

# NOA News

## Keep Asheville weird

VOL XXXX ISSUE I

OCTOBER 2023

### NOA Gathering

**July 18-21  
2024**

**ASHEVILLE**

**North Carolina**

### from your President

Dear Fellow NOA members, I bring you good tidings. The 2023 National Odom Assembly meeting was a success, and we can't thank Ashley Bell, the Bell Family and Peggy Hartsell enough for all their hard work and dedication. Ashley helped us out tremendously when she stepped up to the plate and offered to host after our plans for 2023 fell through.

So, I am forever grateful for her support.

The members attending this year approved a proposal by



### Weird Asheville

- ◆ Historical Tours
- ◆ The Urban Trail and Scavenger Hunt
- ◆ South Slope Mural Tour

- ◆ Hop on Hop off
- ◆ Historic James Vester Miller Tour
- ◆ Glass Works
- ◆ Zip Lining
- ◆ Bird Watching

- ◆ Fishing
- ◆ Biltmore Tour
- ◆ Family Talk
- ◆ A Little Competition Never Hurts
- ◆ Feast and Auction

Cheryl Thompson, Laurel Johnston and Lynn Odom to host 2024 in Asheville, North Carolina. Please add July 18, 19, 20 and 21 of 2024 to your calendars and start preparing for our next year's annual meeting. Another matter put forward was the need for a backup person to support or replace the treasurer in case of need. A co-treasurer was appointed to aid in the financial responsibilities and Allison Bell was elected. However, Allison stated that it may be a conflict of interest with her current employment, but she would check into it.

The newsletter was also discussed at length due to the lack of participation. Cheryl has not received any response from our NOA members regarding articles to be included in the newsletter. We need to hear from you, please. We want to read about your new grandbabies, graduations, anniversaries, engagements, weddings and more. How's your genealogy going? Any new developments? We can't have a newsletter unless you send Cheryl these announcements. It was voted and approved that we try only 3 newsletters a year instead of 4. The publication of the newsletter will be an edition

after the annual meeting so somewhere around September. A Christmas edition sometime in December or January and then an edition for our annual July meeting sometime in May or June. I need all members to participate and send their information to Cheryl so that we can continue to have a newsletter.

Many of our founding members have passed away or are no longer able to attend the meetings. Jimmy Ray and Kathy Odom, Bill Bruce, Glenn and Thelma Blackburn, Helen Harrell, Dale and Paula Tucker and many others are truly missed, and we owe it to them to keep going. The NOA is their legacy, and I don't want to let them down. Send me your ideas and thoughts on how we can keep our family together. I pray everyone has a Blessed Fall and I look forward to reading your articles in the next newsletter.

Your Obedient Servant,

Danny Powell

#### **FROM THE EDITOR**

As per the decision from the annual meeting, This is the first of three issues of the NOA News for the 2023-24 year. The focus of this issues is sharing the time of the gathering and annual meeting. I hope you will read the minutes and see the discussions. It was a truly fun time in a part of the country I hadn't visited before.

As Danny shared, the need for you to share stories, joys and concerns, is the heartbeat of our newsletter. You don't have to wait until I ask for input. Send me something anytime it comes. I just put them in a folder until time to create the newsletter. Our next issue will be in January and a perfect moment to send stories and pictures of the holidays.

