

# The Locke Family Newsletter

Publisher Vann Helms    Volume Number 6    Issue Number 1    December, 2010

## A Very Memorable Locke Reunion...



**Lewis Whisonant** shares a funny family story with the Locke faithful after a most filling meal. Everyone had a chance to introduce themselves and tell where they fitted in to the Locke puzzle. A little summer rain didn't dampen anyone's spirits.

It was a lot to ask. Get **Locke** descendants from all over the country to converge on a small house deep in the **North Carolina** mountains, and have them all bring mouth watering gastronomic delights and desserts to share with an unknown number of hungry relatives and friends. A tall order indeed! But on a cloudy Saturday in August, *seventy-five* people from *eleven states* answered the call, and the family gathering that unfolded that day was an event to make all of us proud to be **Lockes**. If you were among that fortunate group that braved the weather and the distance, you were treated to a true cornucopia of culinary delicacies that ranged from an authentic **South Carolina Low Country Boil**, to mouth watering Buttermilk Fried Chicken, to flavorful pasta dishes, and the always fast disappearing platters of Country Ham Biscuits. There was fresh sweet corn-on-the-cob, home grown tomatoes, healthy fruit salad, home cooked collards and black eyed peas, and more veggies and casseroles than we were able to finish. There were so many desserts that it took an entire table just to hold them all. There were four different recipes of Banana Pudding, and cobblers, and cakes, and pies, and home made vanilla ice cream.



If the **Lockes** never learned how to do anything else, they sure did learn how to cook and how to eat. There's just something about these family get-togethers that brings out the best in the Locke tradition of good food and fine fellowship. If anyone left this reunion hungry, it was only because they had their mouths taped closed.

***Larkin's on the Lake***

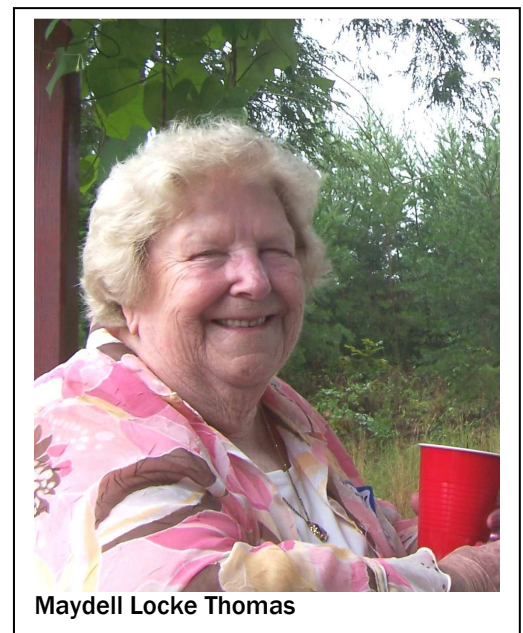
The reunion actually got underway on Friday evening, when sixteen of us met at ***Larkin's on the Lake*** restaurant overlooking ***Tryon Bay on Lake Lure***. We had a perfectly delightful meal in a rustic mountain setting. Many of us had never met before, and it was such fun getting to know one another.

***Saturday, August 14th***



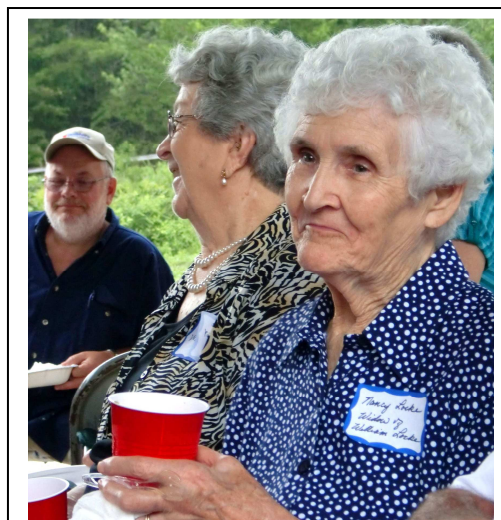
***The morning was overcast, but the rain stayed away. Otter Lake was calm, and a mist was in the air.*** Marilyn and John Ballard (Bea Locke) were the first to arrive from Charleston. It wasn't long before a steady stream of family was walking down the hill to the house. The food tables were overflowing as fast as we could set up more. ***The kitchen was buzzing as food went into the oven and microwave.*** Gladys Howell had already made the iced tea. Cindy and Bill Barnier (Minnie Bell Locke) were busy outside making the Low Country Boil from an old Locke recipe.

