



Winter 2008
Contents

Browsing the Web 2
Barton Babies 2
Barton Marriages 3
American Historical Events..... 3
Historical Obituaries 3
Historical Marriages..... 3
Terrible Gas Explosion 5
First Six Chiefs of Clan..... 7
Minutes of Annual Meeting 11
Looking For 13
Clan Updates..... 13
Letters to the Editor 13
From the Editor..... 14
Barton Lineages Mentioned... 14
Report on 2008 Meeting..... 14
Tales Old Newspapers Tell ... 16
In Memoriam..... 17
Old Photographs..... 18

Barton Historical Society

Newsletter

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Our New Chief of Clan Bette Barton Pitman



Our newly elected “Chief of Clan” **Bette (Barton) Howard Pitman** started attending Barton Reunions at the beloved Tyger Baptist Church when she was just a “wee tot” with her parents **Theron E. and Ruth (Smith) Barton** [way back before this editor will admit in print]. She enjoyed a happy childhood learning to love Carolina upcountry and its mountains. With adulthood came marriage to Andrew S. Howard, moving cross-country with him to Fort Sill, Oklahoma, where he became a U. S. Army officer. After his active service the young family relocated, first to Florida and then back to South Carolina where both Andy and Bette pursued their

graduate degrees, raised their youngsters and worked as educators in their respective fields (he physics and she biology). Bette and her whole family continued to attend Barton Reunions whenever possible resulting in her election in 1975 as President-Elect and 1976 as President of the Barton Reunion.

The 1977 Winter Edition of the Barton Bulletin reported on President Betty (Barton) Howard’s performance as Reunion President as being “Absolutely Grand!” “You wouldn’t believe that Betty’s petite size could ‘whirl up’ all the big (good) ideas that her brain does... Besides being the helpmate to one of the Converse College professors, she teaches in the sciences at the University of South Carolina Community College at Spartanburg along with being the mother to a daughter, Andrea, who is an honor student at Presbyterian College at Clinton and a young man, Alan, who has been receiving recognition in poetry and music.”

In 1981 Bette was in attendance when her father Theron was elected to the high office of “Chief of Clan” [undoubtedly not thinking that she herself would be so elected twenty-seven years

Barton Historical Society

Our purpose is:

- to conduct genealogical research on the Barton family
- assemble, preserve and distribute this information
- establish appropriate memorials
- and to promote brotherhood, fellowship, and pride of family

OFFICERS

President

Terry Barton

terry@bartonsite.org

Vice President & Database Mgr.

Gary Barton

garyb@garybarton.com

Secretary

Shirley Keith

shirrk36@bellsouth.net

Treasurer

Mary C. Barton

madarmary@aol.com

later]. That same year she also earned her Doctorate in Science Education at the University of Georgia.

In 1985 she announced that she and her brother, **James E. Barton** planned to improve the headstones of **Joseph** and **Letty Mcrary Barton**. Sure enough within two years Betty and Jimmy, along with the help of their aunts and uncles, had replaced the disintegrating old headstones with beautiful new ones! For the next dozen years Bette was active in nearly every Barton Reunion. And then came the decade of the 1990's. By then the Barton Reunion was sixty-five years old and its regular attendees were getting up in age. While a new newsletter editor had been named in 1989, there is no record that a newsletter was produced during the entire decade. Without that "glue" the group was becoming inactive. Our "Chief" then retired from a full and productive life of teaching Biology at the high school, college, and university level and then began devoting time and energy to her hobby of genealogy. It was **Bette Barton Howard** that stepped forward in 2000 along with our current president, **Terry Barton** (Bette's 7th Cousin), to assess the current state of the Bartons of the South and conclude that a revised Barton Historical Society with a broader outreach, national and international, for all Bartons was necessary. There were many transitional issues to be dealt with which Bette worked through resulting in two organizations – Annual Tyger Barton Reunion and Barton Historical Society. Each group (which have several overlapping members) is doing well and is proud of each other. Bette also suffered the loss of her husband of over forty years, Andy. We are so happy that **Bette Howard** is now **Bette Pitman** since her marriage to **Carroll Pitman** (an accomplished genealogist in his own right). **Bette (Barton) Howard Pitman** was instrumental in the placement of a **Thomas Barton** House memorial marker in 2006 (reported in the 2006 Winter edition). And so for all that Bette has done for our organization since childhood we say what every editor has said upon the election of a new Chief of Clan...

Hail to the Chief!