John/Ruth Cloud Thrasher line are not related by DNA. There are several other independent Thrasher family lines that have been identified, but probably not originating in Virginia.

Here is the bright side: There is serious research going on right now in the Virginia area. Chere Thrasher Athey and Linda Jean Thrasher are hard at it working to find the missing link that exists between their families in the Virginia and West Virginia areas and how they link to the John/Ruth Thrasher line.

As I write, there is a new DNA test being run for Alvin Thrasher of Virginia. Not only is it wonderful to have another new DNA test results to look forward to, but this test is special because Alvin Thrasher is from Botetourt County, Virginia. There were lots of Thrashers there in Botetourt, and we have known little or nothing about them. Will Alvin's line link to any of the known TFA families? We can't wait to find out.

There is so much more to learn about our Thrasher roots in Virginia and else where. Why not make the reunion in May your time to further explore your Thrasher heritage?

Submitted by John E. Thrasher III of Micanopy, Florida

## **Make your Plans to attend the Reunion**



Joe and Angie Grooms have made reservations for the Thrasher Family Association Reunion for May 20 and 21, 2016 at Sweet Briar College, Amherst Virginia. They have reserved 20 rooms at the Sweet Briar Conference Center. Rates \$108 for 2 double beds or \$117 for 2 queen beds, breakfast included. Sweet Briar is about 4 miles outside of Amherst and about 10 miles from the historic Thrasher property. Conference Center phone:(434) 333-0877

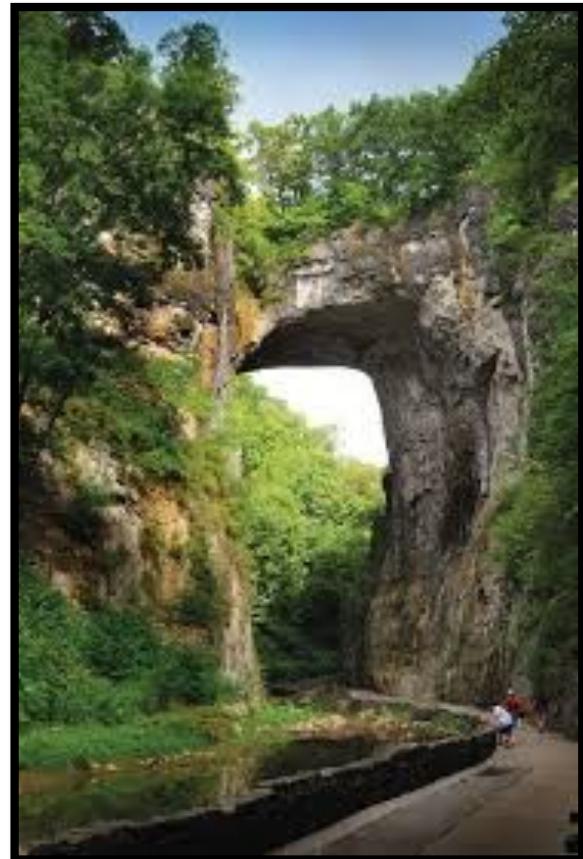
## Natural Bridge

The area around Sweet Briar College is a wonderland of interesting places to visit. Be sure to allow time for exploring when you attend this year's reunion. Southern Living magazine featured famous Natural Bridge, 35 miles from our reunion hotel, in a recent issue.

"This marvel will soon become a state park, marking the end of more than 240 years of private ownership. Thomas Jefferson bought the land from King George III of England in 1774 for 20 shillings. The stunning bridge, flanked by the Blue Ridge mountains, was immortalized by American landscape painters in the mid-1800s. This 90-foot-long expanse was formed when a cavern beneath it collapsed, leaving a 215-foot-high arch. The Monacan Indians claim that the bridge appeared as if by magic, right when they needed to escape an enemy."

My dad took us there when I was in college. It was free then. Now, visitors must purchase tickets (\$20) to view the bridge from below. U.S. Route 11 (Lee Highway) runs on top of the Bridge, but protective fences make it difficult to see anything besides the roadway.

