

HARSIN HAPPENN'N'S FAMILY NEWSLETTER

DESCENDANTS OF GARRET HARSIN BAPT. 6/15/1753

HARSIN REUNION – CARROLLTON, KY A Great Success!



1 The Lake Lodge where this year's reunion was held

On July 25th, 2026, a gathering of fifty from all around the country came to the Harsin All-Family Reunion 2026 that was held in a shelter house within General Butler State Resort Park in Carrollton, KY. Family from Indiana, Illinois, Ohio, Kentucky, South Carolina, Oregon by way of Idaho, Indiana by way of Iowa and last but not certainly least, Mississippi!

At the reunion I mentioned that four people were traveling from South Carolina, but they had not made it. They did arrive just a little late! Also, I mentioned that Elaine from south-central Indiana nd raised in Iowa did not make it. She also arrived a little later!

It was a beautiful fall day with the weather being nice for July in the Ohio River Valley. The very next day was hot with the heat

index reaching one hundred-teens. Eighty degree semi cloudy day made for a nice time. Planning an outdoor event for the summer is risky when not knowing what the heat and precipitation will do.

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I should have introduced Alan Harsin. Alan represented the only known “Harsin” living within Carrollton City Limits. There had been several in the past. There are several Harsins currently living in Carroll County, KY. Several of you saw the mailboxes of three Harsin homes on Wright’s Ridge. Alan, of course, is a direct descendant of Garret’s first son, George (b. 1785), as many of us at the reunion were. But, he living in Carrollton, had the shortest drive to the park!



2A few Reunion participants catching up with one another

The longest commute to the reunion must be given to Deniece Osterberg. She currently lives in Idaho but raised in Oregon. She flew to her daughter, Audra Frassier, in Ohio.

Then they both drove to Carrollton for the reunion. They are both descendants of Garret’s second son, Garret Gilbert Harsin (b.1790 in Paris, KY) and of his son who migrated and remained in Oregon, Garret Quinn Harsin.

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The day began with a field trip to Wright's Ridge Rd, located between Locust Rd and Notch Like Rd, about 7 miles downstream along the Ohio River. This is in Carroll County. We first stopped at Taylor Family Cemetery where Richard Butler Taylor and wife Lavina Jane Harsin (b. 1854 d, 1887) were buried.

The second stop was at the Garret and Elizabeth Harsin's homestead where they lived in a log home that is non – existing today, but the older home on the road was originally built by a Harsin and a Harsin descendant was living there as late as 1980s. We were all met by a very friendly dog when stepping out of our vehicles. I think he would have jumped into one of our cars if we left the doors open, Did Garret and Elizabeth farm cattle? We do not know. Many of the farms on the hillsides fenced in cattle. Maybe they found a good spot to raise tobacco. Tobacco is a huge cash crop for farmers in KY and SE Indiana. We do not know for sure what they did on this farm.

Our last stop was a disappointing one. The Wright's Cemetery was fenced and a no trespassing sign into the adjoining property had been erected since my last visit 7 years ago. Also, the cemetery had re-grown with berry vine bushes and vines, Most headstones were not visible because of the excessive foliage in the cemetery. This cemetery does not hold Garret and Elizabeth Harsin, they had

moved on into Indiana and both died in Shelby County, IN. However, it is assumed that at least their son, George Harsin (b.1785) and his wife, Prudence Gamble, are buried in this cemetery along with several other family members who lived on or near this ridge. My great grandparents, Leon and Mahala (Wright) Harsin are buried in this cemetery with recognizable granite stones in the back of the cemetery. Read more in this newsletter about cleaning this cemetery.

After our field trip, we had lunch. Everyone either brought some lunch and ate it at the shelter or found their way to a local restaurant.

After lunch, I led the group on an exercise that would calculate two family member's relationship. A couple would first locate someone in the



3 Fun at the 2026 Harsin Reunion

attendance of the reunion to find out how they were related to one another. Several found out they were 5th cousins and others, 4th cousins. We also saw how to calculate if there were a number said to be removed, such as second cousins, once

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removed. Several family members made new friends by participating in this event.

Then, after a short break, Pat Harsin Miller spoke about the history of the surname Harsin. We learned that a letter from the Mayor of Harsin, located in the province of Luxembourg within Belgium, the inhabitants of this village came to the village from Persia, dates unknown. But in 1666, the village burned and families moved on to Amsterdam on to New Amsterdam, America.

