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A Quote

If you cannot get
rid of the family
skeleton,
you may as well
make it dance.

By

George
Bernard
Shaw

President's Comments

Colleen A. Brown Kimball, MCGS President

Dear Members & Friends,

As my term as President comes to an end, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my heartfelt thanks to all of you for the opportunity to serve on the Board and enjoy the camaraderie and friendships this position offered.

Our Society has much to celebrate this holiday season as we reflect on the dedication of the volunteers who keep the Gen room staffed, the hard work of the Library committee to keep the lists and indexes updated and new books shelved and cataloged, the website and Journal editors who keep us informed of events and happenings, the greeters and membership committee, the generosity of all those who bring refreshments, and all those who contribute in some small way for the betterment and growth of our Society. We are blessed to have so many members who give generously of their time and talents in service to the Society, and these efforts are truly appreciated.

A special thanks to the Board members for their continued uplifting support during my term as President.

We look forward to 2016 when our Moore Cemetery project will get into full swing and hope all members will find some way to participate in this fun and exciting project. Members are also encouraged to take advantage of the opportunity to attend the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference to be held in Fort Lauderdale, May 4 - 7, 2016. Registration forms for the conference and hotel accommodation forms are now on line.

With warmest thoughts and best wishes for a joyous holiday season and a very happy New Year.

Colleen

MCGS Board of Directors for 2016:

John Sheppard, Margaret Gray,
Cindy Sheppard, Karen Peterson,
Jean Gray, Donna DuBois, and
new member Peggy Gonsalves.

Calendar of Events for the Next Three Months

FIRST THURSDAY OF THE MONTH

And on Every Thursday of the Month.

On January 7th, February 4th and March 3rd, from 5:45 PM to 7:45 PM in the Blake Library's Genealogy Room, 2351 SE Monterey Road, Stuart.

Members from MCGS will be available to assist persons doing genealogical research. There is no charge. Please contact MCGS if you intend to be there, so MCGS can ensure that a member will be present.

FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH ASSISTANCE - MCGS/DAR and regular assistance on Other Saturdays of the Month in the PM.

January 9th, February 6th and March 5th, from 10 AM to 12 Noon, in the Blake Library's Genealogy Room, 2351 SE Monterey Road, Stuart. The PM time is from 1:30 PM to 3:30 PM.

In the AM, members from MCGS and the Daughters of the American Revolution – Halpatiokee Chapter will be available to assist the public doing research about their ancestors: those from any time era and those who were American Revolutionary War patriots. Free. Please contact MCGS if you intend to be there, so MCGS can ensure that a member will be present.

MEETINGS: 3rd Friday of Every Month

Please go to MCGS' website, mcgensociety.org, and click on EVENTS, to find the latest info about the program for a particular meeting.

During the first three months of 2016, MCGS' Friday meetings will be in the Morgade Library.

Guests are most welcome to attend MCGS' meetings, which are free, and light refreshments will be available between the business meeting and the program. Ages 12+.

January 15, 2016, Friday, 1 to 3 PM

At the MORGADE LIBRARY, Anderson Room, 5851 SE Community Drive, Stuart

The program is "Coming To America," by Patti Kirk.

February 19, 2016, Friday, 1 to 3 PM

At the MORGADE LIBRARY, Anderson Room, 5851 SE Community Drive, Stuart

The program is "New France: The French in the New World," presented by Deborah Halacy.

March 18, 2016, Friday, 1 to 3 PM

At the MORGADE LIBRARY, Anderson Room, 5851 SE Community Drive, Stuart

The program is "St. Michael's Stained Glass Window," presented by Roberta Hoffmann

Board of Director Meetings:

MCGS Board of Directors meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of each month at 10:15 AM at the Cummings Library in Palm City. MCGS members are welcomed to attend.

Periodicals in the Genealogy Room

By Shirley Pizziferri

Everyone doing genealogy research would benefit from reading articles written by other genealogists from time to time. Take some time to look at some of those that we have in the Genealogy Room.

The Register published by the New England Genealogical and Historical Society (NEHGS) is in Stack #10. This is the most prestigious journal in the country, and contains articles whose citations have been carefully checked by the editors of *The Register*. We have issues from 1996 to the present, and previous issues can be searched on the NEHGS website.

