PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

REUNION HANDBOOK

Basic Information for Planning Family and Class Reunions

By Kumari Campbell
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Reunions, whether of families or classmates, are popular events on Prince Edward Island. Due to the close-knit nature of Island society, reunions have historically played an important role here. No matter how far from home they roam, Islanders are always anxious to return home and re-connect with family and friends. Because of Prince Edward Island's legendary summers, these events usually take place during that season, but many happen at other times of the year as well.

Reunions happen because humans are social beings, and therefore have an innate need to come together and celebrate their lives as communal entities. Reunions are special gatherings that bring together people with particular ties, a common thread that binds a group with a shared past. While it is this common past – be it ancestry or time spent in a school setting – that draws them together in the first place, the reunion does more than celebrate the past. It also lays and strengthens the foundation for the future.

Class Reunions
This form of reunion is primarily organized around a graduating class of High School, College or University. At the post-secondary level it is usually narrowed down to a particular program or discipline of study, such as Nursing, Law, Medicine etc., as opposed to the entire graduating class of an institution in any given year. Clearly, the more specific the field of study, the closer the relationships formed among the students. Just as clearly, class reunions are limited to the lifespan of the original members. While such reunions may continue for forty or fifty or even sixty years, they will eventually end when the original members pass on or become too old to attend. It is highly unlikely that the descendants of these members will continue the reunions once the original members are gone.

Family Reunions
Family reunions, on the other hand, have some special characteristics that they do not share with other types of reunions. Most important of these is of course their reason for being – a shared ancestry. As long as this one criterion is met, members could be of any age, nationality, religion, or other identity group. And of course, once the original founders of the reunion are deceased, the reunions themselves can continue under the guidance of successive generations – for their common bond is still as much in tact as it ever was.

This common bond of a shared genealogy and ancestry is a far more powerful uniting force than would appear on the surface. The genetic similarities and physical characteristics shared by family members (even those long separated by distance and culture), can provide a forceful emotional tug to even the most independent and avowed 'tough cookies' among us. For all of us, these commonalties can only be found among family. No matter how close non-familial friendships are, they can not provide us with the strong thread that binds us to our own past and future.
Speaking of family reunions, in her book by the same name, Jennifer Crichton says, "We can love our spouses passionately, ... Our friendships may be powerful, ... But blood kinship creates an immediate sense of belonging, of being among one's own kind, hard to duplicate elsewhere."

But sometimes, perhaps precisely because of the longevity of the extended family, we tend to take its emotional and spiritual health for granted. We assume that it will continue forever, and fail to protect and nurture it as we should.

Once more, Jennifer Crichton says in her book Family Reunions, "We accept as a given the idea that marriage takes work and that friendships need nurturing, but we resist the idea that family requires work as well. ... But in truth, family is only a system of linked relationships, a network that survives only if we continue to physically and emotionally forge the links and make the effort to be together."

Organizing the Reunion

Since family reunions are the most common type of reunions, and also since they present some unique scenarios that do not apply to other types of reunions, this handbook will deal primarily with them. However, since much of the information required for planning and organizing any type of reunion is basically the same, it should be of help to all reunion organizers.

In the Beginning ...

As with everything else it all begins with a seed – and idea in someone's mind. But in order for that seed to germinate and take root, it needs a great deal of help. So, reunion planners suggest that unless you are considering a very small reunion, or enjoy a great deal of punishment, you should immediately enlist a few kindred spirits to form a Reunion Committee.

The Reunion Committee

This is the crew that will steer the reunion ship from home port to the very end of the cruise – through storms, mutinies, and yes, all those sunny days too. There's no denying the hard work involved, but neither is there a reward quite like the deep gratitude and warm smiles of all those happy relatives.

Who?

So ... you and your committee think that a reunion is a great idea. But you can't have a reunion without people. So the committee's first task will be to decide who the reunion will be for: will it be only for one arm of the family, maternal or paternal members only, or for everyone who shares a particular family name? Only the graduates of a certain class, or everyone who was in the class? Next, you need to contact potential participants and find out if in fact they are interested in attending.

