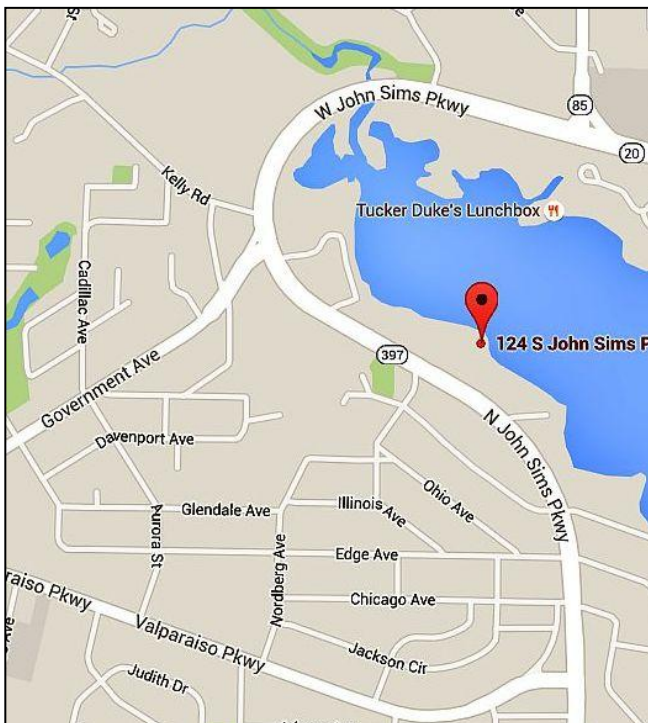


THE GSOC NEWSLETTER

THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF OKALOOSA COUNTY, FLORIDA
DECEMBER 2, 2016

Next GSOC Meeting
December 10, 2016 11:00 a.m.
Boathouse Landing Restaurant
124 S John Sims Parkway
Valpariso, Florida

GSOC Christmas Party and Official Annual Meeting



The GSOC's Christmas Party and official Annual Meeting will be held at the Boathouse Landing Restaurant beginning at 11 am. The restaurant opens at 11 am. The party/meeting will be held in their downstairs room.

There will be a time for socializing, the GSOC officers for 2017 will be installed, and a delicious meal will be served.

Membership Renewal for 2017

GSOC membership can be renewed now for the 2017 calendar year. Please go to the GSOC website, download the revised membership form, and fill it out. [Ed. Note: the revised membership form is also included on page 9 of this newsletter.]

Note the volunteer section has been updated and the GSOC Board encourages everyone to select one or more areas to help the society next year. If there are no changes to the ancestor research section at the bottom of the form please put "no changes". Otherwise add additional ancestors.

Remember, membership dues are \$24.00 for individuals and \$35.00 for families. You can send the membership form and check to the GSOC mailing address on the form or you can bring the form and money/check to the next meeting, including the Christmas party.

Dues must be paid by the end of March 2017 or you will be dropped. It has been a pleasure serving the GSOC as the Vice President for Membership in 2016.

Jon Sheperd

CHANGE IN NEWSLETTER PUBLICATION DATES

Due to the change in our monthly meeting dates beginning in January 2017, this newsletter publication date will be changed from on or before the first Friday of each month to on or before the third Friday of each month. This will be effective with the January 2017 issue.

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Visit to the National Archives

By Jon Sheperd

In October 2016, my wife and I visited the National Archives in Washington D.C. I was particularly interested in seeing the full pension records of my great-grandfather who served in the Union Navy during the Civil War. I had earlier sent for his pension records by mail but was suspicious that they did not send me everything - I was right. We also wanted to look up records for other Civil War veterans.



National Archives (Pennsylvania Ave side)

With limited time available to do research at the National Archives I prepared in advance. First I went on their website www.archives.gov. Although the National Archives has many types of records, my focus was on the military ones. From their website I found they had select records of military members who served from roughly 1775 to 1917. The website did a good job of telling me what was available based on the service, rank, and conflict/war. The three major types of military records available are compiled service records, pension applications and pension payment records, and bounty land (for service between 1775 and 1855). The focus for my limited research was on the pension records. As the website states: "These files often contain supporting documents such as: narratives of events during service, marriage certificates, birth records, death certificates, pages from family Bibles, family letters, depositions of witnesses, affidavits, discharge papers and other supporting papers." (Note: If you are looking for pension records for Confederate veterans you need to go to the state archives in the state they lived. The National Archives won't have them.)

