

# Volusia County Genealogical Society

N E W S L E T T E R

SEPTEMBER 2014

## 38TH YEAR SERVING DAYTONA BEACH GENEALOGY

### 2014 OFFICERS

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Next VCGS Meeting September 18, 2014

Our speakers will be Ron and Alice Howell who will talk on "West Volusia History".

## Volusia County Genealogical Society Minutes of Meeting on June 19, 2014

**Opening of Meeting:** Cora May Hartzell called the meeting to order at 6:03 p.m. She asked everyone to stand for the Pledge of Allegiance. Guests and new members introduced themselves.

The books that will be purchased to donate in Barbara Ochs' name were decided on in this meeting. They are Early Families of Herkimer County, New York Descendants of the Burnetsfield Palatines by William V. H. Barker and Old Westmoreland A History of Western Pennsylvania During the Revolution by Edgar W. Hassler. The purchase of the books were approved by Kitty Consalvo and second by Bob Bailey. Motion carried.

Cora May invited all members to attend the July board meeting. She let everyone know that the July meeting is to help prepare for the seminar. She also explained about the seminar for members and also for our guests and new members.

**Approval of Minutes:** On motion by David Farris and second by Kim Dolce, the minutes of the meeting of May 15, 2014 were approved as printed in the newsletter.

**Treasurer's Report:** Kitty Consalvo reported that the closing balance on May 16, 2014 was \$1262.26. There were deposits of \$150.00 and expenditures of \$9.12, with a balance on June 19, 2014, of \$1403.14.

**Program:** The program was a webinar from Crista Cowan- How to Find Pre-1850 Ancestors. Crista explained how the census was marked in the years after 1850's to help better understand how the census works. From 1790-1840, only the head of household was listed on the census records. Crista suggests using a spreadsheet to record the members of the family and the year and their approximate age in order to better narrow down census records. Also, she recommends using other records to confirm findings from the census once more information is found. She suggests using wills, probates and tax records. She also recommends the pension files to find more information about the family as they list family members. County and town histories may also have a wealth of information. One thing she mentioned in the webinar was to look for names of friends or neighbors that also moved with them as they moved around.

**Adjournment of Meeting:** On motion by Kitty Consalvo and second by Joyce Bailey, the meeting was adjourned at 6:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Stephanie DiMatties, Recording Secretary

### VCGS Society Calendar

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2014 Board Meeting 5 pm

Thursday, Sept. 18, 2014 General Meeting 6 pm

Ron and Alice Howell  
"West Volusia History"

### Volusia -Flagler Sister Societies

HGS Ormond Library - Sep 11, 2014 "Google & Beyond—  
Paul Enchelmayer

GSSVC NSB Library, Sept. 14th at 2:00 pm  
Webinar: Pre 1850 US Research. Karen Gifford—  
CD

GSFC Palm Coast Flagler Library - Wednesday,  
Sept 17 at 5:30 pm "Death Record Research  
Sources" Beyond Death Certificates—Ann Staley

\$\$ **Report by Treasurer Kitty Consalvo** \$\$

\$1,423.14



## We take a public education system for granted

Before public (common) schools became the norm (commenced in 1839 in North Carolina, <http://ncpedia.org/education-public>), tutors and small private academies provided education to those not home-schooled. You will find information about these in directories, via advertisements published in newspapers, lists of subscribers, private collections, published histories (e.g., School History of North Carolina, from 1584 to the Present Time, <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/6080/pg6080.html>), and elsewhere. Both male and female academies existed. Unlike today, children were NOT guaranteed an education and everyone was not home-schooled. Depending on the circumstances of your family, a child may have attended a local academy or, if wealthier, a boarding school. You may find that records exist for such academies or those who provided tutoring. Are the children in your family mentioned?

by Diane L Richard, Family Chronicle and Internet Genealogy author



## Tricks for Finding Free Genealogy Data

by Diane Haddad

Don't get me wrong. Spending money on genealogy is a good thing. This is spoken by someone who works hard to create **high-quality educational genealogy material for your consumption**.