Mailing List

Before you can do this however, you need to generate a mailing list. The committee can brainstorm to come up with as comprehensive a list as possible. Available family trees, family lists, family scrapbooks, older relatives, family genealogists and historians
are all valuable sources of help. Class lists in school archives, yearbooks, and even retired teachers can be of assistance to the class reunion organizer. Often the list will continue to be added to as more people find out about the reunion. If you have the use of a computer (or better still, a willing helper with computer savvy) you would save a great deal of time and make your life a lot simpler by creating a database. Once the database is in place you can generate mailing labels, and as many lists as you care to. Now you are ready to send out your first correspondence.

First Communique
In it you will introduce the concept of the planned reunion, and ask the following questions:

- Would you be interested in attending a reunion?
- When would be the best time of year for you?
- Where would be the best place to hold it?
- How long would you like it to be? One Day? A Weekend? A Whole Week?
- What activities would you like to have at the reunion?
- How much would you be willing to spend?
- Are there any special talents or skills you would be willing to share with the organizing committee or during the reunion?

Specify a deadline for responses. Answers to these questions will give direction to your planning process. On the other hand, if you don't receive many responses, it may be time to disband your committee.

Sub-committees
As you begin your planning process, organize your committee into sub-committees. Even if each sub-committee consists of only one person, or a single person takes on more than one sub-committee, it will help spread the responsibilities and keep people accountable. The following sub-committees are the basic ones that any committee should have, but feel free to add and subtract to suit your own needs.

- Finance: Perhaps the most important of all, they will be responsible for collecting and keeping records of all monies involved. They will also pay all bills and be responsible for the bank account. Previous accounting/bookkeeping experience would be an asset.
- Logistics: This group will be responsible for all arrangements regarding locations for activities, hotel reservations, transportation arrangements etc. Since this is a heavy load, preferably it should be a shared responsibility.
- Fund-raising: Only necessary for larger reunions whose activities require more funds than can reasonably be covered by registration fees.
- Program: This group will be responsible for planning and organizing all the events that will take place at the reunion.
- Food: Members of this sub-committee will plan the menus and be responsible for providing all the meals for the reunion.
- Communications: All correspondence (pre- and post-), newsletters, flyers, phone calls and any form of communications with the participants will be the responsibility of this group.
Some rules-of-thumb as you begin your planning

1. The farther afield your participants are coming from, the more lead time you need to give them. (e.g., If people will be journeying from Europe, the US, or even Western Canada, they will likely need 12 to 24 months notice to be able to arrange for vacation time, and save up the dollars they will need. On the other hand if all your participants live on the Island or even in the Maritimes, you will probably only need three to six months lead time.)

2. The farther afield participants are drawn from, the longer the reunion tends to be. (e.g., Surely one would not expect participants to travel from overseas or the other end of the continent for a picnic.)

3. The larger the event, the more planning time it requires. (e.g., A week-long reunion for 150 people could take up to two years to organize, while a picnic for 50 people could easily be organized in two or three months.)

When?
Almost the first thing you have to settle once you have your initial responses and realize that your reunion is a ‘go’, is the date(s) of the event. Obviously you will want to go with a date that suits the majority of respondents. However, this decision may not be quite as simple as just picking a date. It will certainly be determined by availability of venues for your activities and accommodations. So it may take a few phone calls and a few days of waiting before you can finally settle on the perfect date. And of course, no matter what date you choose, it will not suit absolutely everybody, so be prepared to have a few drop-outs when your finalized schedule goes out.

Where?
This is the next major decision. First you have to decide what location your reunion will be held in, and then of course you will have to scout that location for specific venues for individual activities.

