

THE GSOC NEWSLETTER

The Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Florida

July 1, 2011

GSOC Calendar

July 9, 2011



Our July meeting will be at 10:00 at the Heritage Museum. The program will be presented by GSOC member **Beverly Gross**. Beverly is a renowned genealogist and teacher of genealogy. Her topic will be: ***Tracing Your Family Backwards to Find Their Roots: Migration, Immigration, and Emigration Routes.***

August 13, 2011

The August meeting of the GSOC will be at 10 AM at the Heritage Museum. Our speaker will be Kathy Marler Blue from the Destin Fishing & Heritage Museum. She will be speaking on the history of Destin and the early families who lived there.



September 10, 2011



Our field trip to the Special Collections Department of the University of West Florida Library in Pensacola will now be our September 10th meeting. Time, carpool details, and a map will be provided in the September newsletter.

October 8, 2011

Our October meeting will be held at the Valparaiso Community Library where we will see and hear about the extensive collection of genealogical material housed there.

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Minutes of the June 11th Meeting

President Malcolm Flanagan opened the meeting at 10:00 a.m. at the Northwest Florida Heritage Museum,

Valparaiso, Florida. Malcolm welcomed all members and guests.

Donna Elliott, First Vice President, reported that the guest speaker for the August meeting would be Kathy Marler Blue from the Destin Fishing & Heritage Museum. She will be speaking on the history of Destin and the early families.

Carol Lessard, 2nd Vice President Assistant, reported there were 18 members and 5 guests in attendance. Guests: Keith Latimer, Bonnie Hutton, Hut Hutton, Dave Ebeoglu, and Ariel Burke.

Bob Basch, Treasurer, reported a checkbook balance of \$2,725.49 and an outstanding bill of \$15.00. Frances Hoge, Recording Secretary Assistant, had nothing to report. Malcolm then asked if there were any changes to the posted minutes for May 14th. There being no corrections presented, Donna Elliott made a motion to approve the May minutes as posted. Bob Basch seconded the motion and the membership approved the minutes.

Jim Young, Corresponding Secretary, reported that the minutes are printed in the newsletter and they are on the web site. Also posted is information on future meetings. Jim solicited input for the newsletter from members. He needs news and ideas for articles. Pat Pruett, Publicity, reported that there have been articles in the *Daily News*. One was in the paper that day and also in last Sunday's newspaper on the community page. Pat thanked Del Lessard for getting GSOC news and meeting announcements in the *Bay Beacon*.

Eight members will go to Ed's in Palm Plaza for lunch after the meeting. The door prize was won by one of our guests, Bonny Hutton.

The blue box was passed to collect funds for the purchase of books for Okaloosa County genealogy libraries.

Donna introduced today's program – "We Are So Connected", presented by member Hilma Jenus. Hilma provided many examples of how we discover "connections" with others, some related and some not. She suggested that anyone gathering genealogical information should invest in a flash drive and carry it around with them so they won't lose all of the information they have collected, and also give one to a relative for safe keeping.

Being no further business, Malcolm adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully Submitted, Frances Hoge, Assistant Recording Secretary



The Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida will hold a **Night at the Museum – A Guided Tour and Wine Tasting Experience**, Friday, July 15th.



The guided tour begins at 7:00 p.m. Guests will receive a guided tour featuring historic exhibits of original artifacts from the Museum's collection. Along the guided tour learn about Northwest Florida history, view the new *Military Memories* exhibit and sample wine and food from fine dining restaurants in Niceville and Valparaiso. Hear the beautiful sounds of live Native American music, enter raffles, 50/50, take part in a silent auction and mingle with special guests bringing history to life.

Tickets are \$30; Museum Members \$25. Group discounts are available. Space is limited! Reserve your tickets today by calling: (850) 678-2615.

Civil War Sesquicentennial Selected Highlights of July 1861

The 1st Florida Cavalry was organized in July 1861 at Tallahassee. Members of the regiment came primarily from Alachua, Clay, Columbia, Duval, Leon, Levy Nassau, and Suwannee counties.



