



Tower Family Crest

The Coat of Arms is a shield with three castle towers, a chevron with three roses, a knight's helmet above the shield and a Mason's square and compass above the helmet.

Tower Talk



Newsletter

By the Tower Genealogical Society
Chartered in 1909

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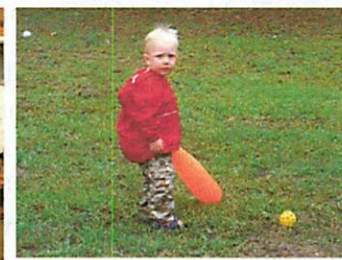
DETROIT TOWER FAMILY REUNION

The Detroit Tower Family Reunion was held on August 19, 2007, at the home of Dan and Katy Conway, in Ortonville, Michigan. Nearly 50 people came for the Hawaiian-themed potluck dinner and the White Elephant auction. Although the outdoor activities were limited, due to the occasional rain shower, the attendees enjoyed renewing old friendships and meeting new relatives. Minutes of the previous meeting were read and the same third Sunday in August was set for next year's Reunion.

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Pictures from the Detroit Family Reunion in Ortonville, Michigan

Opposite, Tower family members enjoy meeting at the reunion in Ortonville, MI. Below left: Dorothy Webber, researching her roots; Below Center: Tammy Hally and daughter, Kaylynn Brownell, keeping warm in the unseasonably chilly August afternoon; Below Right: Will McGregor Tower, 20 months, son of Michael and Susan Tower.



CALENDAR REMINDERS

- 400TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE BIRTH OF JOHN TOWER
(May 17th, 1609-2009)
- 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHARTERING OF THE TOWER FAMILY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
(1909-2009)

President's Message

By David C. Tower

It's been a busy month. The stock market is rocking, the school buses are running, and the weather has given all of us fits.

I don't know if any of the above has energized the population, but our society has had an unusual spurt of activity. Preliminary planning for a 100th anniversary reunion has been going forward, thanks to John Tower, Carol Marchegiani, and Roxanne Summers. We've had a number of membership renewals, a number of people rejoining after an absence, a few new members, and I have suddenly been swamped with people submitting genealogical data and requests for information. We have unlocked the Tower web site and are beginning to look at updating and modernizing that. To you computer gurus, we may someday have blogs, Paypal, and videos; all we need now is one of the geniuses out there to volunteer as webmaster.

Thanks to Priscilla Thayer, I have a month's worth of work on the Schuyler Tower family line. Thanks to Liz Johnston, I have a month's worth of work on the midwest Towers (Texas, Arkansas and Missouri). Correspondence with Pete Sternberg, Jean Kamler, Sue Waterman, Paul Tower, Richard Tower, Tom Tower and others has left me in my usual "behind state". If you've sent an inquiry and I haven't answered, please do NOT be patient...send me a reminder. I tend to get involved in the genealogical puzzles and don't do too well at keeping up with the rest of my life.

I am always amazed at how a birth date, death date, or alternate name spelling can open up a whole new avenue of research, and the subsequent addition of many of John Tower's descendants to our data base. We now have over 51,000 people connected to John in one way or another.

Welcome to our new members, welcome back to those rejoining, thanks to those who have sent in such valuable information, and a special thanks to all of our Board members who have been extra busy this past month. It's both fun and rewarding, when the pot is stirred, and the society comes to life. Let's keep the pot boiling.

David C. Tower
President

New Members

Marilyn Tower-Burdick, of Cheshire, MA, whose family was featured in the July Newsletter. Marilyn is the widow of Clifton R. Tower, Jr., whose line is as follows: Clifton Jr. (10), Clifton Sr. (9), Schuyler (8), Alvin (7), Martin (6), Thomas Gross (5), Shadrach (4), Thomas (3), Benjamin (2) and John (1).

Gertrude (Robertson) Dodson, White River Junction, VT. Her lineage is Gertrude Robertson (10), Helen S. Tower (9), Charlemagne Jr. (8), Charlemagne Sr. (7), Reuben (6), Jeduthun (5), Joseph (4), Ambrose (3), Benjamin (2), John (1).

