



The County Line

Bay County Genealogical Society Newsletter Bay County, Florida

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July 2007

BCGS Fall Seminar Coming October 27, 2007

Ancestor Hunting Demystified



C. Ann Staley, CGSM, will be the featured speaker at our fall seminar on 27 October 2007. It will be held in the spacious Gibson Lecture Hall, Student Union East at the Gulf Coast Community College in Panama City. It will be an all-day

event with sessions running from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. Registration will begin at 8:15 a.m.

Ann will present four timely topics during the day, including “Compiled Resources for the 20th Century,” “Overlooked Research Sources: A Gold Mine to be Discovered,” “Genealogical Research and the Internet,” and “Claws or Clues - Scratching for the Elusive Ancestor!”

Ann is a professional genealogist, instructor, and lecturer at local, state and national conferences. She became a Certified Genealogist in 2000. She has been researching her family since 1980 and has traced her ancestors from Alabama, Mississippi, and Virginia to France, England, and Germany.

She is the Conference Chairman of the Florida State Genealogical Society (FSGS), the Education Chairman and Web master of the Jacksonville Genealogical Society, Inc., and has been an associate of the Board for Certification of Genealogists since 2000.

She is the recipient of the FSGS 1997 “Genealogy Outstanding Achievement Award,” the FSGS 2002 President's Citation Award, and the FSGS 2004 Distinguished Service Award.

You won't want to miss this great event. More information is available on our Web site at www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs, and a registration form is on page 4 of this issue. Bring a friend. We'll look for you there.

In This Issue

President's Message.....	2
Welcome New Members.....	2
Surnames Being Searched.....	2
Tufts Family Research.....	3
Registration Form.....	5
Historical Records for a Family Reunion.....	6
Coming Events at BCGS Monthly Meetings.....	7
Spring Programs.....	7
What's New at the LDS Family History Center?.....	8
New Books.....	9
BCGS Gets New Web Site.....	9

President's Message

Something is in the air. It's too early to be certain, but I think I sense what may be the beginning of a ground swell of renewed interest in family history in Bay County. Is that just wishful thinking?

During the past couple of years, membership in our society has been growing slowly—but surely. Attendance at our monthly programs has been increasing. The quality of our programs is on the rise. Our board is more enthusiastic than it was two or three years ago.

In November 2005 we put a county-wide index to burials on our Web site. That was the first major contribution to general record preservation and dissemination by our Society in a decade. It earned us some national recognition last month in the FGS Delegate Digest.

In April we merged 18 years worth of previously-transcribed marriage records into a single index and uploaded it to our Web site. Suddenly, I noticed that we have three volunteers transcribing additional marriage records. And these are real volunteers—nobody asked them to do the work! When was the last time that happened?

We have forged a cooperative effort with the Bay County Library that allowed us to merge and sort 19 years worth of *Panama City News Herald* obituaries, previously-transcribed by Library volunteers, and upload them to our Web site in May. We are also considering additional joint efforts to make more genealogical content available to those with ancestral roots in Northwest Florida but who live far away.

Our Web site no longer contains just links to other sites. Real content has been growing so rapidly that we had to completely overhaul the site, as reported on page 9 of this edition.

We have landed an outstanding speaker for our fall seminar, and our publicity crew is jumping around like kangaroos to make sure we get our attendance as high as possible. Be sure to tell your friends and family about it. Details and a registration form are on pages 4 and 5.

How about you? Would you feel good about making an important and visible contribution to the genealogical heritage of Bay County? There are plenty of opportunities remaining. I'll look forward to discussing them with you at our next meeting.

Bill Zehner



Welcome New Members

By Bonnie Shipp

Our membership list continues to grow steadily. Please take a moment to extend a warm welcome to our newest members at our regular meeting.

- Frederick H. Borg
- Patty Sikes

Surnames Being Searched

By Bonnie Shipp

New surnames have been submitted by India Belisle, krazyquiltpc@aol.com Please contact her if you think you share family.

Bailey in Henry Co., Ala., 1890

Baker in Barbour Co., Ala., 1842

Baxley in Henry Co., Ala., 1869

Belisle in Ontario, CAN, 1898-1902

Johnston in Barbour Co., Ala., 1874

Robinson in Henry Co., Ala., 1858

Watson in Barbour Co., Ala., 1854



Tufts Family Research

How Our Local FHC Gave Me a Kick-start

By Suzanne Shay

I began thinking about researching my father's side of the family some years ago. But I didn't become serious until late 2006 when I looked up information on the Bay County Genealogical Society and decided to join. I was made to feel most welcome at that first meeting and was introduced to several members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints (LDS). Knowing nothing about LDS and their Family History Library, I was encouraged to visit the local Family History Center and take advantage of their resources in my quest for information about my relatives.

