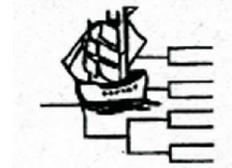


The Tracers



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Brandon Area Genealogical and Historical Society
PO Box 2635 Valrico, Fl. 33595-2635

Dear Members,

We are pleased to announce that our schedule of programs has been set for several months into the fall of 2008. We have some very special speakers and programs planned and should be of interest to a wide variety of researchers. Please consult our website for details. We regret to announce the resignation of Dot Smelt who has been a member of BAGHS since its inception. She has some pressing family and business situations that need her attention and is not able to continue at this time. She hopes to become active again in the future.

We certainly appreciate all Dot has done over the years to help make our society successful. Gus O'Dell will be taking care of most of the help for researchers which BAGHS provides. Gus is in the genealogy room at Bloomingdale Library most afternoons Monday through Thursday and will make himself available to anyone needing help beginning their family research. Noreta Wells will also be "on call" if Gus' schedule is not convenient for researchers. Anna Jean Springer has agreed to serve as Historian in Dot's place. We

certainly appreciate our many volunteers who are always willing to help our society be the success it is. Our annual election was held at the December meeting and the list of new and continuing officers is listed elsewhere in the newsletter. Each December our society holds our annual dinner to celebrate Christmas and the holiday season. This year our society provided ham and our members brought dishes to complement our entree. Instead of a formal program, we have members share the many ways they celebrate the season and what they might have done as a child to celebrate Christmas. Some

of our members have lived in other countries and share the customs of those countries and the traditions of their various ethnic groups. Marilyn Martin read the Cajun Night Before Christmas which was a big hit with everyone. We sang some traditional carols before ending the evening. A special thank you to those who provide refreshments for our meetings and to those who help set up and take down the tables and chairs for our meetings. We could not be as successful as we are without the help of all our members.

Remember to pay your dues and to encourage others to join our society so we can continue to provide quality programs each month. It is costly to have good programs each month and we need to maintain a goodly number of members. Some of our speakers are professional speakers and have a fee which is greater than our usual thank you for giving a program. Also, many come from quite a distance to be with us. The books our society purchased from the East Hillsborough Historical Society will soon be available in the genealogy room for our use. Please see Noreta Wells if you have any materials you wish to donate to the library. If you give it to one of the librarians or leave it at the desk, it will not get to our research room after being processed by the main library. Best wishes for successful research in the new year,

Scott L. Peeler, Jr.
President, BAGHS

A PRODUCT ALERT

The National Genealogical Society, with the support of the Federation of Genealogical Societies, advise you to be on the alert when considering the purchase of products based solely on surnames.

COATS OF ARMS

Several companies sell coats of arms or “ancestral arms” for thousands of surnames. Some employ artists to design original coats of arms; others adopt coats of arms found in books. Coats of arms purchased in shopping malls or by mail order are most likely not related in any way to the purchaser’s ancestry. Rules on the use of authentic coats of arms differ. You may rightfully use British coats of arms only if you can trace your ancestry through the male line directly to the who was first granted that coat of arms. To insure authenticity, you should register your arms with the English College of Heralds or the Scottish Lord Lyon, King of Arms.

HISTORY OF YOUR SURNAME

By the National Genealogical Society Ethics Committee.

A number of companies sell certificates or books that supposedly detail the history of your surname. Some also sell lists of addresses for people with the same last name. These companies mass-produce their products, changing only a few details to make them appear different. Information about various individuals with the same last name is not a family history. A list of names and addresses for individuals who simply share a surname is neither a family history nor a form of genealogy. Unless your surname is unique, you should not assume that people with the same last name are your relatives.

