

newsletter

"Wynkefeld The Saxon held honor and fee, ere William The Norman came over the sea"

... Ancient Suffolk England Rhyme

Vol. VI, No. 2

Special Meeting Edition, 1992



WFS Reno special meeting issue

Everything you need to know . . . to go!

Reno meeting highlights May 15-17, 1992

There must be a reason most of the same members come to the WFS annual meetings, year after year. A survey of this hard core of regulars, reveals the meetings are most interesting, but the pleasure of seeing friends and family heads the list of reasons. Why don't you find out for yourself the enjoyable experience it is to attend an annual meeting?

The board of directors will meet on Thursday, May 15 at 2pm at the Airport



George Wingfield's home
Reno, NV

Plaza Hotel, where we will be staying. Officers and board members are requested to plan to be in Reno for this meeting. Incidentally board meetings are open to any member that wants to attend.

See Page 10 - Highlights

Nevada & Reno Facts

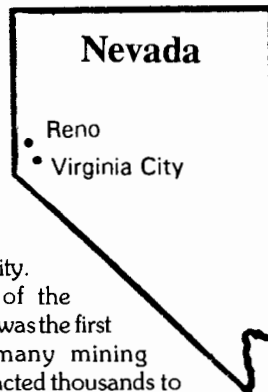
The name, Nevada is Spanish for "snow-capped." It first appeared in 1858 in legislation proposing a new territory to be called, "Sierra Nevada," later shortened to just "Nevada."

In the 1850's gold, and later silver was discovered on the south flank of Sun Mountain, near what is now Virginia City. The discovery of the Comstock Lode was the first of Nevada's many mining booms that attracted thousands to the Territory.

Nevada was admitted to the Union as our 36th state on October 31, 1864. It's capitol is Carson City, just a few miles south of Reno.

Virginia City's mines began to fade in the 1880s, however around the turn of the century, new major silver and gold deposits were discovered in Tonopah and Goldfield, starting another boom.

See Page 10 - Facts



Who was George Wingfield?

Selection of the city of Reno, Nevada for our annual meeting was swayed by George Wingfield's presence there in the early 1900s, with influence so strong that some called him, "The King of Nevada." There is no question he made an impact on the state as he gained stature from the turn of the century until his death in 1959.

He was born in Arkansas in 1876 eventually moving to the railroad town of Winnemucca, Nevada in 1896 by way of California and Oregon. Reportedly an "incorrigible boy," he left home at an early age to work as a cowhand, a jockey and a gambler. He later moved to Golconda, Nevada in 1898 and Tonopah in 1901. At first he relied on his gambling skills for economic support, earning enough to buy into a partnership in a successful club, and later into real estate, hotels and banks.

In 1902 he began acting as a representative for Winnemucca banker George S. Nixon, a state agent for the powerful Southern Pacific Railroad. Together they began investing in common ventures, buying and trading mining stocks, and loaning money to prospectors and businesses at a healthy 8% interest. Wingfield also had private investments of his own, including mining claims.

By 1904 a new mining town of Goldfield

See Page 14 - Wingfields in History

WFS "Some Records" book is out All have been mailed to those ordering at early prices

After several months of tedious monitoring and follow-up, the printers of the WFS second major book, "Some Records of the Wingfield Family" was received by Susan and Terry Cavanagh in Athens, GA on December 26. "Sorry, it did not get out in time for Christmas," Susan apologized, "We did our best, but complications delayed delivery."

It is magnificent and will be a welcome addition to any library. Wilsie Carr, who had loaned her original copy as a master for reproduction, compared the new book with her 1925 edition stated, "it is even better as

it includes a full color photograph of the famous Tickencote picture and is printed on acid free paper." This Tickencote picture depicts the characters in the book.

One hundred one members of the WFS purchased the book at pre-publication prices, but the regular price will only be a few dollars more for the remaining 124 copies left to be sold. Orders came from all over the U.S. and

See Page 10 - "Some Records"

Special Reno Edition

This extra issue of the Newsletter is published in connection of the upcoming annual meeting to be held in Reno, May 15-17, 1992.

