



The County Line

Bay County Genealogical Society Newsletter Bay County, Florida

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January 2007

BCGS Fall 2006 Seminar Widely Acclaimed

Getting Started on Your Family's History

Story by William J. Zehner, CGSM, photos by Ron Young

Those who attended our November seminar were unanimously positive about what they saw and heard. Four of our Society's members put on an all-day event featuring six sessions that covered a broad but basic introduction to family history research. Twenty-five beginners registered in advance, and at least 21 attended the all-day seminar. At least nine joined the Society as new members.



Bill Zehner opens the seminar with an outline of the sessions to come throughout the day.

The seminar was designed to begin at the very beginning—with ourselves—and proceed from the known to the unknown. Because different kinds of genealogical records were created at various times in the past, the six sessions covering the major rec-

ord types were presented in the order needed by genealogists as they work back in time:

- Beginnings
- Twentieth Century Records
- Nineteenth Century Records
- Organization, Citations, and Evidence
- Internet
- Family History Library

Although the seminar was designed for beginners, several of the attendees were actually a little beyond the starting gate. However, all seemed to agree that plenty of useful information was presented because the speakers touched on several important areas that usually are not covered in beginners' offerings.



Nancy Roberts awaits her turn to present "Nineteenth Century Records."

In addition to the speakers—Judy Bennett, Nancy Roberts, Bonnie Shipp, and Bill Zehner—



Attendees take a break while awaiting the last session of the day. On the left are Beverly Gross of the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, Family History Center Director Bama Young, and refreshments host Sally Rinehart. In the center is publicity chair Joyce Soares, speaker Judy Bennett behind speaker Bonnie Shipp. In the back right are Bill Zehner, Cindy D'Aurora, Sid Brickerd, and Bill Querengesser.

many other volunteers pitched in to make the event one of our most successful. Rebecca Saunders made a special trip to the Library on her day off to let us in early. Then Bill Querengesser and Cliff Loper greeted attendees at the door. Walter Sherman and Berniece Loper handled registration; Sally Rinehart and Jo Hanson attended to the refreshments and snacks and Greg Morrison supplied the ice. Our seminar chairman, Judy Bennett, coor-

minated all the arrangements and organization, including setting up the room and audio-visual equipment, and collating all the speakers' handouts.

Perhaps the most important task was publicity, including distribution of brochures, flyers, and newspaper and society articles. That was admirably handled by Joyce Soares, who also made two TV appearances for the cause.



Seminar Chairman Judy Bennett presents "Twentieth Century Records."

In This Issue

President's Message.....	3
Executive Board for 2007	4
Welcome New Members.....	4
Bay County Library Gets New Genealogy Specialist.....	5
Enjoying Your Own E-Circle.....	6
Presidents Past	6
Coming Events.....	7
Programs Review	7
New Books.....	8
<i>The Heritage of Bay County Florida Volume II.....</i>	9

President's Message

It is an honor and a privilege to have been elected your new president. I also view it as a great challenge. The very reason for the existence of genealogical societies is being called into question by a vast and rapidly-growing panoply of not only genealogical information, but also of educational tools on the Internet. Our Society, like most, was created and fashioned in a period when there was no Internet to guide, teach, mentor, or provide moral support to those interested in learning about their roots. Many societies across the country are experiencing a decline in membership and interest. So how is our Society to survive in the twenty-first century?

We must redefine ourselves in such a way that we provide services to our members that the Internet does not and can not. The Internet, for all its wealth of (sometimes inaccurate) information, is just a collection of cold, frustratingly-difficult machinery that does not always respond well to the specific needs and questions of our members in the pursuit of their ancestral heritage. Our challenge, then, is to identify our niche and respond to it robustly. That is the vision of this administration.

Our Society has made significant progress over the past couple of years. We have implemented a comprehensive new set of bylaws and standing rules. We have a new electronic membership database and an improved accounting process for tracking our financial progress. We have a quality newsletter and Web site.

When BCGS hosted the 29th Annual Florida State Genealogical Society's Conference here in Panama City Beach in the Fall of 2005, it was rated as its best conference ever in several ways. Attendance exceeded projections by 44 percent, and handily beat St. Petersburg's record of the previous year despite its much larger population. We were the first local host society to provide speaker introductions and photographic reviews of the activities.