What?
This is probably the most challenging task. Based on responses you have received to your initial letter, as well as ideas you have gathered on your own, you will have to put together a program. While this task is not as trying for organizers of class reunions, because you are dealing with people who know each other and are of the same age and quite often share similar interests, for the family reunion organizer it could present a challenge. For here you are dealing with age differences that could span 80 or more years. There will be in-laws who have never met, family members who do not get along, people from varying cultural and religious backgrounds, and the list goes on. The key here is flexibility. You need to be able to embrace everyone, no matter what their age, interests, and status within the family are. No mean task.
If you start to feel bogged down, remind yourself that no matter how great the differences, the primary purpose of the reunion is to get together and have fun. It also helps to keep things simple, and to try to give people choices. If you hold reunions annually or biennially, it is easy to get into a rut. Try new things every year so as not to become repetitious and boring. Don’t stress yourself out by planning
elaborate meals and extravagant activities. Although not everyone may enjoy an evening at the opera or theatre, you are sure to have more takers if you gave them a choice of golf, beach volleyball, an afternoon at the beach, or even an afternoon of shopping. And those who prefer the theatre can still have their wish too.

It is always wise to arrange special activities geared to children and young adults. What better way to keep the kids involved and enjoying themselves, as well as giving them the opportunity to make connections with far-flung cousins. As well, if time permits, perhaps separate sessions for the guys and the girls may be in order. In some families Male Bonding and Female Bonding are considered very important, while other families may frown on such an idea. Some may appreciate a special activity just for adult siblings. It all depends on your particular family. There is no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ in this game – just whatever works best for your family (or class) group.

Some reunions (both family and class), are built around specific themes. Exploring family history in and around the reunion location, events from the past, musical eras, fashions of a particular decade, can all serve as stimulating themes that permit endless variations and encourage creativity. Reunions can also be organized around specific events such as anniversaries of weddings, birthdays, migrations etc. (Of course, class reunions are a specific example of events that are organized around an anniversary.)

**Typical Reunion Programs**

*One-day Event:* A single day event will usually consist of a single meal-related activity, such as a picnic, BBQ, or supper/banquet. There may also be some short group activities during the day (e.g. beach time, talent show, musical entertainment, or a campfire at night).

*Weekend Event:* This may begin on the Friday night with registration and a relaxing non-structured evening, where people can get together individually with special friends or relatives, or recuperate from jet lag. The main banquet or gathering is usually held on the Saturday evening, with the day given over to one or more of beach time, golf, workshops on genealogy, family storytelling, games for adults and kids, kids’ craft centre and so on. The banquet may be followed by musical entertainment (perhaps with family members participating), family trivia, awards presentations etc.

Most weekend reunions begin Sunday with a group worship service – either ecumenical or of one particular faith. If this is not a scheduled activity, time should be allotted for individual church attendance by those who wish to. More often than not, the worship service is followed by a brunch, which becomes the ‘farewell’ activity of the reunion.

*Week-long Event:* A reunion that lasts longer than a weekend usually follows the same pattern as the weekend event, and then adds on more activities to fill in the rest of the days. For family reunions that occur in the location of the ancestral home, one or more of these days can be set aside for visiting important family historic sites, and delving into family history. More in-depth workshops on genealogy and mapping the family tree can be arranged. Perhaps one meal can be a reproduction of the food that the ancestors enjoyed, or an evening’s entertainment could consist of re-enacting vignettes from the past along with period music. Perhaps a sharing session of old family photograph albums could be arranged. The possibilities are endless.
The Price Tag

Just about anything you plan is going to have a price tag attached to it, but the trick is to aim at keeping overall costs manageable for everyone. Cousin Jane, recently divorced and barely managing to raise her two kids on a single income, and Uncle Jimmy who gets by on a disability pension should not have to be left out due to financial considerations. Setting a realistic budget at the outset — and then living by it — is an important tool for keeping costs under control. In the case of family reunions, families who are more financially advantaged may wish to contribute an extra sum, so as to enable a less fortunate relative to attend the reunion. Finding out ahead of time what each participant wishes to spend, and giving them reasonable choices should help keep expenditures at a manageable level.

