

The Higgins-Mapes Family Legacy

Newsletter July 2008

Don't Miss the 2008 Higgins-Mapes Family Reunion

AUGUST 2-3, 2008 FRIENDSVILLE, ILLINOIS

Reunion packets describing the activities planned for our 2008 REUNION already have been mailed to all members. We are very pleased to announce that we will be meeting in the Fellowship Hall of the Barney Prairie Christian Church, the very church our Higgins-Mapes ancestors helped found. (Barney Prairie Christian Church has a Friendsville address and is located about a mile east of the Mt. Carmel – Lancaster Road.)

Our program will include many of the same features of our successful 2006 Reunion. An abbreviated schedule is included below. If for any reason, you did not receive a packet, Please call Mary Alice Springer at 270-827-1424, or 270-577-5777 (cell) or e-mail her at auntmaryalicespringer@yahoo.com. Please RSVP as soon as possible **even if you are not attending**. We look forward to an exciting event.

August 2 (Saturday)

8:30 a.m. Doors open/ visit displays
10:00 a.m. Formal program
12:00 noon Lunch
1:15 p.m. Motor tour of Higgins-Mapes historical sites
3:15 p.m. Exchange information and visit with cousins
5:30 p.m. Light supper
8:30 p.m. Dismissal

August 3 (Sunday)

10:15 a.m. Worship service at Barney Prairie Christian Church
12:00 noon Lunch to be determined
3:00 p.m. Dismissal

Financial Report

As of June 30, 2008, the Association had \$870.00 in its checking account. Expenses related to the Couch-Higgins Cemetery and to the September 2008 Reunion are yet to be paid. You may pay your dues for 2008 (\$5.00 individual/\$10 family) at the Reunion, or you may include them in your Reunion RSVP or

mail them directly to association Treasurer David Foster at 330 West Grand Avenue, #1102, Chicago, IL 60654. Please make checks payable to the Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association. Thanks to all those who have paid their dues in advance.

A Look Back at the Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association Reunion of 2006

The 2006 Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association Reunion was a huge success! President Mary Alice Springer has provided this summary of the Reunion's highlights.

Approximately twenty-eight members of the Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association gathered at the Mabel Courter 4H Annex Building in Mt Carmel, Illinois on September 30 and October 1, 2006 to celebrate our family heritage. The program included special displays, a formal meeting, a tour of nearby sites of special importance to Higgins-Mapes descendants, and a Sunday church service at the Barney Prairie Christian Church.

Displays included:

- information on our Mayflower connection to Stephen Hopkins,
- a photo essay of several New England gravestones of ancestors of the George Higgins family (provided by Bill Currie),
- river journeys in the early 1800's, the time of the migration of our ancestors from Allegany County, New York to Wabash County, Illinois,
- early Couch-Higgins Reunions, including newspaper articles from the late 1800's and early 1900's and a letter from Dr. William Samuel Higgins to his son, describing his wish to attend such a reunion,
- a beautiful quilt made by Betty Joan Koski showing the leaves and branches of her family tree, and
- articles about the Couch families who lived in Gray's Harbor County, Washington, including that of Ebenezer Bostwick Couch.

In the formal meeting, Darren Couch, our Vice-President and Webmaster, introduced our web site, www.higginsmapesfamily.org. He showed us the various features of the web site and encouraged us to submit our own family trees in GEDCOM format. Darren also asked for photographs and information on any Higgins-Mapes descendants who served in the military or who served as ministers. If you submit a photograph or name, please be sure to identify the connection with George and Patience Mapes Higgins.

The latest research on the George Higgins family in Connecticut and New York was also discussed. The importance of Bible records was emphasized as these records are so hard to find and yet hold great significance for genealogists and for lineage organizations since they were created at the time of the family events. We really would like to include family Bible records on our web site. We are grateful for

the information Harriet Couch Davis has shared with us. She has allowed us to copy the inscription pages and the family records from the William and Sophia Higgins Brown Bible that is in her possession. It gives us goose bumps to realize that this Bible was purchased by William Brown, according to his inscription, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania in May of 1816 when he and his family were migrating to Edwards County, Illinois from Allegany County, New York. These records will soon be on our web site.

David Foster brought us up to date on our finances and discussed the need for cemetery repair and maintenance. Susan Wood and her husband volunteered to mow the cemetery for us but there is still much work to be done to bring it up to the standards of the 1990's when our original members restored this final resting place.

