



FAMILY REUNION

FAMILY IS EVERYTHING

AUGUST 12-14 • LORAIN, OHIO

Oh how good and how pleasant it is for families to dwell together in unity and love.

To God be the glory for the things he has done. We are related to see every one of you as we have come together from far and near to meet in fellowship. This is a great opportunity to enjoy ourselves as we get to know each other. As we fellowship with each other and reminisce on our past, we encourage each of you to enjoy our heritage and appreciate the legacy that was laid out for us to follow. Every opportunity to know and to understand where we came from and where we are going will help us better focus on our bright future.

Throughout the years we have met on occasions such as weddings, birthdays; for sickness and death. It seems we've always had an unspoken commitment to one another. But, it is more than that – it was the absolute bloodline that was binding and forever present.

We welcome each and every one of you to enjoy the blessings of "family" as we come together in a joyous time. We hope that every activity, word spoken, prayer made, or song sung will serve to be something memorable.



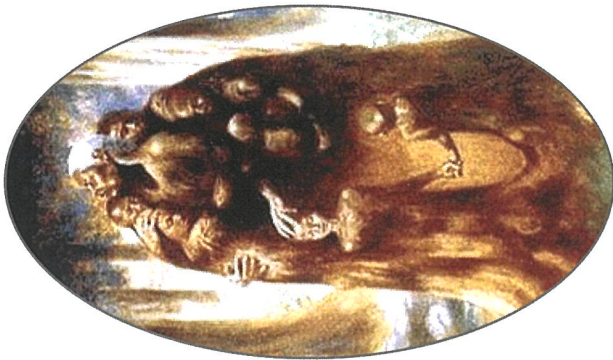
The Family Reunion Prayer

Father, we thank thee for the privilege of being together as a family. Father, as the generations grow farther apart, let them be brought together with the memory of the love ones who were once with us, but now live only in our memories. Father, strengthen the bond of relationship as we face the future, but always keep with us our ties of the past. **Amen**

Jones Family Reunion Committee

Shayla Wright
Sandra Wright
Harold Jones
Tamara Jones
Barbara Williams
Christine Mills
Deana Sutton
Thaddeus Farmer
Bruce Jones
Brian Jones
Laurie Jones

James Jones
Dennis Jones
Brenda Jones
Cherlyn Johnson
Vickie Williams
Cheryl Mills-Bryant
Cheryl Jones
LaQuanda Williams
Nickole Calhoun
Vickie Williams





A LETTER FROM THE OHIO REUNION COMMITTEE PRESIDENT

On behalf of the Ohio Reunion Committee I would like to formally welcome you to the **2016 Jones Family Reunion**. It's been way too long since we last got together and I am happy that we can come together to celebrate one another. We are a family that has a strong foundation that has molded each and every one of us into the men and women that we are today. We would like to honor those who have held us upon their shoulders and are proud to continue the legacy of such great people. During our time together I encourage everyone to take the time to learn our family history and to pass on our heritage to future generations.

A great deal of time, effort, and sacrifice was contributed to ensure that this is a memorable occasion, and I would like to personally thank each family member that worked so tirelessly.

We would also like to extend a special gratitude to those family members who made that journey from the South to be with their relatives in Ohio. We hope that your time in Ohio is enjoyable.

We have planned a weekend full of excitement, fun, love and of course great food. So kick back and relax and let the party begin!

Lovingly submitted by,



Shayla Wright, President
Jones Family, Lorain, Ohio Chapter



PROCLAMATION OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

WHEREAS, members of the Jones Family have been active in both the Civil Rights and labor union movements helping to upgrade the social and economic climate for themselves and the entire minority community; and

WHEREAS, the Jones Family will be celebrating their Family Reunion this August 12th through August 14th at the Charleston Coffee House in Lorain, Ohio; and

WHEREAS, relatives will be traveling from as far away as South Carolina to gather with family in Ohio, and will reminisce, celebrate, and join in love and tribute of past and present family generations; and

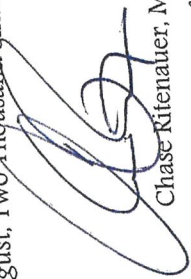
WHEREAS, events planned for the weekend include a tour of Lorain, a family picnic, banquet, and worship service in celebration of family; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Chase Ritenauer, Mayor of the City of Lorain, do hereby recognize the
THE JONES FAMILY

and offer each of you a warm welcome to the beautiful lakefront City of Lorain, Ohio.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto subscribed my name and caused the great seal of the City of Lorain to be affixed this 12th day of August, Two Thousand Sixteen.