I also looked on the National Archives website to see what to expect when I visited and what information I needed to get the applicable pension records. What I gleaned was: Archives location, hours, security protocol, required orientation presentation, researcher identification card required, and a few other tidbits. I also learned a form is required to pull each pension file and I

needed specific information to get the right file. This included some or all of the following: the veteran's/survivor's names, state from, military service, unit/ship, years served, and pension application and certificate numbers (both veteran and survivor). The good news is that most of that information is available on Ancestry.com (Civil War Pension Index to Pension Files, 1861-1934) and FamilySearch.com (U.S. Veterans Administration Pension Payment Cards, 1907-1933). Fold3 also has pension information. The Archives has computers and the staff will help if you don't have everything.

Besides preparing for the National Archives research, I also planned where we would stay in the D.C. area and how to get to the Archives. Having lived in the D.C. area before, I knew that driving and parking in town was not a desirable option. I used their Metrorail system on several trips in the past and found that there is a Metro station (Archives) right across the street (Pennsylvania Ave) from the entrance to the Archives Research Center. I then located a hotel near a Metro stop which had free parking. I also found on the Metrorail website (www.wmata.com) that if you are 65 or over, you can get a loadable fare Senior Smartrip card for \$2.00 at certain metropolitan locations. This cuts the normal fare in half. So it cost me \$1.85 each way during peak travel time. Definitely a good deal for the three round trips we took into the city for genealogy research and visiting museums. *(As a side note, when the National Archives closes, it is high peak metro time. Learn where you must change trains and try to avoid transferring at crowded stations such as L'Enfant Plaza. Metrorail maps are found on line and at the Metrorail stations. There is even a line that will take you to Reagan National airport.)*

Our initial trip into D.C. was on a Monday afternoon after we had checked into our hotel. We got off at the Archives stop on the Yellow Line and exited the station into the Navy Memorial Plaza. We crossed Pennsylvania Avenue and entered the Research Center door located on the ground level at the center of the Archives building (door above red vehicle in picture). We went through security, similar to that at an airport, signed in, and were given a security badge. From there we went into the ground level research room and were directed to watch a Researcher Orientation Presentation (which is also on their website). We then filled out a short form and presented an identification card (driver's license). They took our picture and made us each a plastic National Archives research card which is good for a year. It has a magnetic strip on the back so you swipe the card to sign in or out of each research room. With card in hand we then went to an Archive's staff member who helped us fill out a NA Form 14027 (10-12) for each pension file wanted. The multiple carbon copy form was then put into a box in the

microfilm room. An Archive employee collects the forms on the hour and they pull all the files in that batch. It takes anywhere from 30-60 minutes to collect all the files depending on the number requested. To review the records, you proceed to the research room on the second floor via the ground level elevator. Security is very tight in this room. You cannot bring notebooks, purses, coats, folders, eyeglass cases or anything else that could conceal a record (they provide a free locker to stow these items on the ground floor). Some loose notes can be brought in but they must be stamped by the staff. You may bring a camera, tablet, or computer as long as there is no case. A guard at the door swipes your research card and gives you a once over to make sure you are in compliance with their rules (the process is repeated when you leave the room). You are continuously monitored by staff and cameras.



Pension files are brought to the back of an adjoining room. A staff member allows you to sign out one file at a time using a carbon copy of the form previously filled out. You can review the records at one of the desks or tables in the area. You must keep the papers in the same order even if it doesn't make sense. Gloves were not required despite some files being almost 150 years old. I found a table with a flat white top near a window and proceeded to photograph each paper record in each file. Some files contained over 70 pieces of paper of various types. The next day we went back to review/photograph the remaining pension files. There was a different staff member on duty who suggested I use the light table to photograph the files. I just had to sign up for it. Wish I had known that the day before!

Overall we had a good experience at the National Archives. Most of the staff was very helpful (a couple of employees were not). At least we know what to expect next time. I did find some documents which will hopefully solve some of my brick walls, including more death details for my great grandmother, the survivor of my Civil War great grandfather. So the visit was a success.