After lunch, we embarked on an ambitious tour of family historical sites in the Palmyra, Friendsville, Allendale, Lancaster and Barney Prairie areas, including the original settlement site of Palmyra, the sites of Fort Compton, Fort Wood and Fort Barney, the Friendsville, Lancaster and Allendale cemeteries and the Barney Prairie Christian Church founded in 1819 by many of our Higgins-Mapes ancestors. Reverend Ray Culver, current pastor of the church, allowed us to visit in the church and to view many of the original records of the church. He also provided each of us with a CD of the records of the founding of this church. The rest of the day was spent in exchanging information with one another and visiting cemeteries, etc.

On Sunday, about seventeen of us attended the morning worship service at Barney Prairie Christian Church. It was a beautiful service with contributions from many of our family members: Susan Wood Brooks played the organ (she is a member and regularly plays the organ); Mary Kinnaw sang a solo; Dallas Krumm played the Indiana flute; and Mary Alice Springer gave an inspirational message. Reverend Culver and the congregation made us feel so at home and it was a wonderful and inspiring service.

A light lunch was served at the 4H Center and family members visited until they had to get on their way. Everyone seemed to have a wonderful time and we hope that the 2008 Reunion will be as well attended and just as enjoyable.

Mary Alice Springer Addresses the Barney Prairie Christian Church

Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association President Mary Alice Springer spoke at the Sunday morning, October 1, 2006 worship service at the Barney Prairie Christian Church. This is the text of her inspirational remarks.

On behalf of the Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association, we thank you for your warm welcome to us this morning. We would like to express our gratitude to Reverend Ray Culver for opening your doors to us yesterday and providing us with so many interesting materials. It is indeed a joyous and humbling experience to worship with you, the oldest Christian Church congregation in Illinois! How remarkable!

“Cousins” in our family association have all descended from George and Patience Mapes Higgins, who along with 6 of their 8 children, Ransom, Willis, John, Sophia Brown, Cynthia (Lucy) Couch, and Nancy Harrison, migrated from Connecticut to Allegany County, New York, and then to Edwards County (now Wabash County), Illinois in the early 1800’s, before statehood. Many of you, too, I suspect, are related to these same families.

These pioneer families faced tremendous hardships. Just to make this long journey was a hardship in itself. For those who traveled by land, there were many days of arduous walking and keeping on the right trail to reach their destination.

Those who traveled by the rivers, faced problems with low water or flooding and upon reaching the Louisville area, they had to guide their boats, loaded with all their earthly possessions over the Falls of the Ohio. While not a falls in the sense of Niagara Falls, these rapids were swift and treacherous and the boats could be easily swamped. It was a dangerous voyage, hard enough for grown men and women but these pioneers were bringing their children—some of them infants and toddlers with them. And no doubt, those who were still young by our eyes, 6, 7 10, etc., were helping to pull the load.

Upon arriving here on the Illinois prairie, they began to build communities—Lancaster, Barney Prairie, Lick Prairie, Friendsville, etc. And because there were still hostilities with unfriendly Native Americans, forts were built for protection, land was cleared for cultivation, and homes began to be built. Communities were forming.

One of the first institutions these pioneers founded was Barney Prairie Christian Church! In the midst of the many trials of frontier life, the early founders, who gained their strength and perseverance from reliance on the Lord, knew it was vital to have a place for communal worship. History tells us they built a stand in the woods at a point convenient to the roads leading to the three forts in the area, Forts Wood, Barney and Compton, and to the settlement of Palmyra. On July 17, 1819, the founding members came together to establish this church. The church they founded was part of the Stone-Campbell movement, a religious movement that truly befitted the strong, egalitarian and independent-minded, American frontiersman. We are proud that many of our ancestors were among these founders.

We honor those early founders who worshipped the same Lord that we do today. In July of 1819, they started the flame that still burns bright at Barney Prairie Christian Church. In Hebrews 13, verses 7 and 8, Paul tells us: “Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and tomorrow.” Praise God for this eternal truth and thank you, members of today’s Barney Prairie Christian Church for welcoming us to worship with you.

In Memoriam

Because we do not meet regularly as a family or an association, we often do not get up-to-date information when members and loved-ones pass away. Since the 2006 Reunion, we have learned of the following deaths:

Teino Koski, husband of member Betty Joan Provines Koski, passed away on February 26, 2008.

Jean P. Foster, husband of Sybil Foster and the father of our Treasurer, David Foster, his sister, Deborah Foster Ganaway, one of our members, and his brother Paul, passed away February 5, 2008.

Orval Talbot, maternal grandfather of Darren Couch passed away in September of 2006.

Sarah Couch Highsmith, mother of John Highsmith, passed away on February 24, 2006.

John D. Fane, husband of member Martha Fane, passed away in July of 2005.

Hattie Burrell, mother of Martha Fane and Lindsay Burrell, passed away in April of 2003.