For instance, when choosing accommodations, check out campgrounds and college dorms as well as B&Bs and resorts. Then let each family decide where they would like to stay. Perhaps there are members of the committee who live locally, and wouldn’t mind having a few houseguests. If reserving a block of rooms at a hotel or other venue, be sure to negotiate an advantageous deal. Reunion planners suggest that you have specific numbers at your fingertips and are well-organized when you begin your negotiations. Be sure to let the property manager know that you realize you are bringing him/her a valuable chunk of business. And make it clear that you are shopping around. And do so. You should be able to get a preferred room rate as well as a few other perks such as a free meeting/hospitality room, welcome beverages upon arrival, a discount on your banquet if you choose to hold it at the same venue, or meeting paraphernalia such as nametags, pens, notepads etc. Of course your bargaining position would be stronger if your event was at a time other than the property’s peak season.

Use similar bargaining tactics when negotiating a banquet or major reunion meal. If you opt to prepare the meal(s) yourselves, be sure to buy in bulk. While this is possible to some degree in large retail supermarkets, dealing with a wholesaler or restaurant supplier (provided you have the advantage of numbers) will net you even better bargains. Rather than purchasing utensils that you may seldom or never use again, consider renting them, or even borrowing them.

Fund-raising

This is not an activity that most reunion organizers will need to delve into, especially if groups are of small to medium size, and are able to keep costs manageable so that each family can pay for its own costs. However, in large reunions where program expenses get a little too heavy, or in cases where it becomes clear that some members may not be able to afford to attend, a fund-raising effort may be in order. Again, the best advice is to keep it simple and manageable.

Yard/Garage Sales: It may surprise you how much revenue may be generated from one or more simple yard/garage sales. If you begin early in your planning process, various groups of family (or class) members can take turns renting a table at a local flea market. Or everyone in the same community can pool their resources and hold one giant sale. If there are several such groups in various communities, each group can have its own sale.

Bake Sales: Much like yard sales, bake sales too have the potential to raise considerable sums of money in a very quiet way. They too can be held by various groups in different communities, perhaps in conjunction with the yard sales. In our busy society where not many people have the luxury of time for home baking anymore,
most are thrilled to find a bake sale, and consider it more of a treat for themselves rather than a contribution towards a worthy cause.

Raffles: If ticket prices are kept low and prizes are interesting, raffles tickets are easy to sell, and can be an easy fund-raiser. Group members can contribute items such as crafts, foods, and services (e.g. snow shovelling, babysitting) for the draw.

50/50 Draw: A more specific form of the common raffle, this has become a very popular form of fund-raiser on PEI. Cash is a universal commodity that we can all use at any time, and not many people shy away from purchasing a ticket for the chance on half the spoils.

Cookbook Sales: This is a far more ambitious project because you first have to produce the cookbook! But if this is something your group would like to do anyway for your own members, you may wish to print up some extra copies and offer them for sale to friends and neighbours in your community. By placing a modest mark-up on the book, you should be able to realize a small profit even by selling them just to group members. This type of fund-raiser would work well in smaller communities and rural areas, where most residents know each other.

T-shirts: Of course this is an item that will only be of interest to group members — be they family or class members. Since T-shirts are considered a staple at most reunions, much like a name-tag, they are usually sold at cost. However, by marking them up a dollar or two, you will be able to collect a few additional dollars that could be used for the inevitable gratuities and stipends that are often forgotten about during the budgeting process. (A ‘little something’ for the clergyman who is kind enough to say a special service for your reunion, for the friend who lends his/her musical talent during one of your events but refuses to charge for it, or for the neighbour who loans you her dinnerware or cookware, will let them know that they were appreciated.)

Mealtime!

Naturally, the method you choose to do this will depend largely on the number of participants you gather, as well as the flavour you wish to give your event. There are several options to choose from.

