

The gavel has been passed. As a seventh-generation grandson of Reubin Thompson, I am honored to assume an interim leadership position in our family's foundation. I am humbled to follow in the footsteps of former leaders like organizers George A. Thompson, Col. Reginald Thompson and Ruby Thompson King, former presidents James Johnson, Garland Thompson, Bill T. Akers and Phillip Stephens, generous donors Don and Lillian Thompson, long-time minister Clarence Thompson, as well as other faithful volunteers such as Robert, Elmer, Bill and Mike Thompson.

I am Andy Thompson, son of Garland Thompson, grandson of Clifford Thompson, great grandson of Milledge Thompson, great great grandson of Robert Bird Thompson, great great great grandson of Robert Thompson, whose father was Reubin Thompson. In addition to being a direct descendant of Reubin, Ruby Thompson King was my 10th grade homeroom teacher in Douglas, Georgia. And yes, I have received letters addressed to the intelligent, handsome and talented Andy Thompson, as many of you older cousins will remember was her standard procedure. Based on the above, I trust I have established myself as a "bonified" Thompson. Born in 1956, I was in attendance with my dad and grandpa at the first annual Thompson Family Reunion and at many subsequent ones. The early gatherings were special when we would play with our cousins under the tall Emanuel Longleaf pines. It was also a treat to be with my grandpa when he would reunite with cousins like Randolph, Kenneth and Aleene Thompson, Ruby Durden and Julie Moore. I even remember meeting my grandpa's uncle Ira and great aunt Bertie from Savannah.

I make all these references to point out that our family foundation is a diverse and enduring alliance in a very fluid society. We stand on shoulders of men and women who have preserved our family heritage. It is our duty to take up this mantle to inform those who follow that our rich heritage includes military leaders, a Georgia Supreme Court Justice, ministers, missionaries, etc., all of whom deserve our utmost respect. As the Bible says, we stand before a great cloud of witnesses.

Ray Tapley, well-known newspaper columnist, wrote that ours is one of the larger family reunions in east central Georgia. [One that has now been continuous for 66 years]. Therefore, I invite you to **join us as we celebrate our past, enjoy delicious food and make plans for the foundation's future**. Make a special effort to invite family members who have been distracted in recent years to attend this fall on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2024. I so much admire the strong commitment of the Leon Thompson family as well as our Florida Thompsons who always support the reunion with high attendance. Encourage your siblings and close cousins to attend. Let's have standing room only in the church as was the case in earlier days!

Finally, everyone is invited to attend the Saturday cookout at George L. Smith State Park near Twin City. At this hamburger social, we will enjoy good food prepared by cousin Bill T. Akers and get to know folks in an informal setting. Please see details in the newsletter. Feel free to text me with questions or comments at 478-278-4127.

*Andy Thompson*

## Reubin Thompson Memorial Foundation, Inc. NEWSLETTER 2024

Including Beasley, Coleman, Flanders, Hall, Hooks, Kea/Key, Kirkland, Kitchens, Lumley, Moore, Riner, Rowell, Scott, Sumner, Thigpen, Webb, Youngblood and more

*Special sad news you may have heard: Our foundation president, Philip Stephens, passed away last fall, just three days after the reunion. Philip had started chemo therapy and was feeling unwell on reunion day. He served us so well for many years and is very much missed by all!*

### **2023 Reunion**

Last October we had events on both days of the weekend, which we will do again this year. (See below for details.) Singing and visiting were featured on Saturday and Sunday with terrific weather and food at both gatherings. On Sunday scholarships were presented to two young women, Abigail Hope Goodman and Emily Rebekah Bragg. We wish them both success and hope they know we are very proud of them.

### **2024 Reunion**

**This year's dates are October 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup>**, so please mark your calendars. On Saturday you are invited to go to *George L. Smith State Park* southeast of Twin City in Emanuel County. This 1634-acre park has a large lake, cabins, camp grounds, a covered bridge, kayak rentals and much more. The air-conditioned conference building is reserved for our family's use beginning at 9:45 a.m. on Saturday with snacks provided throughout the day. A hotdog/hamburger supper will be served around 5:00. Please contact Bill T. Akers if you plan to attend the meal at (912) 536-2207 or [btakersjr@gmail.com](mailto:btakersjr@gmail.com) Although there is no charge for supper, side dishes are appreciated, extra chairs can be brought, and there is a \$5 charge per car to enter the park. The address is 371 George L. Smith Park Road.