We were the first genealogical society in Florida to post a countywide index to every interment in all of our 38 county cemeteries on the Internet where

they can be searched from anywhere in the world. We are still the only Florida county to have done so. Our contributions to the Bay County Public Library have helped make its genealogical collection one of the most comprehensive of any similarly-sized county in Florida.

Each spring, our Society, in cooperation with the Panama City Stake Family History Center, presents the largest genealogical event in Florida north of Cocoa. Family historians from every one of the 13 counties west of Tallahassee typically attend the annual Panama City Family History Symposium.

Clearly, our Society has been moving in the right direction and has much to be proud of. Nevertheless, our Society remains small and fragile. We must continue to grow if we are to survive.

It shall be the objective of this administration to continue to move forward in identifying and providing valuable services to our membership and to all family historians throughout northwest Florida. New educational opportunities for the community are priority one. Vice-President Bennett is responsible for identifying exciting and interesting new programs for our monthly meetings, and for establishing our events calendar well in advance so that our members can make plans to attend. Publicity Chair Soares has already greatly expanded our advertising avenues to make sure the community is aware of our events. Vice President Shipp is refining our operations to ensure that membership in our Society is rewarding for all, regardless of experience level.

A balanced budget for 2007 is another major objective. A Web site overhaul is under consideration. A Bay County Pioneer Certificate is among the new initiatives being considered.

I challenge each of you to join me in building a bigger, better Society. Take five minutes right now and think of one person you know who shares your interest in his/her heritage. Drag that person to our next meeting. We'll do the rest.

Bill Zehner

BCGS Executive Board for 2007-2008

This year's nominating committee, consisting of Pat Beach, chairman Joyce J. Soares, and Bobbie Tate, presented a slate of candidates to the members assembled at our annual meeting on December 16. The following nominees were elected for the coming year. Please bring your suggestions for improving your Society to their attention, and please support their efforts to improve our contributions to the community.

Committee chairs will be appointed at the business meeting in January. Your Board is looking for a few good men and women to serve in various capacities.

Office	Officer
President	William J. Zehner, CG
Vice President-Programs	Judy Bennett
Vice President-Membership	Bonnie Shipp
Recording Secretary	Marlene Womack
Corresponding Secretary	Joyce J. Soares
Treasurer	Walter Sherman
Director	Pat & Dick Beach
Director	Berniece Loper
Director	Sally Rinehart
Director	Bobbie Tate



Welcome New Members

By Judy Bennett

As a result of our Beginner's Workshop registration form with options for joining the Society, many attendees became new members. Please take a moment to meet our new friends and get to know them at our regular meetings.

- Shelia C. Banks
- Brandi Barnes
- India Belisle
- Cindy Borders

- Sid Brickerd
- Elizabeth Crusan
- Tina Cummings
- Ann Dauphin
- Cindy D'Aurora
- Linda Dino
- Mary Ann Flowers
- Anna Frisby
- Sandra Ruffing
- Rebecca Saunders
- Suzanne Shay
- Mary Alicia Varnadoe

Surnames

This column could help you with your genealogy, because this newsletter will be listed in PERSI, which is used universally. Following are some example for you to use, although they are real people. We will include a maximum of five surnames per member in future newsletters.

- HATTERSLEY- Bradford, Yorkshire, Eng.
 - MAYSON-Edgefield, SC
 - MOORE-Bute, NC & Edgefield, SC
 - WOOLFOLK-Caroline, VA & Abbeville, SC
 - PORTER-Cumberland, PA & Lawrence, IN
- Contact Judy Bennett, judybennett@knology.net

2007 Dues Due!

If a dollar sign (\$) appears on your address label of this issue, your dues are delinquent. Please tender payment immediately so you don't miss any issues of *The County Line*.

Please mail your check or money order, payable to the Bay County Genealogical Society, to The Bay County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 662, Panama City, FL 32402-0662, or see Bonnie Shipp or Walter Sherman at any regular meeting.

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

Bay County Library Gets New Genealogy Specialist

By Bill Zehner

The Bay County Public Library recently announced that Rebecca Brown Saunders has been promoted to the Genealogy Specialist, replacing Linda Pazics Kleback, who held the position from 1989 until she moved to Maryland last November.



