

The Thrasher Newsletter

CoEditors: Sue Q. Thrasher & Nancy T. Cherry Circulation: John E. Thrasher III Volume 34 No.4 November 2016



An Unexpected & Wonderful Discovery!

John E. Thrasher III

Included in the May 2014 issue of the Thrasher Newsletter was research that I had compiled furthering my research in the Benjamin/Sarah White Thrasher family genealogy. It concerned John Thrasher and his descendants whom I had decided had to be one of the sons of Benjamin & Sarah Thrasher. I was right! A note from Gwen Downey to me said: "Don't know if you have seen this post, but it sure looks like our Benjamin Thrasher family."

<http://boards.ancestry.com/surnames.thrasher/854/mb.ashx>

The message from a Laura Martineau on line says: Was given a book with names & dates dating back to Benjamin Thrasher b Oct. 8, 1740. Here is the information as I transcribed. I put a note or two in the far right column -also note some names were hard to read so help if you know better information.

This book was found at a garage sale in Georgia and was mailed to me. It looks like it was used to keep track of birth dates and a few death dates. I descend from Harriet Thrasher Thomas whose father was John Thrasher listed below. Ancestors of Harriet Elizabeth Thrasher Thomas information comes from a book of poems found at a garage sale in Georgia. "The Poetical Works of David Hitchcock" Boston published by Ethereidge & Bliss No. 12, Cornhill 1806. The book belonged to John Thrasher. Inscription: "John Thrasher book bought of William Christian on June 29, 1808." Then follows two pages, the first the list of births & deaths, then a repeat of the same list with various changes - a recopying of the list.

There are quite a number of people in the list that I have not been able to identify, but they are for sure children and family members not known to us before. Many names ARE easy to identify as the Thrashers in the several genealogical articles that have been printed in the Thrasher Newsletters, especially the issues of December 2012 & November 2014. I am going back and updating my original articles about the Benjamin/Sarah White Thrasher family. Perhaps you would like to do that too!

Never Give up

Submitted by Jim Moule

Nancy Thrasher Cherry and I are descendants of Benjamin Thrasher who died in Prince Georges County, Maryland in ca 1740. We have spent many years tracing their other descendants. Twenty years ago, we decided that the three major questions about this family were: 1) Where did Benjamin Thrasher come from? 2) Who was his wife, Mary? and 3) What happened to his youngest child, Benjamin?

Ten years ago, we found the answer to question 2. His wife was almost certainly Mary Hook, daughter of a close neighbor, James Hook. Suddenly, twenty years later, we have the answer to question 3. Youngest child Benjamin married Sarah White in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and left many descendants in the South—Alabama and Georgia in particular.

The first mention of the younger Benjamin's name is in widow Mary Thrasher's 21 March 1742 (OS) deed of gift in which she left money to each of her children, listing them in their order of birth. Each child received 7 pounds except Benjamin whose name was last. He received 10 pounds.ⁱ All gifts were to be "paid at the common age".

Mary Thrasher, widow of Benjamin Thrasher, married a second time to William Spiers of Frederick County, Maryland. William had one child, daughter Eleanor Spiers. The last mention of young Benjamin's name that has ever been found in Maryland records is in a 10 October 1763 deed in which William and Mary (Thrasher) Spiers deeded all their personal possessions to their daughter Eleanor Spiers and their son Benjamin Thrasher.ⁱⁱ

In 1763, sons of the first settlers of tidewater Maryland were moving inland to where they could buy enough property to raise a family. If young Benjamin could not be found in Maryland, maybe he could be found in Western Pennsylvania, Virginia, or farther south. I spent twenty years looking in other Colonies for records of a man named Benjamin Thrasher who might be this missing youngest son. I found a handful, but none fit for one reason or another.

One possible Benjamin was the Benjamin Thrasher who married Sarah White on 17 Oct 1785 in Pittsylvania Co., Virginia.ⁱⁱⁱ However everyone who had studied this family had evidence that this Benjamin Thrasher was born after Mary Thrasher's 1742 deed of gift. Hence, this Benjamin could not be the one I was looking for. As an example, John E. Thrasher III had published a genealogy of this Benjamin Thrasher and Sarah White beginning in the December 2012 issue of The Thrasher Newsletter. John concluded that this Benjamin was born in about 1753.

