



REUNION 2017: NO REUNION?????

Okay; we asked at Reunion 2014, we have asked in newsletters since, and we have asked at Violette Family Association Facebook and we still do not have a commitment from a group to host a Reunion 2017. At this point it would appear that Reunion 2017 will not happen.

It takes a year or more to make arrangements to host a Reunion. That much lead time is needed to find and tie down a place to hold a Reunion and to make arrangements for feeding and housing our group.

Time has run out.

The officers are, for the most part, not located in the New England area so it is not feasible for them to put a Reunion together. However, the officers, among others, are ready and willing to pitch in and to do some of the tasks necessary at the Reunion itself to help make it a success.

This newsletter provides answers to many questions a potential Host Committee might ask. Won't YOU consider doing that now?

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Please be generous with your donations! Send it to our Treasurer or click on the secure PayPal link at our web site.

Since we have no dues we depend on donations and what is left from Reunions to cover operating costs.

NEXT REUNION LOCATION

The recent Reunion location survey showed the following results:

State	First Choice	Second Choice
CT	11	2
MA	13	18
NH	3	6

PAST REUNIONS

We have had fourteen Reunions in our 38-year history. The locations and dates for those past Reunions are shown in the table below. For planning purposes, note that we have traditionally held Reunions in late July or early August to better accommodate families with children as well as traditional summer vacation times.

Location	Start	End
Methuen, Massachusetts USA	7/29/78	7/31/78
Augusta, Maine USA	7/29/79	
Van Buren, Maine USA	7/31/81	
Windsor, Connecticut USA	7/27/84	
Portland, Maine USA	7/31/87	
Grand Falls, New Brunswick CAN	7/27/90	
Lewiston, Maine USA	7/30/93	
Shelburne Falls, New Hampshire USA	7/26/96	7/28/96
Westford, Massachusetts USA	7/31/99	8/2/99
Edmundston, New Brunswick CAN	8/9/02	8/11/02
Gorham, New Hampshire USA	7/22/05	7/24/05
Windsor Locks, Connecticut USA	8/08/08	8/10/08
Van Buren, Maine USA	8/05/11	8/07/11
Van Buren, Maine USA	8/08/14	8/10/14
???	Aug 2017??	Aug 2017??

WHAT DOES A REUNION REQUIRE IN ADVANCE?

Important factors to provide for in planning a Violette Family Reunion:

- A group of local members willing to help in planning and carrying out the Reunion. Typically this consists of 3-6 members.
- A meeting hall or place that can accommodate from 200 to 300 people.
- Lodging at the Reunion place or close nearby for those numbers.
- Reunion meals: Friday supper, Saturday lunch (possibly) and supper, and Sunday breakfast. If the meeting venue (e.g.: hotel) cannot provide the Host Committee might use a caterer.
- Planning for entertainment and program content.

IMPORTANCE OF EARLY PLANNING

Some members must plan their vacation time as much as a year in advance, so it is important that we set the dates for our Reunions at least that far ahead. Therefore we request that members considering hosting a Reunion act soon so we can lock down a date and give members advance notice.

THE HOST COMMITTEE

The Host Committee is a local group of members planning a Reunion.

REUNION PLANNING GUIDELINES

Those who have put on Reunions in the past have put together a Reunion Planning Guidelines (Draft) document to help those considering hosting a Reunion to learn what is involved. This is available at our web site VioletteFamily.org, or by request from the President. At the web site, go to Reunions, then Planning Document, and download the PDF file.