Potluck: If a picnic is part of your reunion (as the primary activity, or even just one of the activities) you may choose this option. This is a very simple and inexpensive choice that has the added bonus of making everyone feel involved, as well as adding spice and variety. If the picnic is the only meal involved, chances are that all participants live within driving distance of the venue, and potluck will not pose a problem. If however, the picnic is only one activity of a multi-day event, there will likely be participants from out-of-town who will not be able to prepare food. The option of either purchasing some food items, purchasing non-cooked items such as beverages, disposable plates and cutlery etc., or making a cash contribution should be made available to them. Of course, the potluck option can also be used successfully for an evening meal. If the group is either unable or unwilling to incur the expense of an elaborate catered meal, a potluck supper can be every bit as enjoyable — and perhaps more so, for its more personal touch.

Catered: If money is no object, you may consider having your main meal or banquet catered. Naturally this will be more expensive than the potluck option, yet there are many types of catered meals too. While the banquet at a hotel or restaurant is probably the most expensive route, there are other less expensive options as well. You can rent a community or church hall and have the meal catered by a professional
catering company, or a local service club. There are many church- and community-based women's groups that cater to such events rather inexpensively. If your reunion is a smaller one that will be held in a private home, but the hostess would rather not do the cooking, you can still have the food brought in by a caterer or a service group. Or perhaps you can order the meal as a take-out from a local restaurant. Then all you have to do is hire a couple of teenagers in the neighbourhood to serve and do the dishes.

**Communal Cooking:** This option refers to a team of people from the reunion group getting together in someone's kitchen (preferably a large one), or the kitchen of a rented hall, or a camp shelter, to cook the meal for the entire group. A backyard or campground BBQ would be a special form of communal cooking, where one team does the barbecuing while others provide the salads, breads, desserts and beverages. In order to keep costs uniform for all participants, perhaps everyone can pay a set fee, which will be used by a separate team to purchase all the necessary foodstuffs for the meal.

In the case of a reunion that lasts for several days, where participants will be occupying adjacent cottages or camp sites, the occupants of each of the units may wish to take turns providing the main meal of the day, while everyone will be on their own for the rest of the meals. This method could also be used in cases where the majority of participants will be billeted at several homes within the same community.

**Communications**

The Communications sub-committee has already started its job by sending out the first correspondence at the outset of the project. Now it's time for the second.

**Second Communiqué**

Once all the decisions have been made regarding date, location, activities, costs etc. it will be time to send out your second letter to prospective participants. In this mailing you should also enclose a registration form. You may think that this is too formal for your reunion, but according to seasoned reunion planners, it is one of the most expedient ways of organizing your event. The completed forms will give you all the information you need – it can have as little or as much information as you feel you require (but be sure not to make it too long in case you turn people off). Through the registration form you will collect information on how many members of each family are attending, what branch of the family they belong to, what options they choose for types of activities, activity venues, accommodations etc. It is also a good opportunity to gather information on special needs such as special diets, allergies, physical requirements for handicapped persons etc. This is also likely your last chance to nail down prospective helpers for the reunion.

**Important Note on Accommodations**

All reunion planners recommend that organizers should not take on the responsibility of making accommodations reservations. You should get all the necessary information, and even go as far as to make a tentative block reservation, but let each participant make his/her own reservation directly with the property. Along with the registration package send out accommodations information and the deadline by which they have to register with the property. This will save you a great deal of work, and possibly heartache and money too.
If there is a registration fee (for the reunion itself) involved, state it on the form, and most importantly, state the registration deadline. Don't be shy to take a hard line on this item, because reservations you have to make (for meals, venues, services etc.) depend heavily on receiving accurate information in a timely manner. If possible, sending an e-mail reminder to those who are 'connected' would be an excellent (and inexpensive) follow-up tactic. If need be, without getting into too much long-distance expenditure, you may have to make some phone calls to stragglers and procrastinators.

If you have already prepared a database, you can add all the new registration information to it, and be able to print out specific reports related to events, accommodations, meals etc. If you choose the manual route, you may wish to use a system of simple index cards to keep track of all your participants. For the sake of convenience, and in case of electronic failure, you should keep hard copies of all your computerized information in a handy binder, along with all your other reunion documents (brochures, timetables, contracts etc.).

