

NOA *News*

LET IT BE WILD

VOL XXXX ISSUE 3

MAY 2024

NOA Gathering

**July 18-21
2024**

ASHEVILLE

North Carolina



from your President

*Happy Spring my
fellow NOA members,*

It's my favorite time of the year when everything wakes up from its winter hibernation. It's also a great time for National Odom Assembly to begin preparations for our annual meeting which will take place in Asheville, North Carolina this year. The dates are July 18th, 19th, and 20th and we say our goodbyes on

Sunday, July 21st as we all close another great meeting and go our separate ways. I'm so looking forward to



LET IT BE WILD

Don't forget FRIDAY night's
SHOW AND TELL

BRING A FAMILY TREASURE AND
THE STORY THAT GOES WITH IT

seeing everyone again and to making new memories with all of you. So, let's all get started on preparing for our grand event and make it another successful year. Don't forget to bring your auction items and Bill Powell will be there to take your membership dues.

I'm excited to visit North Carolina because a lot of my ancestors started in Virginia and North Carolina then traveled west as new land opened up. A lot of Revolutionary War battles were fought in North Carolina and I hope to get a chance to visit them. So be sure to bring your genealogy with you and maybe we can knock down some of those brick walls that we all run into when researching our family history. There will be a show and tell program and we need everyone to bring an item to display and give us the story behind it. I'm still trying to decide what I will bring.

Once you complete your registration form, please send it in so that Cheryl can get a count of the attendees. I pray for safe travels for everyone and for good weather for all our activities. Can't wait to see you in North Carolina.

Danny Powell
NOA President

Asheville North Carolina

Here is your check-list:

- ☐ Hotel Reservations
- ☐ Transportation Reservations
(flights, routes, motels)
- ☐ Registration Form completed and mailed
- ☐ Biltmore tickets
- ☐ Show and Tell item
- ☐ Auction Item
- ☐ Snack Items

Then, of course, there are those pesky little home items like; pet sitters, someone to check on the garden and water the inside plants, and on and on. At least it isn't winter and I don't have to worry about snowplowing and frozen pipes.

Since there isn't an inclusive breakfast at the hotel, we have an old fashioned hospitality room. On the registration form, there is a line item for stocking that room with breakfast and luncheon supplies, so please indicate the number of people in your group.

We'll have a space for our genealogy research, so bring something to display. Hopefully we'll be able to organize it by groups for ease to check out your family relations and relationships. In Savannah, two people who had known each other for sometime, found out they shared the same line. Let's try and repeat that moment.

CU SOON.

LET IT BE WILD

NOA Gathering Registration

Asheville, North Carolina

July 18-21, 2024

Name(s) _____

Email _____ Text # _____

Oldest Known Ancestor _____

Names for badges _____

WE NEED A HEADCOUNT FOR ALL ACTIVITY
DEADLINE FOR REGISTRATION 20 JUNE 2024

ACTIVITY	DATE	COST PER PERSON	# PEOPLE	TOTAL
FLOAT THE RIVER	Wednesday July 17, 2024	\$30 ages 4+		
BILTMORE ESTATE	Thursday July 18, 2024	Make your own Reservation \$90	-----	-----
HOP ON - HOP OFF	Friday July 19, 2024	\$39		
SCAVENGER HUNT	Saturday July 20, 2024	On your own \$0		\$0
BANQUET	Saturday July 20, 2024	\$36		
HOSPITALITY ROOM	Wed-Sun	\$20		
<i>The hospitality room fee is to stock foods for breakfast, lunch and snack as there is no inclusive breakfast. This will give us time to gather and socialize during meal times. Be sure to include the fee per person in your total.</i>				

MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO NATIONAL ODOM ASSEMBLY
MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO:

Cheryl Thompson, PO Box 413, Seeley Lake, MT 59868

solutions11@mac.com - 406.210.3541

DUE JUNE 20, 2024

MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS TODAY.....

