



Paisley Family Research and News

Spring/Summer 2008

Issue 24

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Marriage Proposal Accepted by Mail!

At Home June 19th, 1866

Mr. Paisley,

After considering the question proposed on last night I have concluded to answer it by note. I have been troubled for some time to know what to do. You know that this is a subject which should be well weighed by both parties concerned. In other matters I have always liked to leave for my ma or some more experienced person than myself to decide; but this decision is to be made by myself. I have prayed that I may be guided by my Heavenly Father in all things; and if there ever was a time when I needed His direction it is the present. I have long thought it to be my duty to marry a Christian and before your conversion, this was my principal objection to becoming your partner through life. A man without religion would be a poor companion for me. If you can get the consent of my parents, then, I will be yours. But till ma is entirely willing we can never be one.

Your friend, Emma Butler

[p.6, *Tulip Evermore: Emma Butler and William Paisley, Their Lives in Letters, 1857-1887*. Edited by Elizabeth Paisley Huckabee and Ethel C. Simpson. Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1985.]

Personal Letters

For those of us who research the past looking for ancestors and family connections, the acquisition of confirmed facts is a joyous experience. We are giddy over our luck in finding descriptive wills, tombstones that are still readable, or (best yet) a family Bible. But, the facts alone don't tell us the whole story. Very few of us get to know what our ancestors were really like – their personality, their interests, their daily toils.

Emma Butler Paisley kept correspondence that she and her husband received from 1857 to 1887. Around 600 pieces of her mail now reside in the Special Collections of the University of Arkansas Library, Fayetteville. Reading letters back and forth between Emma and her husband William is a moving experience. ("My Dearest One," "My dear loving Emma," "many kisses...") as well as a social history lesson. After reading 489 typed pages, one feels like one has become part of the family. And, the final letter offering condolences to William on the death of his beloved wife Emma, brings the reader to tears.

What a legacy Emma Butler Paisley left to her descendants and the citizens of Tulip, Arkansas.

This collection first came to your editor's attention in 1999 when Ed Rindeikis sent information on his great-aunt Elizabeth Paisley Huckabee, one of the co-editors of the book *Tulip Evermore: Emma Butler and William Paisley. Their Lives in Letters, 1857-1887*. This book is long out-of-print, but an inquiry on the internet led to the purchase of a copy from a used book store. Permission to reprint excerpts has been obtained from The University of Arkansas Press and through them, permission from co-editor Ethel C. Simpson.

The letters chosen for inclusion here are not the letters between husband and wife except for the sidebar to the left. Included are letters from Paisley cousins back home in Guilford County, NC or friends that mention relatives. The correspondence allows researchers to connect the branches of the ever-widening Paisley family tree. Interestingly, Aunt Minerva mentions the old family Bible in her Dec. 22, 1885 letter.

William McLean Paisley was born in North Carolina, the son of the Rev. John Paisley and Eliza Bradshaw Paisley. The Rev. Paisley died in 1845. Eliza then married Capt. Lorenzo Dow Lipscomb and the family moved to Tulip, Arkansas.

If you would be interested in buying a copy of the book *Tulip Evermore*, please notify the editor of this newsletter. The University of Arkansas Press would like to reprint if enough people are interested.

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Annual dues are \$5.00. Make checks payable to Rovena Jones and note in the message area "Paisley Family Association."

In the midst of the Civil War

William Paisley was a Corporal in the Confederate forces, Co. I 3rd Arkansas Regiment. His neighbor and good friend Henry Butler was with Cookes Brigade and often wrote William (Billy). Henry would later become his brother-in-law.

Coosawhatchie, SC
Apr 22nd 1863

Dear Billy

I was glad to receive your interesting letter from Mcleansville, N.C. I regret that the circumstances were such as to prevent your coming by and spending a few days with me. Your cousin would also have been much pleased to have seen you, and no doubt you could have passed a few days with us quite pleasantly. Your cousin is quite well, also the young man Clark who was rooming with you at the Jordan Springs near Winchester...

