



# The Alford American Family Association

Serving the Alford community over 25 Years  
We Are Family!!

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**Gilbert Kendric “Gil” Alford, Jr.**

**AAFA #0019**

**Founding Member**

January 1, 1926 – August 20, 2013



## Obituary



Beloved husband of 69 years to Mary Newkirk Alford; loving father and grandfather.

Services: Private Services were held at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery.

Published in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch on Tues., Aug. 20, 2013.

## Personal Data

Birth 1 Jan 1926  
North, Orangeburg County, South Carolina, USA

Death 20 Aug 2013 (aged 87)  
St Louis City, Missouri, USA

Burial Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery  
Lemay, St. Louis County, Missouri, USA

Memorial ID 115996717

Photos added by: [Ernie Chapman](#)

### Family Members:

- Parents  
Gilbert Kendric Alford, Sr., 1901-1997  
Mattie Inez Newsom Alford, 1903-1993
- Spouse  
Mary Louise Newkirk
- Siblings  
Batty Alford Wells

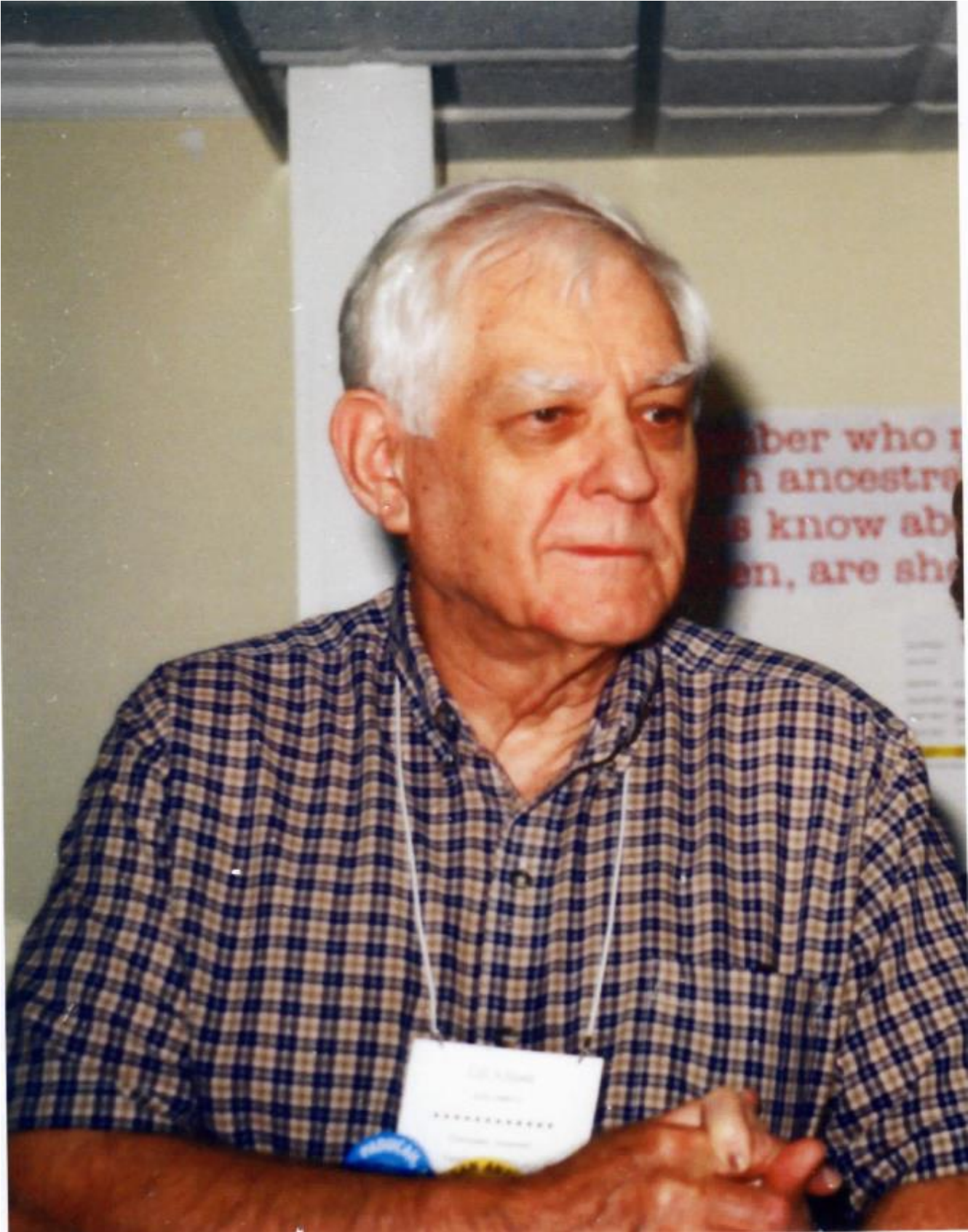


Information copied from the [Find-A-Grave](#) and [Ancestry.com](#) web page.

## AAFA Notes:

1. Gil's Alford lineage: Gilbert Kendric 1926 SC<sup>1</sup>, Gilbert Kendric 1901 LA<sup>2</sup>, Jephtha Martin 1862 LA<sup>3</sup>, John Seaborn 1807 LA<sup>4</sup>, Jacob 1761 NC<sup>5</sup>, Julius 1717 VA<sup>6</sup>, James 1687 VA<sup>7</sup>, John 1645 VA<sup>8</sup>.

Photographs





## Ahnentafel

### **Gilbert Kendric Alford, Jr., AAFA #0019**

**1. Gilbert Kendric "Gil" Alford, Jr.** was born Jan 1, 1926 in North, Orangeburg County, SC and died Aug 20, 2013 in Florissant, St. Louis County, MO. Gil was buried in the Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery, Lemay, St. Louis County, MO. Gil married **Mary Louise Newkirk** on {Private} in Ferriday, Concordia Parish, LA. Mary was born {Private} in Kellyville, Creek County, OK.

#### *Parents*

**2. Gilbert Kendric Alford, Sr.