Most of the articles revolve around the meeting, general information concerning Reno and the area, and George Wingfield, so renown in the early 1900s.

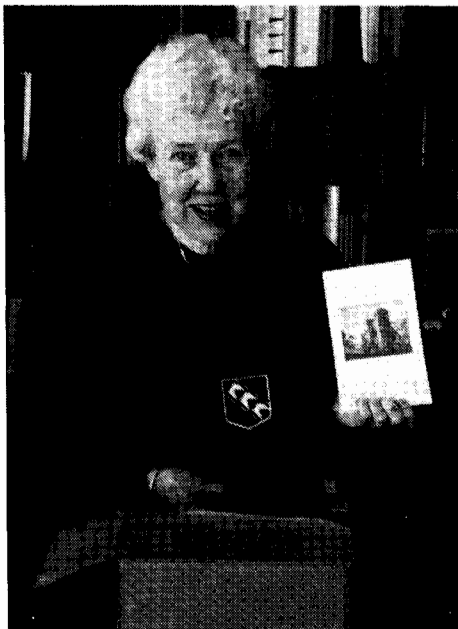
Many of the regular features have not been included and will resume with the regular spring issue to come out in April. You will note we did slip in a couple important announcements.

From Page 9 - "Some Records"

one from England.

Bob Wingfield, president of the WFS and Lord of the Manor of Wingfield, remarked that the book would be an excellent addition to libraries all over the country and he hoped that many WFS members would purchase a copy for their local library. Each book given to a library will give permanent credit to the donor of the book. There will be more on this later on how to donate a book.

The color photograph was provided by WFS member John Parry-Wingfield of Empingham, England, who is the nephew of the author and owns the original of the very valuable Tickencote picture. It hangs in his



Susan Cavanagh opens first book from printer

home. John had his picture professionally copied and we are grateful to him for this kindness that now makes a color copy of this picture available to every member that purchases the book.

Reports from those that have received the new book have been excellent. "Beautiful, excellent, extremely interesting are the adjectives frequently used.

The regular price will now be \$35 and includes postage anywhere in the U. S. For our foreign members, if they are willing to have the books shipped by surface (Seamail) the postage is not much higher than in the U.S., but will take about 6 or 7 weeks to most countries. If interested, ask for the price.

For ordering send your check for \$35 to: Wingfield Family Society, Rt 4, Box 1208, Ashland, VA 23005. Mark your check, "Some Records Book."

About the Hotel, Reno's Airport Plaza Hotel

With all the splashy, neon lighted hotels, name entertainment, casinos and excitement in downtown Reno, some may wonder why the site selection committee picked an airport hotel for our 1992 meeting. There were several reasons.

First, The Airport Plaza Hotel does not have glitz and glitter of a major casino hotel. The committee did not feel this was appropriate for our group. The hotel is friendly, intimate, modern, immaculately clean and just about the right size for our group. We will not be lost in crowds of flashy tourists and boisterous gamblers. We will probably be the only group in the hotel. It has an excellent restaurant and the meeting facilities are convenient to the sleeping rooms.

Second, we have a great group rate for the quality of hotel. . . only \$62 twin (double) or triple, and \$52 single, per night.

Third, it could not be more convenient. If you are flying in, there is complimentary shuttle service from baggage claim right to the hotel. Driving? There is plenty of free parking.

Fourth, for those that want to explore and experience the excitement of Reno, the hotel has a shuttle that will take you to nearby Ballys. This mammoth hotel and casino has acres of casinos, and if you have not been to Nevada before it is truly an adventure. Want to go downtown? The hotel also runs a scheduled shuttle to the center of Reno where you can observe the many varieties and types of hotels and casinos. Reno is not large and downtown is only minutes away.

Yes, you can gamble in the Airport Plaza Hotel, but it is subdued. Choose from slot machines, electronic blackjack or draw poker.

