



# Wells

## Family Association, Inc.

Volume 10.

July 1990



From our President...

As in the days of Caesar Augusta when a decree was issued that a census would be taken of the entire Roman world and everyone was to return to his/her own town to register, and as Joseph and Mary went to Bethlehem so will the Wells family make their way across country to Johnson County, Kentucky on September 1st and 2nd to register as we have for the last eight years in memory of Richard and Susanna Hutchinson Wells. Richard and Susanna Hutchinson Wells traveled from Scott County, Virginia around 1818-1820 to Floyd County, Ky, which in 1843 became Johnson County the 97th county in the State of Kentucky.

Richard and Susanna both are buried on Rt. 3, Daniels Creek, Van Lear, Kentucky. Richard is buried on the property of Ashley Butcher and Susanna on the property of Georgia Richmond Hall. Many of their descendants still reside in Johnson County and the joining counties. However, others moved away, some as far West as California and South as far as Florida. It is believed that Wells Relatives reside in all fifty states and some foreign countries.

I'm sure most of you marked your calendars as I did and are already making plans to be at the 1990 ANNUAL WELLS FAMILY REUNION. The Board Members have already met twice and are scheduled to meet again on July 28th. We need your input on how to make the reunion the best ever. There will be prizes given to the oldest, the youngest, and the member traveling the farthest distance, and the family with the most children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren present. Start now contacting your family members, you may be the winner!!!

There have been some changes in our Saturday evening activities. Due to a conflict in scheduling of the Johnson Central High School, the members taking the grave tours should be on the parking lot of the Central Elementary School adjacent to Johnson Central High School at 4:30 p.m. Refreshments will be provided at 7:30 p.m. at the elementary school and workers will move to the high school at 8:15 p.m. to set up for the Sunday Reunion. Please wear comfortable shoes and clothes if you plan to take the grave tours. The Auxier Cemetary near the Auxier Government Relocation Cemetery will be added to the tour this year. You may want to have some insect repellent handy as chiggers were very bad last year.

Contact your close family members and encourage them to attend the reunion. We know they will have a wonderful time. Looking forward to seeing you there. If you have any questions, feel free to call me at (606)325-4314.

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I want to let each of you know that Phillip and Wanda Wells, Co-Editors of our newsletter are in need of our prayers. The First of April Phillip became ill on the job and was taken to the emergency room and found to have cancer of the stomach, and on April 7th he had surgery in Lexington. They removed 90% of his stomach. He isn't doing very well and is presently back in the hospital. Please remember him in your prayers and remember Wanda and their children during this difficult time. Phillip and Wanda are both on our Board and have faithfully supported the Association, and we really miss their not being able to attend the Board Meetings.

Phillip, our prayer is that you will be well and back with us soon. If you want to send Phillip a card his address is 709 Hamilton Av., Ashland, Ky. 41101.

Mary W. Walton  
124 Mt. Savage Dr.  
Ashland, Ky 41101

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#### SECRETARY'S REPORT

A Board meeting of the Wells Family Association was held on Saturday, May 5, 1990 at the Highland House Restaurant on U.S. 23, in Paintsville, Kentucky.



The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:55 p.m. by our President, Mary Walton.

She announced that the Treasurer's report would not be read due to the absence of our Treasurer, Wanda Wells.

The minutes of our previous meeting were read by the Secretary, Tommie Cechran. There were no additions or corrections and the minutes were approved as read.

#### OLD BUSINESS

Pat Williams gave a report on the quilt project and a motion was made and passed by the group to have a quilt made for the 1990 reunion with 1990 and the location in the center, the names of Richard and Suzanne Hutchinson Wells and their children around it. A \$200 ceiling was placed on the purchase price of the quilt. Our President appointed Delores Booth and Bobby Wells as a committee to help Pat Williams work out the details of the quilt.

Correspondence from Paul Setser was read by the President granting us permission to use the facilities at Johnson Central High School for our 1990

reunion on September 1st and 2nd.

Mr. Setser informed us that we would need to have the premises insured for the time we were using the facilities. Mary Walton agreed to check on insurance of the facilities.

It was decided that we would need to clear the tables and do what we can to return the cafeteria to order, so we will be charged less for those services.

James Wells was not present due to other commitments and we do not know if he has made any progress on the T-Shirt project. This will be discussed at the next Board meeting.

