

COPENHAVER FAMILY REUNION

July 29, 2017

Minutes

On Saturday, July 29, 2017, approximately fifty-five (55) family members representing seven states and Moscow, Russia gathered at Shelter 1 in Hungry Mother State Park, Marion, Virginia to celebrate the 289th anniversary of the Copenhaver Family in America.

Reunion president Karla Henderlong (of California) welcomed the family and introduced the reunion officers for 2017; President, Karla Henderlong; Vice-President, George Griffith(MD); Treasurer, Anne Siebold (MD); Publicity-Karen Copenhaver (VA); Web Page, Michael Perdue (VA); Newsletter/Social Media, Elizabeth Siebold (MD); Copenhaver Memorial Library Committee Chair, Katy Copenhaver Davidson(SC).

Will Bates (NC) offered the family invocation and named those known to have passed away since the last reunion; Roger Copenhaver, brother of Curtis Copenhaver, and Alberta Copenhaver, widow of Edward C. Copenhaver of Winchester, VA.

President Henderlong then asked the group to introduce themselves and their connection to the Copenhaver lineage. After the family shared introductions and some exciting family stories, it was noted that there was a large number of first time attendees. Among the first time attendees was Deb Copenhaver, 92, of Washington state and former two-time World Rodeo Champion and inductee to the National Professional Rodeo Hall of Fame and Pro Rodeo Hall of Fame who mentioned his sister Norma Echelbarger who had planned on attending, but the night before their departure, she had a mini stroke and could not attend. An exciting piece of trivia was shared with the family by Trigg Copenhaver after conducting some past research, in that Deb Copenhaver won the world bronc riding championship in 1955-56 that his son Jeff also won the calf-roping championship 20 years later in 1975 using the same saddle. He also shared that Jeff has the distinction of being the founder of the first Cowboy Church in the U.S., in Billy Bob's Saloon in Fort Worth, TX as well as being instrumental in founding "Cowboys for Christ."

President Henderlong then called for the financial report from Anne Siebold (MD) who reported after expenses and donations the current bank balance was \$1,500. She stated that some of the expenses included the special annual gifts of the Jefferson Cups given during the reunion, shelter fee, food, beverages and newsletter.

Katy Copenhaver Davidson, chair of the Frederick and Eve Phillippi Copenhaver Memorial Library committee shared how the family continues to support the genealogy and research library inside the Smyth County Library. She stated all the brass plaques inside the room have been properly labeled. Davidson also noted that there is a memorial plaque in honor of Robert Madison Jr. and Mildred M. Copenhaver in the room but their photos are not on it, so a company has been located who will make a matching plaque that includes a laser engraved photo of them. Davidson also commented that anyone entering the Copenhaver Room will now be required to check/leave their bags, back-packs and purses

which will be locked in a cabinet in the main library. She also noted that if anyone wanted to make free copies of documents they could do so in the room. Davidson called the attention to another area of the library downstairs reflecting the family connection, the Copenhaver Meeting Room, in honor and memory of Preston Copenhaver, who lived in Smyth County. She then reminded the group that last year there was an intake of a number of rare books about Smyth County and several branches of the family with the caveat that we would provide a locking bookcase for them. This year a donation of \$100 seed money was approved towards the \$400+ needed to purchase the locking bookcase and announced that donations are being accepted to complete that project. Davidson then announced that the family was invited to a meeting in the library to meet the new director, Rob Farmer at 4:00 pm. The reason for the meeting is that sisters Lelia (Copenhaver) Siebold (MD) and Martha Pearl (Copenhaver) Bates (MD) have spent the last 10 years going through (Aunt) Roberta Matilda Copenhaver's substantial number of boxes of papers, photos, invitations and correspondence dating from 1882 to 2016 and the extensive collection of originals have been cataloged in 15 albums with acid-free preservation sheets, plus the three already in the library are being presented to the library for genealogy research. She commented that there are 1,087 line items of documents that they transcribed from the delicate and old script and now available, thanks to their hard work. The originals are housed in the basement archive storage in the acid-free sleeves and the copies that are in a binder will be in the genealogy room. Davidson noted that many documents are now electronic and can be copied onto a thumb drive for personal use. In conclusion, she announced the approval of matching funds up to \$250 for a project that will be discussed later in the program and reminded the family about donations for the locking bookshelves and for future projects and can be mailed to Joe Copenhaver 515 Crab Orchard Lane, Marion, VA 24354.

Mrs. Davidson then introduced special guest speakers Colleen Messick, Executive Director of the Virginia Monument Commission and Susan Clarke Schaar, Clerk of the Senate who shared a special state initiative, "Voices from the Garden" which will be a garden of statues with the purpose of educating people of women's role in the history of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Noting there have been more than 400 years of women's contributions to Virginia that have not been acknowledged. A committee was formed who developed a list of names of women who made significant contributions to Virginia and issued a request for a proposal for the design of the monument and received 37 proposals from across the United States and Europe. They decided on one design called "Voices From The Garden". Ms. Schaar further described the project that includes one dozen (12) life-size statues dressed in garments historic to that time period in which they lived. Laura Lu Copenhaver has been selected as one of these women to be honored with one of the twelve statues. Ms. Messick provided additional information about Laura Lu Copenhaver as entrepreneur, helping women selling their wares and one of the instigators of the Farm Bureau. She explained each statue requires a \$200,000 investment and efforts so far include talking with staff from the Farm Bureau and talking with others including members of her family. Her statue will be one of the first to go on the mall and the dedication ceremony will be on October 14, 2019 at the state capitol. Ms. Messick also stated that all contributions are tax deductible and will also go towards a \$400,000 matching grant for the project. A glass wall is also being developed by the Library of Virginia with the names of other significant women who have made contributions to their region, the state, nationally or internationally including several quotes and timeline of events.

After a break for a buffet lunch of Kentucky Fried Chicken the family continued with the annual awards recognizing Deb Copenhaver of Washington State as the oldest attending the reunion at 92; Kailei Muncy as the youngest at 15; and Glenn Copenhaver, III (Trey) as traveling the farthest from Moscow, Russia.

President Henderlong then recognized Kelly Stinson Bagby who lead a discussion about updating the family genealogy by asking for volunteers to capture stories, or entering family information into a possible data base and brainstorming how to pursue to bring the family tree up to date.

Julian Copenhaver then served as monitor for the election of officers for the 2018 reunion and the following individuals were elected: President, Karla Henderlong (CA); Vice President, George Griffith (MD); Treasurer, Anne Siebold (MD); Secretary / Publicity, Karen Copenhaver (VA); Web Site/Master, Michael Perdue (VA); Newsletter/Social Media Chair, Elizabeth Siebold (MD)

No further businesses being brought forth, President Henderlong thanked everyone attending and encouraged them to return to the park round 6 pm, bring your own dinner and continue visiting with cousins. The family then gathered for the annual family photo and was encouraged to enjoy the rest of the day going on the old Copenhaver house tour, park activities or just visiting.

Several families gathered once again at the pavilion in the evening and brought their own dinner, made smores over an open fire, and visiting one more time, until they meet again next year.

Respectfully,

Karen L. Copenhaver, Secretary

Karla Henderlong, President