

# The Pasco County Line

P A S C O C O U N T Y G E N E A L O G I C A L S O C I E T Y

## SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Follow Tom's summer adventures at area libraries
- See what Linda did at the 2009 Family History Conference
- Read the winning entry for the PCGS writing competition

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## UP COMING EVENTS

**Sep 12:** The first meeting of the fall is always an informal "Welcome Back." We always ask members to tell us what they did or found during the summer. We don't know if our traveling bluebird will be back by then, but know he will have quite a story to tell. Then, we will tell all attending what we have planned for the coming season. Elections are coming up soon and members need to think about whether they want to run.

**Oct 10:** October will be a planning month and we will expect audience participation.

**Nov 14:** November is the month for nominations of new officers but

there will be a short program.

**Dec 12:** December is election of officers and again due to time constraints the program will be short but very informative.

We need to plan for out-of-town speakers now if we expect to get any for 2010. Everyone put on their thinking caps. Tentatively scheduled for January is a well known FGS speaker who will present a program on German research.

We need volunteers for the library and a new budget. We have many items to cover when we pick up the gavel in September. We plan to have something for everyone. Be ready for anything!!!

## WRITING COMPETITION RESULTS

For this year's competition, we asked you to write about a summer time adventure. We had four members who rose to the challenge:

- Emily Mae Hethcote
- James Mason Fritz
- Peggy Fortner
- Scott Black

At four minutes before the deadline, the last story popped up in email. The time-challenged submitter shall remain nameless! All of the stories are delightful. So picking one as the winner wasn't easy. We will be publishing all four stories starting with the winning tale in this issue. Look on page 6. ✂ Editor

## P R E S I D E N T ' S L E T T E R

I wonder if everyone feels as I do that this summer is going past very quickly. It seems like yesterday we were wishing everyone going north to have a safe trip and “see you in the fall.” Here we are - almost fall.

It's been a busy summer, a very warm one, plenty of rain, and I can't say that it cooled the days down that much. We needed the rain so we really can't complain and I'm sure you will find our water level a little higher than last May. We entered into Hurricane Season without a big blow and so far have been fortunate.

“Summer Camp” turned out to be fun, not only was research done but recipes were swapped, funny stories from childhood were exchanged, and even some lost ancestors were brought to light. We worked around baptisms and closures and added a few names to the log-in book, giving credence to our attendance and use of the facilities provided for us by LDS.

I'm probably one of those members that seldom use or post to our blog, I keep forgetting it sits up there—a link on our website—just waiting for members to click on it. You might be surprised what you will find in there. Cathy Vance set it up for our use and she has put much time and effort into making it a great read, an informative read, and you might even be surprised at what you can find there. After the original establishment of our blog, Tom Santa Cruz also became an administrator. His is very active and continuously seeks and provides articles for our en-

joyment. He is always in need of refreshing, unique, and interesting articles. Please, send an email or phone Tom and ask for an invitation to post items of interest or comment on the articles. We really need more interaction from all our members. The blog is meant to be user friendly, to ask questions, to provide constructive comments, and to create interest not only for our local society but genealogy everywhere. It is not meant for “anonymous,” detrimental, or snide remarks (they will be pulled down). If you want to comment on an article, make it a worthy read. Tom will help you out, give him a call.

I found something in a 2008 summer issue of the “*Forum*” that I feel needs to be read and followed by all. I quote Wendy Bebout Elliott, PhD, who was FGS President at the time: “...remember that societies, like families, consist of people with different goals, needs, personalities, backgrounds, education, and experience. As associates in a society or members of a family, they have a common goal—the good of the organization. But most will maintain other agendas as well. Acknowledge their special interests, skills, and talents, as well as your own as you work together to decide what is best for the group. Don't let squabbles divide your group, be it a society or a family instead, work together to build the group into a larger, productive, adhesive, cohesive body that serves everyone that belongs.”