Chase Ritenauer, Mayor
City of Lorain, State of Ohio



We come from all corners of the earth
Rising above deep waters of fear
Overcoming the highest mountains of obstacles
Rich in courage, strength and love
We are the image of those who have come before us
We are the vision of their dreams
And the pride of their hearts
We are the fathers of character, knowledge and integrity
We are the mothers of comfort, beauty, wisdom and faith
We are the children of innocence and the hope of the next generation,
Whose future is filled with choice
We are unique people manifested by the abundance of God's power
And glorified through His spirit

We are Today's Black Family

Author Stephanie Evan
(Essence Magazine, 2001)



Today's Black Family

ITINERARY

Friday, August 12, 2016

Hospitality Committee Meets South Carolina Family at Hotel3:00 pm
(Red Roof Inn, 621 Midway Blvd, Elyria, OH)

Family Meet and Greet 6:00 pm-9:00 pm
(Charleston Coffee House, 630 Broadway Ave, Lorain OH)

Bowling Outing 9:00 pm-1:00 am
(Rebman's Bowling Alley, 5300 Oberlin Ave, Lorain, OH)

Free Time9:00 pm
(JACK Casino, Cleveland Flats District)

Saturday, August 13, 2016

Free Time 9:00 am-11:00 am
(Lakeview Park, Crocker Park Shopping Mall)

Jones Family Choir Rehearsal 11:00 am-12:00 pm
(Charleston Coffee House)

Family Picnic..... 12:00 pm-5:00 pm
(Adriatic Swim Club, 4846 Oberlin Ave, Lorain OH)

Party Time/ Dinner8:00 pm-until
(Charleston Coffee House)

Sunday, August 14, 2016

Memorial Service/Brunch 11:00 am-12:00 pm
(Charleston Coffee House)

HISTORY OF THE JONES FAMILY:

A Legacy of Strength and Perseverance

"What is a Legacy? It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see."



Thanks to oral family history passed on by our elders as well as access to newly discovered online genealogy records, the paper trail for the ancestral origins of the Jones Family starts in South Carolina prior to the Civil War. Like most African American families in the USA, our family roots began with enslavement. **Anthony (aka Anthony) Jones** born in Virginia about 1832 and **Ural (aka Eurilia) Austin** born in South Carolina about 1835 were both born into slavery. They were married in 1855. Exact birth and marriage dates for the patriarch and matriarch of the family are estimated because, prior to the Civil War, Southern census takers viewed slaves as property and not people to be counted in the census. The only hard data we have they ever existed is due to the fact that they were still living in Laurens County, South Carolina when the 1880 census was taken.

It should be noted before the Civil War there were only 10,658 white persons living in Laurens County compared to a slave population of over 13,200 persons! The vast majority of white land owners and slaves lived on farms and plantations. Fed by the textile market, Lauren farmers purchased the greatest amount of slaves they could afford in order to grow and harvest their money crop cotton. Laurens County was among the top cotton producing districts in South Carolina.

The life of slaves living in South Carolina is well documented. For **Anthony** and **Ural**, we can surmise that life on a cotton plantation had to be grueling work, with little respite from the tyranny of the master or overseer's watchful eyes. Work

on these plantations was never-ending for slaves. Slaves were usually forced to work in a gang system in which they labored set hours each day, usually sunrise to sunset, six days a week. Adult male slaves were primarily relied upon to tend the fields, pastures, and gardens. Overseers on horseback equipped with whips monitored slaves, always threatening to punish "stranglers" with flogging. Lastly, female slaves and young children were also forced to work the fields but sometimes served as domestics, tending to the master's family as cooks, servants, and housemaids. They were often starved, whipped, and even raped. Slaves were forbidden to learn how to read or write and could be sold at any time.

By the grace of God, **Ural** and **Anthony** survived plantation life. They had a total of eleven children but only five were living as of 1880. After the Civil War, during a period called Reconstruction, former slaves were granted their freedom but unfortunately little else. With no land, no money, illiterate, former slaves lacked the basic necessities needed to support their families. Records indicate that **Anthony Jones** family decided to use their new independence to farm on leased land located in Hunter Township in Laurens County. This type of farming, called "sharecropping", is a form of land tenure in which the tenant farms rented land for a share of the crop. The tenant provides the labor for his share of the income, usually about one half; the land owner supplies the land, living accommodations, and expenses for food, tools, seed, fertilizer, and other needs of the tenant. This system also enabled the white land owner

HISTORY OF THE JONES FAMILY: A Legacy of Strength and Perseverance

to maintain close supervision over his black labor force. In South Carolina it was not unusual for the owners to manipulate the books to keep tenants like **Anthony** and **Ural** poor and deeply in debt.