Third Communiqué
Your last communication with reunion participants, prior to the event, will be a final reminder of the event (not registration, because that item should have long since been put to bed), four to six weeks prior to the event.

The Home Stretch
After the registrations have been received and recorded, you move into your final planning phase. Now that you have your final numbers, you can make your reservations for activities, services, rental items, and venues. This is also the time to start putting together your reunion packages that will be given out to all participants when they check in.

Reunion Packages
Again, just as with everything else, these can be as simple or as full of information as you want to make them. Usually the allotment is one per family. They could contain all or some of the following:

- Complete Reunion Program/Agenda
- Nametags
- List of all participants (from your database or mailing list)
- List of where all participants are staying (could be placed on above list)
- Family Update Sheet for filling in information on each family
- Maps for activity venues
- Information on local tourist attractions (from Visitor Information Centres)
- Information on restaurants and places of worship (from community offices)
- T-shirts that have been ordered and paid for
- A notepad and pen (could be solicited from local businesses)
- Any other trinkets (pins, stickers) that you may have gathered from hotels, restaurants and other businesses that you will be patronizing during the reunion
- A schedule and location information for volunteers
- Any other treats (especially for the kids) that you feel like including
On Prince Edward Island, perhaps more so than in any other province, the print media are always interested in news of reunions and various gatherings of Islanders. If you would like some publicity for your reunion, be sure to send a press release to your local newspaper two or three weeks prior to the event. If you have an activity or a personality that will be of interest to the public, remember to make mention of it, along with some pertinent details.

At this time you should also make detailed daily schedules and 'to do' lists for everyone with a job to be done during the reunion. You can start making non-perishable purchases a few weeks before the date, and purchase your perishable goods a few days prior to the event.

This final week is also the time for decorating activity venues. Decorating is a highlight for many reunion organizers, who take the job very seriously. Some of them go far beyond the usual flowers, banners and streamers, with banners displaying family heraldry, family (or class) photographs, the family tree, flags representing the provinces and countries of participants, and more.

**Show Time**

All those weeks and months of planning, and finally the big day has arrived. If you have been well-organized throughout the planning phase, you should not have to get stressed at this point. Granted, you will probably be very busy, and even run off your feet, but there should be no need for stress. Keep reminding yourself that the primary goal of the reunion is getting together with family (or friends) for the sole purpose of having fun. Also try to schedule in some private, relaxation time for yourself—a walk, a swim, a hair appointment, manicure, or even just some quiet time with some favourite music and a warm beverage.

Assemble all your volunteers and make sure they each have a schedule and know where they have to be.

**Registration/Welcome Desk**

This will be the first point of contact for all participants—both with the organizing committee and with each other. So make sure that the volunteers at this station are cheerful and relaxed, and immediately make visitors feel welcome and at ease. Special consideration should be paid to newcomers to the family (or class) group. In addition to giving people their reunion packages, and directing them to the various activities on the agenda for the day, you may also want to dispense a welcome beverage and snack.

When reunions involve several participants who have not previously met each other, some organizers schedule an 'Ice Breaking' session at the start of the first day, in order to make people feel more at ease.

A simple suggestion that would make life easier for all participants is to have members of the organizing committee clearly identified, so that they can be accessed whenever needed. The simplest way of doing this is to make their T-shirts (and only theirs) in a different colour, and add the word 'ORGANIZER' on the back. Announce this to the whole group at the beginning of the festivities, so that all will know who to go to for help.

Let the fun begin! Although you will continue to be in 'organizer' mode throughout the event, be sure not to let that dampen your fun. Spread the responsibilities evenly.
among your helpers, and be sure to build in times when you can let your hair down and enjoy the great event you helped put together.

Wrap-up Meeting
The longer and more involved the event, the more helpful it is to have a wrap-up session where everyone can come together and share their thoughts on the success (or lack thereof) of the event. You may even want to use an evaluation form in order to collect hard-copy data to help with the next reunion. The key is to keep the mood positive and upbeat, where the positives are emphasized, and the negatives are not so much played-down, but rather looked at as challenges that can be overcome at the next event. Rest assured that in the vast majority of cases, there will be nothing but positive feedback, with heartfelt thanks and kudos for the organizers. Whatever small glitches occurred along the way will be very easily forgiven and forgotten.

