

2010 New Orleans, Louisiana Meeting Report

Submitted by Ramona Alford Darden, AAFA #0715, Member AAFA Hall of Fame

The Alford Family Reunion 2010 was held in New Orleans at the Radisson Hotel Airport. As it turned out, we did have a nice group of 53 who attended the gathering. They came from across the country IL, NJ, DC, GA, FL, MS, TN, TX, CO and through out our host state of Louisiana.

On Friday morning, Lynn Shelley, AAFA Research Chair, welcomed those in attendance and introduced the officers and project officers that were present. She mentioned it was in 2004 we had met in Baton Rouge, Louisiana and not a lot of information had been added to the AAFA database on Louisiana Alford's as a whole but that a lot of individual information such as death records, obituaries, and cemetery data has been brought up to date as much as possible. She then gave a short history of the Republic of Spanish West Florida, the part of Louisiana north of Lake Pontchartrain that was not part of the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. This year, September 23 was the Bicentennial of the Republic because it was on that date in 1810 that the fort in Baton Rouge was taken from the Spanish officials. Only that part of Louisiana that was a part of Spanish West Florida celebrated this bicentennial because most of the rest of the area (which included parts of Mississippi and Alabama) was never under the control of the Americans until it was ceded to the State later on. This was a very short-lived republic because by Dec. 1810, the area had become part of Louisiana, which became a state in 1812.



Later in the morning, Lynn used her ancestor Isham Alford to illustrate how you can make a chronological time line for your ancestor to see where and when you need to fill in the blanks in your research information. A person is much more than just a birth, marriage and death. National and local events can be added to the time line that may have affected your ancestor. Using different colors for different kinds of records (land, births of children, etc.) can also help give a more complete picture.

In the afternoon, Lynn showed some of the web sites which have Louisiana Death Records, including the LA Secretary of State's website, ANCESTRY, and the pilot site of FamilySearch.org. These only go into the late 1950's at this time because of the Privacy Act and unlike those in TX, LA death certificate images are not yet available.

Lynn Shelley gave a talk on using time-lines in research of our ancestors.

John Smith discussed the alfordassociation.org website

showing how to find all the information it offers. Many were surprised at just how much information was on the site. John explained it was a house with many rooms and you are going from room to room for information. The website may be intimidating to some folks at first, but can be a friendly place after a few visits. John Smith's concern is that many AAFA members don't even go there. John will be available to answer questions about Internet navigation through out the rest of the meeting. If anyone you know needs help, they may contact him at janiceandjohnsmith@verizon.net.

John's second presentation was the DNA Alford Project report. Our group now has 67 who have been DNA tested. DNA connects many of the lines not previously connected by paper. This provides researchers with many new directions in which to point their searches in order to find the paper trail that will connect these lines.

It also stresses the importance of having as many markers tested as one can afford. You may upgrade your tests to the next marker level (for a fee of course). They can use the same swab for the additional testing as was first submitted.

There may not be just one answer but a combination of several, i.e. a renewed effort at finding a traditional genealogical paper trail for those in Alford Lineage I.

Something to think about! Some lines have gotten together and have pooled money to have a family member DNA tested. Also, Family Tree DNA has sales from time to time with significant savings on upgrades as well as first time testing. Max Alford is the AAFA chair of this project and can be contacted at mralford@swbell.net for information on how to get started. This does not hurt; it is only a cheek swab, no finger prick.

To answer some of the questions you might have on DNA testing, here is some information from Max Alford, DNA Project Chair:

I am not sure what the federal or state laws say about the sharing of DNA information. Family Tree DNA does seem to go to great lengths to see that your information is protected. They only test the DNA that contains your genealogy information. When results are posted, only your kit number, your GAP (Group Administration Page) number, and your ultimate ancestor (if one is provided) or your surname are displayed with the results. The Surname Group project administrator who happens to be Max Alford for the Alford Surname Group assigns the GAP Number. As project administrator, Max assigns the GAP project numbers and he is able to log in and see your profile. Other than Max (and a co-project administrator if he is ever lucky enough to have one), no one can log in and view any of your profile information.

In order to have Family Tree DNA search and identify matches to your DNA and notify those matches of the match, you are required to sign a release from which consists of the following:

"I give permission to Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) to make my information available to a genetic match.

