

THE GSOC NEWSLETTER

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
APRIL 14, 2017

**GSOC Program
for April 22nd**
Fort Walton Beach Library
10:30 am

Finding Your Roots: Researching Family History at the State Library and Archives of Florida

Archivists from the State Library and Archives of Florida will discuss basic methods and best practices for researching and preserving your family history. They will highlight the genealogical resources available at the State Library and Archives and provide tips for preserving your family papers at home.



Miriam Spalding
Reference Coordinator,
State Archives of Florida,
Tallahassee

Miriam is responsible for coordinating the reference unit, including staff activities, of the State Archives of Florida, both day-to-day and long term, and maintaining the smooth

operation of the unit. The majority of her time is spent providing professional assistance to Archives researchers, whether in-person or via email, letter or telephone. The major categories of researchers Miriam assists are historians or scholars, genealogists, and legislative bill history researchers, though she has developed a broad familiarity with a number of aspects of Florida history and current topics of interest as represented in the Archives' collections.



Kathryn Palmer
Archives Historian,
State Archives of Florida,
Tallahassee

Kathryn Palmer is a native of Jacksonville, Florida, but has lived in Tallahassee for 8 years. She earned both bachelor's and master's

degrees in history from Florida State University. Miss Palmer now works as the Archives Historian for the State Archives of Florida. She is responsible for organizing community outreach programs, selecting archival material for digitization, and creating content for the Florida Memory website. Additionally, she teaches courses on American history at Tallahassee Community College.

The State Archives of Florida and the Florida Memory Website

The State Archives of Florida is the central repository for the records of Florida State Government. It is mandated by law to collect, preserve, and make available for research the records of the State of Florida, as well as private manuscripts, local government records, photographs, and other materials that complement official State records. The Archives is part of the Division of Library and Information Services, which is one of seven divisions within the Florida Department of State.

In an effort to make its collections accessible to the largest possible audience, the State Library and Archives of Florida has digitized select collections which are available on the Florida Memory website.

The Florida Memory Program

The mission of the Florida Memory Program is to provide free online access to select archival resources from the collections of the State Library and Archives of Florida. Florida Memory chooses materials for digitization that illuminate significant events and individuals in the state's history, and help educate Floridians and people around the world about Florida history and culture.

There are six primary components of Florida Memory:

The Florida Photographic Collection: a searchable image database of 199,719 photographs. The collection spans a wide range of visual images from copies of mid-16th century maps to current photographs.

Video Collection: a selection of over 252 full-length films from the Archives' extensive catalog of moving images, including news, political footage, promotional films, interviews, sports coverage, and films produced by various state agencies.

Audio Collection: a searchable database of 2,927 audio recordings.

Collections: online access to over 310,000 digitized documents from selected historical and genealogical collections, including the Florida Folklife Collection, Spanish Land Grants, Confederate Pension Application Files and World War I Service Cards.

Exhibits: historical essays accompanying digitized examples of documents held by the State Library and Archives, along with related visual materials.

The Online Classroom: an educational resource for students and teachers with transcripts and scanned images of primary documents from Florida's past.

Dan Braxton Memorial Established at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida

Originally published in the April 2011 GSOC Newsletter



On behalf of the Board of Trustees and staff of the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, the Trustees and GSOC (Genealogy Society of Okaloosa County) President Beverly Gross (second from right) and First Vice President Ken Elliott (right) presented members of the family of the late Dan Braxton with a memorial plaque during the February 2011 GSOC meeting at the Heritage Museum.

The plaque will be displayed in Mr. Braxton's honor in the Archival Library of the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida where his extensive genealogy research, generously donated by his family, will be preserved for future generations. [Heritage Museum Press Release]

Daniel "Dan" W. Braxton, Jr., died on Dec. 11, 2009. He was 74. Dan, a native of Chipley, Washington County, FL, was a longtime resident of Valparaiso. Dan served in the U.S. Air Force and received a Bachelor of Electrical Engineering degree from the University of Florida in 1963. He worked in Florida and Georgia and from 1974 until 2004 he was a civilian employee of the Department of Defense



specializing in Range Threat Systems eventually becoming Development Systems Manager.

