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# The Turrentine Letter

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October 2013

No. 235

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**Turrentine Letter editor and Cemetery Chair – Joyce Hodges, 17952 168<sup>th</sup> ST,  
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## Reunion June 2014

We have some volunteers to hold a National Reunion in Orange County, North Carolina. Kermit Turrentine, who has long maintained the Turrentine Cemetery, has managed to get some others to commit to helping him. So far only about 70 people have expressed an interest.

If you plan to attend and have **not** responded to the Turrentine Letter editor, Joyce Hodges ([jehodges@email.com](mailto:jehodges@email.com)) or 17952 168<sup>th</sup> St, Bonner Springs, KS **or** to Kermit Turrentine, ([turrentinejr@gmail.com](mailto:turrentinejr@gmail.com)) or 6003 Guess Rd, Rougemont, NC 27572 please do so before October 30<sup>th</sup>.

We want to only place a deposit down on the space we need. If we reserve too large a space the cost per person will greatly increase.

Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> WEEKEND in June, Friday evening social  
with big dinner on Saturday, June 21<sup>st</sup>.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Contact  
information \_\_\_\_\_  
(email or snail mail)

Number of attendees adults \_\_\_\_\_ youth (age 14 and younger) \_\_\_\_\_

Would you need transportation to the historic Turrentine Cemetery or will you be driving yourself?

If the hotel is not in Durham/Chapel Hill will you need transportation from airport to hotel?

## Deaths



Spencer Donald (Don) Turrentine, known as Don (#2569), was born 28 Feb 1932 in Nashville, Tennessee. He died 9 Sept 2013 in Houston, Texas. Don married in 1951 to Betty Jean Knight and has 4 children from that marriage: Ivy, Donald, Lauren, and Peggy. Don served many years as President of the Turrentine Family Association and as chairman of the Turrentine Cemetery Association. He guided the project to place a tombstone for Mattie Clyde Turrentine which would commemorate her dedication to the original Turrentine Cemetery in Orange County, North Carolina and her importance in reconnecting Turrentine descendants of all races to their roots. Immediately after high school, Don served in the United States Navy. After his service, he worked until the early 1970s for Texaco. He then opened an American Handicrafts franchise. In 1974, he opened Turrentine Needlecraft with his second wife Susan. Later they added custom framing. His daughters Lauren and Peggy worked with him. He retired in 1998, spending his retirement gardening and traveling. He is survived by his four children, three grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, one brother, Dan Turrentine, and one sister, Jean Turrentine Baum.

Turrentine, Carol VanBrackle was born 25 Aug 1927. She died 25 May 2013 in Atlanta, Georgia. She married Julian Atwater Turrentine (#1704) whom she met at Emory University. They were married for 53 years. She graduated from Emory's degree program in Nursing. Carol was also a master gardener. She was also a quilter, and a part of the sewing ministry at Peachtree Road United Methodist Church.



Zula M. Turrentine was born September 9, 1935 in Hartselle, Alabama to the late Hattie Mae and Herman Lee McCormick. Zula died 30 Aug 2013. She was a member of Edgewood Assembly of God where she was involved in the ladies ministry. She retired from Bibb Mills where she worked for many years as a weaver. Survivors include her husband of 59 years, James "Will" Turrentine; daughter, Jamie Cutright and her husband Jerry; and grandsons, James and Joshua Cutright.

## Turrentine News



Antoine Turrentine graduated from United States Army Chemical School in June 2013. Congratulations.



Lucas A. Moore (#4317.03012) United States Army Infantry School, September 2013. He will be attending Airborne and Ranger Schools. Congratulations.



Kimberly Clark Turrentine retired from the United States Army after a total of 30yrs 9mo 25 days that includes Active Army, Army Reserves, Army National Guard and Active Guard Reserves. Her MOS include Petroleum Supply Specialist, Food Service, Truck Driver and Army National Guard Recruiter. She also said she is a single parent who has raised three very successful young men of whom she is very proud. In announcing her retirement she said, “The Military has really been good to me but, it is time for me to spread my wings and fly in a different direction.”