On Sunday we will again gather at historic *Green Leaf Ebenezer Church on Kemp Road*. As you may recall, our family association is now the owner of both the church and cemetery. Visiting and registration will begin at 9:30 and the meeting at 10:30. **"Special Family Stories"** will be our theme this year. **Stories about kinfolk who are buried at Ebenezer will be featured.** You may want to share a short remembrance or humorous tale of a deceased loved one.

About noon the barbecue picnic lunch will begin and as usual, plates, cups, napkins, utensils, tea, and ice will be provided. Please add some of your favorite side dishes to accompany the barbecue. Look for the special dessert table. Be sure to note the updated outside restrooms, thanks to Andy Thompson and a family donation. The new gutters purchased by our foundation as well as the covered entrance doors which the church purchased have given the facilities an update over the last few years. Trees overhanging the shelters were also removed. Lastly, you might want to bring chairs and a table for extra comfort and remember, casual dress is fine.

### **Roots & Wings Scholarship**

We received a record number of applications for the scholarship this year! We have so many deserving cousins. Once again, the winner will be announced on Sunday, October 6<sup>th</sup>, during our meeting. Please contact chairperson Susan Middleton at [symiddleton@bellsouth.net](mailto:symiddleton@bellsouth.net) or at 1175 N. Beachview Dr., Jekyll Island, GA 31527 for an application or more information. The entry deadline is June 1.

### *Family News*

Of special note is the recent passing of our own *Mildred Usry Thompson* on June 11, 2024, in Eatonton, Georgia. Known for her singing, cooking and lovely warm smile, she was the wife of Rev. Clarence Thompson who served Ebenezer Church's minister for a number of years. Millie, we miss you.

If you have lost family members since our last reunion we want to honor them at our annual candle lighting memorial on October 6<sup>th</sup>. Please send their names, dates and other brief information to Andy Thompson, [agt\\_soperton@hotmail.com](mailto:agt_soperton@hotmail.com) or 10021 Ga. Hwy. 15, Soperton, GA 30457.

### *Cemetery News*

Several years ago, Jay Youngblood gave Ebenezer Church a parcel of land for an addition to the west side of Ebenezer Cemetery. Your foundation paid for a new fence and plans were made for new lots. There are a total of 1100 lots, priced at \$350 each. Monuments placed may be of a size of your choice. Please contact Ebenezer Church member Carl Roghelia at 912-562-4241 or 912-682-7978 for more information. This is a special opportunity for family members who might be interested.

### *Featured Family*

*Mary Ann "Polly Ann" Thompson* was born about 1832 in Emanuel County, the daughter of Rev. Robert Thompson. She was the sister of John Nelson, Asa Lee, Robert Bird, William and seven others! She married *Dempsey Moore* of Emanuel County on March 20, 1851. In 1862 Dempsey enlisted as a private in the Company H, 48<sup>th</sup> Reg. CSA, leaving Polly and four children at home. Dempsey died on August 8<sup>th</sup>, 1862 in Richmond, where he is buried. In 1866 Polly married widower *William S. Holton*, twenty years her senior. This couple had two sons. It is reported that she chose "Ebenezer" as the name for the white frame Methodist Church built on Kemp Road in 1876. Numerous Thompson families and others of Kemp gave land, money and labor. Polly Ann, who died in 1898, and her second husband are buried at Ebenezer as are at least eight of her descendants.

*In closing, let me urge you to come to one or both events in October. Meet and welcome new president Andy Thompson. We have been much blessed with financial support, but hope more family members will participate. Your ideas and suggestions are always appreciated. A special effort will be made to make you feel welcome, whether you attend regularly, have been once or have never attended. Remember, our first reunion was on June 22, 1958: let's keep our traditions and family ties strong!*

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Officers/ Directors: Andy Thompson, president, Bill T. Akers, vice-president, Clarke Johnson, treasurer, Mike Barwick, Lucille Braswell, Marilyn Lear, Susan Middleton, Greg Thompson, & Martha Walker.