

2005 Meeting Report
By Ramona Alford Darden & Max Alford

I want to begin by saying to all the members who were effected by Hurricanes Katrina & Rita, our prayers go out to you and your family, we are all glad you are safe. You were truly missed at this reunion; hope next year you will be able to attend our meeting somewhere in Tennessee.

In spite of the attendance shortfall, we had 68 members attend this year's meeting. The Sheraton Westport Chalet rooms were very nice along with great meeting rooms. Those who attended the sessions enjoyed very interesting information on how to do on-line research, the Ancestry.com web site and others that will help you research, conducted by Morris Myers. Lynn Shelley gave presentations on "Connecting the Dots/Following the Trail", William Clark, "The Expedition and His Part in History", and last but not least, "Migration to, Settling of, and Migration from Missouri". All presentations by both Morris and Lynn were very informative.

The Friday Night Reception was well attended. There was lots of good food and good conversation. Those attending were treated to a short one-man fashion show by the new hit of the fashion world, Elroy "Fabio" Alford modeling the just-out official AAFA St. Louis golf shirt, a stunning little number in black with the AAFA logo in white. "Fabio" Alford then did a magnificent job of selling the shirt.

Saturday began with the AAFA official business meeting. Reports were given by Doris Vetri, Treasurer; Janice Smith, Wills Project and Photo Archives; Lynn Shelley, Library, On-going Research and the Master Book List; Kim Savage, OnLine Newsletter editor; and Morris Myers, new AAFA web master. The members present selected the state of Mississippi for our 2007 Meeting. For those of you who were not at the meeting this year, the selected city for Tennessee is still in negotiations, so watch for the on-line announcement as soon as the contract is signed.

Saturday afternoon is always a treat for those attending. Gil presented information on each family group history assisted by his daughter Mary Davis, along with John and Janice Smith who showed pictures from the AAFA archives on those family members who were being discussed. Not all members have photos in the archives so please submit pictures of you, your parents, your grandparents and so on. Each member who had family being discussed were ask to participate in the discussion with any family stories they might want to share. This proved to be a very interesting part of the afternoon. Even "Mr." Gil said he wished these stories were on video to be preserved in the archives for future generations to hear.

A new feature this year was the baby photo contest, which stirred much interest and conversation during the meeting break times. The "guess who this is" proved to be very interesting and fun. It was proposed that something similar to this be done at the meeting next year. Your participation with this fun is encouraged for next year.

The Saturday night Awards Dinner provided a venue for lots of good food and fun. Bryan Davis, pastor of the New Life Church of the Nazarene of St. Peters, Missouri, offered a prayer before the meal. Bryan, his wife Louann, son Michael, and daughter Brianna were guests of his uncle, AAFA President Max Alford.

There was a short Memorial Service to honor all the members who had passed away since the 2004 meeting. Those honored this year were:

Clifton Singleton	0249	07/18/1934 – 10/24/2004
Hugh "Mac" Bateman	1165	10/15/1931 – 11/21/2004
Wallace W. Alford	0479	04/19/1931 – 11/25/2004
Merle B. Alford	0344	04/30/1927 – 01/01/2005
Leonard L. Foster	0765	06/01/1932 – 20/02/2005

James O. Alford	1088	05/23/1945 – 03/05/2005
Ruth L. Alford	0447	09/17/1934 – 03/28/2005
Kathryn A. Perkins	0719	01/03/1922 – 04/14/2005
Elizabeth T. Mohle	0424	11/24/1917 – 06/11/2005
Arba K. Alford	0151	– 08/08/2005
Omer Alford	0086	06/10/1902 – 09/02/2005
Sarah L. Ball	0444	10/14/1908 – 09/02/2005

As each name was called, a bell was struck one solemn note.

Each year, the Association honors those members who have gone above and beyond the call of duty (so to speak) assisting with the many tasks that lay before the Association. These members are honored as “Distinguished Members.” Each year, members are asked to nominate any member who has been very active in providing assistance to the Project Managers or officers during the past year. Any member who is a member of the AAFA Hall of Fame is ineligible for the Distinguished Member award. This year, there were two nominees for this honor. The Board of Directors then casts votes for or against the nominees. The two nominees this year received a unanimous vote from the Board. Both were previous winners in years past. Evelyn Mistich, member #0481, was honored for the work she did handling all the meeting registrations, tour registrations, and monies for both until her life was interrupted by a nasty old hurricane by the name of Katrina. Evelyn lives in Belle Chasse, Louisiana, which is south of New Orleans. Evelyn also serves on the Board of Directors. Sharon and Henry Klehm, members #1080, were honored for the outstanding job they do as assistant treasurers. They keep a set of back-up books for Doris Vetri, AAFA Treasurer and have been doing so for a number of years.

Evelyn, Sharon, and Henry are to be commended for their dedication and support of the Association.