I highly recommend you visit the National Archives for genealogy research if you are in the D.C. area. Check out the original Declaration of Independence while you are there!

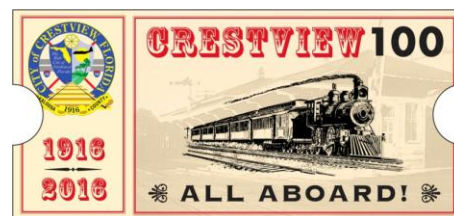
Crestview through the Century **First Tuesday Talk** **Crestview Public Library** **10:30 a.m., Tuesday, December 6th**

The City of Crestview has been celebrating its Centennial year during 2016. Pat Hollarn, former Okaloosa County Supervisor of Elections, and current Mainstreet Crestview Association officer and Crestview Centennial Committee



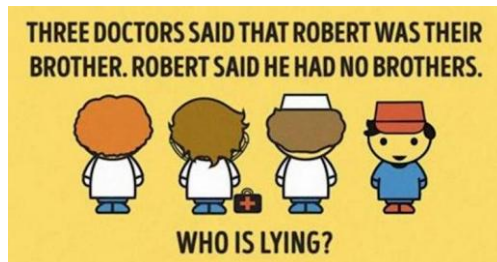
Chair, will paint a picture of what it was like in Crestview 100 years ago and share highlights of the city's history through the century for the December 6th First Tuesday Talk at the Crestview Public Library.

The free program begins at 10:30 a.m. with coffee and cookies served starting at 10 a.m. when the doors open. The library is located at 1445 Commerce Drive behind the Post Office in north Crestview. Call 850.682.4432.



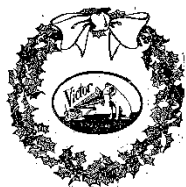
GENEALOGICAL PUZZLES from the [Yancey Family Surname Resource Center](#)

- 1) Most people have two parents (1 generation), 4 grandparents (2 generations), 8 great grandparents (3 generations) how many ancestors do they have at 20 generations back (assuming no inter-marriage of cousins)? How many ancestors in all?
- 2) Someone says "Sonia's daughter is my daughter's mother" -- You pause and think --- Who then, is Sonia?
- 3) Man looking at a photo "Brothers and Sisters have I none. But this man's father is my father's son? Who was the photo of?
- 4) Johnnv's mother had four children. The first was April, the second was Mav. and the third was June. What was the name of her fourth child?



THE ST. NICHOLAS GIRL --- Pensacola in 1916

On December 22, 1916, Pensacola's great municipal Christmas tree was lit in Mallory Court (boulevard between the San Carlos Hotel and the Blount Building), sponsored by the St. Nicholas Girls and the Pensacola Electric Company.



And on December 25, 1916, the St. Nicholas Girls distributed toys, dolls, and socks (in pairs so they might be worn afterwards -- one filled with apples, nuts, oranges and candies, the other with a small toy) to over 450 needy children of Pensacola. After the event, the leftover gifts and goodies were packed into three cars and delivered to the Poor Farm and the Pearl Eagan home.

To Fill the Christmas Stocking



This community benevolence campaign began in 1913 when the Pensacola Journal, its Society

TREE, AGLOW WITH MANY LIGHTS, IS ADMIRER BY MANY

Blossoming out in all the colors of fairyland, the Christmas tree, standing in Mallory court last night, attracted the attention of hundreds of people from the cars and from auto, many of the latter coming to a halt to admire the brilliant spectacle, which shone forth apparently brighter than any one night since being erected. The rains seemed to make the lights, with which the tree was aglow, more brilliant. Lights of gold and purple and crimson and azure, and rose and amethyst twinkled from the great green tree set in the square just South of the San Carlos hotel, and the spirit of Christmastide was caught by everyone who gazed on the spectacle.

Many children, braving the disagreeable night, persuaded parents to bring them down town, and forgetful of the uncomfortable weather, went into ecstasies over the brilliantly-lighted tree.

editor Cecilia Myrover Robinson, and Miss Ada White originated the idea of a doll and toy fund for poor children in Pensacola. Ada was designated the "St. Nicholas Girl" but eventually everyone who pitched in and helped were known as St. Nicholas Girls. In 1915 the St. Nicholas Girl got the idea of a community Christmas tree, and

the Pensacola Electric Company agreed to

provide the tree and lights, and it was erected in the McHugh Store. But in 1916, the St. Nicholas Girl wanted the tree where all the community could see it, and that was at the center of town,




Palafox and Garden streets in Mallory Court.

