



# Watts Reunion Inc.

## I Remember Then

My memories go back to the time when I was around four or five years old living with my mother, Clara Bush, brother Charles, uncle Mart Bush, and grandparents John and Lurana Bush on River Caney. Everyone who was able had to work to help in whatever ways we could to raise and preserve enough food to last until the next crop came in. We didn't have enough land that could be plowed to justify owning a mule, so we hired someone to "plow and drag" the garden; the cornfields were tilled with hoes. I remember Mom "digging in" corn on the hillside. As she dug a hole to put three grains of corn in, I was walking above her with a pocket full of beans and, as she dropped the corn, I would drop in two beans. This was the beginning of my learning the importance of work to provide the necessities of life, and to be able to share with others in need.

As time went on, there would be more and more work to do. I guess about the only time I was ever hungry was when I smelled the food cooking. I suppose those old hills were richer than we thought. We were blessed to have aunts and uncles, as well as good neighbors, to check on us and help us with whatever they could. Charles and I would sit by the fire and sing at night while the rest of the family seemed to enjoy our efforts. As we "aged" to around eleven and twelve years old, we began to do farm work for the neighbors for fifty cents and lunch for a ten hour day. These were the days when people of the community would go to a neighbor's house and "have a working" to help them out when there was sickness or other dilemmas.

Church was held the third weekend of every month with church council meeting on Saturday, and then lots of preachers there for almost all day on Sunday. Some of the preachers who lived on Caney were Harrison White, Higie Henson, and Daniel Mullins. Higie rented a house from my grandparents for some time, and, as I recall, he was allowed ground for a garden and could also plant corn or other crops in the "Nick Field" if he desired. He usually kept a horse, however I don't remember him growing a lot to feed the horse. I do remember him going to the mouth of Caney and cutting "horsetweeds" to feed the horse. One thing I do remember about Higie is that during warm weather at about sunset every evening, we could hear him begin to pray, and it seemed to me that there was a peace and comfort that began to settle on the whole neighborhood. The memory of this grows more precious with time.

Lots of people were around to lend a hand or offer a word of encouragement as I was growing up. However, there are some people who stand out in my mind as what I would call foundational people (those who weren't closely related) whom you could be sure would be there to advise, help, and cheer you on. Cesar Baker, our next door neighbor, was a never-failing friend who was always eager to spend time with us and come to our aid at any hour. He even went to Winchester and co-signed a car loan for me. Daniel Boone Henson, our neighborhood grocer, was always *Continued on next page* ▶

ready to help with our needs whether we had money or needed to charge our purchases. Dan was also a good one to go to for a quick loan. David (Dee) Deaton, who lived at the mouth of the creek, was a grocer. He also ran a sawmill and gristmill, as well as doing carpenter work and making caskets all around the community. Charles and I were pretty small when the church house was being built. But Dee took the time to help us learn to drive nails, square lumber, and "saw by the mark." All of these stand out in my mind as mentors, as well as do uncles Willie and Charlie Bush, Carl Mullins, and Gran White.

Space does not permit me to mention all those who have been so good to me over the years; but each family in the community, in their own unique way, helped to mold me into whatever I am or have been. I thank God that I had the privilege of growing up among people who cared, and whose word was as good as gold in the hand. I often think how good it would be to turn the world back to those days; then I remember that our Lord has a better plan for us if we'll only accept Jesus Christ into our hearts by the free pardon of our sins and lay our burdens at His feet. We can have hope of being reunited with many who have gone on before us.

May this be the most joyous Christmas of your life as we celebrate our Lord Jesus.

Love to all,  
Fred Watts  
Former president of Watts Reunion, Inc.

## Scholarship Report

The Watts Reunion, David Watts Memorial Scholarship recipient for 2004-2005 is Nathan Tyler Hudson. Nathan attended Harvest Christian Academy. He maintained a GPA of 4.0 and scored 31 on the ACT. He was an Honors Student throughout his High School career and the Valedictorian of his graduating class. As well as maintaining his grades, Nathan was very active in basketball and his church.