The Nutmegger is the prominent journal for Connecticut genealogy. We have an incomplete set from 1979 to 2013, and bound volumes for Vols. 17, 18 and 19. A search for a name on the NEHGS website will also search *The Nutmegger*.

The Florida Genealogist. We have issues from 1990 to date; search individual indexes.

The Mayflower Descendant. We have issues from 1985 to 1998; search individual indexes. We also have the Jan 2000 and the Fall 2013 issues. Members who would like to donate issues from 1998 through 2013 are welcome to do so.

The Martin County Genealogical Society Journal, 1999 to date are in binders in Stack #10.

A big THANK YOU goes out to all those who have contributed articles for this issue. Ed

Monday - Friday - 10 AM to 4 PM

MCGS volunteers are available for free assistance. **DNA SIG*** and **Germanic SIG*** - Persons with a question can contact Walt Bruetsch, **772-220-1638** or **waltbruetsch@usa.net**. Help is on a one-on-one basis.

Jewish Genealogy SIG*- Questions? Contact Linda Epstein at **JewishSIG@yahoo.com**

New England SIG*- Questions? Contact Lee Vought at **eleevought@aol.com** or Shirley Pizziferri - **gypsygal2009@gmail.com**.

Irish help - Persons with a question can contact Bob Scully in the Gen. Room on Fridays (2-4 PM) or **772-486-0549** or **scillysr@yahoo.com**

All of these events are always **FREE** and **OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**. Everyone is welcome! Visit the MCGS Web site **http://mcgensociety.org** for more information.

* **SIG** - Special Interest Group made up of MCGS members and guests who meet to discuss ways of improving their personal genealogical search methods, and to find new helpful tools and resources. They also provide help to NON-MEMBERS who have an interest in learning how to research their genealogy.

This 'n That

If you care to be on a MCGS published list of "Researchers for Hire," Contact Shirley Pizziferri.

Members, we invite YOU !

We need members to share their experiences in genealogy to come forward. We always are looking for speakers for meetings, and workshop leaders. If you need preparation help, it will be provided.

Our organization is only as good as we make it. WE WANT YOU!

Colleen Kimball, President

Potpourri of Superstitions

By Shirley Pizziferri

There are hundreds of superstitions surrounding death and dying. Here are but a few:

- A bird flying into the room of a sick person was an omen of death. Folks believed that birds transport human spirits.
- Clocks should be stopped at the hour of death. This served a practical function, as well, so that everyone knew the time the person died. Starting the clock again after burial was symbolic of beginning another period in the family's life.
- Shades and drapery should be drawn at a funeral, otherwise the next person to die will be the one the sun shines on.
- Mirrors should be covered or turned to face the wall. Folks believed that the spirit of the deceased could enter the mirror and that the next person to look in the mirror would die.
- Kissing or touching the corpse was a superstition that prevented the living from dreaming about the deceased. It was also the realization that the loved one would never be felt or seen again.
- There is an unwritten rule against interrupting the movement of a funeral procession. The belief is that anyone who interferes with the deceased going to the grave will attract the wrath of evil spirits.
- It's bad luck if a bride and groom meet at a funeral procession.
- Pall bearers wear gloves to handle the casket so that the spirit of the deceased does not enter their body through their hands.
- Ever wonder why widows wear black? It's so the husband's spirit would not come back and pester her. Black made her less visible to the spirit world. These black garments were known as the "widow's weeds."
- The corpse should be removed from the house feet first. Two theories surround this one: (1) We come into the world head first, so should go out feet first; (2) If the head goes out first, the deceased can beckon someone to follow him to the grave
- A clap of thunder after a burial indicates the soul has reached heaven.

Taken from "A Guide to Cemetery Research" by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack (2002).

A Special Note of Appreciation

We wish to thank Colleen Kimball for her exceptional service and leadership, as President of MCGS for 2015 and for her four years of service on the Board of Directors. She has a passion for genealogy and is a top-notch genealogical researcher.

In Memoriam

Jane K. Redden
a Honorary Member of MCGS

Researching Black Sheep Ancestors



Excerpt from an article at
Archives.com by Gena P. Ortega
Edited by Karen Peterson

Do you hear that rattling? That's the skeleton in your ancestral closet. While some people may feel embarrassed by an ancestor's wrongdoing, it's actually an opportunity. An opportunity that can mean more documentation that records the misdeeds of that ancestor.