**it's going to be fun
it's going to be wild
it's going to be great**

Holiday Inn Biltmore West

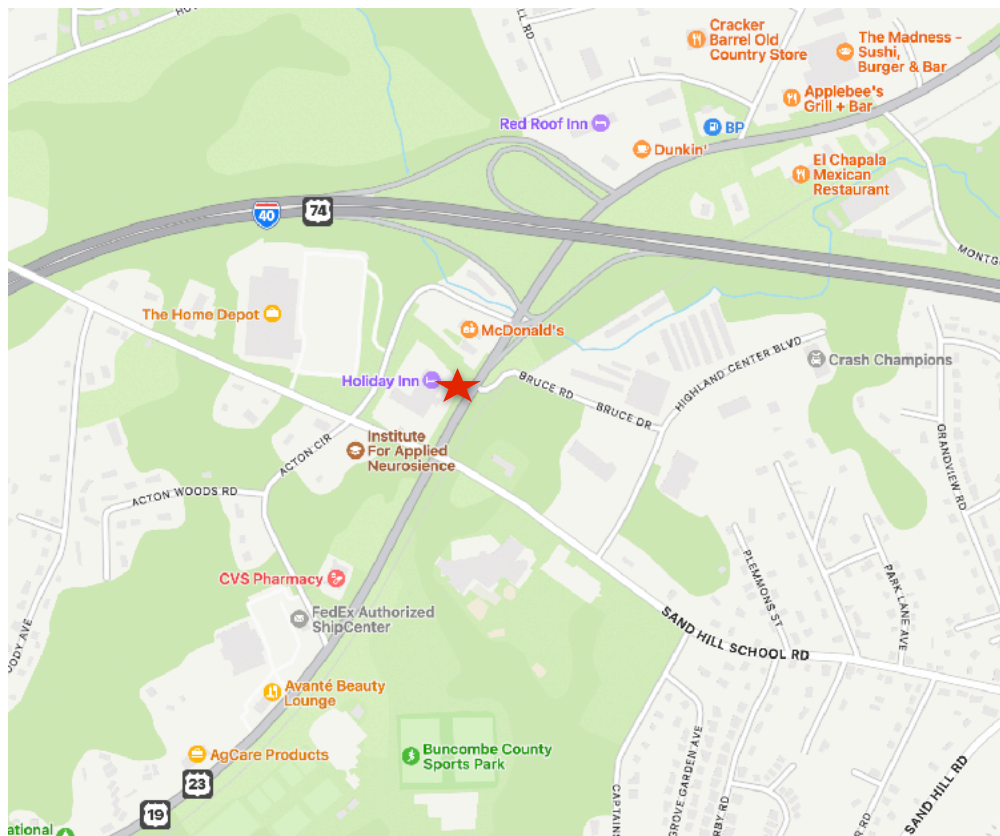
435 Smokey Park Highway, Asheville, NC 28806

(828) 665-2161

Please reference the group's name when booking by phone.

To book online:

Click on the following link: [National Odom Assembly Summer Gathering](#)



Wednesday

FLOAT

TRIP



Thursday afternoon -
Biltmore Estate



Everyone will purchase
their own tickets online.
Talk to your friends and arrange a time
to join together to enjoy the tour.
We are planning 1pm, 2pm, 3pm tours.

Friday
Hop On - Hop Off



Great way to see the town
without a lot of walking

Show and Tell

Friday Evening after dinner

Bring an old family collectable
and a story to go with it.