** was born Nov 9, 1901 in Mount Hermon, Washington Parish, LA and died Jul 15, 1997 in Gonzales, Ascension Parish, LA. He was an Agriculture Extension Agent. Gilbert married **3. Mattie Inez Newsom** on May 26, 1924 in Baton Rouge, East Baton Rouge Parish, LA. Mattie was born May 20, 1903 in Pointe Coupee Parish, LA and died Apr 23, 1993 in Gonzales, Ascension Parish, LA. Gilbert and Mattie were buried in the Lusk Cemetery, Gonzales, Ascension Parish, LA.

#### *Grandparents*

**4. Jephtha Martin Alford** was born Jul 22, 1862 in Washington Parish, LA and died there May 26, 1948. He was a Farmer. Jephtha's 1<sup>st</sup> marriage was to **Fannie Ophelia Purvis** about 1885. Fannie was born in Oct 1869 in Mississippi and died Oct 3, 1896 in Washington Parish, LA. Jephtha's 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage was to **5. Laura Jane Warner** on May 12, 1897 in Washington Parish, LA. Laura was born Mar 8, 1871 in Washington Parish, LA and died there Mar 31, 1939. Jephtha, Fannie and Laura were buried in the Jephtha Alford Cemetery, Washington Parish, LA.

#### *Great Grandparents*

**8. John Seaborn Alford** was born Oct 11, 1807 in Washington Parish, LA and died there Nov 15, 1891. He was a Farmer. John married **9. Margaret Brumfield** in 1834. Margaret was born Feb 9, 1819 in Pike County, MS and died Sep 8, 1885 in Washington Parish, LA. John and Margaret were buried in the Seaborn Alford Cemetery, Mount Hermon, Washington Parish, LA.

#### *Great Great Grandparents*

**16. Jacob Alford** was born Aug 15, 1761 in Franklin County, NC and died Jul 16, 1824 in Washington Parish, LA. He was a Farmer. Jacob's 1<sup>st</sup> marriage was to **Elizabeth Bryant** about 1784 in North Carolina. Elizabeth was born Jun 20, 1765 and died in 1789-92 in Cumberland County, NC. Jacob's 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage was to **17. Frances Barksdale "Frankie" Seaborn** about 1792 probably in Cumberland County, NC. Frankie was born about 1763 in Virginia and died about 1859 in Washington Parish, LA. Jacob and Margaret were buried in the Brock Cemetery, Washington Parish, LA.