Funds for 1916 were raised in three ways. First, merchants were solicited and donations were requested in the pages of the Pensacola Journal. A benefit dance was held December 15 in the Armory, and a French Doll party, a Christmas masquerade for children, was held at the San Carlos Hotel on December 21.

Selection of families and children was made through the probation officer, Mr. Pinney, who distributed tickets (375 in all) good for

attendance on December 25 to the Armory. Children were admitted in groups of eight, given their Christmas presents and quickly exited so others could enter. The St. Nicholas Girls was not the only organization raising Christmas funds in 1916 but it was the most widespread of charitable giving in Pensacola.

A Christmas Gift Worth While-- Shows Its Value With Every Smile



There's nothing so good as a smile that says, 'I'm happy and contented.' It's the best of all things, and it's the best of all gifts. It's the best of all things, and it's the best of all gifts. It's the best of all things, and it's the best of all gifts.

Better Than a \$200,000 Rope of Pearls or a Necklace of Diamonds, It Is To Have a Row of Attractive Sound Teeth.

They are the best of all things, and they are the best of all things. They are the best of all things, and they are the best of all things. They are the best of all things, and they are the best of all things.

We Are Joy-Makers. See Us Before Christmas.

FLORIDA DENTAL ROOMS

1114 SOUTH PALM BEACH BLVD. (OVER D'ALMEIDA'S CIGAR STORE)

PAINTED BRASSWORK	DR.	WHOLE CROWN	\$1.00
CHILDREN'S BRASS	DR.	GOLD CROWN	\$1.50
PAINTED BRASS	DR.	GOLD BRASS	\$1.00
PAINTED BRASS	DR.	GOLD BRASS	\$1.00

Investigate our own prices before you are misled. Why pay more for a good thing when you can get it for less? We guarantee the best.

Office hours, 9 a. m. to 7 p. m. SUNDAY 9 a. m. to 12 p. m. Phone 244

Christmas in Pensacola in 1916 was much like everywhere else in America. Merchants and the newspaper urged people to get their shopping done early. And ads touted everything from electric appliances to dentures!

But perhaps the most poignant Christmas advertising came from the Children's Home Society of Florida seeking adoptions for their orphans.

How About a Fine Little Pair of Twins for Christmas, Eh?



Two Dear Little Girls, Smart, Bright, Full of Ginger, Four Years of Age.

WE have two dandy pair of little homeless, motherless twins that are hoping and praying for a good home and a dear good father and mother for Christmas—and all four of the poor little kiddies are desirable, good looking, healthy youngsters, bright and loveable and worthy of good homes, and we hope that there will be two good hearted families in Florida, who will open up their hearts and homes to these little jewels, and secure for themselves two of God's greatest Christmas gifts on earth. Here are pictures of the two pairs of twins; which pair would you like for YOUR Christmas?



Two Fine Little Girls, Good Enough for Any Home in Florida. They Will Make Fine Children, Sure.

In addition to these twins we have the finest group of boys and girls of all ages, all homeless, all pleading with God and Santa Claus for good homes before Christmas. We hope their prayers will be answered. Among these children—a whole house full of them—are fine boys and girls, 8, 9, and 10 years of age, who desire good homes and loving parents. Also, a mighty sweet, attractive young girl, 16 years of age, who after her mother's death, was a little mother to seven younger brothers and sisters, until she gave out—and all the children came to our Society. We desire a good home for this fine girl, where she will be able to go to school, and be a real daughter in the home, and not just a maid. All of these children are worth thousands of dollars—according to law—yet all are homeless and helpless. Who will do the greatest thing on earth for the Christ and for Christmas—and take one or more of them for permanent care?

