

NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS



%Northland Public Library 300 Cumberland Road, Pittsburgh, PA 15237

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e-mail: pioneerbook@juno.com

President: Elissa Powell

Treasurer: Jean Taylor

Cemetery Project: Ginny Skander

Mailings: Lois & Bill Daviess

Subscription: \$12 per year

Vice President: Syvan Kretz Membership: Steph Valentine

Publicity: Gary Schlemmer

Secretary: Kay Santa Liaison: Elissa Powell Editor: Donna Booth

Program: Tom Wiley

10 Issues - August - June

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We are coming up on October which is Family History Month. You may have seen some of the e-mails being passed around encouraging you to write to your congressman to make it officially so, but for many years it has been unofficially celebrated in October.

Nowhere is this more apparent to me than in my lecture schedule. It seems everyone wants to have a special program in October. That is great! The more people that become aware of their family history and seek to research their genealogy, the more records may become available. People demanding action has, from the Boston Tea Party days, always created at least a stir, if not the desired affect.

For years I have told people that I feel such an urgency in genealogy. For all the nice, wonderful indices, and transcribed records being made available to all, we are still losing an awful lot. From your grandmother's memory to tombstones and court house records not properly preserved. The Pittsburgh Post Gazette just had a couple of articles in their Sunday papers on Aug. 12 and 19 about the deplorable condition of the county records in storage. It is up to the public to make sure that the officials in charge realize the

intrinsic value of the records under their care. The familiar phrase of "Why don't they do something?" can also be viewed as a call to action when one realizes the "they" is "us" who haven't done it yet. So it is important for each and every one of us to be aware of the status of our resources... whether it is a favorite Aunt's health, our own genealogical records (how organized are they?), or the county records which hold that clue that we so desperately need.

This is one reason that the North Hills Genealogists have been working for many years to capture the tombstone inscriptions in our local cemeteries. To preserve the inscriptions along with any other records of the death or burial, and to make it publicly available in book form is the goal of the project. If you can spare some time to help proof a cemetery, please let Ginny Skander know (412-443-1460). Proofing is the fun job of taking the typed manuscript out to the cemetery and making sure that the tombstone is accurately recorded. As I pass down the row during a reading or proofing session, I say to each person beneath my feet, "There! Now you won't be forgotten!" We are doing our part to help preserve records. Are you?

Lissa

WHERE GENEALOGISTS MEET

Tues, Oct. 2 - 7:30 pm - NHG Board Meeting - Cafeteria, Passavant Hospital. Everyone welcome.

Tues, Oct. 16 -7:00 pm - Regular NHG Meeting - "Beginning Genealogy: Find Your Roots Before You Are Planted" - Elissa Powell, CGRS

Other Meetings

Thurs, Sept. 20 - 7:00 pm - Lawrenceville Historical Society - Robert Netzer speaking on Street Car Lines. Stephen Foster Community Center, 286 Main St., Lawrenceville.

Mon, Oct. 1 - 7:00 pm - Beaver County Genealogical Society - 2nd Flr. Jury Waiting Lounge, Beaver Cty. Courthouse

Sat., Oct. 6 - 10:00 am - Pittsburgh POINTers in Person (Pursuing Our Italian Names Together) - Allegheny Intermediate Unit - 14th & Penn Ave. - Lissa Powell will present "Sailing into the Sunset: Tips on Finding Your Ancestor's Passenger List" at both meetings.

The following are all scheduled for Sat., Oct. 6

Open House at Soldiers' & Sailors' Memorial Hall

The Presbyterian Historical Society of the Upper Ohio Valley - Lebanon Presbyterian Church, 2800 Old Elizabeth Road, West Mifflin, PA. Contact: Rev. Hugh Crawford, Treasurer, 820 Redstone Court #301, Washington, PA for details.

Tarentum Genealogical Society - 9:00 am - 3:00 pm - Genealogy Conference 2001, Clarion Inn, New Kensington. Contact: TGS, P.O. Box 66, Tarentum, PA 15084-0066

The Altoona Railfest 2001 - Railroaders Museum. Also on the 7th. For more information check out, www.railroadcity.com.