Consider Their Misdeeds

What did your ancestor do? Everyone may have a different idea of what a black sheep ancestor is. Bigamy, getting kicked out of a school or church, theft, and assault are just some of the many possible black sheep activities. For the purposes of this article, we will concentrate on those who committed a crime. Whatever your black sheep did to earn their title, considering their nefarious activities will help lead you to research sources.

Do you have a family member who was the victim of someone else's black sheep ancestor? Researching the assailant can also be beneficial to learning more about your ancestor. As you research a trial, don't forget to look into the witnesses. They may have been family, friends or neighbors.

Newspapers

Digitized newspaper databases make searching easier than ever before. The benefit of digitized newspaper websites is that they are every word searchable, which means that you can find obscure references to your ancestor in newspapers, and on dates you weren't expecting. When you search for newspapers, make one of your searches a name (without a location) to pick up any references in newspapers outside of their hometown. Depending on the crime, an article may not be limited to a local newspaper; the "bigger" the crime, the more widespread was the coverage.

They Leave Documents. Lots of Documents

The great thing about black sheep is they tend to leave documentation in their wake. Once you exhaust the usual documents and newspapers think about what type of paper trail the ancestor should have left behind.

Those who do crimes, get to meet the judge. *Red Book. American State, County, and Town Sources* provides a history of each state and information about obtaining different types of records including court records. Another place that may hold the court records you need is a state library or archive.

[Note: Besides court records, state archives may also hold prison records.]

Look at Specialized Databases

There are websites that include databases that aid black sheep researchers. Blacksheep Ancestors.com provides various databases for the United States and abroad.

Don't forget to also search on your favorite genealogy website for criminal and court records. Ancestry.com has a section for Court, Governmental & Criminal Records. In this category, you will find databases such as the Atlanta, Georgia, U.S. Penitentiary, Prisoner Index, ca 1880-1922; Leavenworth, Kansas, U.S. Penitentiary, Prisoner, Name Index to Inmate Case Files, 1895-1931; and Alabama Convict Records 1886-1952, as well as others.

Conclusion

Our ancestors were human, just like us. They had their strengths, their weaknesses and, just like us, the occasional misstep. We may not like to think about our ancestors' less-than-perfect sides. However, we learn more about them if we consider the whole person, warts and all.

The National Genealogical Society
Family History Conference--
*Exploring the Centuries:
Footprints in Time*
1950 Eisenhower Blvd.
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33316
May 4 - 7, 2016

By Karen Benson

Mark your calendar for this once in a lifetime opportunity to attend the National Genealogical Society Family History Conference, (*Exploring the Centuries: Footprints in Time*) **nearby in South Florida.**

The NGS 2016 Family History Conference will find genealogists from around the country gathering in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, 4–7 May 2016 for a four-day conference. Conference highlights include a choice of more than 180 lectures and workshops, given by many nationally-known speakers. Topics like federal records, the law and genealogy, methodology, analysis and problem solving, military and land records, DNA, BCG Skillbuilding, and the use of technology. Among the local topics planned are Florida and Caribbean research.

There are hotel accommodations available in the area of the conference, but as we learned in our November meeting, the hotel hosting the conference is probably already booked up for the dates of the conference. However there are many, many hotels and motels in Fort Lauderdale, but you should make reservations soon if you wish to stay relatively close to the conference. Be mindful of cancellation policies when you make hotel/motel reservations.

If you are unable or do not wish to stay in Fort Lauderdale, according to my GPS, it is 87 miles from Blake Library to the conference location at 1950 Eisenhower Blvd., Fort Lauderdale, FL, and would take about 2 hours by auto (not including stops). Perhaps some members could form car pools and ride together. (One-day only registration is available.)

NGS Conference Website:

<http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org>

Helpful Links:

Attendee Registration

(Note Early Bird Pricing Deadlines)

Online Program

Registration Brochure (A great 16-page PDF document you can read online, download, or print out.)

FAQs

I found the 16-page Registration Brochure more reader-friendly than the Online Program. The first few pages provide details about conference logistics and describe several special events. The daily conference program includes the name of each speaker, the lecture title, and a brief description of the presentation.

