

**MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY  
ASSOCIATION, Inc.**  
Quarterly Newsletter

September 2012  
Editor,  
Jarrelyn Lang

Volume 11, Number 4  
Founding Editor,  
Dianne Middlebrooks: 1943-2012

---

Find these inside . . . . .

3. From the President

5. Tribute to Dianne

10. The Middlebrook Who Wasn't

3. Meeting Info

18. Middlebrooks and Simmons Families

17, 19. Websites of interest

20. In Memoriam

21. Good Samaritan Ops

22. Mineral Wells Info - ("Crazy Water Town")

MIDDLEBROOKS FAMILY ASSOCIATION, INC.

2011-2012 OFFICERS

PRESIDENT – Joyce Arnold

VICE PRESIDENT – Sam Middlebrooks

SECRETARY / TREASURER – vacant

**ANCESTOR TEAM LEADERS**

**Isaac b. 1753 –**

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)  
and Jean Shroyer [TXJean@aol.com](mailto:TXJean@aol.com)

**John b. 1755 –**

Bob Middlebrooks [mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:mid293@earthlink.net)

**Micajah b. 1758 –**

Sharon Bartlett [sharonbartlett@att.net](mailto:sharonbartlett@att.net)  
and Mary Baker [mmbaker65@hotmail.com](mailto:mmbaker65@hotmail.com)

**Sims b. 1762 –**

Neal Middlebrook [nealmidbroo1@frontier.com](mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com)

**Thomas b. 1763 –**

Jarrelyn Lang [thelangs@hotmail.com](mailto:thelangs@hotmail.com)

**Robert b. 1766 –**

J.A. Middlebrooks [middle3jam2002@yahoo.com](mailto:middle3jam2002@yahoo.com)

**Joseph b. 1610 –**

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)

**Joseph b. 1770 –**

Dave Clark [cdave@austin.rr.com](mailto:cdave@austin.rr.com)

**Virginia Middlebrooks –**

Neal Middlebrook [nealmidbroo1@frontier.com](mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com)

**Unknown Ancestor –**

Leonard Middlebrooks [gambol@juno.com](mailto:gambol@juno.com)

**England Research –** Ian Middlebrook and

Neal Middlebrook

**MFA Quarterly Newsletter Editor –**

Jarrelyn Lang [MFAeditor@gmail.com](mailto:MFAeditor@gmail.com)

**MFA Web Site:** <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~midregerrata>

Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc. (MFA) was founded in 2001 for the purpose of assembling and preserving genealogical and historical material for future generations. MFA has two publications, as below.

THE MAZE, issued each February, May, August, and November, is sent to everyone on the MFA mailing list. It is free to both paid and non-paid members. If you want to be removed from this list, please contact Joyce Arnold at [joycenjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net).

MFA Quarterly Newsletter is published in December, March, June, and September by the Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc., 274 Wilder Drive, Forsythe, GA 31029. Subscription to the Quarterly is included in membership dues. Articles for inclusion in the Quarterly, or suggestions for topics, may be sent to Jarrelyn Lang, Editor at [MFAeditor@gmail.com](mailto:MFAeditor@gmail.com) All submissions are subject to editing.

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Joyce Arnold, 2011-2014  
[joycenjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net)

Sam Middlebrooks, 2011-201  
[semiddlebrooks@gmail.com](mailto:semiddlebrooks@gmail.com)

Secretary / Treasurer

Charles Swayne Middlebrooks Sr., 2010-2013  
[cmiddleb@bellsouth.net](mailto:cmiddleb@bellsouth.net)

Kerry Middlebrooks, 2011-2013  
[mbrooks@gci.net](mailto:mbrooks@gci.net)

Joan Miller, 2011-2013  
[Jmill1912@hotmail.com](mailto:Jmill1912@hotmail.com)

Bob Middlebrooks, 2011-2014  
[Mid293@earthlink.net](mailto:Mid293@earthlink.net)

Joyce Luck, 2011-2014  
[Jm.luck50@yahoo.com](mailto:Jm.luck50@yahoo.com)

**ON-GOING PROJECTS**

Cemetery.....J.A. Middlebrooks  
and William Sterling [wgs10@embarqmail.com](mailto:wgs10@embarqmail.com)

DNA.....Bob Middlebrooks,  
Dave Clark, and Henry Middlebrooks

MFA Website.....Dave Clark  
and Leonard Middlebrooks

Family Repository.....Michael Kerry Middlebrooks

Family Register Update.....Leonard Middlebrooks

Military Register Update.....M. Kerry Middlebrooks

MAZE by Team Leaders, published by Joyce Arnold

MFA membership is \$20.00 per year, September 01 thru August 31. If you would like to become a member, please make your check payable to MFA and mail it to: Joyce Arnold, 2904 Trinity Drive, Pearland, Texas 77854.

## President's Message, Sept 2012

Our 2012 MFA annual meeting in Mineral Wells/Jacksboro, Texas, October 4-6, 2012, is starting to take shape. Sam Middlebrooks been working on the field trip and speakers, see his article, followed by a draft for the MFA meeting. If anyone would like for us to add something, please send me an email explaining what you want covered.

It's that time of year for us to start thinking about where we will meet next year. Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, Maryland, and Connecticut are the states mentioned as possible candidates by members attending this year's meeting. Send an e-mail and let us know your choice of where the meeting should be held and the time of year.

If you would like to volunteer to help on any of the Association projects or serve as an officer, Board member, or committee member, please let us know. We really need a Secretary /Treasurer. There is plenty of family history work to go around, and there are ways to volunteer without being an officer or Board member.

Please join us for this year's reunion in Mineral Wells/Jacksboro, Texas. Come help us explore Our Texas Roots. Do you know where or when your ancestors first arrived in Texas? Why did they move to Texas? Come and meet your extended family. Let's learn more about our ancestors and share family histories, stories, and those old photographs and documents. Bring yours.

Joyce Arnold, MFA President

\*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*

Hello to all-

Time is starting to get close for this year's meeting in the Jacksboro, Texas, area, and I thought I would give everyone an update on our continuing arrangements. I went up to Jacksboro last weekend and have pretty much wrapped up most of the planning.

First, to recap the hotel. Because of the fact that no hotels with meeting facilities exist in Jacksboro, we will be staying at the Holiday Inn Express in Mineral Wells, Texas. Mineral Wells is about a 25-minute drive from Jacksboro and provides ample space and meeting capabilities. This hotel is very similar to the one we stayed in at Ashland, Virginia, last year. The hotel rates for our conference are (Booking ID-Middlebrooks Family Association):

- Daily rate for Room with King Size bed, single or double occupancy: \$92.99 + tax
- Daily rate for Room with 2 Queen Size beds, single or double occupancy: \$89.99 + tax

A full breakfast bar is included with the room rate and is identical to what we had at the hotel last year. Also included is the meeting room in the hotel for the entire booking period at no charge if our group books at least 10 rooms. As of last weekend we have 6 rooms that have been reserved. If we do not book at least 10 rooms, the charge will be \$200.00 for the meeting room. The telephone number for the hotel to make reservations is: 940-325-7829. The reservation cutoff date to make the 10-room booking is September 21, 2012. So, if you have not booked your room, please do so **before the 21st** so we can meet our quota to get the meeting room at no additional charge.