Anthony had a son named **Allen** (born about 1860). In 1879 he married **Polly Reader** (born about 1862). He and his family of seven children moved from Hunter to Cross Hills Township where he, too, became a sharecropper. Moving from one farm to another was a common practice. Unable to secure ownership of the land, tenants were always on the lookout for more favorable rental arrangements with a new landlord. **Allen's** oldest son **Frank Jones** married **Amelia Watts** (daughter of **Thomas and Janie Watts**) sometime in the early 1900's. From this union came eight children: **Willie Jones, Polly Jones, Johnny B. Jones, Arthur (AB) Jones, Odell Jones, Roosevelt Jones, Mary "Sissy" Jones** and **Bennie Jones**.

As stated earlier a sharecropper's life was extremely difficult. Economics forced wives to work the fields alongside their husbands. Infants were taken by their mothers into the field or left with children only slightly larger than themselves. As soon as they were of sufficient size, children were also required to help in the fields. Rather than pay their famers in cash, land owners would sometimes pay their laborers in an IOU redeemable only in the plantation store.

Bennie Jones provided a detailed description of the predicament confronting **Frank** and **Amelia** as they attempted to raise their eight children by growing crops and livestock on approximately 20 acres of land. According to **Bennie** the family worked in the fields from sun-up to sun-down cultivating and harvesting cotton, corn, peanuts, tomatoes, potatoes and beans. Mules were used to plow the fields since the family could not afford a tractor or other mechanical devices. Cotton was the most important cash crop. The weather and boll weevils

[an insect that infests the cotton plant) were constant threats to the family livelihood.

Shelter for the **Jones** family was typical of the general living conditions many rural blacks of that era experienced. **Bennie** recalled the family lived in a very small three room house which lacked running water, electricity or gas, and in-house plumbing. Meals were prepared on a small wood stove and generally consisted of home grown vegetables. Structurally, the house offered little protection from the elements. At night one could look through the roof and see the stars. Interior light was provided by kerosene lamps. Since there was no refrigeration, keeping food fresh was a daily problem.

For amusement **Bennie** remembered the kids racing each other, playing stickball (baseball played with a stick instead of a bat), hunting rabbit, raccoon, opossum, and fishing. On Saturday nights, neighboring families would gather together to socialize. Boxing matches between the young men were a very popular activity. Dancing to tunes played on homemade musical instruments and the drinking of corn liquor were also enjoyed during these hoedowns.

Through the years of hardship and strife, **Amelia** was delegated with the primary responsibility of raising her children. **Amelia** was a short woman with a reddish-brown complexion and long black hair. She was a very kind and unselfish person who always found time to visit the sick and shared what little food the family possessed with other less fortunate families. She was a very good cook and became quite skilled in killing chickens for dinner. Using a noose made of wire, she would snare a surprised hen just like a cowboy roping a steer. Her sweet potato pies would melt in your mouth.

Amelia was a hard worker. Besides her farming chores, she also took in washing and ironing to





support her children. Her inner strength and faith in God saw her through many personal tragedies such as the death of her daughter **Sissy** at age three from illness, and the death of her son Roosevelt at age twelve from a gun accident.

As the children grew up and married, some of the sons left their homestead to venture into the world. **Willie**, the oldest son, departed the farming life for work in the coal mines in West Virginia. Coal produced in those mines was eventually shipped to steel mills in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Due to the manpower drain caused by World War I, the United States Steel Corporation recruited Southern Blacks to its mills in a place called Lorain, Ohio. The \$4.04 the steel company offered for ten hours a day of rough labor made the migration North worthwhile compared to earning a living sharecropping in the South. In 1920, **Willie** arrived in Lorain and worked as a laborer in the rolling mills, His wife **Pearl** and his children joined him in 1925. Brothers **Johnnie B.** and **Bennie** also found employment in the steel mills, bought homes, and settled their families in Lorain.

Although life in Lorain during the 1920's thru 1960's provided a standard wage, improved housing conditions, and better education for their children, the Lorain **Jones**, along with Lorain's other Black families, were often victimized by racial prejudice and discrimination. The Jones brothers sold their muscle and sweat with little opportunity for promotion and job advancement. Consequently, the family became very active in both Civil Rights and labor union movements helping to upgrade the social and economic climate for themselves and the entire minority community.