I look forward to our meeting in September. Enjoy the rest of the summer. ✕

By Mike Shires

## THE LOCAL RULES WILL VARY

In the last issue, you were encouraged to take a trip to visit a “nearby” library or archive. I did. I made a list of names and date-of-death of people who died in a locale in the last 120 years, and checked to see if there were obituaries for them in newspaper collections in the local libraries.

I started in Tampa at the downtown **John F. Germany Library**, since I can check the online index of obituaries and death notices for **The Tampa Tribune**. The trip was always on Sunday afternoons. You can park on the street for free on Sunday and the traffic is not a big issue. Plus there is no crowd in the genealogy section of the library.

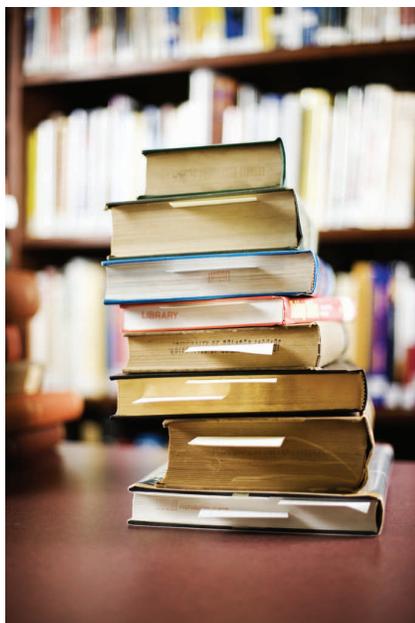
A trip to the **Quintilla Archive** in Plant City was a tag-along trip since I had other business down that way, and the archive was open. I had a list of hope obits in the **Plant City Courier** (sounds a bit ghoulish.) Here cameras are forbidden and personal computers are frowned on. I had to quickly generate a hand written list. Then I had to convince the librarian I only wanted to read and hand copy the information. They had digitized the newspaper and were selling copies starting at \$2 per 8x11 page. I finally got to view the microforms of the old newspapers.

The last trip was to the **Alachua County Library** in Gainesville. The **Gainesville Sun** is available on microfilm there. Cameras and computers are allowed. They also had recent years (back to 1986) of the newspaper indexed. My issue there was that the microfilm reader squeaked and I

had to use another, not a real problem.

My next adventures will include the **Marion County library** in Ocala to check out the **Ocala Banner** and the **Polk County Historical and Genealogical Library** in Bartow, which has copies of the Lakeland and Lake Wales newspapers.

I am not forgetting the **St. Petersburg Times** that is available online through **Google** for free (The indexing is marginal however.) And remember the **Dade City Banner** is on microfiche at the **Hugh Embry Library** in Dade City with later issues in our **PCGS Library**.



The online sources are still an excellent place to look too. You can access the **American Obituaries** database through the **Pasco County Library** using a library card. Additional newspapers are being added to the online databases. **Ancestry.com** continues to add digital newspapers to their collection. Also **ProQuest** and the **National Archives** are adding newspapers to their online collections. There is even a **California Digital Newspaper Collection** that covers the *Gold Rush* years.

*Tips:* If you can check for the obituaries and death notices, look at both. Sometimes one has a lot more surprising information than the other. And if you don't find an obituary or death notice check for the Thank you or Memorial Cards.

*Dangers(poetic):* One of my obituary findings lead to me checking **Ancestry.com**, which lead me to a posted family tree, and that lead me to even more connections that will require me to make additional verifications. X

By Thomas D. Santa Cruz

FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE 2009  
 NATIONAL GENEALOGY SOCIETY  
 THE BUILDING OF A NATION - FROM ROANOKE TO THE WEST

As I registered for my first national genealogy conference, I began to wonder what it would be like to dedicate four days trying to absorb as much information as I possibly could about one of my favorite pastimes. After all, the National Genealogy Society Family History conference is a big event! Over 1,000 people were descending on Raleigh, North Carolina to attend the May 13-16 conference!