July 21, Battle of (First) Manassas (Confederate) (First) Bull Run (Union), 25 miles southwest of Washington

July 22, In a proclamation, **Jefferson Davis** accepts Tennessee as a member of the Confederacy

July 25, The U. S. Congress approves the use of volunteers to put down the rebellion

July 26, **George McClellan** [US] appointed commander, Army of the Potomac

July 31, 11 Union officers including **U.S. Grant** and **W.T. Sherman** are submitted to Congress to be promoted to brigadier general

GSOC Member Ken Elliott Honored by United Daughters of the Confederacy

GSOC Member, **Ken Elliott**, was honored by Pensacola Chapter 298, United Daughters of the Confederacy on June 9, 2011, by the bestowal of the United Daughters of the Confederacy's Cross of Military Service, Vietnam Conflict, Medal Number 3525.



UDC President Gail Crosby and Ken Elliott

Military Service Awards are presented to persons who are lineal or collateral blood descendants of Confederate military personnel who have given a minimum of 90-days active-duty military service to our country in the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Army, U.S. Coast Guard, U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Merchant Marines and U.S. Navy. Both ancestor and descendant's service must be honorable.

Ken served as a Chief Warrant Officer in the U.S. Army with service in Vietnam June 1971 – June 1972. His great-great-grandfather, **Veto Sangregorio**, served in Co. A, Milton Light Artillery, that was formed in November 1861 at Apalachicola, FL.



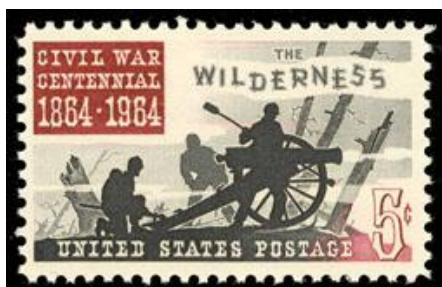
Cross of Military Service is awarded by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. There are four versions, the outgrowth of the Southern Cross of Honor. They are: the World War I Cross of Military Service, World War II Cross of Military Service, the Korean War Cross of Military Service and the Vietnam Conflict Cross of Military Service. These decorations have been established as a testimonial to the patriotic devotion of worthy Confederate Soldiers or Sailors and their descendants.

Okaloosa County Post Offices

Year Established-Year Closed

Almirante (1828-1867)
 Austinville (1855-1867)
 Baker (1912-Date)
 Berryport (1922-1924)
 Bethel (1883-1909)
 Blackman (1884-1926)
 Boggy (1893-1910)
 Bolton (1907-1931)
 Brick (1909-1916)
 Bryant (1897-1901)
 Camp Walton (1907-1932)
 Campton (1892-1908)
 Chaffin (1882-1889)
 Cobb (1906-1912)
 Corbett (1909-1912)
 Cowan (1904-1905)
 Crestview (1883-Date)
 Deerland (1899-1918)
 Destin (1896-Date)
 Dixon (1888-1894)
 Dorcas (1892-1918)
 Eglin Air Force Base (1958-Date)
 Eglin Field Br. (1941-1949)
 Floroso (1924-1943)
 Fort Walton (1932-1953)
 Fort Walton Beach (1953-Date)
 Franklin (1908-1915)
 Galliver (1911-1938)
 Garden City (1910-1919)
 Garniers (1906-1937)
 Gattis (1907-1911)
 Harris (1902-1918)
 Haseman (1918-1919)
 Hester (1898/1912)
 Holt (1883-Date)
 Horsehead (1888-1890)
 Howell (1897/1918)
 Laurel Hill (1896-Date)
 Mary Esther (1871-Date)
 Metts (1908-1917)
 Milligan (1889/DPO)
 Milligan Rur. Sta. (?-Date)
 Miramar Beach Sta. (?-Date)
 New Valparaiso (1921-1925)
 Newell (1897-1916)
 Niceville (1910-1919)
 Niceville (1925-Date)
 Oak Grove (1878/1916)
 Okaloosa Island (1959-1960)
 Otahite (1880-1914)
 Pineaway (1890-1896)
 Red Rock (1907-1925)
 Rock Creek (1912-1919)
 Shady Hill (1916-1916)
 Shalimar (1943-Date)
 Svea (1897/1910)
 Valparaiso (1925-1937)
 Valparaiso (1947-Date)
 Valparaiso (1937-1947)
 Violet (1886-1887)
 Wardville (1855/1867)
 Wright (1911-1916)