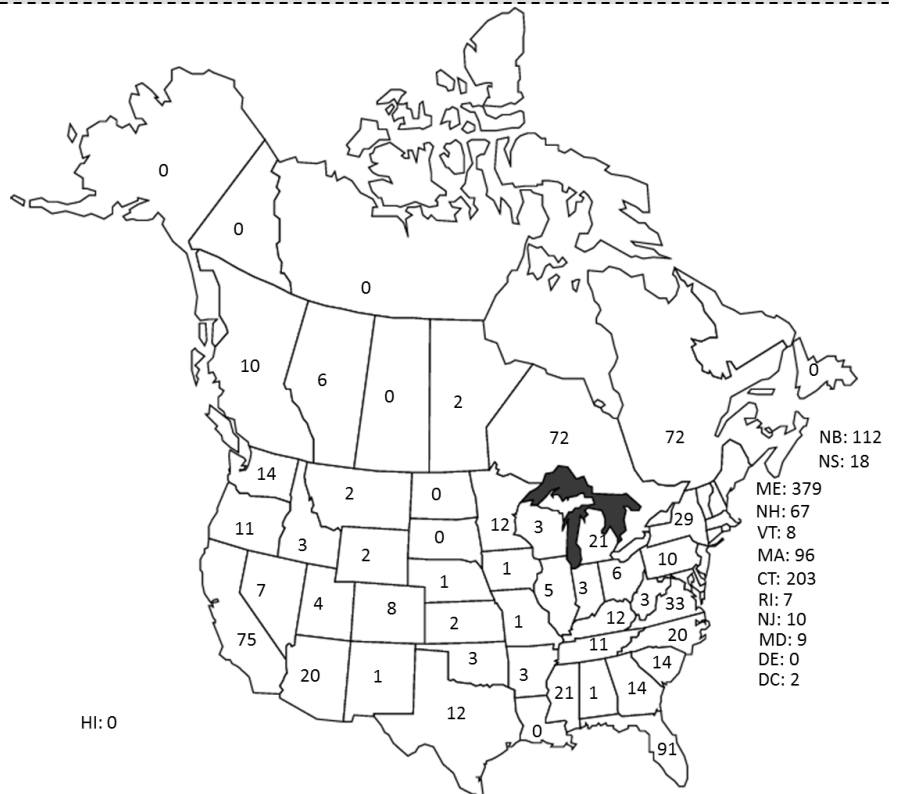
IMPORTANT REUNION SUPPORT

The Violette Family Association Board members and several others have had experience in planning and carrying out Reunions, and are very happy to help the local committee. This is especially valuable during the setup phase and during the Reunion itself, so the Host Committee does not have to do it all themselves!

Help in mailing lists, newsletters, web site content, registration forms and data, and many more aspects is provided by Association officers in support of the Host Committee.

WHERE DO WE LIVE?

The map below shows where Violette Family Association members live in North America, by state and province. The majority of our members are in the northeastern part of North America. Maine has the largest number at 379—about as many as NH, VT, MA, CT, and RI combined. But Massachusetts and Connecticut together have over 300 members. This is why many people would like to have Reunion 2017 in one of those two states. The member numbers represent a single member or a member-spouse/partner pair. Our records have undeliverable addresses for 110 member units. The total of those shown on the map is 1804 member units.



REUNION MEALS

The Host Committee is responsible for selecting the meals to be included in the Reunion registration fee as well as the style of meal service.

The typical agenda on page 4 of this newsletter identifies the various meal events associated with a typical Reunion. The Friday and Saturday suppers are required.; the Saturday night meal is usually called a banquet. A Saturday lunch can either be a planned event at the Reunion (or elsewhere) or leave the attendees free to do it on their own. A Sunday breakfast or brunch is a last opportunity for members to meet before leaving.

We have had both buffet-style and plated meals for the suppers. This will depend on what arrangements the Host Committee makes with whomever will provide the food.

The menu must be determined well in advance so that prices can be fixed and agreed upon with the food vendor. Once set, the price of any meal should not be changed since it will go into setting the registration fee for attendees, and this information must be sent out well in advance of the Reunion (typically 8-10 months). With a buffet setting, there may be choices of meat but there is only one price. With a plated meal, a menu choice may be provided but if there is a price difference among choices this must be available for registration form design and setup.

SPEAKERS AND PROGRAM

The Host Committee is responsible for inviting guest speakers for the times shown on the agenda. The speakers may talk on a subject that is Violette-related, a genealogical topic, a topic related to the local area, or any other suitable topic. Normally we do not pay a speakers fee, though we do pay for their meals and any other Reunion-associated costs. However, if the Host Committee wants a speaker for whom a fee is required this cost must be included in the Reunion budget and covered by registration fees.

TYPICAL REUNION AGENDA

The information below shows a draft agenda drawn from Reunion 2014 and will help the Host Committee understand what they will need to plan for and provide. Various details will change depending on the Reunion location and what is available in the local area, but the overall flow of the Reunion will follow the pattern shown below. The dates are preliminary.

FRIDAY, August 4, 2014

Noon: Registration starts (provide venue address)
 Noon to 6:00 pm: Visit with cousins, view tables and displays
 6:00 pm: (Buffet/Plated) Supper
 7:00 pm: ???, speaker (topic?)
 7:30 pm: ???, speaker (topic?)
 7:45 pm: ???, speaker (topic?)
 8:15 pm: ??? (entertainment?)

SATURDAY, August 5, 2014

Morning: Registration continues
 9:00 am: Association Business Meeting and Voting (provide location)
 10:00 am ±: (Provide some activity at Reunion location)
 Noon: (Meal provided, or on their own)
 2:00 pm: Vendors and Displays: (same as Friday)
 6:00 pm: (Buffet/Plated) Banquet
 6:45 pm: Introduction of new officers, Association announcements
 7:00 pm: ???, speaker (topic?)
 7:30 pm: ???, speakers (topic?)
 8:00 pm: ???, keynote speaker (topic?)
 8:30 pm: ??? (entertainment?)
 9:15 pm: Raffle results

SUNDAY, August 6, 2014

8:00 am: Breakfast at ???
 10:00 am: Mass at ???
 Farewells and Departure

WHAT'S NEW WITH DNA TESTING?