***Maydell Thomas***, Mary Alice Krider, and Patty Pebley, all daughters of Arthur Hayden Locke (Jesse McCullough Locke) arrived from California and Oregon. Bill Locke came from Vancouver, Washington, and his sister, Cindi Locke, came from Littleton, Colorado. Bill and Cindi are our direct links to the Lockes of England. Don Williams (Minnie Belle Locke) arrived from Rock Hill, South Carolina, along with his son Russell, who came all the way from Layton, Utah. Sandy Wright (Judson Lafayette Locke) and her husband Richard came in their RV from Huntsville, Alabama. Her cousin Robert, and his wife Nancy, drove across the Blue Ridge from their home in Kingsport, Tennessee. Vann's brother Eddie Helms (Mattie Locke) and his wife Carol came from Ft. Lauderdale, and stayed in the same RV park as Sandy and Richard. Vann and Eddie's sister Nancy, and her friend Bobbye Schuler drove up from Ft. Lauderdale, and stayed at the historic Esmeralda Inn in Chimney Rock. Kristen Brown Mildenhall (Joseph Locke) and her husband, Taylor, drove up from Lawrenceville, Georgia. Kristen's dad, David, and her mom, Maryelen, came all the way from Pleasant Valley, New



**Maydell Locke Thomas**

York. Kristen has done extensive research on the Josias Locke family, and discovered that two Stephen Lockes, first cousins, were living in Chester County, South Carolina, at the same time. Penny Carter (John Calhoun Locke) came from New York City, joining with her cousin, Lewis Whisonant, and his wife Jenny, from Rock Hill. Also driving from Rock Hill was Mary Ayers, who brought Nancy Locke. It was so good to have Nancy back with us after surviving a brain aneurism two years ago. Her son, Ron, drove from Hickory with his two sons, Robert and William. Jerry and Carolyn Locke from Chester (Benjamin Locke) brought their daughter, Dean Jackson, and granddaughter, Margo. The Winchester family was well represented as usual. Charlie (Sadie Locke) Winchester was our oldest attendee again, at 91, and with his wife of 67 years, Myrtle, brought their daughters, Myra and Karen, along with Karen's husband, Larry Sims. The Boyce family was very well represented. Locke (Mamie Locke) Boyce drove up from Jacksonville with his wife, Earnestine. Dora Boyce came with two of her sons, Tom and David. Tom brought his daughter, Katie, and David brought his son, Macon, and daughter, Matty. Dora's husband, Bill, was Mamie Locke Boyce's oldest son. Valerie McRorie, Mamie Boyce's granddaughter, came from Mt. Pleasant, North Carolina. Her mom was Mary Boyce. Gladys Howell of Cornelius, Glenn Howell's wife, brought her daughter-in-law, Kathy, and Kathy's daughter, Heather, and Heather's two kids, Elizabeth and Ethan Isalis, from Mooresville. At three years old, Ethan was our youngest attendee. Glenn was the oldest grandchild of Mattie Locke Helms, daughter of Absalom and Lizzie. Mattie's son, Harold Helms, was represented by two of his granddaughters, Deborah Fox, and Donna Parker. Debbie's daughter, Erin, came with her friend, Ritchie Clough. Harold's grandson, Johnny (Noretta Helms) Turner was represented by his wife, Wanda, their son, Chad, with friend Casey Marre, and their very pregnant daughter, Christy Rawlins. Christy's daughter, Pheyton, was born in September. Eddie, Vann, and Nancy's first cousin, Ted Moore, came from Charlotte with his wife, Sophie, and son Tim.