#### CALENDAR PROJECT

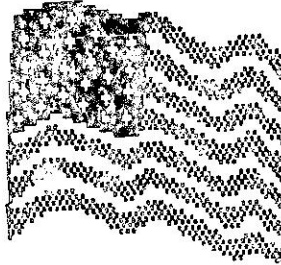
Pat Williams informed the Board that she needed help in obtaining pictures of the 12 descendents of Richard Wells (one for each month). After several suggestions were made the President authorized Pat Williams to go ahead with the project at her discretion.

#### MEMORIAL STONE

There was a lengthy discussion on the implementing of the Memorial Stone project. It was agreed that the Memorial will be placed at the Old Log Church Cemetery where it is known that approximately seventy-five graves are unmarked. It is known that Roseann Wells Spears, Susanna Hutchinson Wells and Moses Wells and at least 15 other Wells relatives are buried in the cemetery. Mary Walton appointed Delores Booth, Bobby Wells, Mabel Wells and Lloyd Wells to check on sizes and

prices so they can bring information to the next Board meeting for a decision to be made.

#### HISTORICAL COMMITTEE



Bobby Wells needs information on the George E. Wells line. He needs to have information printed for resale at the 1990 reunion. We need 100 copies of 150 pages (75 if copied using both sides). Bobby Wells is checking with printers in the Johnson and Floyd County area and Mary Walton will check the Ashland area to compare prices.

#### NOMINATION COMMITTEE

Manford Walton made a motion that Virginia Edgel serve out Woodrow Allen's term on the Nomination Committee. It was second and approved by the group.

#### HOSTESS COMMITTEE

The group approved that Wanda Wells be allowed to write checks to purchase needed paper products for the 1990 reunion.

#### WELCOME AND ENTERTAINMENT COMMITTEE

This committee was not represented at the meeting but the Board decided that Lyman Porter will be in charge of registering guests. It was suggested that we have several persons with carts at the entrance of Johnson Central School to pick up covered dishes so that those entering will be able to register with as little

confusion as possible. This is an attempt to get everyone registered. The Committee will work out the details.

#### NEW BUSINESS

##### Auction:

Ann Porter explained a Chinese Auction to us--one wishing to bid buys numbers and places a bid in a cup in front of the item they wish to bid on. Numbers may be placed on one item or on several--the one with the most numbers on one item gets the item. She also explained a Silent Auction--The bidder writes down the price he is willing to pay for the item and places it in front of the item.

It was decided to have a regular auction on more valued items and a silent auction on lesser valued items.

Ann Porter, Chairperson will be in charge and Jim Preston assisting as the auctioneer.

#### NEWSLETTER

Phillip and Wanda Wells are Co-Editors of the Newsletter and due to Phillip's illness the group decided that only one more Newsletter will go out before the 1990 reunion. We need information or data concerning deaths, births, marriages and any other note worthy news for the newsletter. Pat Williams submitted the information she had to Wanda and Phillip Wells by Mary Walton.

#### CLEANING OF GRAVE SITES

Mary Walton suggested we find persons willing to clean grave sites prior to the reunion. It was suggested that we try to get the young people involved in the project.

The Auxier Cemetery, located on the Jenny Wiley Trail near the Auxier Relocation Cemetery will be added to the tour this year.

The new Board meeting was scheduled for July 28th at 1:00 p.m. at the home of Manford and Mary Walton.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

There were a total of 14 members and one guest.

Tommy Cochran  
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#### TREASURER'S REPORT

11-29-89 Balance	\$1824.18
Receipts	+39.00
Disbursements	<u>-238.97</u>
	\$1624.21

It may appear that we have a good balance in our treasure, but designated funds for Calendar Project, Memorial Stone, etc, is \$362.00, leaving us a balance of

\$1,262.21

The cost of printing and mailing the newsletter will cost approximately \$150.00. (As you know postage went up and the bulk mail permit went from \$50 to \$60 annually). Out of the balance above, the cost for the newsletter will be taken out plus the cost for printing the calendar and printing of the transcript on the George E. Wells line. There will also be the cost of purchasing paper products, goblets for gifts and having the quilt made to be deducted

from the above balance. Hopefully we will have enough to cover all the needed expenses until some of the items can be purchased at the Reunion.

Thanks for your continued support of the Reunion.

Wanda Wells

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**NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

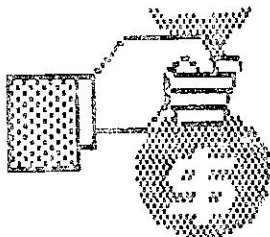
The Nomination Committee is at work on behalf of the Wells Family Association. We will be looking for persons to nominate for officers and committee members for the 1990-90 year. If you are willing to serve or know of someone that you think would serve on any of the positions, contact one of the members. The person for the position will be contacted and if they are willing to serve their name will be submitted along with the slate of nominated officers to the association on September 2, 1990 to be elected by the group. It is important that you contact one of us prior to the reunion. Thank you for your support and assistance to the nomination committee.