In July 2016, I received a message from John E. Thrasher III saying that he had just learned about an old book containing a handwritten list of birth dates and death dates of Benjamin Thrasher, Sarah White, and their descendants. This list was credible because many dates agreed with what John had already learned by other means. In particular, this list explicitly stated that the Benjamin Thrasher who married Sarah White was born on 8 October 1740. Thus, he could be the missing younger Benjamin Thrasher of Maryland.

So, I went through my research notes to see what more I could find on a Benjamin Thrasher in Pittsylvania Co., VA. Forty-five years ago, I visited the Genealogy Room of the Los Angeles Public Library to see what I could learn about any person named Thrasher. Among other things, I found that a 1767 list of tithables in Pittsylvania County, Virginia included “Benjamin Thrasher and negro Luck”.^{iv}

I began to think about that “negro Luck”. I only had an abstract of William and Mary Spiers’s gift of personal possessions to their children in 1763. The abstract said that the personal property included slaves, horses, cattle, and household possessions. I could not help but wonder whether those slaves included one named Luck. So, I ordered a photocopy of the original deed from the Maryland State Archives. Bingo!

10 Oct 1763 - Mary [Thrasher] Spiers and William Spiers of Frederick County, Maryland for love and affection deed to their beloved children Benjamin Thrasher and Eleanor Spiers considerable personal property, horses, cattle, and slaves to wit: “to our Daughter Eleanor one Negro Woman named Luck, one Mare named Cloe, one three year old Heifer named White Back, one Yearling Ditto named White Face”...and considerable household property. “And to our son Benjamin Thrasher We give one Negro child named Pompey, one horse named Samporo [sp?] one ditto named Grey, one horse colt named Jack” ...and the remainder of the stock and household possessions not given to Eleanor.

I do not know how Benjamin Thrasher got the negro slave named Luck who had been given by his parents to his step sister. Maybe he traded his slave and other things for her. But it is clear that the Benjamin Thrasher in Pittsylvania County, Virginia in 1767 with “negro Luck” was the youngest son of Benjamin and Mary Thrasher of Prince Georges (later Frederick) County, Maryland.

Since no record of any other person named Benjamin Thrasher has been found in Pittsylvania County in this time period, this is clearly the Benjamin Thrasher who married Sarah White. This conclusion is reinforced by the 8 October 1740 birth date for that groom, which is very compatible with what is known about the youngest son of Benjamin and Mary.

It is fitting that the Thrasher Family Association and the Mid-Atlantic Thrasher Association have merged. Many of those “Southern” Thrashers descended from Benjamin and Sarah have now turned out to be “Mid-Atlantic” Thrashers.

One thing that I have learned after nearly 50 years of genealogical research is to never give up. Somehow, something entirely unexpected will suddenly turn up to break down that brick wall that you have tried to penetrate for so many years.

^{iv} Prince Georges County, Maryland Deeds. Liber Y, Folio 626. Maryland State Archives.

¹ Frederick County Court (Land Records) book H, p. 734, 10 Oct 1763 [MSA CE108-5] Maryland State Archives.

¹ Gen. Society of Utah: *Pittsylvania County, Pennsylvania Marriage Bonds 1767-1864*.

¹ Clement, Maud C.: *History of Pittsylvania County, Virginia* (1929) p.278.

Can you Solve this Mystery?

Submitted by Bill H. Thrasher

Recently my wife, Juanita, and I were going through one of our boxes of old family photographs and found this picture. We are at a loss to identify who the adult man or the children are. The inscription on the back is:

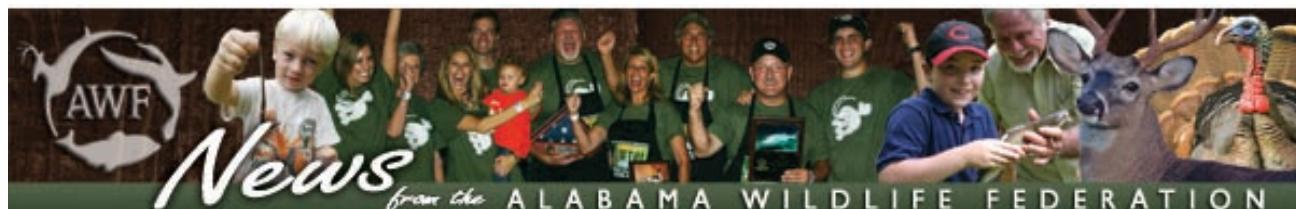
PRINT BY
BROYLES STUDIO
LAWRENCEBURG, TENN.

