

# The Gwynn Gazette

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## JOSHUA'S TALE

Joshua Gwynn, patriarch of the Gwynn Family, was born on August 10, 1826, somewhere in Maryland to Maryland-born parents. Although their names and their station in life are unknown, presumably one or both of them were slaves. In his early life, Joshua was owned by the Burton family in the Glen Arm/Long Green area of Baltimore County; however, at some point before 1854, he bought his freedom reportedly using money he was allowed to keep from stonemasonry jobs he worked after completing a day's work for the Burtons.

On March 5, 1854 he married Ellen Booth Johnson, and they had a son, Joshua Edward, in 1858. According to a divorce notice published in The Maryland Journal, Ellen deserted the Gwynn homestead in 1864, leaving the young Joshua Edward behind with his father. Joshua and Ellen were divorced in 1867. Joshua Edward, however, maintained close ties throughout his life with the elder Joshua.

(An interesting side note of Joshua and Ellen's marriage is a 1854 record of Ellen having purchased 25 year-old Joseph Gwynn from the Burtons. It is presumed Joseph was Joshua's brother; however, no further record of Joseph has been located.)

In 1868, Joshua married Margaret Jane Roberts, a 20 year-old teacher who worked at Dowden's Chapel in Putty Hill near Perry Hall. Margaret Jane was born October 16, 1848 in Nassaguayer, Holton County, Ontario, Canada, where she also received her education. She was the daughter of an Irish immigrant, Eleanor Eckley, and an as yet unidentified man born in Maryland. (Because Eleanor is listed as "white" and Margaret Jane is listed as "mulatto" in the 1880 census, it is presumed that Margaret Jane's

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## Extra! Extra!

Hot off the press, our first issue. All the news about the Gwynn Family that's fit to print. Milestones big and small: births, deaths, weddings, anniversaries, comings and goings and the like. Our hope is that The Gazette will become a kind of conversation, a way for the farflung members of the Gwynn Family to keep in touch. To accomplish our goal means that all of us have to put on our reporters' hats. When something of note happens to a member of the family that you'd like to share with the rest of us, pick up your Blackberry, laptop, or even pencil and paper, jot it down and send it to The Gazette, and we'll include it in our next issue. We can be reached online at

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## ***In Search of "The Source"***

*One of the many lingering questions about our heritage is the source of the family name. According to oral tradition, the name comes from a Caleb Gwynn Burton. So far, finding a Caleb Gwynn Burton has been a fruitless quest. To be "The Source", he would have had to be living in the mid-1850's, because by then, Joshua was using Gwynn as his surname. In all likelihood, he would have been an adult at that time. After tapping multiple sources, including present-day Burtons, the only Baltimore County Caleb Burton identified so far is Caleb Conner Burton (1863-1948), a former sheriff of the county. He is clearly not the one. Another lead to follow is Joseph Gwinn Burton (1807-1892), son of John Burton (1771-1852), an early Baltimore County Burton. Ah, the research continues. If you have any information on "The Source", please share. – Pat Roberts*

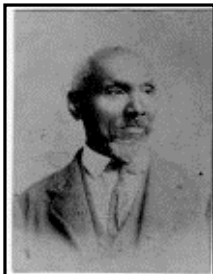
father was black.) Census records indicate that she came to the United States in 1865, apparently with her mother. It is unknown why Margaret Jane's maiden name was Roberts and Eleanor used Eckley as her surname.

In his younger days, Joshua is reported to have worked as a stonemason and carpenter; and over time he became a prosperous farmer and landowner. According to the earliest land purchase record that has been located, Joshua bought a portion of "Truman's Acquaintance" from James Burton in 1857 for \$200. In addition to the 200-acre farm in the Glen Arm area, Joshua reportedly acquired land and houses in Towson, Mount Washington and Glen Arm. According to his September 28, 1907, obituary in the Union, at the time of his death, he was among the largest land owners in that section of the county.

Along with being a wife, mother, homemaker and devoted organist and worker at Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church, Margaret Jane found time to write hymns, poetry and at least one play. One of the things for which she is fondly remembered by family and friends in the Mt. Zion community is the "Pigeon Coterie", a Bible study group primarily for young people.