Cheri, your editor

National Odom Assembly  
Welcome Meeting  
July 14, 2023  
9:30 AM

- I. Call to Order
  - II. Opening Prayer – (Larry Odom)
  - III. Pledge of Allegiance
  - IV. Announcements
    - a. Ashley Bell – Welcome to Fort Smith. Odum (Bell/Hartsell Sisters)  
When they first came to the area, Fort Smith was the Wild West with a Military Presence.
    - b. Good sites to visit:
      - i. National Park: Trail of Tears Statue – Judge Parkers Courtroom
      - ii. Marshals Museum: Today or Friday
      - iii. Fort Smith Museum of History today 1pm (meet there)
    - j. Housekeeping:
      - i. Allison (youngest sister) may help with fees.
      - ii. Auction items – Bring to room tomorrow.
      - iii. Speaker after this business meeting
    - k. Memorial Service after Speaker – Let Natalie know if you have anyone to honor.
    - l. Year Pins – Confirm your years & let Danny know –
    - m. Group photo location – we will have confirmed by Saturday's business meeting.
- New Business
- V. Membership Dues – Treasurer (Bill Powell) couldn't be here.
    - a. Ashley Bell will help take dues and Payment for events, tour & banquet – Pay now to National Odom Assembly or can Venmo Bill
  - VI. 2024 Reunion
    - a. Cheryl Thompson requested help from Lynn Odom for 2024 reunion (because she couldn't do this year in Montana
    - b. Next Years reunion will be in Ashville, NC
  - VII. Newsletter:
    - a. Do we want to modify to just the May Newsletter?

- b. Discussion – Quarterly Now, but not getting content to publish 4 times. Make decision in General Meeting tomorrow.

VIII. Nomination of Officers:

- a. Cheryl Thompson (MT) – Move to keep as is
- b. Second by Sherry Odom (FL)
- c. List of Current Officers – (See By-Laws)
  - President: Danny Powell
  - Vice Pres – Peggy Coriasco
  - 1<sup>st</sup> VP – Upcoming Reunion Host
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> VP – Host for 2 years away Reunion
  - Treasurer – Bill Powell
  - Newsletter – Cheryl Thompson
  - Website – Kim Odom Green
  - Chaplin – (open) – Volunteer / Appointed by President

Discussion Website:

- Kim wants to be off the Website, lack of time, etc.
- Cheryl: wouldn't mind doing, depending on platform.
- Danny: There was discussion last year & a committee set up to discuss.
- Wanda: Word Press is good for a Coder. If not, she has Go Daddy which has Plug & Play templates.

Wanda Holt (TN) – Motion to “Scrap current website and redo into something anyone can navigate. Since have been involved, have never been able to get into website.”

Go Daddy, paying \$1,000 – Domain fee & hosting Fee.

- 5-year plan (longer) is cheaper
- 1-year plan is more expensive
- Secure part – may have to pay to have documents secure.

Bill Odom (FL) – Before shutting down, make sure to move All the info that we have on there. Migrate over to a new platform.

The current newsletter is accessible from the main page of website.

Ashley Bell – Help update website.

IX. Membership:

- a. We lost a lot of members this year – please let Danny or Natalie know for Memorial Service.
- b. Ray Odom (TX – previously SC) attended Jimmy Ray's service. Said that he'd be singing a Hand Williams song and the Memorial for Jimmy.
- c. Lynn Odom (SC) to contribute to Jimmy Ray's legacy, everyone calls 5 people. Jimmy Ray was the best contact/reach out person.

- d. Sherry Odom (FL) – Get an updated directory –
  - i. Update YOUR Name
  - ii. & Pick 5 members to call
- e. Date of Membership
  - i. July to July
  - ii. Same Month as the Reunion
- f. Should be a way to do fees electronically.
  - i. Bill Odom was able to start this last year when he took over Treasurer – at least Venmo is available. (check others)

X. 2025 Reunion

- a. Ray Odom (TX-Previously SC) has offered to host with daughter & try to get Bill Odom (Houston TX to help)
- b. Katy TX – 28 miles West of Houston

XI. Announcements before closing meeting.

- a. Ashley Bell Started a NOA Google Drive so that documents are in a Drive/File and can be accessed by those that need them.
- b. Nationalodomassembly.com
- c. Linda Odum Tidwell – There is an event next door at the Convention Center and we have been invited if we want to go. Crafts and stuff for holidays.

Motion to Adjourn – Natalie Tucker (CA)  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Linda Tidwell (TN)

XII. Adjourn 10:35am



Got to visit with one of my Dad's first Cousins, Jerry Odom.. This is the first time I met him. I got to record his memories and stories of family history.  
*Ray Odom*

# NATIONAL ODOM ASSEMBLY

## GENERAL BUSINESS MEETING

July 15, 2023  
10:07 a.m. CST  
Fort Smith, AR

### **I. Call to Order:**

### **II. Prayer** – Larry Odom

### **III. Pledge of Allegiance**

Recognize the Veterans in the room.

