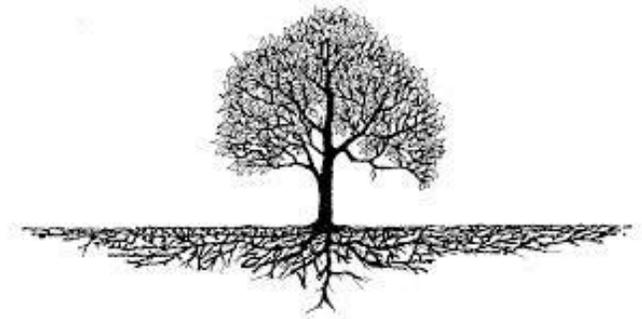


O'Kelley Family Reunion Newsletter

www.blackokelleys.org
<https://www.facebook.com/blackokelleys>



"The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit." -Nelson Henderson



Volume 1, Issue 2

Winter 2015

2016 Reunion in Atlanta, GA

Plans are Underway-

Nikki Williams Sebastian

O'Kelley Family Reunion 2016 Chair
reunion@blackokelleys.org

Last month the 2016 Atlanta Reunion host Committee visited several prospective properties in the Atlanta area. The hotels will post their 2016 rates early next year. After January 2015, hotels will begin accepting 2016 room reservations. Please remember to send your completed reunion survey to Nikki Williams Sebastian at reunion@blackokelleys.org, if you haven't done so already. Your surveys will provide valuable feedback for the 2016 planning process.

2016 Reunion Committee Leads

Positions Available-

Legacy Emeritus: Loyce Pickens Huston

Co-Chair: Aulbon Wilson

Parliamentarian: Nelson Minter

Secretary: TBD

Activities: TBD

Family History: Joyce Ann Huston

Generation Next/Youth: Asha M. Smith

Worship Committee/Chaplain: Lauren Drummond

Committee Descriptions

Legacy Emeritus: Usually former chairperson of Family Reunions. Provides wisdom/ guidance. Serves as a mentor for Planning Committee.

Parliamentarian: Ensures Roberts Rules of Order are followed at all planning sessions. Ensures impartiality, recognition of speakers, presentation of motions.

Secretary: Maintains family member contact database. Conducts family outreach. (Open)

Family History: Provides history presentations. Maintains family tree.

Generation Next/Youth: Engages and encourages young family members to be involved with reunions.

Worship Committee/Chaplain: Plans and presents rituals, ceremonies, memorials. Provides appropriate devotional services.

Activities: Oversees entertainment, family games, ice breakers. Awards and prizes coordinator. (Open)



(Eldest Family Member (in attendance) Evelyn Jackson, Phoenix, AZ 2004)

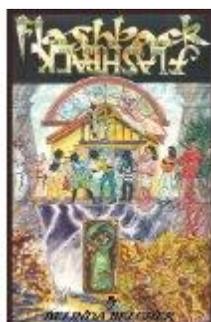
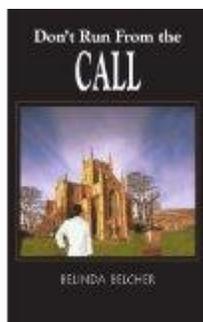
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News and Notes..

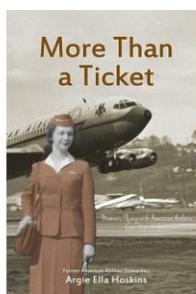
Do you have news to share?

Books by Cousins for Sale



Cousin [Belinda Belcher](#) currently has three books available. Two of the titles are, Don't Run From the Call published in 2004 and Flashback, published in 2011. All titles are available at [Amazon.com](#) but hurry, only a few left in stock!

Cousin [Argie Ella Hoskins](#) is also a published author with her book, More Than a Ticket: Memoirs Flying with American Airlines from Props to Jets, published earlier this year. Proceeds from her [book](#) will help support a charity in Ghana: <http://acaciashade.org/>.



Call for Recipes

Please let me know of any interest in coordinating a family cook book. Those of us who enjoy cooking would love to have a book of recipes gathered from O'Kelley family members as a 2016 souvenir item. If we have enough recipes, I will compile a cookbook. Let me know if you are interested in sharing your family's favorite recipes at reunion@blackokelleys.org.



2016 Reunion Activity Ideas- Family History Bingo

The blog for the National Genealogical Society UpFront (<http://upfront.ngsgenealogy.org/>) recently mentioned Family History Bingo as a creative way to have fun with family history. With this version of Bingo family members provide pictures of relatives young and old and players must guess the identity of the photos as names are called. Take a look now in your old boxes and albums and decide which photos you would like to include in the Reunion Bingo card.

