



Clafin Family Association

The Clafin Connection

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Editor's Letter

In the year that we have a white woman and a black man vying for the Democratic party's nomination for president, it seems appropriate that the Clafin Family Association's reunion this year is featuring Sarah Longman Payne's portrayal of Victoria Clafin Woodhull, who ran for president in 1872. She was the first woman to run for president and her running mate was Frederick Douglas. Although they garnered only 15,000 votes (some say it was 3,000), one wonders what the vote would have been had their constituency had been allowed to vote.

Victoria is remembered mostly for promoting "free love." The "free love" that she promoted was not the free love of the sixties. She meant that a woman should be free to leave a marital relationship that was harmful to her well being. This was not a popular idea at the time, and she was vilified by the press as "Mrs. Satan."

Given the time, it is not surprising that this "first" did not make the history books. With the rise of the feminist movement, Victoria has emerged as an enlightened and forward-looking woman.

Unlike other suffragettes of her time, she did not come from a privileged background. Her father, the post master in Homer, Ohio, was run out of town after being suspected of embezzlement.

In recent years, several books have been written about her. One is left to discern the true history of Mrs. Woodhull. I suggest you consult Amazon.com for a list of books.

There also are several websites. Two are listed here.

<http://www.victoria-woodhull.com/library.htm>;
<http://www.feminista.com/archives/v1n7/wilson.html>.

Hope to see you in Wenham,

Susan Rich

Oh Victoria Comes to Wenham

She was the first woman to run for President of the United States (1872); she was the first woman to testify before a committee of Congress; with her sister, she was the first woman to own a brokerage firm on Wall Street; she believed women should be free to choose who they love, and she also was the first to promote suffrage for all people irrespective of gender or race.

Sarah Longman Payne will portray Victoria Clafin Woodhull at the Clafin Family Association reunion in Wenham, MA, Saturday July 28th.



Victoria Woodhull's Memorial to Congress, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, 1871

Dr. Payne discovered Victoria while she was researching her doctoral dissertation. She describes Victoria as her "alter ego." She has been touring with the show since 1997.

In 2000, Dr. Payne was invited to perform in Ohio as part of a group of actors representing famous Ohioans.

While in Ohio, she visited Joe and Bea Berg (members of the Clafin Family Association) who maintain files on Victoria for the Homer Historical Society.

Mrs. Berg is Victoria's fifth cousin; Mr. Berg describes Victoria as a "very far-sighted woman." and claims that, after Victoria moved to England, she offered to give money to the first person who flew across the Atlantic Ocean. Victoria died on the same day as the famous Lindbergh flight.

Dr. Payne has taught history, public speaking and women's studies at several colleges and served as the cultural affairs officer at the American Embassy in Trinidad.

She is well-studied in Victoria Woodhull history, and when asked why "free love" is mentioned in the publicity, she said, "I use that because it always gets a crowd."

A Word from the President

Greetings to Claflins everywhere! We had a great reunion in Mystic, CT last summer, and we are looking forward to another on July 28 this year at the Wenham Museum/Claflin-Richards House in Wenham, MA. We will have a note of excitement with Victoria Claflin Woodhull (actually Sarah Longman Payne, Ph. D., an accomplished actress) telling us about Victoria's life and times. Make your summer plans early. Attend Sarah's presentation and visit with her at the tea afterwards. Tour the Claflin-Richards House and enjoy the museum galleries. It will be a wonderful day!

Our progress in the last year: Primarily, the near completion of a Claflin Family Cookbook, carefully compiled by Board member Debbie Deptula. 59 persons contributed 147 recipes, and these were painstakingly retyped and reformatted by Debbie. The copy is now at the printers. Watch the www.claflin.org website for an announcement of availability and how to order. On the disappointing side, we have been required to cancel the 2007 Scotland trip. If there is anyone out there who would like to put a trip together for 2008, please let me know at whclaflin@cox.net or phone 401-421-1855. This can be done either by ourselves or with a tour company.

With great pleasure I wish to acknowledge the following persons for their contributions through last summer to the Association, the Friends, and/or the Beverly Dolleman memorial. You make our work possible and worthwhile. My apologies for any errors or omissions.

Kathryn Aldrich, CT; Joseph and Beatrice Berg, OH; Kenneth Blake, CT; George and Cecilia Claflin, NJ. Claflin: Daniel and Suzanne, WA; David, CO; Howard and Linda, IL; Muriel, CO; Nelson and Doris, VT; Robert, MI; Ronald and Dorothy, CO; William and Eunice, RI; and William J., FL.

