

Beardshall Merry Christmas Letter

MS: 109 Gleneagles Drive, Hattiesburg MS 39401 (601-544-7896)
VA: 8150 Little Creek Hwy, Dublin, VA 24084 (276-228-5991)

December 23, 2023

What We Did in 2023

Events of 2023

- Jan—March 2023 - We spent the winter months in H'burg. Elmer worked diligently to become a "biped" again. Ann worked on her book: *Places Our Ancestors Called Home* and finished a draft of Elmer's side of the Family: Beardshalls, Gastgebs, Linsleys, and Grays.
- May 2023—Time to return to the beautiful mountains of Southwest Virginia. This year Lin and Ryan opened it up and greeted us with breakfast.
- July 2023—We returned to Hattiesburg to watch the streaming version of the Tour de France.
- August 2023—Traveled to Atlanta to see Anna off on her adventure: attending Vet School in London
- October 2023—We enjoyed the Fall even more beautiful than the one we described last year.
- November 2023—Returned to Hattiesburg for the winter
- December 2023—Celebrated our 62nd Anniversary.
- After Christmas celebration with Lin and Bill & families

January/April 2023 — When you last heard from us at Christmas 2022, Elmer had just survived 2 operations due to the Pit Bull/Bicycle Accident the day before Thanksgiving in our neighborhood. He was definitely "on the mend" and looking forward to getting a boot so he could begin walking upright. January 2023 found him accomplishing this goal. After many sessions of physical therapy, he was walking reasonably well and without too much pain. He was able to resume his daily workouts and bicycle rides. We are very grateful that we have Dr. Robertson and many others at the Southern Bone and Joint Institute just across the highway from our neighborhood where he was able to get excellent medical care. By the end of April when we returned to Virginia, he was almost back to normal. During this time, I finished a draft of the first part of our family history, ***Places Called Home Trilogy***, specifically, ***Part I: Places Our Ancestors Called Home***. This section was all about Elmer's side of the family which includes the family stories of the Beardshalls, Gastgebs, Linsleys and Grays. I sent the draft out to all that I thought would be interested. As I mentioned last year, I am not publishing a hard copy, but will be supply links online as I finish sections. I welcome any and all feedback and corrections if you read it. Here is the link to the aforementioned [section](#): Contact me for the password if you wish to read what I have written so far.

May—June 2023— We returned to the cabin in Virginia in late April for our 15th summer. So hard to believe that it has been that long. We took our typical route to Virginia this time, traveling the first day from Hattiesburg to White Pine TN, just north of Knoxville. From there it is less than 200 miles to our cabin in Bland County VA. Following our usual routine, we got up early the next morning and were at the cabin in Little Creek by 9 AM. As a special treat, Lin and Ryan arrived ahead of us to open it up and served us a "big" breakfast on our arrival. We settled in, welcoming our "deer" friends at the cabin, and seeing our "dear" friends at different events in Bland, Ceres, and Wytheville. We worked on our usual maintenance projects—the big one this year was replacing the roof on the gazebo aka the silo. We hoped to get this accomplished in May, but it rained, rained, and rained! More about this later. Lin came again for Memorial Day Weekend, helped Elmer with projects around the cabin and cooked delicious meals for all of us. We stayed in Bland through June until it was time to return to Hattiesburg to watch the 2023 Tour de France streaming on Peacock instead of letting NBC control what we got to see. Since we had made the trips between Bland and Hattiesburg so many times (48 to date) we decided that it was time to change routes. We stayed off the interstates, travelled through the rural areas of northern TN, then headed south through the middle of AL until we reached Tuscaloosa, and then headed west toward MS and down the eastern part of our state. It took a little longer, but the driving was much less stressful and we got to see "real" America.

July 2023— We were safely back in our beautiful home in Hattiesburg by July 1 to begin watching the Tour de France. The scenery and competition was fabulous this year. The TDF began in Spain. Even if you have no interest in professional bike racing, just watching the tour from the helicopters, etc. on streaming TV is better than a trip to Europe. It was a very hot July in MS but we got up early, exercised by walking or biking, and were inside with A/C for the hot parts of the day. After the TDF was over in late July, we left Hattiesburg and headed back to Virginia. Our return trip took us through North Georgia and western North Carolina. We visited our friends the Queens in Cherokee NC on that return trip.

What We Did in 2023

August—October 2023— As I alluded to earlier, our maintenance project for the cabin in 2023 was putting a new roof on the gazebo that between the upper and lower stairs to the cabin. The original roof was cedar shakes that had become very worn, and leaked. We contracted with Cattle Dog Roofing (Sean Tate) to complete the new roofing. The shape was octagonal so it took some calculating and masterful cutting to get it right. The underside is wood stained like the cabin and the outer side is metal.