Sample Family History Bingo Card

H U L L S				
44	17		2	56
60		11		77
76	47	FREE SPACE	3	
81		33	16	65
1	69	21		97

Genealogy Corner

Extracted from <http://www.isogg.org/ggfaq.htm>:

Q. What is Genetic Genealogy?

A. In the late 1990's, there were several highly publicized cases, Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemmings, and the last Czar of Russia's family, to name a few, in which DNA was utilized to prove or disprove relationships to people that have long since been deceased. The media coverage of these, and other cases, helped to bring DNA testing for genealogical applications to the commercial market in the year 2000.

Q. How does it work?

A. Geneticists have identified where DNA does not inter-mix and changes very slowly. The markers in these areas are passed down from generation to generation along gender lines.

Q. What will a DNA test tell me?

A. The DNA testing company you select will identify the people you match that also selected the same company for DNA testing. Depending upon the DNA testing company selected, other information may be available to you such as your ethnic origin, or whether or not you have certain genes or your ancestry mix. Other 3rd party websites are available to help you find DNA matches to users of other DNA testing companies.

Q. Do I have to exhume my ancestor to get his DNA?

A. No. Besides being expensive and full of legal and/or societal issues, it's not necessary. Because the Y-chromosome is passed down through the male line from generation to generation relatively unchanged, a close match with another male will lead to identifying a common ancestor. You just need to have a male in your family with the surname you want tested to take the test.

Q. I have a genealogical "brick-wall", how do I identify a common ancestor?

A. The more people that test and match in a DNA surname project, the more data there is available. Mutations excluded, the ancestral modal signature (haplotype) will begin to be revealed. Hopefully, there will be others in the DNA project that you match to you who may have the paper trail you need to get you past your genealogical "brick-wall"

[Black O'Kelley DNA Project at FamilytreeDNA.com](#)

-Administrators Joyce Ann Huston and Nikki Sebastian

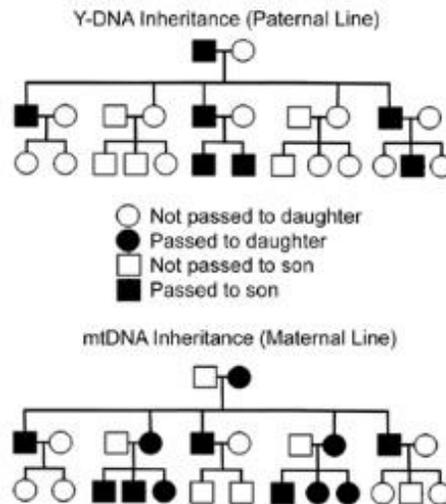


Image Source: <http://www.searchmytree.com/Inheritance.php>

Nikki's MDLP World-22 DNA Admixture Proportions
(www.gedmatch.com)

Population	
Pygmy	3.55%
West-Asian	-
North-European-Mesolithic	1.39%
Indo-Tibetan	0.30%
Mesoamerican	-
Arctic-Amerind	0.68%
South-America_Amerind	0.49%
Indian	0.84%
North-Siberean	-
Atlantic_Mediterranean_Neolithic	5.30%
Samoedic	0.31%
Indo-Iranian	1.61%
East-Siberean	-
North-East-European	11.53%
South-African	1.01%
North-Amerind	-
Sub-Saharan	69.06%
East-South-Asian	-
Near_East	3.47%
Melanesian	0.46%
Paleo-Siberian	-
Austronesian	-

-Typically, the lower percentages represent more ancient heritage further back in time. The larger percentages represent more recent genetic makeup.

About the O'Kelley Family:

Our O'Kelley family began through the union of Ellen Mathews Fisher and James O'Kelley (1824 – 1867) originally from Darlington County, South Carolina. Family lore states Ellen, born presumably enslaved in Virginia ABT1843, was shipped to Mississippi and purchased in order to bear children. Ellen was a servant in the O'Kelley household in Woodville, Wilkinson County, Mississippi along the Mississippi River in the Natchez district.

Oral tradition states Ellen repeatedly refused O'Kelley advances until she was beaten and threatened with having her young children thrown into a fire. Ellen gave birth to three O'Kelley sons Daniel (1862-1930), Will (1867-1927) and Charles (1870-1943) all of whom survived into adulthood. In 1867, Ellen was pregnant with Will O'Kelley when James O'Kelley died, two years after the end of the Civil War when much of Mississippi was destroyed by war.

Daniel and Will's death certificates list James O'Kelley as their father. The youngest son, Charles O'Kelley's death certificate lists John O'Kelley as his father. John B. O'Kelley (1832-1899) was one of James O'Kelley's younger brothers. John lived nearby across the Mississippi River in Tensas Parish, LA. Now, over 150 years later, Y-DNA analyses of Daniel and Will O'Kelley's descendants confirm the historical and biological origins of the O'Kelley surname. Charles O'Kelley had only daughters and therefore does not have any direct male descendants necessary to participate in Y-DNA testing.

Ellen had a total of seven children known at this time: Amos Mathews (b.1874), John Archie Hilliard/Hillery (b.1872), Theresa (Saresta) Fisher-O'Neal (b.1880), and Cordelia Fisher. Cordelia is said to have died early in her life.

