

The Thrasher Newsletter

Mentor: Dot Pruett Editor: Barbara Eger Circulation: John E. Thrasher III Volume 16 No. 1 August 1997

Reunion Weekend Lives Up to Expectations

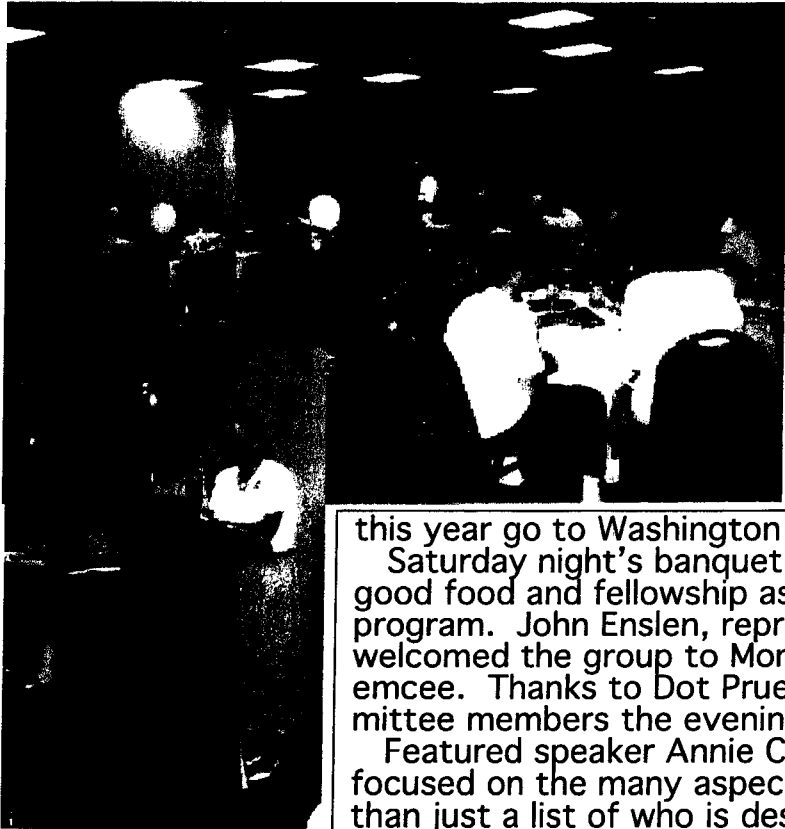
The weekend of June 27 and 28 saw a great turnout of Thrasher cousins -- almost 100 family members began the 23rd Thrasher Family Reunion on Friday night with a barbeque at the home of Jerry and Susan Hudson just outside Montgomery. The food was wonderful, the setting was lovely, everyone had a chance to visit and catch up on family news, and the weather cooperated perfectly with not a cloud in the sky. Distance honors

this year go to Washington State and California.

Saturday night's banquet at the Holiday Inn featured more good food and fellowship as well as an excellent after-dinner program. John Enslin, representing the reunion committee, welcomed the group to Montgomery and acted as program emcee. Thanks to Dot Pruett, John, and all of the other committee members the evening was a great success.

Featured speaker Annie Crenshaw, a professional genealogist, focused on the many aspects of genealogy in her talk. More than just a list of who is descended from whom, the history of a family includes stories about what life was like for previous generations, where they started, where they wound up, how they got from one to the other, and all of the things that went into the making of her family. Historical events become more meaningful to young people if the events are related in the context of how their ancestors were in-

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Genealogist Annie Crenshaw as she spoke at the Saturday night banquet.



Above: Heading in to the verandah for dinner at Jerry and Susan Hudson's home Friday night. Right: Jerry Hudson and Dot Pruett sharing a moment to chat during the Friday night barbeque at Jerry's home.



Reunion Drew Family From Coast to Coast This Year

Cont. from page 1

involved in those events. Crenshaw cooked for two years on a woodstove so that she could tell her children what it was like. She urged our group to continue with the proposed cookbook project and to include family stories and pictures in it, saying it then becomes a mini-history of family life through the years. Her family did a cookbook which wound up being 500 pages long with all of the stories and other material shared by family members, and is so much more than a cookbook now.

John E. Thrasher III shared the results of a trip to Tennessee he and his wife Eleanor made to search for the elusive Isaac Thrasher (John has promised a summary of those results for a future newsletter), and, saying "the scandals in a family are more fun," regaled everyone with the story of Black Bart Thrasher, who is the subject of a documentary currently in production (see story on pg. 5). Nancy Thrasher Cherry updated us on the Middle Atlantic Thrasher Association, including their three-generation project.

Winding up a very full weekend, several of those who were able to linger met at the Cracker Barrel Restaurant for breakfast Sunday morning before heading off for home.



The Alabama Thrashers really outdid themselves to make the reunion special. First, Jerry and Susan Hudson, who opened their home to the family on Friday night for the barbeque. And then the committee members who worked so hard to make this a successful reunion: Dot Pruett, committee chair, Martha Broughton, Diane and John Enslin, Jerry and Susan Hudson, Mae Jones and Bill and Velma Thrasher. A special thank-you to everyone.

And 1998 Will Bring -- Montgomery Revisited

Would you believe that the Montgomery folks are willing to do it again? As discussed at this year's reunion, the 1998 Thrasher Family Reunion will again be held in Montgomery. And Bill and Velma Thrasher have already reserved a block of rooms at the same Holiday Inn. The 1998 dates are June 26 and 27.

The Holiday Inn management told Bill and Velma that the motel will be undergoing a top-to-bottom renovation beginning this October, so it should be even nicer next year. This is early notice (VERY early) so that everyone can save the dates. More information in future newsletters.



EDITOR'S CORNER

EDITOR



The Thrasher Newsletter is looking for contributing authors. If you've got something to tell the rest of the family, now is your chance.

Stories about family history, news items about current family events, questions about Thrasher ancestors -- handwritten, typed, any form at all -- mail them to me (Barbara Eger) at 8770F Allison Dr., Arvada, CO 80005.

If you have access to e-mail and want to send a complete article or just a news item (or items -- the more the merrier), you can save time and postage by just sending it off to:
eger@spot.colorado.edu

I know someone out there has something going on -- but haven't gotten any news on graduations, engagements, marriages, births, etc., for this issue. There is so much going on at the reunions that people frequently don't get to share all of the past year's events; the newsletter can help to bridge that gap.

The loan of pictures relevant to the family are especially nice. I have access to a scanner, and would return them undamaged after scanning.

Dot Pruett: Preserving the Heritage and Passing it On

by David E. Sumner

Dorothy ("Dot") Sturgis Pruett is in some ways the "matriarch" of the many Thrasher families: founder of the association, editor of the newsletter for 14 years and even wrote the book on the subject-- "Our Thrasher Heritage". At her Montgomery home on June 28, she shared some thoughts about her love for genealogy, how the family association began, and other subjects.

She was born November 29, 1916, in Pensacola, Florida, daughter of Aubrey Elbert Sturgis and Evelyn Brooks Thrasher. Her mother was a Montgomery native. After graduating from high school and business college, she held several jobs in Atlanta and Montgomery until she married Joel Fleming Pruett in 1963. After their marriage, she moved to Macon where he owned a printing and advertising business. They were married until his death in 1987, and she moved back to Montgomery in 1990.

She has published several family histories: "Cousins by the Dozens" in 1975 and a supplement in 1978, which included the Sturgis, Thrasher, Carlton, Mitchell and Branch families; "Pruett Past and Present" in 1982; "The Reverend Daniel Sturgis Story" in 1983 and "The Diary of Ann Browder" in 1984. "Our Thrasher Heritage" was published in 1986. Although she is an active Methodist, The Rev. Daniel Sturgis, ordained in 1771, was one of the first Episcopal ministers in this country.

Her current project is a book about the Carlton family, which is her grandmother's family.

She holds memberships in the Daughters of the American Revolution, Daughters of the American Colonists, Colonial Dames of the XVII Century, and the Sovereign Colonial Society of Americans of Royal Descent. Last March, she qualified for membership in the Colonial Order of the Crown, which requires that members show descent from Charlemagne.

