

Doris Alford Vetri AAFA #0303

Doris is one of the main pillars of the Association. Almost from the time she learned of the association she has been actively involved. Not long after she joined she agreed to serve as treasurer and now hers is probably the best known name in the Association. Everybody sends their money to Doris. Beyond that she has helped by preparing Alford memorabilia items for prizes or for sale in the "AAFA store," she is one of two members who do practically all of the computer input of census data. She has also done census extraction and prepared word puzzles for publication in the quarterly. She does a variety of data input jobs such as the obituary index used on the AAFA web site. She is a key element of the meetings registration team and is an active member of the editing committee that prepares this publication. She and husband, Sebastian "Buzz," have been present at most of the meetings since 1990.

January 13, 1935 the fourth child of James Luther Alford and Frieda K Holzmuller, a daughter Doris Orlean Alford was born on the outskirts of Philadelphia, PA. My mother told the story of a blizzard after my birth forcing my father to walk to work because no transportation was running. Dad was a Philadelphia Fireman and had to get to work. Well that was enough to make us move closer to his fire station. I would spend the next 11 years in the Olney section of the city.

My birth was right after the "depression" and President Franklin D Roosevelt had the responsibility of getting ½ million people off welfare. Bread was 8 cents a loaf, a gallon of milk 47 cents, a new car \$580 and you could buy gas for 11 cents. But lets not forget you only earned \$1500 a year. My family was not effected too badly by the depression. As a fireman there was a certain job security and the local corner grocery store would allow you credit knowing that the city would eventually pay their employees. I am sure it did leave a lasting reminder on us all and made us a frugal generation. I remember my years in the city as happy and carefree. We played street games such as hopscotch, kick the can, jump rope and hide and seek. We were given pennies to go to the corner candy store, where a penny bought a lot of candy. This was a trip repeated ever day. Every Saturday we would go to the matinee. I do not feel I was deprived in any way.

1946 brought a dramatic change to this family – Dad retired from the fire department and decided we were to move to the country. How in the world my Dad found Trumbauersville, Bucks County, PA., is a mystery to this day. My oldest brother (14 years older) James Arthur was home from WW II and married. It was with his GI loan that the double home with 10 acres was bought. My older sister (13 years older) Thelma Frieda moved along with us even though she had a job at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. My brother Walter Richard (he is 3 yrs older) and I were excited to be moving to the

country. It was an adventure for us. Mom was not happy about the move. She was a city girl since her arrival from Germany at the age of 2.

Dad did work for Sears in Bethlehem, PA . We had chickens, pigs, and a calf. My job was to get the eggs and that wasn't bad unless there was a rooster hanging around. Walt's job was chasing after the pigs when they would get loose. Walt being the oldest had more jobs than I.

Our school was not a one-room schoolhouse but a four- room school. Actually it was a very large brick building. I fit right in with my pigtailed. I had pigtailed till I was about 12 or 13 and persuaded my mother to allow me to get a perm. Well I came home from the hairdresser in tears. I was one frizzy mess. I graduated from Trumbauersville Public School after 8 grades with As and Bs (if my memory serves me right). These grades were a result of much studying and hard work. One year I won an award for an essay from the Borough Council. The essay was on "How to Improve Our Town" Life back than was so much simpler. I was to earn my high school diploma from Quakertown High School, Quakertown, PA. I took what was called the commercial course (typing, bookkeeping, shorthand and all around office skills). Bookkeeping was my favorite. I disliked shorthand and never did get the hang of it (I wonder with all the electronics, if they still teach it.) After the death of Dad when I was 14, I would take a job after school helping the bookkeeper. At that time we had bookkeeping machine or manual writing. My love of bookkeeping started then and has carried me to this day.

Graduation was June 1953 after a 3-day class trip to Washington, DC (big stuff to us kids). College never entered my mind then as I am sure Mom would not have had the money. Social Security gave Mom \$35 a month to feed and clothe me and she had to account for ever penny to the government. After graduation I married my first husband and had my first child Kathie Emma

Kemmerer to be followed by Brenda Orleans 1957, Jill Sandra 1960 and finally Scott Douglas 1962. We lived in Allentown, PA the first 4 years and 6 years on a farm in Breingsville, PA (west of Allentown). I worked part time most of my married life usually in an office doing some type of bookkeeping, but once as a shoe clerk in a department store. Those years were filled with hard times and good times, never with much money but somehow we managed. Mom was a constant source of help and guidance. What would we do without our Mothers.

We sold the farm and moved back to Bucks County. The family was growing leaps and bounds. We had the normal ups and downs that come with raising children. Kathie, Jill, and Scott would eventually graduate from my old school Quakertown High School. Brenda would get her GED and take some extra college courses. Kathie would take college courses also. Jill graduated Cum Laude from Cedar Crest College, Allentown, PA. BS in Accounting.

Years passed with good and bad times and by 1982 all the children had left the nest. I have had several jobs but my final job was with a Chevrolet dealer. This was my best job and perhaps the most educational. GM brought computers into my life. You can never learn enough and they keep changing these computers and confusing me to this day.

In 1986 I married Sebastian (you all know him as Buzz) Vetri and we retired. That was the plan. Buzz found that was not to his liking and was soon back on the job with the furniture manufacturer he had been working with before. Not me though. I know a good thing when I see it. It did take me a while to get adjusted. Here I was with all the time in the world to do the things you never had time for when raising a family. I took up watercolor painting, exercise classes, toured museums in Philadelphia, cross stitching, reading, crafts, tennis, bowling (I bowled my best game just recently of 212 and a 519 for a series of 3 – bowlers

know that's not bad), and traveling. We have been to many parts of the USA and I never get tired of it. Badlands, SD is my favorite spot to look out across the region of what I call sand castles and just marvel at what God had created.

In 1994 we were on the move again. Buzz finally said he would retire and we made the move to New Jersey to live in an Adult Community. This we believe (for now anyway) will be our last move.

Around 1987 a cousin from Texas, Peggy Schuster, wrote me about my ancestors and that was the start of researching our family. I wrote to many cousins in Texas and did get some information but Peggy has been the biggest source. She was the one who told me about



Doris Alford 1949

AAFA. I did join and the first meeting I attended was 1990 Raleigh, NC. I was so impressed with Gil and the association, I was hooked. Jackson, MS was 1991 and after hearing the pleading for a bookkeeper, I wrote to Gil to volunteer my service. That was one happy man. Gil didn't like handling the money and wanted that responsibility off his shoulders. I had acquired a computer to help store my research and write letters to cousins, so now I was able to put it to greater

use. Over the years I have seen AAFA grow and expand a great deal. It has been wonderful working the meetings and getting to meet some of the members. I have tried to assist as much as my simple brain is capable of doing.

As you have read this account of my life, you see before you a simple life. A mother, housewife, bookkeeper, companion and helpmate. I wrote this so others would come forward with their story. Most of us are not brilliant scholars but ordinary people with ordinary lives, who have lived a full and productive life. My life has been blessed with 4 children, 7 grandchildren and 1 great granddaughter. A husband who is my friend and companion. What more could I ask for except to perhaps have 50 more years.