Manford Walton, chairperson  
Virginia Edgel  
Charles C. Wells

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**AUCTION**

Once again we are having an auction at our annual reunion. The money derived from the sale is to be used for markers for graves.



Don't forget to bring items for the sale. This year, to make it more interesting, we will have three kinds of auctions. You will enjoy the traditional-type auction, a Chinese auction and a silent auction.

Let's see if we can top the amount we realized last year, **\$230.00.**

Ann Porter, Chairperson

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**HISTORICAL COMMITTEE**

Your Historical Committee thought you may be interested in this information and if you are a descendent of Andrew Wells you may want to contact Margaret. The following is an excerpt from a letter written to Patti V. Quallich on Dec. 6th, 1989 by Margaret S. Berryman:

Dear Patti,  
"...I am so happy to have the information on Richard and Sussanah Wells and now plan to go to Kentucky in the spring. Now I know exactly where to go for my early proofs of lineage for DAR. I never dared hoped for as much as you sent me and I am very grateful. I am also very much interested in the Wells Association and do wish to join.

I am sending you all the information I have which my mother received in notes written to her by Cora Wells Cox years ago...Mother is living with me and is 86 years old... Maybe you can compare it with your notes and make any corrections or additions. One thing I need is a death date for Walter L. Wells (b 1 Oct 1855) as the wills in

Jefferson County, Iowa are filed in chronological order.

My grandparents, Floyd Alverson Wells and Ada Virgie Parrott married in Iowa on 10 Dec 1901 and later moved to St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin for 2 years before coming to Virginia in 1914. Granddad worked for the railroad then and later in the chemical plants in Hopewell until his death in 1950. I was too young to get any information from him and although Grandma lived until 1976, she never talked about her family and I doubt she knew much about the Wells...I have visited in Iowa twice, but only saw the children and grandchildren of Grandma's sister...

...Hearing from you was a real pleasure and I send my best wishes to you and your family for a happy holiday season.

Very truly yours,

Margaret S. Berryman  
Chestnut Farm  
Route 1, Box 217  
Surry, Virginia 23883

The following information was attached to the above letter and it is furnished to you in full as follows:

"Richard Wells & Susannah Hutchinson  
/  
Andrew Wells & Polly Mobley  
/  
Rufus Morgan Wells & Mary Ann Groves  
/  
Walter L. Wells & Ellen Alverson (1st)  
/  
Floyd Alverson Wells & Ada Virgie Parrott  
/  
Gladys Lillian Wells & Joseph Shepherd Berryman  
Had the following children:  
Joseph Wells Berryman b 13 Jan 1929

Margaret Sue Berryman b 5 Mar 1941  
Ben R. Berryman b 11 Aug 1942

could be Humphrey  
WELLS

Brothers, George and Amphry Wells came to Philadelphia from Sussex, England in 1765.

\*Amphry Wells had a family but George was a single man and a medical doctor. He took his nephew \*Richard Wells to raise and educate when the boy was eight years old. They moved to Augusta, Georgia and were successful in accumulating a good fortune. When \*Richard Wells was aged sixteen his Uncle George was killed in a duel with a Mr. Jackson. This was supposed to have been his 6th. duel so he must have been a man of volatile temper. It is said that \*Richard Wells then volunteered in the Army and fought for three years in the Revolutionary War. While a soldier he met Savannah Hutchinson of Scott County, Virginia and then married her in 1797. They emigrated to Floyd County, Kentucky, later called Johnson County. Their children were:

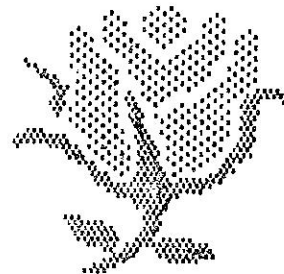
Elizabeth, married Hillman and lived Scott County  
George, lived Johnson County  
\*Andrew, married Polly Mobley  
Peter, lived Boyd County  
Moses, lived Johnson County  
John, lived Ohio  
William G., lived Johnson County, died about 1886  
Rosa, married Sparks and lived Johnson County  
Agnes, married Auriz and lived East Point  
Mary, married Burchee and lived Williamsport  
(all of the above in Kentucky)

\*Andrew Wells, son of Richard and Savannah Hutchinson Wells, married Polly Mobley. Their children were:  
Rufus Morgan, born 20 Nov 1823  
William  
(Rufus Morgan and William emigrated to Jefferson County, Iowa in 1847 or 48.)

