



Mershon News Bulletin

THE ASSOCIATION OF THE DESCENDANTS OF HENRY MERSHON
ORGANIZED AT TRENTON, NEW JERSEY, SEPTEMBER 8th, 1923

Mershon Name

Le Marchand

MARCHAND (French) - MARCHANT (Middle-English) - MERCHANT (Modern-English) - MARSCHAN (Dutch) - Mershon (Phonetic)

April 3, 2018

Mershon Southern Chapter Reunion is on April 24 & 25, 2018

The 2018 Mershon Southern Chapter Reunion in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee, has been planned by Ann Roberts. This notice has some changes from the previous email notice.

The days of our reunion are Tuesday April 24 registration and Wednesday April 25 morning meeting.

We will be staying at the Country Cascades Hotel. A block of rooms for Sunday, April 22nd, thru Thursday, April 26th, has been reserved for persons wishing to vacation in Pigeon Forge, nearby Gatlinburg and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Call hotel reservations at [1\(800\)223-6707](tel:18002236707) and ask for **Mershon Family Reunion** in order to receive our group rate. Rooms are \$89.00 + tax per night.

We have reservations for Dolly Parton's "Smoky Mountain Adventure" for dinner and a show Wednesday evening, April 25th. We must have a minimum of 20 people to get the discount rate of \$44.00 each.

Make a reservation with Ann Roberts for this show before April 15. Email Ann at mittiear@gmail.com. We have to have 20 or more persons to get this rate. You can pay Ann at the hotel on April 24th.

For questions, contact Wally (Mershon) Riviere by email at uuallygator@gmail.com or by phone in Florida at (352) 475-3938.

Save the Date!

Saturday, July 28, 2018

Mershon Association Annual Meeting & Reunion Lawrenceville, NJ

Report on the 2017 Mershon Annual Meeting and Reunion

by Clare & Sharon Mershon, Portland, Oregon



Front Row (seated), L to R: Joanna Beun holding Gwyneth Beun, Dan & Lorie Mershon, Jeanne Stotler, Joan Swearer, Sharon Mershon.

Back Row (standing), L to R: Clare Mershon, Nathaniel Beun, David Beun, Diana Ricigliano-Crannage, Wick & Mary Cloud Hollingshead, Jeff & Alison Linton, Brenda & Don Winter, Rita & Richard Josiassen, Jim Mershon, Bill O'Neal Jr., Lauren O'Neal, Phillip Mershon, Tom O'Neal, Bill O'Neal.

The 2017 annual meeting of the Association of the Descendants of Henry Mershon was called to order on Saturday, July 22nd, at 10:15 am in the Community Meeting Room at the Lawrence Headquarters Branch of the Mercer County Library in Lawrenceville, NJ. Reverend Phillip Mershon led us in an invocation, followed by a spirited rendition of the Star-Spangled Banner on his saxophone. We gave the Pledge of Allegiance. Each family group introduced themselves and shared information about their family history.

At 11:00 am, Laura Nawrocik of the Mercer County Library Staff updated us on what is happening with the Mershon archives, now part of the Lawrence Township Archives. She explained plans to digitize more information. You can make an appointment to review the archives by contacting Laura at (609) 538-8112 or by email at webmaster@thelhs.org.

Following Laura's presentation, we continued with family introductions until 12:00 pm, when we set up for our catered box lunch meal. As a special treat at the end of lunch, Phillip Mershon played a jazzy version of "Summertime" from the musical Porgy and Bess.

Living history program on Abraham Lincoln, after lunch -

President Lincoln was portrayed by re-enactor Bob Gleason of the American Historical Theater in Philadelphia. From humble beginnings, Abraham Lincoln led our nation through the most difficult period in our American history. Lincoln had only about one-year total of formal schooling while growing up, often interrupted by the need to help support his family. He had a burning ambition to learn, so he read books, whenever he could, to educate himself.

It was a fascinating 80 minutes of Lincoln antidotes with some quotes from his speeches. Bob Gleason stayed very much in Lincoln character, displaying good humor and connecting well with our audience. "Mr. Lincoln" even referred to his unfortunate assassination in 1865. We had an opportunity to ask questions at the end of his program. As he departed, each member of our audience received a "Presidential Pardon."



*Phillip Mershon
playing his
saxophone*



"President Lincoln"

PRESIDENTIAL PARDON

GOOD FOR:

**1 Major or
3 Minor Offenses**

A. Lincoln

*"You can't fool all the people
all the time"*

Begin Business Meeting – Our 2016 meeting minutes were approved as printed.