The Registration Brochure includes three pages of speaker biographies on pages 12-14; and a registration form on page 15 you can print out to fill out and mail in the old fashioned way.

Other Info:

If 2016 will be your first NGS Family History Conference, check out the following website at: <http://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/tips-for-first-time-conference-attendees/> for additional information about what you might experience at the conference.

There are special pre-conference events on Tuesday, May 3. In addition to the many, many speaker presentations, there are a number of social events and workshops also offered during the conference. Some special events have limited seating, so register as soon as possible if you plan to attend these events.

Reading the conference info in preparation for this report has motivated me to register for the conference. I hope it inspires you too.

Inmates Indexing

By Megan Marsden Christensen, via
<http://www.ksl.com/?nid=148&sid=33131183>

SALT LAKE CITY — Inside county jails across Utah, Arizona and Idaho, nearly 2,300 inmates voluntarily meet as family history indexing teams to help organize genealogical records around the world.

Using FamilySearch.org, the inmates view digital images of the genealogical records and enter the data into a document, which is then compiled into a searchable index and made available for public use, according to a news release.

Computers and software are provided by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and although firewalls prohibit direct access to the Internet, prisoners are able to access microfilms and flash drives to obtain the documents.

"Because of indexing, more people are discovering their ancestors more quickly than at any time in history," Mike Judson, who manages the indexing volunteer efforts for FamilySearch, said in a statement. "This ease of discovery is helping thousands of people every day to better understand who they are and where they came from."

In most of the locations, service missionaries assist the inmates in their indexing efforts.

In the Kane County Jail, the prisoners manage their own program, looking to a single church leader for occasional guidance.

"Indexing brought the inmates together in teamwork — like a sporting event — and it was really good to see in a setting like this." David, Kane County Jail

The inmates in each of the county jails and two statewide facilities logged more than 7 million names in 2014, and nearly 1 million of them were completed by the Kanab inmates in the month of August alone.

An inmate named David who resides at the Kanab County Jail joined the team because he thought it was comforting.

"Indexing brought the inmates together in teamwork — like a sporting event — and it was really good to see in a setting like this," David said in a statement. "Indexing allows us to have a positive interaction with one another."

At the Park City facility, an inmate named George described indexing as a way for him to be able to "give back."

"Being in a place like this where we do time, it's something outside ourselves that we can do and feel like we are helping others," George said.

Some of the records are difficult to read, specifically if there is water damage or if the handwriting is difficult to decipher. "If you quietly listen, you can figure it out," an inmate named Trent said in a statement.

"You think about it and even say a little prayer and the information comes. It's interesting to see how that works. I really feel like I'm being blessed in many ways for working in indexing."

Inmates at the facilities also have the opportunity to do their own family history work if they desire.

"The family research gives them a new perspective," Walt Coulam, director of the Wasatch unit, explained. "They find family members they didn't even know about, some as close as grandparents. They compile all their information in a folder; some have made books they give as holiday gifts or are able to connect with their families in another way."

Martin County Genealogical Society, Inc.
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Stuart, FL 34995

WEB ADDRESS:
<http://mcgensociety.org>



MCGS Board of Directors - 2015

President	Colleen Kimball
Vice-President	John Sheppard
Treasurer	Cindy Sheppard
Asst. Treasurer	Karen Peterson
Membership	Jean Gray
Secretary	Donna DuBois
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Library Acquisitions	Shirley Pizziferri
Calling Tree	Jean Gray
Hospitality	Lynne Jensen
Journal Editor	Walter Bruetsch
Website Administrator	Walter Bruetsch

Martin County Genealogical Society membership meetings are held the third Friday of each month at 1 p.m. Guests are welcome. There is a short business meeting preceding a program. [E-mail: mcgsfl@gmail.com]

We're on the Web!

See us at:

<http://mcgensociety.org>

Welcome New MCGS Members:

We hope you take the time to seek out our newest MCGS members the next time you are at a monthly meeting or see them in the Genealogy Room.

Warm welcomes to:

**Nancy Baker,
Genie DuPell, and
Joan Mary Webb.**

Annual Membership Dues are \$20 for individuals and \$25 for a family or organization.

The Genealogy Journal is usually printed four times a year and distributed at the March, June, September and December MCGS meetings.

Suggestions and contributions are always welcomed.