Yours, Henry

Kingston, NC
May 21st, 1863

Dear Billy –

I herewith send you two letters from your sister, which were handed me by your uncle James Paisley who is now with the Brigade. He came in yesterday and was much disappointed in not seeing his son, who had been sent off to Johnson County with a detail of men to look up deserters from Daniels' Brigade. We send out a party of one hundred men to arrest deserters from that Brigade – two hundred of the scoundrels having deserted within the past month or two. Your uncle dined with me today, and he expected to leave tomorrow for home as it was uncertain when Sergeant Paisley would return – but as good luck would have it, a squad of deserters were sent down and your cousin in charge of the party. So your uncle will probably remain with his son a day or two longer.

Your uncle is quite a clever gentleman, and thinks a great deal of you. I think I can see a likeness between him and yourself. I was glad to see your cousin return this evening. . .

Your uncle sent you the within printed letter – it is a good epistle, read it.

H. A. Butler

Gordonsville
Sept 26th, 1863

Dear Billy

I saw your cousin a day or two since, from whom I learned that you were now at Charlotte. You run about so much, I know not where to write...

I am quite anxious to hear form the 3rd Ark. Of course they were in the hottest of the battles of Chickamauga. I earnestly hope brother L and Col. M. have escaped again. I have heard nothing further from George or Charlie. The privates are being exchanged slowly, while I hear of no officers being exchanged at all.

I have not heard a word from home since July 22nd. Your folks were all well then. It seems the Yanks have at last taken Little Rock. At least their papers say so. I am glad to hear that your pay has been increased. Your cousin William says you think of procuring a situation in one of the departments as clerk. You could realize more money in that way...

Your friend truly – H. A. Butler

I received your letter written from Rocky Point soon after the opening of the campaign...

I saw your cousin Wm. on a litter borne out badly – but I hope not mortally – wounded. I afterwards learned he was wounded through the left lung. But I am glad to be told, the surgeons are hopeful of his recovery. I had become attached to your cousin partly on your account...

Your friend
H. A. Butler

Petersburg, Va.
Aug 23, 1864

Dear Billy,

Last April you wrote me a long letter in which you pitched into me extensively for not writing you as you supposed. Now old fellow, it is permissible to pitch in, but well not to do so – suffice it to say I have not received a letter from you either in that time – though I have written two if not three letters to you. Since your cousin's death I have been unable even to hear from you. I wrote you not long after your cousin's death, and expressed my sincere sorrow at the sore affliction to his parents. I liked him exceedingly...

Very truly your old friend
Henry

Near Petersburg, Va
Oct. 30th 1864

Dear Billy

I have just received a letter from your Uncle James in answer to one I wrote a few days ago, making enquiries as to your whereabouts &c. The last letter I rec'd from you was in May or June, although I have written three different letters since your last was received. I supposed from your not answering that you was either sick or had gone to Ark; and now that your uncle informs me that you was at his house about the first of August, and left there, well I cannot but express my surprise at your neglecting to write to one who has ever felt and I think expressed real friendship for you...

Your friend,
H.A. Butler

Hatchers Run, Va.
March 10th 1865

Dear Billy – "Captain"

I congratulate you on attaining to the very respectable rank of "Captain." ... "Captain Paisley" - that sounds well and allow me to say is well merited...

H. A. Butler

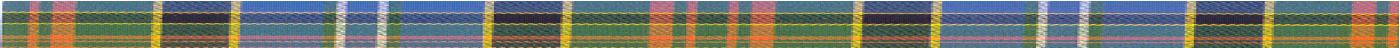
[The Civil War ended 30 days later in Appomattox, Virginia. The cousin and uncle that were referred to in these letters were James Paisley, son of John and Hannah Donnell Paisley, and grandson of Col. John Paisley. James' son William was his only child by his first wife Elizabeth Scott. William died July 13, 1864 from his battle wounds. He was buried in the Alamance Presbyterian Church cemetery, Guilford County, NC.]

Near Chaffins Farm
June 24, 1864

My dear friend Billy –

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance reported	
March 3, 2007	46.92
Dues collected	175.00
Interest	.18
	222.10
Expenses:	
Mt. Pleasant UMC	25.00
Newsletter printing	100.82
Postage	57.30
Paisley Family Society dues	34.00
Total expenses	217.12
Balance reported	
March 1, 2008	4.98



*Letter from Minerwa Paisley of McLeansville, N.C.
to William Paisley in Dobyville, Arkansas*

