

Our History

Who Was Cornet Robert Stetson?

Robert Stetson was baptized at St. George's Church, Modbury, Devon, England in 1615, the son of Thomas Stetson and Argent Lukesmore. He married Honour Tucker at Plymouth, England on May 2, 1635. With England's Civil War brewing under the oppressive reign of King Charles I, Robert and Honour chose to hazard the oversea journey and immigrate to the new community in Massachusetts, settling at Scituate about 1640.

Robert Stetson was neither born of nobility nor a military officer, but he possessed the knowledge and skills highly valued by others in the early settlement in Plymouth. The ancient term "Cornet" denotes a standard-bearer of light horse (non-artillery) units. In 1658, Cornet was a member of the War Board for King Philip's Pequot Indian War and the commanding officer of the Scituate horse troop. He met with the Indians both during warfare and as a commissioner in the settlement of their differences with the white settlers.

Cornet apportioned the common lands, laid out the highways, and represented the Colony in establishing the boundary line between the Plymouth and Massachusetts Bay Colonies settlements. He was one of the surveying party that chopped their way through the virgin forest and swampland to mark this line. A monument, known as the Angle Tree Stone near the Rhode Island border between Attleboro and Plainville, MA, marks the western end of the boundary and corresponds with the "heape of stones near a large white oak tree" that the Cornet's surveying party erected in 1664. The site of the Angle Tree Stone monument was added to the National



Historic Register in 1976.

In 1665, Cornet was chosen first selectman of the Town of Scituate and given authority by the magistrates to execute and enforce his judgment and try cases involving not over 40 shillings. Numerous Plymouth County court records attest to Cornet's regular involvement in government matters during his lifetime.

Cornet and his family lived on the North River in what is now Norwell. In addition to his considerable involvement in government and community affairs, he owned three sawmills in the Scituate area, profits which enabled him to support his growing family.

Cornet and Honour had 10 children, of which 8 survived to marry and have children: Joseph, Benjamin, Thomas, Samuel, John, Eunice, Robert and Timothy. It is estimated that there are now over 3 million descendants, worldwide.

Our Founding

The Stetson Kindred of America, Inc. was first established in 1905 when four members of the Stetson family agreed to contact as many of the Cornet's descendants as they could locate. They felt that a person of his importance should be remembered and that his homestead property should be preserved for future generations of Stetson kin. Once organized, a Board of Directors was elected, a mission statement adopted, and devoted descendants have kept the assembly an active kinship of cousins for well over 100 years. Cornet's original homestead property has always remained in the Stetson family, and is now owned by the Stetson Kindred of America, Inc.

Our Mission

As established in our Bylaws, the Stetson Kindred continues to honor the original mission set forth by our founders. Namely, to support antiquarian, genealogical and historical research; publish and make available to public archives the findings of such research; foster education through scholarship grants; maintain in good condition the

original land grant property now known as "The Homestead" or "Stetson Shrine;" and support St. George's Church in Modbury, England where Robert Stetson was christened.

The Stetson Kindred is now a 501(c)3 non-profit charitable organization in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In 2008, the 36 acres of the Homestead property were placed under conservation easement with the Trustees of Reservations to preserve in perpetuity the land in its natural state for the enjoyment of our members and the public.

Annual Reunion

The Kindred maintains a Pavilion on homestead grounds which consists of salt meadow, uplands and woods. Every year the Stetson Kindred hosts their Annual Meeting of the Membership on the third Sunday in August at the Homestead. Members, along with their families and invited guests, gather at the Pavilion on the banks of the North River in Norwell to share a lobster/clam bake luncheon, followed by a business meeting to elect new officers and receive the annual report.



The Pavilion on the Shrine property, site of the Annual Reunion. Join us as a member in August each year!

Membership

Membership in the Stetson Kindred is a wonderful way to foster interest in your genealogical heritage for current and future generations of your family. Members continue the work of preserving The Homestead and historical archives, granting educational scholarships and supporting St. George's Church in Modbury, England, as well as gathering each year for a weekend of cousinly activities to share their common heritage.

To apply for a membership applicants must first fill out a Pre-Application form (available on our website) and submit it with the Initiation fee to the Membership Secretary. That fee will take care of related processing costs, and entitle you to Associate membership for the fiscal year.

The Secretary will review the application against our genealogy files, and if it appears the Stetson line is provable, applicants are then sent the full Lineage Membership Application to complete which asks for more detail and vital record references/sources. We will help you with the research. Once completed, the Stetson Kindred Registrar is responsible for approving all applications. Individuals who are not proven Stetson descendants but who have an interest in the Kindred, are welcome to remain as Associate members.

All Senior and Associate members receive our tri-annual newsletter, the *Kindred Spirit*, which offers news on our activities, interesting "Stetson Stories" contributed by our editing staff or fellow members, and much more. They also are invited to our Annual Reunion where we meet and greet our members and their families, both old and new. The Kindred also sponsors a Scholarship Program open to members and their families, as well as general applicants who need financial assistance. Details of the program can be found on our website.

To get started on your membership contact us for forms or information through our website or by mail to the Kindred Membership Secretary at lbrooks46@yahoo.com or P.O. Box 31, Norwell, MA 02061

The Stetson Emporium

The Stetson Emporium offers a selection of Stetson genealogy books, along with Stetson crest logoed T-shirts, hats, Christmas ornaments and various sundries for purchase by our members. Check out our website for a complete listing of Stetson merchandise.

Getting Involved

As a member of the Kindred you are welcome to join any of the many activities we enjoy together, from the Annual Reunion to committees involved in such as genealogy, publications, governance, and occasional special projects. We even engage in sharing tales of our ancestors and celebration of Stetson successes. If you have a particular interest, please reach out to the President or other contacts found on our website, <https://theskoa.org/>



The Church at Modbury, England

The Stetson Kindred of America is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit. All contributions are tax deductible.

More information is available at

<https://theskoa.org/>

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