

WHITESIDE FAMILY ASSOCIATION

February 2020



WFA BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The WFA Board of Directors will hold its spring meeting in Lexington, VA at the Holiday Inn Express Hotel on April 22 & 23. Reports and updates on the many projects in which the organization is involved will be on the agenda. All WFA members are invited and welcomed to attend these meetings.

Below is the information about the hotel and room block which is reserved for WFA members. We encourage everyone to make plans to attend.

PLACE: Holiday Inn Express
880 N Lee Highway, Lexington, VA 24450
540-463-7351

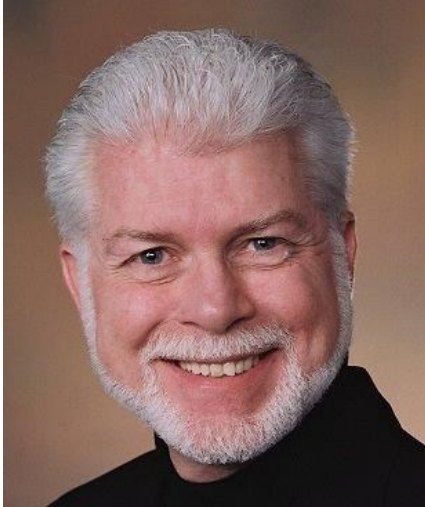
DATES: April 22 & 23

ROOM INFO: A block of rooms has been reserved in the name of the WFA Family Association which provides the special rate of \$99.00 per night for either a king or two doubles. This room block will close on March 20. The special rate will not be available after that date.

Make your plans now to join the board and find out about the work being done by your organization! A good time will be had by all!

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BUILDING BEAUTIFUL THINGS

As a child, I watched my father build things in our home where I grew up in Oklahoma City. A few years later, he contracted a new house to be built and I watched with him all the stages of the construction. After moving into the new one, I was engaged to renovate the old one to prepare it for sale in a bad-housing market. Building things would become my passion, so choosing design as my college major came naturally. As a student I worked in a furniture store. So while unloading trucks, updating catalogs and merchandising the store, I learned about high quality furniture and discriminating customers. By now I knew I wanted a career where my design sensitivity could be a tool to build businesses.

At the peak of the Vietnam War, I was armed with a BA in Design from the University of Oklahoma, and a commission as a US Army 2nd LT with a 2 year obligation. Lucky again, my assignment was Germany. When my tour of duty ended I was ready to start my career.

At 23 years old I was hired to establish **Furniture Trends** in Oklahoma City. Three stores and two years later, I moved to Dallas TX to work for **Gabbert's Furniture and Studio**, a new high-end store. Then I was off to Houston to manage for **Storehouse**, an Atlanta based contemporary furniture chain. As my responsibilities grew I moved to corporate HQ in Atlanta in 1980 as Director of Merchandising.

By 1984 my dream was to start my own business. **Ambiente** was my creation, a living room store where custom made sofas were the specialty. I designed them and had them manufactured under my label. My strategy worked so well I grew to three stores but in 1987 Black Monday arrived. The stock market dropped 27% and my life changed again.....in January 1990, I liquidated the business.

No job, no income, two kids.....what to do. My father asked me to renovate his house. He had been living alone since 1983 when my mother died. I knew she was the "collector" of family information which I wanted to claim, but her collection was nothing more than notes scribbled on scraps of paper that were scattered everywhere. It took days of sorting to discover everything, but eventually I was able to box it up. It took three years for the economy to return to normal, so I had plenty of time to begin my family history research. I became an addict!

But finally the economy improved and I was able to return to the wholesale side of the home furnishings industry as VP of Design for 12 years at **Garden Source Furnishings** in Atlanta. Then I commuted to Dallas as VP to create a lighting line for **Arteriors Home**. Three years later I commuted to Charleston SC as the Creative Director of Design for **Quoizel**. Another economic downturn-- the **Great Recession**—brought the end of my career in 2010.

