



Irving Genealogical Society

March 2008

Irving, Texas

Volume 16, Number 3

Officers:

President: Joe Sissom
Vice President: Jeanne Mantooth
Secretary: Eva Kellogg
Treasurer: Erle Kellogg
Newsletter Editor: Mary K. Weber

Coming Events

Monday, Mar. 17, 7:00 p.m., Irving Central Library – Will Hartnett, Texas State Representative, will speak on how to find your Revolutionary War ancestors. He is a long time member of IGS, graduate of Irving's Cistercian Prep, Harvard, and UT Law, has the largest number in Texas of ancestral lines proven to have participated in the Revolution. Long-term Republican member of the Texas House, and once Irving's legislator, his district has been rotated and made more compact.

He will discuss his methods of tracing elusive participants in our fight for independence and how he documented their services. He will reserve some time for questions, including those relating to state preservation of records. Following the meeting, he will be available for questions regarding the activities of the state government in general.

Monday, Apr. 21, 7:00 p.m., Irving Central Library – John Wylie will be our speaker.

Monday, May 19, 2008, 7:00 p.m., Irving Central Library – Marynell Bryant, President of the Texas State Genealogy Soc., will present her program, "Tips for Sweet Success."

Dallas Genealogical Society

DGS's Lecture Schedule features Tony Burroughs – Farmers and Soldiers in the Western South – March 29. More information is available at www.dallasingenealogy.org. (Click on "Coming Attractions")

Old Red Museum

Special Exhibits: A History of Irving – March 5 – April 12 – The Irving Archives and the City of Irving Public Library present an exhibit about one of Dallas County's most dynamic cities. The exhibit gives an overview of Irving history, from a collective of farming communities in the 1800s to the beginnings of the city in the early 1900s, to the growth following World War II and up through the development of Texas Stadium, DFW Airport and the apartment communities of North Irving, Las Colinas and Valley Ranch.

New Immigration Records

This week, the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) announced that it has made available for the first time online more than 5.2 million records of some passengers who arrived during the last half of the 19th century at the ports of Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia. The records can be accessed through NARA's online Access to Archival Databases (AAD).

The records were transcribed from original ship manifests into electronic databases by Temple University's Center for Immigration Research at The Balch Institute. The Center donated the digital records to the National Archives. The records are known as Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Germans to the United States, 1850-1897; Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Italians to the United States, 1855-1900; and Data Files Relating to the Immigration of Russians to the United States, 1834-1897.

This series consists of records of 527,394 passengers who arrived at the United States between 1834 through 1897 and identified their country of origin or nationality as Armenia, Finland, Galicia, Lithuania, Poland, Russia, Russian Poles, or Ukraine. There are records of passengers who were U.S. citizens or non-U.S. citizens planning to continue their travels, returning to the U.S., or staying in the U.S. There are records of passengers arriving at the following ports: Baltimore, Boston, New Orleans, New York, and Philadelphia; the bulk of the records are for passengers arriving at the Port of New York. Each of the passenger records may include name, age, town of last residence, destination, and codes for passenger's sex, occupation, literacy, country of origin, transit and/or travel compartment, and the identification number for the ship manifest. Information on each ship is in the manifest header file and includes the ship manifest identification number, the name of the ship, the code for its port of departure, and date of arrival. The ship manifest identification number indicates the port of arrival.

The new databases may be found at <http://aad.archives.gov/aad/index.jsp>.

Dues and Newsletters

A reminder, once again, that dues for 2008 need to be paid. Beginning in April, the newsletter will be sent to only those who are 2008 members.

Arlene Harris Update

Arlene left rehab last week and will be living with her granddaughter in Irving. Cards and letters can be sent to: Arlene Lewis

3006 Park Square #102
Irving, Texas 75060

How to Obtain Military Records

The National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis has opened the military records of more than 6 million service members who were retired or died before 1946.

To view original records, visit the center in person at 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, MO; call ahead to check whether records are intact or to make reservations at 1-314-891-0850,

To obtain copies, write to NPRC at 9700 Page Ave., St. Louis, MO 63132, or fax a request to 1-314-801-9195. Requests also may be submitted online at: www.vetrecs.archives.gov.

There may be a charge for copies, but that would be much cheaper than the price of gas these days.

