



VINING FAMILY NEWSLETTER

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Spring 2021

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Mission Statement

The purpose of the nonprofit Vining Family Association is to promote, support, and preserve research about the history of the surname Vining and those who bear it worldwide. To accomplish this purpose, the association will bring together in one place and in a convenient form an online genealogy and related material such as, but not limited to, census records, gravestone images, photographs, and news articles. It will provide a forum for exchange of information, for asking and answering questions about Vining genealogy and history, and will generally encourage an interest in the fascinating world of genealogy.

New Website Categories

Three new website categories (one greatly expanded) have been added to the Vining Family Association: “News and Notes”, “Census Records”, and “Vining Migration”.

New and Notes is a place for breaking news that will be covered extensively in the next Newsletter and for shorter items that do not need further elaboration.

Census Records formerly included just the 1790 census of U.S. Vinings. It has now been expanded to include all the censuses through 1840. Each of these censuses named only the family “head” for each household. Beginning with the 1850 census, the name of every person in a household was named, and beginning in 1880, the relationship of each person in a household to the first-named individual was reported. Some of these households in 1790-1840 may not be Vinings, but they are the result of a search algorithm. Further research will clean up these lists, with the goal that all Vining households and only Vining households will be listed.

Vining Migration is a collection of U.S. maps that show the location of Vining households by state in each decennial census from 1790 through 1940. Many census years still need to be investigated and the results mapped.

New Website Categories (continued)

I have appreciated the contributions to the Online Vining Genealogy made by so many of you, and I hope that you will verify or correct the information in these three new/modified sets of pages described above. - Thomas F. Vining, Website Manager

Arthur Vining Davis – Industrialist

Arthur Vining Davis was born in Sharon, MA, in 1867. Mr. Davis was the son of Perley Bacon Davis, a Minister, and Mary Frances Vining, daughter of Samuel Albert Vining, a descendant of John Vining who settled in Weymouth, MA, in 1652.

After graduating Phi Beta Kappa from Amherst College, Mr. Davis found work in an aluminum business owned by a family friend that experimented with ways to produce aluminum less expensively. Davis worked twelve to sixteen-hour days and he would continue to do so for most of his life. Davis became the Director, then General Manager of the company and renamed it the Aluminum Company of America (Alcoa). Davis then became its President and Chairman of the Board, building the business into an industrial giant. Alcoa produced aluminum for electrical conductors, cookware, kitchen utensils, horseshoes, bicycles, bottlecaps, ships and even the engine in the Wright Brothers' airplane, thereby showing the versatility of aluminum. Davis was awarded the Presidential Certificate of Merit for keeping the government supplied with aluminum during World War II. By the end of the War, Alcoa was providing 90% of virgin aluminum.

As Alcoa's largest stockholder, Davis amassed great wealth and acquired real estate, including a hotel and club, and many enterprises. In 1958, Arthur Vining Davis transferred all his property to a new public corporation which he founded – ArViDa. The company became one of the biggest real estate and development companies in Florida. ArViDa specialized in planned communities, and in 1972, the first community was created in northern Quebec, Canada, for working families.

After retiring from Alcoa, Arthur Vining Davis became a philanthropist and created the Arthur Vining Davis Foundations that provide financial assistance to educational, religious, cultural and scientific institutions. Millions of dollars in grants have financed those institutions, environmental solutions and palliative care. Having a minister for a father, Arthur Vining Davis understood the importance of "religious literacy" – that is the knowledge that religions in the world have mutual goals that link humanity for the common good. Arthur Vining Davis did not just merely contribute money to causes, he sought to support programs and institutions with higher-minded goals for the betterment of society world-wide.

The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations are a regular donor to PBS, sponsoring many programs that have inspired generations for decades. And, because Arthur Vining Davis has made Vining a household name, there is no doubt as to the proper pronunciation of Vining! Like many Vinings, you may have wondered whether you have a genealogical connection to Arthur Vining Davis. One way to find out is to visit the Association's Online Genealogy. – Jim Vining and Judi A. Vining

Sources: The Arthur Vining Davis Foundations, Investing in Our Common Future Palm Beach County, History Online. 2021

ALCOA: An American Enterprise, by Charles C. Carr, Rinehart & Co., New York (1952).