And she never became interested in genealogy until about 30 years ago. "Joe knew everybody in Macon, and when we married and I moved from Atlanta, our friends started urging me to get into DAR. I said 'I don't have time to

do that.' And they said 'Well, we'll help you.' They kept on about it. When you find something [about family history], it's like finding a gold nugget. You want to get a little bit more and then a little bit more. Well, I started finding a little bit, and I'd go back and find a little bit more. Then after I got the line cleared, I just got so fascinated with it. I got hooked. And so that's why I just kept on."

The Thrasher Family Association had its first meeting at her home in Macon on September 21, 1974. "I have been doing [Thrasher] research since 1967 and I had met Dr. Robert and Mrs. Vessie Rainer in McDonough, Georgia; Tom Thrasher in Huntsville, Alabama; and I had correspondence with Col. Warren and Caroline Thrasher in Athens, Georgia; Asbury and Elizabeth Baldwin in Madison, Georgia; and also John E. Thrasher, who was then in Jacksonville."

"And so I told Joe, we ought to get an association started because we know these core people. So I wrote letters to all of those people and invited them to come to Macon.

"It was funny. None of them knew each other, and you would have thought they had seen each other every day. As soon as they got there, everybody started talking--it was 'blah, blah, blah' the whole time we were there. That was the way it got started. Everybody agreed that we would send a letter to all of our relatives in each one of our branches of the family and try to see how many we could get to come to the reunion at our house the next year.

"They came to our house in 1975 and we had a meal catered. We had about between 65-70 that first year. The next year we had a few more than that, and it was again at our house. The next year Warren and Caroline had it in Athens." Most of the subsequent meetings have been in Georgia; one was in Florida, one in Tennessee, and--this year--the first one to be held in Alabama.

She compiled and wrote "Our Thrasher Heritage" with the urging and support from other Thrasher members, especially Hugh Thrasher. "He said the Thrashers

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Profiles: Dot Pruett, Association Mentor

Cont. from page 3

wanted a book with just Thrasher families in it. And so I told them I would. I had done the "Cousins by the Dozens" books, but that included five families.

"I told him I didn't mind doing the work, but I didn't want to handle the money. Hugh said, 'Don't worry about that. I'll take care of that.'" He arranged for several members of the family association to put up the money to cover the cost of printing, which they eventually recouped when most of the copies quickly sold. "The books went real fast. That was 1986. It was circulated at the reunion in 1986," said Dot.

She notes that her husband, Joe, died six months later in January of 1987. "He was one of a kind, a very special person, and was always very good to me," she recalls wistfully.

She moved to Montgomery in 1990 to be closer to her own family. "I'm always meeting new people who are Thrasher related. A lot of these cousins of mine I didn't know growing up. Since I've been over here, it's been fun getting to know them."

Tragedy struck in 1989 when her brother, Ernest Sturgis, was murdered at his Memphis home by a burglar. A suspect, William Taylor, wasn't arrested until three years later when a new computerized fingerprint system matched his thumb print with one found on a jewelry box in the Sturgis home. Taylor, who had 12 felony convictions, was then in prison serving a six-year sentence on an unrelated 1992 burglary conviction. His first trial for Ernest Sturgis' murder in 1994 ended in a mistrial with the jury "hopelessly deadlocked" at 11-1.

"There were a lot of delays and continuances. The re-trial was supposed to be in January 1997, and then they moved it to April. Then they let the guy plead "no contest." He got 25 years and they're giving him so much time off for time he's already served (on other charges). As a result of all of that, they say he will be eligible for parole next year. That is ridiculous. That is not justice. It's just not justice."

All three of Ernest Sturgis' children--

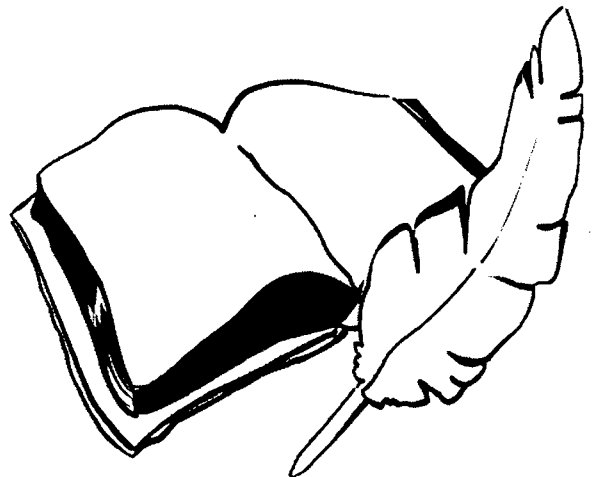
Kristen Sturgis Coffee of Fort Worth, Tex., Kim Sturgis Cooper of Wilmington, N.C., and Greg Sturgis of Mercers Island, Wash., were at the Montgomery family meeting in June. And all came with their spouses and children. Greg is a pilot for Alaska Airlines and former Navy pilot. Seeing and visiting with them gave her great joy since "the last time I saw them was at the trial in 1994."

Turning to the future--when asked about her main hope for the family association and annual get-togethers--she replied, "I just hope they'll continue. It's been going now for 24 years. I hope it will continue because it will be a shame to not keep on until we get more and more information.

"The Thrashers have always been more interested and more enthusiastic about their heritage than any family association I know about."

David E. Sumner, a journalism professor at Ball State University in Muncie, Ind., is a native of Dade City, Florida, and direct descendent of John J. Thrasher. He has written two books and has a sabbatical to work on a third this fall.

Editor's note: Dot Pruett says she still has a few copies of "Our Thrasher Heritage" left; if anyone would like to purchase a copy, the cost is \$40 plus \$2 shipping. Contact Dot if you are interested.



Legend of Black Bart Thrasher to Become a Documentary

by Stacey Norwood, Staff Reporter

Centreville (AL) Press, May 11, 1997

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The legend of Black Bart Thrasher and his gang of bandits begs the question: where was Matt Dillon when we needed him?

For more than eight years in the latter part of the 19th century, the West Blocton native Thrasher--always described as a "famed desperado" in local newspapers--reportedly led a spree of murder and chicanery as chief outlaw of the Miller-Thrasher gang.

His reign of crime ended in 1896 when he was gunned down by U.S. Marshal and bounty hunter Henry Cole, who collected a pricey \$400 for his trouble.

Compared by some to Jesse James and by others to Robin Hood, Thrasher has long been the subject of heated debate between local historians and accounts of his crimes vary from story to story.

What is certain is that the bloodsoaked tale has attracted the attention of Birmingham filmmakers, who are determined to find the truth about Black Bart.

Birmingham-based Get A Grip Productions, in association with Artimotives Productions, is currently in the process of creating a documentary about the Thrasher-Miller Gang's exploits, focusing on Black Bart. The documentary, still in the research stages, will also be filmed in the West Blocton area, including recreated-scenes from Thrasher's life.

Get A Grip owner Cecil Ray Myers, who has relatives in the West Blocton area, says he plans to pitch the finished product to such cable channels as The Learning Channel, The History Channel and "every other media outlet we can tap into." In addition, a feature film based on the life of Bart Thrasher is the second stage of the project.

Myers says he would like to also film the movie in Bibb County, which will hopefully be funded by revenues raised from the documentary. Former MTV deejay and Birmingham native Alan Hunter has signed on as director of the feature-length film, Myers adds.

Myers says he first heard of Black Bart through local friends and was intrigued enough to pursue the subject as the topic of a documentary. "I've always

been interested in outlaws," he laughs. And he has found quite the subject in Thrasher, who began his life of crime in response to the shooting deaths of his father and brothers.

If local news reports and legends are to be believed, Black Bart took to Bibb County trails with revenge in his heart and a gun in his hand. He left behind a trail of dead deputy sheriffs and other law enforcement officers, whom he blamed for the deaths of his family members.

Myers and his research assistant Dawn Barrow, who will be in the area following leads over the next few months are soliciting any information or photographs in connection with the Miller-Thrasher Gang, its victims and the time period surrounding the incidents.

Myers adds that he hopes to wrap up production by September. If you have information you may contact Barrow at (205) 930-0869 or Myers at (205) 251-0850.



Note: More on Black Bart Thrasher can be found in Dot Pruett's "Our Thrasher Heritage." The story on page 27 is an account of what led to Bart's descent into outlawry, with the inclusion of possible mitigating circumstances.

