

# **Minutes**

## **Forty-Seventh Annual Reuben Shepherd Hart Reunion**

### **June 2011**

The 47th annual Reuben Shepherd Hart Reunion was held on June 25, 2011 in Ellicott City, MD. hosted by Dorothy (Dot) Warren and family.

On Saturday afternoon many visited at the Staybridge Suites hospitality room, around the pool and in the lobby area catching up. Later everyone gathered in the fellowship hall at Bethel Baptist Church for the meal and meeting.

Following the welcome by James Michael Warren and invocation by Jannine Warren, a delicious meal was enjoyed

During the meal Dot began her tribute to Novie S. Hart, mother, grandmother, great grandmother, or great great grandmother of those present. Aunt Dot played some songs on the piano that her mom sang to them as children. Aunt Billie also played a favorite, "His Eye Is On the Sparrow" Dot shared that a special memory of childhood was of her mom singing ballads as well as songs of the Faith: "Jack How I Envy You", "The Boston Burglar", "Brighten the Corner Where You Are", "There's Within My Heart A Melody", among others.

Memories were shared of Novie Sue's support of Billie and Dot's accomplishments in the music world. The piano was in a room with no heat, but in the winter she would warm blankets to put around feet and legs, and with no light except oil lamps, she would hold the lamp for light to see the music. Later the piano was moved to the multi-purpose "master bedroom, family room, etc., where there was a wood burning stove and heat.

Several lamps were lit and displayed during the dinner as a reminder of days past)

As Dot continued her tribute to her mother, Novie Sue Hart, she shared a bit of family history of how at age 29 this school teacher in a two room school house married a widow, Reuben S. Hart, with eight children. He was a successful farmer and leader in the community, but during the depression with financial difficulties, the home was lost. Though encouraged to declare bankruptcy and later pay his debts, Reuben, having always believed that the bankruptcy law was not right, he sold the farm, paid debts, and moved to another area where he became a renter and tenant farmer, until he was able again to buy another farm. Years of struggle and a frugal life style lay ahead, but this couple stuck together. Of 12 children, six graduated from four year colleges and another attended college. All of the 12 children were successful in their chosen field of work.

Due to Reuben's poor health, he and Novie Sue sold their farm in Angier, NC and bought a home in Salemburg, NC, where Novie returned to teaching at a private school. She enjoyed those years and was able to retire with a small Social Security check. She spent her last 25 years in the home of her daughter, Billie Warren and Alton.

Novie Sue was always so thankful of how her stepchildren and children treated her with such love and care. She considered her children, stepchildren, and grandchildren as her greatest blessings.

Dot expressed great love and appreciation for her mother.

Dot also encouraged family to hold on to minutes, copies of which will be given out in the future, as they usually have tidbits of family history which might be precious to generations to come. A good example was of the minutes of Uncle Rob Hart's roasting by siblings, when he retired She presented copies of those minutes to Bob's children who were present.