Pat went on to tell us about the Harsins that came to America on a ship in 1666. They claimed a farm and an area in Manhattan, called Harsenville. She explained how Harsenville took up modern day Manhattan, including land from Broadway to the Hudson River and at least half of central park. She had brought maps showing these boundaries. The village of Harsenville along with 4 other hamlets were located in made up the Upper west end of Manhattan, a robust part of New York City.

She spoke of the first four generations of Harsin in America. From Rev. Warnardus, who did not survive the trip to America and assumed died and buried at sea in route to New Amsterdam. Rev. Warnardus had a child named Bernardus Harsing that came from Harsin, Netherlands and settled in New Amsterdam. Then Bernardus had a son named Garret. Garret had a son, Joris. Joris had a son Garret

Harsin, the American Revolutionary War Veteran. Garret was baptized in the Dutch Reformed Church of America on June 15th, 1753.

Pat then turned her attention while speaking of Persia, to showing a rug woven in Iran (old Persia). The pattern of the rug is unique and that of the Harsin people. She said, "It is lying on the floor, and you are welcome to go walk on it". Incidentally, if a Harsin rug is desired, go to any reputable Rug retailer or store and they should be capable of ordering you one. Another great way to get a second hand Harsin rug is to go to major Auction sites, such as EBay. I have seen several rugs on eBay.

Pat and I pointed out the broken and illegible headstones that I brought were so bad that we need to replace them with a new headstone. (see more in this newsletter about the Headstone Restoration project).

After a break, I (Ray), spoke about the first 4 generations in America a little more. I also spoke about two other sons of Bernardus, Jacob and Johannes Harsen, left New Amsterdam and Harsenville, to migrate west to current day Algonac River between Michigan and Canada. It is an Island named Harsen's Island. The two of them settled on the Island making it a trading post for furs to be traded. It provided merchandise and food for the

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trappers and Indians. The Island did have a pub as well.

Yet after another break, I spoke about fun facts coming from my records. I spoke of the frequency of some states within my address book. Also, the frequency of how often certain given names were used in names descending from garret Harsin (1753)

I also spoke about the family members that were fighting in the Civil War. There were 6 that had surnames of Harsin and five that married a Harsin lady. All but one of these 11 were great grandsons or great grandson-on-laws. Four of the Harsins were brothers. Two of them returned home and two died in the war. The other two were also brothers, both died. All fought for the north. The two brothers were from Iowa, the others from Indiana. The one that was not a great grandson was a grandson. (see more in this newsletter about the Civil War)

The last topic I spoke about was the story about how Garret Harsin was actually Andrew Harrison, related to the Benjamin Harrison the fifth and to President William H Harrison. I spoke about how I had done a DNA study that proves the man buried in Garret Harsin's (1753) grave is NOT related to the Political Harrisons.

I want to thank some key people that helped with this event for which I would

not have been able to attend and do myself. First, my daughter, Rachel Harsin and girlfriend, Cindy Varland, for driving us to and from the reunion. Weather was great for our drive as was it for many other folks coming in. Cindy also led the caravan of cars to Wright's Ridge Road. She had never driven on such Kentucky Hill roads that navigated like a snake in the past. It was an experience she was taking back to her friends to brag, maybe complain, about! Second. Pat Harsin Miller for her help organizing, speaking and co-managing the Headstone Restoration Project. I also thank her for bringing her Harsin Rug to talk about and allow everyone to handle and walk all over it. I thought it was going to be a magical carpet, but my hopes were dashed when she said it was actually a rug. I was worried I would not get off the ground with my weight, anyway. She was also my keynote speaker for the topic of the Harsin surname, from Persia migrating through Belgium and Amsterdam, on to New Amsterdam (America). Thirdly, to each person who helped me with the setup and breakdown of the facility! I was humbled with the amount of help I received and I do wish to acknowledge my sincere appreciation for anything that was done. Fourth, I thank Ron Harsin for bringing the barrel and ice for the bottled water. As it turns out, we did not need very much. I think not having a hot day helped keep the volume consumed low. He also brought

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chips and snacks for all to munch on throughout the day. Once again, thanks to everyone!!

Wright's Cemetery Cleanup Crew

We visited Wright's Cemetery on Wright's Ridge Rd in Carroll County, KY on the morning of the reunion. We found it unaccusable with a private fence surrounding it and a posted "No Tresspassing" sign attached. Even if we were to gain access, the cemetery is grown up in briars, bushes and trees. It was in this shape earlier in the 1970. 80s. Then someone cleaned it up. When I visited the cemetery last 2019, it was clean. Now it is gown over again. Terry Peters has come forward with interest in getting the cemetery clean once again and is inviting anyone wishing to help.