At Home
March 5, 1869

Dear Nephew and Niece,

I received your kind letter which afforded me much pleasure not only for the kind regard you manifested for myself and children, but for the love and esteem you have for my dear departed Husband. Every thing that can be said of his worth is gratifying to me. Dear Husband, I always thought I valued him, but feel now that I never appreciated his worth. No woman ever had a kinder husband. This he showed to the very last. While ever he could speak, my comfort was his constant care. The last thing he ever did was to fold me to his bosom and embrace me. This was just a few moments before he died. He was conscious to the very last, but I reckon you would like to know how long he was sick. The fall after you were here in the spring [1867] he had a bad spell, but seemed to recover from that, and I thought him as well as usual, but he seemed to have a presen-timent that his time was short. I was passing by him during the Christmas holidays when he pulled me down on his lap and told me that he felt that he was not going to be with us much longer. I told him that I hoped he would be mistaken, but nothing could shake his opinion. He seemed tolerably well during the winter 'till sometime in the spring, when he had a hemorage of the lungs, after which it was a slow but steady decline—all that could be done for him was done, but nothing seemed to arrest the progress of the disease. He did not suffer much except from his cough, which was distressing at times. Everything that could be done to aid or comfort him was done.

His friends were not a few, and they showed the sincerity of their friendship when he needed it. We had to fan him day and night about a month before he died. It caused him to breathe easier. He slept a great deal of his time toward the last. His mind was perfectly free from doubt for months before death, talked as calmly about death as ever you heard him talk about any thing, made every arrangement for our comfort that he could, left every thing in my hands to go on just as we had done. We did not owe 5 dollars in the world. He had got a negro man to come and live on the place, I think he is a good fellow. I have a woman living in the kitchen who is a very good hand. Thus far we have got along very well. Johnny and Porter have been going to school all winter, but will have to stop now and work on the farm during the summer. I have been teaching Lacy and Annie myself. They done very well. We raised a good crop last year. Johnny and Porter are a great help to me. They are both large enough to plow. I hope they will be good boys and make useful men.

I feel that I have a great responsibility resting on me, but intend by the grace of God to do the very best I can, and I hope and pray that I may not be foolish to do as some widows do. I expect to have trials, but think I can live with my children as happy as I ever could live any other way, and besides, I don't feel that there is another person in this world in whom I could place the same confidence, or who could gain my affections as my dear Husband had. I know that I will have to spend many a lonesome hour, but as I told him, I will spend my lonesome hours in thinking of the many pleasant ones we had spent together. I was setting by him one day fanning him as he was dozing (for he sat up most of the time). He awoke and caught me weeping. He begged me not to do so, said it would not be a long separation, that he would only be in Heaven to meet me when I got there, said there would [be] a host there to meet me when I got there! O rapturous thought, that we will be again united in that world of Joy where our happiness will be complete.

You asked if he ever said anything about you. He seemed anxious to hear from you, but said he knew that you were engaged with your business. Said that he did hope you would make a useful man. Did you see his obituary and tokens of respect? If you did not, I can send them to you. He died very easy, just went to sleep. It was Sabbath evening of a communion at Alamance. Every

respect that could be shown to his remains. Mr. Tidball preached one of the most touching sermons that I ever heard. He appealed to the young men of the church to know who would take his place, said there was a fearful gap made in the front ranks and who would fill it? He preached from the text "whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might," Mr. Paisley's motto through life, given him by his good Mother. Dear Willie, you seem to be very happy. I am glad to see you so, but take care that this world does not occupy too much of your affections. I speak the language of experience when I say this. I think I have been taught the vanity of every thing in this world. How happy I was when I nursed my first babe, who has long since been taken from me I hope to a better world. Just half of our family I hope are safe in Heaven. What a strong magnet to draw those who are left behind.

Dear Willie I have written you a right long letter and I feel like I have not said half that I would like to say. Can't you come and see us some time again? If you ever go North, come this way if you can.

The children often talk of you. Lacy and Annie had you and your wife for visitors the other day in their play. They all send love to all, and say you must kiss your little boy for them, and tell him all about them when he is old enough, and you must both accept my love and best wishes and I want you to be sure to write to me. I must close by asking you again to write

Minerva W. Paisley

[pp143-144, Tulip Evermore]

[Minerva Wharton Paisley was referring to her late husband. James Paisley was born January 3, 1816 and died August 30, 1868. He was buried in the Alamance Presbyterian Church cemetery, Guilford County, North Carolina.]

