
JOAQUIN MILLER NEWSLETTER

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Happenings

See you there! Contact Dottie Smith for additional information: dsmith@ShastaCollege.edu
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Joaquin Miller Conference

Shasta College Campus
11555 Old Oregon Trail, Redding, CA
Oct. 14, 15, 16, 2005

Friday, Oct. 14th

- 7:00 Welcome
7:15 Conference blessing by Matt Root, Wintu/Karuk
7:30 "Joaquin Hiner Miller", a readers' theater play written by Patti Furnari and presented by her Stellar Charter School Living History students
8:30 "What Life was Like for Joaquin and his Indian Friends in the 1850s According to U.S. Army letters" by Dottie Smith and friends
9:15 Joaquin Miller poetry readings by Shasta College students
10:00 Closing for the day...

Saturday, Oct. 15th

- 10:00 Welcome
10:15 "Thank You Joaquin" by Darryl 'Babe' Wilson
11:00 "Separating Fact from Fiction: JM's Life Amongst the Wintu in Northern California" by Julie Cassidy
12:00 Lunch Break. Boxed lunches provided by Shasta College for \$5
1:00 "WinRiver Casino and Joaquin Miller" by Margaret Guilford-Kardell
1:45 "Unwritten History" by Ken Babbs
2:30 "The Many Unknown Books and

Writings of Joaquin Miller" by Bill Miesse

- 3:15 "Is This What Joaquin Miller Envisioned for the Future?" by Stephanie Benavidez
4:15 Joaquin Miller poetry readings by Shasta College students
4:30 Fare thee wells and thank you's. End of conference at the college.
7:00 Social gathering and gabfest at The Eagle Room at WinRiver until??? We'll have a room to ourselves along with a display of rare Wintu artifacts.

Sunday, Oct. 16th (Optional)

- 10:00 til 4:30? Bus tour of known JM's stompin' grounds beginning in Old Shasta and ending at Little Castle Lake in Siskiyou County. Includes a lunch stop (you provide). Limited seating. Call 530-225-4754 for reservations and details.

Observations

Danielle Tsinger in her "Textural Performance and the Western Frontier: Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins's *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims.*" In *Western Subjects: Autobiographical Writing in the North American West*. Ed. By Kathleen A. Boardman and Gioia Woods: Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press 2004 p.96-126 writes well of Sarah Winnemucca and her 1883 "Life Among the Piutes" as edited by Mrs. Horace Mann of New York published by G.P. Putnam's Sons in 1883 and reprinted in Reno by the University of Nevada Press in 1994. Danielle Tsinger either never heard of or didn't for some reason make any connection between Winnemucca's *Life Among the Piutes* and Joaquin Miller's *Life Amongst the Modocs*

which came out in 1873 and which has seen numerous re-printings since then.

Tsinger writes "Winnemucca's second official interpreting position was for Samuel Parrish on the Malheur Reservation in eastern Oregon. In 1875 I was in Camp Harney Oregon to see my father.... [she evidently worked well with Parrish].... Only a year later, however, Mr. Parrish was replaced ... ostensibly because Parrish 'was not a Christian, and all reservations were to be under Christian men's care.'" (p. 106).

This statement, passing strange if true at all, was evidently made in ignorance of the fact that the Miller family stayed with the Parrish family when they first arrived in Oregon City in 1852 and that the elder Parrish was a minister at that time.

Dennis C. Smith has visited and photographed the ruins of a Parrish log cabin in his area.

Additionally from the Linn County Cemetery Records Riverside:

Hugh Nickerson. 1819-1896. He was a pioneer of the year 1851. His Donation Land Claim was about two miles east of Albany.

Serepta Nickerson, wife of the last. 1823-1862. Also a pioneer of the year 1851. She was a daughter of Rev. E. E. Parrish and his wife Elizabeth Bussey Parrish. Hugh Nickerson was twice married. Serepta was his first wife.