Dan was a dedicated genealogist and family historian and a loyal member of the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County where he served on the board in various capacities. He served on the board of the Valparaiso Library and also held membership in the Washington County Historical Society and made numerous contributions to the publication, "The Heritage of Washington County, Florida."

AHNENTAFEL Your Family Tree in Text Form

An **ahnentafel** (German for *ancestor table*) is a genealogical numbering system for listing a person's direct ancestors in a fixed sequence of ascent. The subject (proband) of the ahnentafel is listed as #1, the subject's father as #2 and the mother as #3, the paternal grandparents as #4 and #5 and the maternal grandparents as #6 and #7, and so on, back through the generations.

Apart from #1, who can be male or female, all even-numbered persons are male, and all odd-numbered persons are female. In this listing the number of any person's father is double the person's number, and a person's mother is double the person's number plus one. Using this knowledge of numeration, one can derive some basic information about individuals who are listed without additional research. This construct displays a person's genealogy compactly, without the need for a diagram such as a family tree. It is particularly useful in situations where one may be restricted to presenting a genealogy in plain text, for example, in emails or newsgroup articles. In effect, an ahnentafel is a method for storing a binary tree in an array by listing the nodes (individuals) in level-order (in generation order).

This information concerning the ahnentafel is extracted, with permission, from Wikipedia. Wikipedia also contains a number of binary mathematical procedures for use with an ahnentafel that can help understand family relationships. The full article is at:

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ahnentafel>

Decimal	Binary	Relationship
1	1	starting person (proband)
2	10	father
3	11	mother
4	100	paternal grandfather
5	101	paternal grandmother
6	110	maternal grandfather
7	111	maternal grandmother
8	1000	father's father's father
9	1001	father's father's mother
10	1010	father's mother's father
11	1011	father's mother's mother
12	1100	mother's father's father
13	1101	mother's father's mother
14	1110	mother's mother's father
15	1111	mother's mother's mother

The following illustrates the ahnentafel principle: It contains the first 15 entries extracted from the ahnentafel of HRH Prince William of Wales.

1. HRH Prince William of Wales (born 21 June 1982)
2. HRH The Prince Charles, Prince of Wales (born 14 November 1948)
3. Diana, Princess of Wales (1 July 1961 – 31 August 1997)
4. HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh (born 10 June 1921)
5. HM Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom (born 21 April 1926)
6. Edward Spencer, 8th Earl Spencer (24 Jan 1924 – 29 Mar 1992)
7. Frances Ruth Roche (20 January 1936 – 3 June 2004)
8. HRH Prince Andrew of Greece and Denmark (20 Jan 1882 – 3 Dec 1944)
9. HRH Princess Alice of Battenberg (25 Feb 1885 – 5 Dec 1969)
10. HM King George VI of the UK (14 Dec 1895 – 6 Feb 1952)
11. Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon (4 August 1900 – 30 March 2002)
12. Albert Spencer, 7th Earl Spencer (23 May 1892 – 9 June 1975)
13. Cynthia Hamilton (16 August 1897 – 4 December 1972)
14. Maurice Roche, 4th Baron Fermoy (15 May 1885 – 8 July 1955)
15. Ruth Gill (2 October 1908 – 6 July 1993)

The Social Security Death Index (SSDI) is Still Available

Dick Eastman · May 12, 2016

The Social Security Administration (SSA) Death Master File (DMF) contains more than 80 million records of deaths that have been reported to SSA. This file includes the following information on each deceased person, as applicable: name, date of birth, date of death, state or country of residence (prior to Mar 1988), and ZIP code of last residence. The DMF is often called the SSDI. When first created, the SSDI only listed those people who were receiving Social Security benefit payments at the time of death. However, as the years went by, the database was expanded to include almost all deaths, whether receiving benefits or not.

Due to false concerns over identity theft, the Social Security Administration stopped releasing updates to the SSDI a few years ago. A few web sites that previously had made the SSDI available online have since deleted the records from their web sites. However, the Social Security Administration has stopped issuing updates but the original database, current through January 2011, remains in the public domain and is still available online from a few web sites.