Odell, the youngest son, **was** a farmer/ sharecropper and lived with his mother **Amelia**

for many years. **Odell** made sure his family had plenty to eat with gardens (he planted every kind of vegetables you can think of) along with raising hogs, chickens, and cows. In 1962 he went to work for the W.R. Grace Cryovac Company which is one of the leading plastic manufactures in the South. He retired from Cryovac on disability six months short of his death in 1977.

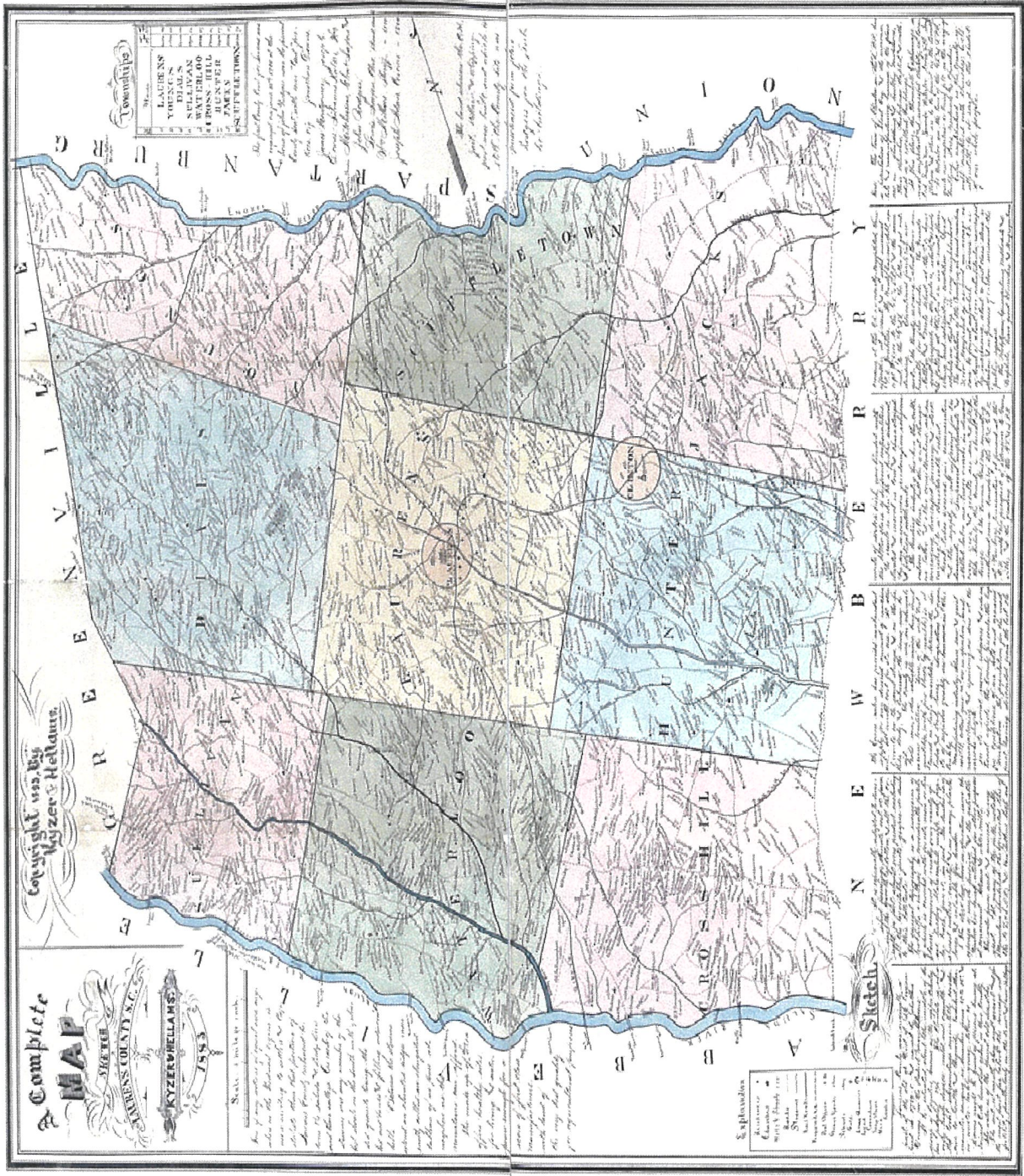
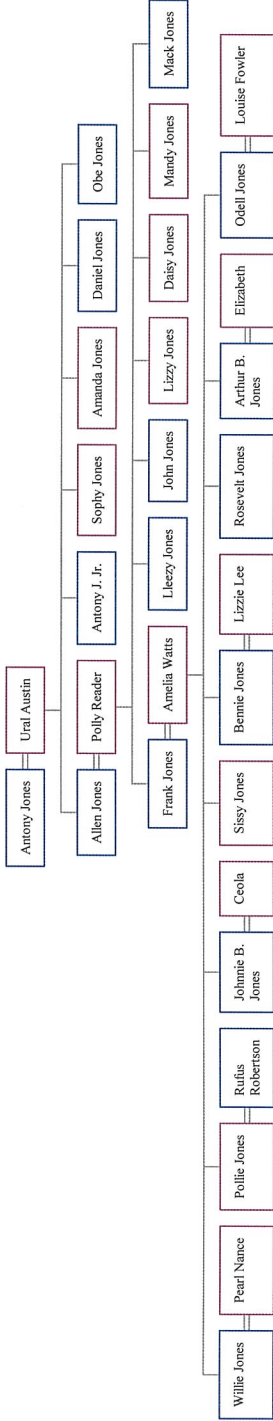
The great grandchildren of Frank and Amelia have graduated from high school and college, pursued meaningful careers, and are confidently looking forward to an optimistic future. We owe a great deal of appreciation and love to our ancestors for planting the seeds of their strength, family devotion, foresight and encouragement throughout the years. **Although this concludes the history of the Jones Family, the legacy continues.**

