

July 25, 2021

Dear Family:

I'm going to include everyone who came to the 2021 Standing Family Reunion in my summary of the weekend—not “blow by blow” but the highlights as I saw them:

One of the greatest delights was how well-attended the reunion was. 105 people came: 51 virtually for at least part of the Chautauqua proceedings and 54 in person. Six countries besides our own were represented: China, Costa Rica, Canada, Wales, Northern Ireland and England. 19 US states were represented (see stats below). A boatload of Osborns and Brickers were at Bear Creek, assembled to honor and remember a favorite cousin, Francis Osborn, who was their husband, brother, father, grandfather, great-grandfather or great uncle. Francis's loving wife Naomi put her heart into organizing and ordering a true celebration of his life in the ten months since he passed away in October of 2020. All of us at Bear Creek benefitted from meeting so many relatives, some new and others we haven't seen in quite awhile. At Bear Creek Cemetery, Naomi brought the bouquet of 2 dozen red roses and offered each little great grandchild or great niece a rose for each family grave they were able to locate. Some graves proved difficult to find, but it was pleasant to see the bright young people tripping through the cemetery searching. We planners often say we hope there will be children at our reunions because their memories will carry the reunion forward into the future.

I lift up the general spirit of sharing that made this reunion easy to conduct--starting with whether Zoom would connect from Bear Creek Meeting House!! We really didn't know. We brought along baling wire and duct tape, of course, but our Bear Creek assembly ended up being tethered to the wider world by the hot spot on Wayne Clark's cell phone! It was lucky he had that conversation with his son Darin before he came!! Other paraphernalia on hand included 3 projectors and 3 large screens (back-up, you know) and a large monitor that Ted Foster hauled in from Athens, Ohio. The large monitor captured the fleet horsemanship of young Kresta Badley of Gate, Oklahoma much better than the big screen projection. Deft advice from Claire Rosenfrisk and Jeff Scholes at the Meeting House with Savanna McGrew zooming in from Livermore, CA on Friday evening enabled us to feel confident the bird would fly.

Russ Leckband assisted us by shopping locally for perishable food items, Katie Standing gave estimates of quantities of food to purchase, fresh green beans from Ellis and Win Standing's garden were the centerpiece of our Sunday noon meal. Dozens of bars and cookies, many of them gluten-free, were supplied. We didn't lack for dessert! Naomi furnished the Saturday evening meal from Francis and his family—a very popular pizza feed.

How awesome is it for us to hear our grandchildren, great grandchildren, great nieces and cousins reading words written by our parents and grandparents? I am talking about the “shivers up your spine” Pandemic Papers, made possible by Osa Bricker's close reading of Reva Griffith's One Man's Story, containing letters written by the “home folks” on Charlie Standing's farm to their son/older brother, deployed to assist with reconstruction in post WW1 France and Arthur's return correspondence. Our youngest “reader”, Nora Wurtzler, had to memorize her great grandmother Eva Standing's words since she cannot yet read well enough. There were many references in the reading to the Spanish Flu of 1918-19 that resonated with our own pandemic experience of the past year.

New treasures galore were brought to our 4-hour program. Yes, some folks sitting on the hard benches at Bear Creek thought the program went on too long. But reflect on the outpouring of talent, new research and new stories—we are so glad to have them and will treasure them into the future!

Research: communication between David Cheal and the Anthony Standing/Richard Standing family had never occurred until the lead-up to this reunion. There are so many Standing relatives here in the US and now there are so few in the UK that any opportunity to mine genealogical records in search of a remote common ancestor is greeted across the pond with enthusiasm. The result is the Our Common Ancestors PDF document (embedded in the Virtual Program) compiled by Helen Standing after David Cheal and Richard and Anthony Standing concluded that yes, their family lines are connected by Susannah Sayers, who signed the birth certificate at the birth of John Standing III (George's father) in 1800. This is another treasure of our 2021 reunion: relatives previously unknown to each other have been united. We in the US shouldn't take for granted our wonderful endowment of relatives with phone numbers and emails we can easily access..