In most cases, only the first ten letters of each individual's first name are shown in the SSDI. Also, middle initials are shown, but complete middle names are not in the database. I find it best to only enter the first ten letters of longer names since entering all the letters of first names with more than ten letters sometimes results in a "not found" error on some web sites. When in doubt, use only ten letters. Not all the online databases will display all the available information about the person listed in the SSDI. You may have to try several online services in order to find what you seek. Keep in mind that Social Security Numbers used to be assigned by the location where the number was issued, not by the place of birth of the individual.

Here are some of the places where you can access the Social Security Death Index (Death Master File):

MyHeritage:

<https://www.myheritage.com/research/collection-10002/us-social-security-death-index-ssdi>

Steve Morse's One Step Genealogy:

<http://www.stevemorse.org/ssdi/ssdi.html>

FamilySearch:

<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535>

Ancestry:

<http://search.ancestry.com/search/db.aspx?dbid=3693>

Ancestry allows anyone to view a short version of the record, but viewing all the details requires a subscription to Ancestry.com.

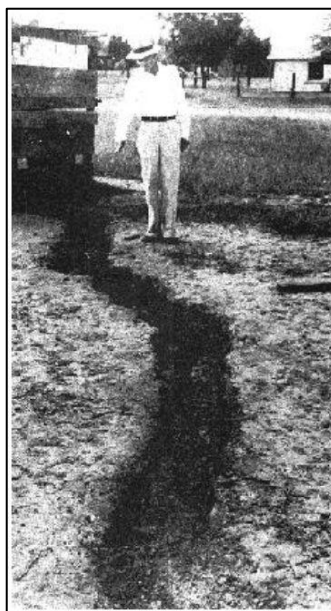
You also can download the entire SSDI record set yourself at <http://ssdmf.info/download.html> although that is the 30 November 2011 edition. No later records are available.

Lightning Kills Three in Baker, Florida

On Sunday afternoon, July 31, 1949, a baseball game was about to take place at Baker in Okaloosa County in Northwest Florida. A team from Baker was to play a team from Munson in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

The baseball diamond was located beside the First Baptist Church in Baker. Over the years the church officials had discouraged ball playing on Sundays - feeling it was irreverent, disrespectful, and even sinful. Much more attention was paid to "keeping the Sabbath holy" in the 1940's and 1950's than in the 1990's and later.

It was a nice day with just a few white clouds floating around when an extremely loud boom was heard and lightning ripped the ball diamond as players were taking their places for infield practice before the scheduled double-header game. As soon as a person could think rationally, it was obvious that this was a bad day in Baker!



There were several players down on the ball field as well as spectators around the concession stand and behind the fence. The full force of the lightning bolt was at third base which was manned by Allen Joiner. Joiner was killed instantly as was Harry Moore who was playing shortstop position. Joe Blue Taylor, second baseman, was critically injured and died the next day in Enzor Brothers Hospital in Crestview, Florida.

Several other players and many spectators felt the charge from the lightning.

Morgan Reeves of Baker, a spectator, was knocked out, but had no apparent permanent injuries. He is shown in the photo showing the lightning's path and describing the events of that fateful Sunday afternoon to a reporter. The 40-foot trench, a zig-zag excavation, was roughly 18 inches across and about six inches deep.

The picture and story were carried in local newspapers as well as national papers (Miami Herald, Chicago Tribune, The Utica Daily Press, New York; Washington, D.C. Times Herald); and national magazines (Life, National Geographic, and others).

Adapted from an article in *The Heritage of Okaloosa County, Florida, Volume II*, Heritage Publishing, Clanton, AL, 2008. The original article was written and submitted by Donald R. Reeves, Baker, Florida

HOW DEFUNIAK SPRINGS ACQUIRED ITS NAME

Elizabeth Garner Andrews, Muscle Shoals, AL

Originally Published in the Natchez Trace Traveler, Vol. 14, NO.1, Feb 1994, pp 17-18;

Reprinted in A Journal of Northwest Florida, Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Volume XIX, Winter 1995

My romance with Frederick De Funiak started the minute I read his naturalization paper. Entering the United States at the beginning of the Civil War, being a civil engineer, and traveling to the South in four short years had all the indications of a railroad man. Being a four-generation railroad person, my curiosity compelled me to see if I could trace his journey south. Glancing over an old Louisville & Nashville rail map, my eyes fell on a small town in the panhandle of Florida, DeFuniak Springs. Could this possibly be the same person for whom DeFuniak Springs was named?