From time to time, there are also nominees for induction into the AAFA Hall of Fame. This is not a yearly process but only occurs when the Board feels that someone truly deserves the honor. This year there were three nominees for induction into the Hall. Jimmie Alford, member #0500, has been a member since 1992. Jimmie was instrumental in providing a presence for the Association on the world wide web by providing space at no charge on his server where the AAFA web site remained until a couple of years ago when space on a commercial server was acquired. Without his assistance, the Association would not have had this valuable presence as soon as it did. Jimmie has also provided leadership by serving on the Board of Directors. Perhaps his most valuable contribution to the Association has been his generous financial support of the AAFA Scholarship Program. Jimmie has almost single-handedly funded the program since its inception. Jimmie is to be commended for all his support of the Association since becoming a member.

The other inductees into the Hall of Fame are the husband and wife co-editors of the AAFA Action quarterly, Sue and Jim Adams, members #1129. Sue and Jim have been members since August of 2000. When they joined, the quarterly was being put together and edited by a committee. Unfortunately, the quarterly had fallen way behind schedule and I do mean way behind. Sue and Jim had not been members for very long when some slick tongue son-of-a-gun talked them into becoming editors of the quarterly and they have been working at getting the quarterly back on schedule ever since. The amount of work that they have put in since taking over the quarterly is mind-boggling. After a lot of blood, sweat and tears, the quarterly is back on a timely schedule and it is all due to the efforts and dedication of Sue and Jim. Jim also serves on the Board of Directors of the Association. The Association and its members owe a large debt of gratitude to Sue and Jim for all their hard work, their dedication, and their devotion to the AAFA.

Speaking of the AAFA Scholarship Program, this year there were three applicants, Jessica Tedder, one of last year’s awardees, Desti Shephard, and Samuel Reeves. Desti Shephard is the grand daughter of Jeanne Singleton, member #0249. Desti’s essay was a delightful piece about her grandmother. Jessica Tedder is member #1227 and she is the daughter of Mary Alford Davis, member #0270, and the grand

daughter of Gil and Mary Alford, members #0019. Jessica's essay was very well written piece about General George F. Alford who served with Sam Houston at San Jacinto during the Texas War of Independence. The third awardee was Samuel Reeves, grandson of Claudia M. Reeves, member #0886. His essay was written about his favorite Alford ancestor or ancestors. His piece was full of interesting family history from the Revolutionary War to the Civil War. All three are to be congratulated on their essays and their awards. The essays will be printed in the quarterly as soon as the photos of the presentations are available. We are awaiting pictures of the presentations to Desti and Samuel, as they were unable to attend the meeting this year.

The AAFA Scholarship Program owes a huge "Thank You" to Jimmie Alford, member #0500, who has generously contributed financial support to the Scholarship Program since its inception in honor of his father, Loren Alford. In an email sent the first year of the Scholarship Program, Jimmie had this to say about his dad: "My Dad was a coal miner of very humble background when we moved to Chicago from Kentucky in 1953. I was nine at the time. We were the typical poor family, no running water, etc., but we were of strong spirit as with most Alfords. Even though my Dad had very little formal education, he valued learning and was very learned in his own way. His sense of values and commitment to helping others is a big part of my values."

There were plenty of door prizes as well as the prizes in the annual raffle. Peggy Wood, Earline Alford, Ramona Darden, Lynn Shelley, and Elroy Alford donated prizes for the raffle. There were simply too many awarded to list them all here. Of course, one of the big events of the night was the announcement of the winners in the baby photo contest. First place went to the mother-daughter team of Mary Alford Davis and Jessica Tedder who got the phenomenal number of 28 or so right out of a total of 36 pictures. Second place went to the one-man team of Max Alford who correctly identified 25 correctly. John Smith, master of ceremonies for this portion of the dinner, wildly hinted at the possibility of a little cheating on the part of some contestants. The three winners, when questioned, strongly denied any cheating as such and instead, referred to it as having done a thorough investigation of all the pictures plus having and using a good set of ears at all times. This was perhaps one of the most fun events ever staged at the annual meetings. Everyone seemed to have had a really good time guessing who was who. Some were really shocked when the true identities of those in the pictures were revealed. Betty Heazel, member #0664, won the cutest baby picture contest and rightly so.

Many of the attending members came early to enjoy fellowship and tours in and around St. Louis, which included traveling up in The Gateway Arch and a movie about how the Arch was built. A spectacular view of St. Louis can be seen from up in the arch. Most of the members had to be dragged (literally) away from the Anheuser Bush Brewery hospitality room (just kidding). However, the brewery tour was not only a beautiful facility inside but also a very interesting tour and informative. Next stop was the Old Courthouse where a Ranger told us what types of trials were held and showed what part of the building was the original building and how it was remodeled and when. The courthouse was where the Dred Scott slavery trial was held. The Galleries depict St. Louis from its French and Spanish occupations through the westward expansion years to present. Our compliments to the ranger who allowed us to sit while he lectured and to his voice which was strong enough for "older ears" to hear and understand. A trip to the Cahokia Mounds began our Thursday morning tour with a movie about the excavation of the mounds. After the movie, we toured a wonderful museum with great life-like exhibits of the ancient city of Cahokia, from about 700 A.D. to 1400 A.D. Some of our brave members climbed the Monks Mound to the top, which consisted of approximately 100 steps after which they were caught sleeping in the tour bus, but they will not admit the snooze!