Other treasures: David Cheal found the ship manifest for the Idaho for the voyage which arrived in New York City harbor on February 21, 1870 carrying our ancestors. He shared that with us pre-reunion. For genealogical researchers this document is Pay Dirt!! I expect whoops and shrieks as you examine the document Ted Foster will archive on the George and Deborah Standing Reunion website. I'm attaching that document.

The JPEGs of documents unavailable to us which David Cheal shared in his first presentation at the Chautauqua were carefully chosen because they document the trajectory of our ancestors, beginning with A) the marriage certificate of John and Lucy Cheal in 1798 followed 2 years later by B) the birth certificate of their first son in 1800, John Cheal III—witnessed by the male midwife Robert ____, the illiterate nurse Ann Easton who signed with an X, and the baby's grandmother Susannah Sayers (see #6 above—SHE'S the common ancestor of David Cheal and the Anthony Standing family). Then in the Register of Quaker Births for the Horsham and Ifield Meetings (not a government document but rather Monthly Meeting records for the meetings located around Crawley) there are C) the birth of George Standing on March 29, 1830 at Battersea (south London) and just below that an entry for the births of twins Mary and Martha Standing (George's little sisters) in 1836. Martha died that same year and the

twins died soon after. David points out that the twins and Martha died about 4 months after Davy Crockett and the rest of the defenders of the Alamo were killed. D) the burial record for little Mary, who died on July 29, 1836. The gravedigger, Edward Swan Bishop, was requested to dig a grave before the 3rd day of the 8th month. E) And then the very morning of the reunion it occurred to David that a letter which had been saved by the family since it was sent January 1, 1888 was written by Deborah Fox Standing from Earlham, Iowa to her half sister Mary Fox Cheal, the wife of John Cheal of Crawley. (The last pages with the signature block had been lost!) This was sent after the Chautauqua as a separate document. I'm attaching the Deborah Fox letter as well. It's in the Reunion Program but when I clicked the link just now I was informed I don't have access.

Win and Ellis Standing and Otis Osborn shared a vignette from Francis Osborn's memoir *The Rebels of Quaker Divide* about hair-raising adventures in the woods on the Charlie Standing farm one hot summer afternoon. Several of us had been waiting for this. Win did a great reading of that story—the story itself is so well-written that I feel it took some of the wind out of Otis and Ellis's sails. Their follow-up consisted of Otis telling us that because he was the youngest he was never to blame and Ellis informing us that Francis had embellished that story somewhat. Under cross-examination later, Ellis said that the old buggy frame survived its crash into the large oak tree instead of falling apart as Francis had reported. Some time after Otis's leg got crushed by the tree Ellis's friend Howard Bricker, son of the Mayor of Earlham came out to the farm and Ellis and Howard took the buggy frame for another series of rides. Ellis's mother Lorene came along to supervise because, after all, Ellis was her baby son. The boys survived their buggy rides but the calamitous occurrence that afternoon was that a horse stepped on Ellis's friend Howard's foot.

We will need to wait for the next reunion to enjoy Ellis's ruminations about the oak tree Otis crashed into. It is still standing. It was standing before there were Standings on Charlie Standing's place. Wow, those bur oaks! The bur oak is a self-effacing oak, not as big and broad as the white oaks, the red oaks or the pin oaks. But boy, are bur oaks durable! Kind of like us Standings. And speaking about the flora of beautiful Iowa, from the moment travelers enter Iowa they are greeted by a carpet of wildflowers spread along the Interstate highways by the Living Roadsides Trust Fund and the Iowa Dept. of Transportation/DNR roadside planting program. This effort is some compensation for the loss of so much native prairie as the state was converted to agriculture. The monarch butterflies, which migrate through in the spring and the fall, benefit from these ribbons of plantings as do many pollinators.

Our discussions around the table in the Eating Hall (as opposed to the Meeting Hall) on Sunday morning unearthed many new factoids for me. Wayne asked, "Where is Quaker Divide?" The rest of us outlanders wanted to know too. We learned that it is a triangular piece of land between Bear Creek and the South Fork of the Raccoon River. At one time there were numerous Quakers settled in that area.