Treasurer Report: Joan Swearer

Checking Account: \$9,371.77 (Dec. 30, 2017 update)

Certificate of Deposit: \$7,325.41 (Dec. 31, 2017 update)

Genealogy Report: Mershon Genealogist Pam Caffrey was unable to attend our 2017 meeting. She can be contacted by email at pcaffrey24@outlook.com or by phone at (201) 739-2308. We appreciate that Pam has established a Mershon Association Genealogy Group on Facebook. Our genealogy database has over 35,000 records of Mershon descendants and spouses, from 1685 to present.

Mershon Southern Chapter Report: The Southern Chapter met on May 19 & 20, 2017 in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee (see page 5 for their report).

Executive Board Report: The Executive Board met on Friday evening July 21st. Main items considered were-

- Harrison Hunt resigned in June 2017 as our News Bulletin Editor, but will continue on our Executive Board. Linda Hunt resigned in June 2017 from our Executive Board. David Beun is resigning as our Vice President, effective at the end of 2017.
- Noel Barton is nearing the end of his paid work organizing and digitizing our Mershon archives.
- Harrison Hunt is waiting for advice from an attorney on our IRS 501(c)3 non-profit application.

- We discussed moving our Mershon Association annual meeting to other cities or sites besides Lawrenceville, perhaps in one year out of three. We would need a core group of persons on-site or familiar with the site to make the meeting arrangements. It was decided that our Executive Board will consider proposals for holding our Mershon annual meeting in a different location, potentially starting with our 2019 Mershon annual meeting.
- We discussed the pros and cons of applying for free history programs offered by the New Jersey Council for the Humanities to non-profit organizations. We would need to advertise the programs as open to the general public because the Council policy requires that the general public be invited.
- We reviewed a proposed slate of nominations for our 2018 Mershon Association officers.

Elect Officers: We elected the following Mershon Association officers for 2018 –

President: Clare Mershon

Genealogist: Pam Caffrey

Vice-President: Vacant

Board of Trustees: Dr. Jim Mershon and Noel Barton

Treasurer: Joan Swearer

News Bulletin Editor: Vacant

Recording Secretary: Vacant

Executive Board:

Dr. Jim Mershon

Doris Harris

Clare Mershon

Beverly Mershon

Harrison Hunt

David Beun

Joan Swearer

Connie Hensley

Daniel Mershon

Noel Barton

Elaine Tredinnick

Planning Committee:

Clare Mershon (chairperson)

Elaine Tredinnick

Noel Barton

Beverly Goldstein

Jeanne Stotler

We voted to hold our 2018 Annual Meeting in Lawrenceville on Saturday, July 28th.

Following our tradition of passing the hat, we collected \$200.00 in donations for our Mershon Association.

We adjourned our formal meeting at about 3:15 PM to travel to the former Andrew Mershon Tavern near Titusville. Once again, Elmer and Ann Smith graciously opened their lovely home to our Mershon family. Elmer continues to delight us with his good stories and warm hospitality.

We gathered at 6:30 PM for a group dinner at the Princetonian Diner on U.S. Route 1 in Lawrenceville. This event concluded our meeting.

We thank Bill O'Neal for supplying the photographs to accompany this article!

Report on the 2017 Mershon Association Southern Chapter Reunion

May 19 & 20, 2017 - Pigeon Forge, TN

by Wally Riviere, Melrose, Florida



L to R: Lallie Benkoski, Pat Bond (seated), Ken Bond, Charles Webb, Ann Roberts, Glenn Roberts, Shelby Cathcart, Wally & Nancy Riviere.

A family dinner was enjoyed at the Old Mill Pottery restaurant on Friday evening, 5/19.

The family meeting was held on Saturday morning, 5/20. The meeting called to order at 9:00 am by Acting President Wally Riviere. Chaplain Glenn Roberts gave an invocation and led the pledge of allegiance to the American flag.

Wally Riviere gave a historical accounting of our forefather Henri Mershon's migration to America from France in circa 1680. The reason for migration being religious persecutions in France under King Louis XIV. Earlier French settlers had arrived in 1562 at what they named "Paris Island" and establishing the first European Settlement of "Charlesfort" near present day Beaufort, SC.

We had an attendance of 13 people and a renewed interest in the Association. Ann Roberts was thanked for being this year's hostess.