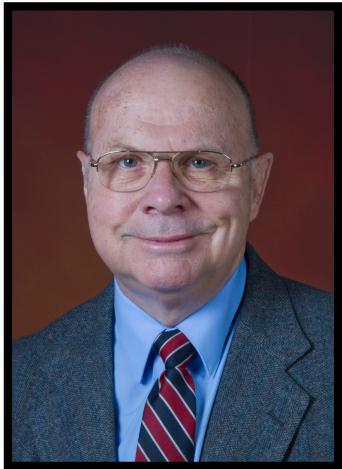
The trail under the bridge also provides access to other attractions such as a recreation of a Monacan Indian dwelling, Lace Falls and the Saltpeter Cave where gunpowder and ammunition were made for the War of 1812. Submitted by Nancy T. Cherry of Beltsville, Maryland



## DAR Award for John E!

On November 14, 2015, John E. Thrasher III was awarded the prestigious Historic Preservation Recognition award by the Gainesville Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution in ceremonies held both in Gainesville in October after John spoke to the Chapter at a dinner meeting and during the November monthly meeting of Micanopy Historical Society. Making the presentation were Dr. Janet Z. Messer, the Registrar for the Gainesville Chapter of the DAR and Carla Van Arnam of Micanopy, Florida.

## Update on The Million Dollar Fumble



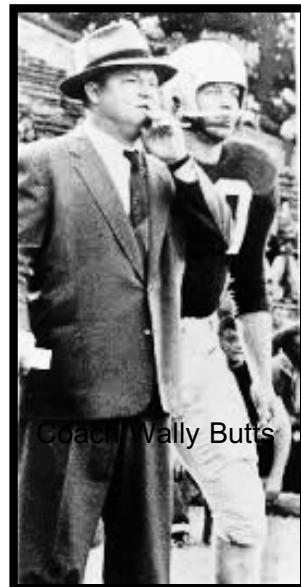
When I started writing *Million Dollar Fumble* three years ago, I wondered if anyone would read it. Was it worth my time? It seemed intriguing to me, but would anyone care about a southern football scandal that occurred more than 50 years ago? A 1962 Georgia-Alabama football game resulted in “The Story of a College Football Fix” article in the *Saturday Evening Post*, which was sued for libel by Wally Butts and Bear Bryant. The case was appealed for five years and eventually landed in the hands of the Supreme Court, which made a controversial 5-4 decision in *Curtis Publishing Company v. Butts*. In a separate case, Bear Bryant reached an out-of-court settlement.

These cases are still controversial. I was invited to participate in a panel discussion to discuss my book at the 25<sup>th</sup> annual [Georgia Bar Media and Judiciary Conference](#) in Atlanta on February 26. Another panel participant is Emmet Bondurant, a 78-year-old Atlanta attorney, who was a junior partner in the Atlanta law firm that represented Curtis Publishing Company in the 1963 libel trial.

I have submitted my book proposal to the University of Illinois Press. It recently passed the first hurdle and is currently undergoing external review. Academic publishers, such as the University of Illinois Press, send manuscripts to external reviewers, who are academic experts in the subject matter being written about. If the manuscript passes this peer review, then the author receives a contract. It usually takes another six months to go through the editing, production and printing process. Keep your fingers crossed for me. You can keep up with my progress at my sports blog: <http://footballfumble.com>

Another reason I chose University of Illinois Press is that it has the largest [sports series](#) of any university press—at least 57 books. It was recommended to me by an author friend, Albert Figone who wrote [Cheating the Spread](#). He has read and critiqued many of my chapters and given me a huge amount of encouragement.

The book is completed. I have written 17 chapters containing 89,052 words. The published book will contain about 250 pages. It contains more than 300 footnotes, which cite mostly primary sources, such as interviews, correspondence, reports, court decisions and depositions.



Writing a book is like starting a business. It doesn’t matter to me whether I make a huge amount of money, or any money for that matter. I am having a good time. I have met and talked to fascinating people, made new friends, and expect to make some more. It doesn’t feel like work.

Written by David E. Sumner of Anderson, Indiana

## Famous Thrasher's French Fries

In 1929, Mr. J. T. Thrasher, a Georgian, introduced a unique concept into the business community of Ocean City, Maryland. This creative Southerner proposed a food stand concession, which would specialize in only one product: the noble French fry. Meeting with skepticism, Mr. Thrasher, an extremely religious man, forged ahead with his fledgling enterprise.