SATURDAY MORNING

**BUSINESS MEETING &
MEMORIAL SERVICE**

SATURDAY NIGHT

BANQUET & AUCTION

**DON'T FORGET YOUR ITEMS AND
YOUR MONEY**

SUNDAY MORNING SERVICE

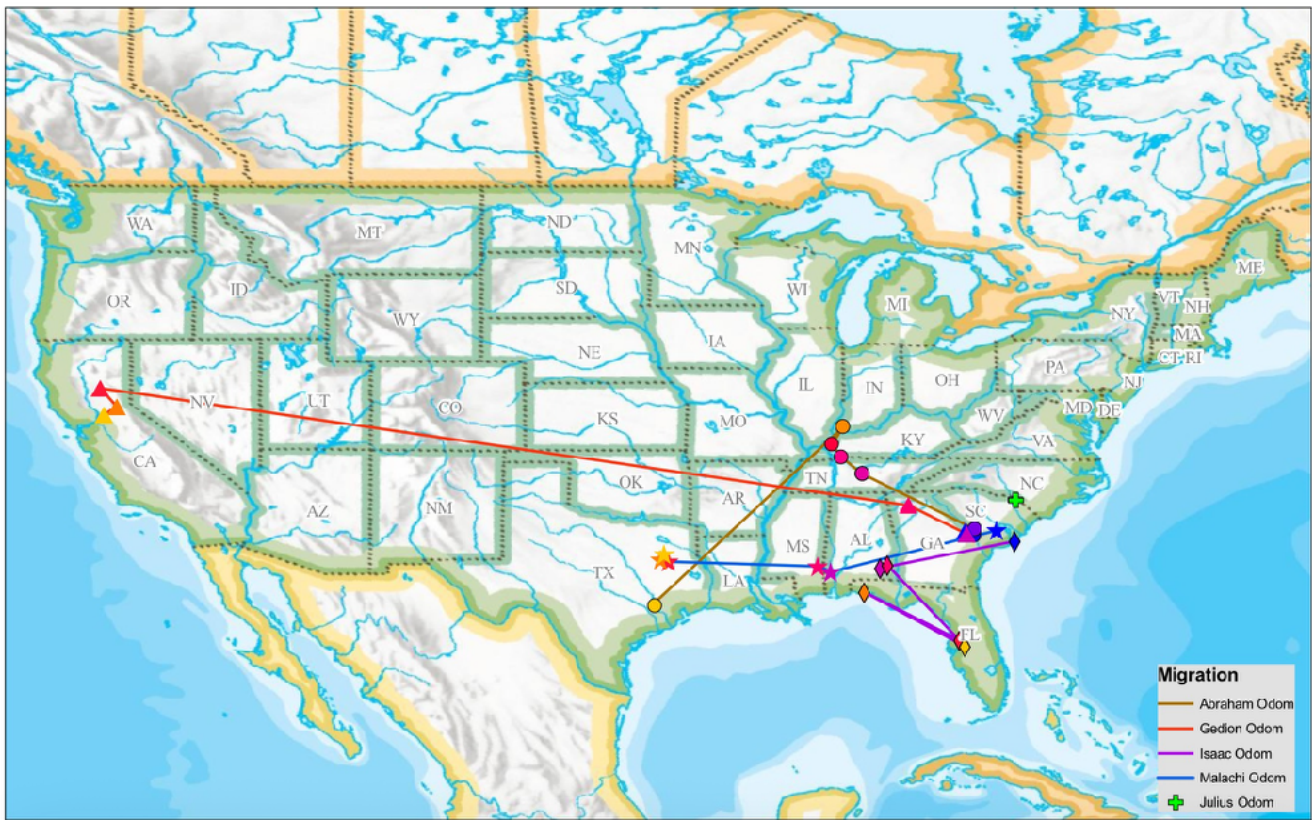
AND
GOODBYES



Saturday

A Day on the
Asheville Urban

Odom Family Migration



At the Hattiesburg gathering in 2009, I had a conversation with Joan Odom about Odom migrations. We had hoped that everyone would contribute information on how their family got from Georgia or South Carolina to where they settled. We got a few contributions. At that time Joan was able to create a map. We will be bringing a map to Asheville and hope everyone will bring their immigration routes. Our hope is that maybe we can make some connections by seeing where the trails cross. Please bring your immigration route if you know it..

HOW MANY GATHERINGS HAVE YOU ATTENDED
PLEASE count the number of gatherings
 you have attended
 and let us know if you are eligible for a pin
 in 5 year increments.

Year	reunion	Place		Year	reunion	Place
1980	1	Eufaula AL		2003	24	Bartlesville OK
1981	2	Eufaula AL		2004	25	Eufala AL
1982	3	Fontana Village NC		2005	26	Richmond IN
1983	4	Austin TX		2006	27	Hartsfield SC
1984	5	Augusta GA		2007	28	Augusta GA
1985	6	Lexington KY		2008	29	Bardstown KY
1986	7	Columbia SC		2009	30	Hattiesburg MS
1987	8	Tulsa OK		2010	31	Chattanooga TN
1988	9	Jackson MS		2011	32	Melbourne FL
1989	10	Mobile AL		2012	33	Savannah GA
1990	11	Fort Smith AR		2013	34	Nacogdoches TX
1991	12	Salt Lake City UT		2014	35	Russelville AR
1992	13	Tallahassee FL		2015	36	Outer Banks NC
1993	14	Tyler TX		2016	37	Eufaula AL
1994	15	Orangeburg SC		2017	38	Murfreesboro
1995	16	New Orleans LA		2018	39	Thomasville
1996	17	Montgomery AL		2019	40	Marion IL
1997	18	Henderson KY		2020		No reunion
1998	19	Charleston SC		2021	41	Amarillo TX
1999	20	Tampa FL		2022	42	Greenville TN
2000	21	San Antonio TX		2023	43	Ft Smith AK
2001	22	Springdale AR		2024	44	Asheville NC
2002	23	Raleigh NC				

Lewis B. Odom honored with plaque at Pacific War Museum

by Marianne Odom

For families who want to leave a lasting tribute to any veteran, consider the beautiful campus of the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas.

