



News Release
For Immediate Release

Govier Family Marks a Milestone in August

(Lancaster)—The Govier family, residents of Grant County for more than 150 years, will mark the 75th observance of their annual family reunion in 2007. The annual Govier reunion and picnic will be held at noon on August 5, 2007, at Marsden Park in Fennimore.

The first Govier family picnic was held in 1932 at Klondike Springs Park, three miles northwest of Lancaster. The following year it was held in Marsden Park. It moved around for several years until the decision was made to settle permanently at Marsden Park, where it's been held every year since.

This year's reunion will feature the release of a newly published Govier family history edited by Donna Jean [Govier] Teegardin, of Tempe, Arizona. Donna began collecting family information for a junior English class project at Lancaster High School in 1952. Her volume greatly expands an earlier Govier family history compiled by George Sanders Govier in the 1930's. The 800-page history traces the roots of the Govier family in Devonshire, England, back to 1570. Copies of the family history will be presented to the Schreiner Memorial Library in Lancaster and the Wisconsin State Historical Society.

Charles Govier was the first in the family to come to America, emigrating from Devonshire, England in 1852. His father, John Govier, and other siblings followed and the family settled on farms in North Lancaster Township in the 1850'. Many members of the Govier family are buried in the church yard of Mt. Zion Church, on county K, north of Lancaster. Descendants of John Govier now living and working in Grant County include Grant County Sheriff Keith Govier. Each year officers for the family are elected for the coming year. This year's president is Galen Govier, of Prairie du Chien.

Early Govier picnics always included a program of entertainment. Minutes for the 1940 picnic, presided over by President Ora Govier, indicate 106 attendees. The oldest person present, James Govier of Patch Grove, was born on November 11, 1861. The program included a Tonette/Clarinet duet, a tap dance, a talk about a visit to the old country (Devonshire, England) by Mrs. Joseph Casey, and Glen Govier "stung by a bumble bee." The Goviers sang *America the Beautiful* and *Auld Lang Syne* before dinner.

THIS YEAR'S PROGRAM

- 11:30am – Early arrivals are invited to participate in Workup, a softball game that can be played by any number of players. It was played at the rural, one-room school houses attended by earlier generations of Goviers.
- 12:45pm – Pot luck picnic lunch
- 2:00pm – Group photos taken
- 2:15pm – Annual family meeting
- 2:30pm – Program consisting of family history report by Donna Teegardin, plus musical selections and recitations by family members

The annual Govier family picnic is usually held inside and adjacent to the A-frame shelter near the tennis courts at the east end of Marsden Park in Fennimore.

For more information:

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