His idea? Simply to produce the best tasting French fry ever eaten. He did. The process Thrasher originated was based upon quality ingredients, hard work, and above all attention to the perfection of each cup of fries. Thrasher found that only the highest quality potato would suffice. This meant that potatoes had to be bought from different regions for different times of the season. Only the best would do.

For labor, Mr. Thrasher relied upon a group of hard working girls from a Christian affiliated school in Georgia. These dedicated young women ran the operation for many years. Thrasher housed the girls in a dormitory above the present Bank of Ocean City.

Those who have tasted this delicacy believe that nowhere can a better fry be found! There are now three locations in Ocean City, Maryland and three in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware. If you find yourself in the neighborhood, go find out for yourself what all the fuss is about. You will not be disappointed.



### Proposed changes to the TFA Bylaws

I hope all of you have your copy of the TFA Bylaws handy. Copies were mailed to members a couple of years ago and there have been copies available at all of the recent reunions. (They can also be found on our website <https://thrasherfamilyassociation.wordpress.com/bylaws/>)

During the business meeting at the reunion last June in Norcross, the membership asked that I include suggested changes in this issue of the Thrasher Newsletter. I have not received any suggestions from the membership thus far, but have a few changes to suggest. If you have any proposed changes, please send them to Susie, our Newsletter editor as soon as possible so they may be included in the next issues.

Proposed changes to the bylaws will be discussed at the reunion in May.

My suggested changes in the printed bylaws are:

Par. 4 That a Vice Chairman be added to the list of officers. The duties of this officer should be discussed at the business meeting. My prime concern is that if the Chairman can not attend the reunion, some designated member needs to be in charge. That officer would perhaps work with organizing/hosting/planning/the next reunion in the event that no one volunteers to host.

Par. 5 Increase the amount paid to assist the hosts for the reunion from the stated amount of \$200.00 to \$300.00.

Par. 6 Add: In the absence of the Chairman, the Vice Chairman would preside at the annual meeting.

Par. 9 In the sentence that states that members are to receive a subscription to the TFA Newsletter and a copy of the biennial membership directory, replace "biennial membership directory" with "yearly membership list." John E. Thrasher III

## Welcome New Members

**Andrea Perisho**, 1509 SW 57th Terrace, Cape Coral, FL 33914-8000. Andrea is very active with the DAR in Cape Coral. Phone is: 239-945-3063 email: [a.perisho@embarqmail.com](mailto:a.perisho@embarqmail.com). Joe Grooms and her aunt share a DNA segment and Thrasher ancestors. Her family is descended from David McCollum and Mary Thrasher.

**Don & Peggy Thrasher Law**, 1200 Trailwood Drive, Watkinsville, Ga 30677. Email: [peggythrasherlaw@gmail.com](mailto:peggythrasherlaw@gmail.com). Peggy is sister to Warren Thrasher, Jr., Susie Thrasher and John Paul Thrasher. We all love having her in the TFA!

**T. G. & Ann Thompson**, 124 Dove Hill Lane, Kyle, Texas, 78640-4437. Phone: 512-295-4863 Email: [tthompson25@outlook.com](mailto:tthompson25@outlook.com)

**Terry and Glenda Thompson**, 1409 Old Tract Rd, Pflugerville, Texas, 8660 Phone: 512 496-2019, email: [mailto:tgt5153@gmail.com](mailto:mailto:tgt5153@gmail.com)

**Bonnie and Dr. Siegfried Schmidt**, 8120 SW 36the Ave., Gainesville, Florida 32608. Phone 352-335-4676. [bonnieeschmidt@aol.com](mailto:bonnieeschmidt@aol.com). Bonnie is John E. Thrasher's great niece. Bonnie is very active in DAR and just received confirmation of more collateral lines approved. She is looking forward to researching in Amherst County, Virginia.

### Editor's Corner

*Please continue to share your news and photos with your "cousins by the dozens"*  
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Be sure to visit **our Thrasher Family Association** website  
at: <http://thrasherfamilyassociation.wordpress.com/>