I consider it a great sin when we don't write the name of those in a family picture on the back of the picture!

And, while I am on this subject - DO NOT USE RELATIONSHIPS as names - like "Grandmother" or "Uncle Joe." Future generations will thank you.



I know that there are a lot of Thrashers and Watsons who have lived around Lawrenceburg, TN for several generations, so I am hopeful that at least one of our clan might recognize the man or the two children in the picture. Please let me know if you can name any (or all) of the three in the photograph. oldclockdoctor@windstream.net or 386-248-2597 (cell - yes I text)



August 2016

Congratulations to our own

Dr. David Thrasher of

Montgomery, Alabama.



He was named this year's
Alabama Wildlife Federation's
Conservationist of the Year!



Obituary for Dale Richard Thrasher

Dale Richard Thrasher, 84, of Leesburg, FL went to be with The Lord on Monday August 08, 2016. Dale was born on February 16, 1932 in Hazel Park, MI to the late James and Frances Thrasher. Dale was a proud veteran of the United States Navy. He enlisted into the Navy on April 3, 1948 and retired 20 years later on February 07, 1968 as Communication Technician Master Chief (CTMC). During his career in the United States Navy Dale served in Great Lakes, Illinois, Port Blakely, Washington, Seattle, Washington, Norfolk, Virginia, and Adak, Alaska. He was awarded the Good Conduct Medal- Fifth Award, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Navy Expeditionary Medal, China Service Medal, and the National Defense Service Medal. After Dale's career with the United States Navy he owned his own accounting firm, "DR Thrasher" for 30 years.



Dale moved to Leesburg, FL in 1998 from West Virginia. Dale was a member of the VFW, of Leesburg, FL as well as the American Legion. He and his wife, Gertrude, were active members of St. Mary of The Lakes Catholic Church, Eustis, FL. Dale was a loving husband, Father, Grandfather, and Friend who will be deeply missed by many. He is survived by his loving wife of 67 years: Gertrude Iola Thrasher, of Leesburg, FL; Sons: Arthur Thrasher, of Leesburg, FL, Dale Jr. and wife, Debbi Thrasher, of California, Clifford and wife, Patricia Thrasher, of West Virginia, and William and wife, Jennifer, Thrasher, of Ohio; Daughters: Mary Anne (Eric) Swan-Lind, of

NC, Patti (Brent) Brady, of Eustis, FL, Terrie (Charles) Widmayer, of MD, Jo (David Young) Thrasher, of NC, Pamelee (Craig) Keyser, of MD, and Christine (Jesse) Chapman, of WV; Sisters, Dolores Vigderman, of FL and Jeanne Henderson, of TX; Over thirty grandchildren and over 20 great-grandchildren; and many nieces and nephews.



A Personal Memory of Dale and Trudy

Submitted by Nancy T. Cherry

Dale and Trudy were the first people through the door when I held the first of my so-called Thrasher Roundups at the Community Center in Jefferson, Maryland in 1992. They were living In West Virginia then, and they arrived at the Roundup at least an hour early, Dale armed with several research notebooks.

My husband and I were still setting up; in fact, we had just started taping family history charts to the walls. Dale and Trudy walked in, and after brief introductions -- because I had never met or even heard of them at that point -- they were up on ladders taking over the task, so that Bill and I could focus on getting the refreshments ready. Then, and again in 2007 when the Thrasher Family Association Jubilee held its meeting in that same building, Dale and Trudy contributed a cooler of soft drinks and a lard tin full of Trudy's special rice Chex party mix. I'll always remember their sharing and willingness to pitch in to get the job done. Good people! And over the years, Dale was always generous in helping others with genealogical dilemmas.

Honoring our Thrasher Mothers

by Susie Thrasher

We have added *Honoring Our Thrasher Mothers* as a regular feature in our *Thrasher Family Newsletters* until all those who contribute one see their story published. So keep the pictures and articles coming! It's not too late.

Allie Lorraine Dodson Thrasher 1909-2010

Allie Lorraine Dodson was married to Albert Americus Thrasher, Sr., the brother of Vessie Mae Thrasher Rainer. She was a loving mother, marvelous cook, caring hostess, and hardworking southern Christian lady. We are so privileged to honor her.



