

Sheldon Family Association, Inc.
Member Survey Comments
(Unedited – Includes comments from survey forms returned)

1. **How long have you been a member of the Sheldon Family Association?**

Comments:

1. My father [a member] since 1939

2. **Do you use a computer program for genealogy? Which program do you use?**

Comments:

1. Note: I currently do not use one but will be acquiring one. Have not yet made a decision which to use.

2. No computer or access to one.

3. I might if free! My old computer doesn't support some software.

4. Occasionally look up cemeteries.

A relative keeps info.

3. **Do you send and receive Email?**

Comments:

1. Don't have [a computer]

2. [Yes] but not often

4. **How many annual meetings have you attended in the past 10 years?**

Comments:

1. Total of 3[meetings attended] in my last 25 years

2. 6 in past 11 years

3. One meeting 15 years or more ago

5. **What is your opinion of the overall quality of the meeting(s) you have attended?**

Comments:

1. No matter what it's wonderful to meet together.

2. I wish I had been able to attend!

3. This Aug will be my first – I am excited about it

4. I didn't get the genealogical help I had hoped for. I was promised but never sent.

5. Would be nice to see more folks, but those who attend do an outstanding job. Always a special time.

6. We really enjoyed the meetings we attended. Especially enjoyed the Sheldon British Heritage Tour, 1993, to England

7. Group activities/programs usually mean a more cohesive and therefore better meeting.

8. It's been a long time, but I certainly enjoyed seeing everyone every year – even if it was a short visit in Windsor CT & Warwick 2 yrs ago.

9. Personal preference – location near Sheldon historical sites.

10. You didn't ask if we had been to any. You didn't care.

11. Instead of visiting lots of places, go modern, use video, etc.

6. **How could Annual meetings be improved?**

Comments:

1. Some sort of plan to get the attendees to mix more – ask the “regulars” to deliberately mix with newer or shy members.

2. Maybe a couple “Sheldon genealogy workshops” for different levels. Variety of activities to choose from.

3. Closer relationships

4. Your meetings are great; I just live too far away

5. Although I know finding sponsorship is difficult - location in Northhampton, Mass or Vermont would have most appeal.

6. Long to but hasn't worked out.

7. Unknown

8. Have a meal where attendees are grouped by original Sheldon ancestor, i.e. all Godfrey descendants together; all Isaac descendants together, etc.

9. Identify lineage on the nametag so I could meet a CLOSE living cousin. For example put “IJAEOP” on my nametag, or have an available roster with similar entries which are the first initial of descending ancestors – Isaac, Jonathan, Asa, Eleazer, etc.

10. We enjoyed the meetings we attended, now more than 10 years ago. Thank you so much for the memories!

11. Genealogy Workshop

12. Why not combine the executive meeting and business meeting? The latter is boring after the first.

13. Since I haven't been to one, can't comment
14. I thought your meeting was very good and interesting. Sorry I can't attend.
15. See [comment #9, question] #5 – also prefer at least a few group outings, I think they pull the “Sheldons” together.
16. Bring in younger generation. Maybe ask some to speak.
17. There just fine! Keep up the good work!
18. All have on E. Coast, Why none on West Coast USA?

7. **If you have NOT attended a meeting, please indicate your reasons(s). Circle all that apply.**

Comments:

1. Wife too ill to travel and I don't want to drive by myself anymore 71 Yr.
2. I am a brand new member – and am going to Geneseo
3. Places, times and dates not convenient so far
4. Swinging from east to west, etc. gives everyone a chance to attend at least occasionally.
5. Too busy working & rearing children
6. Cost and time has been spent for 20 years working on application papers as a volunteer for DAR, SAR, DAC, and CAR instead of continuing my own research. Thanks for all the help I receive from Assoc.
7. I do not fly am now too old to drive a long distance
8. I would like a chance to query the SFA Database myself. Location is relevant to my resources – Cost is overall cost.
9. location 2008, program content 2009
10. not always convenient time due to other plans or commitments
11. Health
12. Scheduling hasn't worked with my previous commitments. Each year I give it serious consideration. I am still hoping to make it although I am 87!
13. Family obligations & work.
14. I just haven't - probably a lack of interest
15. Mistakenly missed 3 - no good reason. No one to accompany me, feared going alone.
16. I am 80 years old & do not travel anymore
17. At this point in my life too busy raising a family.
18. Unable to attend c/o health
19. Various reasons – expense, location, other obligations, not interested in travel plans
20. Competition with other activities – too new a member.
21. Often conflicting dates
22. I was not able to fit them into my schedules at the time
23. Now retired – previously too many other conflicting events
24. Sheldon line is too far back :)
25. Date conflict
26. Time of reunion. My most available time for genealogy is summer months.
27. It seems to be a very select group who meet every year. The field trips never interest me. I think energy should be more put toward creating a better in-line presence (see #14)
28. Widowed; not interested in traveling alone.
29. Too far, sometimes. Being retired now it is harder, before was busy working & with little children.
30. Age 80's and now 92.
31. Not able to travel.
32. Does not coincide with vacation time (still working full time).
33. [Cost] Vacation time too!
34. Failing health
35. Had other trips planned.
36. No time (still working)
37. Conflicting schedule
38. We have had a lot of illness' and can't afford it. Sorry
39. Age 86 - from 1991 husband was ill and I could not attend - he passed away & I am not able. I would love to attend but impossible. Sorry.
40. I have not attended other meetings because of A. & B.
41. New Member
42. Travel costs. It is difficult for me to be away from home.
43. We avoid travel to hot climates in the summertime.
44. This year reunion conflicts [with] Forte Family Reunion
45. [Cost] Airfare - My schedule. I am not coming this year because I was unable to determine my schedule in time to get a