I think we have a good agenda planned for this year's meeting, with many activities for different interests. In addition to attendees from the nationwide group, we expect a good showing from the local Middlebrooks family branch from the descendants of John Floyd and Mary Jane (Jarrell) Middlebrooks who settled into this area of Texas after migrating from Georgia in 1882.. Note that Mary Jane grew up at the Jarrell Plantation in Georgia, which we visited two years ago when the meeting was in Jones County, Georgia.

We are looking forward to seeing all of you here in Texas.  
Feel free to give me a call or send an email if you have any questions or comments.  
Sam

Sam Middlebrooks  
1314 Wilson Branch Road  
Killeen, Texas 76542

**The current agenda (draft) for the week is:**

**Tuesday, 2 October:** Arrival at the hotel for those participating in the field trip recon on Wednesday

**Wednesday, 3 October:** 1. Field trip recon, to follow the planned route to determine exact times TBD for evaluation of the route

2. Check-in for conference attendees

**Thursday, 4 October:** 1. Check-in for conference attendees

2. Hotel Meeting Room: **8:30 AM**- Registration and

**9:00 AM: MFA opening – Welcome, Treasury Report, Newsletter Report**

**9:30 AM** presentation by local historian Mr. Ed Bonner of the Jacksboro Museum Society

**10:00 AM: Presentation on John Floyd and Mary Jane Jarrell Middlebrooks by Sam Middlebrooks**

3. **11:30 AM** Approx. - Hotel Meeting Room: Box lunch catered by Hayes Station Bistro in Mineral Wells, @ \$6.00 per person.

4. 12:30 Approx. - Depart by vehicle convoy to Fort Richardson in Jacksboro.

5. 1:00 p.m. Approx. – Tour of Fort Richardson by Texas State Parks & Wildlife Rangers. Cost is \$3.00 per person to enter the state park grounds. **To be paid by each person.**

6. 2:30 p.m. Approx. – Tour of Jack County Museum in Jacksboro conducted by members of the Museum Society. No cost for the tour. At the museum the following books can be purchased:

- Smith, P. W., & Smith, T. (1993). Jack County Cemeteries. Jacksboro (Jack County), Texas: Manuscript.

- Dodson, M. (1985). The History of Jack County Texas: Presented by the Jack County Genealogical Society on the Occasion of the Sesquicentennial Celebration in 1986 of the State of Texas, 1836-1986. Jacksboro, Texas: Curtis Media Corporation, Dallas, Texas. ISBN 0-88107-043-2.

**NEW on sale: Jack County Museum Cookbook, 800+ recipes from Jack County Cooks! \$25.00 each**

**Plus postage if to be mailed**

7. 3:30 p.m. Approx. – Choice of either visiting the genealogical archives at the Gladys Johnson Ritchie Library or visiting the archives in the Jack County Courthouse.

8. 5:30 p.m. Approx. – Dinner at the Green Frog Café in Jacksboro.

9. 8:00 p.m. Tentative- Meeting of the MFA Board of Directors at the hotel meeting room in Mineral Wells.

**Friday, 5 October:** 1. 8:00 a.m.- Depart by vehicle convoy for field trip to cemeteries and home sites in and around Jacksboro.

2. 12:00 p.m. – Approx: Lunch at the Main Street Bistro on the Jacksboro Square across from the courthouse

3. 1:30 p.m. – Approx: Continue field trip.

4. 5:00 p.m. – Approx: End of field trip and return to Mineral Wells hotel.

5. 6:00 p.m. – Approx: Dinner at Pastafina restaurant in Mineral Wells (order from menu).

**Saturday, 6 October:** 1. 8:30 a.m. **Registration**, – Call to order at the hotel meeting room in Mineral Wells

2. 9:00 a.m. – Presentation and talk on early Jack County and Jacksboro frontier history by local historian and author Ms. Lois Paschal

3. 10:00 a.m. – Approx: MFA Business Projects –**Cemetery, DNA, Military, Repository, Family Register Update**

**SOCIALIZE – REUNION TIME**

4. 12:00 p.m. Hotel Meeting Room: Box lunch catered by Hayes Station Bistro in Mineral Wells @ \$6.00 per person.

5. 1:00 p.m. – **Family Group Pictures**

6. **Sharing our Family Histories - presentations: Thomas Middlebrooks b. 1763 – CT., by Leonard Middlebrooks** (maybe others)

**Robert (others) (about 30 minutes each)**

7. **3:30 – 4:30 PM – MFA Meeting Closeout**

**Feedback- Overview of Meeting**

**Next Year’s Meeting Place**

**Special Assignments – (if any)**

Adjourn the conference.

9. **6:00 PM – Dinner to be announced**

\*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*      \*\*\*\*\*

## **Dianne Burch Middlebrooks (1943-2012), A Genealogist's Genealogist**

By Leonard Middlebrooks

MKS, Diane Burch [1943-2012]

Dianne was born Harriet Dianne Burch, 20 Apr 1943 in Newton County, Georgia. She died Tuesday, 7 August 2012, at her home in Jasper County, Georgia, after a long battle with Alzheimer’s. She married Billy White Middlebrooks 09 March 1963. Their children are Wendy Denise Johnson and Barbara Gay. Dianne's grandchildren are Clay and Brenden Johnson. Services were held 11 August at the Horis A. Ward Fairview Chapel in Stockbridge, and interment was in the Fairview Memorial Gardens, Stockbridge, Henry County, Georgia.

These are the standard personal vitals, but there is so much more. When Dianne's obituary and funeral notice appeared in my Saturday morning e-mail, a flood of memories arose, some funny, some sad, and some amazing.

It was in early 2000 when Dianne and I began e-mail correspondence about members of my Thomas descendants. She responded to an Ancestry.com query and we began a long series of letters, sharing notes and pondering questions about our 400-year Middlebrooks American history. Little did we realize then that nearly a year later we would be talking about a family organization and the beginnings of the first Middlebrooks Family Association meeting.

By spring we were discussing the father of Sims and Thomas. I felt that the father was an Isaac who died before the Revolutionary War. At that time we knew that there was an Isaac who was born in 1727 in New Kent County, Virginia. This preponderance of questions would eventually lead to an MFA meeting in the Virginia-North Carolina area.

By August 2001, the usually unflappable Dianne emailed me about a research trip to the Hancock County, Georgia, Courthouse. It had been a bad-hair-day, and a frustrated Dianne wrote that no one could answer any questions:

I wanted a Land Lot map...*Never heard of such.* I want to purchase land, how would I find the owner...*see the Tax Office, they use only aerial maps, or go to the Superior Court...*and on and on. The only exception to a wasted day was a local restaurant with a good lunch and a good price. DI

By the Fall of 2001 we were discussing how we could pull together corrections and additions to the Middlebrook Family *Register*. The David of the Virginia-North Carolina border and the number and names of John 1755's wives were at the top of the list.

By the winter of 2001, the MFA was formed with two members, Dianne and Leonard. I suggested that she should be president, considering that she was the real genealogist, and I would be VP. Dianne adamantly says "NO way. I will be VP and Treasurer." And so it began.

She still did the bulk of the work, researching and cemetery and courthouse field trips. All I did was ask questions; she was a good teacher. Along with being the first VP, Dianne took on the duties of Treasurer and Newsletter and MAZE editor.