Housekeeping -

- Group pictures tonight at 5PM Meet here & pictures will be in same room
- Memorial Service After the Speaker – in Courtyard
- After dinner tonight, return the Name Badges tonight at the banquet for use next year

### **IV. The Minutes of the Previous Business Meeting:**

The minutes of the previous Business Meeting, July 15 & 16, 2022 in Greeneville, Tennessee were read.

**Linda Bell of AR Motioned to accept the minutes as corrected, 2nd by Ray Odom of SC. (No Opposed)**

### **V. Officers**

Motion yesterday to keep all officers the same as they are currently:

- a. Motion Accepted by Ray Odom (TX)
- b. Wanda Holt 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion

New Motion to ADD 2<sup>nd</sup> name to bank account – Assistant Treasury

- a. Nominated Allynson Odum Dale
- b. Discussion
- c. Linda Odum Bell, Motion to accept
- d. Wanda Odum Holt 2<sup>nd</sup> the Motion
- e. All in favor – the ayes have it.

### **VI. Committee Reports / Meetings**

1. TREASURER: Bill Powell (sent to Dan Powell to read)

- Balance as of August 1, 2022,	\$6,325.00
- Bank Fees	-67.38
- Proceeds	2,311.29
- Newsletter cost	565.75
- Website cost	971.25
- NEW BALANCE	\$7,031.91

Website seems high. Cheryl Thompson, Wanda Holt & Bill Odom will sort out this year.  
Ray Odom Motioned to accept the accept the Treasurers report, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Linda Bell

## 2. EDITOR REPORT: Cheryl Thompson

- Options for number of newsletters per year.
- Discussion:
  - September to follow-up on current year
  - December/January if people contribute information.
  - May – for upcoming years events / registration
- If the number of times the newsletter goes out in the by-laws, it will need to be changed too.  
SECTION 7 – Change from Quarterly to 3 times a year

Peggy Hartsell (AR) Motion to change the newsletter as stated above.  
2<sup>nd</sup> by Sherry Odom (FL)

Options for getting Newsletters:

- If have email attached when paying dues – will get electronically.
- If prefer paper copy – will send paper copy.
- Institutions always get hard copy.

*For Reference items to submit to Newsletter:*

- *This is a place for Permanent Documents*  
*Births, Marriages, Deaths (Hatched, Matched & Dispatched)*
- *Family information – Family Photo down the line.*  
*Make sure you include information, who it is and where they are from*  
*If news clipping, include a copy of the newspaper header (date & publication)*
- *New Section “Preserving Memories Creatively*
- *Editor’s e-mail address Update / Change – Solutions is the correct e-mail. Anything else should be deleted from your contacts.*  
*i.[Solutions@blackfoot.net](mailto:Solutions@blackfoot.net) or [solutions11@mac.com](mailto:solutions11@mac.com)*

## 3. WEB MASTER REPORT: Bill Odom

- Ashley Bell, Wanda Holt, Cheryl Thompson & Bill Odom working on Website.
- Website committee is also Data Editors
- This committee will hold the data.
- Working on paying only once a year
- Looked up in the bi-laws and Our Year runs from August 1<sup>st</sup> to July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Gedcom – Durl got the Gedcom files from as many members as he could & converted them into an Ancestry.com file



- Wanda - Website / Data – Also need a Social Media Person (FB?)  
Ashley Bell has volunteered to help clean up our Social Media
- Website functional by the end of the year or earlier.
- Might also be a Tech / Data Committee as part of Section 6
- Cheryl: At what point do you lop someone off or stop including them in the member list?

Natalie Tucker – Motion to have 2 sections

Discussion:

- Newsletter List – Bill Powell
- Membership List – Danny Powell
- Cheryl / Newsletter person doesn't have a new/updated list from Bill Powell of who has paid dues –
  - Part of work for this year.

Motion to keep Active and Inactive membership directory.