Don't Put it Off. Talk it Over at Home Today, and Write Us Tomorrow

The Children's Home Society of Florida

Florida's Greatest Charity

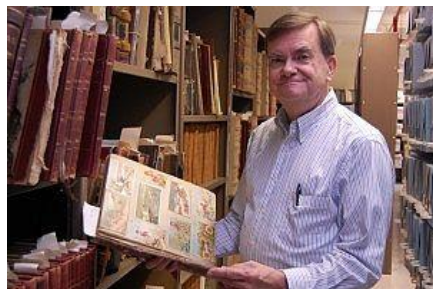
State Headquarters, 361 St. James Building, JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA.

JUDGE W. H. BAKER, President
MARCUS C. FAGG, State Supt.
R. V. COVINGTON, Treasurer.

Source: Pensacola Journal, various issues, December 1-26, 1916.

Dean DeBolt 12/2016

Dean DeBolt is the University Librarian and Archivist of the University of West Florida. He's served in this position since June of 1981.



As Librarian and Archivist, he oversees the largest and most comprehensive research collection in existence on the West Florida region, including the colonies of Spanish and British West Florida, and the ten counties of the Florida Panhandle, the history from earliest occupation to the present. Collections number 1.5 million items including rare books, photographs, maps, manuscripts, business records, family papers, genealogy, etc.

This article is used here with Mr. DeBolt's permission.

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
Webmaster, Jim Young

Addresses

P.O. Box 1175, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549-1175
Email: gsocokaloosa@yahoo.com
Newsletter Editor: youngjmy@cox.net

Membership

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

Please see the notice on the first page of this newsletter for additional information. You can obtain a revised membership form from the web site or use the copy on page 9 of this newsletter.

The Newsletter

Beginning in January 2017, the GSOC Newsletter will be 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.

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.

What to tell someone who asks "Why Should I Join the GSOC?"

*"My ancestors are not from this area,
so why should I join the local genealogical society?"*

Many people share this "why should I join" attitude? I know that I did for many years after the Air Force assigned me to Eglin Air Force Base and I moved from California to Fort Walton Beach. My ancestors were from Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, North Carolina, Virginia, Ireland, and Wales. None of them, so far as I know, had settled in Florida. So I wondered why I should join the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County.

Eventually, someone I had worked with at Eglin and who was a member of the GSOC invited me to attend a meeting. Little did I know how this would influence my life as a genealogist. I found a group of passionate family historians who were eager to share their experiences and knowledge. It did not matter that our ancestors were from different parts of the world. In fact, most of the members did not have northwest Florida roots.

So how, you may ask, can a GSOC (or other local society) membership help us as genealogists? Here are some reasons:

You are not alone. You probably don't realize that there are scores of genealogists within a few miles of where you live. You can share your passion with other like individuals. More important, you can get plugged into a friendly network that alerts you to new products, news, and educational opportunities locally and nationwide.

You can learn new research skills. The guest speakers at monthly meetings and at workshops held throughout our area can teach you to prepare a research plan, how to evaluate evidence, and suggest more techniques to discover new sources.

You can learn about the history and the early families of the area where you now live. Guest speakers present interesting information about a variety of subjects.

You can learn how to evaluate genealogical software. Choosing the right software for your specific needs may be confusing. Hearing the experiences and recommendations of other members can be very helpful.

You can improve your skills in reading old handwriting. My personal research included transcribing old documents, but until I became involved in the society, I didn't realize that my skills were elementary.

You can learn from other members. Our society encourages members to share their latest breakthrough or discovery at our local meetings. This sharing is not only fun, but gave me ideas on how to solve my own brick wall research problems.

You can gain an appreciation of other local societies.

The exchange program for periodicals that the GSOC participates in, for example, allows you to review the publications and activities of other societies around the country.

You can develop leadership skills. As an active and involved member, you will be given opportunities to participate in the leadership of the organization. While serving on committees and board member positions, you can develop skills that are valuable in future roles.

You may not find a cousin, but someone else might. I'm always amazed at the odd connections that are made at meetings. For example, someone will casually mention they are researching the Phillips family in Alabama. Another member will answer that they are too. After comparing notes, they discover they are related six generations back into time. It happens more often than you may think! Members will also find others researching the same geographical areas and can help each other with resources, etc.

You can develop lifelong friendships. Common interests create friendships, and I have gathered many through genealogical connections. Can you imagine what it might be like if you didn't have an understanding genealogical friend to call when you make a major discovery or solve the problem you've been working on for several years?