How did the name MAZE come about? It was felt that there would be two types of members, those who paid and those who did not. The payers would receive the Newsletter and all would receive the MAZE. There were so many questions about the Middlebrooks families that it seemed like one was wandering in a maze, searching for answers, and now you know.

The very first MFA meeting was in the fall of 2002. As there were more Middlebrooks living in Georgia, it was decided to meet near the heartland of the early Georgia Mids. Dianne attacked the project with gusto and Macon was selected. She chose a motel and generated the meeting agenda draft. We had not swapped personal photos, nor described how we would recognize each other. My wife, Toni, and I arrived a few minutes early and sat at a table and in walked this 5'-5ish brunette with glasses hanging around her neck. She said you must be Leonard and I'm hard of hearing. And so it began.

As time progressed, we realized that Dianne had a hearing aid in each ear. She said she never really liked wearing them and seemed to be at her best with both in her pocket. You could definitely tell when she tuned you out. This is something that Toni learned to appreciate over the years when she ended up with dual hearing aids and is able to tune me out.

Dianne published the first Newsletter in August of 2002. It was a one-pager asking for articles. She included a quote that summed up her approach to life. She remained the Editor until the fall of 2006 when she voluntarily stepped down to become the Assistant Editor under Jarrelyn Lang. (Jarrelyn had been Diane's proofreader for sometime, then Dianne bumped her up to Assistant Editor.) During the years, Dianne wrote many interesting articles and one that continually amazes me relates to the death of Joseph Anderson Middlebrooks. Di had found a four-line newspaper article of how he was killed. From that small article she searched for continuing information and wrote a three-page story on the ultimate demise of the killer. This was done at a time when newspapers were still on microfilm or in library stacks.

My wife proofread the early Newsletter editions and I always had the opportunity to read each issue prior to publishing. Dianne and I had a running battle on style. I constantly wanted to rewrite to make sure that MFA always put its best foot forward to the membership. Some contributors were not always coherent in their writing, and I would rewrite, rewrite, rewrite. Well, as you can imagine, Dianne finally said enough is enough and you can edit the Newsletter. It took an enormous amount of back-peddling to get out of that situation.

On a lighter side, we always debated the use of *raised* and *reared*. I contended that people were reared and pigs were raised. She contended that I was from another world with a different dictionary.

In the first MFA Newsletter, Di inserted the following Greek proverb: *People may not remember exactly what you did, or what you said, but they will always remember how you made them feel.* She loved these types of commentary and this early insert was typical of her viewpoint on life. The publication was sent out on a monthly schedule until late 2005.

The first MAZE was sent out in November of 2002. This actually had some meaty articles and was originally designed to highlight one of the North Carolina brothers. It was published six times per year. Dianne's endless research provided many wonderful articles and her propensity to write, at times, led to the MAZE's being larger than the Newsletter. In late 2005 the MAZE was changed to a two-page publication and the Newsletter went to a quarterly publication.

Sometime towards the end of 2002, Di wrote that she and Billy were going cemetery-hopping. What, pray tell, is cemetery-hopping? They were going from cemetery to cemetery, photographing headstones. If my notes are correct the CHILES-MKS Cemetery was the first to be contributed to the MFA Cemetery Project in January of 2003. Why would anyone go out in the dead of winter looking for graves? Well, I was told, it is the time of year with the least bugs and the trees are bare, making it easier to locate some of these family sites. It still sticks in my mind that she would gladly seek out and photograph a cemetery, but would not provide the connection of non-Middlebrooks surnames. This was only fair and we traded many techniques for successful photographs.

One memorable event was when she was searching for the William Sims Middlebrooks cemetery. It is inside the Piedmont Wildlife Reservation and well off the beaten path, and at that time one relied on county survey, U.S. topographical maps, or often poorly described locations

on what were then called family bulletin boards. As Arthur Conan Doyle would say "The hunt was on," and Dianne had set her target to locate this elusive cemetery. Billy was ever present, helping with the maps and driving, and on the third attempt they were successful. Di told me that she was standing in the back of their pickup as Billy drove down a particularly bumpy north Jasper County logging trail. She said she beat on the roof of the truck and the cemetery was about 50 yards off the road. The stones were dark and sooty from a controlled burn-off and not visible from the driver's seat.

During the beginning years, we would constantly swap family relationship questions. Who are these Middlebrookses and to whom do they belong? One of the still unsolved questions, and one that led to the Unknown Middlebrooks Group, was a James MK of Kansas City, Missouri. He and his 12-year-old friend built a canoe during the winter of 1912. They used discarded material and the local newspaper wrote a short article with the boys' ages and home addresses. What could be easier? It should be a snap to determine this James's ancestors. Well we never did and this became the beginning of the "Who File."

By the winter of 2004/5 Dianne agreed that the 1909 Middlebrook *Register* was off base, and the North Carolina clan was a separate group of Middlebrookses. Her research of Isaac and Isaac's family led to her organizing one of the annual MFA meetings in Danville, Virginia, a town north of the Dan River and Caswell County, North Carolina. Her deed research efforts led to what is believed to be the 640 acres of the ca.1753 Middlebrooks homestead. The town of Providence is located on the southern part of the property and Hogan's Creek is to the north.

At this meeting, Dianne appeared dressed in period costume and presented how Thomas could have migrated by waterways and ox-driven wagon from Maryland to Virginia and how his son could have continued the migration into North Carolina. I will always remember her in her full length dress and apron, a straw hat on her head and wooden limb walking stick by her side.

Dianne was not only a serious Middlebrooks researcher, but also a major compiler of the Armistead, Burch, and White families. Her love of family history began in 1980, when she began to research Billy's mother's White ancestry. Nine years later Dianne published the 301-page hardback history *White Genealogy: Thomas Allen White and His Descendants*. With the White genealogy out of the way, her sister Sineath urged Dianne to prove the Burch family Indian connection. Though it was never proven conclusively, a great deal of family information was compiled and Di wrote one of her many booklets.

Next came the Armistead genealogy and then a compilation of her Mount Zion Methodist Church's History. Her research continued with the Middlebrooks family and the writing of a total of seven booklets about the North Carolina brothers Isaac, John, Micajah, Sims, and Thomas, about Robert and Joseph Middlebrooks and many interesting articles about various family members.

In the summer of 2004 Dianne and Billy spent a week with Neal Middlebrook working through Jones County Courthouse records. They located the 2000 acres owned by Sims Middlebrook, the fourth great-grandfather of Billy and Neal. The site became one of the tour

stops during the 2010 Macon MFA meeting. A year later Dianne was still researching on the Internet and planning her next articles. In 2006 she and Billy attended the meeting in Natchitoches and she published her last Newsletter article in 2011, *The Importance of Birth Order*.

In 2007 Dianne attended her last meeting, the Morrow, Georgia, MFA meeting. Her daughter, Barbara, brought her for part of Saturday's sessions. She met with the various groups, saw the progress of the Cemetery Project, the interaction of the various groups, the Register Update progress, and how far the MFA DNA Project had progressed in the two years since its inception.

Dianne was a tireless worker and seldom refused to offer assistance and was continually looking for new avenues of information. In 2011, while we were in Staunton, Virginia, Toni and I went to the local library that contained a considerable genealogical collection. The archivist pulled the file on Middlebrook/s and five sheets down was a query from Dianne on the town of Middlebrook, Virginia. The query reply was not very enlightening, but it turns out that Middlebrook is exactly what the name implies and a town built on the middle brook leading to a nearby estuary and nothing to do with our family.