All in all, we think it is a good choice and believe you will too. There is a hotel reservation card enclosed with this newsletter. Mail it in right away (19 cent stamp) to get a room reserved. Or better yet, call (toll free) 1-800-648-3525. They will accept all major credit card to guarantee your room.

From Page 9 - Facts

In 1931, Nevada legalized gambling as a means of raising tax revenues and stabilizing the state's economy. In the 30's and the depression, Las Vegas was an insignificant village and Reno was the tourism capital of Nevada, famous for gambling and quick divorces.

Reno still thrives and is known, as it has been for years, "the Biggest Little City in the World." It offers large city amenities along with small town intimate service. Tourism (entertainment and sightseeing) and for those who want it, gambling that glitters around the

clock. Northwest Nevada (the Reno area) has many reminders of its rich heritage in historic communities like Virginia City and Carson City. Lake Tahoe has risen to become another tourist mecca, with water activities, snow skiing, sightseeing and of course, gambling.

The route along U. S. Highway 50 in central Nevada has been called "the Loneliest Road in America" as one can re-trace the fabled Pony Express Trail where relics of long-deserted stations are still visible at several locations.

You may want to come early or stay a few days after the meeting to personally see more of this area.

Send your membership renewal dues in NOW

Dee Epps, membership chairman requests that the members paying dues yearly, should make their check to the Wingfield Family Society for \$25 (covers all family members at a single address). Should you want to renew for 5 years the fee is \$100.00, saving \$20. Note on your check. "Dues Renewal" and mail to:

Wingfield Family Society
Attention: Lynn Wingfield
Rt 4, Box 1208
Ashland, VA 23005

We value your membership and urge all to send in renewal checks today!

From Page 9 - Highlights

Officially the meeting starts on Friday May 16. There will be a registration desk upstairs adjacent to the meeting room where we congregate. Here, each will receive an envelope containing a name badge, function tickets, list of attendees, a final program and other miscellaneous information.

Nearby will be genealogy computer demonstrations by Vance Wingfield who has entered records of about 16,000 family members into the "Family Roots" program and will be able to update and printout data on demand. It is doubtful that he will be able to print out individual family pedigree charts as some run 90 pages or more in length.

Lennie Mills, Gerry and Betty Dutton will staff the popular Wingfield Store displaying the various personalized and specialized Wingfield items that are for sale. These items cannot be obtained anywhere else.

Susan and Terry Cavanagh will be there with the new WFS book, "Some Record of the Wingfield Family" for the attendees to see and, if they like, purchase a copy. Buying at the meeting will save a few dollars as there is no postage as long as copies on hand last. There will also be at least one copy of the

To Page 11 - Highlights

Virgil H. Wedge, main speaker knew George Wingfield

When George Wingfield was active in Nevada politics a young attorney, Virgil Wedge, handled legal matters for him. We are pleased indeed, to find this attorney, still practicing law in Reno, who knew and worked with George Wingfield during those interesting years. Virgil even prepared George's will.

Virgil Wedge is with the law firm of Woodburn, Wedge and Jeppson in Reno. We found him at his desk, hard at work but only after considerable legwork, seeking someone that actually knew George Wingfield and willing to talk to us about this acquaintanceship. We don't know the subject of Mr. Wedge's talk, but we asked that he share some antidotes about him to give a better insight into his personality and character.

When contacted to meet with us, Mr. Wedge could not have been more gracious and it promises to be an event you will never forget. Mr. Wedge will be at the final banquet on Saturday, May 16 in Reno. Be there!

Special Airline fares to Reno meeting on Delta

Larry Epps, WFS member and employee of Delta Airlines has displayed initiative in arranging a meeting discount with his airline for Wingfield Family Society members to fly to Reno from many US cities for the meeting.

Basically it works like this: Delta has approved and registered with their meeting's department, discounts for WFS members flying to the Reno meeting anytime during the period May 11 to May 19. So members can go a couple of days early and stay a day or two after the meeting and still qualify for the discount.

All travel must be entirely on Delta. The rate is 40% (no advance purchase required or penalty for cancellation or changing) off the published coach fare or a 5% discount (severe penalty for cancellation or changing) off most other already discounted fares and tickets usually must be purchased at least 7 days prior to departure.