2<sup>nd</sup> by Ashley Bell.

## **VII. Election of Officers**

### **NOMINATING Committee**

AS Discussed, & Motioned on yesterday to keep Officers as is.

#### **Repeat of list**

List of Officers voted in 2023. With #5 & #6 changed based on Site.

1. President – Danny Powell
2. 1<sup>st</sup> VP – Ray Odom
3. Secretary – Natalie Tucker
4. Treasurer – Dorothy Bruce
5. 2<sup>nd</sup> VP is Cheryl Thompson / Lynn Odom, Ashville, NC
6. 3<sup>rd</sup> VP is Ray Odom (&Daughter), Katy, Texas

## **VIII. Location for 2024 Annual NOA Meeting**

### **SITE 2024 - Proposals**

- Ashville, NC – Cheryl Thompson & Lynn Odom

Cheryl Thompson discussion of Asheville, NC – Boots on the ground Lynn Odom will be checking out hotels and such to see a few in person.

Will have more information in the next Newsletter.

Suggestions – Biltmore Estate as of right now, group rate \$76 (regular price \$98)

- Bus Tour
- For adventurous people: White water rafting, zip lining on Black Mountain
- Can email any other suggestions people might have.

### **SITE 2025 – Proposals**

- Katy, TX – Ray Odom - (Brought some brochures, just outside.)

Cheryl Thompson Move to accept proposals for 2024 & 2025, 2<sup>nd</sup> by Larry Odom

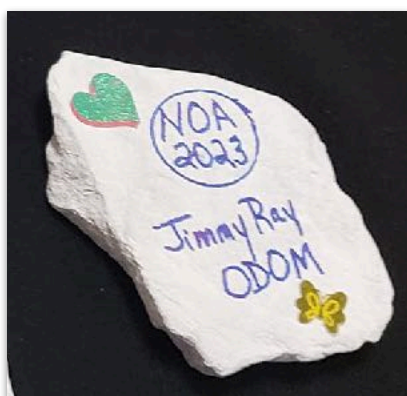
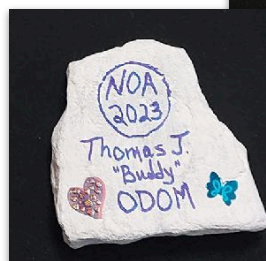
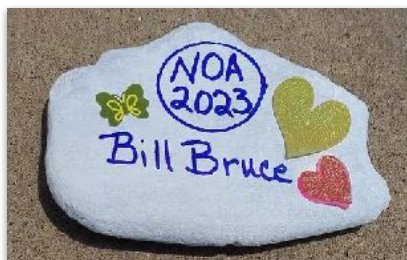
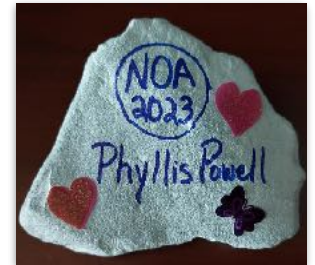
The ayes have it. – So Moved, Passed



**IX. Adjourn** - 11:20 a.m. To get to Speaker

Peggy Hartsell Motion to Adjourn  
2nd by Lindsay Bell

Natalie: Announced: After Speaker 10 Minute Break  
before Memorial – Meet in Courtyard for those that  
want to join us.



**Keeping family  
in our hearts**





I bought this cool auction item from Lynn Odom. I put it up on the window sill by the kitchen table and I have used it to welcome guests and they respond with their own



L-R: Sherry Odom FL, Dan Powell TX, Natalie Tucker FL  
Lynn Odom SC. Fun little coffee place in Fort Smith, AR.

## **Ft. Smith Arkansas**

Hosted by the Bells  
Ashley Bell - head wrangler

Fun was had by all:

We socialized

We scavenger hunted.

We socialized

We went to the new Marshall museum (who knew Ft. Smith had the first US Federal Marshalls).

We socialized

We went to the Ft. Smith National Historic Site, location of the court of "Hanging Judge" Parker and his gallows.