Source: <http://www.postalhistory.com/>



Mail by Steamboat



Florida Archives Photo

One of the major steamboats that made a regular run between Freeport, Point Washington, Niceville, Camp Walton and Pensacola was the **Captain Fritz** which was a stern wheel steamboat that was built in 1892 and began operating in Choctawhatchee Bay.

The Captain Fritz met its end when it caught fire on the night of Sept. 19, 1930, while moored at Cedar Tree Landing near Vernon. After being cut loose, the burning steamboat floated downriver and came to rest a mile north of what is now the State 20 bridge over the Choctawhatchee River. Its remains can still be seen there at low water.

INTRODUCING THE GSOC PUBLICATIONS DISK

A compact disk (CD) is now available which contains the following six GSOC publications:

*Cemeteries of Okaloosa County,
Volumes I, II, and III*

*Funeral Records of Okaloosa
County 1927-1984
from McLaughlin Funeral Home,
Crestview, FL*

*Santa Rosa County Marriages,
1869-1906*

*Walton County Marriages,
1885-1915*

These files are in PDF format and can be easily read using any of the free PDF viewers that are available.

This disk can be ordered for \$15.00 plus \$2.00 postage from the GSOC at
P.O. Box 1175, Fort Walton Beach, FL
32549-1175

Events, Groups, and Sites of Genealogical Interest

Walton County Genealogical Society



The Walton County Genealogical Society newsletter, *Walton Relations*, is available on line at their website:
<http://www.waltoncountyheritage.org>

The Walton County Genealogy Society meets the second Saturday of each month at 10:00 AM at the Walton County Heritage Museum except during the months of July and August.

Bay County Genealogical Society

Meetings are held the **third** Saturday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the conference room of the new Bay County Public Library at 898 West 11th Street, Panama City, Florida. (Exception: meetings are NOT held in July and August.) The BCGS web site is located at:

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flbcgs/>

Santa Rosa County

<http://santarosahistoricalociety.com/index.htm>

Santa Rosa County GenWeb Project
<http://www.db229.com/>

West Florida Genealogical Society, Inc.



The WFGS holds monthly meetings (except in July) at the new [West Florida Genealogy Library](#) at 10 a.m. with a brief business meeting and then a program. Refer to the section on the WFGS web site entitled, "2011 Calendar," for complete information.

[Click Here For Map to West Florida Genealogy Library.](#)

The WFGS web site is at:
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~flwfgs/>

Murphree Genealogical Association



The national MGA biennial convention will be held on July 22nd and 23rd at the Renaissance Resort at World Golf Village, St. Augustine, FL. Most of the Murphrees in the U.S. are descended from Daniel Murphree (1717-1771) who was born in Ireland and died in North Carolina.

The convention will include the usual genealogy workshops, Irish music, socializing, Murphree trivia, local tours, and more. Convention room rates are available.

A distinguished descendant of Daniel Murphree and a Florida member of the Murphree family was **Albert Alexander Murphree** (April 29, 1870 – December 20, 1927). He was a native of Alabama and became a mathematics instructor after earning his bachelor's degree. He later served as the third president of Florida State College (later renamed Florida State University) from 1897 to 1909, and the second president of the University of Florida from 1909 to 1927. Murphree is the only person to have been the president of both of Florida's original state universities, the University of Florida and Florida State University, and he played an important role in the organization, growth and ultimate success of both institutions.

For more information concerning the convention contact the MGA president, **Walter "Dub" Murphree** at 904 533-2325.

2011 FSGS Annual Conference

November 11th and 12th
Sheraton Orland North Hotel
600 Lake Destiny Drive – Maitland, FL

Conference Topics: "Finding the Maiden Names of Your Female Ancestors", "The War of 1812 and Its Genealogical Consequences", "Migrations 1607-1850", and "Newspaper Genealogy."