To get the discount, either the passenger

or his travel agent must call a special toll free number 1-800 221-1212, and give a file reference number A60080. Keep these numbers available as your travel agent may not have them.

While Delta is one of the finest airlines left, no one airline can have the most desirable schedules from all cities nor always the lowest fares, even with an additional discount. To be assured you are getting the best time schedule at the lowest fare, it is suggested you have your travel agent quote the various flight schedules giving the lowest applicable published and promotional fares, irrespective of airline. Then you can compare rates (and schedules) and make a judgement whether you are getting the best schedules at the lowest fare. If the Delta special is best for you, have the travel agent call and make your reservation. A compromise in departure or arrival times, or an extra connection may be required for you to fly Delta, utilizing their discount. Delta has excellent schedules from many cities so this could be an opportunity to hold down your travel costs.

From Page 10 - Highlights

"Muniment Book" for you to see and possibly purchase.

The meeting will officially open at 1pm with a welcome by the Mayor of Reno, Honorable Peter J. Sierrazza, after which the business meeting will convene.

There will be election of four new directors, who will have been nominated from the membership prior to the meeting, updates on the board meeting, other activity reports and interesting announcements. The agenda is under the direction of our president, Bob Wingfield.

This evening, the fellowship continues with a reception and dinner. This will be an informal affair and final details have not been consummated at this time. Don't be surprised if the Lord of the Manor, calls call his court. Should there be young Wingfields, either members or guests, there will be special activities for them. Sorry, minimum gambling age is 21. After dinner we plan to re-open the Wingfield Store and proceed with more computer demonstrations.

Saturday, May 16 will be a big day. Wear your western attire. Buses will depart from the hotel for a full day of sightseeing and reminiscing about George Wingfield. We will

see his old home, at least one of his hotels and Wingfield Park before driving to nearby Sparks to visit his Spanish Springs Ranch. The ranch lacks upkeep but it will give all a feeling for one of his most beloved properties.

From the town of Sparks the coaches will drive to historic Virginia City. This fascinating frontier town will take you back in time to the 1800's. They have done an outstanding job of retaining the atmosphere as it was then. Our first stop is the Delta Saloon where we will go upstairs for a private lunch.

Wander the streets of the old mining town, stop at one or more of the museums, visit a gold mine, ride the Virginia & Truckee Railroad, see Pipe's Opera House, or just sample the casinos, shops and authentic saloons. It'll be lots of fun!

Return to Reno in time for a reception and the final banquet. Our guest speaker for this event is Virgil Wedge an attorney from Reno that knew and worked with George Wingfield.

A registration form is enclosed with this newsletter. Mail it in right away. It is important that we get an idea of the numbers that will be attending, otherwise we cannot always get an extra bus or other larger facilities on short notice. **Again, please register today.**

newsletter

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Editor:
Robert E. Carr
(813) 461-4187

OFFICERS

Robert W. Wingfield . . . President
Dale Ruf Vice Pres
Betty Wingfield Sec.
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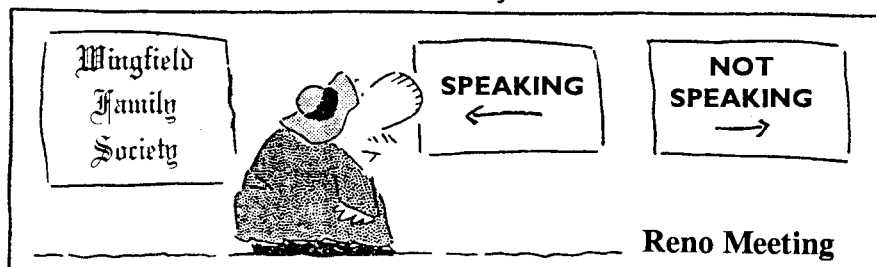
Appointed:

Bob Carr - Newsletter
Dee Epps - Membership
Linnie Mills - Wingfield Store
Lee Preston - Genealogy
Jocelyn Wingfield - Historian
Vance Wingfield - Computer

