



March/April 2023

Bell-Ransom Family News



Sharing Family News



"Each moment of the year has its own beauty."

Ralph Waldo Emerson



"Make the best use of what is in your power, and take the rest as it happens."

Epictetus

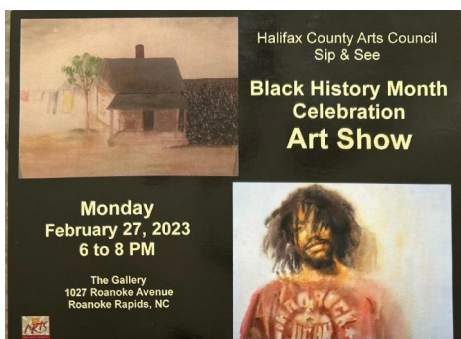


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Margaret Hawkins is shown at Welton High School on February 10 with **Ambassador Gentry Smith** who was speaking at a Black History program sponsored by the local Omega Psi Phi Fraternity.



Featured artists included Ron Beckman, Yulonda Pierce, **Ermagene Ross** and Allen Webb at the Halifax County Arts Council *Sip & See* Black History Month Celebration Art Show February 27, 2023 at The Gallery 1027 Roanoke Avenue Roanoke Rapids, NC.

The North Carolina Museum of History held a viewing of the documentary ***Unlocking the Doors of Opportunity The Rosenwald Schools of North Carolina*** on February 16. **Leanna Bell Pittman** was a teacher and principal of Allen Grove Rosenwald School in Halifax which was built by **Cary Pittman, Sr.**



Evelyn Sweatt Dawson has completed her most recent "Labor of Love" and would like for you to help launch this milestone in her life by attending the kickoff celebration of her book "**Folksy Folks**".

This autobiography by Evelyn Sweatt Dawson is a masterpiece in common sense. Told through a series of remarkable poems about people she has known in her life, this page-turner will help you recall and appreciate the influence of everyday people in your own life. With the emphasis on family, friends, and community, these "folksy folks" will provide you with a guide to live by. Their experiences will cause you to laugh, smile, cry, and sing as you see how their lives mirror your own. The struggles of life are real but the resolve, determination, and potential within us is greater. These folks provide you with the basic building blocks to live a more joyful, peaceful, grateful and fulfilling life. Prepare to be transfixed and transformed. *No cost to attend.* Casual attire. Books available for purchase onsite for \$16.04 each, taxes included. Cash only. Please bring correct change.



SAVE THE DATE AUGUST 12, 2023 FOR THE 45TH ANNUAL BELL-RANSOM FAMILY REUNION



Illustrator James Ransome participated in the African American Book Fair in Philadelphia February 11.



Aric and Taylor Gardner celebrated the 100th Day of School at their Fairfax County Virginia school costumed as they might look at 100 years of age.



Crystal Belfield attended Alpha Kappa Alpha Inc. Founders Day at Greenville Convention Center the Weekend of February 11.



Joni Campanella Roan attended the Negro League's Baseball traveling exhibit "Barrier Breakers From Jackie to Pumpie" chronicling the history of the Negro League. Mayor Karen Bass, Dodger manager Dave Roberts and Robinson's niece were in attendance. Visit the Negro League Baseball Museum Website to view.



David and Florine Bell celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary from January 26th to February 6th, touring Historic Savannah, GA, Historic South Beach, Miami, FL, the Virgin Islands of St. Croix, St. Maarten, San Juan, Puerto Rico, Dominion Republic, and Labadee, Haiti. The couple says they had a marvelous time enjoying the sights, and each other's embrace, thanking God for His grace, incredible blessings, family, and for the decades He has allowed them to be together.



David and Florine reside in Roanoke Rapids. They are both active in their church and community.

Congratulations!



MARCH

2 Rev. Quincy Hawkins Jr.
10 Ralph Bell Jr.
11 Cary Joseph Bell
12 Tala Gardner
15 Earl Epps
15 Abdul Rasheed
19 Beatrice Gardner
22 Michaela Bell
27 Clarence Bell
30 Yvonne B. Lewis
30 Viola Boone
31 Hazel Bell

APRIL

4 Jason Rosser
9 Jeanette B. Richardson
10 Bettye Powell
11 Clarence Bell, Jr.
12 Allen Owen
14 Christopher Rosa
25 Noah Rosser
26 Ernestine Belfield
27 Anthony Cheek
29 Sandra B. Rosser
And to all others celebrating a
March/
April birthday.



Keep the sick and shut-in and those suffering in any way in your thoughts and prayers. Among those reported are: **Geraldine Clark, Viola Boone, Mary Boone and Maxine Hill.**



Stay Well. Stay Safe.

