

# Williams family celebrates 45th reunion

By Katherine R. Dougan

Year-round planning, nearly every year for forty-five years, is what it takes to host the Williams Family Reunion, according to Sandra Glasper, who serves on the family reunion committee. The family has more than two hundred twenty-five descendants, with an average of more than one hundred attending the reunions, so a committee and lots of advance planning are necessary to put on the event.

The committee plans the reunion a year in advance, with everyone making suggestions for activities.

"We are a proud family of over two hundred twenty-five members," Glasper stated. "Our humble beginnings were established on West Northside Drive near Lovett Elementary School. Our family farmed cotton, hunted, fished, raised animals and grew gardens to support the family."

Glasper's grandfather, Isaac Williams, Sr., was born in 1871 and died in 1972. He and his wife, Marie (Jones) Williams, lived in Clinton their entire lives, and the majority of the family members live in the Clinton area. The hosts for the re-



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The Williams family of Clinton recently celebrated its forty-fifth family reunion.

union this year were the youngest child of Glasper's grandparents, and the children of the oldest child, who is now deceased. Isaac, Sr. and Marie had fifteen children.

The reunion has often been hosted in the Clinton area, and, this year, it was expanded into a three-day event, held at various locations throughout the city. In the past, the family reunions were hosted in Philadelphia, Mississippi, and Michigan, where some of the fami-

ly members live.

This year, the family rented the YMCA on July 7 for a night of swimming and play for the children, and socializing for the adults. On Saturday, July 8, Brighton Park was the scene for an afternoon picnic, a memorial ceremony, and activities both indoors and outdoors.

The committee decided to meet in Clinton and expand the reunion to three days, not only because many family members are still in area, but

also to boost the local economy.

"We are deeply devoted to Clinton," Glasper said, "and the majority of our family still resides in the area."

On Sunday, July 9, the family rented the upstairs of the Pastabilities restaurant in Clinton, having a church service that morning with the Rev. Thompson of Refuge Temple Church of Flint, Michigan, with dinner and socializing afterward.

Glasper's aunt, Stella-Williams-Graves-Terrell, the second eldest child of her grandparents, started the family reunions in July 1972. Now that she has passed away, others have stepped up to plan. Sometimes, when the family gets together, it will be for a funeral in the morning, and a wedding in the afternoon.

"We did quite a few days like that," Glasper said. "We get through it. To whom much is given, much is required. For us, that's who the service is truly for - the person who has passed, to celebrate their life. The message to us; know your turn is coming."

The way the family handles death is by celebrating life, as they did at

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