Edward B. Clay, Jr., PA; Arthur and Peg Darrah, NH; Angela Dulce DeLara, CT; Nadine Freese, VA; Harold and Margaret Haley, VA; William McKinley Johnson, DC; Keith and Heather Long, NC; Jeff and Izumi Ludgate, MA; John and Judy Ludgate, NH; Mary Messenger, CT; John Pillis, CT; Jennie Lou Rodgers, NY; Mary Shepard, FL; Barbara Ann Smith, NY; Sandra Atkinson Wagner, NH; Lorraine Walters, CO; and Elizabeth Zaorski, FL

My sincere thanks to you all,
Bill Claflin

On Board

The Board considered how it keeps mailing lists. The overall plan is to have three lists: an Active List; an Acquisition List, and an Inquiries List. It is recommended that people who want to continue to receive newsletters and other communications contact the Association. An email list will be developed separately.

Judy Ludgate, treasurer, presented income and expenditure figures. With the assistance of Association member Lee McClafflin, the 19 Fidelity Funds in which the Association is invested were examined and found to have performed well. Trading two of the funds that have a two-star rating is being considered; the other funds all have four-star ratings.

It was agreed to move forward with the publication of the Claflin Family Cookbook, which will be available at the reunion in July.

The group agreed to invite Sarah Longman Payne to perform *Oh Victoria* at the reunion this summer. There was some discussion regarding the appropriateness of the subject material for young children. A program designed especially for younger children will be provided by the Wenham Museum.

Information will be available at the July meeting regarding the requirements and process to apply for Claflin Family Association scholarship. Claflin family members who attend either Boston University or Claflin University will be eligible to apply for funding. The scholarships are limited to these two colleges because Lee Claflin had a part in the founding of both schools.

Possible sites for the 2008 reunion were suggested. The Charlestown Navy Yard in Boston and Strawberry Bank in Portsmouth, NH are among those being considered

President Bill Claflin reported that plans for an Association trip to Scotland have been cancelled.

The Claflin Family Cookbook

Board member Deborah Deptula spent the last year gathering recipes from the Claflin family. The *Claflin Family Cookbook* will be available at the Reunion for \$10 per copy. It is dedicated to Beverly Dolleman who was the beloved secretary and collector of historic material for the Claflin Family Association for many years.

The cookbook contains about 150 recipes from family members and interesting tidbits about Claflin ancestry and family.

Information will be posted on the Claflin Family Association website at www.claflin.org. If you are unable to attend the reunion July 28th, you may place a mail order with a flat charge of \$1.50 for shipping and handling.

In the meantime, if you are dying for something "Scottish," visit the website http://www.rampantscotland.com/recipes/blrecipe_index.htm.

Reunion 2007

Clafin Family Association

Wenham, Massachusetts
Saturday – July 28, 2007

Friday evening

5:00 p.m. Cocktails and dinner at the Hawthorne Hotel in Salem

Saturday Morning

9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.	Open Executive Board Meeting
9:15 a.m.	Registration Opens
9:15 – 10:55	Coffee and mingling
10:15 – 11:45	Children's program – Wenham Museum staff
11:00 – 11:45	Annual Business Meeting

Saturday Afternoon

12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00	<i>Oh Victoria</i> – in four scenes: "Lady of the Manor;" "I Announce Myself a Candidate;" "Yes, I am a Free Lover," and "The Beecher – Tilton Love Affair" Performed by Sarah Longman Payne
1:00 – 2:30	Children's program – Wenham Museum staff
2:15 – 3:45	Afternoon tea
2:30 – 3:30	Clafin-Richards House Tours
3:45	Reunion "officially" ends

Saturday Evening

5:00 Informal gathering

The Wenham Museum will be open from 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. Children's programs are presented by Museum staff and focus on Colonial living and crafts.

Official Clafin-Richards House tours will be from 10 – 11 in the morning and 2:30 – 3:30 in the afternoon. For information about museum exhibits and program and the Clafin Richards House visit their website at www.wenhammuseum.org

Reunion planners would like to hear from you. Please email Clafin.reunion@gmail.com or phone 781-710-0637 if you will be attending these events. Planners appreciate an idea of the number of people to expect.

Last year the informal gatherings on Friday night and Saturday night were great fun. If you're planning to spend a few days, we hope you will join us.

Clafin Family Association

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**We're on the
web at
www.clafin.org**

E-mail: Clafin.Connection@gmail.com

Reunion photos - 2006

