

# The GSOC Newsletter

## The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Florida August 2020



### GSOC PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Elizabeth Mangum came to the board with a great suggestion to call and check on each member. She even volunteered to help with the calls. So, over the last few weeks, we have attempted to contact via phone or email, each member. I'm glad to report that most are doing very well and many of us have our yards and to-do lists under control and are returning to genealogy. It was great to talk to those we could reach. The board and Elizabeth came together and shared our member's statuses and ideas.

Most of you are excited about the ZOOM monthly meeting later this month. We are looking forward to seeing everyone, even if it is 'on screen'. One of the biggest benefits will be for our members who cannot attend in person. This first meeting will be informational, and we have some exciting opportunities to talk about. The first meeting will also be a first - it will be the first time I have tried to host a meeting of over 10 people! So please be patient as I learn.

Our annual elections are coming up in the fall. The President, First Vice President and Corresponding Secretary must be replaced. I have moved to North Ft Myers. I agreed to serve the rest of 2020 but will not serve in 2021. Mike has done a great job with programs for the last two years, but he will not serve in 2021. Val has been the Corresponding Secretary for years. It is time someone else took on this responsibility.

Nicki stepped in and has done a great job with the newsletter, but she would like to turn that over to someone else. The newsletter is written in Word and is a great creative outlet. Only 2-3 copies are printed and mailed, the rest are emailed.

Please contact me at [cindybarber2@gmail.com](mailto:cindybarber2@gmail.com) if you can serve in any of these positions.

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### Zoom

The GSOC is buying ZOOM meeting each month. At less than \$20 a month, we can have as many meetings as we want, for as long as we want. We decided to go to an evening meeting for the General membership meeting on the 4th Saturday because so many of us are busy throughout the day.

In addition to the monthly membership meeting, I've scheduled the following meetings as organizational events to launch our interest groups.

DNA Interest group - 2nd Tuesday, 6 PM (CDT)  
Family Tree Maker - 1st Wednesday, 6 PM (CDT)  
23&Me - 1st Monday, 6 PM (CDT)

The groups will have control over their meetings after the initial meeting. They will decide meeting days and times and one or two members will be responsible for hosting future meetings. Zoom is very easy to learn and I will help the hosts learn how to use it. There are a lot of free videos to help you learn Zoom, too.

Cindy Barber  
[Cindybarber2@gmail.com](mailto:Cindybarber2@gmail.com)



for continuing your  
positions in 2021!

Jodie Biles - 2<sup>nd</sup> VP - Membership

Phil Hoge - Treasurer

Barb Bethea - Recording Secretary

## WANTED

**President**

**1st Vice President - Programs**

**Corresponding Secretary**

These positions **MUST** have candidates by  
October 24<sup>th</sup>!

Email [cindybarber2@gmail.com](mailto:cindybarber2@gmail.com) or call me at  
863-307-2300 to volunteer for these positions!

The Future of GSOC  
Depends on YOU!

### The GSOC Newsletter

The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Florida

#### Help Wanted

Newsletter Editor

Part time - a few hours, 3-4 days a month

Word Processor Knowledge Required

Start by January 2021

Email [Cindybarber2@gmail.com](mailto:Cindybarber2@gmail.com) to apply

# Let's Get Back to Genealogy!

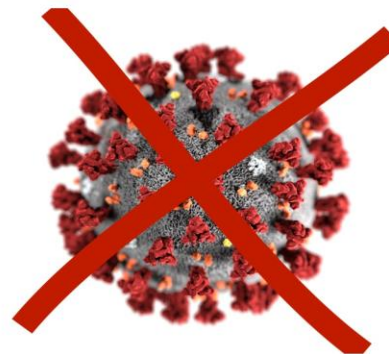
GSOC is going to ZOOM into meetings!

Monthly Meeting  
August 22<sup>nd</sup>

We are moving the meeting to ZOOM and scheduling it at  
7 PM Shalimar Time!

Join us for this first meeting! We'll check in, share what we  
have been doing with our genealogy and share ideas for  
future meetings.

Watch your email for the invitation to the ZOOM meeting!



## New post on FamilySearch Blog

### [Quarantine Diary Prompts—How to Journal about the Historic Events of 2020](#)

by [Jessica Grimaud](#)

We are living in historic times. Are you recording your experiences? Not only can [journaling help you cope better](#) with day-to-day life, but one day your family will be interested in knowing what it was like to live through the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020. If you haven't already begun a COVID diary detailing your thoughts and experiences of this historic moment, below are a few journal prompts to get you started.