Women's History Month Quotes to Note

"We all have a purpose even if we're still striving to understand what that is." Angela Bassett

"There is no limit to what we, as women, can do." Michelle Obama

More News to Share



Ava Gardner is a Mardi Gras Princess. The 3 year older is the daughter of Dr. Brion Gardner and Tala Shahlavi Gardner of Dunn Loring, Virginia.



Mrs. Viola Pittman Boone of Garysburg turns 99 years-of-age on March 30th. She is the wife of the late James Boone and is a Bell-Ransom Family Reunion Honoree.

Stephanie Lockhart participated in the 2023 Las Vegas **Rock 'n' Roll Running Series** 5K and the Raiders 5K. Stephanie resides in Las Vegas. She is the daughter of Terry Bell.



Deepest sympathy is extended to all who have suffered the death of a loved one since the publication of our February newsletter. Those reported include:

Mr. Andre Gay, Sr. of Greenbelt Md., husband of Margo Hill Gay and son-in-law of Maxine Bell Hill

Mrs. Helen Coleman Washington of Garysburg former owner of Coleman Funeral Home and friend

Mrs. Pattie Sneed Bunn of Enfield, cousin of the late Quincy Hawkins, Sr.

"God is our refuge and our strength." Psalm 46:1

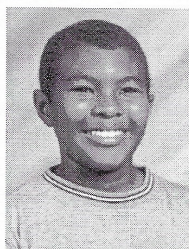


From the Scrapbook Reunion 2003

Educational Achievements....

Corey Caldwell, son of Marilyn Bell Caldwell and Alton Caldwell graduated from Northampton County High School-West as salutatorian of his class. He also served as Student Government president. Corey will attend NC A&T State University and major in chemistry.

Jarrett Caldwell, son of Marilyn Bell Caldwell and Alton Caldwell graduated with honors from Florida A&M University with a Doctor of Pharmacology degree. He will attend dental school this fall at Howard University.



Donavan T. Wells, a student at Durant Road Year Round Middle School in Raleigh, received a **High Honors Award** for achieving a GPA of 3.7 to 4.0 during his seventh grade school year. (2002-2003) He also received a trophy for **Most Outstanding Student in Exploring Technology**. He began his eighth grade school year on July 7, 2003. Donovan is the son of Cheryl Bell

and Timothy Wells of Raleigh and the grandson of Patricia Bell of Garysburg, NC and Clarence Bell of Jackson, NC. His 13th birthday is August 9, 2003.

Dawn Douglas Reveley, daughter of Sandra Bell Rosser and the late Lennon Douglas, Sr. graduated from the University of Maryland, College Park with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Human Resources. She is the granddaughter of Mrs. Maxine Bell and the late Sumner F. Bell.

Melanie Gee graduated from Rowan University with a BA in Communications.

Curry Elizabeth Cheek, daughter of Mr. Roger Ashby Cheek, III & Mrs. Mattie Curry Cheek graduated as the valedictorian from the Benjamin Banneker Academic High School, located in Washington, DC.

Special Honors: Howard, Harvard, MIT, Spelman, Georgia Tech, and Stanford accepted Curry into their colleges. Curry will attend Harvard University in the fall with a major in electrical engineering while fulfilling premedical requirements. She was also featured in the June issue of Ebony magazine as a top high school senior.



Zachary Quarles graduated from elementary school to middle school and **Amanda Bobbitt** graduated from middle school to high school. They are the grandchildren of Dr. Salter and Doris Cochran.

Kalia Crosby, son of Ralph and Dorcas Clark-Crosby graduated from Duke Ellington School of the Arts, Washington, DC with a 3.8 GPA. He will attend Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore, MD.

Cameron (Cam) Owen Dawson graduated from North Carolina Central University with a B.A. in History. He will attend graduate school at NCCU this fall. Cameron is the son of Melvin and Evelyn S. Dawson.

Ashley and Alexis Douglas, twin daughters of Lennon (Buster) and Kim Douglas of Rural Hall, NC graduated from First Assembly Christian School May 20. They will enter kindergarten at Moore Elementary School, Winston Salem this fall. They are also enrolled in ballet and music classes.

Tori Anderson, daughter of Dr. Alton R. and Terri L. Anderson was honored in the spring of 2003 by UNC-Chapel Hill for maintaining a 3.6 GPA.

Whitney Jenkins completed the fourth grade at Cornerstone Christian School in Roanoke Rapids, NC where she received several certificates for academic excellence including the A/B Honor Roll Award. She will attend Gaston College Preparatory School this fall.

She played goalie for the Chichester and Walker soccer team where she was awarded the team autographed goalie shirt and trophy for her successful season.

Whitney is currently a student of Tae Kwon Do where she holds a high blue belt. She is a member of the London Baptist Church in Roanoke Rapids and sings in the youth choir, leading several songs.

