

1765 - September 1996

Free Colored Persons of Pender County



Reunion Of Colored Kindred

Volume 1 Issue 1

### Ninth Family Reunion was a Success!!

The Walker+/Jacobs-Merritt Family Reunion was held on July 4-7, 1996. On July 4th, the kin cooked out at the park in Wrightsville Beach. Friday morning, there was a boat ride in Wilmington on the Cape Fear River. The banquet was attended by one hundred twenty-five persons on Saturday night at the Wrightsville Holiday Inn and we wrapped up with a spiritual service the following morning.

Several decision were made by the family group present at the banquet:

- ⇒ The 1997 Reunion will be in Washington, DC.
- ⇒ Ethel Jacobs Briggs and Tyrone Goodwyn will host the 1997 Reunion.

Here's what Ethel and Tyrone have so far:

- ⇒ The 1997 Reunion will be on the weekend before the 4th of July.
- ⇒ The hotel is the Channel Inn in Southwest Washington, DC. It's on the Potomac River in a nice section of town. There is a pool. Fifty rooms have been reserved for the reunion; please call to confirm a room for yourself. \$85/night for up to four persons. (800) 368-5668

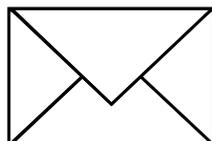
The persons who have formally volunteered to work with the 1997 Reunion are: Lottie Walker Caffee, Joyce Jacobs Dudley, Shirley Walker Jordan, Pleasant Carr, John Love. Thanks to them.



We need more more help, please consider what you can do. We would especially like to establish a Transportation Committee that will find the easiest and most cost-effective way to get many people from North Carolina to Washington. (Bus? Amtrak? Auto Caravan?)

Comments, responses, inquiries:

PenderROCK  
c/o Tyrone Goodwyn  
41 U Street NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
or tsgood1@AOL.com



### What's in a Name?

In the beginning was the Walker Family Reunion. Then came the Wheelers. Then came the Williams. So it became the Walker+ Family Reunion.

There used to be the Jacobs Family Reunion. There was also the Merritt Family Reunion. They beget the Jacobs-Merritt Family Reunion.

The Walker+ people and the Jacobs-Merritt people are kin. They started having reunions together -- the Jacobs-Merritt/Walker+ Family Reunion.

Don't you agree that the name is getting rather long and cumbersome?

Who are these people and why are they all in the same family group? They are descendants of people who have lived in Pender County since at least 1765 (Esther Jacobs was on the tax roll that year). They were colored people. They were colored beige. They were colored yellow. They were colored red. They were colored brown.

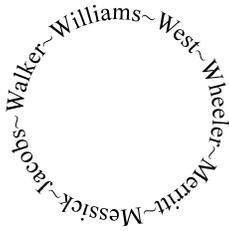
North Carolina had many clans of free colored people. Each clan was heavily interrelated and was also related to neighboring clans. So the Pender colored people are kin to the Robeson colored people and the Sampson colored people and the Brunswick & Bladen & Columbus colored people.

Some of the other people no longer identify themselves as "colored". They have become Indian or white.

The Pender people continued to be called colored or mulatto. Today, they self-identify as black and/or African American. But they're still colored beige and colored yellow and colored red and colored brown. And they're still trying to be free.

The main thing that distinguishes them from the other counties' people is that they are from Pender. Thus, their reunion shall be called the Pender Reunion Of Colored Kindred (PenderROCK).

Wheeler Messick Merritt West  
WALKER Jacobs Williams



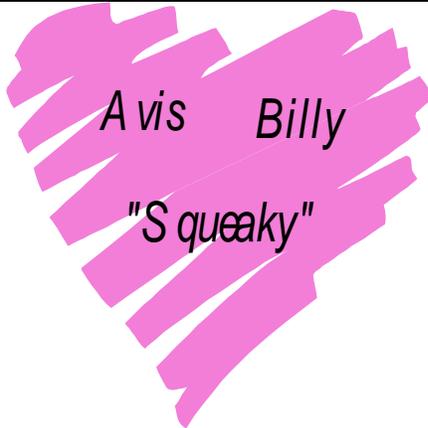
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**Much Thanks!** to Avis Jacobs Griffin, Billy Tyree, and Ella "Squeaky" Merritt Moore for their hard work and dedication to the 1996 Family Reunion. We all appreciate the job you did, guys.

## 1996 Contributors' List

Leon & Corrine Bellamy	400.00
Harold Bowden	100.00
Lottie Caffee	100.00
Robert Dudley	109.00
Sadie Foxie	100.00
Billy Tyree	100.00
Evelina Walker	25.00
Gilbert & Hedy Wheeler	25.00
Thaddeus & Herman Wheeler	100.00
Ivy & Marie Williams	100.00
Jessie Williams	100.00

We realize that some of you may not have wanted your names published. Our apologies in advance. Other persons may want to be certain that we acknowledge their generosity. We will not make a practice of publishing *new* donations, but we will happily publish additions or corrections to the 1996 Contributors' List.