#### *Think Back to the Beginning*

It's easy to forget to write about what life was like at the start of 2020, especially because so much has happened since January! Below are some journal prompts to jog your memory.

- **Record when and where you were when you first heard about COVID-19.**

Did your family or friends tell you? Did you first learn about it from [the news](#)?

- **Reflect on your initial thoughts and feelings about the virus.**

Have your feelings or perspective changed since you first learned about COVID-19?

#### *Write about the New (Albeit Temporary) Normal*

Depending on where you lived or other circumstances, you may have experienced unique disruptions to your daily life. Even if the disruptions are minor, record the ways in which your life changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

- **If you were a parent whose children were out of school, what was homeschooling like?**

No shame if you had to refresh yourself on 5th-grade math.

- **If you were a student whose school closed down, how did you feel about learning from home?**

The year 2020 took [homework to a whole new level](#).

- **If you were an employee who worked from home, what was your daily schedule? How did it change compared to being in the office?**

Bonus points if you include a tally of how many times you heard co-workers say “Sorry, you cut out” and “I think you’re on mute” during a teleconference.

- **Did any of your plans change because of the pandemic?**

Was a family vacation postponed? Did an event get canceled? Did you briefly contemplate buying a [really cheap flight](#) to another country?

- **How did your hometown, city, region, or country respond to the pandemic?**

What social trends happened where you lived? Did people in your hometown [buy out toilet paper](#)? Did your city [erupt in song](#) from apartment balconies? Write about it!

## *Write about Daily Activities and Pastimes*

While it may not seem interesting right now, you or family reading your COVID diary in the future might be interested in how you passed the time—especially if you were stuck at home for weeks on end! The following journal prompts can get you started.

- **How did your schedule change during the pandemic?**

Be honest—you slept in a lot, didn’t you?

- **Did you try any new hobbies?**

Did you jump on the [sour dough starter trend](#)?

- **What books, movies, TV shows, or other activities did you engage in?**

Be sure to include how many times you [watched the same TV show](#) in a row.

- **If you were quarantined during the pandemic, did you dress differently?**

And yes, I’m asking if you wore pajamas all day.

## *Reflect on How You Have Changed*

In all seriousness, COVID-19 has been difficult and life-altering for many people throughout the world. You can cope better with the present moment by reflecting deeply on the ways you and the world have changed, and your reflections can also benefit future readers.

- **Did you learn anything about yourself from this experience?**
- **What is one aspect of your life that was harder during the pandemic?**
- **What is one aspect of your life that was easier during the pandemic?**
- **How has this experience changed you or those around you?**
- **In what ways, if at all, do you think the world will be changed because of COVID-19?**

## *Record Your Memories in a Safe Place*

Remember to save your experiences in a safe place! One place to preserve your memories is on [FamilySearch.org](#). You can type right into the app, or, if you prefer pen and paper, you can upload images of your COVID diary to [FamilySearch Memories](#) for safekeeping.

If writing isn’t your thing—that’s OK! You can record your experiences as well. Just go to [FamilySearch Memories](#) on your desktop, or download the Memories app. When you’re ready, here’s how to make your recording:

1. Download or open the Memories app (to download the app, click on the Google Play or App Store button below).
2. Tap the “**Menu**” icon (3 bars for Android, or 3 dots for iOS).
3. Tap “**Memories**”.
4. Tap the “**Plus Sign**” for making a memory.
5. Tap “**Record Audio**”.
6. Tap “**Begin Recording**”.

URL: <https://wp.me/parwIW-d5P>

[Jessica Grimaud](#) | July 30, 2020

# How to Join a ZOOM Meeting

Cindy Barber - Aug 2020

GSOC is excited to offer our members ZOOM meetings on a variety of topics until we can meet again in person! Below is a quick primer on how to join a ZOOM meeting. You will need to download the "Zoom" app.