The grounds provide a peaceful setting to keep alive the legacy of men and women who served their country in uniform. Commemorative bricks line the Walk of Honor. More than 2,500 plaques are mounted on 100-year-old limestone walls in the Memorial Courtyard. Each tribute represents a story of courage and sacrifice.

The Admiral Nimitz Foundation works closely with families in creating a unique plaque and planning a ceremony to dedicate it.

The unpredictable Texas weather was sunny and cool the morning of Nov. 6, 2021, when we dedicated a plaque to my father, Lewis B. Odom of Tyler, Texas (1915-1976). He served in the 742nd Military Police Battalion in New Guinea during World War II.

We had a formal dedication on behalf of the foundation, a flag presentation, a blessing by a chaplain and a bugler play “Taps,” “America the Beautiful” and “You’re in the Army Now.”

My brother, Larry Dan Odom of Carrollton, Texas; a former sister-in-law, Carolyn Hitt of Lakewood Ranch, Florida; and I shared the attributes that made “Pop” so special. He was a man of relatively few words but a born leader with tremendous courage, dignity, integrity and character. He remains the role model for us and subsequent generations.

Afterward, we provided lunch for 20 family and friends in the adjacent Admiral Nimitz Museum building with a balcony overlooking Fredericksburg’s bustling Main Street. It was once the Nimitz Hotel and the original museum tracing the life of Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, who was born in Fredericksburg and served as Commander-in-Chief of Allied Forces, Pacific Ocean Area, during World War II.

Visitors can stroll the grounds without paying admission, but the first-class museum is well worth touring. Allow plenty of time. The museum is affiliated with the Smithsonian. President George H.W. Bush cut the ribbon in 1991 for the gallery bearing his name. He returned in 2009 for the grand reopening of the newly expanded gallery. In 2020, the museum added state-of-the art interactive exhibits and doubled the number of artifacts.



Information on the museum and memorials is available at PacificWarMuseum.org.

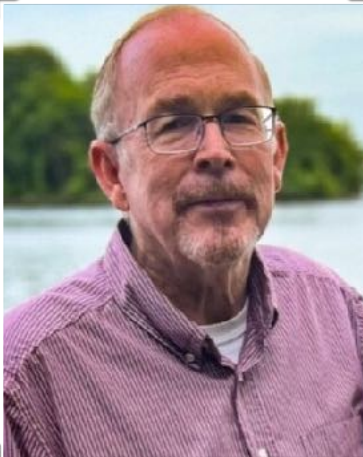
Marianne Odom and her brother, **Larry Dan Odom**, at the dedication of a plaque honoring their father, Lewis B. Odom, at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas



Cheryl, here is photo taken with my families visit together in Katy Tx I host it every other year. My three children their spouse and a cousin from Alabama and a nephew from Indiana joined us for a good time . Other news is I have been searching early 1800 Ky, Tenn , Ill, and Ohio for dNA hits as my family went to Tenn and Ky early then migrated to Ill and Southern Ohio with the settlements after the French and Indian situation was all settled by that time. If any other Odoms can comment please feel to do so. RAY ODOM

Robert Allen Odom

October 1, 1961 — March 24, 2024



Robert Allen Odom, age 62, of Hendersonville, Tennessee passed away on March 24, 2024. He was born on October 1, 1961 in Lawton, Oklahoma to the late William Edward Odom and Carol Ann Odom. Robert is also preceded in death by his brother, William Edward "Eddie" Odom.

Robert is survived by his loving wife of over 42 years, Leslie Odom; devoted children, Rachel Ann Kremer (Gerald), Paul Robert Odom (Megan), and Amanda McQuillen Young (Thomas); grandchildren, Thomas Kremer, Jayden Odom, Kinley Odom, Adiley Odom, Ellany Odom, Sidney Odom, Briley Odom, Selah Young, and Lilah Young; siblings, Jimmy Odom (Cindy), Gale Deleon, Cindy Tennyson (Ken), Johnny Odom, and Marty Odom; and sister-in-law, Robin Odom.