The 1880 the US Census shows Ellen at age 37, in Woodville, Wilkinson County, MS with her children and husband William Fisher whom she married on July 13, 1878. Daniel, Will and Charles are listed with the Fisher last name in the 1880 Census.

Ellen's three O'Kelley sons married and raised their families in Woodville, MS and later near the city of Greenville - in the now defunct town of Magenta in Washington County located in the Mississippi Delta region. Magenta was later incorporated into the area known today as Stoneville-Leland, MS. The brothers were self-sufficient and owned their own land and businesses. Will owned a barber shop and popular restaurant in Greenville with his wife LaVinia (b.1875). Daniel established a school and also a Masonic lodge in Greenville, MS with his brother Charles in 1918. Daniel sent nine of his ten children to college in the early 1900s. He remained in Mississippi until he died on Christmas Day, December 25, 1930.



The 1910 Washington County, MS Census shows Will was doing well enough to employ two household servants. He would later move to Memphis, TN where he died in 1927 -the same year as the Mississippi river flood, the most destructive flood in American history. Elders mentioned the constant flooding in the Mississippi Delta region as a contributing factor to the O'Kelleys leaving Mississippi. Ellen reportedly died in a flood. Charles was a farmer and eventually moved to Chicago where he died and is buried near his sister-in-law, Daniel's wife Rosa Hillery O'Kelly (1867 – 1938) along with other O'Kelleys buried at Burr Oak Cemetery in the Chicago suburb of Alsip, Illinois.

Some descendants of Charles O'Kelley and his wife Amanda (b. 1876) stayed in Mississippi and have remained educators in Leland, MS for generations. Most of the descendants of Daniel, Will and Charles O'Kelley were part of what is now known as the Great Migration of African-Americans who left the rural South to escape racial violence and to seek job opportunities in other cities nationwide.

After slavery was abolished in 1865, it was common for the formerly enslaved to continue searching for family decades after the Civil War ended. This newspaper ad from the 1920s documents one man's search for his mother lost to slavery:



Our family did not need to place ads in newspapers to find each other. The O'Kelleys organized reunions decades before they became popular in the 1970s. The year 2030, the centennial of Daniel O'Kelley's death will mark 100 years of O'Kelley reunions!

In Memoriam:

Annette Sanders O'Kelley
September 15, 1922 – October 22, 2014

Annette Sanders O'Kelley passed away in her sleep during the early hours on Wednesday, October 22, 2014. She was 92 years of age and a resident of Middletown Park Nursing Facility in Middletown, NY. Annette was born September 15, 1922 in St. Louis, Missouri to Christopher Sanders and Lena Hamilton. She attended the St. Louis Public School System attending Banneker School, and was a 1939 graduate of Vashon High School. She went on to business school which established her professional career in St. Louis medical and educational institutions including Homer G. Phillips Hospital and Charles S. Sumner High School. Annette loved her family - immediate and extended; and throughout her life and career, Annette made life-long friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Joseph O'Kelley; sisters: Ruth Harris, Christine Sanders, and Bernice Thomas; and brothers: Leon Sanders and Vance Cooper.

She is survived by her daughter, Jonette O'Kelley Miller; son-in-law, Rev. Earl Sanders Miller; grandson, Isaiah Earl-Joseph Miller and a host of nieces, nephews, and cousins.

A Visitation will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. on Saturday, October 25th at Applebee McPhillips Funeral Home, 130 Highland Avenue, Middletown, NY 10940. A Funeral Service will be held at 4 p.m. on Saturday at the funeral home. She will be buried alongside her husband in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, MO.



Joe O'Kelley (1923-1927), wife Annette O'Kelley (1922-2014) with friends 'Aunt' Wilda and 'Uncle' Herb. Photo courtesy of Jonette O'Kelley Miller.

The purpose of the O'Kelley Family newsletter is to document our O'Kelley family history and share it with as many O'Kelleys as possible. Please share this newsletter with family and invite them to join the family mailing list.

If YOU have any documents, recordings, photos, letters, legal paperwork, arts and crafts -anything of historical significance that provides evidence on the lives and activities of our matriarch, Ellen, her children, and their descendants, please let us know. Your sharing will provide inspiration and pride to the family and future generations. Your contributions will ensure your items will be professionally preserved in American historical archives.

We have several options to save our family treasures and heirlooms in any of the following famous libraries:

- The Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) at: <http://nmaahc.si.edu/> - Joyce A. Huston, Charter Member
- [The Latter-day Saints \(LDS\) Family History Library \(FHL\)](https://familysearch.org/locations/saltlakecity-library) at: <https://familysearch.org/locations/saltlakecity-library> - Loyce P. Huston, Missionary
- Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) at: <http://www.dar.org/library> - Nikki Sebastian, Atlanta Chapter member.

Nikki Williams Sebastian, Chair
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