J. W. Gilmer to William Paisley in Dobyville

Gilmer's Store, N.C.
October 27, 1876

Dear cousin,

I received a letter from you about a month since, which should have been answered long since, but I have delayed principally for the reason that I hoped I would be able to find a suitable young man to send you, & one that I could recommend, but so far have failed. There is only one I know of that would likely go, & I know but little about him, tho I think likely he might do well enough. His name is Mclean, a son of Uncle Thomas Mclean of Grayham, Alamance Co., N.C. He has a steady father, & so far as I know his boys are sober, industrious boys, & have farmed some, tho not raised entirely on a farm—and altho they are my relations, I know but little about them, as they have been brought up in a different county some twenty miles from me. I understand one of his boys would be glad to get such a position. You can write to their father, Thomas G. Mclean, Grayham, N.C. I know of no other young men that would likely accept your offer.

This leaves myself & family well. I have four sons and one daughter. Henry, my oldest, is married and living near Mcleansville. Mary Anne, my daughter, is married to a Mr. Phipps, has two sons & a daughter. Robt, my second son, is going on 23 years, and is still with me helping on the farm. John, my third son, is going on 20 & is now at Davidson College, entered last Sept. Charly, my youngest, was 12 last July, so you see my family are nearly all grown up. Aunt Minerva Paisley's family are well, & getting along very well. Her boys are very nice young men & all of them members of the Presbyterian church. Porter, her second son, is preparing for the ministry. He entered college at the same time my son did. My son also has the ministry in view. I forgot to say to you that Thomas

Mclean is a Presbyterian, & his boys have had Presbyterian training.

Nancy, my wife, wishes to be remembered to you. We would all be glad to see you once more here in your native country.

The history of Alamance church that our Pastor prepared was not published, and was not intended for publication. Crany Presbytery assigned him this duty as they have to different ministers, that is, to get up a kind of a historical sketch of the different churches in the Presbytery, to be read before that body & then filed away with the papers of Presbytery.

Your friends here are generally well. We are hoping to elect our conservative ticket throughout the state the 7th of Nov & carrying the state by a handsome majority for Tilden and Hendren. We have got desperately tired of radical rule (I take it for granted that you are a conservative Democrat).

I stop writing by asking you to write to me. I would like to keep up a correspondence with you.

Your cousin most affectionately

J. W. Gilmer

P-S. I received both your letters. The first was forwarded to my brother, but sent back to me in a short time.

[pp.294-295, *Tulip Evermore*]

[Took awhile to connect Joseph W. Gilmer to the family. He was not listed in the *Paisley and Allied Families* book (Partridge, 1973). Joseph Gilmer married Nancy McLean, daughter of Joel and Maryann Paisley McLean. Maryann was the daughter of John and Hannah Donnell Paisley; and the sister to Rev. John Paisley (father of William McLean Paisley of Tulip and Dobyville, Arkansas). The Uncle Thomas McLean referred to in this letter was the brother of Joel McLean.]

Minerva Paisley to William Paisley in Dobyville

Mcleansville [N.C.] Nov. 24th 1881

My dear Nephew:

I received your long interesting letter, and am sorry it has lain so long unanswered. I thought when I read it I would answer it in a few days, but we know but very little what is ahead of us. A few days after received it I met with a painful accident, which has been the cause of my not writing sooner. I went out into the orchard to gather some apples, and fell and broke one bone of my left arm just above the wrist. It was very painful at first, but is well now, but my fingers are still stiff. But reckon they will all come right some of these days.

Will, you can only imagine how glad we all were to hear from you, and to get such a long and exceedingly interesting letter was simply a treat. It seemed to bring back much of the past vividly to my mind, and that is one of my greatest pleasures. To think of the many, many happy hours and days spent with loved ones is a source of neverending pleasure to me. I sometimes feel that the spirits of loved ones are hovering over me, bidding me not to be discouraged, for the trials of earth will soon end, and if we are faithful in the discharge of our duties, Heaven will be our home through an endless eternity. Surely this ought to stimulate us amidst our daily trials. I have had a great deal of care, as you well know, since my dear husband's death, but I have much to be thankful for. I have had excellent health, never have had a single Dr. bill for myself until this accident, and never had much sickness in the family. My children were obedient and kind, and we have been happy.