A discussion about the future of this Association was led by Wally. It was decided that we will continue for another year as in the past. New officers were elected as follows: President Glenn Roberts; V-President Larry Morton; Corresponding Secretary Ann Roberts; Treasurer Wally Riviere; Recording Secretary open (a recorder will be appointed by the president at each meeting to make notes and prepare minutes); Chaplain Glenn Roberts.

A discussion concerning next year's reunion resulted in the following: To be held in Pigeon Forge, TN, arrangements to be made by Ann Roberts, to be held April 24-25, 2018.

After a discussion it was decided to move the reunion from weekend to middle of the week. This will result in lower hotel cost's and less congestion in town. For those that want to make a vacation, the benefits are group rates will be arranged for Sunday, April 22, through Thursday, April 26.

Lallie Benkoski gave a brief discussion of her 55 years of Mershon genealogy research. She stated that all of her writings on the Mershon studies have been placed in the Macon, GA, library for use of persons interested in Mershon genealogy.

Nancy Riviere collected pictures from the group and will place them in the scrapbook. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am with a benediction by Glenn Roberts.

Henry Mershon IV Jar Donated to Mershon Association

by Bill O'Neal, Lawrenceville, NJ

The jar "...has been moved from pillar to post and it's amazing it's still here and intact," so said Henry Mershon IV descendant, Virginia Skillman, as she donated her redware jar to our Mershon Association.

Ruth Conover, an administrative assistant at the Presbyterian Church of Lawrenceville (PCOL), contacted me in mid-January 2018 saying a woman named Ana Bkir, who works for a woman named Virginia Skillman (Ana is her nurse's aide), came into the church office. Ruth said Virginia is 90+ years old and has a jar that has some connection to the Mershon family. Because of her age (she is actually 96), Virginia wished to donate the jar to our Mershon Association.

I phoned Ana, who in turn put me in touch with Virginia, who said the artifact was a clay vessel, about 10" in height, which belonged to Henry Mershon IV and was handed down to her through the family. According to the late Winona Nash, Henry's stone farmhouse, later known as the Marroe Inn, was located due east of the Lawrence Headquarters Branch of the Mercer County Library, between Alternate US Highway 1 and the Delaware Raritan Canal (see a drawing of the Henry IV house in our March 2017 News Bulletin, page 6).

Virginia said the vessel is in good shape. At that point, I made arrangements to call in on Virginia at the Stonebridge Assisted Living facility just north of Princeton in Skillman, NJ.

My wife Lauren and our youngest son Thomas, both of whom are descended from the Andrew³ line, went with me to Skillman to collect the Mershon artifact. We had a pleasant visit. Virginia was in full possession of her mental faculties and was quite pleasant. However, she did not want her picture taken. The vessel passed from Henry IV (1740 - 1815) to his daughter Abigail, to Mary Anne Lee, to Minnie May Coleman (b. 1872), to Grace A. Pierson and finally to Virginia.

Virginia and her husband, who was a lawyer, settled in the small village of Griggstown, NJ, during the 1960's. She said they made their living flipping houses. Her interest in local history began when her mother-in-law was forming the Hopewell chapter of the DAR. She is the only female left on both sides of her tree and thus ended up with some family artifacts. She says the vessel was last used on the Pierson Farm on Cold Soil Road in Lawrence Township. Minnie May and Lewis Pierson sold that farm (they moved to Craven Lane) to AT&T and it became known locally as the "pole farm." It is now a passive use county park.



The jar has been turned over to Dennis Waters, representing the Lawrence Township Archives, where our Mershon Association archives now reside. Before putting the jar on display at the Lawrence Township offices, Dennis had the jar evaluated by pottery experts at Hunter Research in Trenton. They suggested the jar be described as follows -

“Lidded Storage Jar, 19th century

Redware, lead-glazed with footed base, tooled shoulder and tapered neck.