#### *3<sup>rd</sup> Great Grandparents*

**32. Julius Alford** was born Sep 4, 1717 in St. Peter's Parish, New Kent County, VA and died in Nov 1771 in Bute County, NC. He was a Farmer. Julius married **33. Lucy \_\_\_\_\_** who died after 1790 in Franklin County, NC.

#### *4<sup>th</sup> Great Grandparents*

**64. James Alford** was born about 1687 probably in New Kent County, VA and died there about 1730.

**Note:** John is the supposed father of James Alford based on circumstances. There was also a William Alford in the area at that time with the same circumstances.

#### *5<sup>th</sup> Great Grandparents*

**128. John Alford** was born about 1645 probably in Virginia and died Mar 14, 1710 in New Kent County, VA.

# *Getting to Know . . .*

## **Gilbert K. “Gil” Alford, Jr., AAFA #0019**

[ This article by Gil was published in the *AAFA Action* #47, Winter 2000. ]

I was born in North, Orangeburg Co., SC on January 1, 1926. No, ours is not a South Carolina family. That was where my father could get work when he graduated from Louisiana State University (LSU) in 1925, with a degree in agriculture. He and his brother Lora W. Alford went to South Carolina to accept jobs as county agents. We stayed there only a couple of years before Dad got a job as the county agent in Calhoun Co., AR. We moved to Hampton where we lived for five years. My first memories are of starting to school there. After five years in Hampton Dad got a similar job in Grant County so we moved to Sheridan. All this time he was trying to work his way back to Louisiana with a job in the agricultural field. Finally in 1938 he got a job teaching vocational agriculture in the high school in Columbia, Caldwell Parish, LA. I attended the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> grades there from 1938 to 1940. Teaching was not really my Dad’s cup of tea so in 1940 we moved from Columbia to Ferriday, Concordia Parish, LA, where he had a job with the Farm Security Administration. I attended grades 10 and 11 and graduated from there in 1942 (only 11 years to graduate in those days).

It was in Ferriday that I met a good looking brunette with big bright blue eyes who you will hear more about later. When I graduated, I was only 15 and far too young to be going to college. Besides the country was at war and I thought my place was in the service but at that age no chance. I entered LSU in Baton Rouge, LA, in the fall of 1942 at age 15 and immediately engaged in “funology” and girls. I was taking just basic freshman courses but the only thing I enjoyed was ROTC. With the war on they had a special extra-curricular thing one could sign up for that was supposed to be like commando or ranger training. As I remember now, we spent most of our night training (it was all at night) crawling around on our bellies between cow piles in the university dairy cow pasture. I got into a lot of trouble with my fun-loving ways so had to work off demerits by cleaning and greasing 105 howitzers on the weekends. In the spring of 1943, I was failing miserably and dying to get into the US Marine Corps. By mail and phone, I convinced my parents to sign papers to allow me to join up. A college friend and I went down to New Orleans to the USMC recruiting station and got the necessary papers for my parents to sign. Then in March my Dad came down to LSU to get me and my trunk to take me home. He later told me that was the most difficult task of his lifetime. When I got home my mother had chickened out having read in the news about some military action and a bunch of guys getting killed.

I sure was not about to go back to college. When I was in high school, I had worked delivering papers and clerking in a grocery and market. That kind of work did not pay enough for the situation I found myself in at the time. Help was scarce so it took little time for me to find a job rough necking on an oil drilling rig. The first job did not last long because the night crew had an accident and burned everything up. I got a job on a different rig with a different company but quit after having to climb the derrick in an ice storm and then later hearing the tool pusher tell the driller that he didn't care if blood was six inches deep on the rig floor, he did not want any more stuck drill pipe. I quickly had a job working with a seismograph crew exploring for oil. Basically, we dug holes in the ground and stuffed them full of dynamite and exploded it. We worked all along the Mississippi River flood plain in Adams County out of Natchez, MS. Most of our work was in John boats in backwater. We finished there and the crew was sent to Wewahitchka, Gulf County, FL. I stayed there until I got homesick for my blue-eyed brunette. I quit and went back to Ferriday. I immediately got a job working for a consulting engineering firm that had a contract with the REA (Rural Electrification Administration) staking out power lines to take electricity to the farmers in the country. In those days they were still using kerosene lamps. I was quickly promoted from chain carrier to running the transit. We worked over much of Concordia Parish and some surrounding Parishes before we finished and were transferred to Bossier City near Shreveport, Caddo Parish, LA. We worked out of Bossier City in several areas of North East Louisiana, but we resided in the Inn Hotel in Shreveport. While there I saw my first paratroopers and their great-looking jump suits and their shiny boots.