The only thing that caused us sorrow was having to be separated, which could not be avoided, and I am certainly thankful that I had the nerve to give Porter and Lacy up—for I think it is better for them. I think John is perfectly satisfied to be a farmer, and you know I am glad to have one of them to stay with me. Jno. is a kind, affectionate boy, and has a cheerful healthy companion with a sweet disposition I think will take care of me. Porter's health has not been very firm hitherto, but I think it is improving, and hope he may be spared to fill some useful station in life, which I think he will do. He has not given up the Ministry, but seems to shrink from the responsibilities of so high and holy a calling. I hope he will be guided by an over-ruling Providence in the path of duty. Lacy has his mind on being a M.D., and if resolution, energy and quick motion are any advantages, he has that much to recommend him. Porter is highly pleased with his situation at D.C. [Davidson College].

Says he lives near the fountain head of knowledge, from which he can draw at leisure. He has more than half of his time to devote to his own improvement, and says he studies about as hard as any student he has. Porter loves study. It is his delight. He says the farther he goes, the more he sees ahead that he wants to know, and feels that he knows comparatively nothing.

But I am afraid you will think me an egotist, so I will quit writing about my children. But I must tell you something about Annie. She is grown. I suppose from what you told about Mariannie, I think she is about her size. She is a stout, healthy girl, and a great comfort to me. She has a pretty voice and is fond of music. As to her casting shy glances at the boys, some of them commence that so soon that I put a stop to it. But she has been flying around for some time she says having a good time, but I tell her to let it stop there for some time yet.

I will now try to tell you something about your acquaintances you made while here. Mr. Jos. Gilmer's family are still the same as you knew except Miss Jane, who I told you married Will Wharton. She has one of the smartest little boys I ever saw, has but one. Eli married, and is merchandising in Winston, N.C. He is doing well. Mary Rankin is living near Greensboro. Married Jerrie Wharton, has four children. Callie Stewart married a Mr. Glass and is living over on Alamance, and is just as pretty as ever, has four children. Miss Sue Rankin, sister of Mary, married Mr. Will Rankin and is living between our house and the depot. I believe every girl, so far as I know, is married that you knew while you were here.

I was about to forget to tell you about the Rankin girls, that is the William Rankin of Greensboro. They are all dead but one. She—Maggie—is in New York living with her brother-in-law, a Mr. Cummings. The other three married and lived only a short time—two of them married Cummings and died, leaving one child apiece. The other married Col. Graves of Mt. Airy.

Mr. Joseph Gilmer's family are all living and doing well. One of his sons, Henry, is sheriff of Guilford Co. and one (John) is a graduate of Davidson College, and is a worthy young man, speaks of studying for the ministry. Charlie Tidball is teaching in Graham, N.C. Mr. Tidball sends his kindest regards to you and family.

I don't remember whether I ever told you about the new churches at Bethel and Alamance. They are very pretty. We attend one about as much as the other. We certainly have great privileges here, the best of preaching every Sunday.

But I haven't told you anything about the drought. We surely had the longest drought that I ever saw. Jno. says the roots of the corn were never wet from time it was planted, until it was pulled. You may know there was not much made on up-land. There was scarcely any. Jno had low ground, and made about 1/2 crop. I think this will be a hard year with some people. I think we will have plenty to do us, but very little to spare. And another calamity that befell us in this country—the tobacco was all frostbitten. All together will necessarily make this a hard year, but we did not suffer from scarcity of water, as you said you did, though it began to get scarce before it rained. I hope you have had plenty before this. We have had abundance for the last few weeks.

I thought I was done telling you about the children, but I was about to forget to tell you about Jno.'s little boy (you know I have the dignity of a Grandma). He is a sweet little fellow, just beginning to walk. His name is James Percy. He is a real pet. You will think he is smart when I tell you he walked when he was just eight months and 1/2 old. He is beginning to talk, is not 10 months yet. He reminds me so much of his uncle Lacy, has the same go-ahead disposition. Jno. and Bessie are proud of him. He is a great deal of company for me. His ma has taken him visiting today, and it seems as if there was nobody at home.

Well, I guess I have written enough for once. I hope we will do better at writing hereafter. I forgot tell you how glad we were to get your group [picture]. You certainly have a great deal to live for. I hope and pray that you and your wife's life may be spared to train your dear little children, and that they may live to be a blessing to the world and a comfort to you in old age.