**Tom Locke, Myrtle Winchester, and Nancy Gaston Locke**



**Margo Jackson, Eddie Helms, Maryelen Brown, and Charlie Locke Winchester**



**Eddie with Locke Boyce**

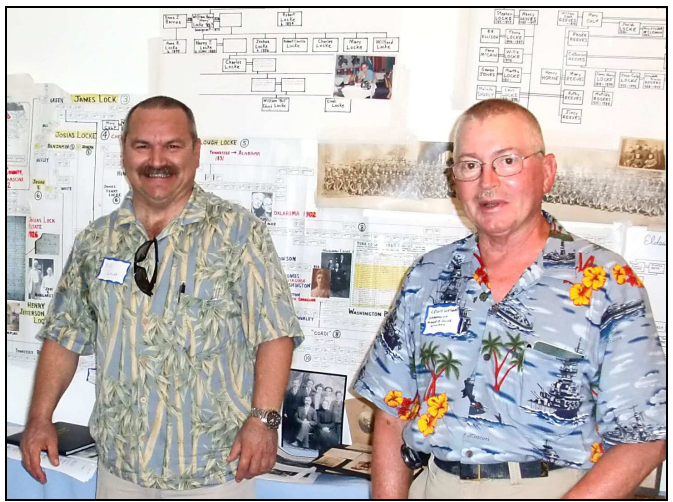
Although the day was a little dark and damp, the rain held off until after everyone had arrived, and most people had filled their plates. After lunch, we all just sat around and shared family histories as the rain fell. It was so unusual to have so many branches of the "Chester County" Lockes represented in one place. Many of us had never met one another before, but our genetic connection made it seem as though we had all been friends our entire lives. Old James Locke and his wife Susannah Green would have been proud, knowing that so many years after they had passed, their family was continuing to meet.

Downstairs, a family museum had been set up, with the Family Tree Scrolls, and many pieces of Locke memorabilia on display. Many people contributed photos and personal keepsakes.





Bill Locke adds valuable names and dates...



Bill shares a humorous story with Lewis Whisonant



Jerry Locke and Larry Sims in the "Locke Museum"



Mary Ayers, Nancy Locke, and Jerry Locke look at photos.



Just one of the many food tables...



One way to keep the Lockes quiet... feed 'em.

The success of this reunion proved that our family will go a little bit out of the way (How about nearly 3,000 miles for Mary Krider, Patty Pebley, Maydell Thomas, Bill Locke, Cindi Locke, and Russell Williams) just to get together. The love and sharing between everyone was just amazing. The amount and variety of food was beyond anyone's wildest imagination. We come from so many walks of life, but when it comes to family, you just can't keep us from gathering together just one more year.



# Next Year, Let's Do It Again!

Hard to believe that it's been four months since the reunion, but time flies when you're planning for the next one. The date will be **August 13**, and it will once again be held at Vann's home in the mountains. Next year, we are planning a larger dinner for Friday evening. Instead of being on the shore of Lake Lure, we will be chartering a pontoon patio that will actually cruise the crystal clear waters of Lake Lure. The Westin Rumbling Bald Resort on the far north end of the lake offers a full sit down dinner at sunset on their floating dining room. Details will follow in the next newsletter. Remember, Lake Lure was the location for many of the most memorable scenes in the popular film, **Dirty Dancing**, and we'll have music from the movie as background for dinner. How romantic!