- 1) Be *PATIENT* and *KIND*! The meeting leaders have very limited experience running Zoom meetings. We hope we get better as time goes on, but please be patient as we learn our way through this. Many of us have participated in meetings, but few have 'hosted'.
- 2) To get the most out of Zoom you will need a computer with a camera and microphone. If you do not have this, you can still call in with your phone and follow along with your computer.
- 3) A few days before the meeting you will receive an email invitation. A sample is below. Each invitation is different. Make sure you are using the correct one.
- 4) Simply click on the link in the invitation and you will be taken to the meeting. If you are early, you will be put 'on hold' until the host arrives.
- 5) To call in on your phone, use the "Dial by your location" information at the bottom of the screen

## SAMPLE Invitation

GSOC Info is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: GSOC Monthly Meeting

Time: Aug 22, 2020 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

**VERIFY  
TOPIC**

**VERIFY  
TIME**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84334128594?pwd=emtZL0ZkeW1aTk12MWFoZS9EV2VHUT09>

**CLICK ON LINK**

Meeting ID: 843 3412 8594

Passcode: 790989

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,84334128594#,,,,,0#,,790989# US (Germantown)

+13126266799,,84334128594#,,,,,0#,,790989# US (Chicago)

Dial by your location

+1 301 715 8592 US (Germantown)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 669 900 9128 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 843 3412 8594

Passcode: 790989

Find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/kh9sp669F>



# ***ZOOM into Genealogy!***

Upcoming Meetings  
Open to ALL GSOC Members  
Watch your EMAIL for an invitation to these meetings

**Topic: GSOC Monthly Meeting**

Time: Aug 22, 2020 07:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84334128594?pwd=emtZL0ZkeW1aTkI2MWFoZS9EV2VHUT09>

**Topic: Family Tree Maker Interest Group**

Time: Sep 2, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88385509927?pwd=bDMwK3pNOUQ2VDc1bFRXZDdlYkNBUT09>

**Topic: 23 & Me Interest Group**

Time: Sep 7, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82158482112?pwd=UEhEMXRMYmRLeKpLZmJUcjlVXVjZz09>

**Topic: DNA Interest Group**

Time: Sep 8, 2020 06:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Every month on the Second Tue, until Feb 9, 2021, 6 occurrence(s)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87275129265?pwd=ZTdFUWxzahRQKzh0UnhHbWY5bjhGdz09>



## A Flashback Trip To Camp Walton

48

The Pensacola Journal

Tuesday, August 10, 1976

Miracle Strip

Loyal Phillips



### A Flashback Trip To Camp Walton

Guided by Martha Buck, who came here from Tennessee, we took a "memory lane" walking tour through Camp Walton as it was around 1928, the year she arrived.

The tiny fishing village was isolated and the only communication with other areas was made possible by a retired newspaper man named Clark. The former journalist had a small house at the corner of Brooks Street (now Miracle Strip Parkway) and Beall.

Clark had the community's only telephone, which was connected by extension line to the Valparaiso Inn. He charged 10 cents each for delivering telephone or telegraph messages to residents.

Our flash-back trip started at George Marler's Hotel located east of the Camp Walton end of the present Brooks Bridge, at the foot of Alconese Street. The hotel was a big frame building with a porch extending over the water. The hotel was destroyed by a 1936 hurricane, but according to Buck's recollection, no one was hurt.

From Marler's Hotel westward, one passed a couple of two-room cottages in addition to a few summer houses before reaching the Indianola Inn. The inn was destroyed by fire around 1960, I was told by Anita Kroha, now with the Destin Chamber of Commerce. The site is now a vacant lot.

On the Sound beach at the foot of the Indianola's driveway, there was a small restaurant and bowling alley which opened during the summer months. The Inn was then owned by Mr. and Mrs. W.C. Pryor. For many years, Mrs. Pryor served as postmaster, in a little waterfront building.

Further westward was the Harbeson Hotel. "During the thirties, the east wing was destroyed by fire one year and the following year, the west wing burned," Buck recalled.

The Harbeson Hotel had a waterfront pavillion where guests danced during the summer to music provided by college bands.

To the west, the next buildings were Buck's store on the waterfront and the family's residence on higher ground toward Brooks Street.

Still going west, our memory lane trip took us along a waterfront board-walk extending from Buck's to Gerlach's store. Just a short block inland, was the Gulfview Hotel which reportedly had been purchased by the Gerlach family in 1914.

At the west side of the village, there were several houses in addition to J. Hartley Beall's laboratory. Buck remembered Beall as a well known pharmaceutical specialist. "Dr. Henry White who came here around the mid-forties was our first physician," she commented.

Across Brooks Street northward, was Clark's place where the only telephone was available. In the same area, there were a few cottages owned by Beall.

North of Brooks Street, there were also several houses owned by the Gulfview Hotel management.