The keynote speaker is **Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck**, nationally known professional genealogist, educator, librarian, author, and columnist.

Go to <http://www.starwoodhotels.com> for hotel details. A block of rooms has been reserved for conference attendees at \$88 per night. Be sure to mention that you are attending the FSGS conference when reserving accommodations.

Funerals in the early days of Northwest Florida

Burial methods in the rural areas of northwest Florida between about 1875 and 1925 were similar to those in rural areas in other less developed areas of the south and west. These areas saw a flow of new settlers. Some were homesteaders, some found jobs in the turpentine and sawmill industries, and others moved through on their way to other places. Disease, lack of doctors, lack of medical knowledge, wild animals, and relatively dangerous work caused death to be a too-familiar event for people of all ages. Families had to rely on themselves and their few neighbors for help in taking care of their dead. The warm climate and lack of improved roads here caused additional hardships for grieving relatives.

There were only a few towns and most of the very earliest burials outside the towns took place on the family homestead. The grave was within walking distance and easy to take care of. Gradually more family members and then friends and neighbors might be added until what had been a family cemetery grew into a community cemetery. Sadly, some burials took place in isolated areas where a family may have lived for only a few years before moving on; and single graves, or two or three, were left behind. Some families who were just traveling through had to bury a loved one along the trail. Most of these have been lost forever because of the crude wooden markers that were used. Others disappeared as the wilderness reclaimed the land, hiding forever these final resting places.

Eglin AFB is dotted with small cemeteries which were left behind when the U.S. Government claimed the land. GSOC member **Mary Ellen Wexler** is to be commended for contributing the document *Burials on Eglin Air Force Base, Okaloosa County, Florida* to the USGenWeb Archives. It can be seen at: <http://files.usgwarchives.org/fl/okaloosa/cemetery/eglinafb.txt>

Further information about some of these graves can be found in Volume III of the GSOC cemetery series.

As more people moved in, land for a church was obtained and a cemetery was usually begun next to the church. In northwest Florida, land for graveyards was sometimes donated along bodies of water so that boats could be used to transport the deceased. The Jesse Rogers cemetery in Mary Esther and the Sunset cemetery in Valparaiso are examples. The more permanent turpentine stills and sawmills sometimes established their own graveyards for workers killed in the woods or at the stills or mills. Early development companies were known to donate land for cemeteries near their developments and they usually selected hilltops or elevated land because of high water tables.

Friends, and neighbors usually prepared bodies for burial. If there weren't any nearby neighbors or friends, the family members had to take on the task of washing and dressing the body. A "cooling board" held the body while it was prepared for burial. This was often a wide wooden plank between sawhorses or other available

supports. In some cases, a door was taken down and used until the coffin was ready.

Men constructed the wooden coffins using wood which may have been stored at a central location for that purpose. The coffins increased in width from the head to about a third of the way down and then tapered from there to the feet. The lids were flat. Traditionally, coffins



Traditionally shaped wooden coffin made of pine. These can still be purchased.

were almost never built before a person died, even in those cases where death was expected soon. There are stories, however, of people who made their

own coffins, or had them made by others, and kept them in their houses or barns. The coffins were lined on the inside with cotton and muslin: black for older people, and white for younger people. The outside was covered with the same fabric or sometimes left uncovered. Later, coffins could be bought in stores in the towns.

Deceased men were usually prepared for burial by men friends or neighbors. Women and older girls prepared female bodies. The deceased were buried in their best clothes, white or black dresses for women, dark suits for men, and white clothing for children. Shrouds and robes also were used. After the body was dressed and placed in the coffin, it was placed in a room in the home. People brought an assortment of foods to the family of the deceased, and then stayed. If the house overflowed with people, friends camped in the yard until the burial took place. Neighbors sat up with the body all night out of respect, to comfort the family, and to protect the deceased.

If available, flowers were picked from gardens, and wildflowers were gathered where they could be found.

News of the death had to be carried by word of mouth or through the mail, which often didn't arrive until after the burial.