GENEALOGISTS BEWARE

Genealogy societies are continuing to warn genealogists of possible “scams” involved in mail-order offers. This list of firms of which to be wary is combined from several sources:

Betrice Baily, Scranton PA
Sharon Taylor, Copley OH
Jenny, Inc., Hyattsville MD
Halberts, Inc., Bath OH
American Gen. Research Institute
Washington DC
Prairie States Pub., Prophetstown IL
Walter Manning, Eugene OR
Search & Research, Dallas OR
Manhattan Tracers, New York NY
Amy Savin, Staten Island NY Elizabeth
Ross & American Gen. Inc.,
Scranton PA
R.G. Wilhelmina, Staten Island NY
Vicki Lee Carr, Roots Research , Bureau,
Ltd.
Anne Louise Baker of Computer

Genealogies Inc.

Mary Whitney of Genealogy Room Search
For Roots & “Noble Order, Descendants
of the Conqueror & His Companions”

Larry Watson, Lawton OK

Donald A Dougherty, Exeter NH

Genealogical Reference Builders Newsletter,
Port Falls ID

Diana Hanson, Oahu HI

Eric L. Jonanasson & Wheatfield Press,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Susan Pelton, Oakley ID

Richard E. Redding & Tree Researcher’s
Gen. Services, Englewood FL

Barbara Van Heart, Ft Wayne IN

James Warwick & Spector Books,
Moweaque II

Jack Evans, New Caster DE

McKinzie Publishing, L.A. CA

Robert E Franz & the Douglass Family Assn.
(Not to be confused with the reputable
Clan Society of North American)

Quarterly, Mobile AI

Robert Anderson & the Journal of Genealogy
Omaha NE

Brian De Breffny of London & Ireland

STATE ARCHIVES

REFERRAL LIST

Alabama Dept of Archives & History, 624
Washington Ave., Montgomery AL 36130

Alaska State Archives, 141 Willoughby Ave., Pouch
C, Juneau AK 99811

Arizona State Library, Dept. of Library, Archives &
Public Records, State Capitol, 1700 West
Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Arkansas History Commission, One Capitol Mall,
Little Rock, AR 72201

California Office of the Secretary of State,
California State Archives, 1020 O Street, Room 138,
Sacramento, CA 95814

Colorado Dept. of Administration, Division of State
Archives & Public Records, 1313 Sherman Street,
1-B20, Denver, CO 80203

Connecticut State Library, Archives, History &
Genealogy Unit, 231 Capitol Ave., Hartford, CT
06106

Delaware Div. of Historical & Cultural Affairs,
Bureau of Archives & Records Management, Hall of
Records, Dover, DE 19901

Florida State Archives, R.A. Gray Building, 500 South Bronough Street, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250

Georgia Dept. of Archives & History, 330 Capitol Ave., SE Atlanta, GA 30334

**Hawaii Dept. of Accounting & General Services, Archives Div., Lolani Palace Grounds, Honolulu, HI 96813

Idaho State Historical Society, Division of Manuscripts & Idaho State Archives, 610 North Julia Davis Drive, Boise, ID 83702

Illinois Office of the Secretary of State, Archives Div., Archives Building, Springfield, IL 62756

Indiana State Library, Archives Division, 100 North Senate Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46204

State Historical Society of Iowa, State Archives, Capitol Complex, Des Moines, IA 50319

Kansas State Historical Society, 120 West Tenth St. Topeka, KS 66612

Kentucky Public Records Division, Archives Research Room, P.O. Box 537, Frankford, KY 40602-0537

Louisiana Secretary of State, Archives & Records Division, P.O. Box 94125, Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Maine State Archives, State House-Station 84, Augusta, ME 04333

Maryland State Archives, 350 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis, MD 21401

Massachusetts State Archives - Columbia Point, 220, Morrissey Blvd., Boston, MA 02125

Michigan Dept. Of State, Michigan History Division, State Archives Unit, 717 West Allegan, Lansing, MI 48918

Minnesota Historical Society, Division of Archives & Manuscripts, 1500 Mississippi Street, St Paul, MN 55101

Mississippi Dept. Of Archives & History, 100 South Street, P.O. Box 571, Jackson, MS 39205

Director Records Management & Archives Service, Secretary of State's Office, P.O. Box 778, 1001 Industrial Drive, Jefferson City, MO 65102

SHARING FAMILY LORE

1. by *George G. Morgan*

I have often wished that it was possible to share all the things I've learned with a younger or less experienced person. It's not that I feel superior to him or her in any way, but I would love to teach them a lot of

human lore that could save them time, trouble, and perhaps even danger and grief.