As a starting point, I had a vague memory of a newsletter sent to my parents, during the time after I had left home to embark on my own life's journey, that had something to do with my father's ancestors. All I remembered was that it was called "Tufts Kinsmen." Through some online research at FamilySearch.org (the LDS Family History Library Web site), I learned that the FHL actually had copies of the Tufts Kinsmen newsletters! Oh, happy day!

I visited the local Family History Center and, for a very reasonable fee, was able to order copies of many of the newsletters on microfiche that would be sent from Salt Lake City to our local Center where the microfiche would remain for use by future researchers. While the room at the family history center is quite small, the computer equipment is top-notch! There is a very nice setup comprised of a microfilm/microfiche machine hooked up to a computer, a printer, and a CD-writer.

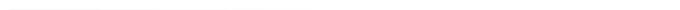
In my case, I was able to scan the pages of the newsletters from the microfiche machine via the computer's software and write the pages to a CD. The only expense to me, aside from my time, was

the cost of several CDs. I have been slowly, as time allows, printing out the pages of the newsletters at home. What a treasure trove of information! I was startled to come across a picture of one of my father's ancestors who bores an eerie resemblance to my own father! He turned out to be Richard Tufts, a grandson of James Walker Tufts, the founder of Pinehurst Resort in Pinehurst, North Carolina, where Annie Oakley served as the shooting director for many years!

Some things I have learned: my father's family has strong, long-standing ties to the Medford-Charlestown area of Massachusetts. My father always maintained that all the "Tufts" in the U.S. were related. It appears most of us (maybe all) descend from "Peter the Immigrant" who immigrated to America in 1638. Another ancestor of Peter's, Charles Tufts, donated the land upon which Tufts University in Massachusetts was built. Herbert Adams, the dedicated family historian, made it his life's work to research and publish the definitive Tufts family history. As part of that quest, he conceived of and published the Tufts Kinsmen newsletter. Sadly, he died before he was able to realize his dream. Happily, however, the Tufts Kinsmen Association lives on and is in the process of having his research published. I have been successful in finally tracking down and making contact with members of the Tufts Association and hope someday to be able to purchase the finished book.

If you haven't had occasion to visit your local Family History Center, don't miss the opportunity to maybe find, as I did, invaluable information in the quest to discover your ancestors!

(Interestingly, I can remember that, when I was a child, my own father used to play golf at Pinehurst while vacationing in Florida. It was one of his favorite courses. - Ed.)



**The Bay County Genealogical
Society**

proudly presents

Ancestor Hunting Demystified

A Genealogy Seminar

Staring

C. Ann Staley, CGSM

Saturday, October 27, 2007
Gibson Lecture Hall
Student Union East
Gulf Coast Community College
Panama City, Florida



Details:

www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs/seminar

850-215-1579

Bay County Genealogical Society
Ancestor Hunting Demystified

Registration Form

Fall 2007 Seminar
October 27, 2007

Name _____

Street _____

City, State _____

Zip code _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Cost:

_____ Walk-in: \$35

_____ Pre-registered before Oct 15: \$30

_____ I'm not a BCGS member, but I want to join BCGS now AND attend the seminar (\$55 value) \$45

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

Registration deadline is October 15, 2007. Seating is limited, so please register early.

How to Register:

Mail with check or money order to:

Bay County Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 662

Panama City, FL 32402-0662

For questions, please contact Judy Bennett at judybennett@knology.net or 850-215-1579

Historical Records for a Family Reunion

By Bonnie Shipp
BCGS Vice-President

Earlier this year, my friend Mary asked that we prepare a family history of her father's paternal line for a family reunion. After a few long-distance phone calls and several emails it seemed evident that we would be unable to assemble the information necessary for a descendant chart in time for the reunion. It was decided that we would provide family group sheets and pedigree charts at the reunion and work on the descendants' information at a later time. Perhaps we could provide other information relevant to Mary's family.

While researching in Ancestry.com, the "Historical Records" tab caught my eye. Would it be possible to assemble a collection of historical records concerning the family? Starting with the census, Social Security Death Index, Military Index and Alabama Marriage Index, we began to assemble an amazing amount of interesting information about the family. The census gave us an approximate birth year for each of the father's twelve siblings, and for the grandfather and his fifteen siblings. The Social Security Death Index and the Alabama Death Index provided death dates for some. A search of cemetery records on the internet provided more information.