National Archives & Records Administration

Using RootsWeb

By Jana Lloyd

Search Thingy Is Back

RootsWeb users have created millions of websites. About 10 million, to be more precise.

Some were created by individuals; others by historical societies, libraries, or genealogical groups.

Some are hosted by RootsWeb (freepages), and some are hosted elsewhere but linked to RootsWeb (registered websites) so RootsWeb users can locate them more easily.

They contain everything from information on a particular family to cemetery burial indexes to instructions on how to create your own freepage.

One of these Web pages may have just the information you are looking for. But how do you find it?

SEARCH THINGY

Welcome Search Thingy.

In the early days of RootsWeb, Search Thingy was developed to search all of the websites and freepages hosted by and linked to RootsWeb.

However, because of a lack of hardware and server space, it was not possible to keep Search Thingy up-to-date with the thousands of websites constantly being added to RootsWeb. It has been out-of-date for some time.

That has now changed. Thanks to a special RootsWeb developer, I am happy to announce that Search Thingy is up and running—and indexing 10 million websites.

So if someone, somewhere has put information you need on a RootsWeb website, chances are better than ever that you will find it.

WHERE IS SEARCH THINGY

Search Thingy is not in the most intuitive spot. Here's how you find it.

Locate the "Search Engines and Databases" heading on the RootsWeb homepage. Click the "Index of All Search Engines and Databases" link below this heading. Click "Search Thingy." It's the second database listed under "Our Most Popular Searchable Indexes."

BROWSING WEBSITES BY SUBJECT

Besides using Search Thingy to search all of the RootsWeb freepages and registered websites, you can also browse them by categories such as locality, surnames, and major projects hosted by RootsWeb.

To browse through the millions of RootsWeb websites by topic, click "Web Sites" on the RootsWeb header (at the very top of RootsWeb.com). You will be taken to the "Registry of Websites at RootsWeb."

I was excited to try Search Thingy out for myself, so as soon as I heard it was up and running I typed in the place name for a locality I am constantly researching on my family tree: Scranton, Lackawanna County, Pennsylvania.

Search Thingy returned an amazing number of hits. Some were more relevant than others, and I admit I had to do quite a bit of wading. But, eventually I located some great Web pages, including one for penny postcards of Scranton from the early 1900s, a fully scanned copy of the 1867-68 Scranton City Directory, and the fabulous USGenWeb county page for Lackawanna. I have visited this site many times, but when I revisited it this time I found some new leads, including an index to obituaries in the *Scranton Republican*, where I located an entry for my third great-grandfather.

I've put out a request on the PALACKAW Mailing List for someone to look up the obituary at the Scranton Public Library, so hopefully a kind soul will take pity on me and look it up (hint, hint).

I hope you will take ten minutes right now to try Search Thingy out for yourself. And, of course, to let me know what great treasures it unlocks for you.

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Note from the Editor: After spending years of researching on Rootsweb county-by-county, this Search Thingy is great! I wouldn't recommend it for Smith or any other very common surname search unless the given name is also used along with quotation marks such as, "Kelly Smith." This should limit the hits to mostly Kelly Smith.

Funny Tombstone Inscriptions

On the grave of Ezekial Aikle in East Dalhousie Cemetery, Nova Scotia:
"Here lies Ezekial Aikle, age 102. Only the good die young."

In a London, England, cemetery: "Here lies Ann Mann, who lived an old maid but died an old Mann. December 8, 1767."

In a Ribbesford, England, cemetery: Anna Wallace - "The children of Israel wanted bread, and the Lord sent them manna. Clark Wallace wanted a wife, and the Devil sent him Anna."

Harry Edsel Smith of Albany, New York - Born 1903—Died 1942:
"Looked up the elevator shaft to see if the car was on the way down. It was."

John Penny's epitaph in the Wimborne, England, cemetery: "Reader, if cash thou art in want of any, dig six feet deep and thou wilt find a Penny."

Anna Hopewell's grave in Enosburg Falls, Vermont: "Here lies the body of our Anna, Done to death by a banana. It wasn't the fruit that laid her low, But the skin of the thing that made her go."

On a grave from the 1880s in Nantucket, Massachusetts: "Under the sod and under the trees, lies the body of Jonathan Pease. He is not here, there's only the pod. Pease shelled out and went to God."

Thanks to Judith Williams

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