William Wells, son of Andrew and Polly Mobley Wells, married Elvira \_\_\_\_\_ in 1850. Their children were: Leona, Charles, Didda, William, Lenard, and Max. No further information on this line.

\*Rufus Morgan Wells, born 20 Nov 1823, son of Richard and Savannah Hutchinson Wells, married Mary Ann Groves, born 30 Sept 1833. They married in 1849. Their children were:  
Laura Ann, born 19 Jun 1850, married William Gants. Children: Lin, Millie, and Frank  
Alla Ethelda, born 1 Oct 1851, married John Hartman. Children: Daisy, Dick, Earl, Winnie, Ethel, Gladie, and twins dying infancy.  
William M., born 7 Dec 1853, married Jeanette Gillette on 1 Jan 1882. Children: Lenora, Cora, Mary, and Lester Morgan  
Lenora and Mary died. Lester Morgan never married. Cora married Claude Cox and did not have children.

\*denotes direct line



\*Walter L., born 1 Oct 1895, married Ellen Alverson. Children: twins  
 Floyd Alverson and a girl, born 19 Jul 1870. Mother and daughter  
 died within days. Second wife was Lucy Myers. Children: Charley,  
 Harry, Bonnie, Kitty, 2 boys and twins dying in infancy.  
 Maryetta, born 2 Dec 1857  
 Frank D., born 28 Mar 1866, married \_\_\_\_\_ . Children: Alma, Shirley and

Edna V., born 26 Mar 1862, married John Gillette on 7 Oct 1886. Children:  
 Edith, Ralph, Ines, Fern, and 3 dying in infancy.

Angelina, born 19 Sept 1864, married William Major. Children: Grace,  
 Emmett, Guy, Effie, Mable, Myrtle, Ray, Olive, Vernon, and 1 girl  
 dying in infancy.

Katy, born 14 Sept 1866

James, born 18 Dec 1868, married Nora Stoborn. Children: Lillian (see below)  
 Walter, Ralph, and Bernice.

\*Floyd Alverson Wells was raised by his aunt and uncle Will and Katy  
 Alverson Armstrong.

\*Floyd Alverson Wells, son of Walter L. and Ellen Alverson Wells, born  
 19 Jul 1878 in Botavia, Iowa and died 28 Dec 1950 in Deepwell, Virginia  
 married Oen Campbell. Children: Olen Wells. Second wife, Ada Virginia  
 Parrott, born 29 Aug 1869 and died 27 Nov 1970 in Norfolk, Virginia, was  
 married 10 Dec 1901. Their children were:

Gladys Lillian, born 6 Oct 1905, married 27 Dec 1927, Joseph  
 Shephard Berryman, born 0 Jun 1884, died 9 Mar 1954. Children:

Joseph Wells, born 10 Jan 1929

Margaret Sue, born 9 Mar 1941

Benjamin Ray, born 18 Aug 1944

John Morgan, born 3 Jan 1909, married Evelyn Pauline Martin. Children:  
 John Morgan, Jr.  
 Barry Martin

Ede Violet, born 10 Jan 1907, married Lucy E. Mowman. Children:  
 Richard Earl  
 Robert Floyd

Alberta, born 25 Feb 1889, died 23 or 29 Mar 1969

Claude Vernon, born 10 Aug 1918, married Leona Knapp. Children:  
 Betty Leona

Ralph Henry, born 26 Nov 1913 married Helen Horton Martin. Children:  
 Barbara Ann  
 Helen  
 Ralph Henry, Jr.

Notes: Gladys, John, Edna, Alberta were born in Everett Grove, Iowa. Claude  
 and Ralph were born in St. George Falls, Wisconsin.

Gene Con said it was true that the Wells family did lose a fortune in  
 Augusta, Georgia. Isaac Wells and his brother I went to Georgia in 1857 or 0  
 to investigate the estate of George Wells and found the administrators bond  
 and it called for 150,000 lbs. sterling, but the records had been destroyed.  
 (Sterling, George was killed under British rule) William Wells later wrote  
 that the investigation was terminated by the War Between the States and the  
 estate turned over to the state of Georgia. //



The Historical Committee will have the George E. Wells line ready for you at the reunion, but remember if you have corrections, please send them to Bobby Wells, or your Secretary who will see that the right person receives the information. Your Historical Committee is at work. Thanks for your assistance.