Robert attended Stuttgart American High School and later pursued his educational journey at Massillon Baptist College. His passion for education led him to become a master teacher in Christian education, where he dedicated 33 years of his life shaping young minds. Robert also worked part-time and full-time for Walmart for the past 15 years. Outside of work, he found joy in woodworking and building, traveling, and collecting pocketknives. Robert was a member of First Baptist Church of Hendersonville and involved with the Bradley/Linn Connect Group.

Visitation will be held on April 4, 2024 from 5:00 p.m. until 8:00 p.m. at Hendersonville Funeral Home. A Celebration of Life Service will be held on April 5, 2024 at 1:00 p.m. at First Baptist Church of Hendersonville with Dr. Bruce Chessser officiating. A one-hour visitation will be held prior to the service at the church. Burial will take place at Hendersonville Memory Gardens. The Bradley/Linn Connect Group will serve as pallbearers.

Thomas LaFontine "Fountain" Odom

April 18, 1938 - November 28, 2023



Former NC Senator Thomas LaFontine "Fountain" Odom, 85, passed away peacefully on November 28, 2023, after a lengthy illness. Fountain's love for life, boundless energy, and commitment to public service were an inspiration to his family and friends.

A celebration of life will be held on Saturday, December 9, 2023, at 1:30pm at Steele Creek Presbyterian Church at Pleasant Hill, 15000 York Road, Charlotte, NC 28278. Following the service, the family will receive friends in the church fellowship hall.

This "uncommon, common man" wore many hats during his lifetime including beloved family man, respected North Carolina statesman, attorney-at-law, environmentalist, businessman, philanthropist, visionary, musical composer, aviator, apiarist, world traveler, freemason, master rose gardener, Christmas tree farmer,

wood worker, baseball coach, and harmonica player, just to name a few.

Humble beginnings laid the foundation and motivation for his success. The son of sharecroppers from south Georgia, Thomas Quitman "T.Q" Odom and Laura Pearl Carter Odom, "LaFontine", as he was known to his parents and siblings, was born on April 18, 1938, in Rocky Mount, NC. The family lived in Norfolk, VA during World War II, before moving to Charlotte, NC and settling off Tuckaseegee Road where the family had room for a very large garden, pigs, and a milk cow, which he said he milked twice a day, seven days a week. He admired and loved his parents deeply, whom he often said were the smartest people he ever knew, despite them not getting beyond the 7th grade. Their strong work ethic, value of education, and welcoming attitude toward others greatly influenced him throughout his life.

He attended Berryhill School, and it was here that he earned the name "Fountain" for talking too much when an exasperated teacher announced, "Words flow from your mouth like water from a fountain!" The name stuck but the talking continued. He graduated from West Mecklenburg High

School in 1956 as senior class president. He was a very smart student but was frequently sent to the principal's office who told him he was going to end up behind bars, which he did, but as an attorney representing jailed defendants.

Fountain became the first in his family to graduate from college. He worked his way through school, studying first at Charlotte College from 1956-1957 and then transferring to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill where he graduated from UNC's School of Law in 1962. He loved the Tar Heels!

In 1960, Fountain married his high school sweetheart, Jane Lowe Odom, and they began their life together in a small garage apartment off Vance St. in Chapel Hill. Jane supported and helped

Fountain through law school and all 39 years of their marriage, before her passing in 1999. They had four children together, Tommy, David, Amy, and Matthew. Jane and Fountain were longtime members of Pleasant Hill Presbyterian Church where Fountain served as a deacon, elder, and

Sunday school teacher. He was also a mason that embodied the words "More Light!", as a member at Steele Creek #737 A.F. & A.M., Scottish and York Rites, and The Red Fez Shrine Club.

Fountain was admitted to the North Carolina State Bar in 1962 and began his professional life as a law clerk for NC Supreme Court Justice William B. Rodman, Jr. (1962-1963) and continued as first assistant city attorney of Charlotte from 1963-1964. He had a long and respected law career as a partner in Weinstein, Sturges, Odom, Bigger, Campbell and Jonas law firm. In 2003, he was duly admitted and qualified to serve as Attorney and Counsellor of the United States Supreme Court. In semi-retirement, he was very proud to be Of Counsel in The Odom Firm, PLLC, founded in 2000 by son, Tommy, and daughter-in-law, Martha. Fountain loved being a lawyer and building relationships with people in the community, even representing a horse and a grapevine on occasion.