Elected:

Maria Butler Michael Walker
Gerald Dutton Bud Wingfield
Dee Epps Jocelyn Wingfield
Ken Wingfield

For our members
Single Issue Cost \$4.00



Local Wingfield Reunions

In addition to the annual meeting of the Wingfield Family Society, usually in May of each year, there are several local Wingfield reunions. We will publish these annually if the appropriate reunion coordinator will keep the newsletter informed about details and dates. At this time, the following have been tentatively arranged:

Colorado: Joint reunion with the Allison family. (Joseph Edward Wingfield, b. 1864, married Areadne May Allison). It is held Sunday before Memorial Day, each spring in Wray, CO at the Vet's Hall. All gather at noon for a pot lunch. It is very informal.

All Wingfields are invited. Contact Gail Wingfield Mansfield, 12945 Co Rd HH,



Elva Wingfield and Billie Wingfield of Phoenix and Mayer, AZ at past reunion

Idalia, CO 80735. Phone (303) 354-7363.

Arkansas: Joint reunion with the Clark family. It is held every year on the second Sunday in June. This year it will be June 14, at the Center Grove Methodist Church located between Gurdon and Okalona, Arkansas. There is a church service, then a business meeting, followed by a picnic. Bring your own food. Usually 150 to 200 attend from a wide area, but the majority from Clark, County, Arkansas. This reunion has been held annually since 1938.

All Wingfield are invited. Contact James W. Wingfield, 900 Maple Street, Gurdon, AK 71743, phone (501) 353-2228.

Arizona: In 1992, scheduled for Saturday August 25, at a mountain location to be announced. Usually a fabulous barbeque and Wingfields come from all over the state, numbering 100 or more. All Wingfields are invited. Contact Elva Wingfield, 4438 Camelback #143, Phoenix, AZ 85018, phone (602) 952-0558.

WFS members please notify the editor of this newsletter for other local reunions held anywhere in the world. We will happily publish the information.

George Wingfield's Grandchildren

One of the first questions that came to mind when we were setting up the meeting in Reno, re-living interesting George Wingfield history, is: does he have any descendants, and if so who and where are they.

The answer is yes and along with this article is an abbreviated pedigree chart showing the male ancestors of George Wingfield

WFS. The first granddaughter was Sandra Daba (b. 1936). Sandra lives in Palm Desert, California and has a daughter, Duffie, age 23. Duffie just married this past November and lives in Blackfoot, Idaho. The second granddaughter is Melinda Price who is featured as our profile in the issue of the newsletter, with



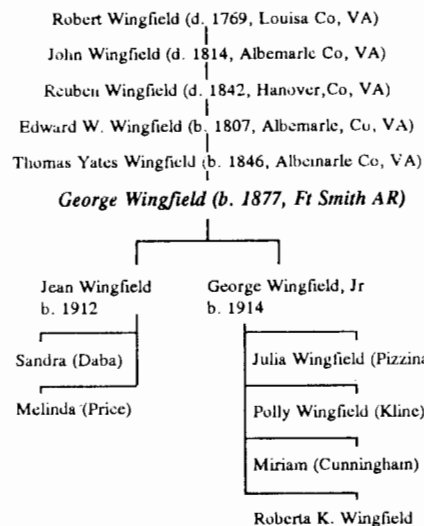
Sandra Daba

photo and more details there.

The second child of George Wingfield was George, Jr. who had two marriages. His marriage to Susan "Dulce" Parker produced one daughter, Julia Pizzinat (another granddaughter of George Wingfield, also a member of the WFS), who has four children, Jason, age 23, Sheldon, 24, Christopher 27 and Victoria 28. Jason and Sheldon are in college, Victoria lives in Hawaii and Christopher works with his father in Pasadena, CA.

George, Jr.'s second marriage to Jessie Kauffmann, resulted in three daughters (grandchildren of George), Polly, Miriam and Roberta. Polly is Mrs. Wingfield Kline living in Menlo Park, CA; Miriam is Mrs. Ron Cunningham of Portland, OR; and Roberta is Dr. Roberta Wingfield of Santa Monica, CA.