In my role as Turrentine Family Association Historian and Archivist, I attended the 2013 Turrentine Scroggins Cravens Counts Bell Reunion in De Queen, Arkansas. The common thread for these families is “young Gib” or “uncle Gib”, Gilbert Turrentine born 1837 and his wife Lively Murphy. Gilbert and his father “Old Gib” were slaves on the farm/planation of James Turrentine #55 and some of their stories are in the old Blue and Orange versions of “The Turrentine Family”. Those who have attended a Turrentine National Reunion will remember the bell which is usually rung at the big dinner on Saturday night. Here is the story of the bell as recorded on the chest in which it resides.

This bell has been calling Turrentines since colonial days, when it was used in Hillsboro, Orange County, North Carolina, home of Major Samuel Turrentine and his wife, Sarah Wilson, who were married in 1739. In 1808, the bell was with the personal effects of Samuel and Sarah and Family when they emigrated from their Orange County home westward over the mountains, and through the wilderness to settle upon new land along the Duck River, in Bedford County, Tennessee.

In 1837, the bell was taken again on another pioneering expedition by a son, James Turrentine, who, following the attraction of new lands opening to settlement on the American frontier as it crept westward, emigrating from Bedford County headed for the Republic of Texas.

Three families started for Texas: James Turrentine, his brother Archelaus Turrentine (#56) and George Smith who was the husband of James’ daughter Margaret or Polly (#75). This was in the fall of 1837. The families with their possessions made quite a caravan. It required an entire day to ferry the Mississippi River at Memphis. The lowlands across the river from Memphis were almost impossible. Nelse was (a) huge Negro slave who belonged to George Smith. Nelse was driver of one (of) George Smith’s wagons. He never got stuck a single time; but his powerful physique was a great help to others of the party who did become mired. It was November when the party reached Arkadelphia (Arkansas). One night they camped between Arkadelphia and Antoine. A severe storm occurred and a big tree was blown across the camp. Two boys (one was Samuel W. #206 son of James) and were killed and Uncle Jim’s hip was broken. They were pinned beneath the tree. In the excitement of the storm, Old Nelse ran to the tree, lifted it and held it until the dead and injured could be removed. The next morning, two men could not lift the tree. All thought of going on was abandoned. The dead were buried and the injured were nursed. George Smith and Old Nelse went in search of a vacant cabin. They found one which could be rented and there George’ wife, Polly gave birth to a daughter. Neighbors were kind to the distressed emigrants. Returning emigrants from Texas related the difficulties of securing title to land in Texas. (Texas belonged to Spain and the emigrants from the United States entering without special authorization were illegal aliens.) For all these reasons and the richness of the land they decided to settle in the Sevier (pronounced severe) County.

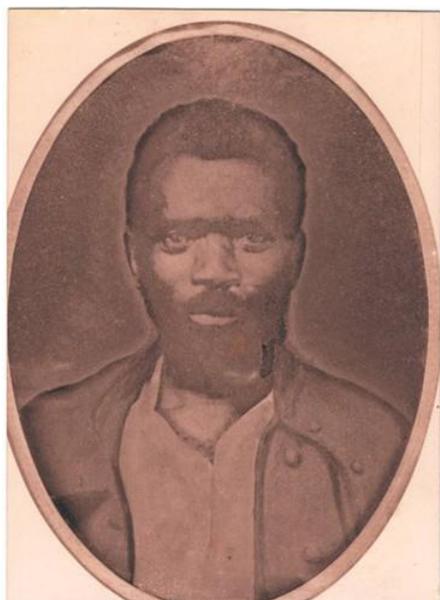
In 1920, George Ruford Turrentine (great-grandson of Archelaus) of Arkansas and Memory Lester of New York became actively interested in, and began to make inquiry and research into their Turrentine genealogy. As he could locate them, George Rutherford Turrentine (#1399) contacted each

present day family of the name or of the blood, which resulted in an awakening of feelings of ties of kinship. The first National Reunion was held in Hillsboro, North Carolina in 1941.

The second was held in Lockesburg, Arkansas in 1950 and was attended by descendants not only of the Turrentine and Smith families of Sevier County, but also by the descendants of the former Turrentine slaves of that county. The third reunion was held in Shelbyville, Bedford County, Tennessee. The fourth was delayed from 1954 to 1955 because a great number of the family were attending the Nation Methodist Conventions held in even numbered years and found it difficult to make two significant trips in the same summer.