This will be done according to guidelines set forth in the section entitled "Legal" on the <http://www.familytreedna.com/privacy-policy.aspx> web page that I have read and understand.

If another party's genetic DNA is a relevant match to my DNA, I want FTDNA to release to them my email address or my mailing address if the email address is not supplied.

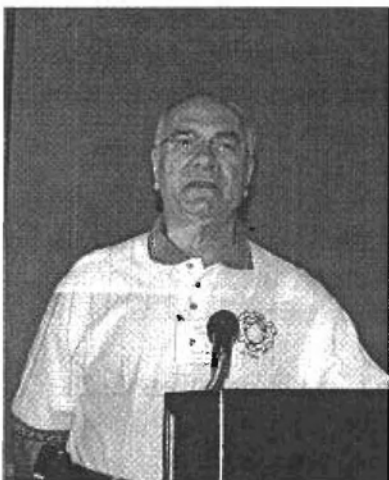
Unless I sign this Release Form, my personal information will not be shared with anyone who may match my DNA markers in any form, now or in the future.

In the event I sign this document, I understand that FTDNA will share only my email address with another person who shares my personal family genetic marker, and I hold FTDNA harmless for all consequences of sharing this information with that other individual(s).

Below is what Family Tree DNA says about health issues and insurance companies:

Will health aspects be analyzed or will insurance companies have access to any information?

The DNA samples collected will be analyzed purely for anthropological and genealogical data; no medically relevant data will be collected or analyzed, nor will the DNA be shared with insurance companies. The tests do not tell us anything about your health or about health problems you or your family may have. In addition, for those who live in the US, in 2008 the Congress approved legislation that was signed by the President, preventing insurance companies from using DNA information to deny insurance coverage (the GINA ACT).



I realize this is rather long winded and may not have even come close to answering your questions. If you have any specific questions about the DNA testing process, please send your questions to the About_Alford's group or directly to me at mralford@swbell.net.

To end the afternoon, a discussion of AAFA research, the need for volunteers and a survey of attendees to determine what they would like to see at these sessions were conducted. Nothing major was determined but those in attendance were encouraged to think about presentations they might be able to make and/or preparation of Power Point presentations that could be presented without the preparer being present.

President Earl Alford presided over the business meeting on Saturday morning.

Our Friday evening meal was a get-to-know-you dinner. After eating we had each person get up and tell something about themselves, and/or something about why they are attending the Reunion. Most are enjoying the fellowship and the getting to know each other!

Saturday began the Alford business meeting with the slate of directors presented as follows: Vesta Bowden, Walt Smith, Frieda Shepherd Peachey, and Robert Alford (who is replacing Doris Vetri). They were introduced and as no further nominations were made from the floor, those in attendance approved the slate. The board met and the introduced the following officers as follows: Emmett Earl Alford - President, Walt Smith - Vice Pres., Evelyn Mistich - Secretary, and Robert Alford - Treasurer. After many years as Treasurer, Doris Vetri is ready to step down as Treasurer and Robert Alford was elected to take her place. He has been assisting Doris over the past year; so it should be a very smooth transition for AAFA. We should all give Doris a big thanks for her service as Treasurer for the past 18 years. Those of us who have been on the board working with Doris through the years appreciate all her time given to AAFA.

Doris is not leaving the organization; she is just stepping aside from treasurer's duties.

Committee reports were given as follows:

Evelyn Mistich read minutes of the 2009 meeting in Dallas and a motion to approve was made and seconded and the motion carried. Doris Vetri gave the Treasurer's Report with a motion made to accept and seconded, and the motion carried.

Janice Smith gave the Wills and Photos Report as follows: There were two Will Books in the research room containing copies of 86 wills. In some cases, there are handwritten copies, and for those who want transcribed copies, they are also available. If the will is more recent, there is a typed copy. There are copies of most of these wills on the AAFA website. There were probate packages for Jacob Alford born 1781 in North Carolina and George Washington Alford from the branch of John Alford born 1801 in North Carolina. Peggy Schuster supplied both of those.

Photography Committee Report:

There are a total of 2,609 photos that have been logged and indexed in a dbase file. Ninety-one of those have been added since last years meeting. There are twelve books of meeting photos, and nine large books of photos that are mainly of people from the Ancestor Photo Collection, and three Cemetery Books. The ancestor photo books are arranged by families and the different Alford branches with family information showing the connections within the branches.