reasonably priced ticket – very sorry not to be with you.

46. Sometimes other things come up
47. Meals seem overpriced. We could find less expensive lodging on our own, so not so impotent [sic]
48. Conflicting activity dates
49. Priorities of other obligations
50. We like to visit places & cemeteries where our own ancestors lived and were buried.
51. Just no interest – other priorities.
- 52/ Distance and timing – I am a farmer.
53. Las Vegas, Nevada – Too far from Vermont!
54. Don't fly anymore.
55. My surname has not been Sheldon for over 9 generations; I enjoy your newsletter.

8. **Annual meetings have become increasingly expensive. The Board has considered holding meetings every other year, rather than every year, or possibly once every five years. The advantage of holding meetings less frequently is to reduce costs. The disadvantage is that members may lose interest in the organization. In your opinion, how often should meetings be held?**

Comments:

1. No opinion [5 responses]
2. Or whatever the consensus of most
3. If held only every other year, they should be in central area of country for convenience of all.
4. Reading about the Annual Meetings keeps members enthusiastic about our roots. My husband is the Sheldon line.
5. No problem – if we could access SFA Database over the Web
6. Annually is fine – when I joined, it was held around Vermont, one of the main epicenters of the Sheldon family. Geneseo is close but I didn't see a direct relevance to the Sheldons – even less with Las Vegas
7. I live in Roswell, New Mexico. I don't know that I can ever attend a meeting.
8. I do not feel I should answer this as I have not attended any meetings.
9. I am not involved enough to know what's best
10. [Every second year] at least
11. Doesn't matter
12. Since I have never attended a meeting, I don't think I can give an opinion. I would love to see them every year, (more chance for me to attend) but I understand costs.
13. I think if you could keep it going every year. My grandma Coris' family did one for years but the young people lost interest. She held the Sheldon reunion in Ohio for years.
14. The meetings are of interest predominately because of location: i.e., were my ancestors there. Thus, I will be an irregular attendee. The programs have generally not been a big attraction to get me there.
15. Continuing effort to have meetings in different parts of this country is a good idea. Of course our history tends to be back east.
16. Until we retire (about 2-4 more years), it makes no difference.
17. It would save money.
18. Every year is ideal, but it does put a lot of heavy work on just a few. Every 2nd year is certainly acceptable. Perhaps give it a try.
19. I could vote for either, but if B – involves more planning would need to be done to make it truly memorable.
20. If you don't hold them every year, people lose interest. There will always be some who can attend.
21. Establish regional meetings in off-years
22. A. Every year. 2nd choice: every second year. Oops – I just realized the reason for my choice is rather selfish, and not necessarily in the best interest of the SFA: I don't like to travel. Therefore, I attend only meetings in or near Conn. Fewer meetings overall would mean fewer yet that would be nearby. Yikes – in view of all the work that goes into putting on a meeting, my reason keeps looking more and more selfish. I think you should throw out my answer to question 8, like I left it blank.
23. The Board should make this decision. They are the ones who must feel compelled to attend regardless of expense.
24. I enjoy meetings and history at locations.
25. [B. Every second year] if it's necessary to save money.
26. [B. Every second year] might help.
27. [A. Every year] reduce costs by emailing SFAQ
28. It doesn't matter.
29. Keep same.
30. Could a meeting be held via conference/telephone?
31. It doesn't matter to me since I don't attend meetings.