Unmarked on base. Probable production by the McCully Pottery, Trenton, NJ

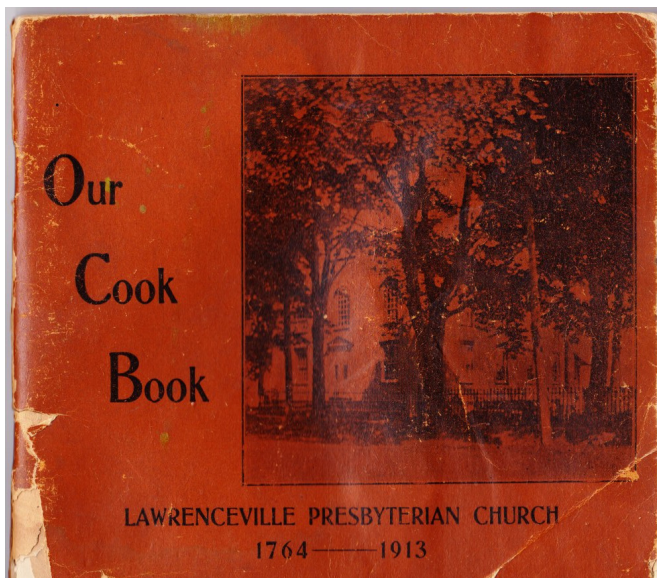
(8” High, 5.75” Dia.)”

A similar jar by the McCully Pottery was sold in 2014. See this link -

<http://www.crockerfarm.com/stoneware-auction/2014-10-25/lot-63/Rare-J-McCULL>

Hunter Research says “... The McCullys’ established potteries in Trenton as early as 1783 and more permanently in 1799. Production by the McCullys’ continued into the 1860s.”

Virginia also conveyed a 1913 PCOL cook book to me, which I passed on to the church office as requested by Virginia. The book had a recipe submitted by Mrs. C. S. Mershon and two recipes submitted by Mrs. James Stevens, second wife of the third Mr. Stevens to own our O’Neal home in Lawrenceville. Ruth Conover and the PCOL office manager had a good time looking over the old recipes. The book will be passed along to our church historian.



Photographs courtesy of Bill O’Neal

Orange Cream Pie.—Beat thoroughly the yolks of 2 eggs with $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of sugar. Add 1 heaping tablespoon of flour, 1 even tablespoon of cornstarch dissolved in milk. Pour into 1 pint of boiling milk and let cook about 3 minutes; let cool, flavor with extract of orange and pour into a baked crust. Put meringue on top.
MRS. C. S. MERSHON.

Mrs. C. S. Mershon was probably Mrs. Caleb Shreve Mershon (1844-1931). She lived near the church, across Lawrenceville Road from what is now the Lawrenceville Golf Course.

Do you have an interesting story about a Mershon descendant or family related artifact? If so, please consider writing it up to share it with our extended family! We welcome contributions to our Mershon News Bulletin. If available, photographs add a lot to a story. Email your contributions to Clare Mershon at ecmershon@aol.com or mail to the return address on this bulletin.

Bernice Mershon, Opera Singer, made news in 1930

“Wife says She stole Husband’s Love – Wants \$50,000”

by Clare Mershon, Portland, OR

You may recall the article about Bernice⁷ Mershon, Opera Singer, authored by Lisa Roose-Church in our June 2011 Mershon News Bulletin and a follow-up article in our December 2014 Bulletin. These Bulletins can be viewed on www.mershonassoc.com.



“New York – Miss Bernice Mershon, Light Opera Contralto, has been named in a \$50,000 suit brought by Mrs. Tessie Gerber, in which it is charged that the former rewarded Mr. Gerber with kisses when he collected rent for her on a building she owned. Mr. Aimé Gerber is Paymaster of the Metropolitan Opera Company.” (Dated June 6, 1930)

Bernice, born in 1884, was a well-known singer during the early part of the 20th Century. She sang 30 grand opera roles in the U.S., Italy and France; performed light opera as Eddie Cantor’s prima donna and became established as a Gilbert & Sullivan artist. Bernice performed in five shows on Broadway. At the time of this June 1930 photograph, she was playing Gladys Carroll in *Fifty Million Frenchmen*.

The outcome of this suit is unknown, but Mr. and Mrs. Gerber were still married in 1940, according to the U.S. Census. Bernice probably found another way to collect the rent on her building! With the “lawyers bookcase” on the right side of this photograph, Bernice may have been in her attorney’s office when this photograph was taken. According to Google, \$50,000 in 1930 would be equivalent in purchasing power to \$742,000 in 2018.

Bernice retired from the stage in 1932, making her home in Los Angeles, where she died in 1960 at age 76. She was married three times, but had no children. Bernice was a Thomas³ Mershon descendant.

This International Newsreel press photograph with the accompanying caption was recently purchased on Ebay.

Updates on Dr. Jim Mershon and Lallie Benkoski

Longtime Mershon Association stalwarts Dr. Jim Mershon of Wichita, Kansas, and Alice Dozier “Lallie” Benkoski of Albany, Georgia have experienced health setbacks.