His public service includes: 14 years as a North Carolina State Senator; six years as a Mecklenburg County Commissioner; and six years on the Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation Commission. He played an integral part in Charlotte-Mecklenburg now having thousands of acres of nature preserves, many miles of greenways, and numerous active park areas. He pursued these interests on a statewide basis when he co-sponsored and supported the landmark 1996 legislation which established the Clean Water Management Trust Fund, now known as the NC Land & Water Fund, which to date has conserved over 500,000 acres and protected or restored 3,000 miles of streams and rivers across North Carolina.

Fountain's charisma allowed him to work well with others and get things done. He worked closely with friend and former NC Senator Marc Basnight on many pieces of legislation that benefited all North Carolinians such as public education, jobs, and healthcare. He often called for a return to policies that united our state rather than created division, even though his own backing of a bill in 2001 to make the Scuppernong grape the state fruit of NC caused quite the kerfuffle with blueberry and strawberry supporters. A great fruit debate ensued in the General Assembly before compromise legislation was reached making the Scuppernong grape the state fruit of NC and the blueberry and strawberry the state berries.

Fountain loved the history and mystery of Roanoke Island. He collaborated with Duplin Winery and Tinga Nursery to propagate cuttings from The Mother Vine, an over 250-year-old Scuppernong grapevine located on Roanoke Island. He built arbors and planted cuttings across the state at rest stops and government centers, often with the help of his grandchildren.

Fountain received numerous awards, among them a Presidential citation and American Red Cross award for saving a young boy from drowning, and Beekeeper of the Year from the NC State Beekeepers Association.

In 2002, Fountain married Carmen Hooker Odom whom he loved. He said he was blessed to have "married up" not once, but twice in his life. They enjoyed traveling around the world together and living in Raleigh, Manteo, NYC, and Charlotte. He often referred to being "on the highway of life" as he crisscrossed the state from the beautiful OBX to his beloved Blue Ridge Mountains in his packed Buick Park Avenue, often reminding folks, "If I don't have it in my trunk, then you don't need it."

One of Fountain and Carmen's most memorable trips was to Tanzania to hike Mount Kilimanjaro in 2004. They reached the summit one Christmas morning at sunrise and experienced a powerful spiritual sense of being one with the Creator and their fellow hikers, all from varied backgrounds

and creeds, reinforcing the greatest commandment Jesus gave. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 22:37-39

We will miss Fountain aka "Dad", "Grandaddy", "Papaw", "Pop", "T.L." but celebrate a life well lived and the love he so freely gave to others.

And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love; but the greatest of these is love. -1
Corinthians 13:13

Fountain is survived by his wife of 21 years, Carmen Hooker Odom of Charlotte, NC; a blended family of six children, Tommy Odom and wife Martha Odom of Charlotte, NC, David Odom of Marion, NC, Amy Odom of Chapel Hill, NC, Matthew Odom of Chapel Hill, NC, Jennifer Buell of Asheville, NC, Cyndi Buell-Christian and husband Shawn Christian of Wilmington, NC; eleven grandchildren, Tripp Odom, Brooke Figueroa, Sean Odom, Odie Williford, Jane Williford, Noah Williford, William Odom, Annie Odom, Nico Horschman, Henry Horschman, and Max Odom; three great-grandchildren, Oslo Odom, Julien Odom, and Milo Figueroa; brother Jimmy Odom and wife Phyllis Odom of Charlotte, NC; sister, Linda Hurley of Charlotte, NC, and sisters-in-law Sylvia Odom of Denver, NC, Jerrie Thompson of Morganton, NC, and Judy Rinn of Pawleys Island, SC; many dear nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

He is predeceased by his wife of 39 years, Jane Lowe Odom; parents, T.Q. and Pearl Odom; brother, Glenn Odom; brothers-in-law, John Lowe, and Bob Thompson; father and mother-in-law, Dave Lowe and Ruth Lowe.

Special gratitude is expressed to the caring staff and nurses at Brier Creek Health Center's Memory Care Unit at SouthPark and VIA Healthcare's Hospice and Palliative Care team. The family requests no flowers. Memorials may be made to Dementia Alliance of North Carolina, 9131 Anson Way, Suite 206, Raleigh, NC 27615, <https://dementianc.org>

Vaults and Big Tops

When I was growing up in Southern Indiana in the middle 1950s you were supposed to be sixteen years old to work for someone other than your own family or on the farm but sometimes age didn't seem to matter. There was a company in my hometown that manufactured burial vaults for the areas of southern Indiana, northwestern Kentucky, and southeastern Illinois. Our neighbor was the general foreman there and he knew we were poor and us boys would work for anyone anywhere if an opportunity popped up. When I was fourteen I got to go several times with one of their workers, who was a friend of my father, to burial sites and cemeteries when the services were on weekends because we went to school during the week.