By Nancy Nolette, VFA #1702

Have you heard about the 23andMe DNA testing service? Having seen and heard it advertised so often on television, I decided to give it a try, why not? I was curious about the genetics that make me who I am, T2b3-C151T.

Over a 15 year span I participated in several medical research studies. I was fortunate to aid product research for Omeprazole/Prilosec, benefits of orange juice with pulp in controlling high blood pressure, genetic cardiac research and the pre-60 age shingle's vaccination. So it was normal for me to complete the many questionnaires on my physical characteristics and traits while waiting for the 23andMe test results. After every question, I saw how others had answered and where I was related to our group.

I was curious about what diseases may develop as I age. I have two elderly aunts (aged 84 and 97) who share the same mitochondrial DNA (MtDNA) with me. Neither have cancer, Parkinson's, a cardiac condition nor Alzheimer's. And I do not either according to my 23andMe genic markers. So I can expect to age gracefully as they have (?).

Unexpectedly I have other accomplishments. I am a tissue donor and was contacted for further testing yet I did not make the final match for the recipient. To date I have shared my DNA genome results with Family Tree DNA, Gedmatch, Ancestry and 23andMe.

To narrow down my genetics, I joined the French Heritage, Belanger/Bellinger Family and T2 MtDNA groups. I already had my parent's lineage and voluntarily shared this information with them. Hopefully, these details would help others in tracing their ancestor's journey in time and place.

Then two separate families contacted me stating my genic markers filled in their missing MtDNA maternal ancestry. Most recently a Canadian genealogist matched my MtDNA to his client and gave me a certified list of my maternal ancestry back to the 1500s in France.

For the descendants of Francois Violet, we have the "Founding Mothers of Acadia" in our MtDNA. Francois' wife, Marie Luce, through her parents Jean Baptiste and Marie (LeBlanc) Thibodeau gave us this historical and noteworthy heritage.

RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR REUNION PLANNING

The Association has many resources available to a Host Committee; they have only to ask! And most will be automatically provided to the select committee.

List of Members in Planning Area

The Webmaster has created an Excel workbook containing a list of members who live in southern New Hampshire, and all of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The list contains names, email addresses, addresses, and phone numbers, and currently contains 261 records. This list will be made available to those who want to consider hosting the Reunion in their area.

Agenda Planning

The agenda for Reunions has followed a general pattern, with adjustments for features of the host area. See the typical agenda in this newsletter on page 5. The officers can help you in customizing this agenda for your venue and Reunion plan.

Registration Support

A major function associated with Reunions is handling preregistrations as they come in and handling registrations at the door. Another part of this activity is greeting members as they arrive and finalizing their registrations and handing them the Reunion packets. Because he maintains the member database, the Webmaster can provide great support in this function. Together with the officers, the Host Committee must decide whether preregistrations will be handled by the Committee or by an officer.

Together with the Host Committee, the officers will help to design the registration form for the Reunion. A standard form is available that has been used in the past, with only contact and local info changed.

Some officers and others have helped to staff the registration table during the Reunion and may be called on to help out again at Reunion 2017. This activity needs at least three people staffing the table on Friday and on Saturday morning, and an additional two to three people need to be available as backups to replace them for breaks.

Funds

We have operated in one of two ways in the past. Some Host Committees prefer to open their own local checking account and in those cases the Association will write them a check to start with. In other cases the Host Committee prefers to pay for items themselves and submit receipts for reimbursement. In any case, the Association can be called on to pay in advance for any single item and the Treasurer will be able to write checks to caterers, venues, and so on while at the Reunion.

ASSOCIATION BUSINESS MEETING

An important part of every Reunion is the Association Business Meeting. Officers are elected at this meeting and other Association business transacted.

The Host Committee needs to only provide a place for this meeting to be held, and the officers will take care of everything else.

The space for the business meeting may be an area set aside in the overall Reunion event space, or someplace very near by. A table is needed at the front and seating must be provided for attendees.

SPACE PLANNING

The Reunion space must provide tables for various displays and for vendors. The number of vendors will be determined by the Host Committee in consultation with the officers.

The registration area needs room for at least two tables plus three chairs, and be located close to the entry door.

There needs to be a table for the Genealogist, with a couple of chairs for members to sit on while consulting him.

The raffle items will typically require about six to eight tables for items to be displayed and room for people to move around them.

There are several standard items displayed at Reunions, some on walls and some on stands. The space needs to provide areas for these.