Torso-shaped grave marker, usually placed at head and feet

The graves were dug by men of the community who volunteered for this task.

Graves were marked in many different ways. A common early marker was a simple wooden cross. More elaborate heart pine and cypress pieces, carved to resemble a human's torso were later used. The top of the grave might be decorated with colored glass, pottery pieces or sea shells. Marking a grave with a cedar sapling was another early tradition.

Permanent concrete markers, often home-made, were fairly common. In the earliest days, only a few people were able to afford marble or granite grave markers.

ON A LIGHTER NOTE

The Cooling Board

by Monette Morgan Young

Around about 1910, a family living on the western edge of Chickasaw County, MS, had two sons.

An elderly relative had recently died at this home and, in that day, bodies were prepared for burial in the home where the person had died. The designated coffin maker in the community made the coffins. The body was first bathed and dressed and then it was laid on a 'cooling board'. The quick cooling helped preserve the body and also provided a place to keep it until the coffin was ready. Each community usually had a wide board for that purpose which was taken from house to house as needed. The board was laid between two tables, or between a table and the foot of a bed, or four chairs, each pair turned back to back. The board was smooth and quite wide. This man's body had been prepared and 'laid out' on the cooling board in the boys room until his coffin was ready and the funeral held.

A week or so later, there was a country dance in the community and all the young people were eager to go. The older of the two boys sometimes got a little wild, especially when he'd sampled some country moonshine. In those days young ladies frowned on loud behavior and especially boys with obvious signs of having a little too much to drink. So the older brother was shunned out of the dance by the girls, especially the one he was most interested in. After about an hour or so he gave up and left the dance and came on home.

Their house, as did many others, had "the boys' room" sitting off from a corner of the porch of the main house. The boys' room's porch created a walkway to the main house porch.

As he neared the house an idea for a practical joke began to emerge. His brother had been very popular that night with the girls who had rejected him so he thought he would have a prank waiting when his brother got home. He tied his horse to a tree in the woods behind the barn and his parents in the main house didn't hear him come in. He sat down in a chair in the room he shared with his brother. He didn't light the lamp, but by the moonlight coming through the window he could barely see the cooling board still propped up in the corner of the room.

When the older brother heard the younger one's horse approaching about midnight (parties were not prolonged things then), the older brother set up the cooling board in the place where it had supported its last burden and got on it and stretched a sheet over himself.

The younger brother came jauntily into the moonlit bedroom and saw the apparition and was quietly terrified. He slowly backed out of the room and went to his parents' room. He sat down in front of the still warm hearth. It was late autumn. His mother raised up and asked why he was not in his room. He replied that he was cold. Finally after another span of time she told him he must go on to his bed. The father was snoring happily all this time.

The boy got up and headed back to his room. He felt like his probable hallucination had vanished by then but it was still there. The brother had heard him coming back and had gotten himself back on the board. The younger brother retreated back to his parents' room. Again his mother questioned him and again he told the story of being cold. He sat and sat, finally she demanded he go to his room. The fire was quite dead. The boy said something to the effect that something was in his room. She said that was foolish and she would go and prove to him nothing was there.

She lit the kerosene lamp and set out with the boy, illuminating the way. The older brother heard someone coming but did not know the mother was along so he got back on the board. When she saw the cooling board and its sheeted burden, she screamed and dropped the lamp. Fortunately, the lamp went out when it crashed to the floor and there was no fire. The father woke up and went hurrying in and found out there had been such a loud commotion and why.

The father sat in that room wrapped up in a quilt and made the older boy lie on that cooling board the rest of the night.

Monette Morgan Young, (1915-2000) was born on her parents' small farm in north central Mississippi. She loved family and community history and writing and also did extensive research on her own family line (**Morgan, Murphree, Hardin, Swindoll**, and others) as well as on her husband's line (**Young, Richards, Blue, Winter**, and others.) She won several awards for her poetry and had numerous published articles. She was the author of *The Cherry Hill – Poplar Springs – Reid Community in Calhoun County, Mississippi* and "The Cooling Board" story above was extracted from that book and used here by permission.