We socialized

We spent a lot of time at the Ft. Smith Museum of History and it really wasn't enough.

We socialized

We ate, actually we ate a lot.

We socialized

We even had an ice cream social.

We socialized

We had a speaker, Curtis Varnell that shared with us the culture of Arkansas.

We socialized

Pictures, Auction, Dinner and more.

We socialized



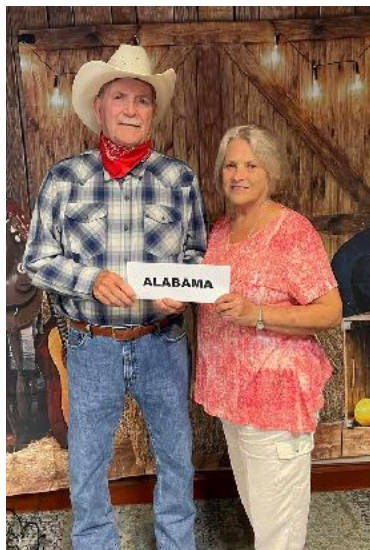


### **Dinner at Doe's Eat Place**

L-R: Grumpy Bill (because he couldn't hear, terrible acoustics) Odom FL, Lynn Odom SC, Natalie Tucker CA, Dan Powell TX, Cheri Thompson MT, Sharon & Mark West GA, Pam Odom FL, Sherry Odom FL









## William T. Bruce, Jr.



**William (Bill) Thomas Bruce, Jr.**, of Dallas, Texas, passed away peacefully of natural causes on April 15, 2023, surrounded by three generations of his family. He was born on January 5, 1939, in the family home on Dallas Street in Port Neches, Texas, to William Thomas Bruce, Sr., and Frances Willard Ritchie. Bill spent his formative years in Port Neches where he enjoyed playing baseball and building things with his brother and cousins, who seemed to live on every nearby street! He also ran track for Port Neches-Groves Junior High and High School and reportedly still holds a PNG pole-vaulting record. Bill graduated 3rd in his class as High Boy in 1957 from the first combined PNG Class.

Bill attended The University of Texas at Austin, graduating in January 1962 with a Bachelor of Science in

Mechanical Engineering (BSME). While at UT, Bill worked as head waiter at Helen M. Kirby Hall dormitory, where he met Dorothy Jean Odom, a resident there; they married in July 1960. He and Dorothy began married life in Austin, before moving to Dallas, then to California, and eventually returning to Texas, making Dallas their lifelong home. They also enjoyed their lake house in Palestine, Texas, with family and friends.

After a brief stint at Proctor and Gamble managing production of Ivory soap, he joined Rocketdyne as a propulsion test engineer for the F-1 engines used on the Saturn V rocket as part of NASA's Apollo program. Bill was the lead engineer on one of the F-1 engine test stands located on the side of a mountain at Edwards Air Force Base in California; noteworthy is that he conducted more than 100 F-1 engine test firings without a failure. There he also began his parental volunteer duties, such as building and spray painting glow-in-the-dark decorations in his garage for his daughter's first ice-skating recital. Returning to Texas, Bill worked as a systems engineer with Collins Radio Company on airborne navigation and communication systems for the U.S. Navy's TACAMO and the U.S. Air Force's Nightwatch aircraft. While at Collins, Bill was the program manager on the 4th-generation airborne trailing wire antenna system; this system is still operational today and enables vital communications with the U.S. nuclear submarine fleet. He spent his later years at Rockwell International and E-Systems as a project engineer and manager working on low-observable (stealth) technologies such as those used on the F-117 fighter jet. Bill's work spanned both commercial and military aviation, ranging from small planes and helicopters to Air Force One and Strategic Air Command aircraft.

Bill was passionate about his family, coaching and refereeing soccer, and all things related to Texas Longhorn football and the Longhorn Band. He held Longhorn football season tickets and enjoyed them even more while watching both his children and grandchildren march in the Longhorn Band and Alumni Band.

Bill and Dorothy enjoyed Square Dancing as well as meeting up with all sorts of family all over the U.S. for genealogy and fellowship during their more than 30 years of membership in the National Odom Assembly.