Gil Alford - 1945

**Photo:** Company C 139th Airborne, Engineer Division, 17th Airborne Division

I got my greetings from the President while in Shreveport and was told to report to the reception center at Camp Beauregard, LA. What a shock that army food was. From there I was sent to the 1262<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Combat Battalion at Camp Shelby, MS where I was to take basic training. As that was coming to an end a recruiting team from The Parachute School at Ft. Benning, GA, came by looking for volunteers. I figured the paratroops was about as close as one could get to the Marine Corps in the army. Besides the base pay for a ground pounder was \$50 per month and in the paratroops, folks got an additional \$50 per month jump pay. I saw a quick way to double my pay and get a better job. I finished jump school in September 1944 after making five exits from a plane in flight. We were all given furloughs and I just knew I'd be bound for Germany as soon as that was over. That bright blue-eyed brunette, Mary Louise Newkirk, and I were married in September 1944. As luck would have it I did not get sent to Germany immediately.

There was more training at Fort Benning, so Mary joined me and we set up housekeeping in one room with a kerosene stove and shared an ice box on the back porch with other renters. What an experience. Fortunately, we were not there long and I was shipped to Camp Mackall, NC where I thought I would be joining a unit to go overseas. Not so. I was assigned to the 161<sup>st</sup> Airborne Engineer Battalion that was training and conducting demonstrations for visiting dignitaries. Again, Mary joined me and we had another one room arrangement with the Baxley family in Rockingham, NC. We had a potbelly coal stove to heat the room and no kitchen privileges or cooking arrangement. I took most of my meals at the mess hall at camp and when I could I stuck stuff in my field jacket pocket to take home to Mary. Sometimes Mrs. Baxley would feel sorry for her and invite her for a cup of coffee. On Friday nights we went out to eat.

Finally, in the spring of 1945 I got word I was being shipped to Germany. I was part of a group of unassigned engineer troops that were going over as replacements. We crossed the Atlantic on the Ile de France in April of that year. That ship was so fast we did not have to have a convoy or escort. It is easy to remember because President Roosevelt died while we were at sea. We landed in Edinburgh, Scotland, and took a train to Southampton, England, and in a few days took a boat across the English Channel to Le Havre, France. It was a slow move up through a replacement depot in Verviers, Belgium to Mulheim, Germany, and Company C 139th Airborne Engineer Battalion, 17th Airborne Division. The war was over before I got there but not long before they had jumped and glided in across the Rhine River at Wesel, Germany. The job of our squad in the outfit was to maintain a floating pontoon bridge across the Rhine River and to assist the crossing refugees as we could. We were not there long before the unit was pulled back and quartered in the Splendid Hotel in Vittel, France. Before the war it was a resort area but it was just a concrete hulk in 1945. A point system was set up to rotate fellows home. Since I had no points, I was not going home but instead was destined to go to the Pacific to fight the Japanese. A group of engineers, field artillerymen and medics were selected for their low points and set up to return to the United States where they would join an infantry regiment to constitute a parachute regimental combat team to deploy to the Pacific. After only about four months in Europe we returned on a slow boat USS James Jackson. While we were at sea the Japanese surrendered. When we got back to the United States, they were not sure what to do with us so we were sent to Camp Mackall, NC where we waited. After a short while we were assigned to the 129th Airborne Engineer Battalion of the 13th Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, NC. Not long after that the 82nd Airborne Division returned from Europe and the 13th was amalgamated with the 82nd Division. I remained with the 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion of the 82nd and was promoted from pfc through the ranks to master sergeant over a period of about three years. In June 1950 I accepted an appointment as a Warrant Officer and in the same month the war in Korea broke out. It was about that same time that I also received a direct commission as an engineer officer in the U.S. Army reserves. About two months later I was assigned to the