In August we went to Atlanta to see Anna off to attend the [Royal Veterinary College](#) in London. Her studies will take four years, with the first two (academics) at the Camden Campus (London), the next two will be Hawkshead Campus (Hertfordshire) at their teaching hospital. Anna worked as a veterinary assistant while attending the U. of Wash. (Seattle) and the year following graduation. I am happy to report that she is successfully enrolled, enjoying it, and doing well. One of the ways I have been able to help her out is to order some of her groceries and other items on Amazon. Interesting to see the products available and realize that it works just like grocery pickup for us.

This year in Bland we became acquainted/reacquainted with a couple of friends. Elmer found a new bicycle riding buddy, Dana Niday. He thought he would be able to keep up with her. Wrong!! At the Wythe Genealogical and Historical Society, I ran into my best friend in high school, Nancy Kitts Hoge. We had several occasions to meet for lunch and talk over old times. We look forward to seeing both of them again when we return to Bland in 2024.

Over Labor Day, Lin brought a friend from Atlanta to the cabin. We used that opportunity to visit my brother, Sam, in Floyd for the weekend. He has added a garage with an apartment with very nice accommodations to his Little River House. We enjoyed our stay. Elmer mowed the river bottom with Sam's electric lawnmower and helped Sam with his trucks that he is fixing up. We went to the Floyd Country Store and enjoyed the food and music.

My project in Bland this year was to prepare a talk for the Bland Retired Teachers Association about the history of the county entitled "[***Bland County History is Anything But Bland.***](#)" The research and writing took up most of my time. If you have any interest in what I came up with you can view using the link. One day while I was writing, a **Black Bear** walked up to my office door with a handicapped door knob and could have walked right in. Fortunately, I jumped up when I saw him and, and as they are just as scared of us as we are of them, he ran off. Needless to say, I am keeping that door locked now, especially if I am napping. He circled the cabin, went to the bird feeder, and looked for food. We watched him from the windows on the upper floor of the cabin. Eventually he lost interest and wandered off. Later that day, a much bigger bear appeared, did his exploring and wandered off. There were many reports of bear sightings in our area this year. However, in the 15 years we have been in Little Creek, we have only seen bears 4 or 5 times at the cabin.

We left our cabin in Virginia in late October, a little earlier than usual. We had fewer closing chores to do since Lin and Ryan plan to come to the cabin often this winter. Ryan is hoping that **Winter Place** in nearby WV will be open for skiing. We travelled yet another route on our return home to Hattiesburg, again staying off the interstates. We stayed east of Knoxville, going through Maryville TN and then down the eastern side of Alabama and ending up at our usual stopping place for the night, Gadsden AL. We were not disappointed with the route although GPS does sometimes take one unusual ways! Glad to be back home in Hattiesburg for the winter.

November—December 2023: Hattiesburg had been quite hot and dry since we left. The yards were parched. It finally started raining again and now looks pretty normal. The Fall here has been glorious and we have missed all the bad storms. Elmer got his Christmas present early this year - an e-bike. He's hoping the boost will enable him to get up our steep driveway at the Cabin, and keep up with Dana. As usual, our family will be visiting after Christmas. We look forward to seeing everyone. Today Elmer and I are celebrating our **62st wedding anniversary**. We were married on December 23, 1961 in my hometown of Bland Virginia. We are so fortunate to have shared this many years together.

Beardshall Happy New Year Letter

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Grandchildren Update

Brooke Beardshall is enrolled at Texas A&M University majoring in Environmental Biology with a minor in Horticulture

Bryce Beardshall, also enrolled at Texas A & M, in the Corps of Cadets, with an undeclared major.

Anna Michael is enrolled at the Royal College of Veterinary Medicine (Camden Campus)

JR Michael is living in Atlanta and working as a Math Tutor.

In Memoriam

Dr. John Pendergrass, our long-time running friend.

Gary Hutchinson, our neighbor in Little Creek for over 12 years.

Jason Michael, our son-in-law Ryan's brother.

Alberto (Al) Alvarez, Elmer's University of South Carolina roommate

Links to Pages of Interest in this Newsletter:

[Places Our Ancestors Called Home: Part I: Beardshalls, Gastgeb, Linsleys, Grays](#)

<https://www.elanbcs.com/AHBEWB/Main.htm> (contact Ann for login and password)

[Bland County History is Anything But Bland](#)

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

Ann and Elmer Beardshall

Our Contact Information:

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Ann's Cell (601-402-8784)

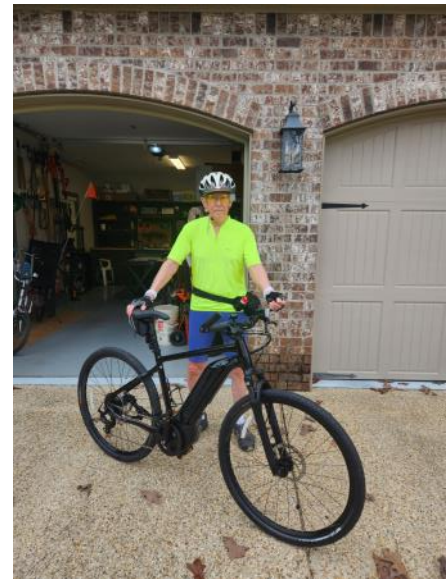
Elmer's Cell (601-310-9885)