At this meeting you can present a financial report if you have one. You can also decide on what form the follow-up communiqué will take, and make tentative plans for the next reunion. It is also an opportune time for soliciting volunteer organizers for the next reunion (people may be so intoxicated by the moment that they may readily agree, without the time for sober second thought on the trip home). In formalized family (or class) groups, where an year-round executive exists, this meeting is used as an annual meeting where business is conducted and officers are elected.

For The Record
It is expected that every family present will have at least one camera for recording the event. However, you may also want to arrange for group mementoes that will be paid for by reunion funds. You may wish to engage a photographer to produce a family (or class) portrait, or a videographer to record highlights of the event. If there is a genealogist in the family, he/she may wish to tape some oral history interviews with some of the older relatives.

Some families produce a 'Family Book' containing photographs, a family history, copies of important documents, stories, sayings, profiles of ancestors, recipes etc. These can take the form of individual scrapbooks made up by each family, or a single volume that can be reproduced and distributed to all members. A specialized version of this is the 'Family Cookbook', which should ideally contain those special recipes handed down from generation to generation, as well as the modern classics. If possible, an anecdote accompanying each recipe would ensure that the volume becomes a treasured keepsake.

A Family Directory is a far simpler task to produce; yet can be a most valuable document for every family member. This can easily be produced from your database, by adding some demographic information and other pertinent details – all of which you have already collected from your registration forms and Family Update Sheets.

Wrap-up Communiqué
If you still have the energy, and the interest, you may wish to send a wrap-up letter to all the participants after they have returned home. Thank-you messages, follow-ups on activities and photographs from the reunion can all be part of this last correspondence and final task of the Communications sub-committee. In families (or class groups) that have a tradition of a periodic newsletter, the issue following
the reunion can fulfil this function. In fact, a newsletter would be a great place to publish reunion photos and a summary of the event.

And finally when all the work is complete, you can sit back, give yourself a little pat on the back for a job well done, and enjoy the wonderful memories!

**SOURCES**

**Books**
There are a great many books available on the market that deal with the subject of family reunions in particular. The following are some you may want to check out:

- FAMILY REUNION Everything You Need to Know to Plan Unforgettable Get-Togethers — By Jennifer Crichton
- THE FAMILY REUNION PLANNER — By Donna Beasley
- THE FAMILY REUNIONS SOURCEBOOK — By Edith Wagner
- THE FAMILY REUNION HANDBOOK — By Thomas Ninkovich & Barbara E. Brown
- FUN AND GAMES FOR FAMILY GATHERINGS With A Focus On Reunions — By Adrienne E. Anderson
- FANTASTIC FAMILY GATHERINGS: Tried and True Ideas for Large and Small Family Reunions — By Kathy Smith Anthenat
- FAMILY REUNION POTLUCK: For When the Whole Gang Gets Together — By Carol McGarvey
- CELEBRATING THE FAMILY: Steps to Planning a Family Reunion — By Vandella Brown
- PICK A PARTY: The Big Book of Party Themes and Occasions — By Patty Sacks

**Websites**
Click on to any web browser and you will find dozens of sites with information on Reunions. However, one of the most comprehensive, and therefore best used sites is:

- Family-Reunion.com
  At this site you will find:
  - Accommodations listed by city
  - Correspondence software – for creating surveys, evaluation forms etc.
  - Decoration ideas
  - Events/Entertainment ideas
  - Family History/Genealogy information
  - Food ideas – recipes, restaurants
  - Gifts/Awards
  - Location suggestions
  - Photography – still, video, and on-line photo album
  - Publications – books, magazines
  - Rentals
  - Software for reunion planning
  - Special considerations – for disabled and elderly guests
  - Travel information

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