We around that table thought that Nancy Osborn Johnsen had provided us with an "Ah-Ha Moment" when she told us how sick Ernest had been when he was a young boy in Northwest England after

enduring a succession of childhood illnesses nearly unavoidable at that time: smallpox, then whooping cough and finally scarlet fever —the cumulative effect made his health delicate and he could not keep up with his schoolwork and had to drop out of boarding school. Henry, his brother, wrote in 1934 that smallpox left its mark on Ernest's health for the rest of his life. In Leigh the family lost their only little girl, Edith, to an unspecified illness; Charles was sick at that same time. Nancy speculates industrial-strength air pollution may have been the cause—at the time the family thought their air quality might be polluted by sewer or well gas and so moved to another house. (You can read passages from family documents in Nancy's complete script, which was included in the Hybrid Virtual Reunion and Chautauqua Schedule. David Cheal's documents have also been rearranged in the correct order in the program link.) We around the table wondered whether it was the illness of the children and the death of a beloved little daughter that caused the family to wish to migrate to the US. David Cheal told me in a e-letter he sent on 7/24 that George had expressed interest in migrating to America for some time, but had been discouraged by the family to leave when he first wanted to. David pointed out that the Civil War had raged in the US between 1860 and 1865, and that that would not have been a good time to emigrate. But our hunch that the family had been saddened and worried by the illnesses of several of their children and the death of one may have been a factor also.

In the Meeting Sunday morning, Ted Foster's wife Katharin Knippenburg spoke of the sweetness of Quaker people who she has been blessed to know—Ted Foster and his mother Martha Standing Foster. In the cemetery the day before I saw a pair of sweet women, one I have loved since she was a little girl. She was standing with an older woman with curly gray hair and I thought I saw a daughter and a mother, though I know the mother (my first cousin Elsie Standing Kuhn) is now dead. The “stand in” for that Standing was Jackie Leckband, who had such a sweet smile on her face as she stood talking with Jennifer. An apparition—they are somewhat common in graveyards...

We did not hold a business meeting at the end of the Chautauqua. I believe it is better to first discover answers to some questions: A) We try to alternate years with the Hendersons (some in the family are related to Hendersons as well) and need to know their plans after which we will know what year will be free and available for us to meet again. B) Then we will need to decide on the team to lead the next Standing Family Reunion. C) We await information from our Treasurer, Paulette Standing, as to the balance in our reunion bank account following her receipt of funds from the reunion itself, her paying of bills, and receiving additional contributions from those attending virtually.

Thanks to Savanna McGrew for hosting the Zoom Chautauqua from Livermore, California. Also, thanks to her first cousin Emily Plagman, who was the Chat Jockey and Co-Anchor, coming to us from Chicago. I heard that Savanna was stuffing slides into Power Point files “up to the wire” even while Emily was doing the sound check. There were a lot of documents and photos to marshall into order and sometimes Savanna's computer got a little cranky and delayed loading a file—this was translated by her as “Technical Difficulties.” Are there things we learned this year that will help improve the next reunion? You bet! Evaluation at the end of an event is an important part of closing out that event.

2021 Attendance Statistics by state and country for the Chautauqua: 19 states: Alaska=1, Arizona=1, California=4, Colorado=6, Florida=1, Illinois=1, Indiana=1, Iowa=30, Kentucky=1, Kansas=4, Massachusetts=2, Minnesota=21, Missouri=w, North Carolina=2, New York=1, Ohio=5, Oklahoma=6, Texas=3, Washington=1 / 6 additional countries: Canada=1, China=1, Costa Rica=3, England=1. Northern Ireland=2, Wales=3 Additional lowans arriving for the meeting at Bear Creek Cemetery in mid-afternoon and for the Saturday evening dinner: Add 18 more lowans to the above total for 58 lowans in all.

Oldest Attendee: Carolyn Johnson, 97 YO.

Youngest Attendee At Reunion: Knox Osborn, almost 1 YO

Youngest Attendee At Chautauqua: Giana Spencer, 2 YO

Beaming In From Farthest Away: Eric Braa from China (signed on at 5:00 AM local time as the Zoom audience was still on air but the Chautauqua had ended (at 4:00 PM Central Daylight Time).

Affectionately,

Ruth Alliband

Stillwater, MN