Engineer Section, V Corps at Fort Bragg and a couple months later had orders to join the Engineer Section of the 21st Transportation Port Headquarters in Brooklyn, NY. My orders said this was a permanent change of station and made no mention of overseas. Mary and I put our furniture in storage and loaded all the household goods we could carry into our car and moved to the big city. When we got there, I found out I was assigned to a reserve unit that had been called to active duty for the specific purpose of going to Korea. A couple months later I was on a troop train headed for the west coast and Mary was headed to Louisiana with our household goods. On my birthday, January 1, 1951, I crossed the sea of Japan from Sasebo, Japan, to Pusan, Korea where our port outfit was setting up a base in Masan, Korea. Before long I was assigned to Pusan as the liaison officer for our unit primarily to make sure all our equipment which came by ship (we were flown over) got through the port and to our unit. Everything in Korea was highly susceptible to theft. The unit later moved to Kunsan, Korea, where I rejoined them, and finally to Inchon. All told I spent 18 months there, finally going home in the fall of 1952. I think I learned more in that 18 months than during any other period of my life, but that's part of the bigger story.

Upon my return to the United States I was assigned to the Engineer Section, XVIII Airborne Corps at Fort Bragg, NC. It was here that our first child was born in 1954, and almost immediately I was assigned to the 521st Army Engineer Supply and Maintenance Group in Germany. I had two assignments there: first as the accountable property officer running Engineer Supply Point #3 near Stuttgart, Germany. Mary and April, our baby daughter, joined me there and we lived in brand new government quarters in Ludwigsburg, Germany. From there we moved to Kaiserslautern, Germany where I was the storage officer at the Seventh Army Engineer Depot. In 1956 our second daughter was born near there at Landstuhl Air Force Hospital. It was in Kaiserslautern that I decided that it was in the best interest of our family for me to get out of the service and go back and finish what I'd done such a poor job of in 1942-43. I had been taking college correspondence courses for the past couple years. When I left active duty, I was then classed as a reserve officer and I planned to maintain that status to eventually get some retirement.

We moved to Gonzales, LA where my father owned a house and was kind enough to allow us to live in it. He had spent some time there as a County Agent. I entered LSU in the fall of 1956 on the GI Bill. While in school I had student employment in the College of Engineering Dean's Office. We lived on the GI Bill, the student pay and handouts. While there we were active in the local Baptist church where I taught a young people's Sunday School class and was Sunday School superintendent. I graduated in January 1960 with a degree in Industrial Technology and had already been hired to work at the U.S. Army Engineer Supply Control Office (ESCO) in St. Louis, MO. We moved from Louisiana to Florissant, MO in early 1960. ESCO went through several name changes and moved

a few times within the city but I stayed with them and retired as a senior executive in January 1981 - nine days after I was eligible for early retirement. During this time, I was active in the local Baptist church and taught men's Sunday School class, was the Training Union director, was a deacon, and chairman of the deacons.

There was one minor interruption to the 20-year stretch described above. That reserve commission I kept got me called back to active duty in 1961 for one full year. We went back to Fort Bragg, NC with the 204<sup>th</sup> Army Signal Supply and Maintenance Battalion. While there I was active in the local Baptist church and taught a Sunday School class. When our year was over, I resigned the commission, but that's part of the bigger story.

Not too long after I retired, I bought my first personal computer and a little later stumbled into genealogy. Believe it or not I'd never even thought of a great-grandfather. I had no idea who he was. I asked my Dad if he remembered his grandfather. He did not know him, of course, but he did say he knew of him. He was John Seaborn Alford, a twin, his brother being Seaborn John Alford. He proudly told me that they had been born at sea on the way over from Ireland thus the "Seaborn" name. Did I ever bust his balloon when I later told him that they were born in the same area in which he was and that their name came from their mother Frances Seaborn. In 1983 I began publishing *About Alfords* and with the help of several subscribers it evolved into this Association, and as they say, the rest is history and part of the bigger story.



Mary Louise Newkirk Alford, Mary Inella Alford (in back) April Louise Alford (in front) and Gilbert K. Alford, Jr. ca 1965

[A]

## Memorials

August 26, 2013

Mary & Family,

Thinking of you all. It was a pleasure to have known Gil. He leaves a wonderful legacy.

---

Mary & Nolan David Alford

August 26, 2013

Your work on AAFA will live on and you will be missed.

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Philip Alford,  
Yucaipa, California

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August 26, 2013

We send you our sympathy on Gil's passing. May God bless him, you and all yours. Love to all. Jean was a grand-daughter of Virginia Blanche (Alford) Sanders, and a great-granddaughter of Dr. Granville C. Alford.

