



Teator - Teter Tree

Spring 2000

Newsletter #13

SUNDAY, JULY 16, 2000

TEATOR-TETER REUNION

Hello to all,

It's that time again - the 5th biennial "Descendants of John Teter Reunion" will take place at Brandow Park, Oak Hill on the 3rd Sunday of July.

I apologize for the relatively late notice - I have a ton of excuses but none sound good enough for now!

On the back is a heartfelt essay which I know you will enjoy. Otherwise, someone is working on a family portrait that I'll try to print in the fall newsletter.

Back to details.

The usual food routine continues: Each household should bring a covered dish (salad, main dish, and/or dessert) to feed 4-6. Families are encouraged to coordinate with others, if you choose. Any single person can bring chips, munchies, etc. "Silverware", liquids, cups, napkins and chairs will be the responsibility of each household.

The tentative schedule is customary:

- Arrive around noon, or whenever you can.
- Food will be served probably between one to one-thirty.
- Plan on electric not being available.
- We'll do introductions of the various family lines.
- Remind me to do the farthest, oldest, youngest, etc.
- I'll bring pictures of our reunions.
- If anyone has anything else they'd like to share, please feel free to do so.
- Deb will take pictures of the whole group and of the different lines.
- If you have recent pictures of you family, I'll be glad to add them to the photo collection.

Remind of any changes of births and marriages. I'll compile a list since the last newsletter for the fall letter.

I hope to see you next month.

Don

This piece was meant to be shared without the author's name attached. Use as you wish. And thank you to the author!

THE GIFT

In my 38 years on this earth, this will be the first Christmas that a celebration will not be held at the Teator residence on Mansard Avenue in Durham, N.Y. The house stands empty now, the heart-wrenching work of my mother, cousin and aunts. The events of the past year with Grandpa's death and the emptying of the house, have caused me to reflect on the influence he and Grandma had on my life. Many memories come to mind when I think of them but none as vivid as the Christmases spent at their home. Each year had its own unique quality, but my memories are of what stayed the same. The house always smelled of wonderful foods cooking, Grandma in her uniform of dress and apron, tending to the feast. There was always enough food to feed an army, and some years the number of people attending came close to army numbers. The house was filled with sounds of family, babies crying, laughter and sometimes raised voices as someone was trying to get their point across in a heated discussion. Each year we would gather to open gifts, visit with relatives, and sit down together at the Christmas feast. At the time, I never realized the impact these memories would have for me. It is what helped to give me my sense of belonging to a family. I know where I came from and who I belong to.

It has been many years since I spent a Christmas in Durham. It was time for me to start my own traditions for my children in their home. However, each year I remember the holidays of the past and the cast of characters that helped to shape them. It always brings a smile to my face and sometimes a tear to my eye.

When learning that the farm house would be emptied, I became very sad. I thought of my mother and how hard this task would be for her. She was born and grew up in that house and I'm sure every room holds a memory for her. I also thought of myself and it seemed as if a piece of my life was ending. It meant that Grandpa and Grandma were really gone. Through this grief I realized that the house and its possessions aren't what is important. They never were. The memories I hold in my heart of my wonderful grandparents and the occasions we held in their home will be with me always. Their love for family I can pass down to another generation and hope they will continue it with their own. Norman and Evelyn Teator were hard working people who were blessed with long lives. They raised their children, saw many grandchildren and even a few great-grandchildren. Each of us that knew and loved them were touched by their presence in our lives. As I continue to remember their home and the Christmases of past, I know that the greatest gift they gave me was themselves and all the memories that go with that. I will love them forever.