News and Notes

MATA 3-Generation Project Underway

The Mid-Atlantic Thrasher Association has made a start on an ambitious project to gather and compile into a single resource what is known about the first three generations of the Benjamin Thrasher family, which first appeared in Maryland in the early 1700s. MATA member Jim Moule has provided the initial information, with documentation, on Benjamin's son John. While this is not our branch of the Thrashers, if you have any information that you think might tie into their search, contact Nancy Thrasher Cherry at 3100 Elkridge Court, Beltsville, MD 20705 or Jim Moule at 2515 Q Street NW, Washington, DC 20007. Both can also be reached via electronic mail: <NancyTC@AOL.com> or <jmoule@earthlink.net>

Family "Regulars" Missed at Reunion

The 23rd Reunion was missing several familiar faces seen regularly at past reunions. Missing from Georgia were Warren and Carolyn Thrasher of Athens, Robert and Jane Rainer of McDonough, Peggy and Albert Thrasher, Griffin, and Earl Thrasher, Quitman. Also unable to be with the family this time were Hugh and Helen Thrasher from Sweetwater, Tenn. Hugh had heart-bypass surgery recently and is still recovering. To these and the other regulars who were unable to be there, we all missed you and hope to see you next year.

Who Is This Thrasher???

Anybody know who the Marty Thrasher quoted in an Associated Press story about Campbell's Soup might be? Thrasher is identified in the story as president of Campbell's U.S. Soup Division, and is evidently based in or near Camden, N.J.

Atlanta Thrashers Ready to Fly

Evidently what Ted Turner wants, Ted Turner gets. Despite some grumbling from hockey fans, his expansion team probably will be the Atlanta Thrashers, a name originally selected because the brown thrasher is the Georgia state bird. Harvey Schiller, who will become president of the new team, told the Associated Press "I just sent an e-mail to our staff: Forget any name research. It's the Thrashers." In another article Schiller is quoted as saying "We will formally submit the Thrashers name for NHL approval as soon as our expansion application gets approved." Turner Broadcasting System offices have already received season ticket applications from hundreds of fans.

And the team and fans will not be unaware of the "other" Thrasher connection. Dot Pruett recently wrote Schiller informing him of Cousin John's role in the settlement of what later became Atlanta. Dot received a prompt reply from Schiller thanking her and saying "I know we will refer to the history as we move down the road to establishing the new hockey team in Atlanta." The historical connection to Cousin John then was mentioned in an article in the *Atlanta Journal-Constitution* shortly afterward.

The team is expected to begin play with the opening of the 1999 hockey season.



THRASHER FAMILY ASSOCIATION
Organized September 21, 1974

Meetings - Annually, 4th Saturday in June

Date	Location	Place	Host/s
-21-1974	Macon, Ga., (Organizing Meeting)	Cag's Restaurant	Dot & Joe Pruett
-21-1975	Macon, Ga.	Pruett Home	Dot & Joe Pruett
-19-1976	Macon, Ga.	Pruett Home	Dot & Joe Pruett
-18-1977	Athens, Ga.	Thrasher Home	Warren & Caroline Thrasher
-17-1978	Pine Mountain, Ga.	Calloway Gardens	Dot & Joe Pruett
-23-1979	Milledgeville, Ga. (Lake Sinclair)	Pruett's Lake House	Dot & Joe Pruett
-28-1980	Micanopy, Fla.	Masonic Lodge	John & Eleanor Thrasher
-27-1981	Quitman, Ga.	Country Club	Descendants of James Cloud Thrasher
-26-1982	Forsyth, Ga.	Holiday Inn	Dot & Joe Pruett
-25-1983	Quitman/Dixie, Ga.	Westbrook School	Descendants of James Cloud Thrasher
23-1984	St. Simons Island, Ga.	Epworth-by-the-Sea	Tom Dodd/Rainers/ Pruetts
-22-1985	Sweetwater, Tenn.	KOA Campground	Hugh & Helen Thrasher
-28-1986	Macon, Ga.	Quail's Nest	Dot & Joe Pruett
-27-1987	Macon, Ga.	Quail's Nest	Dot Pruett
-25-1988	Macon, Ga.	Quail's Nest	Dot Pruett
-24-1989	Jekyll Island, Ga.	Jekyll Island Inn	John & Eleanor Thrasher
-25-1990	Norcross, Ga.	Thrasher Park	Frank Combes
-22-1991	Athens, Ga.	Holiday Inn	Warren & Caroline Thrasher
-27-1992	Columbus, Ga.	Woodmen of the World Hall	L.Z. & Margie Thrasher
-26-1993	McDonough, Ga.	Holiday Inn	Robert & Jane Rainer and "boys"
-25-1994	Athens, Ga.	Holiday Inn	Warren & Caroline Thrasher
-24-1995	Ashburn, Ga.	Thrasher Family Home	Lyn & Evelyn Thrasher
-22-1996	Moultrie, Ga.	Colquitt Hotel	Gerald Bishop
-28-1997	Montgomery, Ala. and Pike Road, Ala. ("Get Acquainted" Barbecue)	Holiday Inn Holidome Hudson Cattle Ranch and Home	Reunion Committee: Bill & Velma Thrasher John & Dianne Enslin Martha Broughton Mae Jones Jerry and Susan Hudson Dot Pruett

Thrasher Shiver Country Music Duo Making Beautiful Harmony Together

"Listen to these voices and remember when you first heard them. With any luck you'll be hearing them for a long time." -- Cashbox

"A very strong and highly recommended first effort." -- Music City News

Frank Combes of Chattanooga first brought musical Thrashers to our attention at the 1996 Reunion with some old albums by the Thrasher Brothers; Nancy Thrasher Cherry discovered that Neil Thrasher, the son of one of the original Thrasher Brothers, is half of a country music duo on their way up the recording charts. Titled *Thrasher Shiver*, their debut album was recently released.

Neil Thrasher is the son of Joe Thrasher, a member of the Thrasher Brothers, a country/gospel group that recorded for MCA in the 1980s. "I went out and sang with



them some when I was 18 years old," Neil recalls. "I got some of my best stage experience from that. He met his partner, Kelly Shiver through Bob Doyle, who manages the duo and who gave Garth Brooks his first publishing deal.

Neil got his early experience in the music business singing with another group, singing demos in Nashville and doing background vocals on other artists' records including Brooks, John Berry, Hank Williams Jr. and Pam Tillis.

Both singers say they think their songs are different, with no drinking, cheating or honky-tonking, but with words and music that "speak to the heart." They wrote or co-wrote six of the 11 songs on the album.

Neil and his wife Lana have a 2-year-old daughter, Alexandria.

1997-98 Dues Payable Now

Remember that association dues are from July 1 to June 30 every year. Dues go toward publication and mailing costs for the newsletter and other costs associated with the group. If you didn't pay your dues at the reunion and haven't had time or have forgotten to mail your 1997-98 dues (\$20), please complete the coupon below to ensure that your information is up-to-date and send it along with your check to Dot Pruett. Thanks.

"Thrasher" at Sea in WWII

Greg Wickenburg of Brier, Washington, recently discovered that the British Royal Navy had a submarine, the HMS Thrasher, in action during World War II. The brief information found on the Submarine Service Web Page shows a print of the Thrasher as she returned from a patrol off Crete in 1942, and mentions that two of her crew received the Victoria Cross for removing two unexploded bombs from under her casing. Anyone know more?

1997-98 Thrasher Family Association Dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Return to: Dot Pruett
4245 Shamrock Lane
Montgomery, AL 36106

For 23 years, Thrasher descendants have renewed family ties

Descendants of John and Ruth Cloud Thrasher know that the fourth Saturday in June is reserved for a reunion and have been gathering since 1974, when the first one was held in Macon, Ga.

The location depends on which family steps forward to volunteer as organizer. This year, Montgomery was picked as the site.

Dot Sturgis Pruett, who has compiled a written history of the family that traces its roots to documented records in 1738 in Goochland County, Va., volunteered to be this year's hostess. Extended members of her family, the youngest being 15 months old, gathered in Montgomery last weekend to renew family ties.

Friday evening, Jerry Hudson was the host for a barbecue supper at his cattle farm in Pike Road. He also resides in Wilson, N.C., and had the barbecue brought in from there in a big-rig truck.

The reunion banquet was Saturday evening at the Holiday Inn East.