After making several calls to DeFuniak Springs, I got in contact with Harold Gillis. Mr. Gillis told me the town had been named for a L&N Railway official, Frederick De Funiak who was a French nobleman. He said there was a newspaper article published about twenty years ago that I would enjoy reading and he would put a copy in the mail the next day.

Information about De Funiak in the article was furnished by Colonel William Q. De Funiak, a grandson, of Santa Cruse, California. Recently [1991] I talked to Frederick De Funiak III, a great-grandson, in San Jose, California. He told me his father, who had done the research on Frederick De Funiak died several years ago. Colonel William Q. De Funiak was a lawyer, a teacher of law and an author. The family had donated the original marriage certificate and the original declaration of intention, filed 7 June 1871 to the DeFuniak - Walton Public Library.

Naming of DeFuniak Springs

by Anna Reardon, Staff Writer,
DeFuniak Springs Herald-Breeze, 28 December 1972,
Abstracted by EGA Frederick

De Funiak's grandparents fled from France during the French Revolution, taking with them their twelve-year-old son, Alfred. When Alfred grew to manhood he married a young lady from Trieste, Austria. Born to this couple was a son, Albert, a daughter, and, on August 15, 1839, a son Frederick.

When the elder Count De Funiak died, his title descended to Albert, and Frederick became a baron under the European traditions of nobility. However, Albert later renounced his Christian religion and all rights pertaining to his title. He was assassinated about 1875. At the time of his death, the title "Count" descended to Frederick De Funiak.

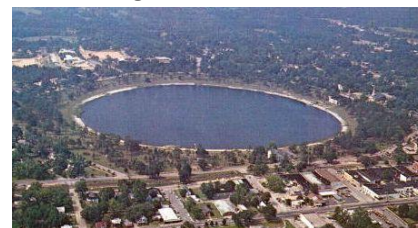
Frederick De Funiak apparently spent his boyhood in Rome and other parts of Italy and studied civil and mechanical engineering at the Austrian School for Engineers in Vienna, later graduating from the Polytechnic High School in August, 1857. Upon graduating, he spent two years in Egypt where he was an assistant engineer on the Alexandria and Cairo Railroad.

In 1859, he returned to Italy. He left Rome in May, 1862 for the United States, staying several months in New York City, learning the language. The De Funiak family history indicates that he had been offered a commission in the Union Army which he declined. He is said to have been placed under surveillance by Secret Service agents. He fled his hotel under cover of darkness and went to Tennessee where he joined the Confederate Army. He carried letters of introduction to Generals Dix and Beuregard.

While serving as an engineering officer on the staff of General Richard Taylor, Frederick De Funiak was wounded. He was dropped off at the plantation of Captain Richard Browning at Hernando, Mississippi, where he was nursed back to health by Miss Olivia Browning. In story book fashion, he and Olivia Browning were married after the war.

After the end of the Civil War, Frederick De Funiak became a civil engineer for several southern railroads, most importantly the Louisville and Nashville Railway; where he was promoted to Chief Engineer and General Manager.

About 1880 the L&N decided to build the Pensacola and Atlantic division through the wilderness of northwest Florida. A construction camp was built at an open pond where a railway station was to be built later. Officials of the L&N agreed that this would be an ideal resort location.



It is not clear whether Frederick De Funiak ever visited the area, but the story goes that he and several other officials met at the exclusive Pendmen's Club in Louisville, flipped a coin or rolled some dice to decide who would have the honor of having the new town named for him. Frederick De Funiak won, so that is how the town acquired its name.

Captain De Funiak was a member of the American Society of Civil Engineers, a corresponding member of the Austrian Society of Architects and Engineers and a member of the Roman Catholic Church. He was fluent in English, French, Italian, Turkish and Greek languages.

He is described as a "fair" portrait painter, fond of scientific investigation and above all, a mathematician of unusual excellence. His personality is described with such terms as politeness, lack of ostentation, somewhat retiring, genial in company, a wonderful organizer and manager. He is said to have been one of the leading engineers in the United States and that he commanded a high degree of respect both professionally and socially.



