

THE DODGE FAMILY ASSOCIATION

Founded in 1981 by Col. Robert Livingston Dodge,
Virginia Dodge Murphy and Earl Farwell Dodge

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*From the desk of Faith Dorothy Dodge Nelson
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A couple days after Christmas, our family had the joy of taking a winter vacation to Florida. Now, my adult children may debate my use of the word "joy," but leaving cold snow for warm beaches definitely qualifies as a cause for joy in my mind. Of course, driving for about twenty-four hours in a van with ten people was trying at times. Fortunately, we had purchased a dual-screen DVD player for the van, and started the long trip with a marathon watching all three *Lord of the Rings* movies.

We were taking this long trip to attend the wedding of the son of dear friends. We have known Graham since he was three years old; he grew up with our son Jesse, who was a groomsman in the wedding. Graham's bride, Kelly was from the Fort Lauderdale area, and they had a wedding on the beach. The afternoon was perfect, the beach pristine, the ocean a lovely blue-green. Following the wedding, we traveled to a club where a formal dinner was served. After dinner, the young people pulled back the chairs and began to dance. What fun!

When I was growing up, dancing was not a part of my experience. Like many little girls, I wished to be a ballerina with a pink tutu. But dancing was like playing cards: something we didn't do. It must have been wrong, but I wasn't exactly sure why. In seventh grade, when we started to learn square dancing in gym class, my dad wrote a note excusing me. He patiently explained to me that not all dancing was wrong; square dancing was acceptable, whereas couples dancing closely together was not. But to avoid any confusion, we would just avoid dancing altogether. So I didn't square dance. When I was home alone, however, I would twirl and glide across the floor as I did my chores.

Last summer, our kids planned a dance party with their friends on our front lawn. Since I never learned to dance growing up, I was desperately in need of lessons. The girls found some instructional videos on youtube, and we spent a happy evening practicing and laughing at ourselves. When the night of the dance party came, I was actually able to participate in the Cha Cha Slide. I made a lot of mistakes, but I don't think anyone noticed. Everyone was too busy having fun.

So at Graham and Kelly's wedding, I was able to dance—a little. I joined in the Cupid Shuffle, and danced with my sons. (Joe was too busy with the video camera; besides, he hasn't had dance lessons yet.) Most of the evening I didn't dance, but enjoyed watching those who did. Dancing is fitting for a wedding. Such an overflowing of joy finds natural expression of itself in the movement to music. And I believe it's wise to relish the joy of living, to grab it and hold it whenever possible, as long as possible.

While we were in Florida, we met the wonderful family of my daughter's fiance, and spent a happy day with them. Linnea and Justin will get married in June this year. This marriage marks a big change for us. Linnea is the first of our children to take this step. We'll be busy over the coming months with wedding plans. Even though I'm sad my little girl has grown up and is moving on in her life, I also feel pride and joy as I see the lovely young woman she is becoming. When she walks down the aisle, I think I'll be smiling ear to ear. And Linnea has decided that at her wedding reception, she wants to dance. I'll be ready.

Faith

P.S. On January 22, the Southern California Reunion was held and on the other side of this letter are a few photos of the smiling people who attended. We may have more photos in the next Journal.

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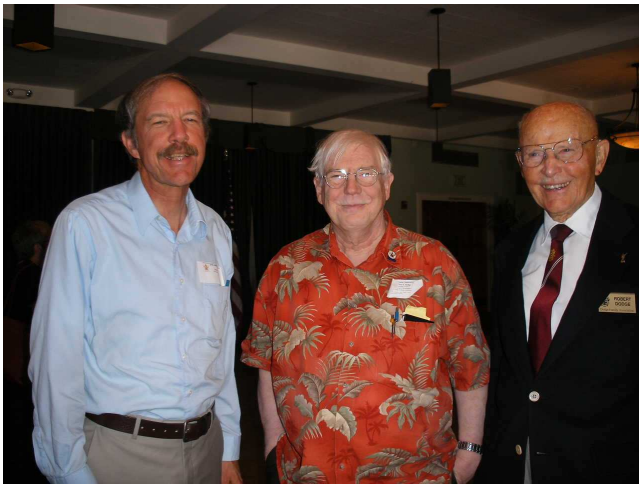
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On the left: Peter Dodge, Norman Dodge, and Col. Robert Dodge, one of the founders of The Dodge Family Association.

Peter is the son of Robert. Peter's mother, Hilda, always attends this reunion but she was sick on this day so was not able to come.

Norman Dodge is the President of The Dodge Family Association and also cares for our genealogy data bases with the help of his wife, Eileen.

On the right: Rev. Larry Campbell, Everett Dodge, Col. Robert Dodge, Doris Dodge.

Larry is/was the brother-in-law of Earl Dodge who was one of the founders of The Dodge Family Association.

Everett Dodge was President of DFA for a number of years. Doris is the wife of Everett.



Below: On the right we see Peter Dodge and Larry Campbell.



Above are Robert and Margaret Williams from South Dakota. Margaret is a niece of Col. Robert Dodge and a cousin of Peter.



We have a great sale on the book "Memorable Dodge First Reunion". The normal price is \$16.00 but We are offering it for \$10.00 ppd. The book documents the very first Dodge reunion in America, which was held to mark the 250th anniversary of Dodges coming to America. This reunion was held before it was known that there were actually two Dodge lines in this country. Therefore, many Dodges from both the Tristram line and the William/Richard lines attended. There were speeches by many including Robert Dodge, who subsequently gathered Tristram genealogy and published the first Tristram genealogy book. There are also letters in the back from Dodges - descended from both lines - who could not attend.

This is a very historical item and a great addition to your library. Order your copy today!

I would like to order _____ Books of the Memorable First Dodge Reunion at \$10.00 each ppd. My check for _____ is included. I also would like to update my dues at \$20 per year. \$_____ Is also included in my check.

Name _____

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