Wed., Oct. 10 - 7:00 pm - Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society - Carnegie Lecture Hall -Marie Varrelman Melchiori - "Using Records at the National Archives: A Researcher's View".

Wed. Oct. 17 - 7:30 pm - Western Pennsylvania Civil War Round Table - Charen Fink of the Mahoning County, OH Round Table - "The Role of Women in the Civil War" - Edgeworth Elementary School.

Mon., Oct. 22 - 7:00 pm Greater Pittsburgh Civil
War Round Table - Tom Nanzig of the Ann Arbor
CWRT speaking on "The Appointable Campaign". The Babcock, Babcock Blvd.

FGS CONFERENCE SYLLABUS

FGS is offering the 2001 Conference Syllabus from the Quad Cities Conference to members of FGS member societies at a reduced rate. This syllabus contains the presentations from the conference. There are over 150 sessions covered in this syllabus. Here is your chance to get a copy of the syllabus if you weren't able to go to the conference. This is a one-time offer to purchase it at a special price of \$16.00. The regular price is \$20 plus shipping. If you would like to order a copy of the syllabus, send your check, made payable to North Hills Genealogists, along with your name and address. We will send in one order for all NHG members. Don't miss this great opportunity to obtain the materials from this conference.

Why is it that the census taker with the clear handwritting and the good ink never enumerated your ancestors?

A MODEL FOR YOUR OWN MEMOIR? (Order Now)

Submitted by Gary Schlemmer, NHG member

A few years ago, before the change in our meeting room schedule, a small group of NHG members would gather in the half hour before the monthly meeting to talk about writing a personal memoir. It might take various forms, such as recollections of the characters in our family trees, or perhaps descriptions of specific events in our lives and our feelings about them. Or, staring with a birth place and date, it could be a development of the circumstances around them, followed by a look forward in time, as an autobiography. The usual problem is (a) choosing a model, and (b) STARTING. Simple, but seemingly complicated.

Now, I've found a good example to follow. Of a Boy and His Valley, by Arnold W. Cook, is a very readable and entertaining look into the life of a boy growing up in rural western New York during the depression. His recollections speak of humble beginnings in a parsonage where family was close and neighbors looked out for each other. The medicine that saved Christmas, the young new school marm in the one-room schoolhouse, the recycled first bicycle, struggles of farm life, the little church at the tee in the road; each chapter is a story in itself and is filled with descriptions of how things were done and of the folks doing them. Best of all, they are true stories which Mr. Cook endeavored to verify with old friends and residents of East Otto and the Brooklyn Valley (not the city!) area.

This is a self-published paperback of 181 pages. Those of us interested can see it at our September and October meetings and can go in together to order copies at a total shared cost of about \$9.00 each (not an NHG sale), if picked up there. Depending upon response, copies may arrive in time for the October and/or November meetings.

Thanks to Gary for bringing this to our attention.

THE STUFF OF HISTORY GOES ONLINE WITH SMITHSONIAN WEB SITE

Pittsburgh Tribune-Review

Among items in the vast collections of the National Museum of American History are the remains of Stubby, a dog that won the Purple Heart in World War I. But Stubby, who is resting inside a life-size model of himself, has been out of sight for a long time. Now he's back, thanks to a new Smithsonian Web site.

"History Wired: A Few of Our Favorite Things" offers a new virtual tour of the museum's storage bins, where millions of objects are kept.

The Web site map allows people to explore by subject area as well as historical period. One can search by subject and ethnic group, such as military objects, related to American Indians, and can see items that aren't on display.

The Web site starts with 450 items, with more to come. It can give much more information about specific objects, as well as contextual links.

"One of our goals here is to keep a conversational tone," says Judy Gradwohl, the museum's Web director. "The visitor can pretend they are standing with a curator and getting a unique viewpoint."

