



The County Line

Bay County Genealogical Society Newsletter Bay County, Florida

Volume 26, Number 4

October 2006

Getting Started on Your Family's History

By William J. Zehner, CGSM

When I first started trying to research my ancestors many years ago, I had no clue where to start, what to do first, what to read, or whom to ask for guidance. I suspect that those same frustrations that derailed me are shared by more family historians than would care to admit it. That's what I was thinking about when I designed this year's seminar.

In each of the past five years, the BCGS has brought speakers of national stature to the panhandle, including Dean DeBolt, Arlene Eakle, Michael J. Neil, Ann Mohr Osisek, and John Colletta. While these annual seminars have been very educational, inspiring, and entertaining, they have tended to appeal more to experienced genealogists than to those still wrestling with the confusing business of getting started. This year we will shift gears.

After much trial and error, I discovered that researching ancestors is actually not difficult, and can be great fun—*once I knew where to start and what to do next*. The key is a methodical approach; it can save a ton of time and money in addition to lowering frustration levels.

Experienced genealogists know that we always proceed from the *known* toward the *unknown*. That means beginning at the *now* and working our way back in time. But the types of records that we use vary greatly in each time period, so we need to learn how to use different records as we move back through each generation in our pedigree chart.

So it makes sense to expose budding family historians to each new record type in the order that they will actually be using it. That way they can see immediate applications for each record type and see how each connects to other things they already know about. Many people seem to learn more readily by seeing examples rather than recipes, so we will be stressing specific examples over theory.

Something else I've discovered: No matter how skilled or charismatic a speaker is, listening to the same guy all day long is sure to put anyone to sleep. Learners respond well to a change of pace; a different face, a different personality, a different voice. It wakes up the senses.

Northwest Florida has an impressive collection of experienced genealogical practitioners, many of them members of our Society, and several of those will be on hand to present this comprehensive program. When you come to our BCGS seminar this fall, you will hear during the day from the BCGS Vice President, Judy Bennett; the most experienced genealogical lecturer in Bay County, Nancy Roberts; Bay County's Historian Laureate, Marlene Womack; and Northwest Florida's only Certified Genealogist, Bill Zehner.

Attendance is limited by the Fire Marshal to 40 seats. It won't take long to fill them. Don't be left out. See page five for registration details. We all look forward to seeing YOU there.

President's Message

Our President has been quite ill with shingles, so I am doing my best to fill in for him, and will write this article.

It has been, it seems, a long time since we had a regular meeting. (Two months *is* a long time!) During that time we have had monthly Board meetings, and they have been great. We have not held Board meetings during June and July in the past, but this year we needed to make preparations for our fall seminar.

We recently received some very disturbing news: Linda Kleback, the genealogy librarian, is leaving town. Her husband has a new position near Washington, D.C., so they will be moving. It will be a great loss to us all—the library and genealogists alike—but we send her on with sincere good wishes, and we know she will be able to visit the National Archives, as well as other places in the D.C. area, to conduct her research. Maybe she can even go to the Federation of Genealogical Societies' annual conference in Boston. We went in 2003 when it was held in Orlando, and it was excellent.

The Florida State Genealogical Society will have its annual meeting November 10-11, 2006, at the Crowne Plaza Melbourne Oceanfront in Indialantic, Florida. For further information and a flyer, don't hesitate to contact any of our Board members.

Our speaker for the September meeting was Mr. Bill Kinsaul, a director in the Bay County Clerk of Court's office. He presented an overview of the types of public records in the Bay County Courthouse that are available to genealogists and family historians. When I was president, I tried for quite a while to have someone from that office speak to us, but wasn't too successful. With the help of Barbara Winge and Joyce Soares, our new publicity chair, we were able to make this happen. I am deeply grateful.

On another matter, January 2007 is approaching rapidly, which means we will have an election of

officers at our annual meeting on December 16. A slate of officers will be chosen by the nominating committee and presented to the Society at the November general meeting. I hope there will be some volunteers for the nominating committee, as well as volunteers to assume some of the roles that need filling. These are important jobs, and should be taken seriously. Those elected will hold the positions for two years.

I know that I am the program chairman, but I have not had time to put my efforts into seeking speakers for the October and November meetings. It would be helpful if you would give me some suggestions for topics and/or speakers who you would like to hear.