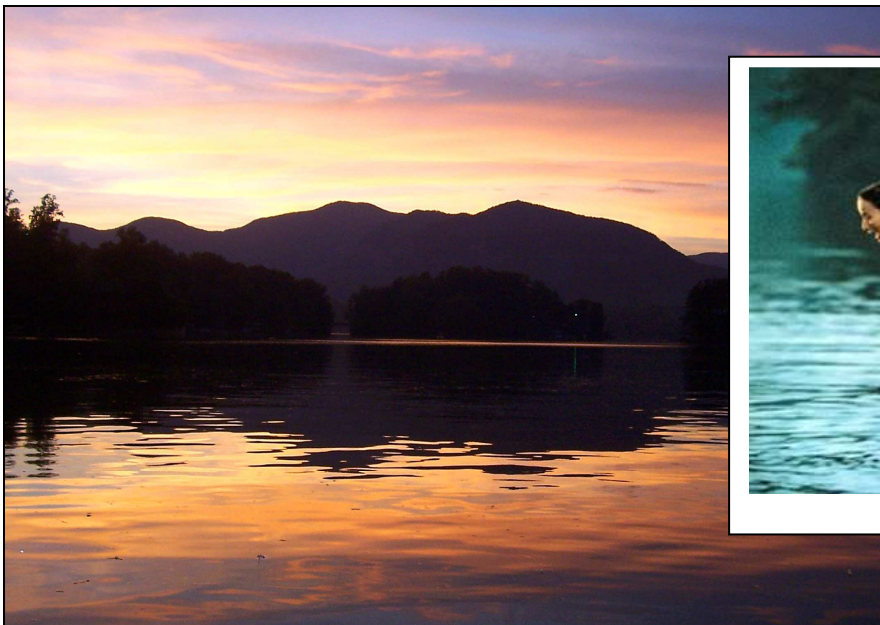
Jerry Locke of Chester has suggested setting up a large tent in the driveway next year. This should make the entire affair more comfortable for everyone. This past year, we never anticipated having so many people, and next year portends to be even larger!

How about some Mountain music to go with the Appalachian setting? A popular bluegrass band from Asheville has been contacted about playing before and after lunch. A lot of pickin will be going on, and we don't just mean your teeth.

In August, the weather kept us off of **Otter Lake**, but the peddle boat and life vests will be ready again, just in case. If you like to fish, bring your spinner and try your luck with the bass and trout in the lake.

Most of all come prepared to spend the entire afternoon just hanging out and sharing family stories and photos. The "museum" will be expanded, and maybe we can get Lewis Whisonant to bring Aunt Cordi's historic rocking chair again.

Mark your calendars today. This weekend seems to work the best for the most people. The kids are still out of school, and the weather is mild. Remember, the house is just 17 miles from 6,700 foot Mt. Mitchell as the crow flies, and evenings can get down into the 50's. Bring your sweaters!



Patrick Swayze lifts Jennifer

Sunset on Lake Lure

# DNA Connections to New Jersey?

With the latest DNA test results, we may have taken our Locke family tree in America to an even lower branch. I was contacted by **Frances Sorrow** in Texas, whose uncle had been tested. His name is **Abner Locke**, and he just celebrated his 91<sup>st</sup> birthday. Before the test, Abner knew that his people came from Georgia, and that they descended from a John or Jonathan Locke who had moved there from Halifax, North Carolina. Not only did Abner's 12-marker test connect him to our Locke clan, but his test was upgraded to a 37-marker level, and what was discovered has thrilled all of us. It turns out that he is an exact match to a line of Lockes that descends from **Philip Locke** of New Jersey. It is known that a direct descendent of Philip Locke moved down to St. Mary's County, Maryland, and that's where our connection picks up. We know that our ancestor, Philip Locke, had moved into St. Mary's County around 1680, and our knowledge of his offspring leads us to Halifax County, where Abner's ancestor, **John Locke** (b. 1730), had settled with his wife, **Sarah**, prior to 1767. This is thrilling because up to now, we could only speculate about the origin of Philip in St. Mary's County. Now we have direct proof that he had come from New Jersey, and because the Lockes of New Jersey had only arrived from England less than fifty years prior to 1680, we may have finally found our first ancestor in America.

It's funny how a piece of new information can suddenly shed new light on previously filed material. Going through my files, I pulled out pages from early 2004, where detailed references to John and Jonathan Locke in Georgia were right there in front of me.