Dr. Jim, Past-President of our Association, suffered a bad fall on Dec. 20, 2017, two days after his 80th birthday. He broke 12 bones, including nine ribs and the C1 vertebrae on his upper spine. Jim was in the hospital for 3.5 weeks and has been getting home care therapy ever since. He is still recovering.

Lallie, a sparkplug of our Mershon Southern Chapter, suffered a stroke on July 1, 2017. Stan Jones, her son, writes: “She can walk, talk and eat but has a hard time with her memory, it is coming back slowly.” Our best wishes and prayers go out to Dr. Jim and Lallie!

Possible new location for our 2019 Mershon Annual Meeting?

Would you and other Mershons' in your community like to host a Mershon Annual Meeting and Reunion? The attendees at the 2017 meeting in Lawrenceville, New Jersey, discussed having our annual meeting at a different location, perhaps, one year out of three. In the past, special meetings in Columbus, Ohio (1985) and Estes Park, Colorado (1988) were well attended. The intent is to make our meeting more accessible to Mershons' in other parts of the country, to build Mershon friendships and enthusiasm for our family history.

The Executive Board will consider proposals for a different location for our 2019 meeting. President Clare Mershon would be happy to answer any questions you may have about planning a meeting. Please send your proposal or suggestions to the Executive Board, c/o Clare Mershon at the return address on this bulletin, by phone at (503) 679-7990, or at ecmershon@aol.com, **no later than June 30, 2018**. Thank you.

Sharing Mershon family stories, anyone?

Please consider making a brief presentation about an interesting Mershon ancestor at our upcoming July 28, 2018 meeting in Lawrenceville, NJ! The use of photos or other visual aids would make it more interesting.

If you have ideas for a program, please call Clare Mershon as soon as possible at (503) 679-7990, or email him with your ideas at ecmershon@aol.com. He looks forward to hearing from you!

Thank You! Thank You!

Our Mershon Association is a non-profit corporation without dues. Your generous donations pay the costs of printing and mailing our twice-yearly Mershon News Bulletin, hosting our annual meetings, honorariums for programs by outside presenters, preserving our family records, answering inquiries and maintaining our mershonassoc.com website.

Listed below with our appreciation are our identified contributors during 2017. However, unidentified cash contributions made while "passing the hat" our 2017 annual meeting are not included in this list. If other contributions were not recorded, we apologize and ask you to notify Treasurer Joan Swearer at 60 Maple Ave., Rahway, NJ 07065, or by email at jtswearer@gmail.com.

Daniel & Dolores Mershon, Doylestown, PA
Willard & Sylvia Tayler, Reno, NV
John D. & Kathleen Mershon, Trenton, NJ
James & Theresa Smith, Broomfield, CO
Janet Helmolt, San Jose, CA
Steven W. Mershon, Granville, OH
Douglas & Elise McGuire, Gresham, OR
Jeffery B. Mershon, Evergreen, CO
Diane Reeder, Englewood, CO

John Kaster, Debary, FL
Barry & Lisa Weddle, New Bern, NC
Beverly M. Smith, Bedford, TX
Mary Ann Odom, Cleveland, MS
B. Marvin & Sally Thomas, Venice, FL
Mary A. Yurko, Pawley's Island, SC
Vernon C. Thomson, Jr., Vermont, IL
Karen J. Zickert, Pittsville, WI
Clare & Sharon Mershon, Portland, OR

Your donations are our principal source of income. Thank you!

Mershon Genealogy

Our Mershon Association Genealogist is Pam Caffrey, 232 Momar Drive, Ramsey, NJ 07446; Email: pcaffrey24@outlook.com; Cell Phone: (201) 739-2308. We have over 35,000 individual records in our Mershon genealogy database going back to 1685. Contact Pam if you have updates to share or want to know what is in our genealogy database for your Mershon family line. For submitting updates, please include names, birth dates, marriage dates, death dates and the places these events happened to the best of your knowledge.

For privacy reasons, our Genealogist does not release information on living persons outside your immediate family (grandparents, parents, siblings, children, spouses) without their written consent, unless the subject persons would be over 110 years old. This is the guideline followed by the ancestry.com genealogy website.”

Opportunities to Help our Mershon Association

Our Mershon Association Vice-President, Recording Secretary and News Bulletin Editor officer positions are currently vacant. We thank David Beun, Elaine Tredinnick and Harrison Hunt for filling these positions until recently. These positions are important to the well being of our Association, because we need a diversified team of officers to share the load.