Finally, do not forget that we have a seminar planned for November 4th. It will be an excellent seminar with several of our local people covering subjects that have information for which we are all searching. The cost will be very reasonable for this all-day session and liberal discounts are available for those who pre-register by 15 October. We will furnish coffee, tea, water, juice, and other goodies to enjoy, but will NOT furnish lunch. You may "brown bag" it, or go to any one of the several nearby downtown eateries during the lunch break. Please encourage friends that have been thinking about "getting into" genealogy to attend. It is an inexpensive and painless way to learn how to get started.

Berniece Loper, for the President

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Nominating Committee for 2006 Elections

BCGS bylaws require an election of officers and directors at the December general meeting in even years. They serve for two-year terms beginning at the end of the December meeting at which they are elected. This year's nominating committee was appointed by the acting President Berniece Loper at our general meeting in September 2006 as required by our bylaws. The committee consists of Pat Beach, Joyce J. Soares, and Bobbie Tate. This committee is responsible for identifying and nominating individuals from our Society who are willing and able to serve the Society for the next two years.

If one of them should approach you for that purpose, please consider giving some of your time to this good cause. Also, if you know of an individual who you think might make a good officer or director, please let one of these committee members know. Further, if you don't care to serve as an officer, but might like to serve on one of our committees—whether as a chair or not—please talk to one of the nominating committee members so they can recommend you to the new president who will be appointing the committee chairs at the January 2007 Board meeting.

Offices to be filled include: president, first vice-president (programs), second vice-president (membership), recording secretary, corresponding secretary, treasurer, and four directorships.



Board Votes to Increases Dues

Your Executive Board has been very busy this summer. The Board normally doesn't meet during July and August, but this year it put in some overtime on budget and seminar issues. As reported previously in this newsletter, your budget committee has been busy trying to identify ways to get our

budget back into balance. Every homeowner and business owner is aware of the trials and tribulations associated with these efforts, and our deliberations generated considerable excitement as well.

Several areas were identified where small reductions in expenditures could be made without impairing our mission. Modest reductions were made in the amounts allocated for memberships and donations to other genealogical societies, and for book purchases for the genealogy section of the library.

The Board voted to conduct our annual seminar with the aid of local speakers in order to save the cost of lodging, transportation, and honorarium for an out-of-town speaker. Budget analysis for this option indicates that our annual seminar may be able to break even or even make a small profit for the first time in several years.

Finally, considering that our present dues of \$15 per year is well below the median for similar small genealogical societies, the Board voted to raise member dues, beginning in January 2007, to \$20 per year.

Your Board believes that these measures, taken together, are necessary and sufficient to get the Society out of the red in 2007.

2007 Dues Due!

It is time to renew your membership again. Your membership will expire on December 31, 2006. Please mail your check, payable to the Bay County Genealogical Society, to The Bay County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 662, Panama City, FL 32402-0662, or see Judy Bennett or Walter Sherman at any regular meeting.

Membership is a still real bargain at \$20.00 per year.

What Is Available in a Database?

By Bonnie Shipp

When searching for information about your ancestors and their descendants, it's best to check the timeframe and content covered by the database, book, or microfilm. For instance, Ancestry's obituary collection database contains millions of obituaries, but by no means all extant obituaries. Ancestry lists the newspapers that are covered with dates for each newspaper. Ancestry suggests you also check its historical newspaper collection, local libraries and newspaper offices. No book, microfilm, or database contains all the information on any particular subject. Read the fine print to discover if a database might contain information that could be helpful to you. Ancestry has a complete list of databases listed by location, title and author.

Check the timeframe covered by a particular website. For instance, New York immigration records for Castle Garden cover 1830–1912. For Ellis Island, the records cover 1892–1954. Boston Passenger Lists are from 1820–1943. The time periods covered by each set of immigration records vary greatly. Timeframes covered by databases are usually noted on the database. However, it is sometimes necessary, as in the case of Ellis Island, to search other sites for a particular time period.

Land and court records that predate a county's incorporation may be found in the original county. For instance, if you are researching Bay County, Florida, before July 1, 1913, the records may be found in the offices of the county appraiser where the property was located—which could have been Washington, Calhoun or Walton counties. Land records after July 1, 1913 will be found in the Bay County Property Appraiser's office.

At www.ancestorhunt.com we find an explanation of what might be found in the Social Security Death Index: "Social Security was passed in 1935. Don't expect to find very early death records here. Most deaths will be 1962 or later. However, you will find a few earlier ones including approximately

400,000 railroad retirement records 1900–1950s which have been added to this SSDI index."

