

FIRST COCKERHAM GATHERING

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE

A long awaited event in the life of the Cockerham Family came to fruition June 25-28 at the Hilton Garden Inn, Charlotte/Concord.

The nine children of the late Lonnie and Nellie Bailey Cockerham say they enjoyed the first "Cockerham Gathering" along with spouses, children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and invited guests.

They said they considered it a blessing from God for all nine siblings, ranging in ages 67-83, to assemble and reflect on their family heritage/accomplishments, to give thanks to God for their present status, and to share expectations and encouragement for the younger generation.

The weekend activities started with a banquet on Friday evening. Saturday's activities included tours of Charlotte Motor Speedway and Sea Life of Concord and dining at local restaurants.

Some family members ventured into downtown Charlotte to explore various venues, while others drove to Winston-Salem to enjoy the city of the Cockerhams' birth.

On Sunday, the family worshipped at Friendship Missionary Baptist Church. In memory of their parents,



The Cockerhams are shown at Charlotte Motor Speedway.



The Cockerham siblings are shown.

who were strong advocates of education, a monetary gift was donated to the Coleman W. Kerry Scholarship Fund.

The nine siblings are: Haven Cockerham Sr., Chapel Hill; Bernard Cockerham Sr., Carson, California; the Rev. Patricia Turner, Salisbury; Emma Jean Pitts, Winston-Salem; Dr. Frances Waller, Charlotte; Arzell Greene, High Point; Wilbert Cockerham, Winston-Salem; Lonnie Cockerham Jr., Advance; the Rev. Doris Winford, Anderson, Ind.



This is the Hauser Williams Russell family taken during its family reunion July 24-26.



Submitted Photo

Actor, director and producer Fay Hauser-Price presides at the family banquet on Saturday, July 25.

Hauser Williams Russell Family celebrates 100 years of reunions

BY FAY HAUSER-PRICE
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CHRONICLE

The family and friends of Bethania Hauser Williams Russell celebrated 100 years of reunions during the weekend of July 24-26.

In 1915, Martin Hauser held a birthday celebration for his mother, which became the first HWR family reunion celebration. Over the past century, the children of Bethania have celebrated family reunions in various locations across the country.

This year they returned to North Carolina, where Nancy Bethania was purchased in 1853 by farmer and landowner TC Hauser and served as his housekeeper before the end of slavery. They lived in Yadkinville, a town Hauser founded, where she gave birth to three of his sons.

After slavery ended, Bethania married Ned Williams and had four additional children. Upon the death of Williams, Bethania married David Russell and gave birth to four more children.

The children, grandchildren, and other descendants of Bethania have lived all over the world. They have worked in many fields of occupation including government, military, education, music, finance, engineering, ministry, and child and homecare.

The weekend began with a fish fry in Yadkinville at the local YMCA, hosted by Dianne Russell Murphy and Lori Russell of Yadkinville, Eddyce Moore Pope of Los Angeles, and Mertine Moore Brown of Washington, DC. It was in honor of David Hauser, who started the lively and

tasty events in the 1950s, and was one of the 13 children of the Rev. Daniel M. and Callie V. Hauser of Yadkinville. In addition to wonderful delicious food, there were games played by adults and children



Louis Price, former lead singer of The Temptations, leads "Family," a song he wrote for the family reunion banquet.

alike, crafts and singing. Louis Price, former lead singer of The Temptations and husband of actor, director and producer Fay Hauser-Price, wrote a song to celebrate the occasion and the family practiced the song "Family" to be performed at the Saturday banquet.

During the reunion, the family visited the former Safe Bus Co., which is now the Winston-Salem Transit Authority. The Safe Bus Co. was the largest owned and operated African American municipal bus company in the world with operations that started in the 1920s and ran until the 1970s. Bethania Hauser Williams Russell's great-grandchild Mary Ruth Miller Green was part of the owners of the company and its president in the late 1950s.

The family also visited Winston-Salem State University where they gathered at the Hauser Building, named for engineer Moyer Hauser, grandson of Bethania, who helped lay out many of the campus buildings. Other family members who attended included Dr. C. B.

Hauser who served as head of the education department at WSSU for many years before his retirement. He later served in the N.C. General Assembly as a two-term representative. He is the father of former Winston-Salem residents, Fay Hauser-Price, currently residing in Van Nuys, California; and Peaches Golding of Bristol, England, where she works as a community leader who was appointed by Her Majesty Queen of England II as the first Black woman to serve as High Sheriff of the County of Bristol 2010.

Other stops included Bethania, N.C., where the Hausers were part of the founding community in the 1700s and participants in the Revolutionary War; Booneville where the family helped spearhead the establishment of a high school in the 1940s for Yadkin County so that Americans of African descent could get an education. Then stops in Yadkinville to see the gravesites and house where Bethania lived with her enslaver Theophilus Hauser. Also visited was the site of integrated family reunions held in the segregated South of the 1950s.

On Sunday July 26, the family attended Pleasant Grove Baptist Church, which is over 140 years old, where Rev. Johnny E. Scott welcomed the family.

The celebration of over 100 years of family gatherings was honored with letters from the White House, the N.C. governor, the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives, as well as many mayors, businesses, clubs, and universities. The historic event was covered by local and national media in print, online and broadcast TV.

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