

KING FAMILY REUNION
Beazell Memorial Forest Park
Kings Valley, OR
June 23, 2007

About 55 family members and guests attended the annual potluck, and most stayed for the business meeting. President Mimi Stang presided.

Note: Due to a scheduling mix-up, this year we were unable to meet at the Kings Valley School Gym, our normal meeting place.

Family History & Stories

Bill Dixon told about the Beazell property, which is the old Plunkett farm. Bill, a Plunkett descendant, actually lived in the Plunkett house here during grade and high school. This meeting room is actually in the reconstructed Plunkett barn. Patricia Plunkett Holler explained a display about the Plunkett family that she made for this reunion, and about the Plunkett connection to the King family: Ashnah Norton Plunkett was the first King family child born in the Kings Valley area (1847) and this place was her home for many years. Ashnah was a granddaughter of Nahum & Sarepta King, born to Hopestill King Norton and her husband Lucius Norton.

A guest today was Richard King who married Janet Gerting (descendant of Sol King and Lucy King Fromherz.) He thinks it is possible to connect his King family with us. He displayed pictures of his grandparents, and he shared the lyrics of a song written some years ago about the Sarah Chambers grave in Eastern Oregon.

Mary Chambers Schell (descendant of Sarah Chambers) told the story of Sarah. Mary descends from Sarah's son who was only 16 months old when his mother died and was buried along the Meek Cutoff.

Charlotte Langston (great granddaughter of Luther King) reported that this year she found Luther's grave! Records show that he was in the soldiers' home in Roseburg in 1910. Luther died in Florence, OR on June 1, 1913 and is buried in the Oddfellows Cemetery there. Luther was nicknamed "Rattlesnake King" because "once each year (in August) he is said to have gone into an inanimate state and sores developed on his skin." This was supposed to have been the result of his surviving a rattlesnake bite. Charlotte has a newspaper article about Luther King.

Quite a few were here at this reunion for the first time. Amber Rose Gilson, age 22 months, was the youngest attendee. Amber is a descendant of Isaac King.

The story was told about the daughters of two attendees who were best friends through their school years, but didn't know they were related until many years later.

BUSINESS MEETING

President Mimi distributed copies of the minutes from the 2006 King reunion, and introduced the officers.

Family Historian David Trask was not able to be here this year because he just returned from Europe—but Mimi relayed a message from David to urge everyone to continue sending family information to him.

Our webmaster Jackie Farris was not able to attend because she is moving her office this weekend.

Mimi noted that the Beazell facility is a “wonderful place” that normally rents for \$450 per day! Because the K.V. school made an error in scheduling our annual reunion, they paid half the the rental fee for today, and the King Family Association paid the rest.

Mimi called the group's attention to the Plunkett family photos permanently displayed on the walls of this meeting facility, along with photos of the major barn reconstruction project done in the past few years.

Thanks to Anne Trussell for again preparing the very large wall chart on display, depicting the King Family tree. Also thanks to Anne for scanning many King family photos and compiling 192 of them onto CDs that are for sale today for \$4 each. Anne said she is adding additional photos to the collection even today.

Complete sets of all the back issues of the *King Folk* newsletter are available for \$25 per set.

Carole Norton Putman has copies available of her booklets on the Norton family. They contain family information back beyond Sarepta Norton King. Mimi introduced Carole.

Thank you to Vangie Greig and Melissa Parkhurst for staffing the registration table today.

\$10 annual King Family dues are now payable, and include a subscription to the newsletter.

Thanks to Earle Greig and Bill Dixon who parked cars today in the limited space available at the Beazell Park. They reported no problems.

Nigel Parkhurst read the names of the King children who were our ancestors, and asked descendants to stand when their ancestor was named. As usual, Hopetill King Norton had the most descendants present today.

Secretary Patricia Holler summarized highlights from the minutes from the 2006 reunion.

Treasurer Anne Trussell reported that we have \$2334.38 in the treasury as of yesterday. She reminded everyone that checks MUST be made payable to "King Folk."

We didn't do an annual project this year, but we received \$785 in donations for the monument project that we approved last year.