Elizabeth Gray Vining – Champion of the Arts

Elizabeth Janet Gray was born in Philadelphia, PA, in 1902. As a child, Elizabeth knew that writing was her destiny, and at the tender age of 13 had her first story published in *The Young Churchman* which earned her \$2 and an invitation to submit more stories.

Elizabeth married Morgan Fisher Vining in 1929; he died four years later in a car accident that left Elizabeth injured. To cope with his death and to find a purpose for her life, Vining returned to writing. In her autobiography: *The Quiet Pilgrimage*, Elizabeth wrote that she rediscovered her passion for writing after reading a passage from the Emerson essay, "Spiritual Laws".

"Each man has his own vocation. The talent is the call. There is one direction in which all space is open to him. He has faculties silently inviting him thither to endless exertion. He is like a ship in a river; he runs against obstructions on every side but one; on that side all obstruction is taken away and he sweeps serenely over God's depths into an infinite sea."

Referring to her youth, Elizabeth wrote that she "had confidently launched her little boat upon that river; now I must disentangle it from the reeds along the bank and try to reach the current once more."

In addition to writing, Elizabeth had been a teacher and professional librarian and in 1946 she was selected to tutor Crown Prince Akihito, the future Emperor of Japan, in English. Vining published several books about the experience and one book, *Windows for the Crown Prince*, became a best seller.

Elizabeth Gray Vining wrote 29 books, many best-sellers, and she won the Newberry Medal for "Adam of the Road". One of her books, *Penn*, was for many years considered a primary source by historians and scholars on the life of William Penn, a Quaker and the founder of the State of Pennsylvania.

Throughout her life, Vining would grieve the loss of her husband and, seeking inner peace, she was drawn to the Quaker faith and eventually became a Quaker. As a prominent Quaker in a Quaker community that did not support or contribute to the arts, Elizabeth, through her writings and observations of Quaker life, became a champion for Quakers who, at their core beings, were writers, artists and musicians.

Elizabeth Gray Vining died in 1999. - Judi A. Vining

Source: Chuck Fager: *An Appreciation of Elizabeth Gray Vining, Types & Shadows*,
Journal of the Fellowship of Quakers in the Arts, Issue #16, Winter 1999-2000.

Harold “Hal” Rowe Holbrook, Jr. - Master of the Craft

Hal Holbrook, actor and writer, passed away on January 23, 2021, at age 95. Hal was the son of Harold Rowe Holbrook, Sr., and Aileen Davenport Holbrook, a vaudeville dancer. Hal grew up in South Weymouth, MA, and was raised by his grandparents, George Holbrook and Lois Vining, a descendant of John Vining, who settled in Weymouth, Ma, in 1652.

Many of you will remember Hal’s unforgettable, award-winning performance as Mark Twain in *Mark Twain Tonight!*, a one-man show which he created. Hal also portrayed Abraham Lincoln. Hal was a talented actor who won several Emmys and a Tony Award for television and stage performances. Hal received an Academy Award nomination for his motion picture work and would earn several more nominations throughout his acting career. And who can forget Hal in the movie, *Magnum Force*. As one fan put it, he would love to hear Hal holler “Callahan” just one more time! Hal wrote his very frank autobiography, *Harold, The Boy Who Became Mark Twain*. Hal could easily have won awards for his story telling and anecdotes in the many interviews he gave throughout his life. Hal and actress wife, Dixie Carter, returned to Hal’s ancestral roots where he performed *Mark Twain Tonight!* at Weymouth High School.

Rest in peace, Hal Holbrook. You will be missed and longed remembered. - Judi A. Vining

Sources: *Harold, The Boy Who Became Mark Twain*, by Hal Holbrook, Macmillan publishers, 2013
Wicked Local/Weymouth News, 2021

A Tale From The Deep – Almost!