But I try to practice what my mom taught me about money: You save what you can when you can, then you use your budget on things that'll really pay off.



This post is about the "save when you can" part. If you can find some genealogy data you need for no cost, then you can dedicate your family history funds, for example, to ordering an original record, taking an **in-depth online genealogy course** or subscribing to a web-site.

Use free sites: **FamilySearch**, of course, but also **Find A Grave**, **EllisIsland.org**, **Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild**, **USGenWeb**, **Genealogy Trails**, **Civil War Soldiers and Sailors database**, **Google Books**, **Internet Archive**, family trees at **MyHeritage** and other pedigree sites, state archives, libraries and others. Many others. Use Google searches and portal sites such as **Cyndi's List** to find these sites.

- Know that free sites often have sponsored links

(they have to pay the bills somehow), which may not be obviously ads: You click on a database title or type your name into a search box, and you end up on a subscription site, which can be frustrating if that's not what you expected. Just hit the back button until you get back to the site you started on (or if the site opened in a new browser tab, go back to the tab you were on). Look for free-for-a-limited-time databases around holidays. Recently, for example, four sites offered free online military records for Memorial Day. Find out about these offers by reading genealogy blogs (**such as this one**) and newsletters (such as the **Genealogy Insider newsletter**), sign up for genealogy websites' email programs, and befriend those sites on **Facebook** and **Twitter**.

Many subscription sites have some free offerings—they want to give you a reason to get to know the site. **Ancestry.com** has a **landing page dedicated to free resources here**; there's a partial list of free databases on the right. Also try typing World Archives Projects into **Ancestry.com's card catalog** keyword search to find the site's volunteer-created indexes (you do have to pay to see most of the corresponding records). **Fold3** lists its **free records here**.

Libraries and **FamilySearch Centers** may have computers with access to a variety of subscription websites such as Ancestry Library Edition, **HeritageQuest Online**, **NewsBank**, **Historic Map Works** and more. Check the library website or call ahead to the center to see what's available.

Sites such as **Archives.com**, **Ancestry.com** and **findmypast.com** offer free trials, usually for 14 days. Just make sure you read the terms and cancel on time if you don't intend to subscribe.

## Preserving Family Papers, Photographs, and Images

The North Carolina State Historical Records Advisory Board and the State Archives of North Carolina have partnered to produce several video tutorials on the preservation of family papers, photographs and digital images. These tutorials were made possible through a grant from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission, and can be viewed on YouTube. Topics are:

- Identifying and Protecting Essential Family Records
- General Paper Preservation Tips
- Caring for and Sharing Family and Personal Papers
- The Care and Preservation of Family Photographs
- Managing and Preserving Digital Images

Find links to the tutorials here: <http://ncarchives.wordpress.com/2014/08/08/the-care-and-handling-of-family-papers-photographs-and-essential-records/>.

## Historical "Myths" Often Heard at History Museums

by Tom Kelleher, Curator of Mechanical Arts, Old Sturbridge Village

*Old Sturbridge Village, an 1830s New England living history museum in Sturbridge, Massachusetts, kindly gave us permission to reproduce this article. -- Editor*

Many bits of "common knowledge" are true for a particular time or place, but some get exaggerated or applied too broadly. Others are just plain wrong! Here are some frequently heard by OSV interpreters.

### **People in the past were a lot shorter.**

On average New Englanders in the early 1800s were an inch or two shorter than today, but not everyone is "average." If you were transported back in time, some people would still be taller than you and some shorter. Then or now, Abraham Lincoln and Clint Eastwood, at 6'4", would be considered tall and at 5' Martha Washington and Paula Abdul both would be considered short. Early Americans were a couple of inches taller than their European cousins, a fact attributed to better childhood nutrition in America.