Our last stop on Thursday was the Missouri History Museum which had three permanent exhibit galleries that look at the lives of St. Louis citizens from the city's earliest days to the present. From "Louis & Clark" to Scott Joplin to Miles Davis, breweries to baseball, and the Civil War to the World's

Fair, St. Louis has been at the heart of history. A replica of Charles Lindbergh's "Spirit of St. Louis" is suspended in the Grand Hall. This museum brings Missouri History to life.

After the AAFA Meeting our last tour was the Oktoberfest Sightseeing Cruise which included a trip down the Mississippi River accompanied by a German Band playing typical ohm pa pa music and a great German Buffet lunch. We ended our tour with a stop at Union Station, which was once one of the busiest and largest passenger rail stations in the world. Redeveloped as an urban market place, it is now the home to a hotel and a festival market place of shops, restaurants and clubs. This was a kickback ending to a very busy five days of tours and meetings.

Those in attendance were as follows:

<u>ASN</u>	<u>FNAME</u>	<u>LNAME</u>	<u>CITY</u>	<u>ST</u>	<u>FAMILY</u>
0484	Lynn & Jim	Shelley	Springfield	MO	ann790ga
0152	Janice & John	Smith	Plano	TX	BAL784NC
1247	Walt	Smith	Dallas	TX	BAL784NC
0059	Don & Joan	Alford	Melbourne	FL	DAV785VA
0832	Janet Alford	Hemby	Houston	TX	DAV785VA
1065	Morris & Rebecca	Myers, Jr.	Hot Springs	AR	DAV785VA
	Bunny Masingill	Mork	St. Charles	MO	EDW792NC
0673	Carolyn & Will	Saunders	Horseshoe Bay	TX	EDW792NC
0258	Kim	Savage	Darien	IL	ISA782NC
1269	Douglas Scott	Alford	Lakewood	CO	JOH782VA
	Jim & Donna	Sample	Benton	KY	JOH787NC
1056	Ruth & Rome	Sample	Benton	KY	JOH787NC
	Stephen	Sample	Benton	KY	JOH787NC
0664	Mike & Betty	Heazel, Jr.	Severna Park	MD	JOH795VA
0230	Max & Earline	Alford	Mesquite	TX	JOH801NC
1197	Rochelle M. A.	Brewer	Redlands	CA	JOH801NC
1175	Velta Autry	Brown	Hesperia	CA	JOH801NC
	Brianna	Davis	St. Peters	MO	JOH801NC
	Bryan & Louann	Davis	St. Peters	MO	JOH801NC
	Michael	Davis	St. Peters	MO	JOH801NC
0666	Peggy & Walter	Schuster	Richardson	TX	JOH801NC
1205	Sandra Lee	Schuster	Houston	TX	JOH801NC
1270	Linda Kay Berry	Smith	Irvine	CA	JOH801NC
0303	Doris O. A.	Vetri	Mount Laurel	NJ	JOH801NC
0611	Charles & Joan	Alford	Oakland	CA	JOH807LA
1054	Geraldine S.	Alford	Mt. Hermon	LA	JOH807LA
0019	Gil & Mary	Alford	Florissant	MO	JOH807LA
0537	Vesta G.	Bowden	Houston	TX	JOH807LA
1142	Mildred J. Brock	Breeland	Tylertown	MS	JOH807LA
0270	Mary Alford	Davis	Dallas	TX	JOH807LA
0269	April & Scott	Ernst	Jonesboro	MO	JOH807LA
1259	Lorraine Alford	Mabus	Amite	LA	JOH807LA

0064	Patricia B.	Smith	McComb	MS	JOH807LA
	Candice	Spiro	Florissant	MO	JOH807LA
	Jaelyn	Spiro	Hazelwood	MO	JOH807LA
	Nicolas & Heather	Spiro	St. Charles	MO	JOH807LA
0120	Sally & Dick	Stoewer	Baton Rouge	LA	JOH807LA
1227	Jessica Louise	Tedder	Arlington	TX	JOH807LA
0904	Helen & Bob	Steele	Lakewood	CO	JOS816LA
1077	Jeanne	Epps	Florissant	MO	KIN812GA
0217	Virginia E.	Alford	Holts Summit	MO	RAN818VT
0563	Elroy & Jan	Alford	Spencer	OK	TOM860OK
0715	Ramona Alford	Darden	Houston	TX	WIL787VA
0439	Earl & Pauline	Alford	Liberty	MS	WIL804GA
1166	Paul R.	Hodson	Rolla	MO	WIL811GA
	Joey	Garger	Hazelwood	MO	
	John	Littrell	Florissant	MO	
	Dan & Carol	Reiter	Oakland	CA	
	Nancy	Weill	Darien	IL	

Special note from Ramona Alford Darden: I hope those who attended the meeting and tours enjoyed what was planned. I would appreciate any suggestions or changes, which would make next year more enjoyable for you or other Members in your family who might attend our annual meeting. Please address your comment to RDa6983707@aol.com