Rebecca is seen here receiving an Outstanding Achievement Award in Florida Genealogy from the Florida State Genealogical Society at their conference in Panama City Beach in November 2005. It was presented by FSGS Awards Chairman, Linda Pazics Kleback. *Photo courtesy of Greg Morrison*

A Panama City native, Rebecca has worked at the Library more than 37 years, beginning as a volunteer while working on a Girl Scout merit badge. Having worked in almost every department in the library, she is presently Local History Specialist and is serving in a transitional capacity as head of Automated and Technical Services. She has been Local History Specialist since 1985.

She is presently serving a fifth term as President of the Bay County Historical Society. She also

served on the board of the Florida Historical Society and as awards and scholarship chairman for the Florida State Genealogical Society for three years. She is also a Florida Pioneer Researcher.

She was project coordinator for a grant, funded in part by a Library Services and Technology Act Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and administered by the State Library of Florida, to digitize and place on the Internet the Local History Photograph Collection. Almost 8,000 of the Local History Room photographs are currently on the Internet.

She served as the topical article chairman for the *Heritage of Bay County* book project, and is serving in that capacity for Volume 2 of the *Heritage of Bay County*. (See page 9 for details—Ed.)

She works closely with the Downtown Improvement Board, Panama City Main Street and the Community Redevelopment Areas in Panama City, St. Andrews, Millville, and Glenwood to preserve and promote the history of our area.

The Historical Society of Bay County, under her leadership, received a Florida Main Street Award for an outstanding private/public partnership. In December 2003 the Historical Society and the Local History Room of the Bay County Public Library placed third in the *Home for the Holidays* window decorating contest.

She has been an active participant at meetings of the Planning Committee and the Panama City Commission, making sure that historical concerns are considered.

Merry Christmas!

Why not give a gift membership to the Bay County Genealogical Society to your friends for Christmas? It's inexpensive and easy, and you'll be remembered four times instead of once, because the benefits include four issues of *The County Line* newsletter. Don't forget to renew *your* subscription, too. See page 4 for details.



Ho, Ho, Ho!

Enjoying Your Own "E-Circle"

By Bonnie Shipp

Having failed to find a word to describe the e-mail connection that my cousins and I share as we exchange genealogy information, I decided to call it an e-circle. This particular e-circle is a group of kith and kin who exchange genealogical information via e-mail. There are separate e-circles for Mother's and Dad's ancestral lines.

The e-circle on my maternal grandmother's line is the most active now. Mostly second cousins to me, they live from Maine to California and points in between. The most distant cousin with whom we regularly correspond is Jenna, a fourth cousin once removed. Jenna and I are both avid researchers and love to share our finds and help each other with research. Nearly everyday we receive an email from someone in the circle with a new tidbit of information or pictures.

Being in touch with cousins has been a great pleasure. Reading the news and keeping the database up-to-date has been fun. Even cousins who aren't interested in keeping family history records themselves have appreciated our efforts and contributed stories and pictures.

The most recent excitement was when cousin Ron and his wife, Joan, traveled to Runnels County, Texas, where our great grandmother lived the last years of her life. They visited the museum in Winters, Texas, and met with a cousin whom we had not previously contacted. Amazingly, they were able to visit with a genealogy volunteer who had done research in that area for our family seven years ago. They also stopped by Bell County, Texas, to take pictures of family tombstones.

If you are interested in forming an e-circle for your family, the first step is to find other relatives who are interested in genealogy. Cousin Mike's advice is to post your family history database on www.rootsweb.com. It's free and your relatives can contact you. Searching online family trees is also

one of the easiest ways to find people who are interested in your family. If you find a tree with a member of your family listed, you can e-mail the person who posted the tree asking if they can give you additional information and contacts.

However, if you aren't ready to post your family history, you can still search and post queries on <http://genforum.com>. Rootsweb has mailing lists and message boards that can be helpful in finding others who are researching your family at www.usgenweb.com. The Rootsweb county mailing list can sometimes provide a treasure trove of information. Also, please consider searching www.usgenweb.com. Select a state and then a county. Search the queries for the county where your ancestors lived to see if someone has posted a query concerning your family. Be sure to post your information on the surname board and place a query there.