The North and South American Indians were assumed to be ignorant savages by the first European explorers, but how wrong they were. The indigenous people had centuries of knowledge that helped assured their survival, even with primitive tools and weapons. They had a culture of knowledge, lore, religion, and traditions that sustained them. They passed this culture intact from generation to generation using stories, demonstration of skills, and repetitious practice. The Indians were, in many ways, far more intelligent and advanced than the Europeans. In fact, without the Indians' assistance and instruction, the settlers could not have successfully hunted nor could they have raised many of the crops that kept them from starving in the unfamiliar new environment.

We seem to have lost a significant portion of the knowledge and lore that was passed down through families. Yes, we have schools, colleges, and universities to teach the masses. However, who is there to teach the younger generations the skills that could maintain their lives if there were no grocery stores, kitchen appliances, GPS devices, and computers? Not one child in a thousand knows how to harvest and grind flour and make bread. Very few could plot a travel route for themselves using the stars. And how many do you think could build a rudimentary house without a calculator, power tools, and nails and screws?

Genealogy is much more than collecting names, dates, and locations. It involves studying history, geography, sociology, architecture, religion, and culture—all in context of the times in which our ancestors lived. When I am researching, I am always eager to examine historical events, especially those in the county or local area where my ancestors lived. These historical writings sometimes include my ancestors. But even if they don't, I gain an insight into what their lives must have been like and the people

with whom they interacted.

You and I would say to one another that any time is a good time to discuss genealogy and family history. However, the holidays are especially good times to share the stories and the family lore that you have. Perhaps you have made a great discovery of a U.S. federal census agricultural schedule that details what livestock and crops were raised on an ancestor's farm. You may have made candied citrus peel from a recipe your aunt or grandmother gave to you. And then, of course, you have probably already become the family archivist for treasures such as the family Bible, boxes of photographs, old letters and cards, your grandfather's christening dress, or your great-grandmother's patchwork quilt. By showing and talking about one or two of these items at a family gathering, whether it is during the holidays or not, you expand the knowledge of other family members.

The information you pass on may pique the curiosity of another budding genealogist. However, it is more important to share some knowledge of the family's heritage and life. You may not be communicating the essential survival skills that the Indians and previous generations of our family members taught to each new generation. You are, though, sharing the family lore and that is a priceless gift to this and the future generations.

From Your Editor

I am sorry for such a delay in the TRACER but with a major lack of articles to put into it and then when I had the Oct-Dec Newsletter set to go my system crashed and the file was not backed up. I requested some help from membership by submitting articles for the newsletter in the last issue. I have received 0 except for Scott Peeler. If you run across any article that may be of interest to the membership, you could submit it to me as well as writing something on your own if you are so inclined. A newsletter is only as good as its content, It takes some help from all members. You can EMAIL the article to me or drop it off at our meeting. If I am not present, I am sure Scott would make sure

I receive it.

My E-Mail address is: rfield22@verizon.net
Thanks, Ralph

TIPS FROM THE PROS: LIBRARY BOOK SALES PROVIDE TREASURES

By George G. Morgan

Many public libraries are supported by their Friends of the Library groups. One of their prime fund-raising ventures is the book sale. Such an event can be used to liquidate older versions of books that can be valuable to your genealogical research. Older atlases may be useless to a library or a donor, but may be invaluable to your work. Reference books; language dictionaries; almanacs; local, state and national histories; and other books may supplement your reference collection at a tiny fraction of the price of new books. Check with your library as to whether they or other libraries in your area sponsor book sales.

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