[Presented at the Dillman Family Reunion held 17 – 18 August 2002 at the Windgate Inn in Indianapolis, Indiana]

WELCOME

Good morning & welcome to the Dillman Mega-Reunion. I'm Earl Dillman, one of three people who have been working on this event for the past two years. I'll tell you a little about my two co-conspirators in a moment but first let me say how pleased we are to see the total turnout as well as the special effort on the part of so many who had to travel long distances to be here today. I won't go through the list of states represented but you can see from the U.S. map on the wall, that the Dillman family is pretty much spread out all over the country.

Every project has it's light moments and this has been no exception: A few months ago, a lady from Indiana e-mailed me to say she was going to attend. She ended the e-mail by saying: "I can't wait to be in a room full of LIVE Dillmans!" Well, here we are.

Phil told me of a conversation with Frank Dillman regarding the reunion. Frank's response was "I hope it's not about hot dogs and T-shirts!" Frank checked carefully this morning but couldn't find a single T-shirt so we passed that test.

Now, back to those co-conspirators: Phil Dillman is the person who came up with the idea and got things moving. This weekend wouldn't have happened without Phil. The really great thing about Phil's involvement, besides the obvious effort and enthusiasm he has put into the project, is his age. In most cases, we have to have a fair amount of gray hair before showing the slightest interest in genealogy. By starting young, Phil has a head start on most of us and many, many years ahead of him to pursue his goals.

June Riccio has collected and contributed enormous amounts of information. Those of you who have been researching the Dillman family for any period of time have repeatedly come across June's name in your search.

I've been the collection point for information as it has been submitted doing the scanning and transferring of information to the CD file but the organization of those files is attributed solely to June. When the CDs are finally mailed, you'll see exactly what I mean. It's organized in a very logical way to make your browsing and searching a lot easier. We can thank June for that special effort.

I should also mention the large numbers of contributors who are not present today. We've had incredible support from family members across the country and just because they couldn't be here today didn't mean they didn't want to a part of the total effort. Again, when you review the CDs, you'll see just how many people have been involved.

Objectives: our goal from the beginning was very basic: to collect and disseminate as much information as possible about our Dillman family while also giving all of us an opportunity to meet many more of our Dillman relatives from all across the country. As you look around the room this morning, hopefully you'll see mostly new faces – folks that you are meeting for the first time today. The weekend will go fast so we want to encourage all of you to 'work the crowd' and get to know one another. Just seek out the nearest "stranger" and introduce yourself.

Getting back to the collection of information – I know many of you brought photos, documents, personal narratives, and so forth so we can get them scanned for inclusion on the CD. We'll get all of that done before we leave. We have two scanners available and we'll be starting on that work shortly after we hear from our guest speaker this morning.

Let me also call your attention to the list of 20 or so categories June has set up for the CD. You'll find a supply of those sheets on the registration table. I would ask you to take a quick look at the list since it may remind you of still other items that you might like to see included. If you didn't bring everything with you today, don't worry – we will keep the collection period open for a couple of weeks to allow you time to submit that material. I've been asked about when to expect the CDs in the mail. My best guess is late September or early October – a lot depends upon how much additional material comes in after the event.

Don't worry about providing too much material – we've been loading information onto one CD for the past 18 to 24 months and it's only 60 or 70% full at this point. And, we can always make this a 2 or 3 CD set.

Individual Presentations – We'd like everybody to feel free to contribute to this event by sharing information about your branch of the family, perhaps about your one Most Unforgettable Character – we all have one of those, don't we? In some cases, I know several of you have personal narratives – some that you wrote yourself and others written by one of your ancestors – perhaps you'd like to read that to the group. Or maybe you've brought a special family heirloom today that you'd like to tell the group a little about its history. We'll provide time specifically for your individual presentations later this morning and again this

afternoon and tomorrow. We hope to give everyone who wishes to do so time to tell your special story.

DISPLAY ITEMS: In between the scheduled events, we invite you to take a look at the many items displayed on the wall and on the tables. Remember this whole event is about additions and corrections to the information you see here so let us know when you spot something. If you brought items with you that you'd like to display, by all means bring them out during the next break and we'll help you find a place for them.

QUICK SURVEY: We relied on three forms of communication to get the word out on this event: (1) e-mails, (2) snail mail, and (3) word-of-mouth.

Could I ask you to just indicate how you first heard about the reunion?

1. How many first got an e-mail?

2. How many first got one of the announcement cards in the mail?

3. How many first heard about it from another family member?

GUEST SPEAKER: Now it's time to introduce our guest speaker this morning. She has been researching this Dillman Family for the past 22 years so she has learned a lot about us. For those of you who have been researching the family for any period of time, you have probably run across her during your search. She has always been ready to share her information with other family members.

She traveled all the way from Florida to be with us today so you know how important this event is to her.

Please welcome our special guest; Marguerite Dillman.