Year in Pictures 2023—Hattiesburg



January 2023—Elmer hopes to be walking soon

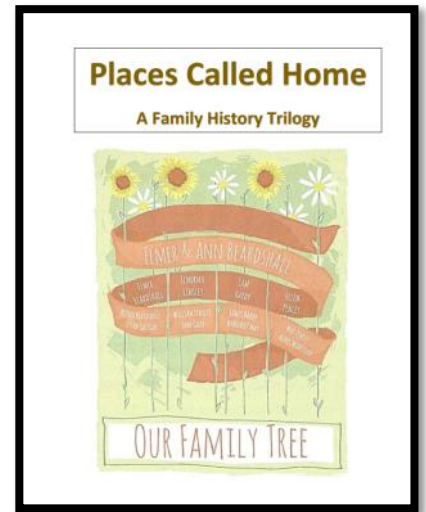
What a Difference a Year Makes



December 2023—Elmer riding his new e-bike



Relaxing on Our Back Porch After a Bike Ride



The Author with Family History Cover (Work in Progress)



Ann & Elmer watch the TDF (2023) from the comfort of their home in Hattiesburg



Tour de France 2023 -July 2023

Year in Pictures 2023—Little Creek (Bland County VA)



We have arrived at 8150 Little Creek Hwy on a Spring Green Day in April 2023



Lin and Ryan arrived ahead of us. Opened up the cabin and prepared a big breakfast for us.



Our “Deer” Friends were waiting for us in April. One of our “Deer” friend still eats out of a cup — corn not yogurt!



Bear #1 (left) that came to Ann’s Office Door



Bear #2 came to the bird feeder same day (6/9/2023)

Year in Pictures 2023—Little Creek (Bland County VA) Visitors



Unexpected Visitors—BEARS!!!



Nancy Hoge, HS friend came to call



Dana Niday rides with EWB in LC.



Ann enjoying a visit from Lin



Michael Shrader rests after working at the cabin.

Year in Pictures 2023—Our Roof Project



BEFORE: Gazebo (aka Silo) —Cedar Shake Roof needed replacing



Sean figures out how to build the underside of an octagon.



AFTER: Beautiful Job Completed by Sean Tate (Cattle Dog Roofing)
Underside is stained wood same color as cabin **Outside is Aluminum like the cabin roof**

Year in Pictures 2023—Floyd VA



Sam's River House —Garage Apt on Rt.



Down by the River at Sam's



Enjoying music and food at Floyd Country Store



Elmer and Sam work on one of his trucks

Year in Pictures 2023—Beautiful Fall in SWVA



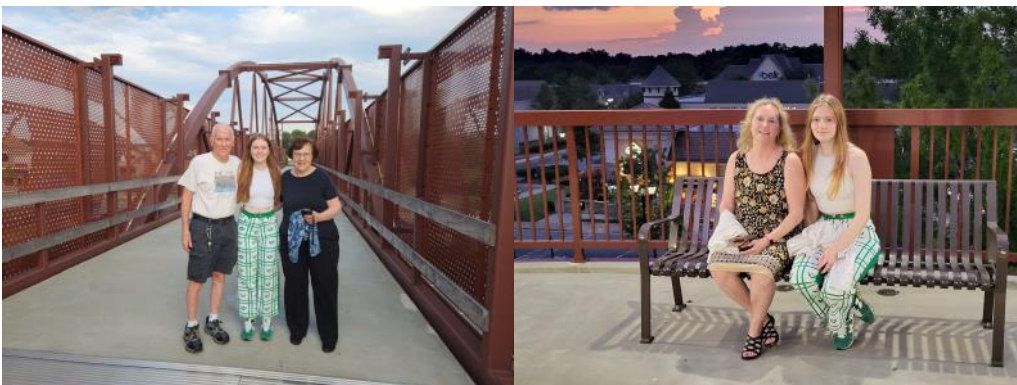
Year in Family Pictures 2023



**Brooke, Bryce, Amydell & Bill at
Texas A&M**



**Visiting Peachtree Corners
to Bid Anna Farewell**



**Anna in her "Farm Outfit"
At Vet School in London**

TODAY IS OUR 62nd WEDDING ANNIVERSARY

12/23/1961—12/23/23



Our Parents
Sam & Helen Hardy
Norma and Elmer Beardshall SR



Our Grandparents
Howell Hardy
Susan Beardshall
Jane Linsley