The branch of the Thrasher family from which many of the kin from Montgomery, Elmore and Coosa counties descend is from the marriage of John Thrasher and Emera Ann Elizabeth Mitchell in 1826 in Montgomery County. Descendants of their son, John Thomas Thrasher, and Martha Hagerty Thrasher, who are buried in the Wetumpka City Cemetery, were among those attending last week's festivities. They were Jack Capell, Allen Thrasher Taylor, Joan Thrasher Mann, Martha Sturgis Broughton and Mae Sturgis Jones and Dot, all of



Elizabeth Via Brown

Montgomery; Aubrey E. Sturgis Jr. of Marion; Edward Enslin of Wetumpka; Tom Goodman Thrasher of Huntsville; Dr. Barrie Thrasher of Atlanta; and Helen Graff Eilts of Bishop, Calif.

Before leaving, they all decided to come back next year on the fourth Saturday of June.



PATRICIA MIKLIK/STAFF

Cousins Jack Capell, Helen Graff Eilts, Dot Sturgis Pruett and Jerry Hudson attend the Thrasher family reunion.

On the Beach, Thrasher's Are The Only Fries Worth Their Salt Spuds Have Faithful Following at Rehoboth

By Jackie Spinner
Washington Post Staff Writer

REHOBOTH BEACH, Del.—All winter long, they have waited for this moment at a place where the smell of peanut oil pulls them like a magnet to a silver counter near the boardwalk.

They bypass the taffy, the pizza, the fudge and the gyros and focus on only one thing—Thrasher's french fries.

"They are just perfect," said Janice Papanicolaou, 35, of Frederick, Md. She and Paul Davis, 33, of Laurel, bought a jumbo tub of fries.

"Nobody makes fries that taste like this," she said. "They're the first thing we came to get when we got to the beach."

This is the Thrasher's french fry tradition. At the start of Memorial Day weekend, fanatics come in droves to buy buckets and buckets of fried potato wedges that they douse with salt and vinegar. No

ketchup, thank you. That's for the other guy's fries.

These fries come piping hot, crispy on the outside, tender inside. They taste of fresh potatoes, not something out of a freezer. With a dash of vinegar, they are simply out of this world. But the most striking thing about Thrasher's fries is their consistency. They taste as good at 11 a.m. as they do at 2 p.m. and, well, again at 9 p.m.

Thrasher's french fries, as the signs say, have been around since 1929. They were the invention of a man from Georgia, known now only as Mr. Thrasher, according to the company's account. He was a religious man who hired girls from a Christian school in his home state to make the fries in Ocean City, Md.

He ran the business at the first Thrasher's stand in the breezeway of the Ocean City amusement pier until he sold out years later. Now there are seven stores, including



BY DEAN SHUTTLEWORTH FOR THE WASHINGTON POST
Dishwashers on Rehoboth Avenue wait in line for a bucket of Thrasher's french fries, a traditional treat made from a secret recipe since 1929.

one in Union Station in the District.

The recipe is a secret, closely guarded by the high school and college students who work behind the counters.

Customers always ask, but the workers are instructed never, never to tell.

"It's in the temperatures. I can tell you that much," said Dean Shuttleworth, district manager for the three stores here, which are owned by Silver Spring businessman Paul Roth and other investors.

"But I don't want to disclose any more than that. It's not that you

See FRIES, BA, Col. 1

French Fry Fans Catch Up on Signature Spuds

FRIES, From B1

couldn't find an ex-employee that would tell you, but I just can't talk about it."

Lynne Monteith, who has a summer house in Rehoboth and spends winters in Florida, doesn't eat french fries at any other time of the year. But when she and her husband come to Rehoboth, she has to have a cup of fries.

"I love them," said Monteith, a thin woman in a floppy straw hat and dark glasses. "They are the only fries I ever eat. They just taste so fresh."

In a back room at one of the two Thrasher's on Rehoboth Avenue, burlap sacks of Idaho potatoes are stacked against the wall. An automatic potato peeler scrubs the skins of the spuds. A tub holds 50 pounds of potatoes in water.

Shuttleworth won't say how many potatoes one store sells in a day. That's a secret, too.

After the potatoes are peeled, they are transferred to another tub of water where they sit until ready for dicing. The potatoes are not diced until they are ready to be blanched in oil. All of that is public knowledge.

The secret is in the three separate pans of hot oil under the counter, where the fries are moved in sequence once a customer places an order.

Fries are the only thing, besides drinks, that Thrasher's serves. The chain has not expanded into burgers, hot dogs or any other beach food.

"Our fries would suffer," Shuttleworth said.

Thrasher's fries have been a constant at the beach, the one thing that rarely changes as other shops come and go.

If people have become more health-conscious, Shuttleworth hasn't noticed. Fat grams? Who knows how many are in the fries, he said, and nobody's ever asked.

"When people come to the beach, they leave all their diets at home," he said. "People know when they eat them, there's going to be fat in them."

At the Thrasher's counter, Richard Buch, a software engineer from Chapel Hill, N.C., stepped up to order two 32-ounce cups and a whopping 64-ounce bucket of fries. Nobody blinked when he walked away trying to juggle all of those fries.

He was off to share them with his wife and two children.

"We'll get them all three days we're here," Buch said. "And we've been known to get one more for the road before we head home."

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The Thrasher Newsletter

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Pasco Courthouse Update

The old Pasco County Courthouse is undergoing extensive restoration. This will be the site of the walkway with the memorial plaques recognizing founding families of Pasco County, which include several Thrashers. Planning continues for the dedication of the plaques and the latest word on a date is sometime this summer. More information coming as it is available.

Montgomery Thrashers Set to Do It Again

It seems that last year's planning and work weren't enough to discourage the Alabama Thrasher family members. They've volunteered to do it again! Montgomery, Alabama, will be the site of the 1998 Thrasher Family Reunion, and it promises to be a repeat of one of the best gatherings yet. Headquarters will be at the Holiday Inn - Holidaydome, which underwent a complete renovation during the past year.

The festivities will begin with a repeat of the Friday night barbeque at Jerry and Susan Hudson's. Saturday's dinner and meeting at the Holiday Inn will feature another interesting talk by genealogist Annie Crenshaw, who was a great hit last year. The reunion committee reports that they are lining up a variety of presentations and entertainment that should make for a repeat of last year's thoroughly enjoyable weekend.

The Holiday Inn is again providing us with a hospitality room, where the family can gather to chat and exchange news and views. If you were at last year's reunion, you remember that there are a variety of things to entertain the younger family members, and a selection of restaurants in the immediate area that should satisfy everyone's taste buds.

Montgomery and the surrounding area offer all sorts of activities and attractions, so if you have an extra day to

spend there, there will be plenty to do and see. A side trip to visit the Barton graves in Emerald Mountain is one possibility.

If you have any family memorabilia that you'd like to bring along to share, there will be the usual display at the dinner and meeting Saturday night. This is always a good way to learn more about the family's past.

The dates are June 26 and 27, and you will find more information about the reunion and a list of some of the many Montgomery attractions farther along in this newsletter. The next issue of the newsletter will have all the final details, along with a registration form, but save the dates on your calendars and start making your plans now to join the family in making this another big event.



Annie Crenshaw as she spoke at last year's Reunion. She is scheduled for a repeat appearance at our 1998 get-together.

Tom Goodman Thrasher built a successful business and a distinguished leadership record in Huntsville

414

by David E. Sumner

Tom Goodman Thrasher is one of the family association's founding members and has attended almost every annual meeting. One of Huntsville, Alabama's, most prominent citizens, he has a long list of civic accomplishments and honors. He founded the Thrasher Oil Company in May 1946, which today has more than 200 employees. He's also one of the two co-founders of the University of Alabama at Huntsville and was recognized for his efforts with an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree in 1976.

He married Dorothy Josephine Wright in 1940,

and he served in the U.S. Army in August 1941 and served in the Ordnance Corps in North Africa and Europe until his discharge as a lieutenant colonel in 1946.

He returned home to Birmingham to his wife and three-year-old daughter, Sharon Mae, whom he had never seen. When trying to decide what to do, his father-in-law suggested that he look into obtaining an oil distributorship.

"I went around and called on Shell, Texaco, Standard Oil and all of those around Birmingham. None



Tom Thrasher (right) shared a smile for the camera with Clyde Thrasher (left) and Warren Thrasher (center) in 1990

and they have four daughters: Sharon Mae Langley, Carol Josephine Mayo, Amanda Grace Segrest and Anne Clay Swain.

