

HARPER FAMILY RECONNECTION MEETING NOTES for:
Tuesday June 4, 2024 – 7pm on ZOOM

Attendees: Beverly Harper-MD, Beverly Harper-PA, Cathy Harper Hogan, Cynthia Ford-Davis, Delores Harris, Faith Harper, Karen Copeland, Lisa James and Sylvia Ford-George

1. We reviewed the reunion details so far:

- a. This 35th Anniversary event is our first reunion post-covid. The main goals are to 1-get us to reconnect, 2-update the family tree, obtain current contact info, and 3-discuss where we go from here.
- b. 1-day event : August 17, 2024 : Harper Cabin in Brookside Nature Center, Wheaton, MD
- c. Anticipated Attendance: 50 - 60
 - We'll use June to concentrate on getting the word/invitations out to all family members
 - We'll use July to concentrate on getting folks to RSVP
- d. Save the Date has been emailed to family members we have email addresses for & placed on Facebook

2. The suggested theme was discussed and agreed on: *Building on Our Heritage, Tradition & Legacy*

3. Suggested Itinerary:

- a. We discussed the possibility of having someone come and speak with us about next steps needed in tracing our family history. Beverly-PA will moderate the portion of our reunion agenda that covers *where we go from here*.
- b. **Draft Timeline** (additional activities to be included):

Time	Activity	Lead
10:00 am	Set-up	
11:00 am	Meet & Greet + Sign-ins & Sign-ups	
	Family History Updates	
	Individual Family Photos - Photo Booth Style - at The Harper Cabin	
12:00 pm	Where do we go from here...	
	• Show Brookside PowerPoint re: The Harper Cabin	
	• Guest and/or family speaker	
	• Family discussion	
1:00 pm	Group Family Photo	
1:30 pm	Light Eats & Refreshments	
2:00 pm	Meet & Greet : Sign-ins & Sign-ups : Family History Updates – cont'd	
3:00 pm	Closing – Until next time	
4:00 pm	Clean-up	

4. **Suggested Menu:** It was determined that we would have a light menu vs full picnic fare mainly because of the cost, limited space, and uncertainty regarding attendance. We discussed pursuing a caterer, however Faith and Evelyn volunteered to secure the lunch fare. Family members can donate cakes and/or pastries. Family members with dietary restrictions can bring their own food.

AM: Dunkin Donuts: water, coffee and donuts

PM: Chicken, sliced ham, potato salad, coleslaw, dinner rolls
cake, chips, fruit, water and soda

5. **Identify costs and resources:** We're not collecting dues or charging family members to attend. However family members who would like to make donations to accommodate the costs are invited to do so. In July's meeting we'll identify all of our costs.

6. **Brookside Nature Center**

- a. We're still awaiting the final word on the waiving of the registration fee of \$350.
- b. Faith will meet with the director and conduct a site visit to scope out where our activities will take place and to confirm the timing.
- c. Quame has accepted the invitation to join us for the Anniversary Reunion.
- d. It's suggested that since The Harper Cabin represents our family, that we should do what we can to build a relationship with Brookside (and the National Museum of African American History & Culture in DC.) At our next meeting we will brainstorm ideas for keeping our relationship continuous, constant and consistent. We'll also speak with Brookside to see if they have any ideas. We'll check to see if Brookside has membership, and if so what it entails. (NMAAHC does have membership and several family members are members.)

7. **Additional Reunion Suggestions**

- a. We'll determine if we need an Icebreaker activity once we finalize the agenda and head count.
- b. A couple suggestions for recognizing family members who have passed were discussed. More discussion is needed.
- c. Bev Harper-PA discussed getting a bus to transport folks from Philly to the event.
- d. Hotel reservations for out-of-towners
- e. Cathy asked about our having celebrated Juneteenth as a family in the past—or in the future. Attendees did not know of any celebration with the family, however, individually most know of events in their areas.
- f. Cathy suggested we have t-shirts for this year and volunteered to take the lead. Sylvia will provide a draft announcement and timeline.

8. **Next Steps for reunion:**

1. Follow-up meeting with Brookside + site visit (Sylvia and Faith)
2. Continue communications re: speaker (Sylvia)
3. Research hotel room reservations (Sylvia)
4. Name tags that identify which brother attendee is related to (Cynthia)
5. Secure family photographer and DJ for the reunion (Cathy volunteered Clinton)

9. **Additional topics or comments** : We discussed the issues Cathy related to the group regarding the upkeep of the MD cemeteries where many of our ancestors are buried. Roddy Harper and Katie Harper are currently looking after the sites. They are in contact with the church and making donations for the upkeep. Attending family members inquired about making donations as well.

10. Change in Meeting Dates

We discussed the notion that It's spring, soon to be summer, and folks are planning more outdoor activities and may not be available to meet on Sunday afternoons for meeting or Game Day events. Meeting attendees agreed that we should try for non-weekend meetings for the next few months.

11. Family Members Update

Mekhi Henry is going to high school. Gabriel Harper and Joaquin Davis are graduating high school. And Billy Roy is studying to get a master's degree this year. He is in training to become a minister.

12. Upcoming Dates

- HFRR Meeting Date : Tuesday, June 18th at 7pm
 - Harper Family Game Day : TBD
-