George Wingfield Immediate ancestors and descendants



and his descendants. The basic information has been supplied by members of George Wingfield's family.

George Wingfield married Maude Murdock in 1908. This marriage produced two children, Jean (b. 1912) and a son George, Jr. (b. 1914).

Jean, had two daughters (granddaughters of George) who are both members of the



Left to right, granddaughters, Polly Kline, Miriam Cunningham Julie Pizzinat and Roberta Wingfield

WFS MEMBER PROFILE:

Melinda Burgard Price



Melinda Price

George Wingfield (1876-1959) had such an influence on Nevada it is easy to be overwhelmed by his role in that state's history, forgetting he had a family. Three of his descendants are members of the Wingfield Family Society. One is Melinda Price whose story follows.

Melinda was born Melinda Clark on August 10, 1939 in San Francisco, CA. Her mother was Jeanne Wingfield and father Leonard Francis Clark. She has one sister Sandra "Sandy" Daba 3 1/2 years older. Her parents literally met on a slow boat to China, a tramp steamer out of Hong Kong in 1937, bound for the island of Hainan, where Leonard Clark, a writer was to do an article for National Geographic on the "Big Knot Loie," a rarely seen tribe. Her mother was on the same boat on an adventure of her own. Her mother, a fun loving person with friends all over the world, had a way of making all those around her feel very special.

Leonard Clark was born in 1906, his parents had lived in the Yukon for some years during the gold rush. He was an explorer and author of five books on his travels, including "The Rivers Ran East," written in 1953. During World War II, he was an Army Lt. Colonel in the U.S. Intelligence with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), working behind Japanese and Red Army lines in China. Before the war he had traveled extensively in the far east. His travels after the war took him to every part of the world. In between, he wrote of his adventures in his log cabin in the rugged Santa Cruz Mountains of northern California. While on a diamond mining expedition in the Amazon forest in 1957, he and two others lost their lives when their boat capsized on the Caroni River in Venezuela.

In late 1941 the family moved to a ranch

in northern California, where Melinda's parents raised cattle. Her father went to war in 1942, so they had to sell the ranch and moved with her mother and sister to San Francisco. They lived there until late 1944, when they moved to Portland, Oregon. Her parents divorced in 1946, and her mother remarried John C. Burgard, who adopted Melinda, so she legally became Melinda Burgard. She attended boarding high school in Marin County, CA just a few miles from where she lives today. She would take the overnight train between Oakland and Portland several times a year to go home from school for four years.

In 1957 the family moved back to California, living part of the time in San Francisco and weekends in the Napa Valley. It was in the summer of 1957 that Melinda met her husband to be, Morgan Weston Price, whose parents had bought a ranch next door and where they raised wine grapes. Morgan had just gotten out of the army and moved into his parents ranch house.

In the fall of 1957 she started her first year at Mills College across the bay in Oakland. Morgan devoted a lot of time driving between Napa Valley to see Melinda in Oakland and to his job in San Francisco. They decided getting married would save gas and did so on February 8, 1958 at a resort in Riverside, CA. Melinda was 18, Morgan was 23. It was a double wedding as her sister Sandy also married at the same time.

Melinda and Morgan lived in San Francisco for three years, then moved to Marin County and started their family. Marin County is where Morgan had lived while Melinda was at boarding school. They have three daughters, Holly C. Price, now 30 who works in the district attorney's office, Lisa P. Olson is 27, married to Norman K. Olson and they have Melinda and Morgan's only grandchild, Emma Jean who is 1 1/2. Carolyn is their youngest daughter, 24 and is the office manager for an advertising firm. Their children all live less than 1/2 hour away from them.

Morgan has been in banking until he retired in 1989, and now works for Marin County.

After the children were all ensconced in daytime schools in the mid-70's, Melinda went to "tax school." She worked for seven years preparing income tax returns for the public with H & R Block. With that experience in 1983 she joined a CPA firm. A couple of years later she passed the IRS exam and became an Enrolled Agent which allows her to represent clients before the IRS. The work is very intense from January to April 15, then lets up for the rest of the year.

