

King Folk eNews

King Reunion 2023

That's Next summer!

The board is looking for a site to hold our next reunion that has a communal gathering area, playground or recreational area, restrooms, parking, and shade from the sun or shelter from the rain.

Here are several sites that the board has suggested. Please take a look at the three possibilities and let us know what sounds good for you. Send your remarks to charwirfs@gmail.com.

1. Thompson Shelter at Avery Park, Corvallis, OR
2. Philomath City Park
3. Kings Valley Community Center

Please email Traci, tracij1031@gmail.com for links to these venues. Traci has also posted them on our FaceBook page.

Would you attend a family history workshop in September? It would be an all-day event held at Kings Valley Community Center which is the old United Evangelical Kings Valley Church. David Trask, our historian, will be there. Please email charwirfs@gmail.com if you want to attend.



King Pioneer Family Association Reunion

Kings Valley Pioneer Cemetery, Kings Valley, OR June 25, 2022

About 50 King Family cousins gathered with family and friends to celebrate the first reunion in two years. Melissa Parkhurst expressed her gratitude to KPFA leadership for safely maneuvering the reunion through Covid restrictions. She also issued a challenge of how we might get our children and grandchildren to attend future reunions so we might still be meeting 40 years into the future.

Other highlights of the reunion are >about 10 folks were attending for the first time. Currently we had 48 members and friends, who have paid dues or made donations for 2022/23. >Linda Crew brought copies of her 2009 book, Fire on the Wind which she generously gave to attendees. >Thia Belle brought items from the Daniel Frommherz estate which his brother, Russell Frommherz, donated to KPFA. These included the Amos King wallet that he carried throughout the Revolutionary War; the Luther King family Bible, published in 1857; and the Abe King family Bible, published in 1892. George Davidson will deliver these to our family historian, David Trask.

Thia Belle reminded everyone that "It's easy to confuse two organizations which are the **King Pioneer Family Association**, which is the name of our group today, and the **Kings Valley Cemetery Association**, which is the

King Pioneer Family Association

The family is made up of the descendants of Nahum and Sarepta King, Oregon pioneers of 1845. **Annual dues are \$10.00.** These funds are used for reunion fees, family projects and publication costs.

- Please make checks payable **King Pioneer Family Association** and mail to **Charlotte Wirfs, 409 Sand Pointe DR, Central Point, OR 97502**
- **All information published in King Folk is printed as presented. For that reason the information presented may not be completely accurate. Corrections and updates are published when they become known.**

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organization that manages where we are meeting today. The two organizations often work together, and each spring you may be sent an annual membership reminder from both of them.”

Following tradition, Traci called the roll of the children of Nahum and Sarepta King while the descendants of each child stood to be identified. **Sarepta, 0; Lucretia, 1; John, 0; Hopestill, 16; Stephen, 2; Isaac, 3; Amos, 0; Sarah, 1; Lovisa, 5; Abigail, 1; Lydia, 0; Solomon, 6; and Rhoda Anne, 3.** Due to temperatures reaching into the nineties, the group adjourned about 2pm.

Several members explored **Luckiamute Meadows**, a 155-acre nature and agricultural reserve located next to the Kings Valley Charter School. Several members visited the **Kings Valley Community Center**, former Evangelical Kings Valley Church, to view the site as a possible place to hold the 2023 reunion. Both of those sites are owned by the **Kings Valley Community Trust.** Reunion photos are by **George Davidson.**



Stories of the Luckiamute River Valley

Our feature article this month is **Hopestill (King) Norton**, or “**Hope**” as she preferred to be called. She was the sibling most represented at the recent reunion. Bertha (Plunkett) Thompson, Anne Trussell, and Earle Greig have stories relating to Hope.

Bertha Thompson, age 62, was living in Blodgett, OR in June of 1938 when she was interviewed by Mark Phinney of the WPA Historical Records Survey for Benton County, Oregon. Bertha was living with her husband, John, and son, who were managing the Blodgett General Store and Post Office. During her interview she related that she was the daughter of **Ashnah (Norton) Plunkett** (1847-1933) and granddaughter of Hopestill. Bertha cited birthdates for the family members in the Nahum King family Bible, published by B. Warner, Philadelphia, PA, 1819. Unfortunately this Bible has been missing since about 1970, however photocopies were taken of the family pages and Mark Phinney included the contents, publisher, and date in his Benton County WPA Historical records. Hopestill is written in long-hand having been born February 7, 1816 and she would have celebrated her 207th birthday in 2022. Hope was age 32 in 1847 when her daughter Ashnah was born in Kings Valley. Bertha said that “Ashnah was probably the first white child born in Benton County, OR”. (note that Kings Valley was part of Polk County in 1847).

Our second story about Hope comes from Earle Greig and Anne Trussell, who both attended this year’s reunion. It seems Hope gained a status of notoriety in 1851 with news of her triplets born May 9, 1850. It was published in the *New York Herald*, Feb. 18, 1851. Here is the article that Anne found. The column was titled “Interesting from Oregon”. Anne writes that “this article discusses curious facts about the 1950 census agent, Mr. O’Neil, and the Oregon population in 1850.” It was first reported in the *Oregon Spectator* as “One family in Kings Valley, Polk County, the mother of which had three children at birth, about 5 months previous, two of

whom are still living, the other babe dying a short time before his (Mr. O’Neil’s) visit.”