Bobby Wells, Chairperson  
 John B. Wells  
 Paula Wells  
 Patti Volota Quallich  
 Charles C. Wells

+++++  
 Remember Our Sick.....

It is our prayer that each of you will be well and up and about soon: Addie Wells, Ivory Wells, Julia Williamson, Mrs. Millard Plummer, Patty Livingston, Lillian Wells, Angeline Collins, Uncle George Wells, Carrie Wells, Eyvand Brown, June Wells Adams, Ruth Wells and Phillip Wells. May God bless each of you. Geneva Volota is back in the hospital at Euclid General, Euclid, Ohio.

#### BIRTHDAYS

H A P P Y  
 BIRTHDAY to  
 our over age  
 80 members;  
 may God bless  
 each of you,  
 you are  
 beautiful and  
 we love you.  
 Charles M.  
 Wells will be  
 98 on August  
 29; Lillian Wells will be 93  
 on July 4; Carrie Wells, will  
 be 88 on June 26; George E.  
 Wells, will be 102 on August



28. \*\*\* George is the oldest known Wells today.

If you know of any of our members over 80 years having a birthday, please let us know so we can include them in our next newsletter.

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#### Deaths

The Wells Family has suffered a great loss but our loss will be God's gain. Our prayers are for the love ones you leave behind.

Rollan Wells, 69 years old, born Jan 15, 1921, died March 10, 1990, son of Walker David Wells and Mary Branham Wells. Surviving are his wife, Ruth Bowling Wells, three sons, two daughters and one sister.

Maxie Ramey, 88 born Mar 5, 1902, died Apr 1990, she was the daughter of the late Hiram Brownlow Wells and Cynthia Collins Wells. Surviving are five son's, Charles, William, James, H.B., Jack, and one daughter, Alka May Webb.

Essa Wells, age 81 years, wife of Charles M. Wells, born Nov 18, 1908, died Jan 23, 1990, she is survived by her husband and one sister, Jewel Burchwell.

Eldridge Welch Sr., 87 years, born Feb 6, 1902, died Dec 28, 1989, the son of Ulysses and Sara Wells Welch. Surviving are his wife, Neccie Welch, two sons, one brother and two sisters.

Elvey Goodman, age 82. born

in 1928, died March 10, 1990, surviving are her husband, four daughters, six brothers and one sister. She is the daughter of the late Conard Collins and Gladie Wells Collins.

Dovie Collins Vanhooose, age 78, born May 10, 1913, died 1990. Surviving are two sons, one daughter, and one brother. She was the daughter of David Walker and Sarah Collins.

Marie Stevens Collins, age 77, born Oct 22, 1912, died July 5, 1990. She was the wife of the late Tillman Collins who comes down the Rosanne Wells Spears line. Surviving are two sons, Paul V. Collins and Clarence (Tony) Collins, one stepson, Frank Collins, and two step-daughters, Avera Sparks and Jean Yount.

Rex Crum, born 1923 died April 1990, surviving are three children. He was the grandson of the late Perry Collins.

Woodrow Allen, born Jan 23, 1912, died Nov 28, 1989. Surviving are his wife, Mable, and two sons. See separate article.

James Clayton (Doc) May, born May 25, 1930. He was survived by his wife, Lois Collins May, and one son. Lois descends from George E. Wells.

George Delong, 79, born 1911, died May 4, 1990 in Beckley, W. Va. Surviving are two sons, Aaron and George Jr. and three daughters, Ethel, Inez and Betty (Tiny). George descends from William Green Wells, and was the son of the late Marion and Viola Wells Delong.





Braden is the grandson of Lewis and Virginia Edgel of Flatwoods, Ky.

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**CONGRATULATIONS!!!!!!**



Tara Lynn Rambo, daughter of Donald Ray and Donna Sue Wells Rambo, of 1306 Prospect Ave., Worthington, Ky. graduated from Raceland High School and has received the John Diederich Scholarship. This Scholarship is given annually to student's from Boyd, Carter, Greenup, Lawrence and Martin Counties. The scholarship pays all college-related cost for students to go to any school, whether Harvard or Community College. The scholarship is granted to students that exhibit outstanding promise and character as identified by directors of the Diederich Educational Trust. Tara has chosen a Kentucky college and will be attending Eastern Kentucky University. We are proud of you, Tara, and know you will do well. Tara is the granddaughter of Ali and Sadie Collins Wells and she descends from both George E. Wells and Roseann Wells Spears.