In 2010 we ate dinner with Dianne and Billy at the Fresh Air Bar-B-Que in Indian Springs. Dianne said she loved receiving and reading email, but that she had trouble typing a response. Leonard: *Teach Billy how to type and send email*. Dianne: *Not in this lifetime*. Billy and Dianne both laughed out loud. It was the last time we saw Dianne.

Dianne never used the word *genealogist* in reference to herself; she always said she was a compiler, never a researcher or a genealogist. Dianne was direct in her thoughts, well organized, but humble in presenting her work. To me she was a genealogist's genealogist and the real motivation behind the Middlebrooks Family Association.

#####

**The Middlebrooks Family Association, Inc.**

Has received a generous gift

In Memory of

**Dianne Middlebrooks**

From

Charles S. & Joanne J. Middlebrooks

Columbus, Georgia

"In memory of our wonderful Dianne Middlebrooks.

So many have benefitted from her early work."

---

The Middlebrooks Family Association  
Appreciates your donation in the name of Dianne Middlebrooks.

Thank you,  
Joyce Arnold, MFA President

## Joseph Middlebrook (1773-1853) *The Middlebrook Who Wasn't*

By Dave Clark, Cedar Park, TX

(The information in this article is not my own personal research, but instead a compilation of the works of other MFA members whose diligent efforts are gratefully acknowledged.)

When it comes to authoritative sources, many of us *believe* what we read. The ***Register of the Middlebrook Family***, by Louis F. Middlebrook in 1909, is a comprehensive description of the Middlebrook family and its start in early America at Fairfield County, Connecticut.

The *Register*, on pages 46 & 66, mentions a Joseph Middlebrook of Caswell County, North Carolina, (b. 1770, d. in Alabama), son of John Middlebrook of Caswell County, North Carolina (b. 1726, d. 1817) and his wife (?) Sims. On page 39, his grandfather is listed as David Middlebrook (baptized 10 Dec. 1704 Connecticut, son of Joseph III of Fairfield, Connecticut) of the Virginia-Carolina border. David is described as "one of the early southern pioneers, settling in this area about 1723-24." We have yet to uncover important source materials that were used to produce these claims about our Joseph.

### ***Houston, we have a problem...***

Known descendants of Joseph have taken y-DNA tests to help us determine how he is related to other Middlebrook/s families. You can see the known groups on the MFA DNA webpage at <http://www.worldfamilies.net/surnames/middlebrooks/results>

When we compare Joseph's DNA with other Middlebrook(s) families, not only are the numbers significantly different, but the DNA is of an entirely different origin **I2a Haplogroup** vs the predominant **R1b1b2** Haplogroup of all the other known Middlebrook(s) families. Both are definitively European, but each has different roots and migration paths as can be seen at

<http://www.familytreedna.com/pdf-docs/2010-ydna-migration-map.pdf>

Our tests for descendants from *two different sons* of Joseph show the same DNA values. We can infer that these DNA values are therefore Joseph's DNA values. These DNA tests provide us with indisputable evidence that Joseph Middlebrook's paternal ancestry is not associated with any known Middlebrook family and hence ***The Register is wrong.***

### ***Over 1500 descendants known in America...***

We have identified over 1,500 Joseph 1773 descendants whose father or mother was a Middlebrook. There are likely thousands more (myself included) who can claim Joseph as their direct

ancestor (the children of Middlebrook grandparents, etc.) as other family names intermingle. Today they all belong to this distinctly separate Middlebrook line.

Incidentally there is another separate group belonging to **Garland Middlebrook** (b 1774? 1786 VA?) who share a common ancestor with the mainstream (CT) Middlebrook families, but there are some significant DNA differences. More research is needed for this group as well.

### ***What about the Joseph 1773?***

So how did Joseph Middlebrook get his last name? He is living in the vicinity of other Middlebrook families during his early years, especially the children of Isaac Middlebrook (b. 1726/27, d. bef. 1771), who are found in Caswell County, North Carolina, records and in 1790s Hancock County, Georgia, records. See Joseph's known records list below.

Considering the association with Isaac's children, it might be that Joseph was adopted into the Isaac Middlebrook family at an early age. While there are no records on this, this could be a "farm adoption" of a young worker boy who was subsequently adopted into the family (took their name). Or perhaps *The Register* is correct (except via adoption) about Joseph's parents being John Middlebrook and his wife (?) Sims, as they too were in Caswell County. Some speculate that John is merely another name for Isaac.

In the book *A Pioneer Speaks*, by Edward Baxter Featherston, Nancy Yarborough Middlebrooks (1833-1912) says her grandfather was of German blood, but spoke broken English. Nancy did not know whether he was born in America or Germany. If she was referring to her paternal grandfather (Joseph), could he (or his parents) have been German? This time-frame coincides with the Revolutionary War and the arrival of Prussians fighting as mercenaries in colonial America. And there are also plenty of other German immigrants as well.

I have also searched 1750-1880 records for \*any\* male Middlebrook(s) who were born in Germany/Prussia and nearby areas (or claimed their parents were born there) and found none. So it is likely that Joseph's parents were not Middlebrooks from Germany.

It remains to be seen if there will be any physical evidence to tell us more about the biological parents of Joseph Middlebrook and their ancestry. In the meantime, there is a lot more information about this Joseph's immediate family available to us.

### ***The Joseph Middlebrook Family***

Joseph Middlebrook was born 18 Apr 1773 (Caswell Co, NC or Germany), and died 18 Sep 1853 (Buena Vista area, Chickasaw Co, MS). He married (abt. 1798 Greene Co, GA) to Rachel Baxter (died abt. 1830 Troy, Hale Co, MS), daughter of Thomas and Catherine Baxter.

Children:

1. **Ibzan Middlebrook**, b. 1802 Green Co, Georgia, d. 1846 Nacogdoches Co, Texas  
m Jane C Crawford, b: 08 May 1807 Greene Co, Alabama, d: abt. 1883 Texas
2. **Thomas Baxter Middlebrook**, b. 1805 Warren Co, Georgia, d. 1870 Egypt, Chickasaw Co., MS  
m1 Harriett Seale, b. 03 Oct 1809 Knox Co., KY, d. 31 Oct 1849 Chickasaw Co., MS  
m2 Safronia Jane Holladay, b. abt. 1823
3. **Seaborn Sims Middlebrook**, b. 12 Jul 1807 Warren Co, GA, d. 11 Feb 1883 Dripping Springs, Hays Co, TX  
m1 Jane Lyon, b. 1800-1810 GA, d. bef. 1850, probably Chickasaw Co., Mississippi  
m2 Mary Ann Pratt, b. 22 Nov 1823 GA, d: 01 Oct 1903 in Dripping Springs, Hays Co, Texas
4. **Anna Middlebrook**, b: abt. 1811 Warren Co., Georgia  
m. Jesse Seale, b. 15 May 1806 Greene Co., Alabama, d. 1857 in Chickasaw Co., MS
5. **James Birdsong Middlebrook**, b. abt. 1815 Warren Co., Georgia, d. 17 Aug 1862 Pine Bluff (Fort Scott/Smith), Arkansas  
m. Mariah Bray, b. abt. 1815 Randolph Co, NC, d. 10 Jan 1874 in Sweet Home, Lavaca Co., Texas
6. **Elizabeth "Betty" Middlebrook**, b. 1800-1810 Warren Co., Georgia, d. Aug 1863 in Fayette Co., Texas