But as one door closes, another one opens. Traditional genealogy research of 20 plus years left me with the same dead end.....I couldn't prove the father of my gg/gf Henry Sword/Soard was Philip Sword 1788 > 1816. I decided to try genetic genealogy.....DNA testing combined with traditional research I learned that Henry's father was a Whiteside and his mother was Polly Ann Sword, Philip's daughter.

That is when I met Warren Whiteside and was introduced to the Whiteside Family Association, subsequently becoming a director. Now my life is filled with all my lifelong passions.....including my family genealogy.

Richard Soard



The vitality of the WFA depends upon volunteers to do some important tasks. There are some critical needs listed below. Please study the list and see if you can support the work in some way—they don't require huge amounts of time or attendance at meetings.

1. **DNA Manager**—work with Bill G. Whiteside to oversee the Whiteside DNA project; recruit individuals to participate in the project
2. **Website Editorial Support**—help to write articles for the website; work in cooperation with Arliss Whiteside, webmaster
3. **Assist with editing** Dan Boucher's work in preparation for placing on the website
4. **Backup treasurer** to support Jim Whiteside and cosign on the bank accounts
5. **Data entry** to create a table of contents for the states with research listed. Contact Arliss Whiteside, webmaster, for further info.

These are positions that the board has recognized, but if you have a skill set not mentioned here that you are willing to share with the organization, please contact William G Whiteside at wgwhiteside@gmail.com

RESEARCH PROJECT LIST

Remember to check the WFA website for the updated list of research projects in which members of the WFA are engaged. Not all of these are being done by the board of directors, but by many of the members. For further information contact Richard Soard at rsoard@mindspring.com.

We have included many stories about people and places in the US, but this story tells about some of our Canadian Whiteside ancestors. They are important too!

Thomas Whiteside and Sarah Murdoch, Scarborough Settlers

In 1822, Thomas Whiteside of Belfast, Ireland was 40 years old, the average life expectancy for men in Great Britain at the time. But Thomas must have been an optimist because that was the year he and his wife, Sarah, 33, and their four children started their new lives in Upper Canada. When he and Sarah both died in 1870, they had lived in Canada for 48 years.¹



The Whitesides were one of many immigrant families, mainly from Scotland and Ireland, who settled in Scarborough in the 1820s. Today Scarborough is a sprawling suburb in the east end of Toronto, but at that time the area consisted of virgin forests and fertile agricultural soil. Thomas bought two properties in 1822 from Ebenezer Cavers.

According to the 1861 agricultural census,⁴ Thomas put half of the 100-acre Concession II, Lot 29 under cultivation for crops, producing primarily turnips, oats, peas and fall wheat. Twenty acres were pasture and 15 were left wooded. At that time, he estimated the cash value of the farm at \$8000. At first, Thomas and Sarah lived in a log house. In 1854, they constructed a handsome stone house, which was demolished in 1989 to make way for a hotel.

Perhaps one reason Thomas and Sarah decided to leave Ireland was the ongoing political turmoil there. But Canada had its own problems in 1837 as rebels in both Upper and Lower Canada demanded more responsible government. A conservative in politics,⁵ Thomas no doubt disagreed with the rebels.

The Whitesides brought their four young children with them from Ireland: Margaret (c. 1814-1874), James (c. 1816-1889), Jane (1817-1872), and Daniel (1819-1904.) Three more children were born in Canada: Sarah (1823-1894), Thomas (c. 1824-1914) and John (1833-1896).⁷

Thomas and Sarah Whiteside died within two months of each other. The Whiteside gravestone in St. Andrews Presbyterian Church Cemetery, Scarborough, is tall and elegant and, although it is now discoloured, the words are still clearly legible. It reads, "Thomas Whiteside, died Dec. 7, 1870 age 88 years. Sarah Murdoch wife of Thos. Whiteside died Oct. 16, 1870 age 81 years."



On a field trip from the 2019 Fall Board of Directors meeting, Jim Whiteside and Jenny Kepner visited the Old Pisgah Cemetery just outside Gastonia, NC. It was the original site of Whiteside graves in the area.

Remember to access the WFA website to see all the various projects and work being done by your organization.

www.whitesideancestry.org