Children:

Carmie Larue Thrasher Cochrane (1933-2004), husband
John Arthur Cochrane

Albert A Thrasher, Jr. (1938-), wife, Margaret "Peggy" Pleasants

Roy Conway Thrasher (1940-19), wife, Lorraine Martin

Grandchildren:

John Arthur Cochrane, Jr. (1961-), wife Anna

Albert Americus Thrasher, III (1961-), wife, Laura Bradley

Julielynn Thrasher Stuckey (1963-), husband, Stephen

Allie Lorraine Thrasher (1984-)

Cathy Thrasher (1986-)

Great Grandchildren: Sonja Anne Thrasher (1996-), Connor Miles Thrasher (1999-), John Arthur Cochrane, III , Amanda, Cochrane, Henry Adair Stuckey (2009-), & Tessa Florence Stuckey (2009-).

- Submitted by Peggy and Al Thrasher

Thrasher Wordsearch

C	A	T	N	A	H	C	R	E	M	L
B	O	H	A	F	N	I	B	K	L	A
B	I	U	A	A	B	D	J	U	V	N
W	B	D	S	M	E	A	U	N	T	D
R	E	N	N	I	D	F	B	H	C	G
X	L	J	Y	L	N	G	C	C	C	R
Q	L	Z	H	Y	A	J	N	R	M	A
A	F	E	D	R	S	D	O	U	D	N
T	H	R	A	S	H	E	R	H	A	T
L	K	E	E	S	G	U	C	C	N	N
A	U	N	G	U	R	N	R	M	C	T
N	S	R	E	S	U	C	O	E	E	O
T	F	J	N	N	F	L	S	L	S	U
A	L	M	E	E	F	E	S	A	T	Y
V	M	W	A	C	I	P	N	S	R	H
G	T	P	L	X	N	Q	L	W	Y	C
D	O	R	O	T	H	Y	S	O	E	R
X	H	U	G	N	K	U	X	L	Z	A
T	F	E	Y	I	O	P	B	Z	V	E
U	G	T	H	T	S	I	Q	Q	P	S
I	V	T	O	M	B	S	T	O	N	E
K	T	H	R	A	S	H	E	R	W	R
Y	H	Y	A	Z	B	R	J	R	S	C
F	R	E	N	C	H	F	R	I	E	S
R	A	I	L	R	O	A	D	M	A	N
L	S	L	I	C	K	F	O	R	K	O
D	H	M	E	F	J	N	Q	L	S	R
R	E	L	A	T	I	V	E	S	D	P
G	R	O	Y	R	E	T	E	M	E	C
A	V	O	N	A	N	O	B	S	E	M
U	I	W	P	A	X	T	K	Z	D	N
H	L	A	N	D	G	R	A	N	T	Y
V	L	T	H	E	D	O	Z	E	N	S
I	E	Y	B	S	N	I	S	U	O	C

Word List:

Ancestry	CousinsBy TheDozens	LandGrant	Ruffin	CousinJohn
Atlanta	Deeds	LickFork	SalemChurch	Census
Aunt	DinnerBell	Merchant	Thrasher (2)	FrenchFries
Bible	DNA	Norcross	Thrasherville	Research
BonaNova	DorothyS Pruett	RailroadMan	Tombstone	Genealogy
Cemetery	Family	Relatives	Uncle	



-Nancy T. Cherry & Susie Thrasher

The Thrasher Family Association proudly salutes Virginia (Ginny) Thrasher, winner of the first gold medal awarded at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Her 10-meter air rifle competition on August 6, 2016 was the first event of the Rio Olympics. Because of this, Ginny skipped the Opening Ceremonies and went to bed early to be ready for the early-morning event. Ginny opened the Rio Olympic finals with a bull's-eye that yielded a perfect score of 10.9, setting a high bar the rest of the field could not overcome. She would have loved to participate in the closing ceremonies but couldn't because she needed to be back in the U.S. to begin classes for her sophomore year at West Virginia University on August 17. Ginny is a biomedical engineering major there.

Ginny got home 20 hours before her first class. She carried her gold medal home in her carry-on, relishing the fact that she had finished above 50 other competitors, including the defending Olympic champion from China, another medal winner from China, and the top-ranked shooter in the world from Serbia.

Her trip home included some bad food at an airport restaurant which led to food poisoning. To add to her troubles, her plane departed late, causing her to miss a connection. By the time her red-eye landed in Washington, DC, and she drove to the university in Morgantown, WV, she was feeling better, but when her WVU teammates held a celebration for her, she still couldn't eat.

ESPN followed her around on her first day of classes, beginning with an 8:30 am Physics class and then on to Differential Equations and Intro to Electrical Engineering. That first 12-hour day, with ESPN filming, included classes, interviews and photo shoots (each with wardrobe changes).