## **John LOCKE**

**Will recorded in Warren County, Ga.- Will book B, Page 126. The date written, May 19, 1823; proved on March 6, 1826.**

## **Jonathan LOCKE**

**DEATH: Warren County, Georgia. Will Book 2. Will written December 2, 1810, proved, March 4, 1811. Named wife, Mary, and children.**

Also in my files was information I found from June, 2009, from the Phillips family history in Texas, submitted by **Cathy Swartz**. Buried in the middle of a lot of data was the name, John Locke (b. 1730) who was the same John Locke who had settled in Halifax prior to 1767 with his wife Sarah. His brother, James Locke, who had followed John to Halifax shortly afterward, was the father of **Josias** and **William Locke**, who were our ancestors who settled in Chester County just after 1800. Going back to the web to research the complete PHILLIPS document, I found many more references to John and Sarah's family. When they moved from St. Mary's County, they brought their family, which included a son, **John** (1751-1786) who married **Charity** in Halifax, and they had three daughters, Anna, Elizabeth, and Dorthea, and two sons, **John** and **Jonathan**. It appears that the boys may well have been identical twins, which might explain the similarity of names. John (1768-1826) married around 1790 in Halifax, and had five children. They were James, Sarah, Elizabeth, Rebecca, and Lydia. Jonathan (1768-1811) married a woman named Mary in Halifax at about the same time. Jonathan and Mary had four children. They were John (b. 1789), Abner (b. 1792), Jesse (b. 1793), and Nancy (b. 1794).

For a reason not yet established, both John and Jonathan moved their families to Warren County, Georgia. This county is just twenty miles west of Augusta. At this time, the exact year is unknown. The

information from Frances Sorrow indicates that John, (b. 1789), was born in Georgia, but that would mean that the twin brothers, John and Jonathan, would have moved to Georgia before they were married, and it's doubtful that these young men would have embarked on such a risky move prior to age twenty.

John (1789-1866) would marry three times. In the course of those marriages, he would first move to Mississippi, then to Texas, where he died in 1866. He fathered a total of 16 children, eleven with his first wife, Rebecca, and five more with his second wife. He left grown children in Georgia, Mississippi, and Texas. Three children from his first marriage, **Abner Crosby Locke** (1843-1901), John George Locke, and a daughter, Missouri Locke, went to Texas with him in 1858. His son Abner Crosby, would serve in Gould's 6<sup>th</sup> Dismounted Cavalry from Texas during the Civil War, and marry there. In 1885, Abner's son, **Oscar**, was born in Polk County, Texas. Oscar (1885-1970) would eventually marry Minnie Fuller in Polk County. **Abner** (b. 1919), who took the *DNA* test, was born on October 26, 1919, one of eight children.

With Abner's test, we are connected to Philip Locke of New Jersey. Our next task is to find out where Philip was from, and when he arrived in the colonies. This will be a challenge, but I'm confident that these questions will eventually be answered.

## Four Locke Sisters from Oklahoma



When the reunion was held in August, there were four surviving sisters from the Oklahoma marriage of **Arthur H. and Mary Locke**. They descended from **Jesse McCullough Locke** of Chester, South Carolina. Sadly, less than one month later, on **September 11**, the oldest sister, **Nadine Locke Watts**, passed away in Boerne, Texas. Her three sisters, all of whom had attended the reunion, were by her side.

**Patty Pebley, Nadine Watts, Maydell Thomas, and Mary Alice Krider**

Maydell and Patty live in Southern California. Mary Alice lives in Jefferson, Oregon. Last year, Maydell sent photos of her family, as well as the family of her sister Patty. I hope that by publishing them here, the memory of "Aunt Nadine" is celebrated. I had a close communication with Nadine over the last few years, and I was personally saddened by her passing.



**Maydell and Mary Alice**



**Patty Pebley**

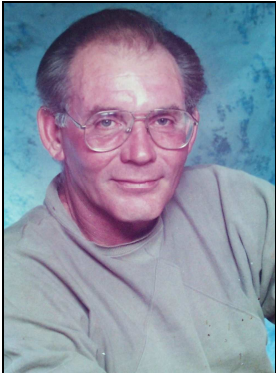


**Vann with Maydell and Mary Alice**





The Thomas Clan at grandson John's wedding to Jess...