We are so fortunate to have online computer databases containing many genealogical records, entire books, and newspapers available to us, so please use them to the fullest extent possible. To enjoy your research and save time and frustration, know what timeframe and content each source covers.



Goodbye, Linda

This past month, Linda Kleback notified the Board of her intention to leave the Panama City area and move to Maryland. Linda is a plank-holder of our Society, having been among the founding members when the Society was formally convened in 1980, and has been one of our most active members ever since. She has served in many capacities over the intervening years, including Society president, newsletter editor, and librarian chair.

Linda Pazics Kleback probably has the highest name-recognition rating of any genealogist in Bay County. She is known all across the panhandle for her weekly column, "Tracing Pasts," which she has written for the *Panama City News Herald* since 1991.

Linda also served the Florida State Genealogical Society for many years in several offices. She was the editor of the Florida State Genealogical Society's quarterly, *The Florida Genealogist*, from 1990 to 1995, and served two terms as the Society's president from 1996 to 1999. She was the chairman of its Awards Committee for 2005.

Linda has been a staff member of the Bay County Public Library for many years where she specialized in building, organizing, and maintaining its genealogy section. In her spare time, she served as the chairman of the committee that compiled *The Heritage of Bay County* in 2005. She also writes book reviews for Ancestry.com and has her own website at www.kleback.freeservers.com



Getting Started on Your Family's History

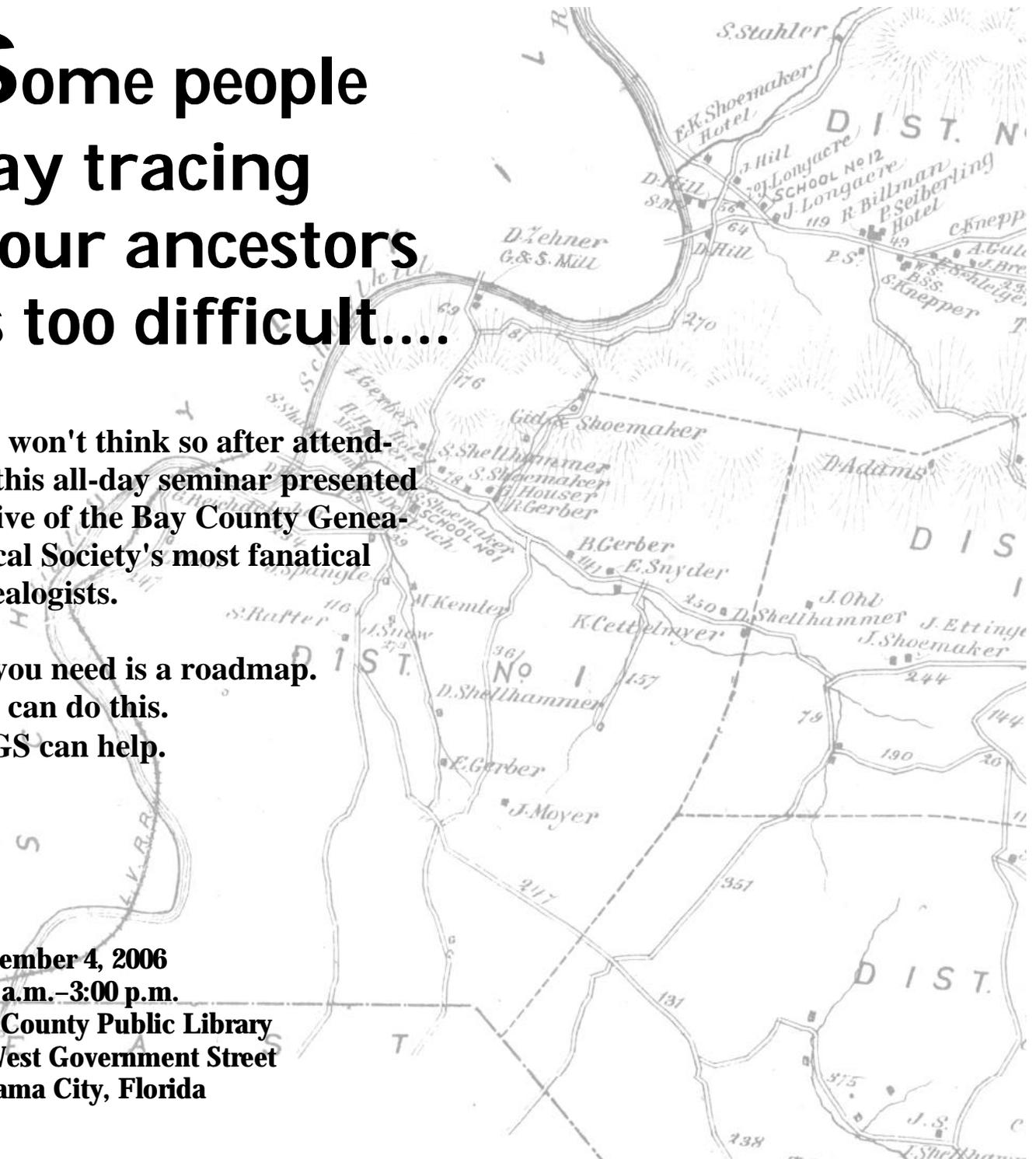
**Some people
say tracing
your ancestors
is too difficult....**

