

SOMSEN LICENCE PLATES

by Johan F. Somsen [1089]

It is no secret that Somsens can be proud of their name. However, there are Somsens that go to extremes in this feeling. Some have licence plates on their car with the name Somsen on them. This is only possible in the USA when an extra charge is paid.

I met **Daniel Somsen** [2478] and his wife Suzanne [2485] on the Friday afternoon before the official start of the reunion in Baldwin. He had heard that something was going on in the Somsen family and he had come by just to take a look. No, he did not want to get involved any further; he only wanted to take a look. He was heartily invited to take part in the whole reunion, he was invited to become a supporter of the Somsen Foundation and he could also buy our family book *Somsen Omnes Generationes*. No, no, no, Dan only wanted to have a look for about half an hour. And apart from not being very much interested, he did not have much time either.

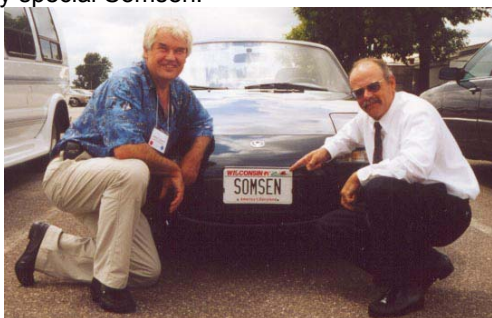
The end of it was that Dan stayed that Friday night until deep in the night and when the large hall was closed we continued our conversation at the bar of the Coachman Supper Club.

The next morning he was among the first people present at the opening ceremony and that night he was among the last visitors to leave the party. Unfortunately he could not make it on Sunday, but just guess who turned up in the church and at the cemetery, dressed in a nice dark blue suit: Daniel Vern Somsen.

It had struck many visitors to the reunion that a nice sports car with a sunshine roof was parked near the locations for the reunion. And the licence plates of this car said: *Somsen*. Well then, it was not difficult to find out that Dan Somsen was the proud possessor of this car and this shows that he has his Somsen heart in the right place.

Before saying goodbye in very warm way we posed together in front of his car for a picture. Then Dan left with a family book, with Somsen magazines and he left me behind with \$ 30 in my pocket: his generous contribution as a new supporter of our family foundation for the year 2002.

But what is even more important: he also left me behind with a load of very good memories of this very special Somsen.



I.-r.: Johan Somsen [1089] and Daniël Somsen [2478]

A couple of weeks later and a few thousand miles away I met **Don Somsen** [831] in his place of residence Salt lake City. I had known Don since the first great Somsen reunion in The Netherlands in 1997.

Though he had planned to come to the Baldwin reunion, unfortunately, Don had not been able to do so because of illness. Therefore it was so good to meet each other in Salt Lake City.

Barbara Petersen-Somsen [2520], an aunt of our travelling companion Ken Anderson [3934], had arranged a lunch at her home and she had also invited Don and his wife Susan [879]. It was a beautiful and warm meeting again and the time we spent together at the table was very special. We talked endlessly and much too soon Don and Susan had to take leave.



I.-r.: Don Somsen [873] and Johan Somsen [1089]

On saying goodbye outside – and this was not a small surprise - I caught sight of the licence plate of Don's car. So it was true indeed, there was another Somsen driving around in the USA with a Somsen licence plate. Only in a different state – Utah – a couple of thousands of miles from Wisconsin. They did not know each other at all, they did not even know of each other's existence, but they had this one special thing in common. Since they lived in different states the layout of the licence plates was different, but the name was the

same. It was **my name** and the name of so many others that read this article. ■