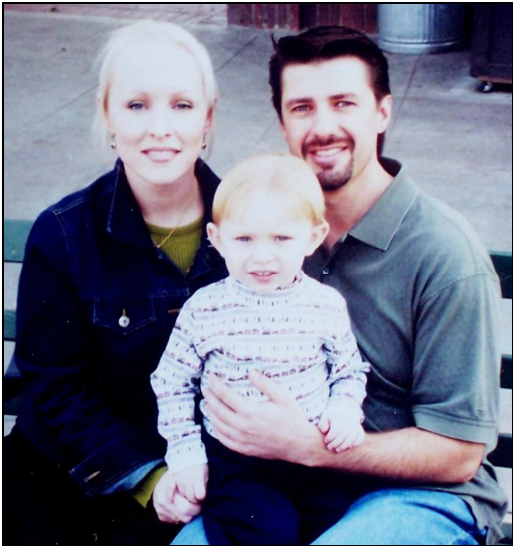
Maydell's son Houston



Maydell's daughter, Sarah, and husband, Greg Prosak



Maydell with Grandson Sam, Raquel, and daughter, Norma



Norma's son, John, with wife Beth, and son Ben



Sam and Raquel with Maydell's G-Grandkids, Tiffany, Valrie, Brittini, and Ryan

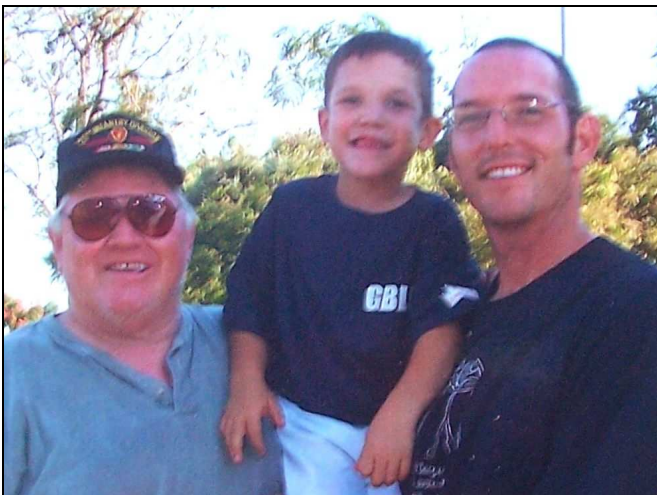




**Maydell's son, Danny, with wife Irene, and grandkids, Eric and Danielle**



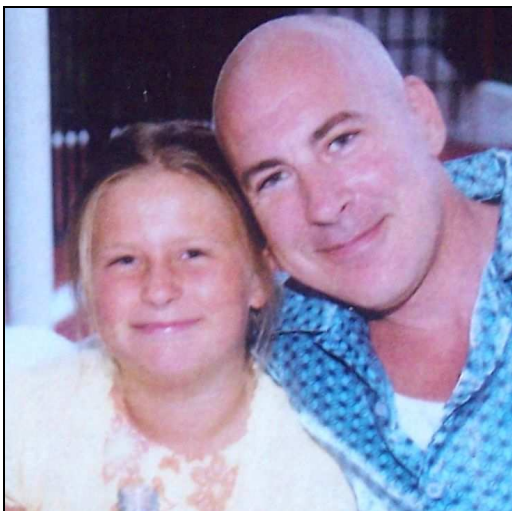
**Norma's son Bill with wife Theresa, and kids, Adam, Kyle, and Katie**



**Maydell's Son, Sam W., with her grandson, Robert, and great grandson, Ryan**



**Patty Locke Pebley with son, John, daughter Connie Stalcup, and granddaughter, Sierra Stalcup**



**Patty's son, John, with granddaughter Shylar**



**James Anderson, Patty Pebley, Nadis, and Nadine Locke Watts, in Richland Springs, Texas**



Harry Williams was Newton's Son. Larry Whisonant's uncle...

# The Family of Minnie Belle Locke Williams

One of the largest and most colorful of the York County, South Carolina, Locke families was that of **John Calhoun Locke** (1854-1917), the oldest surviving son of **Levi** and **Malinda Shurley Locke**. He and his wife, **Nancy Frances Ira Ferguson**, had five children, all of whom married and had large families of their own. The fourth child was **Minnie Belle** (1885-1975), who married **Newton Whiteside Williams** in her parent's home in 1903. Over the next twenty-five years, they would have eleven children, nine boys and two girls. Two of those children, **David Fennel Williams**, and **Harry Bruce Williams** are still alive today. The following photographs were among a large collection assembled by **Lewis M. Whisonant**, son of **Faye Williams** and **Garland J. Whisonant**. Lewis and his wife, **Jenny**, live in Rock Hill, South Carolina.