Also following is a list of the names of those living at or near Portland prior to 1852: J. L. Parrish, Norman Parrish, Samuel B. Parrish, Chas. W. Parrish,

Research

Jo-Anne Flanders of Eugene, OR has done a neat bit of Joaquin Miller research. She found:

The *Eugene City Guard* Vol.? No 795 (10 February 1883)

Mr. Hulin Miller, one of the early pioneers of Oregon, died at his residence, about seven miles west of Eugene, Friday Feb. 2d. aged 69 years, from the effects of injuries received from being thrown from his wagon about two months ago by a runaway team. He was buried at West Point cemetery last Sunday. He was born in Pennsylvania in 1812.

In the early part of his life he moved to Ohio and followed the occupation of boating on the Ohio

river, but soon becoming tired of this occupation, he taught school for several years.

He then moved up to Union County, Indiana in 1835, and married Miss Margaret Witt, with whom he lived up to the time of his death. In 1852 he moved to Oregon Territory and settled in Marion county, but in the following spring moved to Lane county and settled on the farm now occupied by the family; having lived on the place for 30 consecutive years.

His family consisted of five children: John D., who died in Easton, Pa., in 1871, Cincinatus Heiner (Joaquin); James H; Ella, wife of John L. Luckey, who died also in 1871; and Geo. M. Thus ends the life of another pioneer, who always proved himself a friend to the poor, and one whose neighbors trusted implicitly.

A Friend. [possibly Geo.M.]

So now we know Hulin or Hulings Miller died Feb. 2d, 1883 and was probably born in 1812, and that John D. was his eldest son. One argument solved, Joaquin wasn't the first son and he wasn't born in 1837. Everyone please correct that erroneous 1837 date, PLEASE!

Jo-Anne Flanders also found a copy of an article written by Beatrice B. Beebe in the Sunday Morning *Oregonian* (23 October 1927) in which Beebe was interviewing Geo. Miller who claimed *inter alia* that "after they injured the cow J.M. ran away with George Willoughby." Now where was it J.M. said they "killed the cow?" The "injured part" must have been a family legend because George was only born in 1853.

Correspondence

MGK/Nathaniel Lewis:

Nat: Read at your book, of course starting with the index. How can you have written about the True West without any mention of Joaquin Miller? Historical facts prove he was writing about real people, real places, and real happenings, was it because he didn't write at the level you consider good writing? Otherwise I thought the book interesting. Please write me a few paragraphs on this so I can put them in the next newsletter. You will be getting a newsletter in the mail soon that

will mention a second Joaquin Miller gathering in Redding CA Oct.14,15 this year sponsored by the WinRiver Casino incidentally owned by the very Indians with whose ancestors he actually lived.
Margaret Guilford-Kardell, editor,
The Joaquin Miller Newsletter.

Nathaniel Lewis replies to my query:

Hi Margaret, nice to hear from you,
The reason that Miller doesn't show up in *True West* is simple: we didn't get any submissions on him. Perhaps it was chance, perhaps a sign of the kind of work being done in western studies, perhaps the anxiety of influence. He didn't come up in the introduction that Bill Handley and I wrote because we tended to de-emphasize individual writers in order to focus more broadly on the theoretical questions being raised.

More personally, you know my feelings on the matter - I've had my say. The essay that I wrote for *Arizona Quarterly* re-emerged in my book (*Unsettling the Literary West*), revised a bit following many of your suggestions and still acknowledging your work. Although in my book I'm still critical, even dismissive, of much of his poetry and his outrageous posturing, I adore Miller. He's the only writer who gets his own chapter. I call him "arguably the central figure in the early history of western American authorship" and end by saying that "Miller remains a vital, marvelous, inevitable figure in the history of western literature." I'm not at all sure it's a chapter that many Miller aficionados would sympathize with - I see him as a profound cultural icon and early postmodernist rather than a profound poet - but I hope that my affection for him is clear. Since the essay had already appeared twice I decided not to include it in *True West*.

I know that this isn't the kind of response you requested for the newsletter, but, again, I've already had my say.

How are you? Will you be attending the LA conference?

all best,

Nat

PS: I consider much of his prose absolutely first class - canny, smart, prophetic, complex, and shifting. His poetry seems uneven to me, not easy to read by contemporary poetry standards.

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