The Committee has supplied Jim and Sue Adams, AAFA Quarterly editors, with photos for the quarterlies, Earline Alford for the Memorial albums and to Pam Thompson for use on the website and to Ramona Darden for the AAFA Hall of Fame books, and photos for the Member Memorial Service annually.

The "originals" or a good copy of the ancestor photos that are submitted, as well as the negatives of the photos taken at the earlier meetings and CD's of the more recent meetings are kept in three safety deposit boxes.

Lastly, Ramona Darden asked for recommendations for meeting locations for next year. Just before Evelyn left for this year's meeting, she received an email from Gil Alford stating that if the 2011 meeting could be held in St. Louis, he would do his best to attend. He ask that she share this information with those in attendance at this year's meeting. With that said, there were no other suggestions made. Everyone wants to see the remaining AAFA founder attend another meeting. The membership voted unanimously to hold the 2011 Alford Family Reunion in St. Louis, Missouri. Gil is working on some suggestions for changes to AAFA and wants to present it to the attendees at the 2011 meeting. Look forward to him sending out more information as it develops in the near future. This concluded the business meeting.

After lunch we began the Alford Family Forum with the following genealogy lines represented:

EDW792NC-Edwin B. Alford 1792 NC given by Deloris Alford Bitting



Doris Vetri gave the treasurer's report.

WIL804VA-William Alford 1804 VA given by Emmett Earl Alford
 JOH801NC-John Alford 1801 NC given by Peggy Alford Schuster
 GEO850SC-George Alford 1850SC given by Beverly Alford
 WIL855VA-William Alford 1774 VA given by Ramona Alford Darden

This concluded the Alford Family Forum. We all retired to our rooms for a quick R & R before dinner.

The evening Buffet Dinner began at 6:30 pm. After dinner the program began with the Memorial Service remembering those members who passed away during the past year or those whose passing was made known to AAFA during the past year. There were twenty-five members who were honored.

Awards were made to those in attendance in the following categories:

Largest family group attending – The Ellard Family with 10 family members present.

Longest distance traveled by a member – Doris Vetri from New Jersey.

Closest distance traveled – Lindsi Godfrey lives about 4 miles from the hotel, she is granddaughter of Evelyn Mistich.

Youngest child - Nikola Tesia Alford, 11-month-old grandson of Earl Alford.

The most senior member in attendance - Jerry Alford at age 88 years young. Jerry did tell us she is planning on being in St. Louis next year.

I should also mention Mac Alford's mother-in-law attended the Saturday banquet; she is visiting from Belgrade, Serbia.

The drawings for Raffle prizes were made and we appreciate those members who donated the prizes. Members donate all prizes for the raffle. Many members have donated prizes for several years; among them is Norma Idom who won her own prize but donated it back with a request for it to be auctioned off. The basket of wine and cheese went for \$55.00 to Anne Alford Flippin. This proved to be well received by those in attendance, as it was a lot of fun.



Anne Alford Flippin, on the left, was the winner of the wine and cheese basket that Evelyn Mistich is holding.



Jerry Alford was the winner of the free room-night at the hotel. Ramona Darden made the presentation.

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The genealogy workshop was held on Sunday morning with books and documents available for research purposes. There was also individual help on the computer dealing with genealogical research. Some just stopped to say their good-byes.

Those in attendance were as follows:

