

Local family related to famous explorer

By Jennifer Archibald
Staff writer

The Lewis and Clark Expedition is not just history to the children of Delphia Clark Shives. It's family history.

Larry Shives of Delphi, Phyllis Shives Shoemaker of Rockfield, and Linda Shives Ello of Mystic, Conn., were raised in Camden. They were always told that their family history intersects with that of William Clark of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but they didn't have documentation.

During the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial (2003-2006), Linda decided to take a journey of her own. She went back into history and traced her Clark family roots all the way back to England. In the process, she discovered how she and her siblings are related to William Clark and his older brother, George Rogers Clark (of Revolutionary War fame).

"We're distant cousins," she said.

Specifically, they are directly descended from William and George Roger's grandfather, Jonathan Clark. The father of the Clark brothers and the sixth great-grandfather of the Shives siblings were brothers.

The story about the family connection to the famed Clark brothers was passed down to Delphia and her brothers and sisters by their father, also named William Clark. Delphia, now deceased, grew up near Glasco, Ky., and many family members are still from that area.

The Shives siblings were born

in Kentucky, but moved to Indiana when they were young. Last year they went back to Kentucky and visited cemeteries where Clark ancestors are buried.

The tracing of the Clark family history was prompted a few years ago when Phyllis attended a program at the Canal Center on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. She learned more about the two captains who led an expedition

through uncharted territory west of the Mississippi, as a directive from President Thomas Jefferson. They took three years (1803-1806) and covered 8,000 miles. During their journey, they found a path to the Pacific Ocean, established good relations with Native American tribes, and discovered previously unknown species of plants and animals.

It was then that Phyllis

became more interested in knowing how her family was related to Captain Clark.

"Linda did all the work," Phyllis said. She said Linda gathered information from relatives, census records, birth and death records, family Bibles, genealogy Internet sites, etc.

Linda discovered some interesting family history in the process. The Lewis & Clark Expedition could have been known as the Lewis & Woodchurch Expedition if a change in the family name hadn't occurred in the 1200s.

It was then that Sir Thomas Woodchurch decided to retire his last name, and exchange it for his mother's maiden name. Her name was Clerke, but Sir Thomas changed it to Clarke. Linda said in succeeding generations, some family lines dropped the "e" on the end, as in the case of William Clark and the Clark-Shives family.

The town of Clarksville, Ind., was named after Captain William Clark, and Louisville, Ky., was named after Meriwether Lewis because it was in the Clarksville/Louisville area that plans were made and recruiting started for the expedition. The 33 permanent members of the expedition were called the Corps of Discovery.

An important member of the expedition in 1804 and 1805 was Sacagawea, a Shoshone Indian who was the wife of a French fur trader. She served as a translator and "good will ambassador" in dealings with the Indians. She had just given birth a couple months before she and her husband joined the expedition, and they brought the baby along. The baby's name was Jean Baptiste, nicknamed Pompey, which means first-born.

Larry said William Clark later took Pompey to raise and saw that he got an education.

"I've been interested in the Lewis and Clark Expedition for a long time because of my ancestry," he said.



Sacajawea

This sculpture in Wyoming portrays Sacajawea, the young Shoshone woman who served as a translator on the Lewis and Clark Expedition. She also was invaluable as a guide through the Shoshone homeland. This photo was taken by Larry Shives, who has followed part of the Lewis and Clark trail.

Larry has been out West, traveled along the Lewis and Clark trail, and visited some of the related historical sites. He's been to the Shoshone Indian reservation in Wyoming to see a sculpture of Sacagawea and visited a cemetery where she is believed to be buried.

He's also been to Pompey's Pillar in Billings, Mont. Captain Clark named the rock formation after Sacagawea's young son. Clark carved his own name and the date, July 25, 1806, in the sandstone. Still visible today, the inscription is the only remaining physical evidence of the Lewis & Clark Expedition along the trail.

In September, Larry revisited

Chamberlain, S.D., to see a replica of the keel boat used on the expedition.

"It's 55 feet long and 8 feet wide, and has all the same provisions as in the original expedition," he said.

Two years ago, Larry was in the Chamberlain area, and when he talked to some locals about his ancestry, he was asked to be in a parade celebrating the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial.

"I didn't do it, but I've kicked myself ever since," he said.

The official Bicentennial celebration ended this year in September, but the Clark-Shives family will continue to keep Lewis and Clark history alive for generations to come.



Shives siblings

(l-r) Phyllis Shives Shoemaker, Linda Shives Ello, and Larry Shives are pictured at a cousin's house in Glasco, Ky., last year when they returned to the place of their birth to visit family cemeteries. Photo provided

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Looking Back



Delphi City Park shelter house, 1919

From the files of Hoosier Democrat, Delphi Journal, Journal-Citizen and Carroll County Comet. Photo provided by Carroll County Historical Museum.

10 YEARS AGO

A building permit for the construction of a McDonald's restaurant in Delphi was issued Tuesday by the Carroll County Area Plan Commission.

Liberty Township Volunteer Fire Department will be hosting a ground-breaking ceremony for a new fire station and training room on Oct. 26.

The end is now in sight for the Delphi City Clerk-Treasurer's office for long, awaited relief from computer dilemmas. In a two-to-one vote, Board of Works members accepted a proposal by ENS for a new computer hardware to be placed in the Clerk's office, with appropriate software.

25 YEARS AGO

Smith Construction Co., Flora was one of 116 firms honored by the Indiana Motor Truck Assoc. during the association's 50th Anniversary

Convention at French Lick.

The company, which became an IMTA member prior to 1950, was individually recognized for its long-time service to the association.

50 YEARS AGO

Donna Clingenpeel, a senior at Carroll High School, was crowned homecoming queen during halftime festivities at the Carroll-Pioneer football game last Friday. She is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Don Clingenpeel, Flora.

50 YEARS AGO

Sunday evening, beginning at 6:30 at the Christian church, members and friends will gather for a fellowship meeting to honor Mr. and Mrs. Freeman Redding, home on furlough from Jamaica. Redding has been in Jamaica for the past three years building churches.

Cosmetic business should have been good in Delphi this week judging from the amount used by Delphi high school freshmen Tuesday. The extravagant and haphazard use of it was in keeping with their ridiculous attire as they submitted to the dictates of their upper

classmen on "Initiation Day". Casual observers believed the freshmen were enjoying it as much or more than the sophomores.

75 YEARS AGO

The Delphi Journal is celebrating its 92nd anniversary today, being almost a century old without missing a single issue.

During all these years it has fought the battles of the people as it has seen them from an unbiased standpoint. While at times some few might have had different ideas, yet standing by the principles of the Republican party, it has been assisting the early pioneers in making the United States the greatest nation in the world today.

We have always reserved the right to praise officers of both parties in power as well as to tell them of their faults and short comings and while the Journal will continue to be a Republican newspaper, our policy will remain unchanged for the future.

100 YEARS AGO

Flora is to have a regular city park, besides a new ball park next season, if present plans are carried out, and as the promoter is a man of his word, things at this time look very favorable.

The beautiful grove is just south of town, half way between Flora and Bringhurst. The place will be an ideal one for family reunions, band concerts, etc. It will prove a great place for large crowds. Another movement will be to select the best players from the Flora and Bringhurst teams and have one that can play Frankfort a close game any day.

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