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Rita Collins, of Van Lear has been awarded a Child Development Associate (CDA) credentials in recognition of outstanding work with young children. The credentials were awarded by the Council for Early Childhood Professional Recognition in Washington, D.C., which represents the Early Childhood Profession through its affiliation with the National Association for the Education of Young Children. The candidate must demonstrate ability to work with families

to develop children's physical and intellectual capabilities in a safe and healthy learning environment. Rita is the daughter-in-law of Carl and Polly Wells Collins. We are proud of you Rita.

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**Special Articles  
for Your Information**

**WOODROW ALLEN**, born December 23, 1912 at Mallie, Ky. and died November 28, 1989, Prestonsburg, Ky. Woodrow served on the Wells Family Association Board for six years and never missed a meeting during that time. The Wells Family will greatly miss his leadership. Woodrow was the son of the late Sam and Rhoda Reynolds Allen and attended the one room rural school at Mallie until he was eleven years old. He was then enrolled at the Alice Lloyd School at Caney Creek. Woodrow finished the grade school, high school, and two years of college at the Alice Lloyd School. In the year of 1928 Woodrow was one of the four mountain youths of Caney that traveled to the university campus as a debate team and were undefeated.

At the age of eighteen Woodrow started teaching in a one room rural school. After receiving his B.S. degree from Tuscullean, he came back to Alice Lloyd College as Registrar. He then started working on his M.A. at the University of Kentucky during summer terms. It was here he met Mabel (Spears) Wells. The summer that Woodrow received his M.A. and Mabel her A.B., they were married at Lawrenceburg on July 20, 1940.

Woodrow Allen could have left Eastern Kentucky, but his heart was there with his people. He felt that by working in his beloved Eastern Kentucky he could make a difference in the lives of his people. Woodrow returned to Floyd County in 1947 and served as Principal at both the Prestonsburg Grade School and Prestonsburg High School. He retired from the Floyd County Board of Education as Supervisor.

Woodrow was a member of the First United Methodist Church, where he was a former Chairman of the Administrative Board and a former Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He was an active member of the Kiwanis Club and served as a past President.

Woodrow was very interested in geneology. He and Mabel did a lot of work on the Allen line. He was interested in the Wells Family of which his wife, Mabel, descends. He was more knowledgeable of the Wells Family than Mabel. The Wells Family has suffered a great loss and we will always remember Woodrow for his genuine concern and support. Woodrow will be missed not only by his wife and sons but by scores of relatives and friends. He is survived by his wife, Mabel Wells Allen, two sons, William Edward (Bill) Allen of Lexington, and Woodrow Wells (Woody) Allen of Overland Park, Kansas, also three grandsons, Sean McPhearson Allen of Charlotte, North Carolina, Daniel Patrick Allen and Charles David Allen of Overland Park, Kansas.

May God bless Mabel and the

family. Our prayers are for you.

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WOODRIDGE SPEARS, born Jan 1, 1913, died Oct 10, 1989, Georgetown, Ky. Woodridge was the son of the late Kelly and Julia Clark Spears, and descends from both William Green Wells and Roseann Wells Spears. The article below as written by Dr. Gwen Curry (Cranfill) Georgetown University.



Eve and Woodridge, like the Brownings, were inseparable in spirit

#### Woodridge and Eve: Two Poets Intertwined

A campus legend is gone. As I am writing this, Woodridge Spears lies on the crest of a little cupped-in hill in the Georgetown cemetery, and I am left to wonder what he might say if the dead of Georgetown would speak as those in Spoon River did.

While Woodridge was living, on the Georgetown College campus no man's words were quoted more often than his. Students and former students repeated his cryptic phrases and puzzled over them long after they were spoken. In his poem "About the Only Honey Well" Woodridge comes close to revealing his secret of teaching:

And one can do and do and do.  
So one and tangent is the crew, And one and tangent what's to tell

About the only honey well.  
A fine-haired child on tippy toes  
Around and around the center goes  
Until so circular the time,  
So one and two and two the rhyme,  
So tippy truly the about,  
And simple then the falling out,  
That one can do and do and do,  
So one and tangent is the crew.

(River Island, 1963, p.4)

Remembering my own experience in Woodridge's creative writing class when I was a student, I felt then we were tip-toeing around a secret honey well that Woodridge alone could dip into at will. How much influence did the enigma of his class have on the direction my life has since taken?

Woodridge never forgot the names of his students as other teachers do at times. He knew his

students—not only their names, but also their geneologies and their mental geography. Six years after my graduation, when I came back to Georgetown College to teach, Woodridge remembered a story I had written for him in that creative writing class. He asked me about it—but not superficially; he recalled the symbolism I had tried to develop in it.