Now you can view things such as the field equipment carried by the Buffalo Soldiers, the famous 19th century black cavalry unit to the Kermit the Frog puppet and the Scarecrow costume from "The Wizard of Oz."

Check out the new website at <u>HistoryWired.si.edu</u>. Here is a chance to get a first hand view of artifacts and events that make up our, and our ancestors' history.

NEW YORK CIVIL WAR INFORMATION

Submitted by Betty Hoge, NHG member

Vicki Weiss at the NYS Library is putting together great information about where to find Civil War records in NY. She is asking for help in locating ALL records that pertain to men who served for New York in the Civil War. She is also interested in any information on organizations affiliated with the Civil War, such as Women's Relief Organization. You are asked to include names of regiment or organization, types of material and size of collection and the name, address, telephone number and e-mail address of the repository where held. For more information, contact Vicki Weiss at vweiss@mail.nysed.gov. There is also a conference on Thursday, Nov. 8 sponsored by Heritage Hunters of Saratoga Co., NY - "Researching the Civil War Resources at the NYS Library and Archives (and then some!). Check out http://www/nysi.nysed.gov.

TOMBSTONE SYMBOLS

Fruits - eternal plenty as in the fruit of life
Full-Blown Rose - the deceased died in the prime
of life

Ivy - stands for friendship and also immortality

Laurel - a symbol of worldly accomplishment and
heroism

Lily - the virgin's flower and also the symbol of innocence and purity

Morning Glory - signifies the beginning of life Oak, Oak Leaves and Acorn - oak leaves stand for power, authority or victory. Often seen on military tombs.

Palm Branch - signifies victory and rejoicing
Poppy - eternal sleep

Roses - signify completion and the brevity of earthly existence

Rosemary - for rememberance

Thistle - deceased was of Scottish descent; also stands for remembrance

TIME TO GATHER FAMILY INFORMATION

Submitted by Steph Valentine

What activities have you especially enjoyed as an adult?

What are your hobbies?

What did/do you like to do when you are not working?

What is the most amazing thing that has ever happened to you?

What is the most embarrassing thing that has ever happened to you?

Have you ever met any famous people? Describe what happened?

What organizations and groups do/have you belonged to?

Have you ever won any special awards or prizes as an adult? What were they for?

Describe a time and place when you remember feeling truly at peace and happy to be alive. Where were you and what were you doing?

What is the most beautiful place you have ever visited and what was it like?

What is the longest trip that you have ever gone on? Where did you go?

What has been your favorite vacation? Where did you go and why was it special?

What was the favorite place you ever visited and what was it like?

THE STORY BEHIND THE NAMES OF PENNSYLVANIA COUNTIES

Reprinted from John M. Roberts' & Sons advertising in the Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph, late 1940-early 1950. Submitted by Bernice Broniecki

McKean County

McKean County was created by Act of March 26, 1804, its territory being taken from Lycoming County. The name was selected to honor General Thomas McKean, the Governor and a signer of the Declaration of Independence. By the final treaty at Fort Stanwix, October 23, 1784, the Indian lands in Pennsylvania had been relinquished but no general movement of white settlers towards the region was attempted prior to 1795. Not one family was then settled in what is now McKean County. The Susquehanna Co. of Connecticut, prior to 1796, granted a township called Lorana to three men but, after there was a great controversy about the granted land, Governor McKean signed the Act of Assembly forming the county and four other counties. Quite appropriate that McKean should be affectionately known as "The Governor's County." The actual organization of the county was not affected immediately, as it was attached to Centre County until 1814, then Lycoming County administered its judicial work until 1826, when the town of Smethport was selected as the county seat and the officials duly qualified. The region is drained by the Allegheny and Clarion Rivers and their tributaries.

Smethport, the county seat, was settled in 1812 and named for Theodore de Smeth. John Keating chose the name when the town was laid out in Keating Township in 1807. Incorporated a borough February 1853, Bradford is a city which owes its phenomenal progress to the oil industry. In 1850, 50,000 acres at the present site of Bradford, were sold to Daniel Kinbury, who named the place Bradford, probably for his ancestral town of Bradford in England.

