



NEWSLETTER

of the

HARFORD COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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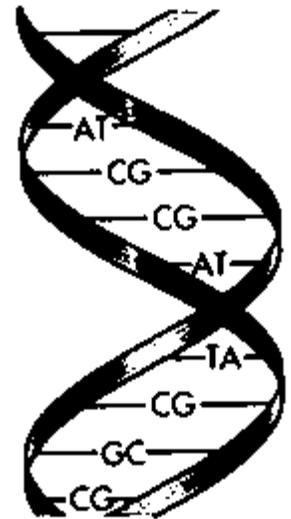
SEPTEMBER 2007

NOTICE OF MEETING

Date: **Sunday, September 16, 2007** Time: **2:00 PM**
Place: **Historical Society of Harford County**
143 N. Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014

Program: **“DNA Genealogy and You -
Unraveling the Mystery”**

The program is titled "DNA Genealogy and You - Unraveling the Mystery" by Sharon Swope, editor of "Our Name's The Game" the newsletter of the South Central Pennsylvania Genealogical Society (www.SCPGS.org) since summer 2001. This program will attempt to answer your questions on DNA and illustrate how DNA testing relates to genealogical research. The object is to put DNA in terms you can understand and show how your research may benefit from participation in a DNA project. Sharon's interest in genetics began in college where her major was Horticulture with an emphasis on plant breeding and plant pathology. To date five members of her family have had DNA tests completed.



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MEETING SCHEDULE: March, May, July, September, & November

We hold five meetings per year, usually on the 3rd Sunday of the month. The March, May, September and November meetings begin at 2:00 PM at The Historical Society of Harford County Inc., 143 North Main Street, Bel Air, MD 21014. The July meeting is a box lunch held at various historical locations in the county.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Welcome to a new season of exploration and inquiry. After the lull of summer, respites of vacations and relaxation, Fall is the time to ‘crank-it-up’. As we anticipate new adventures for the Harford County Genealogical Society, the Board of Directors has charted a course to whet our appetites! In September, we come to grips with DNA questions and issues as related to family research – unlocking the perplexities of DNA analysis. Come November we will explore Deed Mapping and how new technology can help establish exact locations and ownership history of specific tracts of land, grants and patents. Some several hundred Harford County tracts have been plotted. Moving into Spring, we will peer behind the scenes of Methodist Church archives and their utilization in our quests. Having said all of that, the best leads for new vistas and opportunity come from the most unexpected places – keep your eyes and ears open and do let us know when you happen upon a promising lead for a program, experience, or publication for our Society – we are each other’s keeper in this business.

In closing, I would be remiss in not thanking all who helped make the July picnic at Holy Trinity Church a delightful and successful afternoon. Special thanks go to Marian Seguin, our hostess and guide, who so ably came to the fore on short notice; Walter Cooley who shared his recently published family history; and Gwyn Poole for managing lunch reservations and getting the food to the church on time.

See you all in September! ...Arch

GENEALOGY FEATURE

How Safe is your DNA Identity?

I have pondered this question since January when our Newsletter included information on DNA Genealogy. In the lecture at our September meeting, we will hear more about the vocabulary and details of using DNA test results in our quest to find relationships with those who may be our ancestors. For now, here are some discussions related to the security of your DNA identity.

“We should be at least as concerned that others may know more than we do about our own genetic makeup. DNA analysis, in combination with the Internet, creates an unregulated market in DNA [identities] and new opportunities for invasions of genetic privacy. Using the Internet for the marketing and purchasing of genetic tests sidesteps the doctor–patient relationship and eliminates meaningful, face-to-face genetic counseling. It also magnifies an older but unresolved danger: whenever identifiable DNA samples are collected and stored, there is a high risk that violations of genetic privacy will follow. As the evolution of DNA banking for research demonstrates, DNA donors should not assume that the privacy protections they take for granted in medical care and clinical research apply. People give up more than they realize when they hand over their DNA.”¹

Another “...reason privacy advocates have railed against the expanded use of genetic databases is that DNA contains far more intimate information about a donor than other identification technologies. The principal method of DNA collection used by police -- reveals such private data as a person's genetic disposition for thousands of diseases and his or her parental origins. In the future, such samples may even reveal behavioral characteristics including sexual orientation or aggressive tendencies, and physical characteristics, such as skin color.