Tom Thrasher was born Aug. 4, 1916, at Wetumpka, Ala., and his family moved to Birmingham a few months later. His father, Eugene Wilson Thrasher, died when Tom was only nine months old. His mother, a school teacher, supported the family while they lived with her parents in Birmingham for several years.

He studied mechanical engineering at the University of Alabama, but never completed his degree. He became a second lieutenant with the Corps of Engineers and went on duty with the Civilian Conser-

vation Corps. When I went into Shell, he said he didn't have anything.

"We talked for a few minutes. By the time I was getting ready to leave, he looked up and said, 'Sit down. I've got something here I want to tell you about. We just signed a contract with a man up in Huntsville. He might sell you that contract if you want to go up and buy it,' which I did. So I went up and bought it with \$7,000."

He credits his wife, Josephine, for helping him get started in business by "saving frugally" during the three years he was overseas in the Army.

Not long after he started the business, he said "We were doing about 8,000 gallons a month at the

Tom Thrasher's Huntsville Roots Go Deep

(cont. from pg. 2)

two stations in Huntsville. I remember very well when I was saying, 'If I could get to 500 gallons a day, I'd have it made.'" Today the company delivers more than 30,000 gallons a day and also owns about 40 convenience stores that sell Shell gasoline. The day-to-day operations are managed by his son-in-law Mike Segrest, who is president of Thrasher Oil. Another son-in-law, Albert Swain, is an attorney for the company in addition to having his own law practice.

He actually founded two companies: Thrasher Oil Company delivers gasoline to the dozens of Shell stations in northeast Alabama. Thrasher Oil Marketing Company owns and manages the convenience stores.

One day in the late 1940s, Tom Thrasher met Huntsville lawyer Pat Richardson at the courthouse square. "We were standing in the middle of the street and he told me about plans for a University of Alabama extension center up here," he said. "He (Pat) said we could get a university up here if we worked it right. He and I both started working at it. Finally, we got a branch of the University in Huntsville." Thrasher and Richardson are considered cofounders of the campus, which today has about 7,000 students.

"I'm really pleased that I had something to do with establishing the university," Thrasher said.

Another accomplishment of which he is very proud is serving as chair of the Huntsville Industrial Development Commission from 1965 to 1976. During this time a dozen major industries were recruited and came to Huntsville.

Joe Hinds, current chairman of that board, told *The Huntsville Times*, "[Tom Thrasher] was the consummate gentleman, easy to talk to, eager to be helpful. You just knew you were talking to someone sincere, and I think that's how he came across to people considering coming to Huntsville."

Tom Thrasher is also a hockey fan and helped to get the UAH Chargers hockey team started in 1978. The UAH Chargers, which first started as a club sport, had no financial backing in its early days. But Tom Thrasher wrote a check for \$5,000 from the

UAH Foundation, which covered the cost of the team's outfits for its first year in 1978. "It was totally unsolicited and he took no credit," said Joe Ritch, former head coach for the team, quoted in the same *Huntsville Times* article.

Dorothy Pruett's *Our Thrasher Heritage* includes these other accomplishments for Tom Thrasher: In 1958 he was appointed to the U.S. Army Civil Advisory Committee, Third Army Headquarters. In 1961, President Kennedy appointed him to serve on the National U.S.O. Board for three years. He was on the board of directors for the Alabama State Chamber of Commerce from 1962 to 1994 and is a former vice president. He was on the Huntsville School Board from 1952 to 1961 and was president for two years. He has been vice chairman and member of the U.S. Army Civilian Advisory Committee since its inception.

In 1991, the Department of the Army awarded Tom its Decoration for Distinguished Civilian Service. The award, signed by the Secretary of the Army, commends him for helping the Army "forge a unique bond and partnership between Redstone Arsenal, the soldiers and civilians who served there, and their civilian neighbors in North Alabama" and also for helping the Army "recruit, build and retain its world-class missile team at Redstone."

Why has he done so much for Huntsville? With characteristic modesty and honesty, he replies, "I had a selfish interest. I felt by getting involved, I would become better known and people would know me better and, after all, it would improve the oil business."

He has attended almost every annual family reunion since 1974 and has a strong interest in family genealogy. "Since I lost my father so early, I only knew a couple of Thrasher cousins growing up. Being involved has helped me stay connected to this side of my family. I've enjoyed seeing people that I have a little something in common with. They've all been very nice."

This article is based on a June 25, 1997, interview with Tom Thrasher in Montgomery; information from a June 16, 1996, article about him in the Huntsville Times; and Dorothy Pruett's book, Our Thrasher Heritage (pp. 385-388).

David Sumner

Editor's Corner



Oscar the Grouch has returned to the Editor's Corner, but only because the editor is disorganized. Please forgive any errors and/or omissions in this newsletter and the next one because I'll have a foot in two states for the next few months. I retired last month and am trying to get a house built in Florida while still keeping my home in Colorado. I'm alternating between the two places right now, and don't have access to my computer while in Florida. If you have anything you would like to have included in the next issue, send it to my Colorado address, 8770F Allison Drive, Arvada, CO 80005.

Meanwhile, thanks to David Sumner for the writeup of his interview with Tom Thrasher at last June's reunion and to Dot Pruett for providing the article with the information on Montgomery and the upcoming reunion, as well as the picture accompanying David's article.

THRASHER FAMILY REUNION
June 26-27, 1998

The 1998 THRASHER REUNION will be held, again, in Montgomery, Ala., on the weekend of Friday, June 26, and Saturday, June 27. The Holiday Inn East - Holidome at 1185 East Boulevard and Interstate 85 will be our reunion headquarters.

The Holiday Inn will again give us a special rate of \$59.95 (flat rate for 1 - 4 people in the room). All rooms have either a king-size bed or two double beds.

We have set aside 20 rooms, which they will hold for us until June 8th. If you wish to come in a day earlier, the Holiday Inn will honor the same rate.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE BY CONTACTING THE HOLIDAY INN DIRECTLY:

Telephone: (334) 272-0370
Fax: (334) 270-0339

TELL THEM YOU WILL BE ATTENDING THE THRASHER REUNION. CHECK-IN TIME IS 3 P.M.

Since we have set aside only 20 rooms, if you are planning to attend make your reservations early and, if necessary, cancel later.

We will have our HOSPITALITY ROOM again this year -- Room 212 -- which will be open on Friday and Saturday, from noon until 4 p.m., in order to give you time to dress and drive out to the barbeque by 5:30 on Friday and to assemble in the SAVANNAH ROOM on Saturday for the meeting and banquet. There will be snacks and soft drinks available in the Hospitality Room.

The Holidome has many features which will be attractive to young people, including:

Beautiful Indoor Pool
Recreation Room
Exercise Room
Pool Table
Ping-Pong

The Holiday Inn does not have a dining room, but they do have room service. This is due to the fact that they are surrounded by many excellent full-service restaurants and well as fast-food franchises. A copy of the Montgomery Area Visitors' Guide, published by the Montgomery Chamber of Commerce, will be available in the Hospitality Room.

REUNION EVENTS

Friday, June 26th:

Again this year, a barbeque will be held at the palatial Hudson home on Pike Road in Montgomery. I am sure those of you who were here last year will join me in saying that this is an experience you will not want to miss!

Since our reunion last year, the area of Pike Road where the Hudson home is located has been annexed into the City of Montgomery. There is now a MONTGOMERY CITY LIMITS sign at the entrance to the long driveway to the house. A map will be furnished prior to the evening. If you need a ride, check with the Hospitality Room.

In addition to the good food, there will be entertainment, as well as time to renew fellowships with all of our cousins.

Saturday, June 27th:

Our meeting and banquet will be held in the SAVANNAH ROOM of the Holiday Inn. The room will be available from 5 p.m. until ??????. Dinner will be served around 6 p.m. and will be buffet style. The menu will include:

FRIED CHICKEN, ROAST BEEF (inside round, with carver), GREEN BEANS ALMONDINE, CORN O'BRYAN, SCALLOPED POTATOES, CARROT AND RAISIN SALAD, POTATO SALAD, MACARONI SALAD, CONDIMENTS and ROLLS and PECAN PIE.

PROGRAM:

We will have several interesting speakers, including by popular request, a return appearance by ANNIE CRENSHAW, whom many of you heard last year. She is a very interesting speaker, and talks on several subjects.