Most of the family had remained in the same area of northern Alabama for more than 150 years. Thus, our research was concentrated in Blount County, Alabama. Locating spousal information in the Alabama Marriage Index is tricky because it does not list the name of brides and grooms together. Instead, it lists only the bride's name, date married, a numerical code for the county, and the license number. The groom list is similar. The index is available on Ancestry.com and on microfilm at the Bay County Library. It's fairly simple to locate the information

with the electronic search engine on Ancestry.com, but with microfilm, I find it nearly impossible to match a husband and wife without knowing the surname of both. In order to find the wife's maiden name, we first located the husband's information. Then, entering only the marriage date and county name, the search engine brings up names of all people married in that county on that date.

For this family, only World War I Draft Registrations were found for the grandfather and his brother, because World War II Draft Registrations for Alabama have not yet been posted on Ancestry.com, and we have been unable find them elsewhere. However, those records for several other states are available online already.

Checking the Bay County Library's wealth of Alabama Heritage books, we found an article about the Albert Hodge family written by one of Mary's aunts. There was also an article about a Hodge daughter and her husband.

Inspired by notebooks that several of our genealogy buddies had assembled, we compiled a notebook of "Historical Records of the Albert Hodge Family" using clear sheet protectors and section dividers with tabs. The first section consists of a number of images of selected census records ranging from 1850 through 1930. The next section contains graphic images of military records of interest, and the third section contains marriage index records. The next section has copies of Social Security Death Records, Alabama Death Records, and other information found in online cemetery listings. The last section contains copies of the stories found in the Blount County, Alabama Heritage book.

Although we were not able to complete our first goal—a descendant chart—the historical records notebook proved a worthy substitute. Wouldn't it be interesting to have the birth, death, census, and military records from our files placed in a family notebook?





Coming Events at BCGS Monthly Meetings

July 19, 2007: Rebecca Saunders, Bay County Library's new Genealogy Specialist, will conduct a second "Genealogy After Hours" from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday in the genealogy room of the Bay County Public Library. Reservations are required and the event is limited to 20 participants. Please call (850) 872-7500 ext. 18 for reservations.

Come join us for an introduction to the Genealogy Collection and an opportunity to do YOUR family research without interruption during closed hours. Beginners will receive a beginners packet and assistance from the staff. Bring your family information with you so you can research YOUR family in books, microfilm, periodicals, and on Ancestry.com.

July 21 and August 18: No meeting—closed.

September 15, 2007: Sandra Ruffing will present "Witches, Rakes, & Rogues: How to Research Your Black-sheep Ancestors." She will tell us how to locate sources of information on our Black-sheep Ancestors: They will range from newspaper articles about trials to researching and obtaining prison records. The talk will also reference helpful Web sites and books. Sandra has been researching her family tree and assisting others with their research for the past 10 years. She is currently serving as the archivist for the Bay County Genealogical Society and volunteers in the Genealogy Section and Local History Room of the Bay County Library.

October 27, 2007: BCGS annual seminar; see pages 4 and 5 for more details.

November 17, 2007: Bill Zehner will present "Surname Profiling." Sometimes it is useful to have a map depicting the historical distribution of our ancestral surname. Bill will illustrate several Web sites

that can be used to create surname distribution maps. They can be used to find the most likely place your ancestor may have lived, and to add interest to your family history. He will also talk about the origin and meaning of your surname. ❖

Spring Programs

Genealogy After Hours

Conducted by Rebecca Saunders



A special event for local genealogists (photo above, by Becky Saunders) was arranged in Panama City on Thursday evening, April 19 from 5 to 8 p.m. Rebecca Saunders conducted a discovery tour of the genealogical facilities at the Bay County Library and a workshop, with staff available to assist. The event was attended by about 18 family researchers who received a beginner's packet of information as well as personal assistance from Library staff members.

Genealogical Treasures in Small County Courthouses

Presented by Marlene Womack,
BCGS Recording Secretary

Our meeting room was packed in anticipation of Marlene Womack's presentation on 21 April, and those present were not disappointed. Marlene is probably the most active researcher in Northwest

Florida, and much of her research is done in county courthouses across the region.

Though her professional interests are tuned more to local history than genealogy, she uses many of the same records that are used by genealogists, and many others that genealogists should be using but often aren't aware of. Marlene provided many examples of remarkable records she has discovered that are of particular interest to those family genealogists seeking both specific information about their ancestors and general historical information to flesh out their family histories.