### ***Documented dates for Joseph Middlebrook:***

1773 Caswell Co., NC per head stone (Masonic symbol on tombstone)

1790 ~moved to Georgia [PROVE DATE]

1794 Tax Digest, Hancock Co., GA

1796 Tax Digest, Hancock Co., GA

1797 Hancock Co., GA, purchased 66 acres

1802 1st child born: Iban [PROVE PLACE]

1805 Greene Co., GA, 2nd child born: Thomas Baxter

1808 Warren Co., GA, 3rd child born: Seaborn Sims

1811 Jones Co., GA, paid taxes on 101 1/4 acres

1812 Jones Co., GA, purchased land from Arthur Burney, Deed Book D, p. 203

1815 Warren Co., GA, 4th child born: James Bird

1817 Jones Co., GA, January, sold 100 8/10 acres to Thomas Carter, Deed Bk J (1817-1818), p. 158

1817 Jones Co., GA, April, sold 101 3/4 acres to William Baldwin

1817 "History of Greensboro, Ala" [see Notes for his wife, Rachel]

1820 [LOCATE JOSEPH 1773 IN CENSUS OR OTHER SOURCE]

1823 probate William Bates, Greene Co., AL, 17 Sep 1823 (to help appraise the estate).

1830 census Alabama, GREENE, Roll 2 Book 1, Page 374a (South Dist)

1837 Chickasaw Co., MS, state census list, Joseph Middlebrook

1837 Chickasaw Co., MS, Tax rolls,

1840 census Mississippi, CHICKASAW, Roll 215 Book 1, Page 64a

1841 Chickasaw Co., MS, state census list, Joseph Middlebrook

1845 Chickasaw Co., MS, state census list, Joseph Middlebrook

1850 [LOCATE JOSEPH 1773 IN CENSUS OR OTHER SOURCE]

1853 Chickasaw Co., MS, died, per headstone

***Migrations of Joseph Middlebrook:***

It is believed that Joseph and Rachel Baxter Middlebrook went to Warren County when they first arrived in Georgia [assumes they were married prior to arrival]. Warren County was created in 1793 from four different established counties.

According to the land deeds and tax records, Joseph was in Georgia by 1793, the year Hancock County was created. His name was first recorded in Hancock County in the Tax Digest of 1794. He was also listed in the 1796 Tax Digest.

On April 12, 1797, Joseph paid “thirty pounds Sterling” to purchase sixty-six acres of land, located in Hancock County, from Dr. Seth and Pollie Kennedy. The waterway located on the land was Shoulderbone Creek (also known as Shoulder Bone Creek). John Middlebrook was the witness to the deed, recorded May 29, 1800, in Deed Book C, pages 357-358, Hancock County Superior Court, Sparta, Georgia. Thomas [son of Isaac 1727] was also living in the same area. Hancock County did not use land lot numbers and districts. Even today (2005), they do not use districts and land lot numbers.

John, son of Isaac 1727, bought one hundred and twenty-eight acres of land from a Dr. Kennedy. The land was located on the waters of the “Watery Fork of Buffaloe” in Hancock County and sold for the “...sum of sixty-five pounds.” In 1797, Georgia was still under British rule, using British money. The deed was recorded May 29, 1800.

Joseph and Robert [son of Isaac 1727] purchased an estate in 1801, and in 1803, Joseph was a buyer of an estate in Hancock County.

Sometime before 1805, Joseph moved to Greene County, Georgia, where he was listed in the 1805 Land Lottery. He did not receive a draw. It is possible that Joseph never moved from Hancock to Greene County, but the county absorbed him, instead.

Green County, Georgia, was surveyed in 1784. Lots were sold in the county seat, Greensboro, where settlers began building “rude” cabins in 1786. The county is one of the oldest to be created and was named for General Nathaniel Greene.

All of Georgia’s land was once inhabited by Indians. “In 1773, the Cherokee, Creek, and Chickasaw Indian chiefs signed a treaty in which they granted 2 million acres of land to Georgia.”

Sometime before 1811, but after 1805, Joseph was in Jones County, where he purchased 101¼ acres located on the watercourse of the Ocmulgee River.

The Ocmulgee (original name Okmulgee) River was once a tributary of the Altamaha River, approximately 255 miles long. The name of the river probably comes from a Hithiti Indian phrase, *oki mulgis*, meaning “bubbling water.” Now the river arises in Atlanta, Georgia, by the confluence of the Yellow, South, and Alcovy Rivers, which joins the Lake Jackson reservoir. Downstream from Lake Jackson, the river flows past Macon, at the fall line of Georgia, and joins the Oconee River to form the Altamaha River near Lumber City, Georgia.

On April 9, 1812, Joseph purchased Land Lot 201 from Arthur Burney of Wilkinson County, Georgia. No description of the land was given. The deed is recorded in Deed Book D, page 203, Jones County, Georgia. According to the tax and county maps, the land is located on River Road at Jackson Hill Road and Plantation Road in Jones County.

A land deed was instrumented between Joseph Middlebrook, Sr., and Thomas Carter on January 7, 1817, for one hundred acres of land located in Jones County. The land was in Land Lot 201 in the 12th District, on the waters of Oakin. (Oakin could be short for Ocmulgee.) The deed was recorded on February 20, 1817, in Deed Book J (1817–1818), page 158.

On April 23, 1817, Joseph sold one hundred, one and three-fourths acres of land to William Baldwin. The only description given was: South Land Lot 207 adjoining Cadenhead. According to the tax map of Jones County, this land was in the 12th District. The transaction was recorded in Deed Book J (1817-1818), page 283.

## **Alabama**

It is not known when Joseph actually set foot on the soil of Alabama, but he most likely met up with other families in Forsyth, Georgia, traveling the Federal Road in Monroe County, which was close enough that Joseph could easily reach it. Joseph was living on the Jones County side of the Ocmulgee. The distance from Forsyth to the state line of Georgia and Alabama is about 160 miles. Traveling by oxen or wagon just twenty miles per day would take at least eight to ten days.

The Federal Road was first used as a postal road and went through Creek Indian land after the Creek Indian War in 1813-1814. The Creeks had given permission for the creation of a horse path to be used for mail delivery. An 1818 map of Alabama shows that the Federal Road ran from the Georgia-Alabama line to Fort Mims, Alabama. Greene County, Alabama, was created in 1819 from “part of the land ceded to the Federal government by the Choctaw Cession of 1816” and named for General Nathaniel Greene of Georgia.

Sometime after 1817, Joseph traveled to Greene County, Alabama, where three of his children were married; Anna, Thomas, and Seaborn all married in 1827. There were other children: Elizabeth, Ibzan, and James. James was only two years of age when the family left Georgia.

The Middlebrooks family in North Carolina carried on their faith as Primitive Baptists by joining the Salem Baptist Church in Greene County. Rachel died in 1830 and Joseph left Alabama shortly thereafter.

The land owned by Joseph was located between the Tombigbee and Black Warrior Rivers.

## **Mississippi**

The next move was to Oktibbeha County, Mississippi. The distance from Ft. Mims, as the crow flies, is about 312 miles, and it likely took Joseph fifteen days or more to arrive in Oktibbeha. By September of 1836, Joseph was in Oktibbeha, where he purchased 80 acres of land. The following month, he purchased an additional 80 acres of land.