My traveling companion and I arrived at the downtown Raleigh Marriot City Center late Tuesday afternoon. After a fast check in, I had 20 minutes to run over to the registration desk at the convention center next door. Could I make it? Yes! I checked in, got the conference schedule, and had my packet of items for the next few days. The conference was broken into several different tracks of presentations. They were:

- BCG Skill building
- Migration
- The Carolinas
- Ethnic
- Working with Records
- State
- Methodology
- Gen Tech
- Workshops

I quickly discovered that pre-planning before you arrive at conferences helps. Since I've worked with computers for the last 25 years professionally, I knew I could skip the sessions that were computer centric. I reviewed the schedule trying to pick sessions based on my experience or on the speaker for a given session.

My first lesson was that that if the session starts at 8 a.m. and you wanted a good seat, you need to be there by close to 7:30. The featured speaker for the first session was Ira David Wood, III. As he began to speak, I wondered what the relevance of his speech would be to my re-

search. Before long I realized it didn't matter. He was a great speaker and I was laughing quite a bit as he entertained us talking about his life. The conference was off to a good start. Some sessions were more popular than others.

Many of the speakers are well known to all of us. Now came my opportunity to meet or at least see some of them!

If you do research in North Carolina and you are unfamiliar with Helen Leary, this event offered a great opportunity to listen and learn from her. She is known to many as the genealogy authority in North Carolina. If you do research in Louisiana, particularly the Natchitoches area—or you are familiar with books related to evidence and citing sources—then you've heard of Elizabeth Shown Mills. Other speakers I listened to and enjoyed included Thomas W. Jones and A. B. Prutt. There are too many to name. Most of the sessions I attended were very good. Some were thought provoking, others reassuring—Hey, I do know something after all! As the afternoon approached, I quickly realized that I was getting to my saturation point and I could actually get too much genealogy in a single day. Sessions on the first day ran until 8 p.m. or so. I needed a break, so my day of genealogy ended at 5p.m.

My second day began with a workshop, which are small classroom sessions that have a separate fee in order to attend. My workshop was "From Dockets to Documents: Papers Created for Courts" presented by Marty Hiatt. I really like this format and I recommend workshops to anyone who can spare the additional funds to attend. The workshop combined lecture and hands on providing for a nice learning experience.

I finally had a chance to visit the exhibit hall on the second day. Many of the vendors we all know—Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.com, Family Tree, book vendors, other software vendors, and genealogy societies were all there—waiting to be visited. Throughout the next three days I walked around and talked with vendors and learned about different things related to genealogy. I signed up for the drawings given by many of the vendors. I didn't win anything, but someone did.

As the second half of the conference began, my time was divided between attending sessions for the conference and the State Archives, which is located in downtown Raleigh. After attending several sessions, I learned more and my curiosity was aroused. I wanted to find more information



on my relatives, many of whom are from the North Carolina area. In the archives I found a Supreme Court case that my relatives were involved in. I also discovered original wills that date back to the early 1800's and a lot of other information. I happily gave the clerks money to make copies. Wow, I have so much to review when I get home.

After four long days, the conference was now over. I learned a lot; but most importantly, I now know what a national level genealogy conference is all about from the viewpoint of attending. Will I do this again? Probably. I discovered that there are some advantages to attending a conference in a location where you have relatives and are able to do research at the same time. Happy Hunting! Ж

By Linda A. Perdue



## A WEBSITE TO WATCH

Whether you're a hobby genealogist or a professional, getting to source documents can sometimes be an expensive, frustrating task. Genlighten—a developing genealogy referral service—aims to make that task easy, reliable, and affordable.

Genlighten's goal is to list local researchers who can retrieve source documents for you quickly and for a reasonable fee. The researchers offering the service may be passionate amateurs or professionals picking up a bit of extra cash. In any event, your research request is fulfilled by a local person who knows exactly where to go and what to do.

The list of researchers offering lookups is limited at the moment. But the site looks ambitious. They have a drop-down list that includes countries. You can see this developing site at <http://genlighten.com/>.