One of his favorite things was being surrounded by his family. Dorothy, Cathy, Tom, Bob, Sara Beth, and John truly appreciate the love and care shown to Bill during his final week as Max, Judie, Karen, David, Linda, and Andy helped us see to his every need and made him laugh and smile with stories and tales of our lives together. So many other family and friends were there in spirit or by phone call including Bill and Sue Hines, his favorite Australian Royal Flying doctors. We are grateful for visitors from his Sunday School class and for friends who brought us meals. We deeply appreciate his caregivers at Baylor Scott & White Medical Center in Plano who provided us what we needed. They also let all of us be with Bill around the clock while we said goodbye.

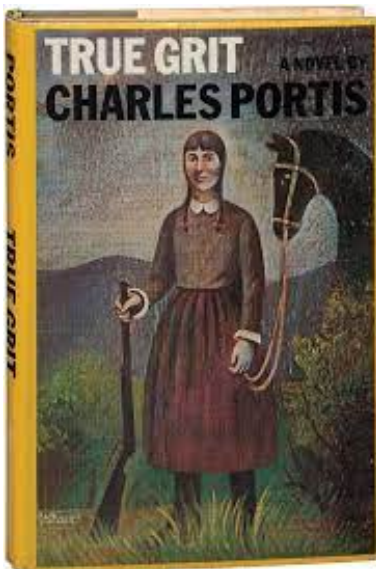
In lieu of flowers, anyone who would like to honor Bill's memory and wishes to make a donation should consider The Alzheimer's Foundation, The Alzheimer's Association, the University of Texas Cockrell School of Engineering, or the Longhorn Alumni Band Scholarship Fund.

Bill was preceded in death by his parents, and his sister, Frances Willard Buffer (Jim) of Sacramento. Bill is survived by his wife of 62 years Dorothy Odom Bruce, brother Maxallen Lee Bruce (Judie) of Houston, daughter Catherine Bruce Purdy (Bob) of Austin, son Thomas Howard Bruce of Plano, grandchildren Sara Beth Purdy and John Thomas Purdy of Austin, and his many beloved cousins, nieces, and nephews stretching from Texas to California.

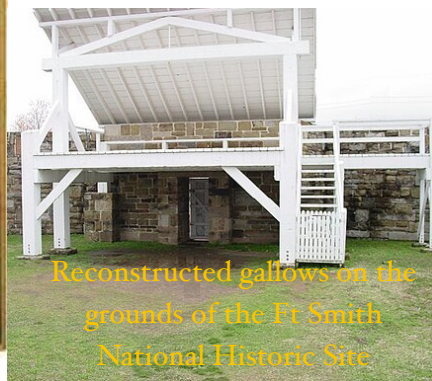
Family and friends held a Celebration of Bill's (and his wife Dorothy) meeting and early married life in Austin, Texas starting at Kirby Hall followed by a tour of all their favorite UT spots and first homes on June 10.

A Graveside Service will be held at 11 am on July 15<sup>th</sup>, in his hometown of Port Neches, Texas, at Port Neches Oak Bluff Memorial Park Cemetery with an additional Family Memorial Celebration in Rusk, Texas at 11 am on Dec 9 at Cedar Hill Cemetery.

Please view the tribute for Mr. Bruce at the link below: [https://www.alltexascremation.com/obituary-detail.php?obituary\\_id=62796](https://www.alltexascremation.com/obituary-detail.php?obituary_id=62796)



This novel is written about Ft. Smith and the area, including Judge Parker.

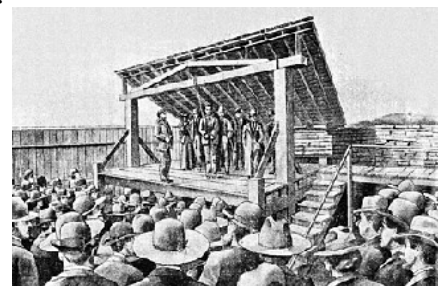


Isaac Charles Parker, also known as "Hanging Judge" Parker held court in Ft. Smith Arkansas. In 21 years on the federal bench, Judge Parker tried 13,490 cases. In more that 8,500 of these cases, the defendant either pleaded guilty or was convicted at trial. Parker sentenced 150 people to death; 79 were executed, 81 either died while incarcerated, were pardoned or had their sentenced commuted.