Melinda's mother, Jeanne Wingfield is the daughter of George Wingfield and Maude Murdoch. Her mother was born in her parent's house on Court Street in Reno, NV. She told

many stories about her upbringing in Reno on the banks of the Truckee River. Their back garden ran all the way down to the water in the early days, but today there is a road between the garden and "Wingfield Park" on the river. The house is still there but now is owned by the man next door, a plastic surgeon who owns most of the block. Melinda remembers spending a number of vacations in that house and at the Spanish Springs Ranch on the outskirts of Sparks, Nevada. The ranch is still there, looking almost the same as in the early days. Melinda's mother, lived the last 28 years of her life in Palm Desert in the Mojave Desert of California where she died in 1986. Her uncle, George Wingfield, Jr., lived his whole adult life in Reno, where he worked with his father until Christmas day 1959 when George, Sr. died. George Jr. graduated from Stanford business school and was a stock broker and involved in the commercial development of Reno. He died in 1987 and his widow, Jane Turner Wingfield still lives in Reno. He was the father of four children. (See related article in this newsletter on "George Wingfield's Grandchildren.")

Melinda recalls her grandfather, George Wingfield very well and remembers, "As I was twenty when he died, my sister Sandy and I have many fond memories of him. His Spanish Springs Ranch was a favorite place for us kids to go during the forties and fifties. He raised prize winning Quarter horses and there were many cattle on the property. It was great fun for us to ride horses all day, play in the barns, collect the eggs, etc. Granddad was a crack shot and always took a rifle with him on his walks around the property, and would shoot the carp that got in the lakes from the irrigation ditches, because they ate the trout fingerlings. He also raised black labradors, keeping some and giving the best to the Guide Dogs in San Rafael, CA. I never saw him that he wasn't wearing a three piece suit, summer or winter, with his watch chain across his vest. He always wore a hat, felt in the winter, straw in the summer. He loved good food, and his table groaned with fresh food all raised on the ranch: eggs, meat, vegetables, to butter and cream. In Reno every day he walked down the hill from his house to his office on Virginia St., or to the Riverside Hotel. Sometimes I walked with him. He did not speak much at all, but when he did, people tended to listen. All the time I was growing up he wrote me a short one page letter once a week, often enclosing a crisp two dollar bill, and of course I had to write back and tell him my news, or he would contact my mother and ask why I hadn't written.. As I look back on this now I find it unbelievable he found the time to do this. Of course I stupidly

See Page 14 - Melinda Price

Wingfields in History

From Page 9 - Wingfields

Who was George Wingfield?

was booming as was the partnership of Wingfield and Nixon. They began to invest in banks for the new community. Nixon, 16 years Wingfield's senior, impressed his partner to give up his gambling and concentrate exclusively on their joint business ventures. Eventually Wingfield took this advice but retained a nervous habit of shuffling stacks of silver dollars together with one hand while thinking, but he never relied on gambling again to earn his living.

Within a matter of a few years, George Wingfield underwent a miraculous metamorphosis, from rough and boisterous cowhand and faro dealer to dignified multimillionaire investor. In 1908 he rose to the social scene by marrying a San Francisco banker's daughter, Maude Murdoch. The instrument of his transformation was the Goldfield Consolidated Mines Company, which he founded in partnership with now Senator Nixon. They drew substantial eastern capital from Bernard Baruch and Henry Clay Frick, among others. Wingfield and Nixon were able to combine six of the richest gold claims in the astounding boom town of Goldfield. The resulting company, capitalized at \$50 million, thus avoided dissipating its considerable profits in fielding lawsuits brought by rivals and made its principals multimillionaires overnight. It is believed Wingfield's net worth was between \$20 and \$30 million. He was 30 years old.

During the next six years, George Wingfield and Senator Nixon extended their banking empire throughout the state, while the Goldfield Consolidated continued to pay handsome dividends.