Land deeds are written very differently in Mississippi. Examples: Deed dated September 1836: "...tract of land lying ...in the survey of public land ... vange 14 east..." Another deed dated November 1836: "...a parcel of land, the W ½ of the NW quarter and the west half of the south east quarter of section twelve in township seventeen of vange No. 14 E each containing 80 40/100 acres on a legal subdivision of said section...." Joseph sold this land to his sons James B. and Seaborn Middlebrook in 1842.

The land records of the Mississippi Land Patents were transferred from public lands to private ownership. Some of the lands were from the United States Government; others were from homesteading, Indian cessions, or bounty given to military veterans. Baxter (Thomas) and James received two plots each. Thomas received 320.32 acres on November 11, 1840; James received 321.14 acres on April 4, 1842.

Oktibbeha County was originally part of the lands belonging to the Choctaw Indians. The Indian meaning of Oktibbeha is "icy waters." A creek by the same name as the county is the boundary line between the Choctaw and Chickasaw Indian Nations. Presbyterian missionaries established the first permanent settlement in Oktibbeha County about 1820. The county seat is Starkville.

Joseph moved again, this time to Chickasaw County, Mississippi, which was established in 1836 and named for the Chickasaw Indians. It is surrounded by five other counties which were created from land that was originally part of Chickasaw County. This move covered a distance of only forty-five miles. Joseph died 18 Sep 1853 in the town of Buena Vista, Mississippi.

Joseph Middlebrook's grave is in the Thornton Cemetery southeast of Buena Vista, Chickasaw Co., MS, on CR169. The cemetery west of CR169 is in wooded, fenced private property.

This cemetery is also known as the Old Union Cemetery and is located on the private property of Howard King (2005). Located nearby in this same cemetery is Joseph's grandson, Baxter Holladay Middlebrooks, b. 1853.

>From Prospect, MS, at the intersection of the Natchez Trace and SR8, go southeast on SR8 for about 8.2 miles. Turn left on SR169 and go about 1.9 miles; the cemetery is in woods to the west. Protecting this cemetery should be on the priority list for the Joseph line. The area is enclosed with barbed wire, but there were signs of the neighboring cows roaming inside the fenced area.

Tombstone photo submitted by Geneva Garrett March 31, 2005 and Lat/Lon coordinates are 33-52-11N; 88-49-3-W. says b. 1773 Caswell Co., NC; also shows Masonic symbol on tombstone.



+++++

### WEBSITES TO EXPLORE

**Ancestry.com** – Ancestry gives you access to thousands of collections of records from around the world, including immigration, census, voter, vital, and military records, newspapers & periodicals, family trees, photos & images, directories, maps, court, land, wills & financial records, stories, memories & histories, and detailed records about births, marriages, deaths, land ownership, and much more. It is the largest for-profit genealogy company in the world. All family history centers have access to Ancestry.com Library Edition version through their Family History Center Portal at

<http://www.familysearch.org>

**The Genealogist** – [TheGenealogist.co.uk](http://TheGenealogist.co.uk) English Parish records, directories, civil registration, surname mapping, and selected Army and Navy lists

# MIDDLEBROOKS AND SIMMONS FAMILIES

## Jones County, Georgia

Contributed by Neal Middlebrook, who received the following e-mail:

I am researching my Simmons ancestors in Jones County, Georgia. My family and the Middlebrookses intermarried several times. Elizabeth Simmons married Alfred Middlebrooks in 1831. Sophia Simmons married John S. Middlebrooks in 1831, and John W. Simmons married Bethiah Middlebrooks. I have located wills and deeds in Jones County records in which my 3X great-grandfather, Thomas F. Simmons b.1816 in Jones County and later moved to Meriwether County, Georgia (married Mahaly Barmore 1836) is listed as the brother of Sophia and Elizabeth Middlebrooks and the brother of John W. Simmons and James Simmons. I am unable to determine the parents of Thomas F. Simmons. Some believe his parents are William Simmons and Rachel Simmons who married in Jones County on 10/27/1814. Others believe he is the son of John R. Simmons of Anson, NC, and Sarah Stewart of Georgia. I have spent several months trying to sort out the Simmons line.

Do you have any info on the Simmons people who married into your family in Jones County? Any info would be greatly appreciated.

Pamela Nelson

Neal's reply:

Hi Pamela:

I am of the Sims Middlebrook (b. 1762) line through Isaac R. Middlebrook (b. 1796). I have not researched the Simmons line. I think you already have what I have on John S. Middlebrook and Sophia Simmons. It says below in Sophia's will that Thomas was a half-brother.

I looked on Ancestry Family Trees for Alfred Middlebrooks and Elizabeth Simmons. The parents of Martha Elizabeth Simmons were David Ephram Simmons and Susan Crosby. You will need to be careful about using free information, but it does provide some clues.

Also, on the Ancestry Family Trees, it has the parents of W. Simmons (husband of Bethiah Middlebrooks) as John R. Simmons and Sarah Stewart. You may want to contact both of the family tree authors to see what sources they have in documenting the parents of Elizabeth and John W. Simmons.

I will forward your inquiry to other Middlebrook researchers to see if they have anything on the Simmons line.

You may want to consider joining the Middlebrooks Family Association, \$20.00/ year. Please contact MFA President Joyce Arnold if you would like to join. Her e-mail: [joycenjim@sbcglobal.net](mailto:joycenjim@sbcglobal.net).

Neal adds: **Land Records and Wills for John S. and Sophia (Simmons) Middlebrook**

On November 1, 1859, William H.C. Nivins, executor of the estate of his father, Daniel Nivins, sold to John S. Lot 106, 8<sup>th</sup> District of Dooly County, Georgia, for two hundred, fifty-five dollars.

The deed was recorded in Jones County, Georgia, in Deed Book S, page 389, on November 12, 1860. John was the highest bidder in the auction on the courthouse steps. Since John and his wife did not have any children, nephews David T. Middlebrooks and James Jones, Jr. were heirs to their legacy. John's will was written on August 8, 1867, and recorded September 2, 1867, in Book E, pages 62-63, in Jones County, Georgia. After the death of John's wife, Sophia, David and James were to inherit the land in Wilcox County, Georgia. Even though the Executor was appointed to brother, Samuel C. Middlebrooks, Sophia was to have "control of his state." The will specified that if David and James could not agree on the lots, then their "names put in a hat and draw." One would get "one half of dwelling moved to Lot 45" and the "other half says on Lot 66." If David did not have any heirs, his share was to go to Mrs. Lavonia Nevis and Mrs. Elizabeth Jolly. After the sale of the perishable property, two hundred, seventy-five dollars went to his wife.

The land in Wilcox County, Georgia, located in the 8<sup>th</sup> District, Land Lot 106, was to be sold at public outcry after Sophia's death. The money gained from the sale was to be divided in half – David and James would be one half and Sophia the other half. When John's wife, Sophia, died, she left a will. The will was written on September 9, 1868, and recorded May 5, 1873, in Will Book E, pages 116-117, in Jones County, Georgia. Before she wanted her estate to be divided, she requested that the estate was to "Pay for her sickness and burial expenses." She divided her estate between her brother, John W. Simmons; half-brother, Thomas Simmons; her sister, Mrs. Ruth Cook, wife of George Cook of Talbot County, Georgia; her niece, Elvina E. Stubbs, wife of James W. Stubbs; and her sisters, Elizabeth Simmons, wife of Alfred Middlebrooks and Adaline Plidgin of Alabama. All the heirs received a one-fifth part of the estate. She also wanted her niece to [have] "one bed bedstead, counterpane, bolster and pillows with cases."