Ginny calls WVU her "comfort zone" where she can get back to normalcy and routine, but her life is unlike that of other students. Her strict student-athlete schedule calls for class from 8 to 1 pm, then training with her rifle teammates from 1 to 5 pm. It means exercising every day, eating dinner with her team, and trying to save enough energy for homework before going to bed at 10 pm sharp. Somewhere in all this, she fits in public appearances and TV shows.

She calls herself the "girl from everywhere," because she was born in upstate New York but moved around the country nine times before her ninth grade because her father was serving in the US Airforce. She dreamed of competing in the Olympics when she was a youngster – as a figure skater. But by ninth grade, when her family moved to Springfield, Virginia, she realized

that she probably wasn't Olympic skater material. Ginny didn't fire her first gun until four years ago after begging her grandfather to take her hunting. She went through gun-safety training, learned to shoot from her father, and then wowed her father, grandfather and brothers when she bagged a white-tailed deer with her first shot; she was hooked.

The rush of adrenaline she felt led her to switch sports. Skating became a hobby and stress-reliever, and she joined the air rifle team at her high school in Virginia. She quickly rose to the top and became a three-year team captain and four-time team MVP as well as capturing the 2015 Virginia air rifle state championship. She also won five medals at the 2015 USA Shooting national championships to earn a spot on the US National Team and third-place at the 2014 Junior Olympic championships. In addition, she was a member of the National Honor Society. After being recruited by West Virginia University, she became the first college freshman to win both NCAA rifle titles in small-bore and air rifle. She led the WVU Mountaineers to an unprecedented 18th national rifle championship and their fourth in a row. That was in March 2016, and three weeks later she qualified for the Olympics by winning the Trials at Fort Benning, GA. Ginny Thrasher isn't slowing down anytime soon. She plans to continue shooting at WVU for the next 3 years and to make the Olympic team again in 2020 in Tokyo.

The president of West Virginia University believes that Ginny represents what it means to be a student-athlete. "She's one of the most poised and committed students I've ever met," he said. "I think she's what student-athletes are all about. But she also loves what she does. She loves her sport and represents it, obviously, to the highest level." Her coach finds her incredibly coachable and willing to listen and try new things. He praises her dedication, drive, and motivation.

This shows in her academic life: She is on the President's List, Dean's List, and other honors. She is already a pro at public speaking. She answers questions in a thoughtful and gracious but not rehearsed way, as though it would never occur to her to be sarcastic or insincere. "Standing on that podium, hearing the national anthem and watching our red, white and blue flag be raised was just an amazing moment," she said. "To know that your state, all the states, and the entire country are behind you in that moment is very gratifying."

Ginny's Genealogy: Ginny is the daughter of Roger and Valerie Thrasher. Roger is a retired Colonel in the US Air Force. (The line is: Roger¹⁰, LeRoy⁹, Dean⁸, Loyd⁷, Lawrence⁶, Josiah⁵, Sally⁴, Josiah³, John², Benjamin¹)

Ginny's grandparents are Roy and Carolyn Thrasher. Roy is retired from the airline industry, and he and Carolyn have lived in Frederick County, Virginia, since 1999. When they learned that other Thrashers were interested in their genealogy, the family shared their extensive compilation, much of it done by Roy's sister Julie Thrasher Lenzi. They were delighted to find that Julie's work dovetailed with Jim Moule's compilation and confirmed that they were of the Mid-Atlantic clan. Julie has, among her files, a query letter written by Thomas E. Thrasher of Jefferson, MD in 1984.

My Great Grandmother's Hands

By Elizabeth Darnall

Mattie Lee Thrasher Rhodes was born June 19, 1899 in Quitman, GA. My 102 year-old great-grandmother is an amazing woman. Even now in her nursing home, Christian City in Union City, GA, she still tells stories of her gardens on Maxwell Drive and John Calvin Avenue in Atlanta. She can recall stories from her life fifty years ago. Matt remembers who I, one of her twelve great-grandchildren, am whenever I go to visit.

When I went to visit her last November with my mother, she grabbed my mom's hands and held them in hers. I looked at those hands, all thin, frail and practically transparent. You could identify large purple and blue veins. Her skin stretched tight across those enlarged veins and prominent bones. It was altogether quite disgusting. Then it changed.