Other students have similar memories of the way Woodridge treasured their uniqueness and the way they revered the same quality in him. Every college needs a Woodridge. It is an essential part of a student's education to be directed toward the honey well, to be at one with a "tangent" crew—with someone who has tasted the secret sweetness and who understands it.

During the years I taught with Woodridge, I realized more fully his uniqueness. I never saw Woodridge in anything but suit and tie—church-going clothes. And I never saw him without his courtly good manners—even on the day when his class in Indian Literature held a tribal war dance in Knight Hall 2 in the basement of the John L. Hill Chapel; his students then dressed in blankets and feathers, and rhythmically beat their drums while my own class was taking a conventional final exam.

Who steals the fire is taken in  
By laughter where the stars begin.  
His nature leaves him then and there  
And goes off singing everywhere.  
Bird leaves him, and damozel,  
Creatures and measures possible.  
For now he knows that element  
Of the first four, having spent  
Many and many is the hour  
To learn the use and lose the power,

The fiery fraction in his thought  
The thing that did not equal naught.

("Fennel Hill," *River Island*, p.5)

Woodridge never did "learn the use and lose the power"; I believe the "fiery fraction" of Woodridge's thought is "singing everywhere" even now—in his poetry, in his students' lives, in the memories of his family and friends.

This Christmas we won't receive one of Woodridge's understated Christmas cards—hand-drawn, hand-lettered, unique. What will Christmas be like without Woodridge's annual, original, Yuletide verse?

I can't think of Woodridge without thinking of Eve, a poet of note herself. The two are inextricably intertwined—in marriage, in name, in interest, and in spirit.

Last January on Eve Spear's eighty-first birthday, I attended a reception given in her honor at Nancy Brown's home to celebrate the publication of Eve's latest book of poems, *A Cloud of Laurel* (Kentucky Poetry Press, 1988.) The cover of Eve's book was designed by Woodridge.

The long, central poem in this collection, "A Cloud of Laurels" is about a haunting: a ghostly visitation, mistaken identity, a mountain feud started by the murder of the wrong brother. The material of this poem haunted Eve for over half a century. She weaves into "A Cloud of Laurels" other of her poems and two of Woodridge's treating the same incident. Hers were previously published in her collection *Laurel Creek* (Georgetown College Press, 1972); Woodridge's poems came from his first collection, *The Feudalist* (1946.)

Eve says she "revisited" her earlier poems. "A

Cloud of Laurels" opens by quoting "Return" and "Hunted" in their entirety. The only change is that the ballad form of the first publication has become two longer stanzas in *A Cloud of Laurel*. The real difference, however, is in the addition, in "A Cloud of Laurels," of the narrative voice which personalizes and connects the parts of the experience. In the first two lines of the third stanza Eve explains, "My new name is Eve," and asks, "How long must I wait to tell the story?" To explain how long she has waited, how long she has been haunted, she writes, "Sons have been born, grown tall, and gone away. Paler grows the picture in my mirror.

Must fire flare up in ashes that are white?  
Later in the poem we learn that it was Woodridge who gave Evalena Gilbert her "new name"—Eve—although her brothers still called her Renie.

Two of Woodridge's poems quoted in "A Cloud of Laurels," "Among These Pines" and "Warning," treat the same incident which started the feud:

...They got your brother with the face like Christ,  
In the dark, stabbed the wrong one their intent  
And left the right one for their punishment."  
(p.13)

Eve's poem tells of the trauma of the murder and the loss of both her brothers—the one who died that dark night, and the one who fled from his home to plot revenge.

Eve was mourning this double loss when a young poet entered her life. She says, "Love helped me, soothed me." Love told her "To create is better than to mourn," and she "found that (she) could live again, and laugh." Woodridge brought Eve a new name; he brought her twin sons and a daughter, a lifetime of love and joy. He called her back from grief to come and see that "the laurels/are in

bloom." Although "A Cloud of Laurels" on one level is a poem about loss and useless death, it is also a poem about the healing of grief by love.

As I wander through the landscape of Woodridge's and Eve's poems today, thinking about the loss to the community that the death of Woodridge Spears has brought, I also contemplate the poetry of these two lives intertwined with each other and with us. I am struck by the beauty of the poetic landscape in *A Cloud of Laurel*. I think of the woman who "saw the hills around" her "as great bouquets"—but it is not just the hills she sees as beautiful, but the hollows, the birds, the paths, the creeks, the orchards, the streams, the grass, the moonlight, the fields, the flowers, "The lovely land" ("Escape", p. 25) itself.