REGISTRATION:

In order to simplify the bookkeeping, it was decided to cover everything with one registration fee, which will include both meals (the barbeque and banquet Friday and Saturday nights) and all of the reunion events.

Children under 6	Free
Children 7 - 12 years	\$12.50
All over 12 years	\$25.00

For those of you who find it impossible to arrive in time for the Friday night barbeque, an adjustment will be made. However, we hope you will not have to miss the delightful evening planned at the Hudson home.

PLEASE MAKE YOUR ARRANGEMENTS NOW TO INCLUDE THE 1998 THRASHER REUNION IN YOUR 1998 VACATION PLANS. BRING THE YOUNG FOLKS, AS WE ARE SURE THEY WILL ENJOY THE MANY ACTIVITIES, AS WELL AS GETTING TO KNOW THEIR THRASHER COUSINS.

Just a reminder: If you didn't take care of it at the last reunion and haven't had time or have forgotten to mail your 1997-98 dues (\$20), please complete the coupon below to ensure that your information is up-to-date and send it along with your check to Dot. Thanks.

1997-98 Thrasher Family Association Dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Amount Enclosed: _____

Return to: Dot Pruett
4245 Shamrock Lane
Montgomery, AL 36106

Some points of interest in Montgomery you may wish to see are listed as follows:

- 1 - The relocated graves of THOMAS BARTON, his wife SARAH (KEYES) BARTON, and two of their daughters, SARAH E. BARTON and HARRIET PINKSTON, which are now located near their original resting place on the BARTON Plantation, which they originally settled in 1817, two years before Alabama became a state, in 1819. THOMAS BARTON was the son of our DAVID BARTON, who went into Kentucky with DANIEL BOONE, where he was killed by Indians. THOMAS BARTON was a brother of our SUSAN BARTON, who married JOHN THRASHER, our REVOLUTIONARY ANCESTORS. You will probably want to bring your cameras and take pictures of these graves, as THOMAS BARTON died in 1826, and SARAH BARTON in 1845. As with many old tombstones, it is not known how long these markers will be in existence.
- 2 - Alabama State Capitol - The Capitol has recently undergone major renovation and is very beautiful. You will want to see the star on the steps where Jefferson Davis took the oath of office as President of the Confederate States of America.
- 3 - First White House of the Confederacy, where President Jefferson Davis and his wife lived.
- 4 - Alabama Shakespeare Theatre. Schedule to be announced.
- 5 - Beautiful new Montgomery Zoo. Discounted rate for group of 10 or more.
- 6 - Lovely Jasmine Hill Gardens and Outdoor Museum, known as "Alabama's Little Corner of Greece". You would enjoy seeing the extensive collection of fountains, pools and famous Greek statuary -- and the beautiful flowers. Adult admission \$3.50; children 6-12 yrs. \$2.00; children under 6 - Free. Schedule will be found in your Montgomery Area Visitors' Guide.
- 7 - Victoryland Greyhound Racing Park. Admission limited to persons 19 yrs. and over.
- 8 - Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts, within the Wynton M. Blount Cultural Park, noted for its collection of 19th and 20th century paintings in the Blount Collection, and other interesting art collections. Admission Free. Handicapped accessible.
- 9 - Old Alabama Town - over three blocks of houses and landscapes showing how people lived in Central Alabama from 1800 to 1900. Many visitors are attracted to this place each year.
- 10- Shopping: The Holiday Inn is located about half way between two major shopping malls -- The Montgomery Mall and The Eastdale Mall. Both have Gayfers, Parisians and Pennys -- and a McRae's is located in the Eastdale Mall. There are also many specialty shops.

The Thrasher Newsletter

Mentor: Dot Pruett Editor: Barbara Eger Circulation: John E. Thrasher III Volume 16 No. 3 May 1998

Jerry Hudson again to host Friday event for Thrasher Reunion attendees

by David E. Sumner

Fitzgerald S. (Jerry) Hudson is again the Friday night host for this year's Thrasher Family Reunion. While last year's was the only the second Thrasher reunion he has attended, he says, "I've known Dot and had a great admiration for her for a long time. When she told me last year they wanted to have it in Montgomery, I offered to have everyone for a barbecue at my place."

Jerry Hudson has more accomplishments in his business career than this newsletter could hold. He built his own multimillion dollar insurance bonding company, served as Chairman of the Board of Trustees at Duke University for five years, and has a building named after him at Duke. He maintains his company's headquarters in Charlotte, North Carolina. The annual reunion will again be held in Montgomery, and Jerry will repeat last year's Friday night get-together at his Montgomery home and 2,000-acre ranch.

I caught him at the end of last year's Montgomery reunion and asked him to share a little about himself. "I grew up here in Montgomery," says Jerry. "I went to high school at Sydney Lanier." The son of Elizabeth Graff (1886-1948) and Holt Harrison Hudson (1886-1945), his maternal grandmother was Mary Lillian Thrasher (1857-1922).

"I left here and went to Auburn my freshman year. Then I joined the Marines in World War II. And they sent me to Duke. And then I took engineering work at Duke. Near the end of the war, they sent me to Michigan to do some work in civil engineering. That was right toward the end of the war in 1945. And I then was sent back to Parris Island...then to OCS at Quantico and was stationed there when the War ended. I went back to Duke to finish some required courses and graduated in 1946."

After graduating from Duke with his civil engineering degree, "I went to Atlanta and went to work for American Rolling Mill Company. I was a civil engineer and worked as a production engineer in their East Point plant.

I learned there that I wasn't cut out to be a plant engineer, so I ended up going into the insurance business in an engineering capacity.

"I made the transition over into insurance and then quickly into bonding. So I was offered an opportunity to go back to North Carolina in 1949 and open up an agency that specialized in construction bonding. Then I got called back into the Marines during the Korean War in 1951. I didn't go to Korea, but was in the Marines two years. I was discharged as a captain. I went back to the insurance business and stayed at it 40 years.

"We had a small insurance agency. The first year, 1950, we produced \$32,000 in revenue. When I sold it to a big British broker after lots of changes in 41 years, we had \$27 million in revenue that year (1991). We had offices from Boston to San Diego to Tampa--fourteen of them."

"What does a surety bond do?" I asked Jerry. "We wrote surety contracts with the owner of a construction project," he replied. "A performance and payment bond is a contract. We guarantee that the contractor he selects--we guarantee that this contractor will perform that contract for the price stated in the time allowed according to plans and specifications.

"Does it sound like I've said that before?" he asked. "Just three million times," he said with a laugh.

Jerry bought his Montgomery ranch about 1974. "I had been in the cattle business in Paraguay. We finally closed that operation down completely in 1982. We were making money, but the Paraguayan currency kept declining. When we went down there, it was 125 guaranis to the dollar and when we got out it was 400 to the dollar. No matter how much we made, we couldn't keep up. We finally shut it down.

"We looked in Ecuador, Columbia, Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Texas,

Jerry Hudson (cont. from pg. 1)

and New Mexico. We ended up in Alabama. That was sort of pre-ordained, I think. I was delighted to do something at home."

He says the ranch has "six hundred mother cows. That means you've got about two thousand on the ranch all the time with the feeders and calves, bulls, etc. It's an active cattle ranch, but we've never made much money from it."

He married the former Susan Minshall Wainright in 1980. He has four children by two earlier marriages. His current business is run by his sons. "One son was an art student at UNC at Chapel Hill and ended up coming to Auburn and taking business agriculture. Then he got his MBA at Carolina. He runs something called Hudson Group Partners. That includes all of my children, four children, as the partners. They're the limited partners; I'm the general partner.

"One son is a financial manager. He has an older brother who is a lawyer. The other two, one sister and a brother, are equal partners, but they're not in the business. One of them is an aircraft broker and leases airplanes to third world airlines in San Francisco. The daughter is an interior decorator married to an investment banker in Baltimore."

Hudson was asked to join the board of trustees at Duke in 1978 and served as chairman from 1986-1990. "I've been very close to the university ever since I graduated. I've been involved in fundraising and chair of something called the Dean's Council. There's a building there, the engineering building, named Hudson Hall. We've given some money for that and to endow a couple of professorships.

"It's a great school, and I'm very proud of Duke. I think Duke's made a real surge to the top. In the "U.S. News" rankings, Duke's gone from tenth or twelfth to fourth, and only behind Yale, Princeton, and Harvard."