Our Vice-President performs the duties of the President at any time the President is absent.

Our Recording Secretary takes minutes of our Executive Board and our Annual Meetings.

Our News Bulletin Editor compiles this bulletin, normally published twice a year. Familiarity with publishing software is desirable in this position.

Please assist our Association by applying to fill one of these positions. For more information, contact Clare Mershon by email at ecmershon@aol.com or by phone in Oregon at (503) 679-7990.

Photograph of the Reeder Plantation Homestead

This old photograph showing the plantation homestead of John and Hannah⁴ (Mershon) Reeder was published on page 17 of *Andrew Mershon and His Descendants*, 1955. Unfortunately, the original photograph is not in our Mershon archive photograph collection.



If you know of a better copy of this photograph, we would like to copy it for our Mershon archives.

An old two-story home similar to the large home in the central part of this photograph is located at the Jones Farm New Jersey Correctional Institution on Bear Tavern Road., north of Trenton. This facility is part of the original 500 acre Reeder plantation. A better copy of this photograph could confirm the Reeder home still exists. Please email Bill O’Neal at info@billoneal.com or call him in New Jersey at (609) 599-1843 if you have information about this photograph.

For Your Information

1. **Contributions Needed.** We are a non-profit association without dues. We appreciate your donations to help pay the costs of our twice-yearly Mershon News Bulletin, preserving our family records, annual meetings and for outside program presenters. Please make checks to the “Mershon Association” and mail to our Treasurer: Joan Swearer, 60 Maple Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065. Thank you!
 2. **Please send your mail and email address changes to Gayle Murphy, 464 Firetown Road, Simsbury, CT 06070, or email Gayle at gammurphy@comcast.net.** There are currently 1,012 mail and email addresses on our mailing list. We need your help to avoid losing contact with you when your address changes!
 3. **If you can receive our Mershon News Bulletin by email, please send your email address to Gayle Murphy at gammurphy@comcast.net.** The advantages are you will receive our bulletin with color photographs and our Association saves the cost of printing and postage. Our March 2017 bulletin cost \$486. to print and mail 328 copies, a cost of \$1.48 each.
 4. **Mershon Family Cookbook, 2014, 180 pages** – Only eight copies remain for sale of the 200 printed. This 6” x 9” book is coil-bound with over 150 delectable family recipes, family pictures and interesting anecdotes. There is an index for easy reference. The price is \$25.00 each, including postage, from Joan Swearer, 60 Maple Avenue, Rahway, NJ 07065.
 5. **Visit our Mershon Association website:** www.mershonassoc.com
 6. For a summary of **Mershon genealogy books and DVD’s** available from the Association, please refer to our June 2016 Mershon News Bulletin or visit www.mershonassoc.com.
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Pacific Northwest Mershon Picnic in Troutdale, OR, August 20, 2017



Front Row, L to R: Pat Lucas, Susan Arnold, Denise Branam, Christine Mershon, Sharon Mershon.

Back Row, L to R: Doug & Carol Quinn, Karen Goheen, Ken Arnold, Karen & Lou Basté, Tom Mershon, Clare Mershon.



E. Clare Mershon
3809 NE 136th Place
Portland, OR 97230-2720

Return Service Requested

Upcoming Mershon Family Events

April 24 & 25, 2018 (Tuesday & Wednesday) - **Mershon Southern Chapter Reunion** in Pigeon Forge, Tennessee. See the reunion announcement on page 1.

July 28, 2018 (Saturday) – **Mershon Association Annual Meeting and Reunion** begins at 10 am in the Community Meeting Room of the Lawrence Headquarters Branch, Mercer County Library, 2751 Brunswick Pike (US 1-Business), Lawrenceville, NJ 08648.

August 19, 2018 (Sunday) – **Pacific Northwest Mershon Potluck Picnic**, 12 noon to 4 pm at the Glen Otto Community Park, Picnic Shelter A, 1106 E. Historic Columbia River Highway, Troutdale, OR 97060. For more details, contact Clare Mershon at ecmershon@aol.com or by phone at (503) 679-7990.



Mershon Polo Shirts

are still available for \$16.00 each at our Annual Meeting on July 28th or by mail for \$19.50 each, including postage, from David Beun, 226 Meadow Drive, Mt. Laurel, NJ 08054. Contact David by email at 1776nj@gmail.com, or by telephone at (609) 417-3323.