The 2013 gathering of the Worthington Family History Society was held at Chillicothe, Ohio on June 13-16. In attendance were: from Australia, President Jan Worthington and John Tiller; from England, Secretary Philip Worthington, Miranda Worthington, and Rosalie and Michael Courage; and from the United States, Treasurer (U.S.) Trish Ward, Susan and George Webber, Sue and Bill Worthington, Donald Gradeless, Louise Smith, Hallie Worthington Wilson, Mary and Peter Pearre, and new member Tom Worthington Gross, his mother, Gay Gross, and wife, Kristi Jamrisko Gross. Several other members who had hoped to attend but were unable to do so owing to ill health or previous commitments sent their regrets.

Chillicothe was the home of Thomas Worthington (1773-1827), one of Ohio's first senators, her sixth governor, and widely considered to be the 'father of Ohio statehood.' Thomas was the youngest son of Colonel Robert Worthington, Jr.; Robert was the youngest son of the 17th-century immigrant Robert "The Quaker" Worthington and his second wife, Mary Burtis. Several of the members in attendance claim descent from the elder Robert and thus at least a collateral connection with Thomas: Donald Gradeless, through his son Ephraim, Susan Webber, through his daughter Martha Worthington Pearson, and Tom and Gay Gross, through Robert, Jr. and Thomas himself. While much of the gathering was devoted to learning about the life and times of Worthington and his home, Adena, the group also had several opportunities to learn about Chillicothe and those who have called the area home from prehistoric times to the present.

A small contingent of attendees who arrived in advance of the gathering began their time in Ohio with a visit to Columbus, where they were granted rare entry to the Governor's office to view Thomas Worthington’s official portrait. This group also visited the Serpent Mound State Historic Park southwest of Chillicothe, which features an earthen serpent effigy (at 1,348 feet, the longest in the world!) of ancient or perhaps prehistoric origin.

The gathering kicked off in earnest with an opening reception Thursday evening at the Hampton Inn. As members and their guests caught up or met each other for the first time, the group was officially welcomed to Chillicothe with remarks by Melody Young of the Ross-Chillicothe Convention and Visitors Bureau and Joy Gough of the Lucy Hayes Heritage Center (in the guise of former First Lady Lucy Webb Hayes herself), who provided a useful reminder that Thomas Worthington was not the only notable figure to have called Chillicothe home. Lucy was the wife of President Rutherford B. Hayes and a well-known temperance advocate; Ms. Gough, in keeping with the character she portrayed, sipped lemonade rather than wine as she mingled
with attendees. Also joining the reception was Mary Anne Brown, who for decades worked for the Ohio Historical Society as site manager at Adena and is considered the most knowledgeable expert on Worthington and his home. The reception was followed by a group dinner at Olive Garden in Chillicothe.

Friday began with a tour of Adena led by Ms. Brown, who explained not only the home's rooms and contents but also the circumstances of its construction in 1802-1807. In keeping with Gov. Worthington's personal style, which the group learned had been described by a contemporary as "simple to the point of severe," the Benjamin Latrobe-designed house is straightforward in its layout, practical in its proportions, but no less impressive in its situation on top of a hill overlooking the Scioto River valley. Ms. Brown explained some of the modern technology employed to bring the home back to what was considered a more authentic appearance during a major renovation prior to the bicentennial of Ohio statehood in 2003. Also of interest to the group were various anecdotes offered throughout the tour concerning the lifestyle of Thomas and Eleanor Worthington, their ten children, and those who worked on the property, as well as the visits by such dignitaries as President William Henry Harrison, Henry Clay and the Shawnee warrior Tecumseh. A surreal (yet flattering) moment for Tom Gross came when several of the group had him pose for photographs next to a portrait of his great-great-great-grandfather James Taylor Worthington, the governor's eldest son.