She is the daughter of Sonya Jenkins and granddaughter of Sumner F. Bell, III.



Cherelle D. Edwards, daughter of Cheryl and Gilbert Edwards of Garysburg, NC and granddaughter of Sandra Bell Rosser, will attend Gaston College Preparatory School, a KIPP school, this fall. She will enter sixth grade at this charter school which is a School of Excellence as designated by the state of North Carolina. KIPP, the Knowledge Is Power Program, is dedicated to providing historically underserved students with the knowledge, skills, and character needed to succeed in top-quality high schools, colleges, and the competitive world beyond.

Shawnic Brooks, daughter of Dawn Douglas Reveley and granddaughter of Sandra Bell Rosser, was honored for outstanding achievement in academics and physical education at an awards program at Gwynn Park Middle School in Brandywine, MD on June 20, 2003. She will enter eighth grade this fall.

Staci Marie Bell graduated from Junior Kindergarten at Chesterbrook Academy. She also earned a certificate of achievement for outstanding work in the art of dance. She is the daughter of Douglas and Kelly Bell of New Jersey.



Happy Easter

EASTER FUN FACTS

What is the true meaning of Easter Sunday? Why does the date of Easter change every year? How is Easter calculated? Why are eggs associated with Easter? Here are some answers from The Old Farmer's Almanac.

What Is Easter Sunday?

Easter is the most important holiday on the Christian calendar—and has been regularly observed from the earliest days of the Church.

Easter Sunday celebrates Christ's resurrection from the dead, following crucifixion. It marks the end of Holy Week, the end of Lent, and the last day of the Easter Triduum (Holy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday), as well as the beginning of the Easter season of the liturgical year.

The resurrection represents the triumph of good over evil, sin, death, and the physical body.

When Is Easter Sunday?

Easter is a "movable feast" and does not have a fixed date; however, it is always on a Sunday.

How Is the Date of Easter Determined?

Would you believe that the date of Easter is related to the full Moon? Specifically, Easter is celebrated on the first Sunday after the paschal full Moon on or just after the vernal equinox.

For simplicity, the equinox is considered to be March 21 (a fixed spring date set by the Church), although in astronomy, it's not always that day. The paschal full Moon always falls on the 14th day of a lunar month; because ancient calculations (made in AD 325) did not take into account certain lunar motions, it may differ from the actual full Moon date by a day or so.

Easter always falls on a Sunday between March 22 and April 25.

What Folklore Is Associated with Easter?

Eggs, traditionally forbidden during Lent, symbolize new life.

The Easter Bunny recalls the hare, the Egyptian symbol of fertility.

Where Did the Word "Easter" Come From?

The origin of the word "Easter" is unclear.

It may have derived its name from the Anglo-Saxon dawn goddess Eostre, whose feast was celebrated each spring at about this time.

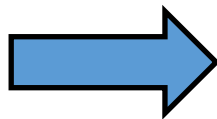
Or, it may have derived from words meaning "rising," "dawn," or "east."



The Bell-Ransom Family Tree



Deeply Rooted in Love



Sallie Ransom Jordan was the sister of Alice Ransom Bell and Leanna Bell Pittman was the sister of Sumner F. Bell, Sr.



Sallie Ransom Jordan Memorial Health Clinic



Dorothy Jordan speaks to the crowd about her memories of her mother, Sallie Ransom Jordan, during the ribbon cutting ceremony for the new health clinic in Seaboard which continues her mother's legacy of philanthropy and community service.

Kathryn Kennedy/Herald Staff Writer

This is an excerpt of an article that appeared in the Roanoke Rapids Daily Herald on June 28, 2005

SEABOARD - Longtime residents of Seaboard will remember the days when the railroad was running and the town was a bustling community with two doctors to care for townspeople. That was 30 years ago.

Since then, the town has withered a bit and times have changed. Citizens had to drive to receive health care and were nostalgic for the days when travel wasn't required. Their wait is over.

Northampton Family Practice, located at the newly renovated Sallie Ransom Jordan Memorial Health Clinic, opened its doors to visitors for the first time at 106 Clay St., in Seaboard Saturday.

"This is progress in the best sense," said David Emanuel, grandson of the clinic's namesake, Sallie Jordan - a renowned midwife who died in 1939. Emanuel and his cousin Lindsey Merritt served as masters of ceremonies, providing introductions for the day's five speakers.

Also present was Jordan's daughter, Dorothy Jordan, who appeared both as a member of the family and the Eastern Seaboard Trust - an organization with significant participation in the clinic's development.

"Sallie Jordan was a woman of unbounded energy, ethics and accomplishment," she said, then joked, "She was in control of the Seaboard Community for 106 years."

