



*Know your kindred better*

## Society of Stukely Westcott Descendents of America

Greetings Cousins!

**M**erry Christmas and Happy New Year! My very best to all of you during this Holiday Season - the art embedded in this greeting is another “Louise original” - I’ve been doing artwork for holiday cards for a number of years, and I hope you like this year’s rendition. Chickadees were one of my Mom’s favorite birds and this piece is a neat way to remember her during this holiday season. I trust you all are reveling in your own family traditions just as we are ... I hope 2023 is a year that brings new beginnings and adventures for all of us.



As I’ve been making my way through this holiday season, I’ve been thankful for many things - among them is the SSWDA - its members and leadership (past and present). I’m so very grateful to know all of you as kindred spirits on this great adventure of life!

I’m especially thankful for the Board, the Officers, and those that stepped up to help with you Biennial Reunion earlier in 2020; I’m sorry to have missed it due to my mother’s passing.

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My entire family was glad to know the reunion was happening - that is what Mom would have wanted. We are also very proud of my nephew, Jack Baumgartner, as the recipient of the SSWDA Scholarship for 2022; Jack is in his 4th year at Northeastern University and will be doing a Co-Op this coming spring with PriceWaterhouseCoopers (PWC).

The 2023 Scholarship information will be out to the membership in the spring newsletter, so keep an eye out for that in your inbox and please encourage your college-age kindred to apply (high school seniors and college students).

Before we know it 2024 will be upon us and we will be gathering again; I am so looking forward to seeing my Westcott Cousins in person!! Until then, please enjoy the newsletter content when it hits your inbox or mailbox.

In Kindred Spirit,  
Louise

Louise Aitcheson  
SSWDA President

## ***Back on Track***

### ***Cousins Gather for 2022 Westcott Society Reunion***

By Reunion Hosts David and Rosemary Smith



Forty-three Westcott descendants and spouses gathered in *South County*, Rhode Island, on the third weekend in June for the 43rd Biennial Reunion of the Society of Stukely Westcott Descendents of America. And with that, we are back on track after the Coronavirus pandemic

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snuffed out the 2020 reunion. But with vaccination and careful planning, our albeit smaller reunion was an enjoyable success, and we are looking forward to another gathering in 2024.

The reunion was held at the Holiday Inn in South Kingstown with planned trips and events focused on the multiple ways that Westcott descendants have contributed to the agricultural and maritime history of South County.

First up on Friday was a trip to the South County Museum in Narragansett with its exhibit on the Westcotts and the other families that made nearby Galilee the third busiest commercial fishing port in New England. There were demonstrations in the Print Shop (featuring cut blocks that were used to illustrate Roscoe Whitman's first volume) and at the blacksmith's forge built by William Wescott Smith, plus a family picnic on the museum lawn – all of this accomplished before the arrival of downpour.

Chuck Westcott and daughter Laura Westcott, Nancy Westcott, Judy and Jesse Fregoe, and Teresa West picnic at the South County Museum on Friday of the 2022 Reunion.



On Friday evening we enjoyed a South County Seafood Buffet with special guest Roger Williams. Yes, that Roger Williams who baptized Stukely and Juliana Westcott in the new settlement of Providence in 1638. Williams (channeled by National Park Service Ranger John McNiff as he had done at the Westcott Reunion in 2002) regaled us with tales of crossing to The



Roger Williams answers a question about how he made the 26-mile trip from Providence to the reunion: "By canoe, of course, on Narragansett Bay and then I walked up the hill from the Pettaquamscutt."

New World, developing friendships with the Narragansett sachems, debating Quakers, and dealing with those pesky authorities in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

On day two, we got down to business with the General Membership meeting in the Holiday Inn Narragansett Room under the direction of Past President Susan Morris filling in for current President Louise Aitcheson, whose mother, Leela Aitcheson, passed away the week before the reunion. Leela's grandson, Jack Baumgartner, winner of the 2022 Barlow Westcott Scholarship, was also not able to attend, but

spoke to the meeting via a video link. Jack is a student at Boston College.



At the General Membership meeting Susan Morris reprised her prior role as SSWDA President (one more rodeo) and scholarship winner Jack Baumgartner thanked the membership via a video.

SSWDA Chaplain Laura Westcott led a service in which we remembered Leela and others who have passed since our last meeting, Treasurer Bart Westcott reported that our 256-member

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society is financially healthy (despite the pandemic) and growing, and the membership approved the following slate of SSWDA officers and directors for 2022-2024:

President: Louise Aitcheson

Vice President: David Leflar

Secretary: Mary Pat Carroll

Treasurer: Bart Westcott

Registrar/Genealogist: Jeff Westcott

Historian: David Westcott Smith

Chaplain: Laura Westcott

Board of Directors: Lynn Hulkow, Judy Fregoe, Jennifer Verruto, and Cathie Westcott

Quarterly Editor: Connie Stirling

Webmaster: Jim Leflar

Scholarship Chair: Pete Bentson



Officers and Board members elected at the meeting included Connie Stirling, Cathie Westcott, Judy Fregoe, Jeff Westcott, Laura Westcott, David Smith, and Bart Westcott

It was then off to nearby Wickford for a walking tour of this historic harbor village with local historian Tim Cranston, starting at the town dock and the house where Captain John Westcott ran a chandlery, and then on to other Westcott homes and the Old Narragansett Church. As Tim wrapped up the tour at the location of a farm where the young Oliver Spink Westcott lived and worked, Chuck Westcott, a descendant of Oliver Spink Westcott, filled us in on the story of this famous educator.