9. **Would you be willing to host a SFA meeting? If yes, please contact our Vice President who is chair of the Conference Committee. Planning assistance is available, you won't be on your own.**

Comments:

1. Not yet, too new
2. To ponder
3. No big draw in my area.
4. Already done so- Oswego, NY
5. I cannot be the host, but I would be happy to help with any meeting in California.
6. [Maybe] In the far future
7. Already have [hosted a meeting]. Would encourage others to do so.
8. Sorry poor health precludes doing so.
9. Health will not permit
10. [Yes] but not in right location Anaheim, CA

10. **What is your level of interest in the SFAQ?**

Comments:

1. I think it is excellent as it is!
2. When I relax – with pen in hand to (check) items.
3. find very few [articles of interest]
4. Rose does excellent work! How can Rose be replaced?
5. [High interest] well, not quite cover to cover

11. **Are there any articles or features you would like to see added or removed from SFAQ?**

Comments:

1. Coverage has been great. How to contact help has aided me greatly in researching for Genealogical Assoc. papers
2. Has there been an article about the T. B. Sheldon Memorial Aud. In Redwing, MN?
3. The references to early Sheldons remain arcane to me; Maybe more information on how to trace relationships
4. Add a Section that tells us of new information on the Web site, generally, (e.g.) New general categories, etc.
5. My direct Sheldon ancestry ends with Rebecca Sheldon who married Seth Smith. New info is becoming available and I would like to see articles on sheldons from Isaac thru his sons, etc.
6. Lots of space used for upcoming annual meetings. Then account of past one. For us not able to attend - meaningless. I'd like to see some space [illegible] on all 4 or 5 first Sheldons. I'm John 13 - Rarely find any mention even if it's geography/history.
7. I am fascinated by DNA issues and what they may reveal
8. I'm interested in books I could purchase. I have my families tree from John Sheldon S0013 to myself and would like to know more about the other S0013 cousins.
9. fine as is
10. I would like to see the information on S#13 John to William (what is the (W) Sheldon number and is John #13 his son or grandson, etc.
11. No II
12. Would appreciate moe articles pertaining to Rupert, VT. My husband's home is there.
13. Enjoy articles by Peggy Jones – Maybe SFA members could submit articles about their ancestors. Maybe add a "Queries" column.
14. I love narrative information about the individuals or places. I would be interested in more stories. I appreciate the need for documentation & dates but relish the flavor of individual personalities, proclivities & pursuits.
15. Stick to articles about Sheldons – the article in the current issue re "Christian Nation" is not appropriate! Publish Sheldon lineages – e.g. Ahmentafel charts, how about queries? Also, newsletter needs to be proof-read better, Many typos, etc.
16. It all looks good.
17. I think they do a good job on the Quarterly
18. Most articles are interesting to me. I have no recommendations for additions or removals.
19. The annual evername index should be kept. It's very helpful.
20. More of William Sheldon line that lived and are living up on [address] NY. [Some personal genealogy]
21. I find how Sheldon's have lived and contributed to their communities interesting. How about the Sheldon Pear?
22. Editor is doing a great job – keep up the good work!
23. More variety of genealogies
24. Love personal stories on lines, DNA research.
25. I would like people from different lines to write of their search experiences
26. Very much enjoy the history articles.

27. No
28. Good as is
29. I like what you use.
30. With help by mail I have been able to complete several application papers quickly and accurately. A million thanks -
31. I naturally would like more articles on my direct Sheldon line. [personal information redacted]
32. I liked the "inquiry" space for hunting other family members and info
33. Just general Family History
34. Can't think of any at the moment. Later: I really enjoyed the lists of members until Mark took them away. How we going to find relatives??
35. Some times read the whole Quarterly& some times not. I do like it's content.
36. Just fine!
37. Researchy findings & articles of family members. Could a "help wanted" column be added, i.e., I am looking for a family bible, etc.

12. **Substantial savings would be achieved by sending SFAQ as an attachment to an Email message. The attached SFAQ would be in Portable Document Format (PDF) and could be downloaded and printed on your local printer. Paper copies would continue to members without Internet access. Your reaction?**

Comments:

1. In favor of saving paper
2. Our church tried this – everyone complains! "Can't open e-mail " or "didn't get the info." Computers also break-down or crash at times.
3. I find that my computer time is limited, so I usually don't even read (let alone print – to use or file) the newsletters I receive on line.
4. If content can continue to be interesting and useful, then saving money would be good
5. If 8 pages or so
6. Favorable - Absolutely!
7. Or you might consider semi-annual instead of quarterly
8. If it isn't difficult & workable (I'm 80)
9. See paper copies above ["paper copies would continue to members without Internet access"] I do not have or use a computer
10. Useful given \$10 annual dues.
11. [selected Unfavorable] I share my copy with the Fiske Genealogical Library in Seattle. They even have a copy of the old magazine.
12. [selected favorable] Preferred!
13. I do not like to attempt to download attachments.
14. Charge higher dues to cover printing & mailing to those not online. My local genealogy society is doing this right now. I estimate about 1/3 of the newsletters we exchange with other societies are online. We will be adding \$5/yr to dues for a paper copy.
15. My computer printer would not do justice to photographs.
16. Less likely to read
17. I do not go on the computer very often and have too many emails.
18. I would miss the hardcopy but can understand the need for saving.
19. Anything to cut down [on costs]
18. Because we have dial up computer and that takes forever. DSL or others are not available.
19. It is a pain to printout – but I understand the cost savings.
20. I prefer a hard copy
21. [Favorable] But – I prefer receiving paper copies!
22. [Unfavorable] I donate my copies to the Santa Clara Co., CA Library
23. [Favorable] Really like this idea; then I wouldn't miss any as I have in the past.
24. Email copy easier to ignore, but cost s/b a large deciding factor.
25. Yes, yes, please do.
26. Just keep the same – paper & Internet.
27. I do not have or use e-mail.

13. **How often do you navigate to the SFA Web site? <www.sheldonfamily.org>**

Comment:

1. The website is wonderful!
2. When I first started going to the Web site, I read everything. Then it seemed no new information (or enough) was added to prompt me to go back.

3. [Frequency] Varies. Sometimes more than others. Dictated by health.
4. I think it is impressive!
5. Never, don't have [a computer]
6. [Never] Well, almost never. My answer would be the same for any Web address one might name.
7. [Never] I just did. Nice job. I like pics.

14. **What could be added or removed from the Web site to increase your interest?**

Comment:

1. Haven't yet
2. No opinion
3. I looked at it today and found some interesting articles. I will check it more often. Nice work!!
4. Actually I forgot about it but will weekly from now on!
5. It is very well done. Keep it as is!
6. SFA Database access – So give it a password for Members
7. It would be helpful to have a list of member's e-mail contacts for the different families. For instance, I am part of "John 13." I would be happy to have my e-mail address listed under this family so we can share information on line.
8. I just visited the Web site. I think it is very appealing and informative.
9. N/A no opinion; Genealogy is great but job & other activities slow my quest, not enough time.
10. I am just learning about all this –
11. Searchable family lines – This questionnaire could have been put online.
12. Not the problem – lack of time & continuing computer disconnects
13. I'd like to be able to find "Wm" (John) 013 descendants
14. More photos – perhaps Sheldon homesteads, old Sheldon tombstones, 19th century photos, etc.
15. What's new section – I am happy to peruse a site the first time but appreciate having changes noted up front. I can always peruse again if I want to re-check something.
16. How about letting members access the Sheldon database on line?? Put Rev Sheldon's material on-line! Come into the 21st century with the SFA!
17. I think the site is O.K. as is.
18. SFA database (for member use only)
19. You could have a dues paid member's area where special capabilities such as SFAQ archive, perhaps even genealogy search. Is there an opportunity to be closer to cousin's in England and their Web site(s)?
20. Not familiar enough to comment.
21. Didn't know about it. Add more variety of genealogies.
22. Keep on doing what you are doing.
23. I forget about the Website. Perhaps SFA members could be emailed when new info posted.
24. Email with helpful tips including how to interpret our FamilyTree DNA results, and provide additional genealogy info online for a fee.
25. I check Rootsweb & Genforum every month to see if I can find more relatives. I'd like to see more historical documents & papers of "old"
26. I don't know. I want to applaud and thank all those many people who have given so much of their time and effort to making the SFA, the quarterly, the meetings, and other genealogical programs the success that they are, and have been, over the years. [Some personal information redacted.]
27. Add individual index. Have an online database available to members. I would like to see a big push for raising the money necessary for publishing a book on our family history. What amount would we need to raise? Can we ask for donations?
28. I did not know about it! It's wonderful – very well written. I will now visit it often. I do not recall reading anything about it in the Quarterly.
29. Wasn't aware of Website
30. Just didn't think of it. Now I will
31. Could not locate a site for checking who is or is not listed in our family so as to update your records
32. Would it be possible to create a members only area for browsing previous SFAQs and perhaps a viewable/searchable copy of the family lineage (with taking certain privacy concerns for living individuals into consideration)
33. Not that familiar with it.
34. When winter comes I'll have more time to work with it – I'll send my thoughts – if I can improve it.
35. Need to see first!
36. To Xchange info with people sharing the same family

Tabulation as of : Sunday, October 18, 2009