You won't think so after attending this all-day seminar presented by five of the Bay County Genealogical Society's most fanatical genealogists.

**All you need is a roadmap.
You can do this.
BCGS can help.**

**November 4, 2006
8:30 a.m.-3:00 p.m.**

**Bay County Public Library
25 West Government Street
Panama City, Florida**



Tour Guides

Judy Bennett

BCGS Vice President and Seminar Chair

Nancy Roberts

Bay County's most experienced genealogical lecturer/educator

Marlene Womack

Bay County's Historian Laureate

Bill Zehner, CGSM

Northwest Florida's only Certified Genealogist

Schedule

8:30-9:00 Registration

9:00: Beginnings— Zehner

10:00: 20th Century Records—Bennett & Womack

11:00: 19th Century Records—Roberts

12:00-1:00 Lunch—Bring a brown bag; juice & water provided

1:00: Sources, Citations, Resolving Conflicting Evidence—Zehner

2:00: Internet—Bennett

3:00: Family History Library & Family History Centers—Shipp

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*Special Offer!*

If you are already a member of BCGS, take \$5 off the regular price.

If you would like to become a new member, you save \$15. (Regular membership cost is \$20 plus seminar cost of \$15 = a \$35 value). Plus, your new membership is good through the end of 2007! Offer open to non-members only.

Note: You *must* pre-register to obtain these discounts. Register early: seating is limited.

**Registration Form**

**Getting Started  
on  
Your Family's History**

**November 4, 2006  
Panama City, Florida**

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Walk-in: \$18

Pre-registered before Oct 15:

I'm not a BCGS member: \$15

I'm a BCGS member: \$10

I want to join BCGS *and* attend the seminar (\$35 value): \$20

Make checks payable to the Bay County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 662, Panama City, FL 32402-0662

Price includes bottled water, juice, coffee, and pastry plus handout materials.

Lunch NOT included. Bring a brown-bag lunch or choose from several nearby restaurants.

Questions?

Contact Judy Bennett at 850-215-1579 or judybennett@knology.net

Visit the BCGS website:

[www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs)



## Coming Events

### *BCGS Events*

Our Programs Committee, chaired by Berniece Loper, continues to provide information, education, and entertainment for the Society throughout the year. She invites you to share any thoughts you may have about future topics and speakers. Meanwhile, please give Berniece a big “thank you” if you have enjoyed her efforts.

October 21: TBD

November 18: TBD

December 16: Election of Officers and Christmas party.

### *14th Annual Panama City Family History Symposium Planned*

By Bill Zehner

The 14th Annual Panama City Family History Symposium will be held on the 17th of February 2006 at 3140 State Avenue in Panama City, Florida, presented by the Panama City Stake Family History Center. A wide variety of topics at the beginning and intermediate level will be available. A dozen of Bay and Okaloosa Counties' leading genealogists will present more than 20 topics of local interest in six tracks to help solve problems and locate ancestors:

- Beginners
- Intermediate
- Technology
- Internet
- Ethnic
- Software

Several sessions show how to access and use the world's largest collection of genealogical materials, including photocopies of original records from all over the world that are available right here in our own hometown through the microfilm-loan program of the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, as well as millions of compiled records, finding aids, and how-to guides available on home computers via the FamilySearch Internet website.

This seminar is free and open to all. Please bring a brown-bag lunch. Free juice and water will be provided. Schedule, course details, and speaker biographies will be posted as soon as they are finalized on

[www.northwestfloridagenealogy.com/fhcseminar](http://www.northwestfloridagenealogy.com/fhcseminar)



## Summer Programs

### *Accessing Genealogical Records at the Bay County Courthouse*

Presented by Bill Kinsaul, Deputy Clerk,  
Office of the Clerk of Court

On September 16, 2006, we were treated to a virtual tour of the genealogical records in the Bay County, Florida, Courthouse, presented by Mr. Bill Kinsaul, the Bay County Deputy Clerk of Court. Mr. Kinsaul described several record classes of particular interest to genealogists, including official records, marriage licenses, civil records, criminal records, and probate records.