She also shared an insider's knowledge about where records are sometimes hidden, who to contact to find them, and how to get around those occasional reluctant custodians.

Florida and Bay County Pioneer Programs Using the Library's Local History Room

Presented by Rebecca Brown Saunders, Bay County Library's new Genealogy Specialist

Our May meeting attendees got a special treat when Rebecca Brown Saunders, Bay County Library's new Genealogy Specialist, presented this topic, which is of special interest because it is one of our new initiative areas.

Her presentation highlighted the Florida State Genealogical Society's "Florida Pioneer Descendants Certification Program," focusing on obtaining County Certificates and Researcher Certificates. Since Bay County was not formed until 1913, there are many materials available in the Local History Room at the Bay County Public Library that may be of help, including early area newspapers on microfilm, city directories, Sanborn maps, the Panama City Historic Sites Survey, voter registration rolls, and photographs from the extensive History Room collection. Of particular importance were the voter registration rolls, which lists the names of early Florida residents; their addresses, occupations, citizen-

ships, and signatures. Becky showed several examples of items that she has used to prepare Pioneer packets for her families.

Four British Immigration Waves

Presented by Patty Sikes



At our June meeting, we were treated to an excellent and informative presentation by Patty Sikes (above, with Judy Bennett and Bill Zehner). She based her talk on *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America*, by David Hackett Fischer. The four groups had many differences, including their place of origin, their speech, religion, wealth, social status, and their ideas about freedom. Between 1629 and 1775, they came from four different areas of Britain to different sections of America. A more detailed review can be found at our Web site:

www.rootsweb.com/~flbcgs/patty.html

Review by Judy Bennett; Photo by Dick Beach

What's New at the LDS Family History Center?

Bama Young, LDS Family History Director

Update to the Pedigree Resource File. We have just received vol. 6 of the Pedigree Resource File, which consists of five DVDs (#126 through #130) and two DVD Masters. Each DVD holds about five times as much data as a CD.

FamilySearch Indexing Projects. We are seeking volunteers, both LDS members and nonmem-

bers, to work on this program. Let us show you how to do it at home. We are already indexing the 1900 federal U.S. census, and many more projects are coming. Many volunteers are needed, and over 29,000 indexers have been registered this past quarter. Visit www.familysearchindexing.org and follow the steps to start indexing. Participating genealogical and historical societies are listed on the "Projects" page.



New Books

In the Genealogical Collection Of The Bay County Public Library

By Rebecca Brown Saunders
Genealogy Specialist
Bay County Public Library

3-June-2007



Book purchases for the past quarter have been on hold pending reorganization of the Library.

General:

Saxons, Vikings, and Celts : the Genetic Roots of Britain and Ireland; Sykes, Bryan — Gen R 599.93 SYK

The New England Historical and Genealogical Register, Waters, Henry F. (Henry Fritz-Gilbert). Genealogical Gleanings in England. — Gen R 929.3 NEW

Florida:

Gulf County; Mount-Douds, Beverly — FL Gen R 975.991 MOU

Georgia:

Collections of Early County Historical Society; Whitehead, Mary Grist — GA Gen R 975.8 COL

North Carolina:

The Cansler Family in America: the Ancestors and Descendants of Philip W. Gentzler of North Caro-

lina; Roberts, William Clifford, 1958- — NC Gen R 929.2 ROB

Pennsylvania:

Genealogical Data Abstracted from History of Middle Spring Presbyterian Church, Middle Spring, Pennsylvania, 1738-1900; McElwain, Wilbur J. — PA Gen R 929.374843 MAC

Texas:

The Heritage of Hill County, Texas; Hill County Historical Commission — TX Gen R 976.4 HER
Terry County, Texas; Terry County Historical Commission — TX Gen R 976.4 TER 3759 NOM



BCGS Gets New Web Site

About six years have passed since Billy Nale last overhauled our Web site. His design was a major improvement and has served the Society well. After his resignation in 2005, new content began to be added incrementally to the site. As the number of pages grew, it became increasingly clear that a major change would be needed to facilitate maintenance and upgrading efforts.

On 4 June 2007, after several months of construction, our old site was razed and replaced by an all-new design aimed at better navigation, more content, faster loading, and a more attractive facade. Although transparent to most users, the new design also uses advanced coding techniques to make expansion and maintenance much easier.

Our redesigned site is loaded with new content, including a membership application form, members' surname list, projects list, a "how to get help" page; and marriage, cemetery, and obituary indexes.



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 in the Library's Local History Room 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>

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