## Combined Treasurer's Report

as of August 20, 1996

1996 Beginning Balance	614.98
<b>1996 INCOME</b>	
Donations	1,259.00
Picnic	696.00
Boat Ride	745.00
Banquet	2,152.00
T-Shirts & Hats	<u>2,523.00</u>
total income	7,375.00
<b>1996 EXPENSES</b>	
Picnic:	
rental & cleanup	127.50
caterer	676.00
Boat Ride:	
rental	600.00
refreshments	135.00
Banquet:	
dinner & equipment	2,117.15
deejay	325.00
video	125.00
Church	79.50
Mugs	162.00
Plaques	42.00
T-Shirts & Hats*	<u>2,432.00</u>
total expenses	6,821.15
1996 Income less Expenses	553.85
1997 Beginning Balance	1,168.83

\* \$200 screen donation by Calvin & Helen Walker

The treasury is used for expenses that benefit everyone and to provide "seed money" for caterers, etc. For example, the cost of printing and mailing this newsletter came from the treasury.

 Anybody know how to "piece" a quilt?  
we need you for a family project. write to PENDERoc



## Looking Back

**C**arrie Herring Walker was born on September 30, 1900 in Pender County, NC. Carrie's mother was Julia Herring -- the daughter of Rachel Herring. Rachel's parents were freed slaves -- David Herring and Harriet Williams Herring.



As a young girl, Carrie, her brothers Haston, Eddie, and C.J., and her sisters Mae and 'Bert went to live with their uncle Arthur Herring. They became part of a large extended family that included Arthur's daughters Lula, Mamie and Lethia, as well as the nephews and nieces of Arthur's wife Annie Walker Herring -- Archie, Ander, Mary, and Hugh Lester

Walker. People were always coming and going in the big white house on Rhyne's Crossroad. Walkers, Williams, Wests, Merritts, Mainors, Jacobs were all kin and often stopped by.

Carrie and the other family members worked on the farm as children, and later moved out and on to farms of their own. Carrie fell in love with Joel Walker -- the brother of her uncle's wife. They married on May 20, 1917 and enjoyed fifty-five years together before his demise in 1972.

Like most rural women of her day, Carrie delivered a child every two years. Again like most rural women of her day, she lost some children to early childhood diseases. Thirteen of her seventeen children survived childhood. From her teens to her mid-forties, Carrie had "stair step" children, a house to care for, and her own share of field work to do. Life was not easy.

Carrie and Joel bought land, farmed it, and raised their children in a way that is truly American. The best testimony to their success is the fact that twelve of their children came back to the same part of Rhyne's Crossroads where they grew up and where their parents were raised. First, there was something to come back *to*. Carrie and Joel had not only managed to get thirteen people to adulthood and on their feet, but they had amassed enough land to share with each of them. Secondly, after careers in the armed forces and in major northern metropolitan areas, after a broader view of the world, Carrie's children felt that the place for them was under her glow on Rhyne's Crossroads.

Why? If there is anything noteworthy about Carrie Herring Walker it is not the number of children she had -- that was not uncommon in her day. It is not how hard she had to work --

everyone around her was working just as hard. It is not even the fact that she eked out enough to live on *and* enough to share.

It is her disposition. She has spent ninety-six years not complaining. She has prayed through two world wars, Korea, Vietnam, and Desert Storm. She moved gracefully through the Depression, recession, and suppression. She has lived through times where she could not vote because of her color. She has lived through times where she would not vote because there was no one worthy to vote for. She has seen her descendants grow and prosper, get laid off and downsized, and start the cycle all over again.

And she has never broken stride. She keeps her glow. She makes you feel better in her presence. She is always thankful for another day; yet she approaches the Jordan without fear or complaint. If everyone knew about Aunt Carrie, there probably wouldn't be enough room at Rhyne's Crossroads for the people who would want to be near her.

## The Future

**Kim Way** (Annie Jacobs Merritt Branch's great-granddaughter) received a four-year scholarship to the college or university of her choice.

**Rahsanna Towns** (Willie Jacobs' great-granddaughter) graduated from San Diego State University and is starting law school at University of Southern California in the fall.

**Melita Simmons** (Daisy Walker Merritt's great-granddaughter) graduated from University of Pennsylvania and is starting medical school at Cleveland School of Podiatry in the fall.

**Steve Walker** (Arthur Walker's grandson) graduated from college and is a probation officer in Laurinburg, North Carolina.

**Nia Brinson** (Esther Walker Brinson's daughter), a communications major at North Carolina A&T, was a commentary assistant at the Olympics in Atlanta.

**Tamia Lassiter** (Juliette Walker Goodwyn's granddaughter) graduated as number thirteen in her class from I.C. Norcum Senior High School in Portsmouth, Virginia.

**Valerie Bannerman** (Carrie Herring Walker's great-granddaughter) graduated from Morgan State University and is starting law school in Pennsylvania.