The house tour was followed by a wander around the home's three-tiered gardens, where one of Adena's devoted volunteers, Whitey Coates, explained recent efforts to restore its appearance along the lines of a plan developed by famed landscape scholar Peter Hatch, who for many years oversaw the garden and grounds of Thomas Jefferson's Monticello in Virginia. Attendees were then treated to a delicious lunch in the grove behind Adena catered by Patti Kruger, a board member of the Adena Mansion and Gardens Society, a local organization that administers the site on behalf of the Ohio Historical Society. After lingering there in good company and perfect weather, the group had an opportunity to tour the extensive museum and visitors' center before it was time to move on.

Next on the agenda was a visit to the Hopewell Culture National Historic Park, a site commemorating a band of native people who lived near Chillicothe around 2,000 years ago. The chief feature of the park is a series of man-made earthen mounds of various size and shape scattered around a 15-acre clearing in the woods along the Scioto River. Ranger Melinda Repko of the National Park Service related the history of the Hopewell culture -- as far as it is known -- as well as an explanation of the purpose of the mounds as repositories of ceremonial items made from copper, stone, obsidian and other materials. Almost every mound is a reconstruction, the originals having been leveled to make way for a military installation during the First World War. Archaeology is ongoing at the site, with each newly found artifact promising (threatening?) some adjustment in historians' understanding of the Hopewell people.
Friday evening brought the group face-to-face with another important figure in the history of Ohio, with a viewing of the outdoor drama *Tecumseh!* by Pulitzer Prize-winning historian and novelist Allan W. Eckert. The production, now in its 41st season, tells the story of the famed Shawnee warrior who attempted to unite the various tribes of eastern America in order to repel white settlers who were increasing their claims on the virgin woodlands of the Ohio River Valley and elsewhere following the Revolutionary War. A stellar theatrical experience in its own right, *Tecumseh!* was of particular interest to the group because its title character was a visitor to Thomas Worthington's home in 1807 and held the governor in high regard despite their obvious policy differences. The drama also relates how the warrior befriended frontiersman James Galloway, his wife Martha, and, to a more intimate degree, their daughter Rebecca. While there is an apocryphal story that the two had a child together, the production only carries the relationship as far as a futile attempt by Rebecca to draw Tecumseh away from his warlike ways in exchange for her hand in marriage. This he could not do, and the story ends with the great Shawnee felled by American rifle shot as he and his confederates fought alongside the British during the Battle of the Thames in 1813. James Galloway, it should be noted, was the grandfather of Julia Galloway Worthington, the first wife of James Taylor Worthington and the mother of his children.

A buffet dinner was provided before the show, and several attendees participated in a behind-the-scenes tour that explained the various stunts and illusions used throughout the production. Tom Gross had seen *Tecumseh!* (and taken the tour) at age seven and remarked that both had changed little in 26 years!

The group convened Saturday morning at the Ross County Heritage Center, which is housed in the former home of its wealthy patron David McCandless McKell. The museum archivist, Patricia Medert, provided a very thorough account of Thomas Worthington's first trip to Chillicothe from his native Virginia in 1796, which entailed requesting passage down the Ohio River in a canoe and then 'poling' a small boat up the Scioto to his destination. Having decided the new town was suitable for raising a family, he pulled up stakes in Berkeley County and made the rough journey with his wife, Eleanor Swearingen Worthington, and four month-old daughter Mary. Before Adena was completed in 1807, Thomas and his growing brood lived first in Chillicothe proper and then in a log cabin on the hill near where his stone house was being erected.

Mrs. Medert also explained Worthington's role in Ohio's nascent government and its campaign for statehood, at various points producing relevant original documents from the museum's extensive archives. Also of interest was a letter of fatherly admonition from Thomas to his second son, Albert, who had taken an apprenticeship in New Orleans and was feared vulnerable to the various adult temptations on offer in the Big Easy. These concerns, it turns out, were entirely justified; Albert returned to Adena in
1832, drowned in liquor and swimming in debt, and died two years later at age 29 years.

After a brief tour of the museum, the group was met by Mary Anne Brown and escorted to the gravesite of Thomas and Eleanor Worthington at Grandview Cemetery. A few words were offered by Tom Gross, after which he and Gay Gross, as descendants of the governor and his wife, placed a wreath next to the marble obelisk that marks their place of burial. A group photo was taken, and attendees had an opportunity to visit the graves of various members of Worthington's immediate and extended family who are laid to rest nearby.

