Society of Stukely Westcott Descendents of America

Know your kindred better

SSWDA Quarterly: November 2026 Edition

Cousins,

Fall is finally here (well in most places!) and I hope that you are all enjoying the cooler weather and the magic that this time of year starts bringing in.

For those that don't know who I am, my name is Jennifer Verruto, and I am the newly elected President of SSWDA for 2026-2028. I am excited to see all that we can achieve over the next 2 years. And I hope to have the chance to meet many of you that I have not met at a previous reunion.

Unfortunately, I was unable to make it to the reunion up at Watertown in NY this past July. It looked like a wonderful time and beautiful weather. Thank you to Judy Fregoe, Jessy Fregoe, Paula Molnar, and Tasha Molnar for putting that together.

If you couldn't make it to NY, go ahead and mark your calendars for the 2028 reunion to be held in Minneapolis, MN from July 13-16, 2028. We have a great group of people already planning the reunion and additional information will be provided as details are finalized. Thank you to Ann Sundermeyer, Lynda Zanolli, and Connie Stirling for volunteering to plan this next reunion.

I hope you all can get together with family over the next few months to celebrate Thanksgiving and Christmas!

Take care,

Jennifer Verruto
Waxhaw, NC



Barlow Miles Westcott 2026 Scholarship Recipient

Shelby Rose Long, Boston Massachusetts

I don't look like my mother. I don't look like my father. My hazel eyes stand out in my brown-eyed house. My naturally light hair is often dyed over matching my brother's. Somewhere in the mixing pot of genetics, I won the recessive presentation. However, there is one exception. Ms. Linda Vincent, my grandmother and my twin.

In my childhood home, there is a room divider covered floor to ceiling with pictures of every family member since the camera was invented. Papa Loman sits like a king in his Air Force uniform. Great-Grandma Rosie's hair is tied into intricate buns I always thought looked like Princess Leia. And if your eyes trace to the bottom, you will see the picture I used to confuse for myself. Her name is not Linda to me, it's Nana. And she is absolutely extraordinary.

Linda Vincent was born January 12th, 1942, to Charles F. Hopkins and Emma Christina Cooney. She was born in Providence, Rhode Island, growing up with two siblings: Nancy and Charles. She married Adrian Ronald Vincent in 1960 and had three children: Theodore, Maureen, and Michelle. And in 2005, she became my grandmother.

Nana moved from Rhode Island to Oregon around when I was born, settling into a condo, whose address ran consecutively, 678, to my childhood home's 2345. Nana took me and my brother on "Nana Wednesdays," a weekly adventure every summer break from school as children. And every Saturday morning, my mom and I go pick her up for coffee and a walk around Riverfront Park. I have always been extremely close with Nana.

In November 2023, I went to Providence for the first time. For me, it was mainly tied to her. If Providence was a 50 minute train ride from my college campus in Boston, I couldn't not see where my grandmother was born and grew up. Providence became one of my very favorite day-trip places to go.

Over the course of many more trips to Providence, my mother, who is the Assistant Historian of the Oregon Society of Mayflower Descendants, encouraged me to see some of the sites that are important to my ancestry. I found a sign in Roger Williams Park with the original settlements of Providence and I pointed out Stukely's in a picture to my mother.

Another spot I sought out was the first baptist church in America, which stands tall and white against an often bright blue sky. This church is where Stukely Westcott was a founding member. A church is an important landmark for the Westcott heritage as Stukley was ordered to leave his former home of Salem, MA by the "General Court" and later was ex-communicated by the church there. Upon arriving in Providence, the church was a sign of finding a second home and committing to it full force. Stukley demonstrated incredible commitment to always

moving forward, finding his way to great achievements and success by taking challenges in stride. Nana has done her fair share of both.

After starting her career as a realtor, she went back to college at age 39 at the University of Oregon, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Business. From there, she worked in fine jewelry and then as a successful Mortgage Originator in the banking industry. She and my grandfather separated before I was born and I've always seen Nana as an independent, strong-willed woman who could rock business clothes and cycled through a wide variety of hair colors and styles over the years. To me, Nana always epitomized class and independence.

Though the latter trait has been challenged in recent years. When I was in middle school, on a Nana Wednesday, Nana forgot we had ordered at a restaurant. I remember me and my brother being so confused when she asked us to close our menus so the waiters wouldn't think we were still deliberating. She didn't believe us when we told her we had already ordered, asking us: "Well, what did I get?" Later, Nana was diagnosed with Alzheimer's.

It is a truly incomparable experience watching someone slowly lose their short term memory. We have been incredibly lucky with the pace of Nana's Alzheimer's progression, as it has been nearly 10 years since that lunch and she still can crack a great joke and hold lovely conversations. But Nana Wednesdays have long since stopped. Over the years, her mind and body have blurred the lines of what exactly is having difficulties and it has caused her to deal with chronic pain we struggle to find solutions for. When she walks she grabs mine or my mom's arm tightly, and we walk in the smallest steps. Saturdays switched from coffee and a walk, to coffee and a drive.

Back to Providence, I find a sort of peace walking down the canal sidewalks and thinking about this city who knows a version of my grandmother that no longer exists. The one who could run if she wanted to but might frown at the idea of willingly going for a jog outside. The one who could remember the names of people in shops and at work. It feels to me when I'm in Providence, that there's promise there. I think there are similarities in the way it held Stukely Westcott safe and kindly when he was rebuilding his life from the ground up, to the way it holds me to closeness and community of my grandmother.

