
Historian's expert opinion on Ben Stapleton's making amends for his KKK involvement

Rename St*pleton For All <renameforall@gmail.com>
Draft

Tue, Jun 25, 2019 at 3:14 PM

Begin forwarded message:

From: Bob Goldberg <bob.goldberg@utah.edu>
Subject: Re: Stapleton!
Date: March 21, 2019 at 1:14:09 PM MDT
To: "Jacqueline St. Joan" <jackiestjoan@earthlink.net>

Hi Jackie:

According to my research:

1. Stapleton never “publicly split” from the Klan.
2. He did not fire all of the Klan members in his administration – only those loyal to John Galen Locke.
3. I never found a public apology or statement of regret from Ben Stapleton regarding his membership in the Klan nor his willingness to allow Klan members in his administration to administer Hooded justice or policy.
4. I found no amends, significant or otherwise.

Best,

Bob

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From: "Jacqueline St. Joan" <jackiestjoan@earthlink.net>
Date: Thursday, March 21, 2019 at 11:21 AM

To: Bob Goldberg <bob.goldberg@utah.edu>
Cc: Rename St*pleton For All <renameforall@gmail.com>
Subject: Stapleton!

Dear Bob,

I'm writing to bring you up to date on our efforts to rename Stapleton and to seek your scholarly opinions.

Right now the current delegates and board of the Master Community Association (MCA)—essentially a homeowners association for 12,000 members— is calling for a “referendum” in the community on the name change.

The vote will include a pro and con argument for changing the name. The “con” argument (last page of draft ballot, attached) includes some information about Ben Stapleton that I think is incorrect, so I am writing to ask you if it is accurate, and if not, what is correct?

"While it is true that Stapleton was a member of the Ku Klux Klan and was supported by them in his first election in 1923, only two years later in April 1925 he publicly split from the organization and most notably he fired his police chief and other Klan members of his administration. He ran for re-election in 1927 without the Klan's support and also successfully for State Auditor and then three more times for Mayor. The Klan era was an ugly period but he evolved and sought change, as did our city, our state and our country. He accomplished great things as Mayor and our community should not lose its iconic name because of one short period of his past of which he made significant amends."

Can you comment on this paragraph, in particular Stapleton's “split with the Klan”? Is there evidence that Stapleton “evolved and sought change” or “made significant amends”? Your opinion can help with keeping the peace in this community while moving forward with a fair election process. I've also attached a summary of the history of visible and vocal opposition to the Stapleton name.

Kind regards to you and your wife, with appreciation,

Jackie St. Joan
Rename St*pleton for All