Anne noted that on the CDs, she separated the scanned family photos into collections by contributors, and she read the list of contributors that includes some of our cousins in Canada. We lacked photos of these King family members, who died in an era before photos became commonplace: Lydia, Rhoda, Amos, Sol, Saretta and Lovisa. However, Anne reported that today someone brought in pictures of Lydia, Rhoda and Amos, so they are now scanned into our collection. Earle said that we do have a picture of Lovisa, too.

Linda Parrott, in CA, is a descendant of Amos King. She said her family is not interested in the King family, so she offered some photos to us. Anne will scan them into our collection and then take them to the Benton County museum. A discussion took place.

James Plunkett's drums are currently on display at the museum in Philomath.

Thanks to Mimi and Earle who compiled this year's *King Folk* newsletter. They reported that it now has a circulation of 200 copies.

Earle reported that the four reader boards are now installed at the Kings Valley cemetery. They cost about \$100 and were paid for by the cemetery group. Earle asked for approval to spend \$50 from the King Family funds to make some improvements to the displays. Approval was unanimous.

Mimi introduced Audrey Theurer, former sexton of the K.V. cemetery, who was in attendance.

Charlotte Price Wirfs noted that she, Carole Putman Norton and Pat Plunkett Holler walked the pioneer section of the K.V. cemetery in the 1970s and wrote down detailed notes of all the markers that were readable at the time. There was also a WWPA reading project, and Ruth Moore did an earlier reading.

Someone also took Art Lyday through the cemetery and made notes of things he said. We keep adding additional information as we can, and the several readings mentioned become ever more valuable as time continues to erode the older markers. Fortunately, K.V. has had good stewardship over the years.

A discussion took place about the K.V. cemetery. Nahum & Sarepta are actually buried on their Donation Land Claim at Wren. The precise location is not known for sure. (On private property.)

Charlotte reported that when a road was constructed in recent years around the back of the K.V. cemetery, they had to move the stone for Hopestill's child Serena. Earle said that an earthquake sank part of the original road, so it had to be relocated.

Mimi reported that author Linda Crew (*A Heart for Any Fate*) could not attend because her son is being married in China today. Her website is www.linda.crew.com, and her novel about the King family is still available. The Oregon Historical Society's press went out of business on June 1, 2007 so Linda is working now with another publisher. As Mimi said, Linda "put a face on our family."

Mimi called attention to a chart and display made by Keegan Asbury Moyer, a sixth grader and descendant of the King Family, for his school's cultural fair. It was on display today. Keegan received an A+ for his work. Mimi introduced him, and we applauded him and someone took pictures of him and his display.

Thank you to Nigel for taking pictures at many of our recent reunions.

Mimi spoke about the King Family monument that we approved at last year's reunion. She showed some pictures of such a marker made for the Cornell family at a cost of \$1600 some years ago. We now have \$785 toward this project plus \$600 that we approved last year, for a total of \$1385 available.

Since the monument will be placed in the K.V. Cemetery, Audrey Theurer said we need to get approval from the K.V. Cemetery Association. They have their annual meeting in May of each year.

Nigel observed that no other group is likely to ever build a monument to the King Family, so we'd better do it. He also noted that all of our projects seem to fall on the shoulders of just a few people (usually Earle is involved), and he urged others to contribute both their time and energy.

Mimi said it will probably cost about \$2000 now for a monument that is large enough to contain the names of all 16 King kids! During discussion, someone said that "Regardless of the cost, it's priceless," and also "It's our

heritage!" Mimi asked the group to reaffirm that is still the direction that we wish to go. No one objected to the project, which was approved by attendees at the 2006 reunion.

Nigel said that we're over halfway there now, and suggested that anyone could speed this project up today via their checkbook! So, a donation was taken up for this purpose.

Thank you to Nigel, who made copies of the King Folk directory. He asked for all corrections, additions and changes for the second edition. The directory is for sale for \$1 each.

This being the time set for the annual election of King Family Association officers, Carole Putman moved, seconded by Nigel Parkhurst, to reappoint all officers to their current positions. On call for vote, all members present voted aye, motion carried.