All join in love to you and family. Write soon
from your loving Aunt Minerva



P.S. Tell Mariannie [Billy's sister] that I think she ought to write to me or her name sake, and will look for a letter from her soon. P.S. I forgot to tell you that Mr. and Mrs. Gilmore wanted me to send you their best love. And Mrs. James Wharton and family were here yesterday, and wished to be remembered in kindest wishes to you. Mrs. J. says she well remembers the night you and her got up to kiss in our parlor, and Mr. Paisley and myself held the candle to see it well done. No me more but ever remain

your affectionate aunt

[pp377-379, *Tulip Evermore*]

Minerva Paisley to William and Emma Paisley in Dobyville

Mcleansville, N.C.
Dec. 22, 1885

My Dearest Nephew & Niece

I am afraid you have thought me tardy about writing, but I hope you will excuse me, for I assure you, it is not because I have not thought of you, or because you have any less hold of my warmest thought and affections. I often think of you all, and there is no family outside of my own children that I would rather correspond with. I would like so much to see you all, but if this is denied us, do let us write to each other as long as we live.

... You will believe me when I tell you Jno and Bessie have named their boy William. He is a bright little fellow, made his appearance the 28 of Nov. Percy is fond of his brother, says they will have a big time rabbit hunting. Bessie and babe are doing well—for which we ought to be so thankful.... We had letters from Porter and Lacy last week. They are well and have a fine school. Annie is well, is coming home to take her Christmas. Jim and Jno are going to have a grand time hunting—you must remember than Jno is in a big way about his boy.

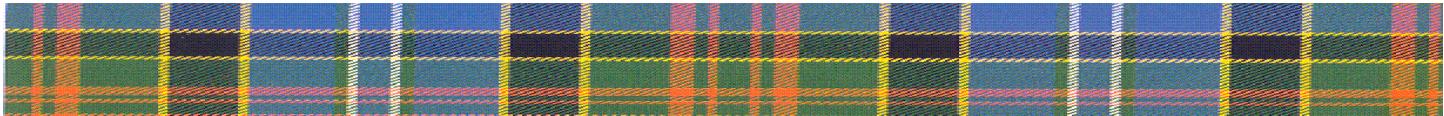
... I reckon you will have a jolly time with all of your little fellows Christmas, if they make as much fuss over it as Percy. He has been writing notes to Old Santa, and counting the days till C. for a week or two....We had a visit from my brother's daughter, who lives in Virginia this fall. I had not seen her since she was two years old. That was a great pleasure to me. She is a nice intelligent young lady. She is the daughter of Rev. W. P. Wharton.

Will, there is one thing that I wish I had given you when you were here, that is the old family Bible. I did not think of it, but I would just as leave you would have it as any one, and you have just as much right to it as any of my children. I want it kept in the family. Give my love to Maryannie, and tell her to write to me. Our very best love and wishes to every one of you. Please write soon. God bless you from

your loving Aunt Minerva

[pp455-456 *Tulip Evermore*]

[Any knowledge as to where this Paisley family Bible ended up?]



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Highland Games in Charleston, SC, September 20.
The Much Honorable Duncan W. Paisley of Westerlea will be in attendance.
Contact Harvey Lee McCollum for details.

**Paisley Family
Research and News**
Issue 24
Spring/Summer 2008

IMPORTANT! PLEASE READ!

At the Paisley Family Association meeting in March the rising cost of the newsletter printing and postage was discussed. It was suggested that those with email may receive theirs on line. But, the editor uses an old version of Microsoft Publisher which many people may not be able to open up as an attachment. To solve this problem a web site was set up to "publish" the Newsletter electronically. If you have internet access and email and find this format acceptable, please email Diane or Rovena. You will be notified when the next newsletter is posted.

This newsletter (Newsletter #24) is already posted. Check it out at
<http://dlangsto.googlepages.com/paisleyfamilyassociation>

Paisley Family Association Reunion 2009

March 7, 2009

Tomahawk Ruritan building

4101 N. Bailey Bridge Road, Midlothian, VA 23112

11:00am visiting and set-up; 12:00 noon dinner followed by the program.

Freshly prepared Brunswick Stew is being provided.

Bring drinks, desserts, and

any side dishes that go with stew (anyone make homemade bread?!)