Phoebe Higgins Kimmel, a member of our group and mother of Karen Murray, passed away in 2003.

Milo Provines, father of Lulu Osborne and Betty Joan Koski passed away in September of 2002.

Richard Marshall, a Couch descendant and husband of Doris Marshall Calhoun, passed away early in 2000. His widow Doris, who has generously helped our organization in the past, is now married to Harold Wayne Calhoun of Monticello, Indiana.

We extend our heartfelt sympathies to the members of all these families. If you have information on any other deaths among our families, please let us know.

Association Officers

At the 2006 Reunion, Rosemary Sitzman, who has filled many officer slots within our organization since its inception in the 1990's, announced her resignation as Association secretary. We are pleased to announce that Mary Susan Wood has assumed the responsibilities of this position.

We honor Rosemary for her long years of service and her steady, willing hand in keeping our organization alive and well. She always has been more than generous with her time and knowledge and her absence as an officer will be felt by all. The Association owes her a great debt of gratitude.

Our current officers are:

President: Mary Alice Springer

Vice President: Darren Couch (Darren also serves as our Webmaster)

Treasurer David Foster

Membership Chairman Jack Kinnaw

Rosemary Sitzman and Lynda and Lou Hoornbeek continue as ex-officio board members.

MEMBER IN THE NEWS

Dallas Krumm, a columnist for the Mt Carmel newspaper who writes feature articles about pioneer life, useful botanical herbs and plants, and sketches of the early settlers of Wabash, Edwards, Lawrence and surrounding counties, was featured in a January 21, 2008 article in the Evansville Courier & Press (Evansville, Indiana). Many thanks to Courier & Press staff writer, Garret Mathews, for allowing us to reprint his article on Dallas' wide-ranging knowledge and service to the communities of Southern Illinois.

We salute Dallas and thank him for his many contributions to our knowledge of our ancestors.

Illinois Renaissance man lives to learn

Dallas Krumm has a master's degree and has taught for many years at the high school and college levels. He's an antiques dealer. He has a keen knowledge of American Indians. He writes history-related columns for several weekly newspapers.

That's one side of the 60-year-old Wabash County man.

For the other, it's necessary to watch Krumm exit his house trailer that's as cluttered as it is battered, and step toward the nearest black cherry tree. He breaks off a small section of limb and pops it into his mouth.

"Best thing in the world for sore throats and coughs."

The heavysset man studies herbs and their remedies for everything from asthma to lung congestion. Mullein leaf, comfrey, sassafras, pokeberry roots. He's your man.

"If I get sick, I would go to the hospital only as a last resort. For most of what ails me, I can walk out in the yard. Even if I got cancer, I would look into treatments involving violets and bloodroot."

Krumm smiles.

"But I'm not foolish. I research herbs thoroughly in 10 to 12 books before I try them."

The trailer that he's lived in for 20 years contains a black-and-white TV, stacks of newspapers and hundreds of books. If he needs to use the Internet, he fires up his dented 1993 Buick Century and goes to the library.

"The trailer is rugged but paid for. I have a 21st century understanding, but an early 1900s mindset. I love that philosophy of making do with what you have. It gives me a special feeling of self-sufficiency."

Krumm learned the simple life while growing up on his father's farm in Olney, Ill.

"He reverted back to the Depression with survival tactics. We had a milk cow, and we churned butter and we raised hogs. We bought bread, sugar and gasoline and did the rest for ourselves."

Krumm is slowed from a childhood bout with polio that sometimes makes him dizzy. He walks with two canes he has modified to provide optimum balance.

Lancaster is about as rural as it gets. The community of about 100 is on a back road midway between West Salem and Allendale.

"This is the perfect place for me. When I go to an urban area, I vegetate. I need a small town to keep motivated."

He sings in church choirs. He plays the flute. He helps international students at Wabash Valley College in Mount Carmel, Ill., "because I know how it feels to be lonely and poor."

Krumm is a historical re-enactor and often attends Indian powwows.

"I want to explore all the different genres of learning."

On summer days, he relaxes in his side yard with a good book. He'll have watermelons for sale plus a selection of items from the antiques he keeps in a building in West Salem.

"If people want to buy something, that's great. Or they can just wave as they drive by. Is my life based on making money? No."

He knows some folks around Lancaster think he is an oddball.

"It used to bother me if I wasn't popular, but not any more."

Maybe Dallas Krumm will invest the rest of this afternoon in a study of cholera. Or, perhaps, he'll research edible herbs for a classroom presentation. "I'm getting ready to order my tombstone, and I know what the inscription will be: 'He lived to learn and share.'"

Higgins-Mapes Family Historical Association

c/o David Foster

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