I can only imagine the challenges that must come along with starting a city from scratch, of being part of an original settlement. Of losing your son upon arriving and being ex-communicated from your church. And yet–Stukely Westcott went on to help form a civil government in Providence, move to Warwick, and hold many leadership positions within the community there. He moved forward again and again and through it built one of the greatest American lineages.

I went back home for winter break and just like I've done every time I'm home, I went over to cut Nana's hair. I brought smoothies with me: she likes mango or peach. And I started the cut she's opted for in recent years, a blunt bob she asks for "just below the ears".

And when I'm with Nana like this, chatting about school and work and home, it's easy to forget about Alzheimer's. It doesn't loom heavy in the room like a ghost, it's as though it steps outside the door and lets us have that time together. Laughing, as Nana proclaims, "Seems like you've been cutting for a while! I'm going to have no hair left!"

It sometimes strikes me how infrequently Nana complains about losing her memory. She's definitely aware of it, sometimes repeating a question and following it up with "did I already ask you that?" But oftentimes she just treats it like a fact that is. As though the real important focus for her is hearing how her daughter and granddaughter's weeks have been, getting good coffee, and seeing if anything's new around town. The other stuff, the memory, the loss of it, that's just something that is.

I see this great capacity for moving forward in both Nana and Stukely. Both were approached by large challenges and met them with consistent forward momentum, with a focus on what is actually important to them. For Stukely, he faced the loss of community and responded by building a new one. For Nana, she faces losing her memory and responds by being present in the moment.

I hope to meet challenges in my life with the same forward movement, the same confidence in myself that any challenges will not be the thing that defines me. I want to show the same independence and class I have long associated with my grandmother as I finish my schooling and move into a post-graduate world.

In my career aspirations working in Parks and Recreation, I will undoubtedly approach many challenges while planning events and maintaining natural spaces. I hope to work through these challenges while giving the people I work with grace and setting an example I would be proud for people to follow.

Learning about my family's genealogical history through my mother's work has introduced me to many inspiring ancestors, who have shown me that the blood that runs through my veins has persisted through periods of history where even survival was not always likely. I have found stories of resilience, integrity, and perseverance. And like you've seen here, they echo in my family today.

Nana is one of the most inspirational people I know. One of my favorite people on this Earth. And I hope that future generations look at her story, like I look through Stukely's, as a tale of getting back up again, and making it all work out through anything.



Third Thursday with the SSWDA genealogist

Jeff Westcott, SSWDA genealogist, holds a genealogy collaboration time via zoom for Westcott cousins on the third Thursday of each month. The next meeting will be held Thursday November 19, 2026 at 8:00 PM Eastern time. Collaborative time allows for Westcott cousins to share your history.

Here is the link to the meeting:

https://us05web.zoom.us/j/82303664094?pwd=llwnnlPbOJlVn6sbd7oKm4an0UbUzX.1



Article for the Westcott Family Quarterly, David Wescott Smith

SSWDA Continues Partnership with the Warwick Historical Society

At the Westcott Society Board of Directors meeting on the eve of the 2026 Reunion in Watertown, New York, the Board voted to contribute $500 to the Warwick (Rhode Island) Historical Society, which holds a significant portion of our archive. In a thank-you note WHS Board Members wrote, "We acknowledge our stewardship whenever we give a house tour."

Our partnership with the WHS began in 2012 when then SSWDA Historian Betty Acker transferred much of our archive to the Warwick Historical Society, including journals, deeds, military records and other original 18th and 19th century documents. The collection also includes many Westcott products and promotional artifacts that Betty and other members acquired over the years. Visitors to the Warwick Historical Society in the John Waterman Arnold House on Roger Williams Circle in Warwick can view permanent displays of Westcott S-handle adjustable wrenches, Westcott rulers and three samplers stitched by Stukely descendants in the 19th Century, and peruse Westcott family histories and genealogies of related families.

Thanks to research by members of the Warwick Historical Society and the Warwick Commission on Historical Cemeteries, the lot where Stukely and Juliana Westcott are buried (and which Stukely laid out in 1663) was rediscovered and officially designated Rhode Island Historical Cemetery WK165. The lot was dedicated during the 2014 Westcott Family Reunion in Warwick.



Know Your Kin: This One Has Three Emmys



Bryan Wescott Smith won his third Daytime Television Emmy Award on Friday, October 30, 2026 for Outstanding Sound Mixing and Sound Editing for a Live Daytime Program - The Kelly Clarkson Show along with seven co-workers.

Bryan, the son of David and Rosemary Smith and a 12th generation descendant of Stukely and Juliana Westcott, is a 1998 graduate of Natick High School in Massachusetts, where he played in the NHS Jazz Band; he also attended The Rivers School Music Program in nearby Wellesley. Bryan went on to Case Western Reserve University for a joint program with Cleveland Institute of Music where he studied Music and sound production and was a featured part of the CWRU Jazz Band. While in Cleveland he interned at Azica Records.

After graduation in 2002, Bryan moved to New York City where he worked at Clinton Recording Studio with Grammy Award winning producer Ed Rak. This led to a position with Rak working on sound production for the Tony Awards in 2003 and the 23 Tony Awards since then.

Bryan and his wife, Erica Corlito, and their two sons Wescott and Walker live in Malverne, New York. He continues his work with music performances and sound production.

Article for the Westcott Family Quarterly, David Wescott Smith

SSWDA Officers and Board of Directors for 2026-2028

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You can join or view the community discussions on the Westcott-Wescott Descendants Facebook Group

To stay informed about the Society of Stukely Westcott descendents, share family events or contact the board of directors, check out the SSWDA website https://www.sswda.org/