...continued on page 3

How Safe is your DNA Identity? *continued from page 2...*

“Because no federal genetic privacy law regulates DNA databases, these privacy advocates fear that the data they contain could be misused. People with ‘flawed’ DNA have already suffered genetic discrimination at the hands of employers, insurance companies and the government. Today, all 50 states have forensic DNA databases and local law enforcement agents have aggressively added material to their genetic libraries. DNA dragnets -- wherein police stop random people fitting a suspect's description and request a DNA sample -- are becoming increasingly common.”²

“A fundamental concern is that the possession and storage of a personally identifiable DNA sample give the possessor access to a wealth of information about the person and his or her genetic relatives. This includes information derivable from new DNA tests that were not available, or even anticipated, when the sample was relinquished. Consequently, as long as personally identifiable DNA samples are stored, there is the possibility of unauthorized access to and use of genetic information — an invasion of genetic privacy. To the extent that we see ourselves and our future as influenced by our genes, such invasions can disrupt our very sense of self.”³

“We will not learn who we are by having our DNA analyzed, but we will almost certainly give others the opportunity to learn something about us. And our DNA is not like our credit cards: we cannot simply get a new number. As long as someone has our identifiable DNA sample, he or she will be able to learn things about us we may not know, may not want to know, and certainly don't want others to know.”⁴

After scratching around for hints and comments I was surprised at how small a portion of our DNA information is used in genealogy, as well as how minimally useful the results seem to be. It must be that Safe Harbor privacy rules are forcing vendors to be extremely cautious about how they handle our DNA information for fear of killing their “golden goose.”

There are two popular DNA Tests used in **anthrogenealogy**, Y-Chromosome DNA, and mtDNA. In both tests there are basic pieces of information, 1- a partial DNA sequence, 2- marker match report, 3- test samples, and 4- your name. By far this information, except for the sample, is minimal compared to other DNA databases.

The overwhelming risk in my opinion is the storage of the DNA sample material. Some vendors say they maintain samples for 25 years or more, others for 180 days, but all store samples for a short period after testing as a matter of quality control and for re-test requests. During this storage period, access may be compromised, laws may change, and “big brother” could confiscate samples “in the name of the law.”

...by: Rich Appel

¹ Roche & Annas; **DNA Testing, Banking, and Genetic Privacy**; NEJM, Vol 355:545-546 10Aug2006 Number 6.

² Scheeres, Julia; **Fears About DNA Testing Proposal**, 31Mar2003.

³ Annas GJ; **Privacy rules for DNA databanks: protecting coded ‘future diaries.’** JAMA 1993 Vol 270:2346-2350.

⁴ Roche & Annas

GENEALOGY TIDBITS

Documentation means copying original source material as proof of lineage

Six basic rules for beginners in genealogical research were offered by Russell F. Shaw, C.G., in Volume 5:3 of the *Los Alamos Family History Newsletter* and reprinted in Vol. 17:2 *Newsletter, Genealogical Society of Southern Illinois*. Shaw states, "Your copy of any source document should be so faithful and reliable that another researcher will never have to refer to the original in order to verify its contents." Documents are the building blocks with which a family history is built. Shaw's rules are:

- "Keep the original spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Any unusual mark should be reproduced in shape, size, and location exactly.
- Any additions to the text or explanations of the original should be indicated by enclosure in brackets.
- Whenever words, letters, or even entire lines have been omitted because of tears in the manuscript, illegibility, or other reason, some indication as to this fact should be made in the appropriate place, followed by a series of evenly spaced dots indicating the approximate space taken up by the omitted material.
- If there are deletions, the deletions in the original should appear in the copy crossed out as in the original. If an entire section has been deleted then the word "deleted" can be enclosed in brackets at the beginning, followed by the deleted section
- If the document being copied is embellished with stamps, seals, rubrics (red lettering or printing), or otherwise, their presence and location should be indicated by a notation [in brackets] describing the graphic.
- Notes appearing in the margins, endorsements, addresses on letters, etc. should be inserted as closely as possible to their location in the original, suitably enclosed, by brackets and with an explanation if the reason is not obvious"

Many patriotic societies are becoming more stringent in requiring documentation for each generation in lineage. Documenting simply means copying the original source records as proof of one's lineage. Therefore, the copies must be exactly as found in the original documents. One should acquire copies of the documents as one proceeds to trace each generation.

.....Reprinted from: *AntiqueWeek, Mid-Atlantic Edition, April 3, 1989*

FROM THE EDITOR

We ask the membership for your support. Attend our meetings, offer assistance, send items for the NEWSLETTER to the Editor, pay dues in a timely fashion, and offer written suggestions. I am not able to "see all" or "read all," so make it a habit to tell the Editor about what's happening. Send me an email, or drop a note in our Society's mail-drawer.