***Local historian Tim Cranston began the Wickford tour at the home of Captain John Westcott, providing a photo op for Chuck Westcott, the chandler's proud descendant.***

One of the highlights of the reunion was a genealogy workshop conducted by newly elected SSWDA Registrar/Genealogist Jeff Westcott on Friday and Saturday afternoons and just about every spare moment over the weekend. Interactive sessions with Jeff's database of more than 90,000 Stukely descendants helped clarify lineal relations and grew by several hundred names.

In the evening we returned to the Narragansett Room for a Rhode Island Italian Fiesta and special guests from the Warwick (R.I.) Historical Society, WHS President Felicia Gardella and Peggie Malcolm, who is also Chair of the Warwick Commission on Historical Cemeteries. Both organizations have been involved in the development of an interpretive sign at Stukely and Juliana Westcott's burial place ([Warwick Historical Cemetery 165](#)). In a brief ceremony, SSWDA Treasurer Bart Westcott presented Felicia with a donation to defray the cost of the sign and to recognize the long-standing partnership between SSWDA and the WHS.

Felicia then had the honor of picking the winning ticket in a drawing for a "swag bag" with Rhode Island mementoes and treats, and the winner was Annabelle Doro, niece of Mary Pat Carroll. In farewell we stood behind the reunion banner for a cousins family picture.



***Cohost Rosemary Smith with  
"Swag Bag" Winner Anabelle Doro***

As the local hosts for the 2022 Reunion, we thank everyone who journeyed to South County for the reunion and the SSWDA Board for its help and support to make the event happen. We look forward to gathering with our cousins in two years in another locale where Westcotts have left their mark.

### **Side Trips: Black Ships Celebration in Newport**

Along with scheduled activities during the reunion weekend in South Kingston, family members were able to explore the Rhode Island area independently. Genealogist Jeff Westcott, from Indianapolis, was interested in finding the grave sites in Newport of two of the more illustrious Westcotts; the brothers, [Oliver Hazard Perry](#) and [Commodore](#)



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[Matthew Perry](#). Oliver is known for winning the battle of Lake Erie during the war of 1812 while Matthew is known for sailing into Japan and opening that country to trade with the United States. The weekend before the Westcott reunion, the city of Newport RI. held the [39<sup>th</sup> Black Ships Festival](#) to celebrate the achievements of Commodore Matthew Perry. To end the weekend of cultural and sailing activities, representatives from both countries set wreaths at Perry's memorial tomb in the Island Cemetery in Newport.

**Welcome 2022 new Westcott cousin life members:**

Life memberships were presented in 2022 to the following Westcott cousins:

- Clifford Brown Jr; Schenectady, NY
- Jean K. Brundage; of Holley, NY
- Ailene E. Picheco; Merritt Island, FL
- Robert L. Clute; Kennesaw,GA
- Gale C. Demlow; Antigo, WI
- Phillip R. May; Chicago, IL
- David Webster Westcott Sr.;Tustin, CA

A last 2022 note, from the editor: Doing the quarterly for the first time was a learning experience. Google Docs and Microsoft Word do not work with the same tools. For this final edition for the 2022 year, my guiding principle was to keep the newsletter simple. Enjoy this recap of the SSWDA year. More quarterlies will be in your future in 2023.

Connie Stirling



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## **THE WESTCOTT FAMILY QUARTERLY**

Issued quarterly or thereabouts through the year with news of the Society.

Free to members Non-members \$10.00 annually.

[www.sswda.org](http://www.sswda.org)

## **SOCIETY OF STUKELY WESTCOTT DESCENDANTS OF AMERICA**

President: Louise K. Aitcheson, East Greenbush, NY [president@sswda.org](mailto:president@sswda.org)

Vice-President: David LeFlar, Atlanta GA [vicepresident@sswda.org](mailto:vicepresident@sswda.org)

Treasurer: Bart Westcott, Palo Alto, CA [treasurer@sswda.org](mailto:treasurer@sswda.org);

Secretary: Mary Pat Carroll, Alvin TX [secretary@sswda.org](mailto:secretary@sswda.org)

Registrar/Genealogist: Jeff Westcott, Indianapolis IN [membership@sswda.org](mailto:membership@sswda.org)

Chaplain: Laura Westcott, Forest Park, IL [chaplain@sswda.org](mailto:chaplain@sswda.org)

Historian: David Wescott Smith, Narragansett, RI [historian@sswda.org](mailto:historian@sswda.org)

Quarterly Editor: Connie Stirling, White Bear Lake, MN [newsletter@sswda.org](mailto:newsletter@sswda.org)

Webmaster: Jim Leflar, LaGrange, IL [webmaster@sswda.org](mailto:webmaster@sswda.org)

Scholarship Program: Edmund ("Pete") Bentson, Arlington, VA [scholarship@sswda.org](mailto:scholarship@sswda.org)