Mrs. Parkhurst asked whether Amos King was part of the old Olds & King Department Store in Portland. The answer was no, but he left his mark in Portland with place names such as Kings Heights. Also, his tannery was located where the ballpark is now.

Next reunion: June 21, 2008 at the Kings Valley School.


Patricia Plunkett Holler
Secretary

KING FOLK

Newsletter # 26

King Family Association

Published April 2007

**KING FOLK REUNION
SATURDAY, JUNE 23, 2007
9:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M.**

**BEAZELL FOREST EDUCATION CENTER
KINGS VALLEY HIGHWAY**

PLEASE NOTE NEW LOCATION!!

Beazell Forest Park is located just 3.5 miles from the Kings Valley Charter School on Kings Valley Highway. There is a sign on the road marking the turnoff.

The morning session is a workshop. Please bring King family material to share. Pictures are especially wanted. Perhaps you will discover a new relative, or be able to assist someone else with their research. A copy machine will be available to use free of charge. Coffee and donuts provided.

POTLUCK LUNCH AT NOON

**Please bring a main dish and one other item of your choice (dessert, salad or munchies). Bring your own table service. Coffee, soda pop and bottled water will be provided.
NOTE: at our new location there is a refrigerator but no oven for reheating food!**

BUSINESS MEETING AT 1:30 P.M.

(Need more information? See back page to contact officers)

See next page for candid shots from 2006 reunion compliments of Nigel Parkhurst.

from Richard King

Janet King brought home a stack of "Oregon Trail" videos and tapes this November 16, 2006. On this tape we discovered this song.

The story of Sarah Chambers King can be found in a book; "The Terrible Trail; The Meek Cutoff". Also an easy to read novel with actual characters and events was written called, "A Heart For Any Fate" by Linda Crew. The King family found their dreams in King's Valley, just north of Corvallis, Oregon. Many of the family still live there (2006). Linda Crew

<http://www.lindacrew.com/>

ljc1@earthlink.net

Truly, Janet (King Fromherz Gerding King), healthmiracles2@comcast.net

THE SONGS AND MUSIC OF THE OREGON TRAIL

Cassette Tape

GO WEST, Vol 1

Recorded at Illustrated Audio, Ontario, Oregon, 1992 by Prairie Dog Music
Tape # GW-0492

Musicians: Bill Van Atta, Bonnie Van Atta, Steve Barger, Dan Coleman,
Annie Coleman, Jerry Camp

Available from: Salem Public Library

585 Liberty St. SE

Salem 97301-3591

Song No. 10 - "The Grave of Sarah Chambers"

Note with the song:

"Sarah King Chambers was the first of many to die along what is known as "The Terrible Trail of Meek". Stephen Meek, the brother of Joe Meek, convinced an entire wagon party to take a short-cut across Oregon's great desert to avoid the treacherous slopes of the Blue Mountains. Visiting her grave one September's eve, I could not leave without capturing with my pen this tribute to the often forgotten courage and virtue of the pioneer women who made the settlement of the West a reality for the men who toiled".

Words of the song:

All alone out here on the prairie,
Overlooking the Oregon Trail,
Lies the grave of Sarah Chambers,
A testimony to the pioneer's will.

Standing here upon this timeless sage hill,
One can hear the beast of burden groan,
Hear the clanks of their chains,

And the creaks and the strains,
Of the oak and the ox as they rolled on.

Sarah, why did you come here?
Tell me why did you leave home?
Was it love for your man that made you bold?
Did your love for the Lord
Lead you to this land
Or was it faith in shining gold?

September 3, 1845 and your name on a rock upon this hill,
Is all that's left of a woman's life so vibrant,
All that's left of Sarah's life to tell,
Still I wonder someday will she be there,
When her story is finally fully told.
Is it faith in her God that lies beneath the sod,
Or is it faith in shining gold?

Sarah, why did you come here?
Tell me why did you leave home?
Was it love for your man that made you bold?
Did your love for the Lord,
Lead you to this land.
Or was it faith in shining gold?
Tell me why, Sarah, Tell me why,
Tell me why, Sarah, what made you bold?
Is it faith in your God that lies beneath this sod,
Or is it faith in shining gold?