By her son, **Jim Young**

(For more information and a picture of a cooling board, go to <http://www.suttonscorner.org/32.html>)

Legacy Standard Free Genealogy Software

Legacy Standard is recommended by several software reviewers as the best free Genealogical software. It is relatively easy to use, flexible, and has plenty of capabilities. The free version supports family, pedigree, and index views. You can easily navigate to younger or older generations simply by clicking on the individuals. Clicking on the Events icon displays all of the events for an individual. The \$29.95 Deluxe version has even more capabilities, but by downloading and using the free Standard version you can see if upgrading to the Deluxe version would better meet your needs.

You can attach photos or any other type of document. The source templates are especially well structured. The location field is unstructured but the Master Location List can help keep the locations consistent. There is a merge feature for people, places, sources, repositories, etc. You can select specific individuals, families and entire family lines for export or reports by placing them in a Focus Group.

The report generator supports many general report types including citation and to-do lists. Legacy can print narrative book style reports using generic sentence templates and it can create great graphical charts, ancestor, descendant, fan, hourglass, bow tie, and DNA charts. It can't save reports to RTF (Rich Text Format); but text format (ASCII) is supported. The program provides Research Guidance with tips, Internet Search links, and a To Do List. Legacy also creates great looking web pages and has the most features for web site creation of any of the free programs that were reviewed.

However, Legacy does not support multiple parent child relationships. If recording adoptive or foster parents or other possibilities is important to you then you might consider *Gramps* software.

Many menu items when selected display a nagging message that the feature is available only in the Deluxe Edition.

Legacy places data files in the C:\Legacy\Data directory instead of the normal %UserProfile% directory unless the default directory is changed in the options. If the users have backup software they should take care that the backups include the nonstandard location.

For more information check out the Legacy home page at:
<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/>

There is also a guided tour of Legacy available at:
<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/Tour.asp>

A comparison of the Standard (free) version and the Deluxe (\$29.95) version can be seen at:
<http://www.legacyfamilytree.com/DownloadLegacy.asp>

GSOC INFORMATION

Officers for 2011

President, Malcolm Flanagan
1st Vice President (Programs), Donna Elliott
2nd Vice President (Membership), Lorna Sainz
2nd Vice President (Membership) Asst, Carol Lessard
Treasurer, Bob Basch
Recording Secretary, Mike Martell
Recording Secretary Assistant, Frances Hoge Corresponding Secretary, Jim Young
Immediate Past President, Beverly Gross
Historian, Sue Basch
Genealogist, Margaret Harris
Publicity Chairperson, Pat Pruett
Webmaster & Newsletter Editor, Jim Young
(Elected and Appointed positions)

Addresses

P.O. Box 1175, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32549-1175

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

Email: gsocokaloosa@yahoo.com

Newsletter Editor: youngjmy@cox.net

Meetings and Membership

Regular meetings of the GSOC are held at the Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida, 115 Westview Avenue, Valparaiso, FL, at 10 AM on the second Saturday of each month. There is no admission charge and all are welcome. The meetings are usually followed by an optional Dutch treat lunch at a nearby restaurant.

Annual membership dues are \$24 for an individual and \$35 for an individual and spouse at the same address. If you would like to become a member, want to renew your membership, or want to update your membership record, please go to the GSOC web site and get one of the appropriate forms.

The Journal

The GSOC Journal, *A Journal of Northwest Florida*, is published once each year. The 2010 issue, Volume XXXII, Issue 99, was published in September 2010.

The Newsletter

The GSOC Newsletter is published on or before the first 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 Web Site

The GSOC web site is hosted by Rootsweb at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~flocgs>. It is updated frequently and provides information about future programs as well as information about Okaloosa County and the GSOC itself.



Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County
Next meeting: Saturday, July 9, 2011, at 10 AM

*Tracing Your Family Backwards to Find Their Roots:
Migration, Immigration, and Emigration Routes.*
by Beverly Gross

**Location: Heritage Museum of Northwest Florida
115 Westview Avenue, Valparaiso, Florida**

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