The assembly was very interested to discover that Bay County is among Florida's leading counties in making their records available online (with some important exceptions that are dictated by the state). He provided a detailed walk-through of the Bay County records website, including what is, and what is not, included there. One of Mr. Kinsaul's major functions is to expedite the migration of Bay County records onto the Internet, but for those records not yet available online, he specified the record location, a point of contact, and a phone number for each record class. Handling and copying rules for those records that must be viewed at the courthouse were made clear. This presentation drew the largest crowd of any recent BCGS meeting. Special thanks to our new publicity chair, Joyce Soares

—Ed.



## Family History Center News

By Bonnie Shipp

**New Imaging System.** The Family History Center of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is pleased to announce the arrival of a new microfilm/fiche reader-printer imaging system. This system enables patrons to view microfilm or microfiche and save their images to a CD, print them, or email them. One of the big advantages of the computer program is being able to convert microfiche images from negative to positive. It is so nice to be able to view black print on white paper. It is also possible to enhance the image with contrast and brightness adjustments. It's great to take home a CD with images that can then be viewed on your home computer. If you plan to save any images to a CD, please bring a blank CD to the Center with you.

Bama Young, Director of the Family History Center, invites you to come in to see how the new system works and what it can do for your genealogy research. Those of you who have film/fiche at the center may want to view the images with the new equipment to see if they can be improved.

**New computers added.** Two powerful new computers have been added recently, so there are now three online computers available for your research. Ancestry.com will be available on all three computers.

**New Hours.** The Panama City Family History Center has recently increased the number of operating hours for the convenience of its patrons. The new hours are:

Tuesday: 9 a.m. to 12:00 noon and 5 to 8 p.m.

Wednesday and Thursday: 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Friday and Saturday: 9 a.m. to 12:00 noon.

Closed: New Year's Eve and Day, Good Friday, Memorial Day, Independence Day, and Labor Day weekend; plus one week each during Thanksgiving and Christmas.

The Family History Center's phone: 785-9290



## New Books

*In the Genealogical Collection Of  
The Bay County Public  
Library*

By Linda Pazics Kleback  
Genealogy Specialist  
Bay County Public Library



26-Aug-2006

### MICROFILM:

Ohio. Pioneer Project of Church and Cemetery Records; St. Mary's and Old St. Joseph's German Catholic Cemetery, Frey-Geigers (V210 #119) – OHIO

Pension and Bounty land Warrants Application files, Packer, Eldredge- Pagan, David (M804 #1858) – REVOLUTIONARY WAR

Army, Compiled Service Records of Soldiers; Virginia: Clark's Illinois Regiment, Virginia State Troops – REVOLUTIONARY WAR

NEW YORK: 1850 census, 4 rolls; 1860, 3 rolls; 1880, 5 rolls: 1900: 3 rolls

### GENERAL:

Everyday Life During the Civil War – Gen. R973.71 Var

Family Chronicle Year Four, September 1999-August 2000 – Gen. R929.1 Fam

Family Chronicle Year Three, September 1998-August 1999 – Gen. R929.1 Fam

Family Chronicle Year Two, September 1997-August 1999 – Gen. R929.1 Fam

In Search of Your British & Irish Roots – Gen. R929.1 Bax

Minutes 216th General Assembly, 2004 Part- Office of the General Assemble, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – Gen. R285 Min

Preserving Family Keepsakes: Do's and Don't's – Gen. R363.69 Mil

Pronouncing Dictionary of Proper Names – Gen. R423.1 Pro

The Andrew Zumwalt Family, Outline of the First Four Generations, Volume One – Gen. R929.42 Ree

The Census Book – Gen. R929.1 Dol  
 The Family Chronicle Collection – Gen. R929.1  
 Fam  
 The Handybook for Genealogists, 11th Edition –  
 Gen. R929.3 Han  
 The Source: A Guidebook to American Genealogy  
 (Third Edition) – Gen. R016.929 Sou  
 The Writer's Guide to Everyday Life in the 1800's –  
 Gen. R973.91 Mac  
 Your English Ancestry: A Guide for North Ameri-  
 cans – Gen. R929.1 Irv