Well at one cemetery out in the country we arrived early and set things up for the burial service. All of you have probably seen how things are set up, they place a frame around the grave and run two straps one at each end to place the casket on for lowering the casket into the ground. Well when we were finished setting up the guy I was working with got out a bottle of whiskey and went over and sat down under a big pecan tree, there in the cemetery and started drinking whiskey waiting for the funeral procession to arrive and the preacher to start preachin' and get the service over with so we could go back to the factory, turn in the truck, get me paid, and then

go home. Well this preacher was pretty long winded so I walked down to where the grave was and noticed that one of the straps had come loose from the keeper and the head end of the casket was starting to fall down into the vault before the feet and the casket might fall . So I was afraid and ran back up to where the worker was and told him what was happening and he chuckled and said “ She is dead anyway so she won’t care if she falls or not” and thankfully the casket did not fall any further on the head end and when everyone said their Amens she was lowered into the ground and everybody lived happily ever after.

I worked with one foot in the grave only one more time that summer.

Big Tops

There used to be several traveling circuses who traveled and played small towns all over the Midwest. Well, there was one that would come into town normally the last week of August or the first week in September every year for most of the 50’s. I think the last one came through about 1958. They would bring their trucks, vans, and animal cages on flat beds, and elephants, in large crates, to the open area near the ball park and begin to set up for the show. They would arrive on Thursday afternoons and set up for a show Friday night and a matinee and show on Saturday then teardown Sunday and move on. One time I skipped school to help them set up. They did not ask me how old I was and put me to work. They would give me steel pegs and point to where they wanted them hammered in the ground so they could set up the Big Top, a large canvas tent with flaps to roll up on the sides. When I finished that chore I would help them stretch the tent out flat with the loose ropes hanging on the sides and corners. Then the fun began, they would bring out the elephants and put them on each end of the tent and have them pull the tent upright so the ropes could be tied to the metal stakes. Once upright the workers would go inside the tent and place long poles from the floor to the top to keep it tight and sturdy and upright.

When we were finished with those chores the elephants would be taken and staked outside and I got to take buckets of water for them to drink and grass that the circus brought with them and rub the elephants on the legs. Then they would bring all the other animals in for the show tigers, horses, and camels.

My favorite act to watch was the tight rope walkers and I would watch them practice before going on and decided I wanted to be a tight rope walker but as fate would have it the skills were not there but at least I got to watch the shows free and was paid on Saturday with a brand new ten (\$10) dollar bill.

I thought, for a fifteen year old boy, I had it made and would wait for the next year for the next circus to come to town. Those days are over now and, sadly, traveling circuses are too.

Raymond (Ray) Odom

We had a traveling circus come to our small (1200 people) of Seeley Lake. I didn't know they were coming. I looked out my NAPA store front window and low and behold a tall skinny black man was walking up the edge of the highway leading an elephant. Like lightening the small town grapevine heated up and a herd of people came to town to see this sight. This was the best advertisement they could have devised in a small town.

They set up their big top the same way as Ray described and took it down at the end of the show in reverse. One of the elephants got cranky and ripped a tree out of the field, but all was well. **Cheri Thompson**

2023-2024 DIRECTORY

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Still looking

Group C - September Contributors

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The NOA News is published quarterly by the National Odom Assembly, August, November, February, May. Information in this publication is of interest to those people doing genealogical research on the names Odom, Odum, Odam, Oldham, etc. Assistance is offered and research as well as fellowship is shared.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/DUES RENEWAL

(Membership Year is August 1 to July 31)

Name: _____ ☐ New ☐ Renewal

Address: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Phone # _____ Email _____

Earliest ODOM Ancestor: _____

Newsletter Preference: ☐ Email ☐ Snail Mail Have you been DNA Tested? ☐ Y ☐ N

Please make your check out in the amount of \$25.00 payable to National Odom Assembly and mail to:

Bill Powell, 14515 Wunderlich Drive # 815, Houston, Texas 77069

Your payment of dues entitles you to receive the NOA newsletters, publication of queries, entry into the Members Only Section of the website and posting your family line into the Members Only Section of the website.

NOA News
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