Some of Jerry's other affiliations include: underwriting member of Lloyd's of London; director of the Duke University Management Company; past president of the National Association of Surety Bond Producers; and Board of Trustees of the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association. He is a director and past chairman of the Walthour Moss Foundation of Southern Pines, North Carolina.

Montgomery again "The Place to Be"

The Montgomery Thrashers' family spirit was high enough that they volunteered to repeat last year's very successful and enjoyable reunion again in 1998. Bill and Velma Thrasher are in charge of event reservations, while hotel reservations should again be made directly with the Holiday Inn East. All of the information necessary to make your plans to be in Montgomery June 26 - 28 is farther back in this newsletter. Don't delay, or you may miss out.

Everyone attending last year's reunion said it was one of the best ever. The Saturday night program following the banquet will feature several interesting speakers, including a return visit by genealogist Annie Crenshaw. Again, if you have pictures or family memorabilia that you would like to share, there will be display tables available Saturday night.

Capital City praised by travel magazine

Historic Traveler magazine has named Montgomery as one of America's essential historic sites.

Montgomery was one of 25 sites which the magazine said provides an historic and geographic overview of the nation.

A visit to all 25, which include Williamsburg, Monticello, Independence Hall, the Alamo, Gettysburg and Mount Rushmore, among others, will give tourists a profile of historical events which shaped the nation.

More than 100 historians, politicians, news media figures and the magazine's contributors picked the sites.

reprinted from the Montgomery Advertiser, and sent in by Dot Pruett.

	<h3>Editor's Corner</h3> <p>As I wrote in the last newsletter, I'm in the process of moving from Colorado to Dade City (If the builder ever gets my new home finished!). Since right now my files and computer are still in Colorado, until July any newsletter material that you may want to contribute should be sent to me at 8770E Allison Drive, Arvada, CO 80005. This will change sometime during the latter half of July, and the new address will be 13318 Omega Court, Dade City, FL 33525. My e-mail address, <eger@spot.colorado.edu> will be the same until I can get connected with an ISP in Florida.</p>
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Bits and Pieces

Golden Anniversary:

Congratulations and best wishes to Aubrey Elbert Sturgis, Jr. and Janette Rogers Sturgis, who celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary recently. The couple were honored with a reception held March 21 at the Excess House, Marion, Ala., which was given by their children, Linda Radcliffe, Brad Sturgis, Faye Barnett and Janet Miller. The flower and food arrangements were done by their daughter-in-law, Page Murfee Sturgis.

Graduations:

Amy Evelyn Boak, Dot Pruett's great-niece, will graduate from Trinity Presbyterian High School in Montgomery on May 24th. She was the honoree at a tea given by her aunts and great-aunts in April.

Matthew Elliott Payne, son of Debbie Broughton Payne, will receive his B.S. in Chemical Engineering from Auburn University in June.

Congratulations to Amy and Matt, and to any other graduates in the family.

Wedding Bells:

Margaret Ann Thrasher, daughter of Colonel and Mrs. Warren Thrasher, and Donald Bruce-Law celebrated their marriage December 17, 1997, in Madison, Georgia. Best wishes for their happiness from all the family.

Get-Well Wishes:

Best wishes for a speedy recovery to Rob Eger, who was injured in an accident May 4. While stopped in traffic at a red light on his way home from work, he was rear-ended. Since there was a car in front of him, he was caught between the two vehicles and thrown from his motorcycle. He is recovering from a fractured vertebra and other less serious injuries. A special request from your editor: Please keep him in your thoughts.

Does anyone know these Thrashers?

An article in the Gainesville Sun mentions a Dr. Charles White and "his wife, real estate agent and former Memphis TV personality Marge Thrasher." The piece was a wire service pickup on downsizing your home.

And in the Denver Post recently, a Mary Thrasher was mentioned as a member of the Board of Trustees of Bennett, Colorado, a town of 2,000 out on the eastern plains.

Overseas research:

Nancy Thrasher Cherry is endeavoring to establish connections with Thrasher researchers in the UK. She wrote to the Bradford Family History Society, the Guild of One-Name Studies, and the Wiltshire Family History Society asking their help and included copies of both the MATA Newsletter and our newsletter. Perhaps Nancy will have more information on this at the reunion.

Kentucky/Tennessee Thrasher roots:

Some time ago Sandy Thrasher Harbison sent me a copy of her family information that had been researched originally by Charles Royster Thrasher of Albany Kentucky and updated by Sandy. She wrote that her mother was a Thrasher who married a Thrasher. Sandy mentioned that there are several Isaac Thrashers in their history. She also hoped to be able to attend the reunion this year. In case she is unable to be there, I will bring the material she sent me so that anyone who is interested can get in touch with her.

Coming in the next issue:

Some time ago, Ashley Thrasher sent me a list of things and places with the Thrasher name. I haven't been able to get it keyboarded yet because of my currently nomadic life but should have it ready for the next issue. It was a wonderful project, and when you see it please send any additions you may know about. Ashley, thanks for your hard work chasing these down.

1768 Thrasher will transcribed by Association member

Greg Wickenburg, one of our members, has set up a Thrasher list via e-mail, which has a lot of interesting items and queries. The following is the will of Richard Thrasher, recorded in March 1768, which Greg transcribed for the list. The spelling is as it was in the original will, and some of the words are too difficult to read, although Greg has done an excellent job. Greg's comments on the will are at the end. Thanks, Greg, for sending this out. It makes a great addition to the newsletter.

In the name of God amen, January the Twenty Eighth One Thousand Seven Hundred and Sixty Eight. I, Richard Thrasher of the County of Frederick & colony of Virginia being Sick & Weak of Body but sound & perfect memory do make this my Last Will and Testament.

First my desire is that my body may be Entered in Christian like form. Secondly my desire is that my debts should be paid.

Item: I give & bequeath unto my eldest son William Thrasher one dark Bay horse branded with TV which he has now in Possession.

Item: I also give and bequeath unto my next eldest son Robert one Bay mare branded with RT which he is now possessed with.

Item: I also give and bequeath unto my lawfull wife Ann (Silor?) one Black mare branded with a single R upon the left shoulder and likewise the side saddle which she now has in possession and if the said mare should bring a colt this Spring, then I give and bequeath the said colt unto my son John & desire he may be possessed of it when it is a year old.

I also give and bequeath unto my lawfull Ann (Sillor) her Third of my personal estate and as for my two last children Thomas & (the supposed) Benjamin my youngest not yet Christend. I give and bequeath unto them one shilling sterling a piece & then for the rest of my Estate to be sold and equally divided amongst the rest of my children and the money to be Putout house tell those come of age.

Item: I nominate constitute & appoint my friend & neighbor (James Catlett? Sen?) & my eldest son William Thrasher executors of this my last will and testament. Revoking all other Wills by me heretofore made and do acknowledge this & no other to be my Last Will and Testament and further as for the lott I now live upon my desire is that my wife may live upon it doing the Land lord pleasure and as for the other lot that is on the other side of the Run I leave it to my two eldest sons in the like manner in witness I have here unto set my hand and affixed my seal the day & time before mentioned.

Signed sealed published & declared to be my Last Will & Testament in the presence of us,

John (Andrews?)

George (Farrow?)

Thomas (his T mark) (Howell?)

Richard (his RT mark) Thrasher

At a Court held for Frederick County March (-) 1768 This Last Will and Testament of Richard Thrasher dec'd was produced in court by James (Catlett? Sen?) & William Thrasher the executors therein named who made oath thereto same being proved by the oaths of John (Andrews?) & George (Farrow?) Witnesses thereto is Ordered to be recorded, and on the motion of the Said executors who having complied with the same certificate is granted them for obtaining letters of administration of the said decedents Estate in due form of law.

By the Court

(- - -)

From Greg: I'm sure a word or 2 may be wrong. I'm not sure what is meant by the phrase "my two last children Thomas & the supposed Benjamin." That's what it looks like. Is this a legal term? is he not born yet? did she have an affair and Richard not think he is the father? Not sure about that.

From Barbara: In reading the will, I noticed that Benjamin was "not yet Christend," so I would guess in those days a child's name was perhaps not "official" until that child was christened. Anyone else have any comments?