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Jean & Tom Donnelly,  
Western Springs, IL

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August 26, 2013

Gil,

Thanks for your untiring dedication, devotion and love. We know God already has you in charge of getting the entire eternal Alford clan together!

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Paul and Jean Alford,  
Decatur, Alabama

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August 26, 2013

Mary and family, Sorry to hear about the passing of Gil. His spirit will live on through our memories. Thanks for sharing your best friend with us in his passion for researching the Alford line. Never forgotten and I will meet him in heaven!

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Bobbie Alford Stuck,  
Gloucester, Virginia

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August 26, 2013

I'm so sorry for your loss. I really appreciate all the work Gil did for the Alford name. He will be greatly missed.

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Margie Brown,  
West Monroe, LA

August 26, 2013

Thank you for sharing Gil with all of the rest of us. (The Alford clan). His work is appreciated. Prayers will be with you.

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Linda Lou "Alford" Flack,  
Ruidoso, New Mexico

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August 26, 2013

Gil, thanks for helping me learn more about my ancestry.

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Wendell Meggs,  
Springfield, Tennessee

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August 26, 2013

Thank you for keeping the name Alford alive allowing those far away to have contact with relatives previously unknown. R.I.P.

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Judith Haselton [Alford],  
South Australia

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August 26, 2013

This is a tremendous loss to the entire Alford family. I considered him a friend and will miss him dearly. We need many more like him and now we have lost him. God bless his entire family.

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John A. Rogers,  
Huntsville, Alabama

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August 26, 2013

I want to say how sorry I was to hear of Gil's passing. I corresponded with him on the Alford any number of times from 1982 to the present. What a great loss to you and the Alford Association.

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Deena Cross,  
W. Des Moines, Iowa

August 27, 2013

I met Gil years ago and he too helped us with the Alford line. Such a caring man who made the effort to stay in touch and keep us in the Alford loop. He made everyone feel included and important. Thank you, God, for putting him in our path and may he rest in your arms today and forever.

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Irene Jacobi,  
Palo Alto, California

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August 27, 2013

A tremendous loss for all of us researchers and his extended community. Thank you, Gil, for opening doors.

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Patricia Alford,  
Pendleton, Oregon

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August 27, 2013

Mary, I was so sorry to hear of Gil's passing. He was a fine man and I am glad to have known him. I wish you the best in the future, for I know it will be hard. I have really enjoyed your and Gil's company at the reunions.

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Roy Alford,  
Hemphill, Texas

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August 27, 2013

Our condolences Gil's family. Though he and I never met in person, we enjoyed several years of email communication through which, he mentored and helped me. Gill was a good friend, and we will miss him. God bless his family.

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James W Johnson,  
Pinellas Park, Florida

August 27, 2013

Many thanks to Gil for his efforts with Alford family history. His contribution is a great legacy.

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Michele Brooks,  
Santa Ana, California

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August 28, 2013

I sometimes worked for Gil over at the Federal Center on Goodfellow. He was quite a guy. You and your family have my deepest sympathies. He will surely be missed.

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Carolyn Foushee,  
Wentzville, Missouri

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August 29, 2013

John and I were saddened to hear of Gil's passing. He was a completely unique individual with the vision to form AAFA, and we have all benefited so much from all he did for us. It has been a privilege to have the opportunity to meet and know Gil and you, too, Mary. We will certainly miss him, but just think of all the fun he is having now meeting all those dead Alfords in heaven!

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Kathryn Schultz,  
Germantown, Tennessee

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August 29, 2013

We have all lost a 'treasure' but your grief is much deeper. I am so glad I got the chance to meet Gil. Please know my thoughts and prayers are with you.

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JoLynn Long,  
Ambergris Caye, Belize

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September 01, 2013

I have lost a true friend! I worked for and with Gil from 1966 until his retirement and have been in touch ever since. He will be sadly missed.

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Don Johnson,  
Greeneville, Tennessee

September 09, 2013

Dear Mary,

We are very sorry to hear of Gil's passing. He was such a wonderful person and we enjoyed being with him at many Alford reunions. Please accept our deepest condolences. You and family are in our hearts and prayers.

Love, Charles & Joan Alford

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Charles Alford,  
Oakland, California

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