It's useful to belong to more than one society! While you may not be able to attend meetings, the obvious benefit of joining any local society is that of receiving the society's publications. One of the primary goals of local societies is to index, abstract, or transcribe local records and publish the results in their journals and/or online. If you have roots in Butler County, AL, for example, you may want to join the Butler County Historical & Genealogical Society in order to receive notice of their publications and projects.

Jim Young

Suggested by an article by [Kathleen W. Hinckley, CGRS](#) in www.genealogy.com

Color Blindness and Genealogy

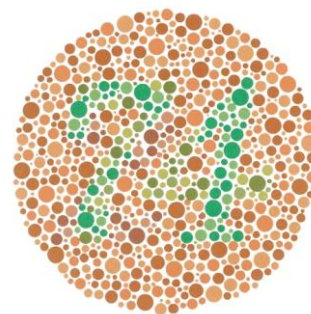
One of the causes of color blindness is genetics. Color blindness can be inherited, and inherited color blindness can be congenital (from birth), or it can begin in childhood or adulthood. Depending on the mutation, it can remain the same throughout a person's lifetime or it can be progressive.

Red-green deficiency is the most common type of color blindness, followed by blue-yellow.

Approximately one in 12 males of Northern European descent is born with some degree of red-green color deficiency. Most females possess genes that counteract

the deficiency, so less than one percent of females of Northern European descent have this type of color deficiency. In other populations, the prevalence of red-green color deficiency is lower. Blue-yellow color deficiency is inherited by fewer than one in 10,000 people worldwide.

Color blindness occurs when there is a problem with the color-sensing pigments in certain nerve cells (cones), within the eye. The cones are found in the light-sensitive layer of tissue that lines the back of the eye. Even if just one pigment is missing, you may have trouble telling the difference between certain colors or shades. Symptoms include not only an inability to identify colors, but also trouble seeing the difference between shades and brightness.



Example of an Ishihara color test plate. The numeral "74" should be clearly visible to viewers with normal color vision.

Color blindness affects a significant number of people, although exact proportions vary among groups. In Australia, for example, it occurs in about 8 percent of males and only about 0.4 percent of females. Isolated communities with a restricted gene pool sometimes produce high proportions of color blindness, including the less usual types. Examples include rural Finland, Hungary, and some of the Scottish islands.

In the United States, about 7 percent of the male population – or about 10.5 million men – and 0.4 percent of the female population either cannot distinguish red from green, or see red and green differently from how others do. It has been found that more than 95 percent of all variations in human color vision involve the red and green receptors in male eyes. It is very rare for males or females to be "blind" to the blue end of the spectrum.

Other causes of color blindness include disease, medications, chemicals, and aging.

Although there is no direct treatment for color blindness, specially designed glasses and contact lenses can often help. Many people, especially those with mild color blindness, are able to adjust without much difficulty.

Sources: NIH, Mayo Clinic, and Wikipedia

MINUTES OF THE 12 NOVEMBER 2016 GSOC MEETING

Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County The Northwest Florida Heritage Museum

President Sue Basch welcomed members and guests to the November GSOC meeting held at the Northwest Florida Heritage Museum. This is the last GSOC meeting to be held at the Heritage Museum and we thank them for the use of their facilities and hospitality these past years. Beginning January, 2017, the GSOC will hold its meetings at the Fort Walton Beach Public Library at 1030 am every 4th Saturday. (Note: the library address is 185 Miracle Strip Parkway SE in the historical section of downtown Fort Walton Beach. See also the GSOC website for directions and map.)

OLD BUSINESS

Speakers: Last month our speaker was our own Dr Tom Sajwaj who spoke to us about ethics in genealogy. This month our guest speaker is our own Charlene Grafton who will present a National Geographic program called the Genographic project and the video titled "The Journey of Man."

Events Attended: No one attended genealogical events.

NEW BUSINESS

Door Prize: Margaret Harris and Donna Elliot won the monthly door prizes which were a set of pencils and pencil grips and a set of American Flags, respectively.

Notes of Interest: Sue passed around a clipboard with recent information of interest to the GSOC.

GSOC Nominating Committee: Bob Basch presented the slate of nominations for the 2017 GSOC Board and requested any nominations from the floor. There were no nominations from the floor. Hilma Jenus made a motion to accept the nominations as presented and Val Moreland made a 2nd motion to accept. All GSOC members in attendance voted to accept the slate of officers as presented.