Richard Kent Tower, of Lansford PA, has submitted his renewal as a couple membership with his wife, Chrissanne Powell.

(continued from Page 1)

Detroit Family Reunion in Ortonville, MITower

Tower, named in honor of Miss Ellen May Tower, who was born in Byron Michigan, on May 8, 1868. She was the daughter of Samuel S Tower, a prominent business man and politician in Onaway. Ellen May a pretty hazel-eyed, brown hair lass, who after graduation taught school and worked for a doctor. She loved the medical field and was a graduate of Grace hospital training school in Detroit. In 1894 she worked at the school for the blind.

When Gov. Pingree gave the call for volunteers during the Spanish American war, Ellen offered her services as a nurse. July 1898 she told her father of her interest of joining the army. Ellen was the first woman to volunteer her services to her country as a nurse. The training was harder and six months longer than it was for a male nurse. Female nurses received no pay while the male nurses were paid ten to twelve dollars a month. September 1898 she traveled first to Montauk Point, New York then a month or two later went to Puerto Rico to care for the injured soldiers.

At Ponce in December 1898 at age 30 she died from typhoid fever. Ellen May was the first woman of Michigan to receive a military funeral with full honor, and the first American woman to die on foreign soil, while serving our country. January 17, 1899 over 3000 mourners attended the services. Friends and organizations raised money for a monument for her grave, which is in Byron. April 28, 1899 a post office was established and Tower honored Ellen by naming both the town and the post office in remembrance of her.

Tower came into existence because of it's location on the Black River and the Tower Pond. The Pond was formed before Tower as a source of power for a water powered mill, run at one time by Merritt Chandler of Onaway. The Mills around the Pond made not only lumber, but handles, butter bowls, shingles. Ice for local households were furnished by the Pond, and a large ice house maintained for use for railway refrigerator cars.

Census records show that Tower, covering only a few square acres, had in it's boom days, more people than Forest Township with it's 72 square miles, has now.

A prosperous town, Tower had at the time mills, a bank, a newspaper, two hotels, several saloons, fire department and water works and all the things usually found in larger towns. The town faded away and became part of Forest Township when the timber was gone.



One of the interesting documents at the Michigan reunion was the plaque honoring the life of Ellen May Tower and the document describing her life and the fact that the town of Tower, Michigan, was named after her.

According to the Tower Genealogy, Volume II, Ellen "died of typhoid

fever. Her body was returned to Byron MI for burial but the then-legislature refused to expend \$500.00 toward the burial. The public outrage and outcry was so large, they reversed themselves. Detailed accounts of the Military Funeral can be found in the Lansing (MI) Journal of December 6, 1936, part 2, p.4. The local newspaper of Byron (MI) dated Friday, January 20, 1899 notes that on that bitter winter day, approximately 4,000 people came by sleigh from far and wide to pay their respects. She never married." Ellen May Tower⁽⁹⁾ was the daughter of Civil War Captain Samuel S. Tower⁽⁸⁾ and Sarah Bigelow, who were married on April 11, 1867. The lineage of Samuel S. is Samuel S.⁽⁷⁾, Joseph⁽⁶⁾, Isaac⁽⁵⁾, Cornelius⁽⁴⁾, John⁽³⁾, Ibrook⁽²⁾, and John⁽¹⁾.

A TOWER HOUSE FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

Philip Tower sent this photograph of his Tower family home and the following information about it:

William Bennett Tower (11) moved his family of five onto this estate at 906 Mohawk Lane, Saint Joseph, Michigan, in 1960. No van was required since they moved from the house next door - which had one less bedroom.

Bill was the Saint Joe School System vocal music director till he retired in 1976. After Ruth Tower died, Bill moved to Florida to stay, and Philip and Sharon Tower (12) took over the Mohawk house. Phil says: "It is only four blocks from Lake Michigan beaches ... and this way we didn't have to empty it."