Saturday afternoon took members of the group in different directions, with some taking advantage of a few hours for rest and others taking part in Chillicothe's Garden Tour, which was raising funds for the restoration of a house once occupied by Thomas Worthington's daughter Mary and her husband, David Betton Macomb.

The official Society dinner was held Saturday evening at the Atwood House, an 1843 home that has been magnificently restored as a bed and breakfast by proprietor Bill Hirsch. Members and their guests enjoyed drinks in the well-kept garden before being summoned into the ballroom at the appointed time by a gong-wielding Philip Worthington; apparently, this is not something Philip travels with but rather had been furnished by Mr. Hirsch for the occasion. The meal itself, featuring tender roast beef and pound cake with fruit for dessert, was universally enjoyed. Philip Worthington was Toastmaster for the dinner and toasts were offered by Michael Courage to the Society and by Bill Worthington to the guests, with responses provided by Jan Worthington and Mary Ann Brown, respectively. Brown was one of several special guests invited to the dinner, the others being Patricia Medert of the Ross County Heritage Center, Adena Mansion and Gardens Executive Director Kathy Styer, and William Beatty, president of the Adena Mansion and Gardens Society. Patti Kruger of the AMGS Board was invited to the dinner but was unable to attend. Each received a copy of either Philip Worthington's *The Worthington Families of Medieval England* or Jan Worthington's *Coopers & Customs Cutters: Worthingtons of Dover and Related Families, 1560-1906* in appreciation for the kindness and consideration extended to the group during their visit to Chillicothe. Gifts were also presented to the Organizing Committee of Susan Webber, Trish Ward and Rosalie Courage, to whom all attendees owe a debt of gratitude for the planning -- and flawless execution -- of the weekend's agenda. Each received a copy of the pedigree of 14 generations of the Worthingtons of Worthington on record at the College of Arms.

The evening concluded with a photo of the group and their guests on the Atwood House staircase, with parting words to those who would not be attending the Annual General Meeting the next morning. Several of the group then reconvened at the Hampton Inn and enjoyed further fellowship over a rousing game of "Texas Hold'em Yahtzee," with Miranda Worthington helpfully offering instruction to the uninitiated.
The team of Hallie Wilson and George Webber was particularly strong, while Louise Smith impressed competitors with her inscrutable poker face. Donald Gradeless served as chief photographer from the sidelines.

The Society's Annual General Meeting, convened at the Hampton Inn on Sunday morning, is detailed in the official minutes and need not be described here. Suffice to say, all matters were disposed of expeditiously and the gathering came to a close promptly at eleven a.m. With words of farewell among friends old and new, the group departed Chillicothe with great anticipation of meeting again at next year’s AGM or the Manchester Gathering in two years' time.
Thursday, June 13th

Welcome sign at the Hampton Inn

Opening dinner at Olive Garden

Friday, June 14th

Front view of Adena

Drawing room
Entry Hall and Staircase

State Dining Room, as seen from Family Dining Room

Ms. Mary Anne Brown leads the group through the boys’ bedroom

Mrs. Worthington’s sitting room

Ms. Brown in the kitchen
Lunch in the grove behind Adena

Attendees learn about the Hopewell Culture from Park Ranger Melinda Repko (not pictured)

Jan Worthington and John Tiller at Hopewell National Historic Park

The “Tecumseh!” theater before the show

Philip M. Worthington meets with actors after the show
Saturday, June 15th

Patricia Medert of the Ross County Heritage Center shows documents written by Thomas Worthington. Thomas Worthington’s draft of the Enabling Act of 1802, authorizing the formation of Ohio as a state.

Gathering attendees, joined by Mary Anne Brown, at the gravesite of Thomas and Eleanor Worthington. Several family members are buried nearby.
Drinks in the Atwood House garden

Philip Worthington: “Dinner is served.”

Dinner in the Atwood House ballroom

Michael Courage, with a toast to the Society

Philip Worthington, with William Beatty