Therefore, the GSOC 2017 Board members will be:

- **President – Jon Sheperd**
- **1 Vice President – Margaret Harris**
- **2nd Vice President – Jerry Rush**
- **Recording Secretary – Kathie Sheperd
(continuing from present year)**
- **Corresponding Secretary – Val Moreland
(continuing from present year)**
 - **Treasurer – Phil Hoge
(continuing from present year)**

The installation of officers will be held at the December annual party (Boathouse Landing restaurant in Valparaiso).

Board Meeting: The next board meeting will be held Saturday, 19 Nov 2016, at 10:00 am, Northwest Florida Heritage Museum.

Lunch: Today's luncheon would be after the meeting at Po Folks, Niceville.

REPORTS:

1st VP Charlene Grafton: Reminder that the December meeting will be the annual Christmas Party held at the Boathouse Landing.

2nd VP Jon Sheperd/Membership: Jon introduced 2 visitors: Jacquie Arnott and Linda Patterson. He reminded everyone that they can start paying 2017 membership dues. Please fill out the membership form which you can download off the GSOC website. [It can also be found on page 9 of this issue of the Newsletter.] Please volunteer for other duties on the form. Only fill out the family history portion of the form if there are changes. If there are no changes, please so state. Changes will be made accordingly to the GSOC family surname data base. Form and dues can be mailed to the GSOC mailbox or you can bring them to next meeting, including the Christmas party.

Treasurer Phil Hoge: Phil reported that there is \$1518 in the GSOC treasury. We had a major expenditure of \$627 for publication and mailing costs of the 2016 Journal.

Recording Secretary: Kathie Sheperd asked if everyone received the September meeting minutes. She then requested any changes. No one had recommended changes. Bob Basch made a motion to accept the minutes and Phil Hoge seconded the motion. The minutes were approved by those members present.

Corresponding Secretary: Val Moreland reported that former member Robin Stiles has moved to North Carolina and requests we remove her from the email address list.

Publicity: Val Moreland: Val submitted notification of meeting articles to the Northwest Florida Daily News and the Bay Beacon newspapers. Members reported seeing them in the newspapers.

Genealogist, Margaret Harris: There are no new inquiries. The Family History Center, Fort Walton Beach, will be closed on the upcoming holidays. Normally they are open Thursday from 10:00am to 4:00pm and Saturdays from 10:00am to 1:00 pm. If you need to call them to confirm whether they are open, their phone is 850-244-3338. The Center for Life Long Learning classes have concluded and the next classes will begin in January.

Christmas Party Chairperson, Donna Elliot: The annual Christmas/holiday party will be at the Boathouse Landing in lieu of the normally scheduled December meeting. Thus far we have 20 people attending. The deadline to RSVP is Nov 23rd. Kathie Sheperd volunteered to present the icebreaker/games.

GSOC Newsletter, Jim Young: Jim reminded us that his last newsletter edition will be in June 2017. He is looking for a volunteer editor now to allow enough time to work with him/her and show them how the monthly newsletter is published. Please consider volunteering for this position.

Journal Editor, Kathie Sheperd: Kathie Sheperd reported that the 2016 Journal of Northwest Florida was published in October and mailed. One person reported they had moved and because there is no forwarding by the post

office, we gave her a new Journal on the spot. Thank you to all the members who generously contributed articles for the Journal.

GUEST SPEAKER:

Charlene Grafton introduced the National Geographic Society's The Genographic Project. She spoke about her family. Her father was a family doctor and he emphasized knowing family medical history. Since that time to now, family medical history is playing a huge role in understanding diseases and treatment. We now know that genetics plays a big role and she mentioned Dr Francis Collins who is an American physician-geneticist pioneer who is the current director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Charlene went on to say she bought the "Journey of Man" film and donated it to the Valparaiso Library and the NW Florida Heritage Museum because she felt it was important for the community to be aware of genetic advancements in the human genome using DNA evidence. Today's presentation is "The Journey of Man."

The following notes are from "The Journey of Man," a documentary film by The National Geographic Society. Blood embodies the past – the story of the journey of our species.