I will seek permission to access this cemetery and coordinate a date in the Fall or Winter to clean it up. If interested in helping, please contact me. I will be sure you are kept in the loop for the cleanup day!

Join Our Group!!

If you are not yet a member of our private Facebook group for our family, search for the group name, Garret and Elizabeth Harsin Descendants, and request to become a member. Or, contact me and I will invite you!

Headstone Restoration Project



4This photo is what the gravesite looked prior to the stones weathering and being broken.

Garret and Elizabeth (Doughty) Harsin's headstones have broken off and are impossible to read. I presented them with a viewing at the Harsin Family Reunion in Carrollton, KY on July 25th. Pat Harsin Miller and I are chairpersons for rrestoring this monument. Pat is contacting the local DAR chapter to arrange the engraving and placement of an emblem stating this is the grave of an American Revolutionary War veteran. She states only DAR approved engravers can do this job. We took a collection at the reunion toward the cost of demolition of the old concrete slab and marker, the new headstone and the placement of a new slab with the headstone resting on it. We do not yet have a quote from an engraver. Watch future newsletters for updates. We raised \$900 at the reunion!! With monies I have previously collected, \$1,500, this brings the total thus far collected at \$2,400. Thanks to each one of you who has

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donated toward this much needed project!!

When the new stone is placed, we will plan a memorial date. The local chapter of the DAR will most likely do a military style memorial as well that day.



5 Where Garret's headstone broke off at the slab.



This photo was taken July 25th, 2026.

On the way home from the reunion, I drove by the cemetery. Anytime I am in the area, I usually stop. I place two USA flags on the grave each time. This time, when I arrived at about noontime, there were already two flags and a wreath of flowers on a small stand. Pat had already gotten the ball rolling with the local DAR chapter concerning the new headstone and she mentioned they were most likely the party that placed these there earlier that morning. I must have just missed them.

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It is not too late to help with donations toward this project! Here are a few ways you can donate:

1. By creditcard at a Go Fund Me page that has been created. The web address is <https://gofund.me/a81bf0084>
2. Send a check or money order to
 - a. Ray Harsin
205 Winchester Pl
Fairview Heights, IL 62208
 - b. Pat Miller
105 DRIVE 59
Tupelo, MS 38801
3. Send by Venmo to me at @Ray-Harsin

A Musical Family

Many family members are musicians! Darcy Lynn Ford of California not only teaches music but plays her violin often in concerts and recitals. She is the proud owner of a violin that belonged to her Great Grandfather, George



6Darcy Lynn Ford with violin her Great Grandfather built

Harsin b. 1884. Not only did he own it and played it, he built it! Upon his death, it was passed down to his son, Allen Harsin b. 1921. Allen played the organ in concerts. He was known in the

family as learning to play the organ at a young age. He was so young he had to stand on one leg in order to reach and press the pedals with his other leg. He passed the violin his

father made to his daughter, Lori (nee Harsin) Ford. Lori passed it down to the fourth generation of ownership, Darcy Lynn Ford. George Harsin is a son of



7Geirgw Harsin with his violin he made and played

Garret Quinn Harsin b. 1836. Garret Quinn was a grandson of Garret Harsin 1753. Many of Garret Quinn's descendants played musical instruments.

Do you play an instrument? I played piano, guitar and the trumpet. All 11 grandchildren of my grandfather, Sherley Harsin b/ 1894, played an instrument. My sister currently plays in a small band as a drummer. They play at Veterans Administration events.

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Photos Wanted of Reunions

My photographer I had secured to take photos through the day and of the attendees could not attend the reunion at Carrollton. I am searching for any photos attendees took at this reunion. I will post them on the private Facebook page for our group, Garret and Elizabeth HARSIN Descendants.

Also, I am searching for any photos taken at the Harsin Family Reunion for Gilbert Edward Harsin descendants in Iowa held on July 18th, this year.

Photos can be posted on the facebook group or sent to me by email at rayharsin@gmail.com.

Next Year's Harsin Family History Talks and Reunions to be Scheduled

I am planning to schedule events at the following locations for next year. Please stay tuned in to this newsletter and our private Facebook group for more information as they get scheduled.

Indianapolis, IN	Seattle, WA
Tupelo, Mississippi	TBD, Nebraska
Enterprise, Oregon	TBD, California
Pomona, Missouri	TBD, Arizona

Flash Drives Available Soon!

I am putting final touches on a flash drive with all my data I have collected over time. Watch future newsletters to see how you can get yours!

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Family is important for many reasons! I feel that it is socially needed to keep a family together. Do more events with your loved ones!