Photo by Carmen K. Sisson

The Azaleas of Mobile

Extracted from Alabama Pioneers by Donna Causey

In the middle of the Eighteenth Century, Fifise Langlois, returning to Mobile from a visit to his childhood home in Toulouse, France, brought three colors of Azaleas to Mobile. From that time on we find the Azaleas woven into the pattern of Mobile's history. When France ceded Mobile to England in 1763, visitors came to see the Azaleas; and in 1779 when the Spaniards took Mobile they marveled at the glory of these flowers.

Since the turn of the Twentieth Century some of the bushes planted about the middle of the Eighteenth Century have become almost trees, towering fifteen to twenty feet in height and measuring over a hundred feet in circumference.

Many of these ancient bushes have been brought into Bellingrath Gardens, where they are zealously guarded for this and other generations to enjoy and admire.



Azaleas are so important in Mobile's History that in 1929, with the encouragement of Mr. Sam Lackland, and the Mobile Junior Chamber of Commerce (now known as Mobile Jaycees), citizens of Mobile were asked to plant azaleas that would line local streets. This "azalea trail" ran through many areas of the city and was marked by a pink line that ran through the middle of the street.

A Trail Maid Court of 10 girls greeted visitors to the opening on the Trail every year. The Court became so popular during the 1950's that girls from around the Southeast bid to be a member of the court. "A decision was made to only allow girls from Mobile County to participate in the court and the America's Junior Miss was formed as scholarship program for girls around the country.

The court has grown from its original 10 that only gathered for three days to 50 girls that represent the city of Mobile year round.

Besides serving as ambassadors for the city of Mobile, the girls have appeared nationally at "the Fourth of July Parade in Atlanta, the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade in New York City, the Rose Bowl Parade in Pasadena, the Christmas Parade in Chicago, the Thanksgiving Day Parade in Philadelphia, the Presidential Inauguration Parade for George W. Bush in Washington, D.C. and the Easter Parade in Walt Disney World.

Events and Information of GSOC Interest

GSOC INFORMATION

Officers for 2017

President, Jon Sheperd
1st Vice President (Programs), Margaret Harris
2nd Vice President (Membership), Jerry Rush
Treasurer, Phil Hoge
Recording Secretary, Kathie Sheperd
Corresponding Secretary, Val Moreland

Immediate Past President, Sue Basch
Journal Editor, TBD
Genealogist, Margaret Harris
Publicity Chairperson, Val Moreland
Newsletter Editor, Jim Young
Associate Newsletter Editor, Ed Crosby
Webmaster, Jim Young

Addresses

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Membership

Annual membership dues are \$24 for an individual and \$35 for an individual and spouse at the same address.

You can obtain a revised membership form from our web site or use the copy that is included in this newsletter.

The Journal

The GSOC Journal, *A Journal of Northwest Florida*, is published once each year. **The 2016 issue, was published and distributed in October 2016 and has been mailed to all GSOC members.** The theme of the 2016 issue is the Vietnam War. If you are a member and didn't receive your copy, please contact us.

The Web Site

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~flocgs>

The site is updated frequently and contains information about future GSOC meetings, minutes of past meetings, copies of the newsletters, articles and items of genealogical and historical interest, and much more.

GSOC on Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/okaloosagsoc>

The shortcut address to the official page of the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County is shown above; or you can go to your Facebook account and search for

Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County. This page will provide the latest information about our future meetings and other news that is important to members or prospective members.

There is also a Facebook **group**. It is useful for exchanging information about your research and getting help with questions you may have about the Society or resources available to you. You can find it by going to your Facebook account and searching for **Friends of the GSOC**.

The GSOC Books

The five GSOC cemetery, marriage, and funeral books are all out of print, but are now available on the GSOC web site for reading on line and for downloading as searchable PDF files at no charge.

Please note that all these GSOC books are copyrighted by The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County and may be only used for personal use. Reproduction is prohibited without the permission of the GSOC. Go to the web site, scroll down and click on the **GSOC Books** link, click on the name of the book to access, and read it on line. Save it to your computer to download it.

Because of the size of these books, it may take them a few minutes to display (depending on the speed of your internet connection.)

The Newsletter

The GSOC Newsletter is published on or before the third Friday of each month.

Suggestions for articles are welcome. The editor, Jim Young, can be contacted by phone at (850) 862-8642 or by email at youngjmy@cox.net. Letters to the editor are welcome and may be published.