Mr Spencer Wells, a geneticist and anthropologist was the main subject and narrator of the film. He met with Mr Luca Cavalli-Sforza who is an Italian population geneticist and the first man to realize that blood is a time machine with our genetic history. Cavalli-Sforza hypothesized in the 1950s: what if we could use blood as a means to trace our ancestors? So, he began gathering blood from all around the world, in an effort to prove a monumental truth: everyone is related. In the 1970s he went after isolated tribes to work out distant family lines. In the 1990s, a scientific revolution of genetics occurred. Blood was the time machine and we were time travelers.

There are currently roughly 6.0 billion people on earth. Our origin: Africa, the birthplace of every human alive. Wells traveled to Namibia to meet with the San Bushmen, an ancient tribe who are expert hunter/gatherers and speak a language unlike any other language on earth. They are the least westernized and integrated of all peoples known to exist. Even their language is not spoken with words, but a series of sounds and clicks. No other families on earth have this language pattern (of clicks and sounds vs. words). A reasonable hypothesis is that all people used to speak like that, but lost the sounds. The tooling the San Bushmen make to hunt (prey) with is also unique and they travel many miles in the arid lands to track game. They are considered the best trackers in the world. Wells believes the fathers of mankind started their journey from the ancestors of these people 50,000 years ago.

Wells stated how the A C G T molecules of one person, if laid out, would stretch to the moon and back 30,000 times. Each person has a specific DNA genetic sequence made from these molecules and inherited mutations called "markers". Drawing blood from the San Bushman for genetic testing, Wells and his research staff found the San Bushmen markers are unlike any other markers on earth. Considering the isolation, the language, the unique hunting methods and totally unique genetic markers from

DNA analysis, Wells and his team believe the San Bushmen to be directly descended from the first humans on earth. Twelve hundred kilometers south of the San Bushmen, on a South African coast, is a cave containing human bones 80,000 years old. The stone tools of these peoples are not as advanced like the San Bushmen. Wells concluded that between 60,000 and 30,000 years ago something happened to the San Bushmen and the area where they originally lived. There are so few plants and people remnants that there is no archeological evidence. Archeologists theorize it was the ice age that disrupted human life. Deserts grew and sea levels dropped. Prey vanished and humanity was on the verge of collapse. Some peoples from this ancient area left and migrated away. Where did they turn up next?

The answer: Australia, the most remote continent on earth. This is the very next place where we find their bones (analyzing the genetic material), but no evidence of their journey. So Wells considers possible migration routes and travels to western New South Wales, Australia. There, he examines traces of human bone left behind of the Mungo people. The oldest remains are carbon dated to 40-45,000 years ago. Aborigines have oral history passed down through song lines that say their origins are from Australia. However, Wells discovers that Aborigines have traces of the San Bushmen's genetic markers. So another question: how did some of the San Bushman ancestors migrate to Australia? Could they have gone along a coastal land route?

In analyzing the possibilities, Wells considered the land route through the coast of India. Wells traveled to southern India, near Madurai in the state of Tamil Nadu. Isolated villages have lived here for generations with little outside integration. Wells began Y-chromosome DNA testing through blood samples taken from hundreds of men in the region (he paid the men). The blood samples were taken to extract the DNA. Each sample took 2 hours to analyze and he looked for an anomaly in genetic sequencing that would link the subject to coastal Africa and the San Bushmen.

He found one sample that worked; the blood's DNA sequence linked directly back with the San Bushmen about 2000 generations ago! This proved genetic evidence that the San Bushmen traveled through southern India and from there likely island-hopped to travel to Australia. It proved the genetic evidence of the first coastal migration to Australia!

At this point, Charlene stopped the film, due to time constraints. There is a second half of the film; ancestry out of Africa to Scotland. Charlene stated this is where her (haplogroup) J1 comes from. If anyone is interested in watching the second half of the film, they should check the library's copy.

CLOSING:

Sue thanked Charlene for this fascinating presentation and several members commented on how interesting they felt the film was. Sue reminded everyone to get their RSVPs in to the Christmas party and the meeting adjourned.

/S/

Kathie Sheperd
Recording Secretary
Genealogy Society of Okaloosa County

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Our December 10th, 2016, program
will begin at 11:00 am

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