Some of the "proof" that people in the past were dramatically shorter is just not valid. Most antique beds are at least 75" long, the length of a modern full-size bed, but vintage bed hangings and puffy mattresses trick the eye into making them appear shorter. Ceilings are a bit lower in some old homes built before standardized materials and building codes, making them cheaper to build and easier to heat. Ceilings in other antique homes (like OSV's Salem Towne house) are higher than those in most homes today.

### **Everyone died young.**

While average life expectancy was shorter in 19th-century New England than it is today, many people then lived into old age, and some even lived beyond 100 years. The Bible says that expected lifespan 3,000 years ago was "70 years; 80 for those who are strong" (Psalm 90:10). But before the mid-20th century, people died regularly in *all* stages of life, not just in old age. Life expectancy at birth in early 19th-century New England was only in the mid-40s.

But as the old saying goes, "there are three kinds of lies: lies, damned lies, and statistics." Statistics in the 19th century were skewed by high childhood mortality rates--especially in urban areas--largely due to infectious diseases such as pertussis, measles, scarlet fever, and diphtheria. (Thanks to vaccination, these diseases are rare today.) By the time a person reached age 30 his life expectancy jumped to 67 and the average 50-year-old could expect to live until age 73.

Tuberculosis, acute infections (e.g. typhoid and cholera), accidents for men, and postpartum infections for women were the biggest killers of adults in the early 1800s. Modern sanitation and health care have extended average lifespans. Today heart disease, cancer, stroke, lung disease, and automobile accidents are the leading causes of death in America.

### **"They" never wasted anything.**

Early Americans were far less wealthy than we are today and could not afford to be as wasteful with some things. There was less "stuff" and little packaging to waste. What had value was reused, but what did not yield a worthwhile return (like sawdust) was not. In 1748, Benjamin Franklin wrote, "Time is money"--and they certainly did not want to waste their time! But they blatantly wasted many things. "Used up" farmland was regularly replaced by "new," western lands; native animals and plants were thoughtlessly killed off; and whole forests were burned or clear cut. Early Americans definitely degraded their environment, but they just did not have the population, technology, and wealth to do as much harm as did later generations.



## Wondering What Uncle James Died From?

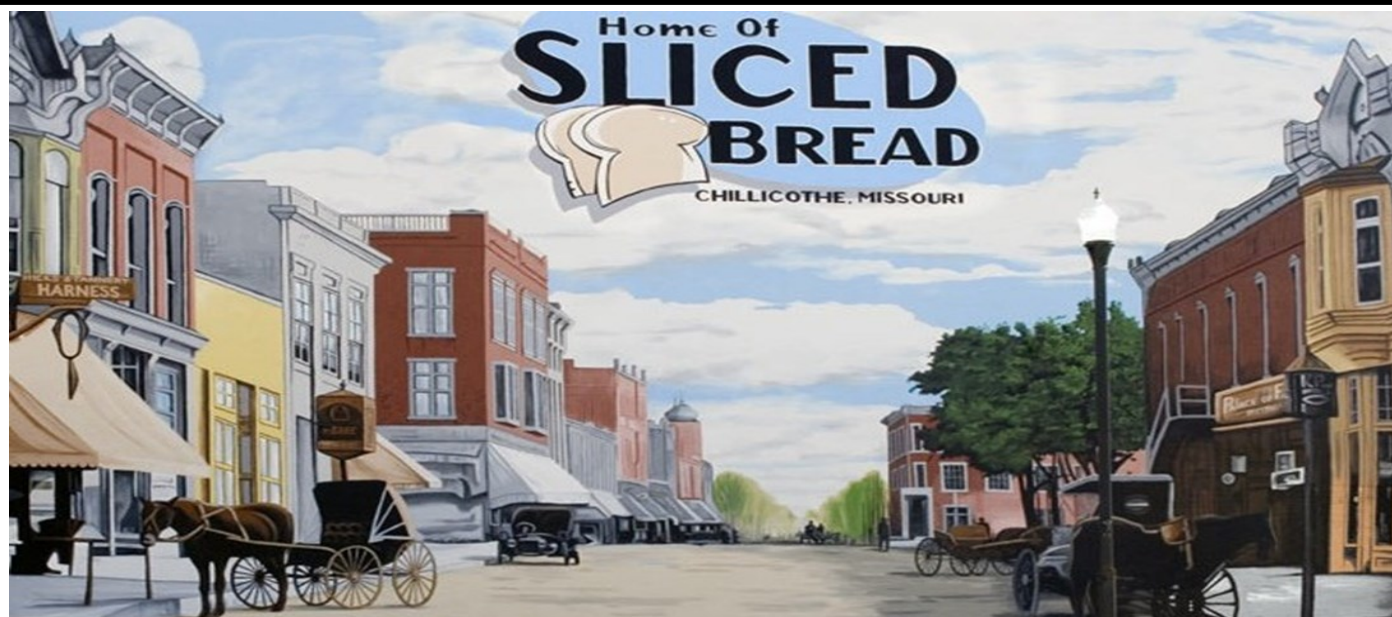
Death registers can be a treasure trove of information. Having been raised by a nurse, I am always fascinated by the terms used for cause of death. It helps me brush up on my Latin (does anyone even speak that anymore?) I have a great-great uncle who died of Phthisis. This one stumped me. Then I came across this website for Archaic Medical Terms. I learned that Phthisis is actually a fancy name for Tuberculosis! Here are the definitions from the website:

<http://www.antiquusmorbis.com>

By Christine Woodcock, Internet Genealogy author and Tour Director of [Genealogy Tours](#)

## Mark Your Calendar

The Volusia-Flagler Council of Genealogical Societies, of which VCGS is a member, is sponsoring an upcoming seminar on Saturday, January 24, 2015, from 9 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. at The Club at Pelican Bay in Daytona Beach. Claire Bettag, a certified genealogist and a 2014 APG\* achievement award recipient from Washington, DC will be the guest speaker. A continental breakfast and luncheon will be served. More information will be coming soon.



July 7th we celebrated the 86th birthday of one of the most popular – and most referenced- inventions of all time.

**Volusia County Genealogical Society, Inc.** Founded 1976, is the oldest Genealogy Society in Volusia County. Meeting City Island Library Daytona Beach, 3rd. Thursday, monthly at 6pm. Sept—June

**Mission:** Encourage Society Members and the community to find their ancestors and connect with the past. Provide enlightening speakers at the monthly meetings on relative topics to aid, assist and better our research. Promote the use of and growth of our genealogy research room, develop our resources and

# Virginia County Court Records

by John Beatty, CG

Work in colonial Virginia poses many challenges for researchers. A number of county courthouses have burned and their records have been lost, but others survive, either completely or partially intact. Deed records, will records and court order books, where they survive, are often essential sources for reconstructing families. Those records from the 17th and 18th centuries can be difficult to read and peruse in their entirety for a particular name. Yet it is the appearance of a name, often in passing, as a witness to a deed or will that can sometimes be an important clue to open a door to a wider investigation.

Between 1985 and 1993, Ruth and Sam Sparacio of McLean, Virginia, undertook the herculean task of abstracting and indexing original records from colonial Virginia through their publishing house, Antient Press. In all, they produced some 114 volumes pertaining to the records of 16 counties and two cities, as well as several miscellaneous volumes of a more general nature. The 16 counties include Albemarle, Caroline, Culpeper, Essex, Fairfax, King George, Lancaster, Loudoun, Madison, Middlesex, Northumberland, Orange, Prince William, Old Rappahannock, Richmond, Spotsylvania, and Stafford, as well as the cities of Fredericksburg and Petersburg. The volumes comprise many records from surviving counties in the upper Tidewater and trace many families into the lower Piedmont area of upland Virginia. Many of these books can be located in The Genealogy Center's catalog under the series label "Virginia County Court Records."