## OTHER EVENTS

**26 September 2009:** The Genealogical Society of Tampa presents its annual fall seminar on the Dale Mabry campus of Hillsborough Community College. The speaker, Elizabeth Shown Mill, will present lectures on four topics during the day. For more event information, visit [www.fgstampa.org](http://www.fgstampa.org).

**13–14 November 2009:** The Florida State Genealogical Society presents its 33rd Annual FSGS Conference at the Hilton Melbourne Rialto Place, Melbourne, Florida. The featured speaker, Craig Roberts Scott, MA, CG<sup>SM</sup>, will present lectures on four topics. For more event information, visit [www.flsgs.org](http://www.flsgs.org).

## THE CURSE OF THE CARPETBAG GOVERNOR

It was late summer 1995 and we flew to Boston and rented a car for a leisurely trip through New Hampshire and Maine. Laura, of course, knew that traveling with me would involve detours to places that few would find interesting. However, the scenery was beautiful and she did, thankfully, marry me “for better or for worse.”

The day had been long and progress had been slow. We had visited two different house museums dedicated to the life of Franklin Pierce and even found another of his homes that wasn't open to the public. Then we found a summer home that had belonged to Grover Cleveland, also not a public attraction. But that didn't mean I couldn't take a lot of photographs of it and also enjoy the wonderful view from its front porch.



Traveling with me when I'm on a mission often means that there may not be time for lunch breaks and supper may come late. I have learned that sometimes my traveling companion becomes less pleasant when she doesn't get to eat, but, then again, there weren't many choices out in the wilds on this particular day.

I hadn't carefully watched the clock and I hadn't budgeted my time too well and I realized I was racing the last remaining rays of the late summer sun. There was a governor's grave not far across the line into Maine that I just had to visit before the day was done.

Marcellus Lovejoy Stearns had been one of the governors of Florida during the Reconstruction era following the War Between the States. He had been born and educated in Maine and had, of course, fought with the North during that conflict. With the loss of an arm in battle, he was

transferred to more civilian roles. As the North completed its conquest of the South, Stearns was assigned political responsibilities in several former Confederate states, primarily in Florida, but also later in Arkansas, before being swept back home when Reconstruction ended. His almost three years of service as a “carpetbag” governor of Florida during that time did not make him a beloved figure in Florida.

My attempt at scholarly research of Florida's governors did not allow me to choose favorites. So, I felt compelled to study this man as well. Since I

was in the neighborhood anyway—well, perhaps that was a stretch, but I do enjoy detours—I had determined that I would call on this former chief executive at his final resting place and make a good faith effort to pay my respects.

Alas, the sun was not cooperating and I raced from New Hampshire into Maine with dusk rapidly approaching. As I turned off less traveled roads onto even more desolate stretches, I was praying for prolonged daylight. Finding Governor Stearns' final resting place at Lovell was more complicated because of a bad northern habit of creating several villages with the same name. I was looking for Lovell, but with minimal luck. There are separate communities—South Lovell, North Lovell, and even Lovell Center. All of this is especially frustrating when one is racing with the sun. At least they hadn't forced this confusing practice on southern communities during their time of domination.

Suddenly, the last streaks of light turned into the darkest of nights. It was then that I realized, here in this lonely section of back roads Maine, that we had been cast into a Stephen King novel. Laura

and I began praying fervently for a happy ending. I was getting closer to this governor, though, so I was still willing to chance it and press deeper into the darkness.

We finally pulled up into an ancient graveyard, surely where Governor Stearns reposed, and the next challenge presented itself. I remembered then that I was driving a rental car, not my own vehicle, and there was no trusty flashlight behind the seat of this car.

I pointed the car toward the old tombstones and vainly began searching for names by high beam headlights. Soon I realized that this task was in vain and became quite disgusted with myself. Believe it or not, this wasn't the first time I had pushed my luck too far and had achieved the same (lack of) results.