It was a beautiful, sunny day at the beach with waves about a foot high. I always make it a point to swim near the shoreline, a precaution brought on by watching too many reruns of “Jaws”! The gravitational pull in the surf that day was stronger than usual, so I swam beyond the breakers. The calm water lulled me to and fro. The day was relaxing and carefree until I noticed that I was way beyond the rock jetty – my geographical marker. How did I drift this far out, I wondered? I started for shore but the outgoing tide pulled me back twice the distance of my swim inward. The lifeguards in their highchairs seemed not to notice, as I probably looked like a speck in the water. I hollered “help” and gave the Red Cross distress signal, but the lifeguards did not respond. What a sinking feeling it was (no pun intended) as I was swept farther out to sea. Then I noticed a lifeguard standing on the shoreline looking in my direction. The little slip of a lifeguard swam out to me with a foot long, five-inch wide floatation device, and I remember exclaiming that we both would probably drown.

I have been swimming in the ocean for decades and encountered jelly fish stings, red algae, rogue waves that nearly folded me in half in their turbo and then body-surfed me to the shore with resulting sand burns, but I had never experienced anything like that!

The lifeguards said there were more rip tides and currents than usual that summer due to three successive hurricanes that year. There were more than one-hundred people rescued that week. The lifeguards had been watching after all! I got caught in a rip current and forgot to swim parallel to shore. The sharks were the least of my worries that day – in fact, I never once thought about them! – Judi A. Vining

Manget Clifford Vining.....Information Sought

Stephen Rose has contacted the Vining Family Association seeking information about Manget Clifford Vining (1916-1994), in particular, any information relating to his World War II service and Regiment where he was believed to be posted to the UK, at least during the early part of 1944. Mr. Rose would also appreciate a photograph. Mr. Rose applied to the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis a year ago but still awaits a reply. Mr. Rose may be contacted at stephenrose@btinternet.com with any suggestions or information you may have on Manget Clifford Vining. – Thomas F. Vining

New Vining Books

Thomas F. Vining, website manager for the Vining Family Association, and lead author, Ruth Gortner Grierson, have published their first book together, *Living on the Edge: A Guide to Tide Pool Animals, Seaweeds, and Seaside Plants*. The book is a fascinating guide to the common flora and fauna of the coastal habitats of Mount Desert Island and southern Maine and covers species found north and/or south of Maine. The book is beautifully illustrated with colored photographs and includes delicious recipes from some items in the area. – Thomas F. Vining

Vickie Vining has written a book, *Life Goes on: The Story of Elberta Loucille Dale Vining*. It is the autobiography of Elberta who married Virgil Vining who appears under his father, Harry Ray Vining, in the Online Vining Genealogy. The book tells Elberta's story, starting with her birth in Chaflin, Kansas, and it contains many photographs and interesting details of her life. It is available on Amazon. Elberta is the grandmother of John Vining who serves on the Vining Family Association's Board of Directors.
- John Vining

DNA – A Humorous (or not) Look at DNA Revelations

DNA testing companies are a means to discover ethnicity, ancestors and ways to connect with relatives. With new dna testing companies sprouting up every few years attracting new participants, and with the annual recalculation of prior dna results, it is amazing how dna ethnicity results may change over the years. Many people test with several companies for comparative purposes. These new and differing results can change how we view ourselves. For example, we thought we knew who we were, then we discovered who we are, then we rediscovered who we are, who knows who we will be in the future. Stay tuned.

Humor aside, dna testing coupled with the Vining Family Association Online Genealogy are valuable tools to learn one's ethnicity, discover ancestors, and locate and communicate with relatives. – Judi A. Vining

REFLECTIONS

From a pensive babe in christening clothes,
To a fair-haired boy who posed
For photographs frolicking on the beach with friends for laughs –

He attended clambakes where the devilish pranks of youth he did make.
One day he borrowed a dinghy and rowed his friends to Minot Light off the east coast
And upon his return, his hide the elders wanted to roast!
But they weren't long mad at the adventurous lad who was a descendant of those "wicked
good" New England neighborhoods.