Your hobby is supposed to be fun and give you pleasure. Genealogy as a hobby can be a most rewarding experience. It is amazing that discussing how our ancestors moved about using stories told by their grandchildren and siblings brings the events and history into better perspective. Enjoy your search.



Presidents Past

During our 25-year existence, we have had at least seven presidents. Berniece Loper holds the record for most consecutive years served, while Nancy Roberts holds the record for most comebacks.

1980-1981	Nancy Roberts
1982-1983	Linda Pazics Kleback
1984	William Kelsey
1985	Patricia Crow
1986	Nancy Roberts
1987	Linda Pazics Kleback
1988-1991	?
1992-1993	Nancy Roberts
1994-2004	Berniece Loper
2005	Barbara Anderson
2006	Dr. Clifford Loper





Coming Events

BCGS Events

Our Programs Committee, chaired by Judy Bennett, is very busy just now. While it is not difficult to think of any number of subjects that might interest our members, finding someone to talk about all those topics is another matter. If you are thinking “boy, these programs are boring—I already know all about those subjects,” then Judy would definitely like to have a quiet conversation with you, because you are a candidate for our next speaker. Maybe it’s time you gave something back to the genealogical community? What can you lose? She also invites you to share any thoughts you may have about future topics and speakers.

January 20, 2007. Beverly Phillips Gross, president-elect of the Genealogical Society of Okaloosa County, will present “The Importance of a Time Line and Maps When Doing Genealogical Research.” Beverly was born and raised in the Panama Canal Zone, but her parents were from north-east Alabama.

Formerly a teacher and tour guide, her interest in genealogy came early in life. When visiting the states every two years to be with family, she enjoyed sitting on the front porch with her grandfather and listening to his stories.

February 17, 2007: The Society will adjourn to the Family History Center on State Avenue for the Fourteenth Annual Panama City Family History Symposium. It will be sponsored by the LDS Church with BCGS providing many of the speakers for the all-day event. See below for more information on the biggest genealogy event in north Florida.

March 17, 2007: Nancy Roberts will present “Wills and Other Records Associated With Death,” a presentation on researching county courthouse records including estates, wills, and administrations.

14th Annual Panama City Family History Symposium Planned

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. Ten of Bay and Okaloosa Counties’ leading genealogists will present more than 17 topics of local interest in five categories to help solve problems and locate ancestors:

- Beginners
- Intermediate
- Software
- Internet
- Technology

Several sessions will 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, millions of compiled records, finding aids, and how-to guides available on home computers via the FamilySearch Internet Web site.

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, and registration forms can be viewed at: www.northwestfloridagenealogy.com/fhcseminar



Fall Programs

DNA Testing for Genealogists

Presented by John Carter
Past President, Florida Chapter
Sons of the American Revolution

On October 21, 2006, we learned about some recent applications of Deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) for genealogists. Mr. Carter has been an active par-

ticipant in several DNA projects involving himself and some of his cousins. One of the lessons he learned was that surprises may result.

Genealogical Computer Web Sites

Presented by Carol Atkinson

Our November 18 meeting was presented by Carol Atkinson, who has been researching her family since she was a teenager.

Annual Christmas Program

The theme for our Christmas program on 16 December was "Christmases Past." Those present told Christmas stories and learned lots of Christmas trivia from Judy Bennett.

—Ed.



New Books

In the Genealogical Collection Of The Bay County Public Library

By Linda Pazics Kleback
Genealogy Specialist
Bay County Public Library

6-Nov-2006



GENERAL:

First Addendum to McElvy Beginnings and Connections – Gen. R929.42 Sto

In Search of Your Asian Roots: Genealogical Research on Chinese Surnames – Gen. R929.42 Cha

McElvy Beginnings and Connections – Gen. R929.42 Sto

Richard Griffith and His Valuations of Ireland – Gen. R929.2 Rei

Southern Kith and Kin, Vol. 4 – Gen. R929.42 Sca

The Ponders of Europe and America – Gen. R929.42 Pon

ALABAMA:

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

FLORIDA:

The Heritage of Holmes County, Florida – FL Gen. R975.9 Her

GEORGIA:

Southeast Georgia in Vintage Postcards – GA Gen. R975.87 Dos

ILLINOIS:

1850 Census Clay County, Illinois – IL Gen. R929.42 Mac

Clay County Marriages 1825-1877 – IL Gen. R929.3773 Cle

Land Assessments of Clay County Illinois 1853 – IL Gen. R929.3773 Bai

MISSISSIPPI:

Mississippi Territory in the War of 1812 – MS Gen. R973.5 Row

NORTH CAROLINA:

Caswell County North Carolina Will Books, 2 Volumes in One – NC Gen. R929.3756 Ken

Clark's Regiments: An Extended Index to the Histories of the Several Regiments and Battalions from North Carolina in the Great War 1861-1865 – NC Gen. R973.7 Dav

Marriage Bonds of Tryon and Lincoln Counties, North Carolina – NC Gen. R929.3756 Byn
Marriages of Bute and Warren Counties, North Carolina, 1764-1868 – NC Gen. R929.3756 Hol

VIRGINIA:

Wills of Richmond County, Virginia 1699-1800 – VA Gen. R929.3755 Hea

Queries & Questions

Queries are now being accepted as space permits. 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.

Christmas Lists Past

Dear Santa:

Am enclosing a map, so that you can find me. I have moved since last Xmas, and I don't want to miss any of my candy. Please bring me all kinds of candy, cause I can eat a heap, and Santa, where I live is close to the grammar school. You know the white house, next to the green and gray house? Well, that ain't it. But it's down the street some, a little blue house, only the blue house ain't ours cause we live in the brown house across the street. If you can't find me at first, the teacher says to try, try again. I'll light a candle and put it in my window. I'll be awake when you come. Your little,

TOMMIE OLIVER.

Dearest Santa Claus:

I am a real, real, good girl and I want all I can get. But please don't forget I am a girl and not a boy. I want girl's presents. Heaps of love,

Your little girl,

JANE BAILEY.

Source: *The Panama City Pilot*, December 20, 1928.



The Heritage of Bay County Florida Volume II

By Rebecca Saunders

The Heritage Book Committee will be publishing a second volume of the popular *Heritage of Bay County, Florida* released in 2005. Don't miss your second chance to get a family or topical story published in this grassroots book. Stories about your family, your school, your neighborhood, your church, a club, military service or other stories may be submitted. The current deadline for submitting stories for *Volume II* is March 31, 2007.

You may contact Mona Lucas at alucas@nwrls.lib.fl.us; Ann Robbins at apalacheeb@aol.com or Becky Saunders at saunder@nwrls.lib.fl.us or at 850-872-7500.

You can get information about this project and download a prepublication order form and guidelines for stories online at www.nwrls.lib.fl.us. Click on "Local History Collection" along the left-hand side or on the "Bay County Heritage Book Volume II" link on the right-hand side of the page.

Editor's Corner

It takes a lot effort and time on the part of many people to produce a quality newsletter. Your editor wishes to thank all those who have taken the time to contribute articles and photos to one or more of the past seven issues of *The County Line*:

Barbara Anderson
Judy Bennett
Linda Kleback
Berniece Loper
Cliff Loper
Greg Morrison
Billy Nale

Walter Sherman
Bonnie Shipp
Natalie Thompson
Barbara Winge
Marlene Womack
Bama Young
Ron Young

Many thanks also to my diligent proofreader, Catherine M. Zehner, and to all the board members who have helped with the assembly process.

Thank you, one and all —Ed.

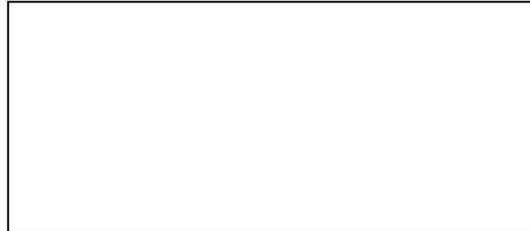


Web Site News

On 24 Oct 2006 BCGS became the twelfth Florida genealogical society to post its newsletters online. Archival editions beginning in April 2005 may now be viewed in PDF format by anyone with Adobe Reader and Internet access. Our Society continues to be among the most progressive of approximately 94 genealogical and historical societies currently active in Florida.



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



***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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Postmaster: Send address changes to the Bay County Genealogical Society at the address shown above.