“These hands have done so much” Matt said as she gazed into my mother’s eyes. My mom seemed to just brush away the comment by responding with a “Yes, they have”. I, on the other hand, began to reflect on what Matt had said.

Those hands have swung to the music on a dance floor during the Roaring Twenties, scrounged to feed a family through the Depression, sold Men’s shirts at Rich’s – entering the workforce along with countless other women, and turned the dial of the television to watch the Apollo 11 moon landing. Her hands survived into a new millennium. Matt’s hands have unplugged countless electrical appliances, only to replace them with a newer, more developed model, switched from turning a wringer washer to throwing clothes into a washing machine. She crocheted blankets while listening to the early radios and clapped to the excitement of finally getting a color television in her house. Those hands have lasted through many wars around the world, sending a husband off in WWI, sons off to serve in WWII and The Korean War. In the South they witnessed a Civil Rights Revolution, and since she moved to Atlanta in 1922, they have labored as the ‘town’ grew into a metropolis.

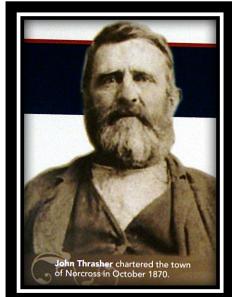
Those warm, soft hands loved the same man for seventy years, only to be separated in nursing homes, and finally left to grasp his casket with one hand and weep into a handkerchief with the other hand. Those worn hands have raised six children and buried only one of them. They've prepared meals, ironed shirts, vacuumed, dusted, washed dishes, comforted sick children and grandchildren, suffered from bouts of poison ivy and eczema. Matt's hands used to set up the record player to play "This Old House" sung by Rosemary Clooney over and over for wild dancing when her grandchildren came to visit. Every Sunday, they dressed her children and made sure they went to church. My great-grandmother's hands have prayed to God every day.

Those thin, frail hands miss working in the yard. Not one visit goes by when Matt doesn't mention her past gardens. She talks of her zinnias, cherry tomatoes, cucumbers, green peppers, and her favorite – Shasta Daisies. Then she asks us about planting we've done in our garden. My mother tells of Matt's Black Eyed Susans that grew in her backyard and how every time she visited as a child, Matt would place in her small hands a coffee can of water filled with bunches of flowers to take home and put in her room.

Those hands now sit on her lap in her bed down in Christian City, waiting to pick up the phone, open a letter, and most especially, to wrap around her family with a welcoming hug. When once my great-grandmother's hands could provide for her family, they must now wait patiently for someone else's hands to do the providing. They can no longer carry a platter of country fried steak to and from the kitchen or even brush her own hair. Today her hands serve as a reminder of her immense life lived through parts of three centuries.

With her 102nd Birthday last summer, I was once again reminded of the four generations those two hands have helped and loved. For Matt, each wrinkle was created by some hardship, every freckle tells of a happy time, the veins show each strain in life, every smooth, rose pink painted fingernail her southern generosity, and the taut skin of a life of work. I realized how much of one's life can be told through their hands. Your hands reflect your whole life.

Cousin John says, "It's never too late to renew"



Dues are collected at the annual reunions each year. Those of you who weren't able to attend the reunion this year or haven't renewed yet, please make your \$20 membership fee check to the *Thrasher Family Association* and mail it to Treasurer, Robert P. "Buddy" Thrasher at: 1047 Old McCrary Road, Columbus, MS 39702

Reminder to save the dates: May 5th, 6th and 7th 2017 will be the next Thrasher Family Reunion in Montgomery, Alabama

Thrashers Compete!



The Bedford County Dinos went undefeated at the Tennessee Senior Games and brought home another Gold. For the fourth time, the Dinos are qualified to compete in the National Senior Games, which will be in Birmingham in June 2017. Karen Thrasher (wife of Hershel) is #15, standing in the back row, second from the left. Congratulations Dinos!

Welcome New Members

Tom & Judy Smith, 75 Stagg Trace, Social Circle, GA 30025, Phone: (770) 784-1523
jannsmith@aol.com

Please continue to share your news and photos with your “cousins by the dozens”

Susie Q. Thrasher: 1101 Christian Drive, Watkinsville, GA 30677 or by email:
drsuethrasher@gmail.com

Nancy T. Cherry: 3100 Elkridge Court, Beltsville, MD 20705-3239 or email:
NancyTC@aol.com

John E. Thrasher: 6424 SE 169th Avenue, Micanopy, FL 32667 or email:
fish_jet@bellsouth.net