...Rich

GENEALOGY HAPPENINGS

Family History Workshop

Date: **September 08, 2007** (Sat) 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Place: Baltimore Family History Center, Baltimore, Maryland LDS Stake
120 Stemmers Run Rd, Essex, MD

For Details & Registration: www.BaltimoreFamilyHistoryWorkshop.org

The keynote speaker is **Dr. Joshua Taylor**, whose opening lecture is **Family History: What the Future Holds**. Dr. Taylor will also present 3 workshops. There will be six 50-minute sessions, with an average of 11 concurrent workshops, by 30 different presenters.

2007 Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society -Fall Conference

Date: **October 06, 2007** (Sat) 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

Place: Plaza Hotel, 1718 Underpass Way, Halfway Blvd, Hagerstown, MD

For Details: www.magsgen.com/ or registration@magsgen.com
or Diane Kuster 301-893-8588

The program is titled **Putting the Family Puzzle Together! Research and Writing**, and consists of four lectures by John Philip Colletta, PhD, author of three books and numerous articles about researching family histories. His website is: www.genealogyJohn.com

2007 Harford County Public Library, Family History Month -October

Dates & Places: **October 17, 2007**, 6:30 PM at the HCPL Fallston branch,
October 23, 2007, 6:30 PM at the HCPL Edgewood branch, &
October 30, 2007, 7:00 PM at the HCPL Bel Air branch.

Our own Henry Peden and Doug Washburn will present a program, titled “**Genealogy Research in Harford County**.” The program provides insight into specific resources available to researchers in Harford County. Topics include: the Research Library, Genealogy Library, Court Records, and Archives at the Historical Society of Harford County, Wills, and Land Records at the Court House plus, a few others.

Maryland Genealogical Society Annual Fall Seminar

Date: **November 03, 2007** (Sat) 8:15 AM – 4:30 PM

Place: **Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland**

For Details & Registration form: www.mdgensoc.org

The Program is titled **Finding Your Ancestors In State & On the Web**. and features guest speakers Claire Bettag, CG CGL & Patricia O. Shawker, CG. Each speaker will give two lectures.

For details, registration form, lunch menu, parking, etc. go to:

http://www.mdgensoc.org/2007_Fall%20Seminar_page%201.html

This program consists of four presentations by two nationally recognized Certified Genealogists: Claire Bettag and Patricia Shawker. Lectures are titled: **Assumptions in Genealogical Research: Your Own Worst Enemy**, **National Archives Records and Information at Your Fingertips**, **Maryland Online**, and **The Old Line State: Research at the Maryland State Archives**.

GENEALOGY RESOURCES

Digital Genealogist - <http://www.digitalgenealogist.com>

Digital Genealogist, Exploring the convergence of genealogy and technology is a new online magazine published by Elizabeth Kelley Kersterns, CG, CGL. Access subscriptions are \$20/year for six bimonthly issues. The Table of Contents for four previous issues and the complete initial issue are available online. Anyone subscribing to this publication is encouraged to send their review comments to the Editor.

World Vital Records - <http://www.worldvitalrecords.com>

This site claims to have thousands of searchable databases with more being added each year, plus a monthly newsletter. Access subscription is \$50/year with the first two years discounted 50%. Anyone subscribing to this service is encouraged to send their review comments to the Editor.

U.S. National Archives and Records Administration <http://www.archives.gov/genealogy/>

The NARA has arranged the Genealogy section of the web site by research topics, or types of records available to search. From the Research Topics pages, you will find links to pages throughout the web site with articles, finding aids, and other helpful information to help you prepare for your genealogical research at the National Archives. The records in our holdings that are most commonly used by genealogists include:

- Census Records
- Military Records
- Immigration Records (Ship Passenger Lists)
- Naturalization Records
- Land Records

While you will not locate the actual records online, you will hit upon *finding aids*, such as microfilm indexes, and information on how to conduct research in the different types of records.

HARFORD COUNTY GENEALOGY SOCIETY EMAIL LIST

To correspond: Use MDHARFOR-L@rootsweb.com

For service: Use MDHARFOR-L-REQUEST@rootsweb.com

To subscribe: Send service email with “subscribe” in the message subject and body.

To unsubscribe: Send service email with “unsubscribe” in the message subject and body.

NOVEMBER MEETING

Our Sunday, November 18, 2007 Society meeting will be held at the Historical Society of Harford County headquarters at 2:00 PM. Our speakers, Messrs. Michael Pierce & James McConnell will present their program dealing with “**Mapping 900 Early Land Patents within Harford County**” Please mark your calendars and look for details in the NOVEMBER 2007 issue of the NEWSLETTER.