People came from far and near to watch the hangings.

It became quite the thing to

attend, bring the family and a picnic lunch.



## Jimmy Ray Odom



**Jimmy Ray Odom**, a beloved husband, father, grandfather, and friend, passed away on June 5, 2023, at the age of 87 in Palestine, Texas. He was born on February 7, 1936, in Frankston, Texas, to William Seale Odom and Bertha Pauline Dickey. His late siblings include Sara, Birdie, Betty, Wallace, and Joe. His surviving brother, Jerry Odom, remains to cherish his memory.

At Palestine High School, Jimmy crossed paths with the love of his life, Kathy Odom. They formed an unbreakable bond and embarked on a journey filled with love, laughter, and mutual support. Together, they raised two sons, Jimmy Earl, residing in Aurora, Colorado, and Jerry "Randy" Odom, residing in Lake Charles, Louisiana. Jimmy took great pride in his family, and his grandson, Jake Odom, and wife Jessica, who live in Palestine, were especially dear to his heart. He always ensured that Jake had everything

he needed to thrive, embodying the role of an extraordinary grandfather.

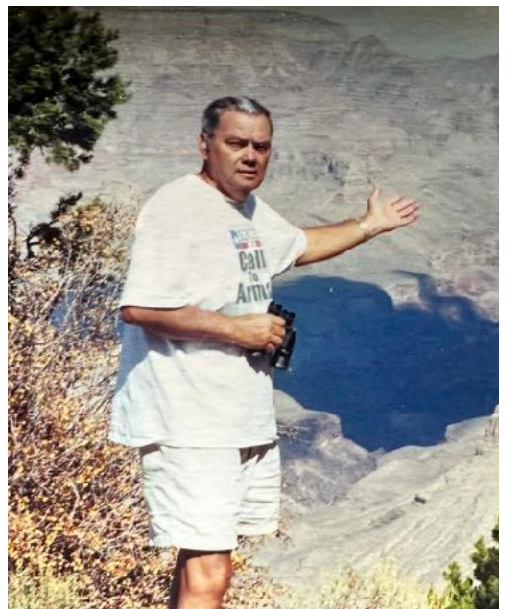
Throughout his life, Jimmy was dedicated to preserving history, particularly in Anderson County. He invested countless hours in researching and contributing to historical markers, leaving a lasting impact on the community. Jimmy's passion for history extended to his personal pursuits as well, as he tirelessly researched his own family tree. In 1980, he played a pivotal role in founding the National Odom Assemble, an organization that continues to hold annual meetings to this day.

Jimmy was a man of diverse interests and hobbies. He was an avid fisherman, a gold glove boxer (a fact he proudly shared with others), and a staunch advocate for causes he believed in. As a yellow dog democrat, a NRA member, and a man with strong opinions, Jimmy never hesitated to express his thoughts, leaving a lasting impression on those who knew him. His slow driving speed was the stuff of legends, and he would often humorously conclude conversations with his trademark line, "Glad you got to see me." He loved classic country music and could talk for hours about Hank Williams or Lefty Frizzell.

Jimmy's indomitable spirit and unique personality made him an unforgettable presence in the lives of many. While some loved him wholeheartedly, others may have held differing opinions, but no one could deny his impact. His journey from humble beginnings, living in a logging tent with a sawdust floor, to building a magnificent lake house on Circle R, exemplified his perseverance and determination.

Jimmy Ray is survived by sons Jimmy Earl and Randy Odom, grandsons, Jake, Malachi and Austin and granddaughter Lindsey, daughter in law Robin, granddaughter-in-law, Jessica, and his nieces and nephews, Jennifer, Susan, and Jeffrey. He will be dearly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him. **Palestine, Texas**







## Asheville, North Carolina

Laurel, Lynn and I are so excited to be the hosts for the gathering in 2024. Be saving your pennies for the crown of the event, the Biltmore Estate.