"The old St. Mary's Catholic Church, a frame structure built primarily by the Gerlach family, stood at the corner of Shell and First Streets," she recalled.

Back of Buck's place was the community's first school house. "The land was donated by E.S. Buck, lumber was supplied by the Santa Rosa County School Board and construction work was done by residents, under the supervision of Buck, who was a contractor. All work was done without pay," she asserted.

"Our only two black families lived in the area between the First Baptist Church and the school administration building," she continued. "Emma Butler cooked at the Indianola and her husband, Ben, did yard work."

That's the way it was at Camp Walton 48 years ago. In the early thirties, Buck started teaching school at a salary of \$50 a month.

In addition to her civic and charitable work, she catered lunches for the Chamber of Commerce board of directors for 17 years, with the assistance of Nancy Rodgers, her maid.



FYI: I worked with Loyal Phillips who was the writer of this article, during the 1970's which was when the Pensacola News Journal had an office in Fort Walton Beach. Our branch was then located near Jimmy's Gun Shop on 4<sup>th</sup> Street SE. I was the secretary-receptionist and took care of all the classified ads. It was an interesting job and I met a lot of people. ~~~~~ "Nicki" CHAMBERLAIN

## Ex-Slave Founded Shalimar

Monday, February 20, 1978

Loyal  
Phillips

*Miracle Strip*



# Ex-Slave Founded Shalimar

Shalimar, the little town situated on a scenic spot between Garnier's Bayou and Choctawhatchee Bay, has a romantic background story enacted by area pioneers.

Homesteaded in 1903 by Gus Tart, a former slave who worked for the Brooks family, the 125-acre tract has played an interesting role in the development of South Okaloosa County.

Soon after "Uncle Gus Tart" died in 1915, the land was acquired by members of the Brooks family.

During World War I, Shalimar had a brief but prosperous industrial era. Approximately 130 Germans opened a dye factory which opened employed 250 area men at wages up to \$6 a day.

Around the time the dye works opened, the shores of Garnier's Bayou, particularly on the west side, were virtually a wilderness, according to William R. Brown Jr., who still lives in the Mooney Road section. "Wildcats would kill our chickens during the daytime and alligators crawled ashore and got our dogs," Brown told us. "In 1906 when my father moved to the waterfront location, he cut cordwood and kept bees. He had 100 hives scattered along the Shalimar and Mooney Road sides of the bayou and sold honey for \$2 a gallon."

Shalimar had no post office until around 1940. Prior to that time, the community's few residents relied on either Valparaiso or the little one-room post office operated by the Mooney family across the bayou to the west. The present modern post office employs 11 people.

Honoring "Uncle Gus," the white-haired black man who homesteaded a 125-acre grant now worth many millions of dollars, the Shalimar Town Council has plans to build a memorial near Meigs Junior High School. The former slave lived in a two-room cottage off Richbourg Avenue, near the present school. A site for the memorial has been dedicated for the purpose by Dax Inc., according to D.B. Phillips, an official of the the land developing firm.

The corporate population of Shalimar is estimated at 500, which figure represents only a fraction of the sprawling community's inhabitants. Notwithstanding the fact that the name of the town appears on maps in tiny type wedged between Valparaiso and incorporated Cinco Bayou, the delivery area of the Shalimar Post Office encompasses more than 100,000 people, according to Alto Cain, Shalimar postmaster.

The community was named by a poet and author of children's stories, Mildred Plew Merryman Meigs, who was a daughter of James E. Plew, according to Mrs. James P. Tras, who was married to the late Clifford Meigs. Shalimar was part of a subdivision known as Port Dixie.

There is a garden in Kashmir, India — and possibly a stream — called Shalimar, we were told by Mrs. Tras.

Presumably the poet-authoress selected the name from the Kashmiri Song which begins, "Pale Hands I loved beside the Shalimar."



August 2020 | Clayton Extra



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Your  
Family  
History



**Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research**  
5300 Caroline, Houston, TX 77004 | 832-393-2600

**Mobile Device Genealogy**  
**Friday, August 28 | 2 PM**

Leave the desktop behind (at least for a while) and get the most out of the mobile devices at your fingertips. Discover software tips and hardware hacks to find and record your precious family history research with Clayton Library staff member Mitch Clendening. **Registration required**.

*After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the Zoom meeting.*

**[Register Today!](#)**



**Genealogical Society of  
Okaloosa County (GSOC)**  
**P.O. Box 1175**  
**Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549-1175**