THRASHER FAMILY REUNION

June 26-27, 1998

PLACE: Holiday Inn East - Holidome (Headquarters)
1185 East Boulevard
Montgomery, Alabama

ROOM RATES: All rooms are \$59.00, flat rate -- up to four (4) in room.
Check-in time - 3:00 P.M.
We have set aside 20 rooms, which will be held for us
until June 8th

PLEASE MAKE YOUR OWN RESERVATIONS WITH THE HOLIDAY INN:

Telephone: (334) 272-0370
Fax (334) 270-0339

HOSPITALITY ROOM: We will have Room #212 open on Friday, and also on
Saturday, from Noon until 4:00 P.M., in order to give you
time to dress and drive out to the barbecue on Friday
night, by 5:30 P.M. There will be snacks and soft
drinks available.

EVENTS: Friday Night - June 26th

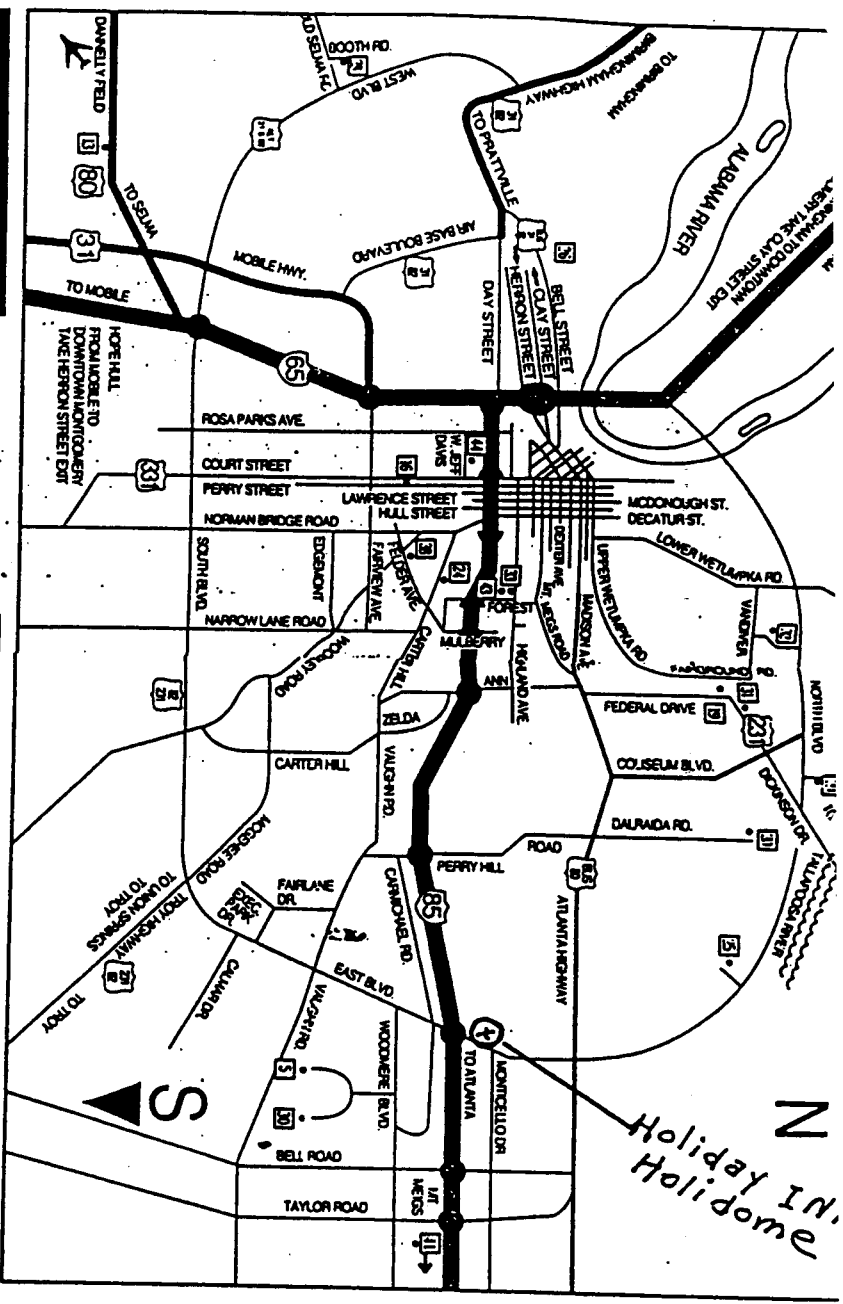
A barbecue will be held at the palatial HUDSON HOME, on
Pike Road, Montgomery, Ala. I am sure those of you who
were here last year will join me in saying that this is
an experience you would not want to miss!!!

Since our reunion last year, the area of Pike Road in which
the Hudson home is located, has been annexed into the City
of Montgomery. There is a MONTGOMERY CITY LIMITS sign at
the long driveway into the house. A map will be furnished

BANQUET: The banquet will be held in the SAVANNAH ROOM of the
Holiday Inn. The room will be available from 5:00 P.M. -
until ---

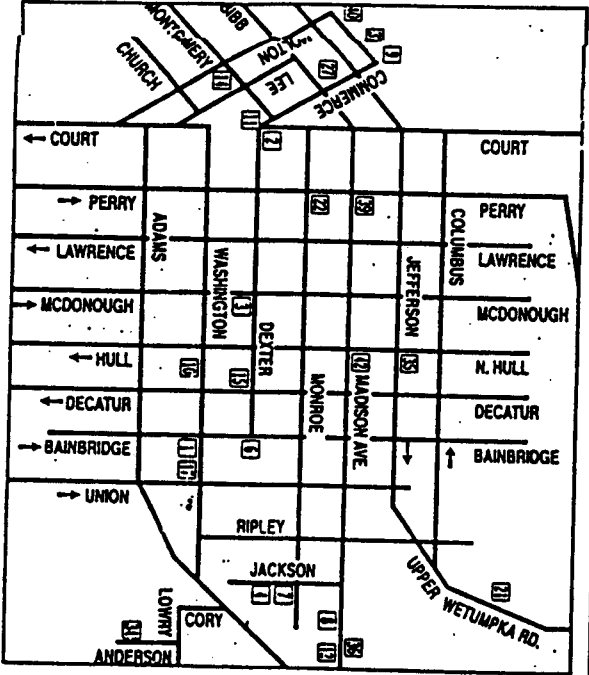
MENU: FRIED CHICKEN, ROAST BEEF (inside round, with carve)
GREEN BEANS ALMONDINE, CORN O'BRIEN;; SCALLOPED
POTATOES, CARROT and RAISIN SALAD, POTATO SALAD,
MACARONI SALAD. CONDIMENTS and ROLLS and PECAN PIE

PROGRAM: We will have several interesting speakers, to include by
popular request, a return appearance of ANNIE CRENSHAW,
whom many of you heard last year -- however she is a very
sought-after speaker, and talks on several subjects.



ATTRACTIONS

1. Alabama Archives & History Museum
2. Alabama Artists Gallery
3. Alabama Judicial Building
4. Alabama Science Center
5. Alabama Shakespeare Festival
6. Alabama State Capitol
7. Alabama War Memorial
8. Armory Learning Arts Ctr.
9. Betsy Ann Riverboat
10. Civil Rights Memorial
11. Court Square Fountain
12. Crumley Bowl
13. Dannelly Field Municipal Airport
14. Davis Theatre for the Performing Arts
15. Dexter Avenue King Memorial Baptist Church
16. Executive Mansion
17. First White House of the Confederacy
18. Fort Toulouse/Jackson Park
19. Garrett Coliseum
20. Gunter Annex, MAFB and Museum
21. Hank Williams Memorial
22. Hank Williams Statue
23. Jasmine Hill Gardens & Outdoor Museum
24. Joe L. Reed Academic Lagoon Park
26. Maxwell Air Force Base
27. Montgomery Civic Ctr.
28. Montgomery Motor Speedway
29. Montgomery Motorsports Park
30. Montgomery Museum of Fine Arts
31. Montgomery State Farmers Market
32. Montgomery Zoo
33. Oak Park
34. O'Connor Tennis Center
35. Old Alabama Town
36. Paterson Field Baseball Park
37. Riverfront Park
38. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald Museum
39. St. John's Episcopal Church



40. Union Station
41. Victoryland Greyhound Racing Park
42. Visitor Center
43. W.A. Gayle Planetarium
44. World Heritage Museum