As a boy of ten, he took piano lessons and produced water paintings like grown men.
As a teenager in school, he excelled in Art and English and was enamored with the wild west.

As a young man he attended dances where he was one of the
best
Then onward to the United States Army where he advanced.
Then he met the love of his life at a dance

He continued onward to a career in the United States Air Force but
the arrival of three little girls changed his life course.
He bought a home – his pride and joy,
And made a career with the United States Postal Service which he enjoyed.

As a son, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, and in law, he was steadfast and caring,
and he set an example with qualities more than ample.
As a relative and friend he went above and beyond – his generous spirit knew no bounds, and
he was wise and helpful more than we knew.

In his life there was much to do
There was his home and good times with family and friends, there was church where he ushered;
there was traveling throughout the United States, Canada, Europe, and cruises to exotic ports, and
dancing, card games, carpentry/woodworking, gardening, canning, house remodeling, landscaping,
reading, writing, boxing, and doing puzzles.

Ah, but home, painting and gardening were his favorite leisure time desires!
And when he retired, his talent stoked those fires!
He produced artwork in numbers untold and many a painting was sold.
But it was in his flower and vegetable gardens he was most ardent.
Yes, a man of many talents was Melvin "Mel" Howard Vining – a star always shining!
Then came time to enjoy the slower pace of life, and reflections of a happy, productive life!

- Judi A. Vining

Barbara Gay Vining

September 8, 1919-December 7, 2006

Barbara Gay Vining was born September 8, 1919, to Dallas Claude Vining and Euterpe Nash Vining, in a sleepy town in central Nebraska. Dallas became the stationmaster for the Burlington Railroad in Seneca, Nebraska later when their three children were still very young. Barbara grew up with two brothers, who were her playmates in early life. She started school at the age of four because her brother, Glenn would not go to first grade without her. Barbara was fortunate enough to spend a year or two living in Denver, Colorado with her maternal aunt, in order to attend an academically superior high school before returning to Nebraska and home. She excelled and graduated from High School at age 16 with a scholarship in her pocket for the University of Nebraska. There, she enrolled in the Nursing Program and graduated in the first class at the University to offer a Bachelor of Science in Nursing. It was a five-year course, with the final year on rotation to all hospital services (University Hospital, Omaha).

She married Frederick Max Chittenden the same year and a year later gave birth to a son. They were living in Wichita, Kansas where Max was a supervisor working 12 hour days at the Boeing plant, making 8-29 bombers for the war effort.

After the war, the family returned to Lincoln, Nebraska and my mother gave birth to me several years later. She started working in the Emergency Room at Bryan Memorial Hospital, named for the "Silver Tongued Orator", William Jennings Bryan, whose property was donated for the hospital. She quickly became a very well liked R.N.

As the hospital grew, Barbara was put in charge of updating the skills of nurses returning to the profession after being absent, raising families. She coordinated education classes to update and introduce them to new procedures.

Her final years were as House Supervisor on the evening shift, which meant she was responsible for the hospital nursing staff overall, during those hours. When she retired after many years of service, they saluted her with a tea to honor her, and a handmade quilt from all of the nurses (over 80 embroidered panels with each one done by a nurse, featuring an animal or flower and the contributors name). She loved her profession and helping people. She often cared for family and friends in her home, who were recovering from illness or surgery, and required skilled nursing care. Her compassion is something I admired, along with her skills. Barbara died while living with me, in 2006. She was a very wonderful Mother and person. - Linda Basinger, VFA member





Membership

The Vining Family Association is open to all persons who are interested in supporting its purpose as set forth in the Mission Statement.

Dues are:

Lifetime - \$100

Individual – annual \$10; semiannual \$5

Donations accepted

Dues and donations may be made payable to the Vining Family Association, c/o Judi A. Vining, P. O. Box 505, Yardley, PA 19067.

Newsletter Items

Please mail or email items (photographs, stories, inquiries, research) you wish to see in the Vining Family Association Newsletter to Judi A. Vining, P. O. Box 505, Yardley, PA 19067;
judi.vining@aol.com.

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