History (... continued from page 2)

Our family members and friends have participated in and helped to shape, a dream, a dream that has survived for 40 years. But listen: Good dreams are not stagnant. Good dreams grow and evolve. Good dreams continue, always, to reshape themselves to the measure of the need. There was a need 40 years ago. Punkin’ - Synnia - saw it, identified it. Others joined with her to make it happen and not even death could stop it. There are many needs today. There will be many more tomorrow. Hopefully, the next generation - or the next - will take this organization, this dream, and continue to reshape it and move it forward.

THANK YOU, FAMILY
40TH ANNIVERSARY COMMITTEE
Lawrence Ford, President
LitaRae Bradford-Mitchell
Andrea Fletcher
Beverly Ford
Brenda Ford
Chandre Ford
Ramone Ford
Stephanie Ford
Hudson Ford, Jr.
Margaret Ford-Taylor
Mattie Kidd
Jeff Lewis
Liana Lewis
Chaz Mitchell
Hudson Ford, Jr.
Margaret Ford-Taylor
Mattie Kidd
Jeff Lewis
Liana Lewis
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Jeff Lewis
Liana Lewis
Chaz Mitchell
Hudson Ford, Jr.
Margaret Ford-Taylor
Mattie Kidd
Jeff Lewis
Liana Lewis

SYNNIA’S SIBLINGS, 2013
Top (Left to Right) Hudson Ford, Jr., Margaret Ford-Taylor, Lawrence Ford
Bottom (Left to Right) Mattie Kidd, Ella Pearl Williams, Carrie Stewart
(Missing are brothers Marvin Ford, David Venson and Curtis Kilgore)
REUNION HISTORY

On her father’s side, Synnia Solomon was the daughter of Hudson, who was the son of Mattie, who was the daughter of Sarah Ann who was the daughter of Hansie Solomon. On her mother’s side, she was the daughter of Willie Mae, who was the daughter of Aaron who was the son of Anderson Bryson. In 1973, she began contacting family members regarding the possibility of a family reunion.

Synnia’s mother’s side of the family, the Brysons, was very small and so it was her initial plan to celebrate the lineages of both her parents, the Fords and the Brysons. This is why the Cleveland Chapter bears the sub-title, Ford-Bryson Chapter.

So, in January of 1974, Punkin’ - this was Synnia’s nickname - Punkin’ was busy preparing a mailing for the first reunion which was scheduled for August of that year. That day, she was at the world renown Karamu House Arts Center where she, her cousin Jean Louise Ford-Lawrence and her sister, Margaret Ford-Taylor, all worked. Her brother, Lawrence, was standing by waiting to take the mailing to the post office. While she was, literally, finishing preparations for the mailing, Synnia had an aneurysm. She was taken to University Hospital and died three days later without regaining consciousness. She left to mourn and miss her, a large group of family and friends, a devoted husband, Homer Solomon, Jr. and two daughters, Carla, ten years old and Carolyn, six years old.

After much prayerful thought and deliberation, it was decided that the first reunion must take place for many reasons but definitely in Punkin’s honor. Joy of purpose overrode the burden of grief and Punkin’s spirit took wing as family far and wide doubled and redoubled their efforts in support of her dream. It also became clear that there were two branches of the Ford lineage to be celebrated.

The first reunion was, subsequently, held as scheduled at the Charter House Hotel here in Cleveland, Ohio. For the next 39 years - sometimes with budgets, sometimes without; sometimes with large committees, sometimes with two or three people forging ahead - for the next 39 years, Punkin’s dream has continued. The Hansie Solomon Family Reunion has been hosted in a number of cities. Participating states have been: Ohio, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, Georgia, Texas, California, Virginia, Alabama, Florida, and the province of Ontario, Canada. (continued on Rear Cover . . .)