Exchange Journals and Newsletters

We send copies of our Journals and Newsletters to other genealogical and historical societies. In turn, they send us copies of their publications. We file these in the new Genealogy Section of the Fort Walton Beach Library where they are available for anyone to read.

The GSOC Corresponding Secretary has provided the following list of the newest additions:

Kinfolks – Southwest Louisiana Genealogical Society
The Coweta Courier - Coweta County Georgia
The Searcher – Southern California Genealogical Society
Oklahoma Genealogical Society Quarterly
Autauga Ancestry – Autauga Genealogical Society, Prattville, Alabama

**MINUTES OF
THE MARCH 25, 2017
GSOC MEETING
Fort Walton Beach Library**

President Jon Sheperd welcomed members, visitors, and guest speaker, Mr. Bert Outlaw, to the March meeting of the GSOC.

OLD BUSINESS

Minutes: Minutes from Feb Meeting were approved by acclamation.

Afghan Raffle: Thank you for your support of our afghan raffle. The afghan was made and donated by Cissy Larson as a GSOC fund raising project. Prior to the meeting we collected over \$120 and the final tally will be presented at the April meeting. The drawing for the raffle was made and it was a happy announcement that Keith Latimer won the afghan!

Journal Editor: Cindy Barber graciously volunteered to be the 2017 journal editor. This was a timely response as we were concerned about whether we would produce one this year. The theme is Okaloosa County Education; members are encouraged to please research/write articles.

Workshops and Seminars: Jerry Rush and Margaret Harris are heading up a genealogy seminar at the **Bob Hope Village**, on **May 18th, 3:00 pm in the Ballroom**. This presentation will include one-on-one with residents after the presentation; do we have volunteers? Please talk/call to Jerry or Margaret if you can help. We are also looking at some workshops later in the year.

Fieldtrips: The GSOC Board is looking at a field trip to the **University of West Florida Library** and archival tour. Although the date is not settled, we are looking at the Saturday before Mother's day. The library has an excellent local heritage collection. More information to follow. (Note: After the meeting we learned the library is not open on 13 May. New date is being coordinated.)

NEW BUSINESS

Door Prize(s): Prizes are donated by the members. Occasionally there is no door prize, as in last month. If no donated prizes, there won't be a door prize. This month, Val Mooreland donated a jar of her delicious homemade jam and Tom Sajwaj drew the winning ticket.

Christmas Party in December: This year we will have the party in the FWB area and next year we will switch back to Niceville/Valp. We would like a volunteer to locate a place and coordinate a menu for the party. And if you have ideas for a location that will handle approximately 30-40 people please let Jon know. Cindy Barber suggested the FWB Yacht Club as a possible location.

Heritage Quest presentation at Eglin AFB Library: At the request of the Eglin base library, Margaret will give a

presentation called *Heritage Quest, Genealogical Resource You Can Use From Your Home*. It will be on **Apr 12th at 11:00 am**. You are encouraged to attend. Bring lunch if you wish.

Book Memorial: The society recently bought the two Okaloosa County Heritage books: The Heritage of Okaloosa County, Florida, Volume I, ©2004, and The Heritage of Okaloosa County, Florida, Volume II, ©2008 (Published by Heritage Publishing Consultants, Inc., and the Okaloosa County Heritage Book Committee.) The books are labeled in memory of Bob Basch. They will be in the general reference section of the FWB library.

This supports the Board's decision to honor fellow GSOC members who have passed away by purchasing genealogy reference books in their memory. If you are a member of the Okaloosa County Public Library Cooperative, you can log in from home and reserve books with your library card and its bar code. Check out their list of genealogical reference books on line.

Lunch at local restaurant: Dutch treat. Lunch was at Chapala's Mexican Restaurant at 67 Eglin Parkway. Thanks to those that responded to the email which allows us to contact the restaurant ahead of time so they can better serve us.

Donation of Journals: Mary Bloomquist donated her 2011, 2012, 2013 and 2014 Journals back to the Society. Once we have the storage cabinet set up, they will be deposited as reference materials. Anyone wishing to donate their old Journals, especially those before 2008, would be welcome. We don't have Journal copies from 2007 and earlier.