As a lover of trees, I think most of all about the trees catalogued in Eve's book of poems: sycamore, persimmon, oak, willow, pine, and birch. I think Eve and Woodridge together who would forever "stop awhile/By the great trees/to gather birdsong" ("Signs and Wonders," p. 43). Even if the trees are cut down as they were in the poem "Signs and Wonders," the spirit remains:

An inner and more subtle spring,  
A grace more quickening  
Than this April rain.

("Now that He is Dead," p. 37)

I think of the affirmation of their life together—these two poets, spirits drawn together into a "magic circle," who say to us:

Subtract  
We never could,  
Nor love divide,  
So we use  
Times  
And  
Times again

To total up our love."

("For Miss May," p. 31)

Years ago when Eve and Woodridge first came to Georgetown I was scarcely more than a girl. Eve told me about her honeymoon which, because of a blizzard, she spent in her father's spare bedroom where the winter apples were stored under the bed. I was enchanted at the time to imagine Eve and Woodridge together in that room breathing in the smell of those apples. I was delighted to find that memory turned into art in the poem called "Winter" in *A Cloud of Laurel*. The poem ends:

Strange,  
But after forty years  
I hold in mind  
Only the taste  
Of honey.  
(P. 34)

I want to add a stanza of my own to Eve's poem "Jesse, Hollis, and Young Logan" which has written to commemorate the deaths of Jesse Stuart, Hollis Summers, and Logan English.

Woodridge is gone.  
In this time of falling painted leaves  
Who is left to ask, "What say the trees?"  
Who will grace our days with love's applause?  
Will bid us pause before the dark of timelessness?

Who is there now to tell  
about the only honey well?  
Who is left to ask and ask,  
"What say the trees?"  
Woodridge, don't stop speaking to us now; from your place under the trees on the hill continue to haunt us with your questions.

by Dr. Gwen Curry (Cranfill) '54 She is chairperson of G.C.'s English Department and a frequent contributor to *Insights*.

## INSIGHTS

Georgetown College / Winter 1990

A special congratulations to **Greg Slone** who has excelled in sports in the Johnson County School System. He has signed a contract to play college baseball for Chipola Community College in Florida this fall. He is the son of Ronnie and Diane Slone Wells of Paintsville. **Greg, we know you will do well!!**

**FOR YOUR INFORMATION:**

Mary Walton and Gloria Spears Sallie attended a Wells Family Reunion on June 3, 1990 at Armco Park, Ashland, Ky. The Wells Family members descended from George Washington Wells, born in Elliott County, Ky and Martha Webb Wells of Webbville, Ky. Mary and Gloria talked with several members including Joan Richardson, 2809 1/2 Carter Ave., Ashland, Ky 41101 (606) 325-9857. According to Joan, George Washington Wells had the following siblings, Labe Wells, John Wells, Zack Wells, Frank Wells, and Ida Wells Shival. Joan is the daughter of Labe. George Washington had a son, Ira Wesley Wells, who married Lucy Jane Collins, Carter county. George Washington and other family members are buried in the Ashland Cemetery.

Joan told Mary and Gloria that Pat Ferguson, Grayson, Ky and Pauline Wells are a descendent from George Washington Wells. She said (Coey) Germaine Vincent, Main Street South, Ashland has researched the family line and could let us know if they tie in with our Wells line.

This Wells family has a

striking resemblance to our Wells Family, and also carry the same names. Another thing they have in common with our Wells Family is their love for eating and good cooks. Some of you may know if this group are the same as our Wells, if so let us know.

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**Welcome to Ashland!!!**

We want to welcome James and Ann Wells to the Ashland area. Jim is the Vice President of the Wells Family Association, and served as Pastor of the Jeffersonville, Ky., First Assembly of God Church. He has just accepted the pastoral position for the First Assembly of God Church in Raceland, Ky. The church is a beautiful Church located on U.S. 23, Raceland, Ky. 41169. Jim and the family reside in the Church Parsonage, at 407 Caroline Rd., Raceland, Ky 41169, phone (606)836-2487.

Jim and Ann our prayer is that God will bless you with a successful ministry at Raceland.

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**Wells Family members mark your calendars for September 1 and 2 for our REUNION and we will be looking forward to seeing you there!!**

P.S. This will be the last Newsletter until after the Reunion...

The Wells Family Association, Inc.  
709 Hamilton Ave.  
Ashland, Kentucky 41101

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