The bell was carried to each of these reunions and to nearly every reunion since where it is displayed and used to call the participants to together for meetings, meals and worship. The cedar for the chest in which the bell is kept came from DeKalb County, Tennessee from trees on the farm of Sallie Turrentine Robinson (#657) and Alma Robinson (#1559). It was built by Fount Beverly Robinson (#1560), at Oxford, Pennsylvania in 1955 and presented at the 1955 Marionville Reunion to Mrs. Eva Baker Moores (#1340), the custodian of the bell and the great-granddaughter of James Turrentine.

It is not often that it is possible to connect with a piece of family history from the 1830's, and even rarer for a descendants of slaves to find that connection. It was very special to bring a bit of history and allow all the kids, of any age, to ring the bell. Additionally, Ken Austin came to the reunion, hoping we could tell him if his great-grandfather Arthur Turrentine was connected to these families. Arthur was another son of Gilbert and Lively, making Ken a third cousin to many in attendance. Ken viewed photos of those 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandparents for the first time.



Gilbert



Lively

I also attended the 2013 Arkansas Genealogical Society Conference in North Little Rock, Arkansas on September 20 and 21<sup>st</sup>. I acquired CDs of Arkansas births prior to 1912, Arkansas Death Certificate Index 1935-1960, Arkansas Voter Index for 1867, and the Arkansas Family Historian magazine from 1962-2011. I will look up your ancestors on these CDs, just email me the names and approximate dates of birth of the persons for whom you are searching. The Arkansas Family Historian magazine is published under the auspices of the Arkansas Genealogical Society. George R. Turrentine of Russellville as the President of the society and Editor Professor Walter J. Lemke of the University of Arkansas at Fayetteville, lead the new society which met at Conway in May of 1963 for its first annual meeting. From its inception, the organization has sought to accomplish four main goals 1) publish a

quality journal devoted to Arkansas family history and genealogy, 2) print and distribute books, pamphlets, and other resources relating to Arkansas and its people, 3) preserve our state's historical, genealogical, and biographical resources, and 4) sponsor educational workshops, conferences, and seminars. I plan to gather some of the Turrentine Arkansas connected stories and submit them.

## Turrentine Places



Mike Turrentine of Basehor, Kansas found this sign in Creve Coeur, Missouri, a suburb of St. Louis, Missouri. It is at the location of his grandparent's former farm. Edward Lee Turrentine #1987.

If you find a Turrentine named street, building, etc. Take a photo of a Turrentine descendant and the sign and I'll put it in the newsletter.

Besides Turrentine Trail in Missouri, there are Turrentine named streets in El Paso, Texas; Killen, Alabama; Gadsden, Dalton and Cussetta, Georgia; and Russellville, Arkansas. The Russellville location has appeared in a prior issue, but if you go there we will publish your photo too.

## Turrentine Family Crest Needlepoint



We still have some Turrentine Family Crest needlepoints. Cost is \$60.00. Don Turrentine has pledged \$30 per sale to the Turrentine Cemetery Special Fund for tombstones for unmarked graves or those with badly worn stones. If you wish to purchase one send your check made out to: **Turrentine Cemetery Fund**,

Mail to: Joyce E. Hodges,  
17952 168<sup>th</sup> St  
Bonner Springs, KS 66012

I send you the crest. Photo of the needlepoint on the left. The price does not include a frame, just the needlepoint. The size is 8 ½ inches by 11 1/2 inches.

## TURRENTINE CEMETERY FUND

Jerry Turrentine of Fredericksburg, Texas had promised to match the next \$750 donated toward the Turrentine Cemetery Fund. Only about half of that amount has been donated so far. The Cemetery Fund does have federal tax exemption **under 501c** as a non-profit charity, so the amount you donate is tax deductible. If you want to see photos of the cemetery and the stones, go to <http://findagrave.com> and search for Turrentine Cemetery in Orange County, North Carolina.

## Turrentine Queries

Lora Morris, daughter of Catherine Szymczak who is the daughter of Lola Elva Turrentine Rhoden. Lola's parents are Eliza E. Murphy & Ora Turrentine. Lora Morris is seeking more information about Eliza E. Murphy. If you have more information about Eliza, please email her at [mloralu3@aol.com](mailto:mloralu3@aol.com).