Incorporated as a borough February 1873, and chartered a city in 1879. The first oil exchange was established in 1877 at the Runa Valley Oil Exchange. Bradford was also the home of the late Lewis Emery, Jr., a pioneer oil producer.

Elred Borough was incorporated as Eldred, December 1880. Kane was named in honor of Thomas Leiper Kane, of Philadelphia, the most distinguished citizen of the county, who with David Cornelius, lead an exploring expedition into the region in 1859. He led the famous "Bucktails" from this vicinity through the Civil War, fighting in 39 battles, in five of which he was wounded, being brevetted major-general for gallant service. General Kane returned to his new town. Here he was visited by President U.S. Grant. The altitude of nearly 2,300 feet above sea level makes it a region of scenic beauty. Lewis Run is named for the stream within its borders; Mount Jewett was incorporated a borough in 1893, and named for a prominent railroad official. Port Allegheny was settled in 1815 and was first known as the "Gateway to the Sinnemahoning and to the upper and lower Allegheny." Hamlin Township has within its borders the famous Kinsua Viaduct spanning Kinsua Hills, 2,200 feet above sea level, said to be the higest in the world.

ALLEGHENY CITY SOCIETY WALKING TOURS

Representatives of The Allegheny City Society conduct a walking tour of Beech Avenue every Saturday, year-round (except the 2nd Saturday in December) from 10 am till 11 am. The tour is made possible by the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation, Office of Cultural Tourism, The Allegheny City Society and The Alcoa Foundation. The tour begins at Calvary United Methodist Church at the corner of Beech and Allegheny Aves. The cost is \$3 per person and reservations are not necessary.



WEB WANDERINGS

Note: All start with http://www unless otherwise noted

PA Civil War Rosters pacivilwar.com

FHL Research Outline - Germany http://feehs.org/frl/de/frl-rogm.html

Ancestor Archive - over 250 vintage photos from antique shops, fea markets, etc.

http://ancestorarchive.com

Youngstown, OH 1910 Necrology Indices http://members.tripod.com/harry_turner_3/

State On-Line Databases - By County ilsos.net/departments/archives/databases. html

Scotland Genealogy scotwewb.com.uk/ScotRoots/

Date Calculators
Birth Date

longislandgenealogy.com/birth.html

Death Date

http://web2.airmail.net/bhende19/b-date.
htm

Day/Date

http://familyreunion.8k.com/calcalc.html

BOOK REVIEW

ORGANIZING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY SEARCH - Efficient & Effective Ways to Gather and Protect Your Genealogical Research

Sharon DeBartolo Carmack

Sharon DeBartolo Carmack is a Certified Genealogical Record Specialist and has written more than 75 genealogical columns, articles and book reviews. The new book by Ms. Carmack tells you how to:

- Create filing systems that not only keep your research straight, but also grow with your needs.
- Get a handle on correspondence, eliminate duplicate requests and locate your findings easily.
- Plan productive research trips using special journals that help you record essential information while you're on site.
- Define your research goals and establish projects around those goals.

There is also information for professional genealogists, including how to set up client files with contracts, reports and invoices.

Sample forms are also included which the reader can copy for their own use.

As the cover states: "Whether genealogy is your part-time hobby or full-time obsession, you can get organized and stay that way!"

The book is available from Betterway Books at 1507 Dana Avenue, Cincinnati, OH 45207 or your local bookstore. Use the ISBN number when you order from your favorite store - ISBN 1-55870-511-2.

This book has great suggestions for both beginners and experienced genealogists.

CARTOGRAPHIC AND ARCHITECTURAL RECORDS AT NARA

Information provided by Keith Kerr, NHG Member

Among the records in the Cartographic and Architectural Branch (NWDNC) are over 15 million maps, charts, aerial photos, architectural drawings, patents and ship plans. They are arranged in 190 record groups. Record group numbers have been added in parentheses to help reference the specific NARA holdings.