The Williams Family. Two boys: Harry Bruce, Gene Newton. L to R: David Fennell, Hugh Carmichael, Faye Lyle, Lewis Manning, Newton Whiteside, Dallas Heyward, Minnie Belle Locke, Herbert Odell, Beulah Young, and Cecil Whiteside.



Newton Whiteside and Minnie Belle Locke Williams



Army Pfc. **Lewis Manning Williams** was killed Nov. 1, 1943, in the South Pacific.



Minnie Belle in 1960's



# Sherrie Ann Helms Weds Mark Kukulski

**Sherrie Helms**, the youngest daughter of **Edd** and the late **Carol Slater Helms**, and great granddaughter to **Mattie Locke Helms**, married **Mr. Mark Kukulski** in a seaside ceremony on *October 10<sup>th</sup>* (10-10-10), in *Hollywood-by-the-Sea, Florida*. The wedding was originally planned to take place on *St. Johns* in the *Virgin Islands*, but a sudden tropical storm flooded the hotel, and cancelled airline service to *St. Thomas*, forcing the last minute change to the *Westin Diplomat Hotel* on the ocean in South Florida. Everything was shipped back from *St. Johns*, and guests were diverted to *Fort Lauderdale*, allowing the vows to be taken on the scheduled day.

**Sherrie** was given away by her father, with her sister, **Charlene Helms Freedland**, serving as a bridesmaid, and Charlene's daughter, **Ashley Freedland**, serving as a flower girl. A live string trio played on the terrace overlooking the *Atlantic*, and the weather couldn't have been more perfect. During the ceremony, Monarch butterflies were released in memory of **Sherrie's** mother, **Carol**, who passed away in 2006. The happy couple now live in a home on the water in *Fort Lauderdale*.



A radiant bride, Sherrie was the picture of beauty....



Edd escorts his daughter...



Mark and Edd share a light moment....



## Christy Turner Rawlins gives Birth to Pheyton

If you attended the reunion, you must remember **Christy Rawlins**, who was “great with child”. Christy is the daughter of **Johnny** and **Wanda Turner**, and great-great granddaughter to **Mattie Locke Helms**. On *October 12*, **Pheyton Rawlins** was born. She weighed 8 pounds, 15 ounces. Mother, father, grandmother, and baby are doing just fine! The happy family lives in *Denver, North Carolina*.



Uncle Chad Turner, mom Christy, and Grandmom, Wanda.



Pheyton at six weeks

## Shelby Parker Celebrates a Graduation

This past spring, **Shelby Parker**, daughter of **Donna Brotherton** and the late **Tim Parker**, graduated from high school in *Charlotte*. Until this year, **Shelby** was a regular attendee at all of the **Locke** reunions. She is the granddaughter of **Hazel Helms Brotherton**, and great-great granddaughter to **Mattie Locke Helms**. We’ve watched her grow up, and we wish her all the best in the years to come.



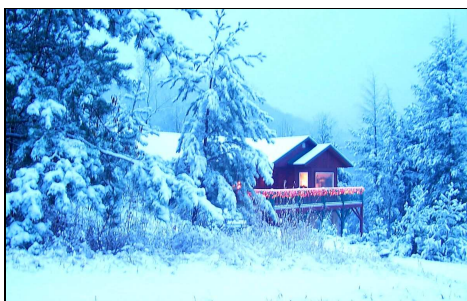
Shelby with Uncle Jamie Fox at 2007 reunion.



Donna Parker



Shelby Class of 2010



### *A Merry Christmas from Otter Creek*

This photo was made on **December 12**, after 4” of snow fell. May the spirit of the season be with you at every moment during these wonderful days. Remember to call your loved ones and tell them how much you **treasure** their lives!

[vann@miami-art.com](mailto:vann@miami-art.com) or [mountainvann@gmail.com](mailto:mountainvann@gmail.com)