Joshua and Margaret Jane had 13 children between the years 1869 and 1890 — Caleb, Solomon, Joseph, David, Louisa, Mary, Moses, Martha, the twins Margaret and Aaron, John, Benjamin, and Elijah. Of these, 11 lived to adulthood, and as early as 1880, everyone in the family could read and write.

Joshua died September 20, 1907, at age 81. Margaret Jane followed on February 1, 1935 at age 86. Both are buried at Mt. Zion — as are Eleanor Eckley, Joshua Edward, and most of Joshua and Margaret Jane's children



## MILESTONES

### Graduations – 2005

**Alix Roberts**, daughter of Fletcher and Karol Roberts, from The Hudson (Middle) School in Hoboken, NJ. In the fall, she will be a sophomore in the high school.

**Randi Roberts**, daughter of Fletcher and Karol Roberts, from The Hudson (High) School in Hoboken, NJ. This fall, she will be a sophomore at Brown University in Providence, RI.

**Shanika Walker**, granddaughter of Eva Scott, from Roland Park Middle School in Baltimore, MD. In the fall, she will be a sophomore at Digital Harbor High School.

### Graduations – 2006

**Tiffnie Brandt**, daughter of Bonita Barton, from Long Reach High School in Columbia, MD. In the fall, she will be a freshman at the University of Maryland in College Park, Maryland.

**Chris Lee**, son of Bonnie and Chris Briscoe, from the Western School of Technology and Environmental Sciences in Catonsville, MD. In the fall, he will be a freshman at Penn State University in Philadelphia, PA.

**Avá Roberts**, daughter of Donna Knight, from the Medical Technology program at the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Department of Medical and Research Technology. In 2004, Avá graduated from Wesley College in Dover, DE with a B.S. in biology. She will pursue a career in pathology at the Johns Hopkins University, where she is currently working. Avá has twice been the recipient of the Gwynn Family Educational Award.

**Shawan Walker**, granddaughter of Eva Scott, from the Nursing School at Howard Community College, adding an RN to her degree from Frostburg State College.

## MORE MILESTONES

### Happy Landing, Birthday Girl

In April, Beatrice Payne (Cousin Bea Bea to most of us) was on a flight home from Louisville. As the plane landed in Baltimore, a flight attendant returned a bouquet of flowers she had brought on board with her and asked her what was the occasion. Cousin Bea Bea explained that it was her birthday, and the flight attendant asked her which birthday she was celebrating. When Cousin Bea Bea told him (we'd never tell a lady's age), the flight attendant got everyone on board – the crew and passengers — to sing "Happy Birthday" to her.



### ANOTHER BOOK

Louis Diggs has published "North County," his seventh book on historic African-American communities in Baltimore County. It focuses on settlements in northern Baltimore County's horse country, including Glen Arm, Long Green, Forge Road and Loreley. It also features remembrances of our own Beatrice Payne, Moses L. Gwynn Jr. and Roberta Roberts. Interested? Contact the author at (410) 356-5259 or [Louis.Diggs@comcast.net](mailto:Louis.Diggs@comcast.net), or check out your local bookstore.

### Retirements

**LeVerne Kelley**, from The San Disk Corporation in San Jose, CA, October 2005.

**Patricia Roberts**, from the US Environmental Protection Agency in Washington, DC, January 2005.

### Birthdays

**Moses Lewis Gwynn, Jr.**, 90 on August 2, 2006

### Anniversaries

**Moses & Caroline Gwynn**, 67th wedding anniversary on August 10, 2006.

### Passings

**Leflie A. White**, August 8, 2004

**William Grier**, November 1, 2005

**Violet Pitchford Gwynn**, January 11, 2006

**Rose Gwynn Hodge**, January 12, 2005

### Relocations

**Monet and Curtis Humphries** from Palm Dale, CA, to Las Vegas, NV

**Gwynn and Joseph Olive** from Beverly, NJ, to Westly Chapel, FL

### *Special Thanks To*

Fran Levere for her contribution to the GFR Treasury  
Bonnie and Chris Briscoe, our hosts for this year's GFR picnic