Saint Joseph was hometown to both Sharon and Phil before they met, married and left on their 27-year Navy adventure. Still living and working full time in Midland, Michigan, the second generation keepers enjoy having a "beach house" to share with the third, and now fourth, generations of sand castle builders.

OBITUARY NOTICE: CHARLIE BENTON HUNT, HUSBAND OF NOREEN (TOWER) HUNT

Charlie Benton Hunt, 90, of Greeley, CO, passed away on Saturday, July 28, 2007 at Bonell Good Samaritan Center. Charlie was born January 26, 1917 in Mound Valley, KS to Maynard T. and Phila N. (Holmes) Hunt. He grew up in the Mound Valley area of Kansas, working on farms with his family. He graduated from Labette County High School in 1934. On September 4, 1935, he married Norene Tower at her parent's home near Oswego; they had been married for 68 years at the time of her death on April 3, 2007.

Charlie continued to farm until 1941 when he began his life-long vocation as a mechanic in Parsons, Kansas. He was drafted into the Army and served in Japan from 1945-46. From 1946-50, he worked in Parsons and Eureka, KS, and in Denver, CO. In 1950, his Army Reserve Unit was called into active duty and from that time on, the Army Corp of Engineers was his career. He retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 4 after 26 years of service to his country. While in the Army, he was stationed in Okinawa, Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Germany and Indonesia, as well as Mineral Wells, TX, Ft. Leonard Wood, MO, Ft. Carson, CO and Ft. Belair, VA. Following his retirement from the Army, he worked at various jobs including 2 ½ years in Saudi Arabia.

He and Norene moved to Pierce in 1977 and quickly became involved in the community. They were members of the Pierce United Methodist Church, where he served as treasurer for several years, the Pierce Senior Center and the Moose lodge. Charlie was a member of the Pierce Planning Commission and enjoyed being an election judge for both the Town and Weld County. He was an RSVP volunteer for the Medi-gap insurance program, tax counseling programs and advisory council. Charlie also served on the Weld Senior Foundation, Weld County Republican Party and Masonic lodge. In 2002, they moved to the Regency apartments at Bonell, living in various facilities on the Bonell campus. While there, Charlie served on the spiritual care committee.

A love of travel carried Charlie and Norene to many places. During his lifetime, he was in 49 states and 46 countries. Charlie lived a good life and enjoyed his military career and lived his retirement years to the fullest. He volunteered for things he believed in and helped his family. He is remembered with love and laughter by his family, friends and care givers.

Charlie is survived by his daughters, Peggy and husband, Jerry Dunn, of Kansas City, MO; Keitha and husband, Bob White, of Greeley, CO; and Rita and husband, Rob Stalzer of Conroe, TX; grandchildren, Tanya Blair, Elena Barthomew, Cameron Meyer, Terri Parris, Patti Gaffney, Jerrie White, Carolyn Stalzer, Elaine Stalzer, and Gene Stalzer; 12 great-grandchildren; and 3 great-great-grandchildren.

CORRECTION: An error was made in last month's Newsletter. Leeanne Mariya Tower is not the granddaughter of Pricilla Thayer. She is the granddaughter of David and Lillian Tower, of Antigo WI.

TGS BOOKS

TGS Volume III genealogy books may be purchased by sending \$60.00, payable to: TOWER GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, to Roxanne Summers, 46200 Sylvan Court, Lexington Park MD 20653. TGS Cookbooks may be purchased by sending \$8.50, payable to: TOWER GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, to Georgena Miller, 977 E. Glass Road, Ortonville, MI 48462.

Note from your Editor ROXANNE SUMMERS

The new members who responded to our mailing of past newsletters, as well as those who signed up at the recent reunions in Readsboro VT, and Ortonville MI, encourage us to think that a 300th reunion in Hingham MA in June 2009 would gather a fair number of Tower descendants from around the country, if we can find them and inform them of the upcoming event. We will soon decide on an exact date and place. If you are willing to be on one of the reunion planning Committees, please let a member of the Board of Directors know of your interest. You certainly do not have to be a member of TGS to attend the reunion, so bring all your Tower relatives and come celebrate with us.

TOWER TALK NEWSLETTER

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