REPORTS:

1st VP and Genealogist Margaret Harris: In April, we will hear from Kathryn Palmer and Miriam Spalding from the Florida State Archives. They will be discussing their archival materials used by genealogists.

2nd VP Jerry Rush: About 5 people have not renewed; he will follow up. As a reminder, membership dues are \$24 for a single person or \$35 for family. Contact Jerry if you are looking to join or renew.

Treasurer Phil Hoge: Phil is on vacation, and sent his financial report to Jon. We have \$2244.81.

Recording Secretary Kathie Sheperd: No comments

Corresponding Secretary Val Mooreland: No comments.

Newsletter, Jim Young: Ed Crosby will be taking over the Newsletter in July. Jon replied that we are grateful for this!

Past President, Sue Basch: No comments.

GUEST SPEAKER:

(From Kathie: these are not perfect notes because he talked fast! Use with your own notes!)

Our guest speaker was Mr. Bert Outlaw who presented an in-depth look at the value of American land records and how to research them.

Margaret presented Mr. Outlaw's biographical data: Bert was a former infantry officer and helicopter pilot. After military retirement, he taught 6th grade science (chemistry & physics) and math. He was an instructor pilot for Lockheed and holds a Bachelor of Science degree in business and a

Master of Science in aeronautical science. The following notes are a brief synopsis of Mr Outlaw's presentation:

Land Records: When searching for your ancestor's land records, it is important to know the history of the territory/state before you start as borders change and different types of land records were used. By the 1770s, 7 of the original 13 US colony had claims to areas in the west. Public Domain Land States were lands that were outside those state, later territories ceded to the Federal Government to create Public Domain – Federal Land States.

Terminology:

Metes & Bounds: This terminology was inherited from the colonial days and uses natural geographic features to describe land boundaries, such as streams, specific types of trees, roads).

Surveyors Chain: a measuring device that was 66' long. 1 pole = 16½ feet. Another word for pole was a rod or a perch. Thus, 1 pole = 1 rod = 1 perch. A chain is also known as 4 poles. 80 chains = 1 mile. A section is 1 square mile. If you have access or find plat books, 90% of this information is in the front. Even with these ancient terms, it is possible to obtain a map of the area and sketch out property boundaries, which were often irregular in shape. (Mr Outlaw showed how he did that to Tennessee property in the 1700s, along the Duck River by using an 1877 TN map found on the Library of Congress website. He then made an overlay with Google maps to determine the present day location.)

Public Land Survey System: Most used townships, ranges, and sections; Texas used leagues & labors. Dower Lines = used when the person dies and 1/3 of the land goes to the wife (until her death) and 2/3 goes to the children. When the wife dies, it reverts to the kids. Quit Claim = selling the right to inherit the land or just quitting the right to inherit the land without exchanging money.

Land office warrant = right to do a survey and lay off the land (1700s).

Grantor = seller, **Grantee** = buyer (in property transfer records.) Courthouses have **Grantor-Grantee Index** books, which include a **General Index** to Deeds and names listed in alphabetical order. They also have



Grantee from Grantor Index Books.

(Kathie's input: check also:

http://www.surveyhistory.org/metes_&_bounds_vs_public_lands.htm)

Warrants: Example, US Congress granted land in the mid-1800s for various things – all named from a specific congressional Act.

Bounty Land: Land granted for military service and was an incentive to support the wars (Revolutionary, 1812, Mexican, & Indian). This was a way to push the westward expansion. Example: after the Revolutionary war, the treasury was empty and the government paid the military in land as a Military Bounty. The veteran's process to obtain the land included: application, documentation of military service, & acres granted based on rank. Where to find: look in county records, state land offices, state archives. There is also State Bounty Land, for example in Tennessee. Bounty land states are GA, MD, MA, NC, NY, PA & VA. Headright Bounty – VA/GA, gave 40 acres – from about 1790s to about 1820s.

(Kathie's Input: See US Military Bounty Land Warrants in Family Search, and open hyperlinks to search.)

Land Patents and Land Grants – check BLO/BLM.

Land Offices – established in these lands/territories. Check on land offices in the state you are research-ing. Also the National Archives and Ancestry.com for federal lands.

Bureau of Land Management Tract books of official records from 1800 to about 1955.