He became a Republican as was Nixon, although he had been elected as a delegate to the Nye County Democratic Party Convention in 1902. In 1910 Wingfield supported Nixon against a Democratic challenger and later from Senator Key Pittman. Nixon supervised Republican politics while Wingfield managed their joint ventures. In 1909, the two men amicably split their holdings, with Wingfield taking the Goldfield Consolidated Mines, and Nixon retaining the banks.

Wingfield moved to Reno in 1909 and the town remained his center of operations until his death in 1959. During most of this time Reno was the largest town and the political center of Nevada. It was also generally acknowledged of Wingfield's dominion, especially after the death of Senator Nixon in 1912. The demise of Nixon brought Wingfield

into the national limelight when he was offered an appointment to fill Nixon's seat by Republican Governor Tasker Oddie. His refusal of the senate seat, came only after consultation with Baruch, Frick and other prominent eastern backers. This refusal was made on the grounds that he could do more for the state by remaining there to take care of his business interest than by going to Washington. In the national press, Wingfield instantly became "the Cowboy that refused a Toga." His reasons for doing so were sound and shrewd. George Wingfield realized he was no politician. He was reserved, not charismatic, always more comfortable as a private businessman than a public figure. Instinctively he assumed the role of power behind the throne. This he played comfortably and enthusiastically for the next twenty years, until the Depression caused closure of his

Reno were considerable. He owned a ranch in nearby Sparks known as Spanish Springs. This was his favorite retreat after his rise to the top. Martha Spradling Wingfield, George's mother moved to Reno later in her life and lived only a few blocks from her son's home in Reno. She died in 1941 at the age of 91 "falling from a tree."

Even after his financial collapse in 1935, Wingfield remained an insider in Nevada Republican politics. He managed to rebuild his economic base and at his death in 1959, left an estate reputed to be between two and three million dollars.

Perhaps his greatest legacy is the modern tourist economy in Nevada based on legalized gambling. It is probably accurate to say George Wingfield was an early and significant force in shaping this very unique magnet that draws millions of visitors to the state each year.

George Wingfield descended from John Wingfield (Robina Langford), through their



Left to right, Sandra Deba, Jimmy Durante, George Wingfield and Melinda Price

banking chain in 1932 and led to his personal bankruptcy in 1935.

Upon Nixon's death, Wingfield assumed the mantle of financial leadership in Nevada's Republican party. He purchased from the Nixon estate all of the banking interests they formerly owned together. From this he went on to establish other banks. By 1932 his 12 banks controlled well over half the total deposits and perhaps 60 to 65 percent of loans outstanding in Nevada.

In addition Wingfield owned Reno's two largest hotels, the Golden, which he purchased in 1915, and the plush Riverside a popular resort for Reno's fashionable divorcees, which he built in 1927. The Golden was the location of Reno's infamous Bank Club.

In addition to his Nevada Stock Farm, which raised thoroughbred horses that raced throughout the country, Wingfield was also interested in ranching companies in Nevada and California, and in a pioneer rice-growing effort in Butte County, California. He founded and operated Nevada's only bonding company, the Nevada Surety and Bonding Company. His real estate holdings in the city of

son Reuben (Mary Anderson), their son Edward (Frances Gilmore) to his father, Thomas Y. (Martha Spradling).

Ed. Note: Much of this report was taken from Elizabeth Raymond's, speech at WFS meeting in Scottsdale, AZ in 1989. Ms. Raymond, Assistant Professor of History, (University of Nevada-Reno), has written a book tentatively titled, "Playing the Game: George Wingfield and Nevada." It will be published in the late summer of 1992 by University of Nevada Press, Reno, NV 89557.

From Page 13 - Melinda Price

didn't save any of the letters or the two dollar bills."

About six years ago, Melinda became interested in genealogy and what started as a casual interest became a favorite obsession. She plans to write a book for her children on her heritage and has targeted the turn of the century as a publication date. She belongs to a number of historical and genealogical societies all over the country, especially in areas she is researching. She is a charter member of the WFS.