1. PLACE OF DEATH County of <u>Lorain</u> Township of <u>Franklin</u> City of <u>Lorain</u>		CERTIFICATE OF DEATH STATE OF OHIO No. <u>17451</u>	
2. FULL NAME <u>Robert Jones</u>		DATE OF BIRTH <u>April 18, 1926</u>	
3. FULL NAME <u>Robert Jones</u>		DATE OF DEATH <u>April 18, 1977</u>	
4. OCCUPATION <u>Farmer</u>		5. CAUSE OF DEATH <u>Heart Disease</u>	
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DESCENDANTS

OF ANTONY JONES



Laurens County South Carolina Map (1883)



REMEMBERANCES

A Legacy of Strength and Perseverance



Amelia Jones

"As far as Grandma Amelia, I remember she was a very clean lady. I remember she would take a hoe and tie a cracker sack around it and mop the floors. She smoked a pipe and sometimes chewed tobacco. Before she died I remember she would walk around with a stick. Grandma Amelia is buried at Zion Hill Baptist Church in Mountville, South Carolina."

- Linda Sullivan



Odell Jones

"Dad was a fine dresser. His clothes were always starched. Dad always provided for his family. He made sure we plenty of food to eat with the gardens, hogs, chickens, cows. He planted every kind of vegetable you can think of. While my dad was on the farm, it was customary for the owner of the property to have his house painted white while the workers' houses were painted red. My dad refused to paint his house red and insisted that his house be painted white like the white landlord's. He stood his ground. In 1972 dad built my mother a beautiful brick seven room house which is still being occupied by my baby sister Cheryl Smith."

- Linda Sullivan



Willie Jones

"When I was little boy I used to love visiting Grandpa and Nana at their house in South Lorain. Although they lived in the city, I'm sure they owned animals that were not legal. There were chickens, ducks, rabbits, dogs, and a goat. I thought the animals were great pets until one day I noticed that my favorite hen was missing. Later that evening I asked grandpa about the missing chicken. To my horror he told me we ate it for dinner."

- Bruce Jones



Bennie Jones

"As a young boy I remember Uncle Bennie and Grandpa Willie sitting on the porch late at night during the summer. Uncle Bennie would pull out his guitar and strum some old "down home" blues songs. Everyone was invited to sing along. Interspersed between each song were stories about the old days. I remember some of those stories were about ghosts which scared the heck out of me! There was always plenty of laughter, lemonade for the kids and white lightning for the adults."

- Dennis Jones

Thank you

for coming to share in this family gathering. The Ohio Reunion
President Shayla Wright would like to thank the committee members
who have worked for long hours to make this reunion great.
Special thanks to the subcommittees that assisted during the reunion.

Wherever you go you represent God and your family so let us
continue to have a positive effect in our communities and the world.

Have a safe drive to your various destinations.

Peace be with you until we meet again.

Thank you

*to the Charleston Coffeehouse
for opening their doors to the
Jones Family*



Charleston
coffeehouse