The type of records that the Sparacios abstracted varies according to what survived. For many counties, they carefully examined both deed and will books, abstracting every entry on each page and compiling an evername index. For others, such as Caroline County, where the deeds and wills are lost, they examined the court order books. These court books yield clues about when a will or estate was probated or a deed was recorded, even if the contents of those wills, estates and deeds are not fully known. While these are derivative and not original sources, they nevertheless provide researchers with a highly-detailed view of a minutia of records, and as such are full of potential clues.

Researchers of these counties will want to examine the Antient Press Surname Index series (GC 975.5 Sp2s and 975.5 Sp2sa). These 14 volumes provide a full name index to all of the Sparacios' books. Following each name in the indexes is a two-letter code and a number, corresponding to a specific volume, as reflected in the key at the beginning of each index book. The researcher will then need to locate the needed volume in the Genealogy Center catalog and search the index of that volume for the specific reference. The value of these indexes is that it can be seen at a glance whether a particular name appears in the record books of more than one county. For example, a tobacco planter who spent most of his life in Orange County may have journeyed to Caroline or Essex to be a party to a lawsuit or to give testimony, which would be recorded in the court order book.

The Sparacios accomplished an important task through these publications. They brought a myriad of records to the fingertips of modern researchers, allowing them to comb through records with a level of detail seldom matched in other regions. If your ancestors come from this part of Virginia, these books are an essential research tool.

# 17 Genealogy Things To Do if You Only Have A Few Minutes

by Diane Haddad

Sometimes life gets in the way, and you can't find a decent stretch of time to sit at your computer or go to the library and do some genealogy. Our Sept. 30 webinar [Weekend Genealogy Breakthroughs](#) will show you 13 shorter projects you can accomplish in an evening or on a weekend.

In the mean time: 5 or 15 minutes might not be enough to delve into the life and times of your most stubborn brick wall ancestor, but it is enough time to do one of these quick genealogy tasks:

Check your tree and make sure you have a 1940 census entry for everyone alive at the time. For the missing ones, you can [search the 1940 census](#) for free. Search the [Social Security Death Index](#) for US folks who died after 1962.

Run a [Google Books](#) search for an ancestor you don't have much on.

- Open mystery genealogy files on your computer, see what they are, and rename them according to a system. Now you know what the file is without opening it.
- File the loose genealogy files on your computer desktop, or the papers on your actual desktop.
- Write two paragraphs about an ancestor's life.

Any relative you don't have burial information for, search for him or her on [Find A Grave](#), [BillionGraves](#) and/or [Interment.net](#).

- Transcribe a record into your family tree software (or wherever you keep record transcriptions).

Add to Great-grandma's or another relative's life time-

line, using your family tree software or our [free, downloadable Biographical Outline](#).

- Read a few pages of a county or family history.
- Check your favorite genealogy blogs for the latest news.
- Call an older relative and make an appointment to visit and talk about family history.
- Scan several photos.
- Write a journal entry or blog post.
- Share a genealogy find with your family on Facebook.

Think of all the crazy ways last names in your family could be spelled, and write them all down so you can try them when you search genealogy websites. We have a [free Surname Variants chart you can download, print and fill out](#).

Tag photos in your photo-organizing software.



## PBS Series *Finding Your Roots with Henry Louis Gates, Jr.* Returns Tuesday, September 23 at 8pm ET for its Second Season

The 10-part series explores the heritages and ancestries of 30 of today's leading entertainers, athletes, chefs, and media personalities, including: **Ben Affleck, Jessica Alba, Khandi Alexander, Tom Colicchio, Tina Fey, Sally Field, Derek Jeter, Stephen King, Nas, Anna Deavere Smith, Sting, and Courtney Vance**

Working closely with leading U.S. genealogists (including Johni Cerny, co-author of the acclaimed *The Source: Guidebook for American Genealogy*) and ancestry experts from around the world, Gates and his production team comb through family stories to discover unknown histories and relatives the guests never knew existed. When paper trails end for each story, the team turns to top geneticists and DNA diagnosticians to analyze each participant's genetic code, tracing their bloodlines and taking guests back further in time than ever before.