This old Reconstruction governor was literally within a few feet of me, but I had absolutely no means of reaching him. We were scheduled to spend the night several hours away and instead here we were in this forsaken place, many miles from civilization, and I knew I couldn't prolong this visit any longer. To go away empty-handed was rather humiliating...there would be no photographs of this governor's grave. Then, glancing over at Laura, I realized from her glare that I would soon face much worse if I didn't quickly find at least some golden arches or something even more substantial.

I was kicking myself as I pulled out of that cemetery and began retracing my tracks down one lonely road to another. After all, when would I ever find myself again in this part of the country? Then we began to feel like we were going in circles and seeing the same sights over and over again, and then we began missing turns and having to back-track. It did indeed feel like something out of Stephen King.

Finally, quite assured that we were, at long last, on the right road out of Lovell (Lovell, North Lovell,

South Lovell, Lovell Center, et al), I had a sudden burst of self-confidence that we had finally escaped the villains of the darkness and we were enjoying a straight stretch of road for a change. I rejoiced to see oncoming headlights, realizing that we were returning to the land of the living.

After we passed, though, I was rather dismayed to see brake lights in the rearview mirror and the car turning around to follow us. A few seconds later, after seeing the flashing blue lights, I learned that driving 60 in a posted 45 mile-per-hour wilderness zone was not permissible and that the law extended even into this area. With ticket in hand, I was kicking myself even harder over this ill-fated attempt at research and adventure.

To the salvation of our marriage, I found a McDonald's drive-through not much further after getting back on the main highway. Several wrong turns later, we finally made it to our waiting hotel room in Augusta. We felt like we had survived the Stephen King spider web that had been set for us, but these native southerners didn't think we had escaped the curse of the carpetbag Florida governor from Maine. ✕

**By Scott Black**

## SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Want to have an article published in the newsletter? We'll be happy to accommodate you. Please submit items by the following deadlines:

—Oct 10, 2009 for Nov 2009

—Jan 10, 2010 for Feb 2010

—Apr 10, 2010 for May 2010

—July 10, 2010 for Aug 2010



Please feel free to send your submissions any time between now and the deadline. Early is great; by the deadline works too. Email your submissions to Pam at: [ptreme@hotmail.com](mailto:ptreme@hotmail.com)

WE'RE ON THE WEB AT  
[WWW.ROOTSWEB.COM/~FLPCGS/](http://WWW.ROOTSWEB.COM/~FLPCGS/)

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*Researching Our Ancestors is Family Fun...*

## **SOCIETY INFORMATION**

### **Meetings**

The Pasco County Genealogical Society meets the second Saturday of each month for membership meetings from September through May. The summer recess runs through June, July, and August when there are no meetings. The public is always invited and welcomed to all membership meetings. Meetings are held at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints at 9016 Fort King Road (State Road 41). The church is located at the intersection of Bailey Hill Road, which is midway between Clinton Avenue, Dade City, and Daughtry Road, Zephyrhills. Visit our website for a map:  
[www.rootsweb.com/~FLPCGS/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~FLPCGS/)

### **Membership**

Membership is open to all persons interested in genealogical research. Annual Dues cover the period January 1st through December 31st of the year and are paid in December for the year.  
—Individual—\$15.00  
—Family Membership—\$22.50  
—Student—\$5.00  
Visit our website for an application:  
[www.rootsweb.com/~FLPCGS/](http://www.rootsweb.com/~FLPCGS/)

### **Benefits**

Membership has its rewards! They include access to our library, quarterly newsletters, and the availability of our members, many of whom are longtime, respected genealogists.

### **Mission Statement**

To encourage research, publication, preservation and availability of genealogical material. To instruct and lend assistance to the membership and general public in the modern methods of research. These objectives shall be accomplished by regular and special meetings by means of lectures, workshops, field trips, and other educational activities. To encourage our members to strive for a personal level of achievement in genealogical research, to preserve that research with a documented lineage society and to place a record of research in the membership files. ✕