ASN	FNAME	LNAME	CITY	ST	FAMILY
0120	Sally & Dick	Stoewer	Baton Rouge	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0152	Janice & John	Smith	Plano	TX	BAL784NC/ISH755NC
0197	Robert & Gail	Alford	Houston	TX	CLA89_GA/!!!!!!GA
0257	Richard & Ruby	Alford	Alvarado	TX	BAI781NC/JAM687VA
0303	Doris O. A.	Vetri	Mt. Laurel	NJ	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
0425	Nolan David & Mary	Alford	Mt. Hermon	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0439	Earl & Pauline	Alford	Summit	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
0481	Evelyn Z.	Mistich	Belle Chasse	LA	SEA807LA/JAM687VA
0484	Lynn D.	Shelley	Springfield	MO	ann790ga/ISH755NC
0537	Vesta G.	Bowden	Houston	TX	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
0606	Catherine & Bruce	Ellard	Natchez	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
0666	Peggy & Walter	Schuster	Richardson	TX	JOH801NC/!!!!!!NC
0686	Beverly	Alford	Forestville	MD	GEO850SC/!!!!AASC
0715	Ramona Alford	Darden	Houston	TX	WIL774VA/SAL716VA
0768	Norma Earle A.	Idom	Lenoir City	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
0904	Helen & Bob	Steele	Lakewood	CO	JOS816LA/JAM687VA
1054	Geraldine S.	Alford	Mt. Hermon	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1138	Deloris & Jim	Bitting	Baton Rouge	LA	EDW792NC/JAM687VA
1142	Joana	Breeland	Tylertown	MS	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1247	Walt	Smith	Dallas	TX	BAL784NC/ISH755NC
1248	Ronnie, Melanie & Ryan	Smith	Denham Springs	LA	BAL784NC/ISH755NC
1258	Gail	Hall	Tylertown	MS	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1259	Lorraine Alford	Mabus	Amite	LA	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1271	Mac, Dragana, Stefan, and Nikola	Alford	Hattiesburg	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
1304	Michael Philip	Idom	Georgetown	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
1305	Sylvia	Idom	Georgetown	TN	BRI781NC/ISH755NC
1321	Mary Alford	Yarborough	Aiken	SC	GEO850SC/!!!!AASC
1329	Reginald D.	Alford	Hartsville	SC	GEO850SC/!!!!AASC
1341	Holly Jean	Alford	McComb	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
1342	LaDonna Jeanne	Alford	Daisetta	TX	WIL850AL/
1345	James & Delfina	Alford	Biloxi	MS	JOH807LA/JAM687VA
1364	Wayne & Joyce	Alford	Manito	IL	DAN796CT/BEN619EN
1369	Trellie Alford	Mullis	Cochran	GA	WIL794GA/JAM687VA
1370	Talmadge	Alford	Pace	FL	WIL794GA/JAM687VA
1371	Opal Dean Alford	Coy	Statham	GA	WIL794GA/JAM687VA
1372	Ann Alford	Fennell	Dublin	GA	WIL794GA/JAM687VA

1373	Jimmye Alford	Schubert	Ridgeland	MS	ISH755NC
	Kael	Alford	Dallas	TX	ROB814VA/JOH735IR
	Lane, Debbie,				
	Mallory & Carly	Ball	Summit	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
	Mike, Sandra, Kate				
	& Marty	Ellard	Natchez	MS	WIL804GA/JAM687VA
	Lindsay, Jerry, Bryce				
	& Brynn	Godfrey	River Ridge	LA	SEA807LA/JAM687VA
	Ingrid & Taylor	Leverett	Belle Chasse	LA	SEA807LA/JAM687VA
	Zorica	Mladenovic	Belgrade	Serbia	
	Russell	Thomas	Belle Chasse	LA	

So, until next year when we meet in St. Louis, Missouri, we hope you will plan to join us there. The exact location will be announced at a later date, but be prepared to join us the second weekend in October!

Remember Gil Alford, our founding member, will be there to meet each one in attendance!

JA

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meeting in October, Pauline and I were involved in an accident about a mile from our home in McComb, Ms. Pauline received a head injury and was transported to the University Medical Center in Jackson. where she spent several days in ICU for observation. She is recovering at home. On November 9 I lost my mother, Louise Alford Bridges, who was 89 years old. She will be sadly missed by family. We were blessed to have her this long, but didn't expect to lose her this soon.

Congratulations go to my first cousin, Vernon Alford, of Tylertown, MS, who was elected the new Circuit Clerk of Walthall County in November. Vernon is the son of member #1353 Samuel Eugene

Alford . George Alford held the position for many years before retiring, but was called back as interim circuit clerk before this election. Hopefully, I can recruit George and Vernon, to join as AAFA members. Vernon will join longtime County Supervisor Travis Alford, father of member #1355, Troy Nelson Alford, in County Government. Travis is the oldest serving Supervisor in state history. Found elsewhere in the quarterly is a list of famous Alford's and their contacts submitted by AAFA member #1271 Dr. Mac Alford of Hattiesburg, MS. Mac was recently elected as the new President of the Mississippi Native Plant Society .

A special thanks to all the volunteers in our Alford American Family Association who work so hard to make this organization so great.

JA