Mapping

Exploration and Scientific Surveys - The Lewis & Clark Expedition was the earliest of the government sponsored expeditions. The files of the Office of the Chief Engineers (RG 77) and the Archives Files of the Hydrographic Office (RG 37) contain the most important collection of Federal explorers' maps, many of which made major contributions to geographic knowleged.

Publis Land Surveys and Settlement - During the period 1785-1787 the Seven Ranges of Ohio became the first tract of public land surveyed under the new rectangular land survey system. This system, which was institutionalized in 1812 by the establishment of the General Land Office. has been of immense importance in shaping the cultural landscape of the public domain lands that lie outside the Thirteen Original States, Kentucky, Tennessee and Texas. The surveys produced a large body of township plats and field notes and records. Presently there are township plats and field notes for Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Alabama, Mississippi, Wisconsin and parts of several other states. Other records of the General Land Office and its successor, the Bureau of Land Management (RG 49) include general state maps, plats of private land claims, mineral claims and townsites and maps.

Indian Affairs - Maps showing information about the Indians of the United States can be found in the central map file of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (RG 75). This body of over 16,000 maps, covering the period 1800-1939 includes items pertaining to Indian treaties, removal policy, reservations, settlements and land use.

Census Mapping - Although Federal census schedules date from 1790, the preparation of enumeration district maps did not occur until 1880. These records include maps of counties, cities, towns and unincorporated settlements, showing boundaries of the districts covered by the census-takers. Population counts for each districts covered and, in some cases, information about farm dwellings and farm population are contained in accompanying bound volumes of verbal descriptions of the boundaries of each district. Other map files of the Bureau of Census (RG 29) and the Bureau of Agricultural Economics (RG 83) contain manuscript and published maps relating to population changes, immigration, and beginning with the 1840 census of agriculture, such agricultural statistics as crop and livestock distribution.

Maps of Foreign Countries - Because the mapping needs in the early years of the federal government were greatest in the domestic sphere, its production of maps of foreign territory was limited to areas of government involvement, such as treaties with foreign governments, foreign wars and exploration. The records of the American Commisison To Negotiate Peace (RG 256), the U.S. delegation at the Versailles Conference of 1919, include 1,100 maps covering areas in Europe and other parts of the world that show social linguistic, and economic statistics compiled to aid in the postwar geopolitical restructuring of boundaries. Similar social and economic maps for the WW II period exist. The largest series of maps covering foreign areas consists of topographic maps of various

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scales published by the Army Map Service beginning in 1942. These maps cover many areas of the world. These maps are now done by the Defense Mapping Agency (RG 456).

Military Campaigns - Maps and charts have always played an important role in the planning and execution of military operations, and military maps, nautical charts and foritfication plans for a significant part of the holdings in this group. These are found in records of the Offices of the Chief of Engineers (RG 77), the Adjutant General (RG 94) and the Quartermaster General (RG 92); the Office of Strategic Services (RG 226); the Army Map Service (RG 77); and the Hydrographic Office (RG 37). Major battles and minor skirmishes are depicted in time frames that range from minutes to daily order of battle to historical summaries of entire campaigns.

The earliest documentation consists of a few period maps for Queen Anne's War and for the French and Indian War and a few hundred maps for the American Revolution and the War of 1812. The 8,000 Civil War maps constitute the largest collection of such maps plus an extensive manuscript mapping of the Indian campaigns, Mexican War and Spanish-American War form a unique and significant body of records.

Urban Development -The Federal Government's concern with urban areas is reflected in the holdings of the Branch. Particularly noteworthy are plans of U.S. and foreign cities dating from the late eighteenth century to the present; enumeration district maps and boundary descriptions of U.S. Cities from 1890-1970; and real property surveys of major U.S. cities undertaken during the Depression.