Taking a more serious tone, Jordan emphasized the importance of continued commitment to the clinic's success.

"Go out and solicit patients. Let's not leave today and say the doctor's office will take care of itself. We have to do that."

Carmen Hooker Odom, an official from the North Carolina Department of Health, began the accolades and stressed the importance of community in creating this project.

"Clinics like these only happen and only thrive because communities get behind them and make them happen," Odom explained. "What we have here is a committed community."

Dr. Frank Taylor, a native of Seaboard and graduate of East Carolina University's Medical School, will return to his childhood community and serve as practicing physician. Taylor currently works in a Conway office, but has been involved in the project for five years.

A ribbon cutting, tour of the building and refreshments were enjoyed by the approximately 300 people in attendance. Each was glad to see the project completion, but no one more than the senior citizens who have had to drive as far as Conway, Jackson and Roanoke Rapids to receive treatment.

The clinic will accept patients beginning Aug. 1

Grandsons David Emmanuel and Lindsey Merritt served as emcees during the ribbon cutting ceremony. Also in attendance at the ribbon cutting ceremony were her daughter Bernice Emmanuel and family and other grandchildren.



LEANNA BELL PITTMAN (Her Legacy)

(Odelia Fry of Detroit cherishes a portrait of her mother, Leanna Bell Pittman.)

October 21, 1995 marked the dedication of the historic Allen Grove-Rosenwald School in Halifax, North Carolina. The Rosenwald schools were created so Black children could receive an education. They were named after a Sears, Roebuck, and Co. president, Julius Rosenwald, who donated \$500 to building each school. Allen Grove is one of 38 Rosenwald schools in Halifax County and 813 in North Carolina.

For 42 years Leanna Bell Pittman headed the school. Pittman was born in Halifax, NC on January 28, 1880, the eldest of nine children of David and Gillie Bell. At age 20, she became a teacher, like her father. Her first job was at Pea Hill Rosenwald School in Scotland Neck, NC. That same year, she married Matthew Pittman, a farmer who tended more than 150 acres of cotton, peanuts, and tobacco.

After two years, Pittman transferred to Allen Grove Rosenwald School in Halifax, where she continued to teach and become the principal.

"Everybody loved her. She was a wonderful woman," says her daughter, Odelia Fry of Detroit, Michigan. "She was sweet. She loved everybody. She was kind, and she was very helpful."

Fry says her mother was successful in commanding respect while nurturing her students. Above all, she was determined to teach her students the importance of education.

The two-room school where Leanna Bell Pittman taught sat vacant from the late 1950s until October 1994, when it was donated to the Halifax County Cooperative Extension Service. The cooperative relocated the greatly deteriorated building to the Halifax County Rural Life Center, where it was restored as a tourist attraction and a 4-H camp store.

At the dedication ceremony last October, Fry and other family members, as well as Leanna Bell Pittman's former students, gathered in Halifax to celebrate.

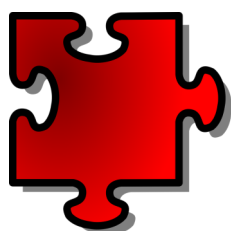
"A whole lot of them went on and made good of their lives," Fry says. "That's when times were hard. We couldn't get an education."

Family members donated a pair of photographs of Leanna Bell Pittman which hang in the school, a concrete symbol of her legacy.

Bell-Ransom Family

Reunion

45



Together, we make a family.

Will **YOU** be the missing piece? Complete the puzzle at the **45th Annual Bell Ransom Family Reunion.**

Reunion Update

Dear Family,

We continue a time of celebration with the arrival of spring, Women's History Month and the observance of Easter. I have shared with you articles about two important women in Bell-Ransom family history, Sallie Ransom Jordan and Leanna Bell Pittman as well as some interesting facts about Easter.

It is in a spirit of history-making and celebration that we begin the planning and countdown to the 45th Annual Bell-Ransom Family Reunion. In our February newsletter, your input was requested. In accordance with those responses, we are planning for a one day reunion event on August 12, 2023. A schedule for the day will be sent with the registration information.

In order to **not** increase our reunion fee, and because of increase in vendor charges, the registration information will be e-mailed. Those family members not on the email list will be

mailed registration forms. We are asking that those who have volunteered time, talent and donations in any way, continue to do so. As in the past, we will plan for 125 guests and must adhere to our registration deadline in order to meet our financial obligations. No money will be collected on the day of the reunion.

We are blessed to be able to celebrate a 45th Bell-Ransom Family Reunion. We are blessed to be able to honor our heritage by continuing a legacy of faith, excellence, and service. **You** are the important piece needed to make the Bell-Ransom family reunion special. Come! Together, we make a family.

Enjoy the beauty and wonder of Spring!