Sophia also used Samuel Cannon Middlebrooks as her executor of her estate. Samuel posted a bond dated May 5, 1873, and recorded on May 6, 1873, in Bond Book E., page 61. James F. Barron and Samuel posted the bond. In both wills, it is written that both John and Sophia were to be buried in the family cemetery.

If anyone can shed more light on the Middlebrooks and Simmons families of Jones County, Georgia, please contact Neal at [nealmidbroo1@frontier.com](mailto:nealmidbroo1@frontier.com) so that he can share the information with Pamela.

+++++

### ANOTHER WEBSITE TO EXPLORE

**Genline Family Finder (launcher)** – <http://www.genline.com/> Subscription-based website that offers access to images of the original Swedish church records from the 1600s to 1897. The record types include births, marriages, deaths, household examination books or the clerical registrations, and registers of movement in and out of parishes. Genline's archive also includes the civil registration between 1860 and 1897 for births, marriages, and deaths. Will be adding newer records up to the 1930s.

## IN MEMORIAM

**Anita Louise Williams**, 85, passed away in Seymour, Texas, February 22, 2012. Anita was born April 18, 1926, in Jack County, Texas, to William and Eula Middlebrooks Mathis. She married H.C. "Ted" Williams June 2, 1942, in Mineral Wells, Texas. He preceded her in death February 20, 2000.

Anita, a Thomas 1763 descendant, was a member of the Seymour Golf and Country Club, a homemaker, and an avid bridge player. She was a member of the First Christian Church of Seymour.

Anita was preceded in death by her parents and two brothers, William and Donald Mathis. Survivors include two sons, Jerry and Craig Williams; one brother, MFA member Charles Mathis; six grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were held February 25, 2012, at Oakwood Cemetery in Jacksboro, Jack County, Texas, under the direction of Archer Funeral Home of Seymour. Rev. Jerry Williams, Nita's son, officiated at the service.

Anita was a lovely woman and will be missed by all who knew her. Middlebrooks Family Association sends our sympathies to all of Anita's family.

**Peggy Joyce Autry**, age 72, of Calhoun, Georgia, passed away July 4, 2012.

Peggy was born May 6, 1940, on the Middlebrooks farm in Covington, Georgia, to James Woodrow Middlebrooks and Viola McDaniel Middlebrooks.

She was a 1958 graduate of Vashti School for Girls in Thomasville, Georgia. She received her degree from Reinhardt College, Waleska, Georgia, in 1960 and her post-graduate degree from Berry College, Mount Berry, Georgia, in 1967.

Peggy was a member of the Calhoun First United Methodist Church and taught with the Calhoun City School System from 1967 until her retirement in 1997.

Besides her parents, she was preceded in death by her foster parents, Albert and Marion Duncan of Augusta and Macon, Georgia. She is also preceded in death by her sister, Mary Brumbley, and brothers Joe and Gene Middlebrooks.

Peggy, a John 1755 descendant, is survived by her daughters, MFA member Deborah Autry and Donna Rinedoller; her brother Jimmy Middlebrooks; her sister, Martha Chason; and her husband Bill, of Valdosta, Georgia; two granddaughters; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held July 7 at the Calhoun First United Methodist Church, followed by burial in Chandler Cemetery, Calhoun, Gordon County, Georgia.

Debbie adds that, if anyone wishes to make a contribution, they can send it to the Middlebrooks Cemetery Project, a project of Middlebrooks Family Association, in Peggy's memory. Contributions can be mailed to MFA President Joyce Arnold at 2904 Trinity Drive, Pearland, Texas 77584.

Middlebrooks Family Association (MFA) extends deepest sympathies to Debbie and to all of Peggy's family.

\*\*\*\*\*

You've got to do your own growing, no matter how tall your grandfather was. – Irish Proverb

**James Stanley Middlebrooks, Jr.**, of Bridge City, Texas, passed away September 4, 2012. A Micajah 1758 descendant, James was born in Orange, Texas, March 26, 1949, to James Stanley Middlebrooks Sr. and Dorothy Irene Goynes Middlebrooks.

James was preceded in death by his father, his daughter Robin Middlebrooks, and brothers Alan and Mark Middlebrooks.

Survivors include his mother; sons Chris and Dax Middlebrooks; sisters Lynn Linthicum, Judy Guidry, and Donna Newsom; six grandchildren; and a cousin, MFA member Sharon Bartlett.

A funeral service, officiated by Father Steve Leger of St. Henry Catholic Church, was held September 7, 2012, at Claybar Funeral Home Chapel in Bridge City. Interment was at Hillcrest Memorial Gardens, Bridge City, Orange County, Texas.

Our sympathies and prayers go out to Sharon and all of James's family.

## Good Samaritan Opportunities

**FROM BOBBIE MIDDLEBROOKE:** Holiday Mail for Heroes Program

The holiday season is just around the corner, and it's time to start thinking about being part of the 2012 American Red Cross Holiday Mail for Heroes. For a sixth year, the American Red Cross and Pitney Bowes are partnering to ensure all Americans have an opportunity to send a touch of home this holiday season to members of our U.S. military, veterans, and their families, many of whom will be far away from home this holiday season.

Starting this fall and throughout the holiday season, the Red Cross is working with Pitney Bowes, a mail stream technology company, to collect and distribute holiday cards to American service members, veterans, and their families in the United States and around the world.

The process is very simple and takes no time at all. All you need is a pen and piece of paper to share your appreciation for the sacrifices members of the U.S. Armed Forces make to protect our freedom. The Holiday Mail for Heroes mail box is open and ready to receive your cards. Please send all mail to:

**Holiday Mail for Heroes**

**P.O. Box 5456**

**Capitol Heights, MD 20791-5456**

To see guidelines for sending the cards, go to: [redcross.org//support/get-involved/holiday-mail-for-heroes](http://redcross.org//support/get-involved/holiday-mail-for-heroes), and scroll down to **card guidelines**.

Sending a "touch of home" to American men and women who serve our country is the perfect way to express your appreciation and support during the holiday season. The deadline for mailing cards is December 9, 2012.

+++++++ +++++ +++++

### **OCTOBER IS BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH.**

You can make an easy, free contribution that will help fund mammograms for women who can't afford them by going to [thebreastcancersite.com](http://thebreastcancersite.com) and clicking on the pink rectangle. The site accepts only one click per computer per day, so if you have access to more than computer, either at home or at work, click daily on each one. Please continue to click daily, even after October is past. (Don't wait until October – start today!) This is a way to help scores of women, and it costs you absolutely nothing except a few seconds of your time.

## MINERAL WELLS, TEXAS: HOME OF "CRAZY WATER"

By Jarrelyn Lang

The 2012 MFA meeting/reunion will be held in Mineral Wells, Texas, in October. If you've never stepped foot in Mineral Wells, let me enlighten you.

Mineral Wells is at the junction of U.S highways 180 and 281. The site was settled by J.A. Lynch.