George Vanderbilt, grandson of famed shipping entrepreneur and industrialist Cornelius “the Commodore” Vanderbilt, first visited Asheville, North Carolina, in 1888. Captivated by the area’s natural beauty, he slowly began purchasing land, ending up with 125,000 acres for what would become his country estate. Determined to make this a self-sustaining home, George enlisted architect Richard Morris Hunt to **design and build the 250-room château**. Landscape architect Frederick Law Olmsted was also hired to create formal gardens and transform the former farmland into a beautiful pastoral landscape.

Biltmore House officially opened to family and friends on Christmas Eve, 1895. George Vanderbilt had a beautiful new family home, but as America’s most eligible bachelor of his time, no one to share it with.



That all changed on April 28, 1898, when he proposed to Edith Stuyvesant Dresser. A family friend, Edith was 10 years younger than George and admired for her beauty and



personality. She was hailed as cosmopolitan and cultured, yet humble and down to earth. The couple shared a passion for learning and travel that they enjoyed throughout their marriage.

On June 1, 1898, George and Edith were joined as husband and wife in a private 15-minute civil ceremony in a town hall in Paris, France. The next day, they followed French tradition with a religious ceremony at the American Church of the Holy Trinity in Paris. Close friends and family were invited to this ceremony, which was surprisingly simple and modest considering the media fanfare that surrounded the event.

A quiet Italian honeymoon followed, and then George brought his bride to Biltmore Estate. Estate employees welcomed Edith to her new home by lining up



along the Approach Road. A giant horseshoe made out of goldenrod flowers with the phrase “Welcome Home” greeted the couple as they arrived at Biltmore House.

The happy couple added to their family on August 22, 1900, with the birth of their daughter Cornelia. It was a joyous occasion celebrated among the family and recorded by local newspapers. The *Spartanburg Journal* wrote, “A new star has appeared at famous Biltmore, and the charming mistress of this most gorgeous home is smiling upon her first born, a tiny girl called Cornelia Stuyvesant Vanderbilt, and the world shares in her new found happiness.”

Cornelia spent her childhood at Biltmore, and often played with the local children whose families lived and worked on the estate. When Cornelia was 13, tragedy struck when her father George unexpectedly died following an emergency appendectomy in Washington, D.C. in March 1914. Mrs. Vanderbilt returned to the estate after her husband’s death, but eventually consolidated the family businesses and properties.

A decade later, wedding bells rang as Cornelia married the Honorable John Francis Amherst Cecil at All Souls Church in Biltmore Village on April 29, 1924. It was a wonderful celebration as guests from around the world descended upon the quiet little town of Asheville. John Cecil was a British diplomat and a descendant of Lord Burghley, who was High Treasurer to Queen Elizabeth I. A second generation arrived at Biltmore House a year later. George Henry Vanderbilt Cecil was born in Biltmore House in 1925. Three years later, William Amherst Vanderbilt Cecil was born in Biltmore House. George and abroad in Switzerland and England, but



Cornelia Stuyvesant Vanderbilt’s formal wedding portrait, 1924

always returned home to Biltmore for holidays and summer vacations.

The brothers were instrumental in caring for the estate as adults. William especially was involved in overseeing the care of Biltmore House, the estate, and The Biltmore Company. Today, Biltmore remains a family business, with the fourth and fifth generations of George Vanderbilt’s descendants involved in day-to-day operations. Along with more than 2,000 employees, they continue Biltmore’s mission to preserve this national treasure.

What began as my great-grandfather’s estate continues to thrive as a timeless experience for today’s guests. Biltmore is still family-owned, and we are still passionate about our mission of preservation through self-sufficiency—a philosophy embraced before the first stone was ever placed. *BILL CECIL*

**President**

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**1st Vice President**

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**2nd Vice President - Host 2024****Asheville NC July 18-21**

Cheryl Thompson  
Laurel Johnston  
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