Nathan was captain of Harvest Christian Academy Varsity basketball team. He was selected MVP in tournaments throughout his high school career. He served as Camp Counselor at the Ohio University Southern National Youth Sports Program Summer Camp and the South Portsmouth Church of God (SPCOG) basketball camp. Nathan was also a "Huddle Leader" at Cameron Mill's FCA Basketball camp at Asbury College.

Nathan also gives 110% to his church (SPCOG). He has served as church camp counselor, VBS Teacher and Director of Church Camp Activities. He also volunteers with maintenance at the church. Along with his many talents, we can include a musical talent. Nathan plays the bass with the SPCOG Sunday morning worship team, the HCA praise band and the youth rally praise band.

Nathan plans to attend Ohio University-Southern and major in Pre-Med. Nathan is the son of Greg and Jan Hudson and has siblings. He is the Grandson of South and Maxine Hudson and the Great Grandson of Wash and Dosh Watts.

– *Connie Watts*

## 2004 Reunion Recap

The Watts family enjoyed yet another fine day of fellowship at Natural Bridge State Park on Sunday, July 25, 2004.

The day began with coffee and doughnuts for the early arrivals. Visiting and reminiscing continued until 11:00. President Calvin Watts then called the business meeting to order.

The business meeting was opened with prayer by Greg Hudson. Vice-President, Brenda Watts followed with lining and leading the singing of Amazing Grace, as is our tradition. Plaques were awarded to Fred and Gora Watts in appreciation for all of their hard work and service as president and secretary, respectively. The scholarship for this year was awarded to Nathan Hudson of South Shores, KY.

Nathan is the grandson of Maxine and South Hudson. His parents are Greg and Pamela Hudson. He plans to follow a pre-med course of study when he starts college at OSU (Ohio Southern University) this fall. Nathan is a fine young man that you can be proud of supporting.

After taking care of business we got down to the business of eating. Everything on the table was scrumptious, as usual. When we had all eaten our fill, we proceeded with the auction.

Thanks to everyone who contributed items to be sold at the auction. Thanks also to those who bid on and bought items. We raised nearly \$600 this year for the scholarship fund, and had a lot of fun doing it.

More fellowship followed the auction while musical entertainment was provided by Charles Watts, Ronnie, Ryan and Amanda Combs; Alexandra, Victoria, and Elizabeth Watts; John Caudill (a friend of Tina Neace); and Carlee Combs. Charles even let loose and clogged with his daughters, Cathy Combs and Karen Southwood.

With our fun-filled day winding down, we packed up our lawn chairs, dishes, and memories, and headed home. We'll cherish those memories 'til next year, when we bring them back to share at Watts Reunion 2005.

Keesha Ovee Watts is the newly crowned 2004 Breathitt County Honey Queen. Keesha is the daughter of Sandy and OV Watts Jr. of Jackson and the granddaughter of OV Watts Sr. Keesha is 16 years old and is a senior at Breathitt County High School. She is very active in both athletics and academics. Some of the sports she participates in are softball, basketball, cheerleading, volleyball, gymnastics and swimming. With all these activities she manages to maintain a 4.0 grade point average and is a Governor's Scholar. We know she gets her intellect from her grandfather! Congratulations Keesha!

We are saddened to hear of Carlee Watts Combs' serious injury from a fall. We wish her a speedy recovery.

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After being in and out of the hospital from May to September, Patty is home and on the mend. She really appreciated the cards she received from everyone at the reunion.

– *Vinson Watts*

Happy Birthday to Vinson Watts on the 23<sup>rd</sup>!

## Christmas Ponderings

At this season of the year, I hear people speak of getting the “Christmas spirit.” Some people only think of Christmas as a time to give and receive presents. This is well and good, but so often fails to bring the cheer and good will that the true Christmas spirit embodies. I will agree that with the art of modern advertising it is easy to put the emphasis on the commercial side of Christmas.

I have often wondered what it would have been like to have been in Bethlehem on the first Christmas night. There must have been a feeling of expectation. Long had Judea waited for their coming King. Even before the star appeared in the sky, the shepherd must have known that it was a night like no other. There on the hill above the town of Bethlehem, God made known to a chosen few that He had given the greatest gift ever to be given to mankind.

If in all our giving and receiving we remember the love of the infant who came so long ago to lie in a low, humble manger, we will in the true Christmas spirit say Merry Christmas.

– *Jean Watts*

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