**ALABAMA:**

The Heritage of Marengo County, Alabama – AL  
 Gen. R976.1 Her

**FLORIDA:**

Family Maps of Holmes County, Florida – FL Gen.  
 R912 Boy  
 Indians of Central and South Florida 1513-1863 –  
 FL Gen. R975.9004 Han  
 Pioneering in the Panhandle: A Look at Selected  
 Events and Families As a Part of the History of  
 South Santa Rosa County – FL Gen. R975.9 Wel  
 The Heritage of Washington County, Florida – FL  
 Gen. R975.9 Her

**GEORGIA:**

Carroll County, Georgia, Cemeteries, Volume 1,  
 Land Districts 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11 (Western Sec-  
 tion) – GA Gen. R929.3758 Car

**ILLINOIS:**

Clay County Illinois 1860 Census – IL Gen.  
 R929.42 Mac  
 Illinois, Her Counties, Her Townships, and Her  
 Towns – IL Gen. R929.1 Ill

**KENTUCKY:**

Adair County Kentucky Records #1: Marriages  
 1802-1850; Deaths 1852 – KY Gen. R929.1 Ada  
 Casey County Kentucky Records #1: Marriages  
 1807-1850; Deaths 1852 – KY Gen. R929.1 Cas

**SOUTH CAROLINA:**

A Guide to South Carolina Genealogical Research  
 and Records – SC Gen. R929.1 Hol  
 Annals of Newberry – SC Gen. R975.739 One  
 Every Name Index to The Annals of Newberry –  
 SC Gen. R929.42 Dav

Greenwood County Sketches: Old Roads and Early  
 Families – SC Gen. R917.57 Wat  
 Miscellaneous Cemetery Records from McCormick,  
 Laurens and Greenwood Counties, South Caro-  
 lina 1990 – SC Gen. R929.42 Bra  
 Old Abbeville: Scenes of the Past of a Town Where  
 Old Time Things Are Not Forgotten – SC Gen.  
 R975.735 War  
 South Carolina Genealogical Research – SC Gen.  
 R929.1 Sch

**VIRGINIA:**

Finding Your People in the Shenandoah Valley of  
 Virginia, Fourth Edition: A Genealogical Guide  
 – VA Gen. R929.3755 Goo  
 Kegley's Virginia Frontier – VA Gen. R975.502  
 Keg  
 Married Well and Often: Marriages of the Northern  
 Neck of Virginia 1649-1800 – VA Gen. R929.42  
 Hea  
 Middlesex County, Virginia, Marriage Bonds and  
 Minister Returns 1740-1852 – VA Gen. R929.1  
 Mid  
 The 1787 Census of Virginia: Frederick County,  
 Winchester Town – VA Gen. R929.1 Sch  
 The 1787 Census of Virginia: James City County,  
 Williamsburg City – VA Gen. R929.1 Sch  
 The 1787 Census of Virginia: Lancaster County –  
 VA Gen. R929.1 Sch  
 The 1787 Census of Virginia: Washington County –  
 VA Gen. R929.1 Sch  
 Virginia Genealogical Research – VA Gen. R929.1  
 Sch

## Queries & Questions

Queries are now being accepted as space per-  
 mits. They are free to members; \$5.00 per query  
 to non-members. Submissions should be typed  
 and brief (150 words or less), and may be edited  
 for clarity. See back page for e-mail & postal  
 mail addresses. As always, remember to enclose  
 SASE when requesting help from others.

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Bay County Genealogy Society  
P. O. Box 662  
Panama City, FL 32402-0662

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***THE BAY COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 662 PANAMA CITY, FL 32402-0662***

The Bay County Genealogical Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to the advancement, education and promotion of personal and general genealogical research and the preservation of historical records relative thereto, for the cultural enrichment of the people of Bay County, Florida, and surrounding areas.

Membership in this organization, with voting rights and the right to hold office, is open to anyone, without restriction of race, color, creed, or sex, who has a continuing interest in genealogy and whose membership dues are current.

Meetings are held the third Saturday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the Panama City Library. The Executive Board meets at Quality Analytical Laboratories, 2355 St. Andrews Blvd. at 10:00 a.m. also on the third Saturday of the month. Membership dues are \$20 per year for individuals, \$20 for single-address families, and \$10 for full-time students, payable in December for the following year. Our Web address is <http://www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs>

***The County Line, Newsletter of the Bay County Genealogical Society (BCGS)***

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