Anne relates, “Imagine! no telephone, telegraph, cell phone, email and yet news of the birth of the Norton triplets born in a tiny isolated valley on the West Coast made it across the continent and onto the front page of a New York newspaper.” Anne has photocopies of both news articles and transcribed the information from them.

In an article written by Earle Greig, the three children were named as Nahum Norton, Cyntha Norton, and Sarepta Norton. The triplets are named incorrectly in the 1850 census as Daniel, Clarissa, and Clarinda. Hopestill’s triplets were big news in 1850 when *The Oregon Spectator* published it on page 2 of their Nov. 28, 1850 edition. *The New York Herald* picked up that article on their front page on Sat. Feb. 8, 1851.” Cyntha was the triplet who did not survive. Earle states that “Cyntha Norton’s marker is the oldest one in Kings Valley Cemetery, pioneer section. It lists her age as six days.” Cyntha’s sister, Sarepta “Sis” Norton married Willard Lane Price in 1870 and they are Earle’s great great grandparents.

***King Folk eNews* will continue
featuring different people, events,
photographs, and places related to the
Luckiamute River Valley and
surrounding area in upcoming issues.
These can be recent stories as well as
historical anecdotes.**

**Please email your information to
charwirfs@gmail.com.**



Hopestill “Hope” (King) Norton was born Feb. 7, 1815 in Madison County, Ohio. She arrived in Kings Valley, Polk County, Oregon Territory with her family in 1846. She died Nov. 16, 1892 at Norton’s Station, Benton County, OR. Her marker is located at Kings Valley Cemetery, pioneer section and reads “Hope S Norton, 1816-1892.” We do not know what the S. refers to, perhaps a middle name of Sarepta or S for the last part of her given name, Hopestill.

The marker has the year of her birth listed as 1816. Bible records list Birth year as 1815. Hope married Lucius Carol’s Norton (1818-1859) Oct. 9, 1839 in Madison County, Ohio and had two young children when she crossed the plains to Oregon Territory in 1845. At age 45, Hope was left as a widow with a large family to provide for with the death of Lucius in 1859. She lived to age 77.

This professionally framed portrait of Hopestill “Hope” King Norton by an unknown photographer can be found at Benton County Historical Society’s Museum, Philomath, OR. It was donated by our cousin, **Joan “Jo” (Price) Larsen**. Char Wirfs had the opportunity to photograph this version in the 1990’s while visiting Rovia Price at her home in Kings Valley. She and her son, Earl, were living in the James Watson home at that time. A similar portrait of Larkin Price was also hanging in their home and Char got to photograph that also. The portraits were taken off the wall and placed against a vehicle tire so they could be photographed in better light. Joan Larsen donated the Larkin Price photo to the museum at the same time. KPFA wishes to thank Joan for making such a generous donation.

John Larsen, a current member of KPFA sent news that his mother, **Joan Louise “Jo” (Price) Larsen** (1934-2022) “passed away peacefully in her sleep on **June 13, 2022**. She loved the reunion and reconnecting to all of you and felt strongly that we ‘pass the torch’ to the next generation.

Drums & Fife

From Bertha Thompson WPA interview...”My father, James Plunkett, came to Fort Hoskins with the 4th California Volunteers. He stayed in Kings Valley after the fort disbanded in 1865. Father was a base drummer in the drum corp at Fort Hoskins under Phil Sheridan. Charles Franks played tenor drum, and JC Lottsenheiser played the fife. Another man who chummed with them was Si Copeland. After the company was disbanded the four men scattered and never met again for many years. Then, 25 or 30 years later they all came back and played together again. They were much in demand for celebrations and political rallies. I think I never heard finer music than they made.

Announcements

Carol Anne (Norton) Putman (1932-2020) passed away November 21, 2020. Carol was a long-standing member of KPFA and was an early King family researcher. She compiled **A Norton Family Branch, James Norton and his Descendants, New York-Ohio-Oregon, 1988.** in a 34-page-booklet and shared them at our reunions.

Daniel Lewis Frommherz (1947-2019) passed away August 13, 2019 in Eugene, Oregon. He was an avid King Family researcher and contributed much on the early family genealogy dating back to William King of Salem, MA. Daniel wrote an article about Amos King's wallet which was published in King Folk newsletter and will be featured in our next issue of King Folk eNews.

Joan "Jo" L (Price) Larsen (1934-1922) passed away June 13, 2022. She was residing with her son, John Larsen, and had just renewed her membership to KPFA a few days before her death.

Ruth Alice (Price) Stellmon (1947-2022) passed away July 9, 2022. She is the half sister of Joan "Jo" (Price) Larsen. Their father was Louis Elmer Price (1912-1982) who was a second great-grandson of Nahum and Sarepta King. Our condolences to the family for the recent loss of two loved ones.

Next KPFA board meeting will be a Zoom meeting, Tuesday August 23, 2022. Members are invited to attend. Please email tracij1031@gmail.com if you wish to attend. She will send you an invitation.



The King Pioneer Family Association Reunion was held under the shade of the trees at Kings Valley Pioneer Cemetery. An outdoor venue was chosen last January, when the board was not certain what inside Covid restrictions would be by the time of our gathering in June. Photo by George Davidson.