Meridian = north-south (N-S) longitude line. The line connects poles. One such meridian line is in Tallahassee; Prime Meridian. N-S is meridian line. Tracts are 24 miles wide. Ranges are N-S lines which are 6 miles apart. There are 4 Ranges in each meridian. Base Lines are east-west (E-W) lines and

Townships are subdivided into 36 parts; each one is a square mile and called Sections. The 36 Sections into which the Township is divided are numbered from 1 to 36 beginning with the N-E corner and zig zagging back and forth. This can be confusing, but when examining the words in a land patent, start at the end and read them backwards to the first word (from Range-Section-Quarter-Half).

Public Domain State Records - land sold by land lottery, i.e., \$1.25/acre in cash. These were recorded in a Tract Book for the first transfer of land information. Paperwork was sent to the Land Office and documented in a case file called "land entry case files". There should be a case file for every application, processed, and approved/rejected record. See NARA for these files. All states except the original 13 colonies have these case files. VT, KY, TN, ME, WV, TX and HI have no files.

You may order National Archives (NARA) copies of land records (\$50), using NATF (National Archives Trust Fund Board) Form 84. NARA has 10 million records, 30 public domain states, military bounty land warrants. Before 1908 – general land entry files date from about 1800. See <https://www.archives.gov/files/forms/pdf/natf-84.pdf> for more info. Another good site is the US Dept. of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM) General Land Office (GLO) Records Automation website <https://gloreports.blm.gov/default.aspx> which has records for the Public Land States Per the preceding paragraph, not all states have land records here.

Territorial Land Records: Class 8 is public lands volumes 1-8. Class 9 is Claims, volume 9. Territorial Papers of the US: papers generated in territories before statehood. There is one per every territory. These will show land & property records that were once in private lands. For the serious researcher, DeedMapper software (\$99) is for working with old land records, especially those that were surveyed using metes and bounds system. The software will depict the plats of the deeds. <http://www.directlinesoftware.com/>

The webpage has a very nice land record reference section.

Warranty Deeds: The grantor promises the title is good. They were made by a deed of trust or mortgage on the borrower's debt. A gift deed was used for love and affection; no money changes hands. A quit claim deed is when Grantor transfers or "quit claims" the right of the

property (allowing the grantee to claim the property). There is no title involved.

For land management books, check WorldCat, by finding items in libraries near you. <https://www.worldcat.org/>

Mr Outlaw introduced several reference books, which are found at the Pensacola Public Library:

1. *The Source, A Guidebook to American Genealogy*; Edited by Loretto Dennis Szucs & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking, c. 2006, ISBN 1-59331-277-6
2. *Land & Property Research In The United States* by E. Wade Hone, c. 1997, ISBN 0-916489-68-X
3. *Military Bounty Land 1776-1855* by Christine Rose, c. 2011, ISBN 978-0-929626-20-8
4. *Courthouse Research for Family Historians* by Christine Rose, c. 2004, ISBN 0-929626-16-8
5. *American State Papers (Volume 9) 1790-1823 Claims* by Southern Historical Press, Inc, reprinted 1994, ISBN 0-89308-513-8.
6. *The Territorial Papers of the United States, Vol XXII The Territory of Florida 1821-1824*, Compiled & edited by Clarence Edwin Carter, US Gov't Printing Office, 1956, Publication No. 57-4
7. *Genetic Genealogy in Practice* by Blaine T. Bettinger & Debbie Parker Wayne, c. 2016, ISBN 978-1-935815-22-8
8. *The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy* by Blaine T. Bettinger, ISBN-13: 978-1-4403-4532-6

CLOSING:

Jon thanked everyone for attending. The next meeting will be here on April 22nd at 10:30 am when we will hear from Kathryn Palmer and Miriam Spalding from the Florida Archives in Tallahassee.

**Kathie Sheperd, Recording Secretary
Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County**

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Our April 22nd 2017, program
will begin at 10:30 am

***Finding Your Roots: Researching Family History
at the State Library and Archives of Florida***
Presented by Archivists Miriam Spalding and Kathryn Palmer

**Fort Walton Beach Library
185 Miracle Strip Parkway SE,
Fort Walton Beach, Florida 32548**

"Whatever you know, whatever you learn – Pass it On!"

**Genealogical Society of
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