In 1877, James Alvis Lynch, his family, and 50 head of livestock left Denison, Texas, and headed west for a drier climate, in hopes of finding relief from malaria. Both James and his wife, Armanda, also suffered from rheumatism. After arriving in a valley among the hills of Palo Pinto County, the family got news of Comanche attacks farther west, so they decided to settle down where they were.

After several years of hauling water four miles from the Brazos River, they drilled a well in 1880. At first, the Lynch family was afraid to drink their well water because they thought it was poisoned. They tested it by watering their livestock from the well. Satisfied that it was safe for animals, they began using it, also. Over time, as they drank the foul-tasting water from their well, an amazing thing happened: their health improved substantially.

In 1881, Lynch laid out the town of Mineral Wells and proclaimed himself its first mayor. In 1882, a stage line operated between Mineral Wells and Millsap, a tiny town 15 miles west of Weatherford in Parker County. (As of the 2000 census, 353 hardy souls still call Millsap home.)

As word spread about the benefits of the water, the town of Mineral Wells boomed as a health resort. After 1885, when the Crazy Well was dug, Crazy Water was hailed as a sure cure for many disorders, including hysteria and other mental problems. The water was bottled and shipped throughout the country. People arrived in Mineral Wells in droves to drink the water and to bathe in specially constructed bathhouses. The Crazy Water name originated from a tale about a woman being cured of insanity by the miraculous waters.

J.C. Son, founder of the *Palo Pinto Star*, wrote articles praising the water's healing qualities. The railroad reached Mineral Wells in 1891, and the first of several hotels, the Hexagon Hotel, was built in 1897. By 1920, there were 400 mineral wells in the city, which was hailed as "the South's greatest health resort."

Eventually thousands of visitors were drawn to the bath houses and spas built by enterprising entrepreneurs. Special trains were run from the cities of Fort Worth and Dallas to accommodate the crowds.

Delbert Trew, who writes for the *Amarillo Globe-News*, tells how his grandmother traveled to Mineral Wells to bathe in the hot healing waters containing Crazy Crystals. She took a supply of the crystals home with her, to be mixed with hot water and consumed every day.

The labels on the box of crystals (small whitish flakes) gave instructions to "mix one teaspoon of crystals with twenty ounces of tap water and drink daily, as can be agreeably tolerated." The flakes consisted of sodium sulphate, magnesium sulphate, sodium chloride, potassium chloride, and sodium carbonate. The product, named "Radium Ore," came with warnings: "Precautionary Advice - Not to be used when abdominal pain, stomachache, cramps, colic, nausea, vomiting, or other symptoms of appendicitis are present." and "Warning - Continual use of any laxative may develop a systemic dependence." Trew adds, "No details have been recalled about her (his grandmother) ailments." His conclusion is that the crystals were pretty much the same as Epsom Salts.

Several Crazy Water hotels were built over time to handle the crowds, the tallest and most famous being the Baker Hotel. From 1920 to the mid-1930s, the town of Mineral Wells prospered, with the famous and infamous arriving weekly for the cure. Among those who registered at the Baker Hotel during that time were Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, Clark Gable and Carole Lombard, John F. Kennedy, Roy Rogers and Dale Evans, Larry Fine, Curley Howard, and Moe Howard, Helen Keller, and Lord Louis Mountbatten, uncle of England's Prince Philip - and the list goes on and on. The movie *Shadows on the Wall* was filmed at the Baker Hotel in 1985.

Today, very little from the gilded era remains. The Baker Hotel has been closed since 1972. The Famous Mineral Water Pavilion, built in 1914, is located at 209 N.W. 6<sup>th</sup> Street. You can still enjoy a mineral water at the old bar, and for anyone hesitant to commit to a full glass, they have free samples. They also sell snacks and other merchandise and love to talk about the history of the area.

In 1925, Washington gave a grant to Gen. Jacob Wolters to build a training site in Mineral Wells for the mounted cavalry in Texas. This campsite was named Camp Wolters and became the training site for the mounted cavalry guardsmen. Camp Wolters was designated an Infantry Replacement Center for the U.S. Army on March 22, 1941. The camp expanded from 50 acres to 7,500 acres within months. The newer part of the camp is now Wolters Industrial Park, and Camp Wolters is now called Old Camp Wolters. During World War II, Old Camp Wolters housed German POW's from North Africa.

In 1945, when the war ended, both old and new Camp Wolters were de-activated. The National Guard sold Old Camp Wolters in 1965 to the Pratt brothers, who gave the majority of the property to nonprofit groups and the new Mineral Wells Independent School District. Just east of Mineral Wells High School today is the original headquarters of Old Camp Wolters. Only one small rock building remains. It is maintained by the school district.

In 1951, the government re-activated New Camp Wolters as Wolters Air Force Base. New Camp Wolters was re-designated in 1956 as Camp Wolters Army Base. In 1963, the camp was permanently re-named Fort Wolters and served as the home for the Primary Helicopter Training Center during the Vietnam War. The new fort saw some 40,000 students from 30 countries, including South Vietnam, go through the 20-week

program conducted by the Southern Airways Company. An average of 600 students graduated each month in 1967.

Fort Wolters officially closed in 1973, but it took around two years to completely shut down. Most of the Fort Wolters property was sold off in the 1970's and is now privately held. The National Guard uses one portion of Fort Wolters for training purposes. Weatherford College operates a branch campus on the old Fort Wolters facility.

Wolters Village is located near Fort Wolters Military Reservation along U.S. Highway 180, three miles east of Mineral Wells in far eastern Palo Pinto County, near the Parker County line. After Fort Wolters was re-commissioned in the 1950's, the community was established as a housing development for military personnel and civilian employees. By 1970, it had 3,743 inhabitants. The town was annexed by Mineral Wells in 1984.

Mineral Wells is also home to Bat World, a living museum and rehabilitation center for orphaned and injured bats that nest throughout Mineral Wells. Residents of the area have grown to appreciate these insect-eating, pollinating friends. Bat World is an affiliation of the non-profit Beneficial Animal Teaching Society, B.A.T.S.

The Mineral Wells State Park is located at the intersection of Texas State Highways 180 and 281. The park lies just a mile or two east of town. The rugged terrain along Rush Creek was an early home to several Native American tribes, including the Comanche. Here you'll find camping, a nice lake, hiking trails, rock climbing (in the Penitentiary Hollow of the park), and one of the largest stands of undisturbed Cross Timbers forest in the region.

In 1952, Mineral Wells hosted the Republican state convention, in which delegates divided their votes between presidential candidates Dwight D. Eisenhower and Robert A. Taft. Though state chairman Orville Bullington of Wichita Falls led the Taft forces, the convention vote ultimately went 33-5 in favor of Eisenhower, who was thereafter nominated and elected.

**Sources:** "Wolters Village," Handbook of Texas Online; "Mineral Wells, Texas," Wikipedia.org; "Mineral Wells, Texas," texascapes.com.; "Old CampWolters," mineralwellstx.com; Delbert Trew, "Mineral Wells, Once a Booming Health Spa," texascapes.com; "Mineral Wells History," allacrosstexas.com;"Bat World," texascapes.com; "The Famous Mineral Water," texascapes.com; "Mineral Wells, TX", HandbookofTexasOnline; "Baker Hotel,"mineralwellstx.com; bakerhotel.us/CELEBRITIES.html; "Mineral Wells Founding," mineralwellstx.com.

