

120th Ballard Reunion Report 2008

The Ballard Reunion was held on August 9, 2008 at Rob and Sue Vincent's Greystone Farm Estate in Thompson, Connecticut. This was an amazingly picturesque spot with huge extensive stone walls all about. We gathered under one of the barns on the property. The weather that day was sunny with some puffy white clouds that passed by. It was a day that was neither too hot nor too cold. We seemed quite fortunate since the weather on many previous days included violent thunder storms and heavy rain. Forty-eight people attended from near and far. There was a tie for who traveled the longest distance. The two people tying were Kathleen Alton from Dinwiddie, Virginia and Susan Shaw from Charlottesville, Virginia.

At 12:45 the traditional Ella Ballard school bell was rung calling everyone to the tables filled with food. Stanley Shaw graciously offered the blessing. A bountiful spread of food was present for all to enjoy. It included hot buttered corn donated from the Reynolds farm, and cooked by Stanley Shaw in a new gas cooker. Along with that were many sandwiches and salads of every description, along with lemonade as well as an assortment of cakes and cookies. The traditional watermelon was noticeably absent. The lemons that made the lemonade were once again from Sis O'Connor's lemon tree from Phoenix Arizona and was picked by Martha, Bill, Billy, Amy and Zachary Takacs. An unusual feature this year was that nice big bales of fresh hay were available as seats around the picnic tables and were very comfortable to sit on.

After the meal, everyone gathered into the barn that the Vincents moved from Alice Ramsdell's farm. Rob and Sue Vincent spared no expense to lovingly reconstruct and refurbish it. As people gathered in the barn Mary Ellen Tomeo played a recording of a song about Alice and Hezekiah Ramsdell. Next a business meeting was called to order by Dale King and Ken Alton Jr. was elected Chairman of the Day. The Secretary and Treasurers report was read by Dale King and the Historian's report was read by Mary Ellen Tomeo. She reported that there were 2 marriages, 8 births, and 2 deaths since the last update. The arrangement committee was changed to now include Donna Lynch, Pat Hall, Mary Ellen Tomeo, Bruce Alton, Jan Lytle, Angie DeCourt and Judy Potter.

Clarence Ballard told us about how John Vincent Ballard worked for a small oil company and received some stock options from the company but by the time he was through his options were worth \$42 million dollars. Dale King read a newspaper report of what the Ballard Family was doing at their reunion 100 years ago in 1908 where one of the seven Ballards who started the reunion was still present. A rousing round of applause was give to our historian, Mary Ellen Tomeo, for her outstanding efforts in preserving the Ballard history. She told us of her efforts to place Ballard histories in the local libraries. Judy Potter told the family of the medical difficulties that our youngest Ballard at last years reunion, Nicole Purington, has had during the last year. She reported that she is doing much better now though. Mary Ellen Tomeo asked that if anyone had pictures of any of the reunions from Roseland Park that they try to get her some copies. On the search for the oldest and youngest present it was determined that Dorothy Alton was the oldest at 94 years and Jayden Singleterry was the youngest at

age 3 months. A collection was taken and a total of \$215 was donated. A thank you card was sent around for the gathering to sign to thank our hosts Rob and Sue Vincent for the use of the property that the reunion was held on. It was requested that a donation be given to the Thompson Historical Society instead of paying the Vincents for the use of their estate. The Ballard membership voted to give \$100 as a donation. The expenses for the projected year came to \$120 to pay for the web site run by Blair Cole.

The final act was to decide on where to hold the next reunion. It was decided to have it at the Elliot Boat Basin at Eliot Maine sometime in August of 2009 which was where it was held in 2007 and 2005. After the meeting the group gathered for a family picture. Then everyone spent some more time visiting with family and friends before slowly parting.

Respectfully submitted,

Dale R. King
Secretary & Treasurer