Aerial Photography

Aerial photographs provide a straightforward depiction of the physical and cultural landscape of an area at a given time. When skillfully

interpreted. these aerial images supply historians and others with a geographers, pictorial basis often critical to their studies. Recently genealogists have used aerial photography to identify and locate ancestral sites. The federal government became significantly involved in the systematic acquisition of aerial photography in the 1930's. WW II brought a rapid acceleration in the use of aerial photography of foreign areas The Branch holds WW II aerial images covering parts of the European, Mediterranean and Pacific Theaters of Operation, taken by units of the U.S. and Allied Air Forces. The Branch also holds approximately 1.2 million prints of aerial photographs taken by the German military. A smaller collection (about 37,000 images) taken by the Japanese military between 1933 and 1945, consists of aerial photographs of parts of China, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Island.

In order to request a search for maps and charts, you must provide NWDNC with a subject, geographic area and time period. In order to request copies of NARA holdings, it is necessary to know the record group, series and individual file notation for the original record. All reproductions are made to order for a fee. Requests should be directed to:

NWCS: Maps and Plans or NCWS: Aerial National Archives 8601 Adelphi Road College Park, MD 20740-6001

Telephone Numbers:

General NARA Reference: 301-713-6800 Cartographis & Architectural Reference: 301-713-7040

E-mail address: carto@arch2.nara.gov

Thanks to Keith for providing this great information from the NARA.

EDITORIAL COMMENT

As we work on our family history, we find instances of tragedy, be it war, disease, the holocaust, and we accept them as part of the history of our family.

Tonight, as I work on this newsletter, I have the TV on and am watching the terrible events that occurred today in New York and Washington, and even a little closer to home, in Somerset, PA.

When we write our family histories, will this be one of the events we record for future generations? Will we tell them what we were doing and what we felt when we heard the news? For many of us, we have stories of relatives who served and sometimes died in the Revolutionary, Civil and World Wars I and II. These were tragic events, but for many of us, these were events that we did not experience personally.

Today is part of the fabric of our history, terrible though it may be. This is not something we would ever want to have to put in our family history, but it is something that will have an impact on our lives, now and in the future. Just as we record the stories told by our relatives about where they were when Pearl Harbor occurred or maybe our thoughts of where we were when we heard about President Kennedy being shot, we need to record our thoughts and feelings about today.

Let us all say a prayer for those killed and injured today and a prayer for our country. Our ancestors struggled to come to "the land of the free and the home of the brave." Let us pray that their struggle was not in vain.

Donna

THE STORY TELLERS

We are the chosen. In each family there is one who seems called to find the ancestors. To put flesh on their bones and make them live again, to tell the family story and to feel that somehow they know and approve. Doing genealogy is not a cold gathering of facts but, instead, breathing life into all who have gone before. We are the story tellers of the tribe. All tribes have one. We have been called, as it were, by our genes. Those who have gone before cry out to us: Tell our story. So, we do.

In finding them, we somehow find ourselves. How many graves have I stood before now and cried? I have lost count. How many times have I told the ancestors you have a wonderful family, you would be proud of us? How many times have I walked up to a grave and felt somehow there was love there for me? I cannot say.

It goes beyond just documenting facts. It goes to who I am and why do I do the things I do. It goes to seeing a cemetery about to be lost forever to weeds and indifference and saying I can't let this happen. The bones here are bones of my bone and flesh of my flesh. It goes to doing something about it. It goes to pride in what our ancestors were able to accomplish. How they contributed to what we are today. It goes to respecting their hardships and losses, and their never giving in or giving up, their resoluteness to go on and build a life for their family. It goes to deep pride that the fathers fought and some died to make and keep us a Nation. It goes to a deep and immense understanding that they were doing it for us.

It is of equal pride and love that our mothers struggled to give us birth, without them we could not exist, and so we love each one as far back as we can reach.

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NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS

C/O Northland Public Library 300 Cumberland Road Pittsburgh, PA 15237

FIRST CLASS MAIL

DATED MATERIAL

BEGINNING GENEALOGY: FIND YOUR ROOTS BEFORE YOU ARE PLANTED

Elissa Scalise Powell CGRS
October 16, 2001

That we might be born who we are. That we might remember them. So we do. With love and caring and scribing each fact of their existence, because we are they and they are the sum of who we are. So, as a scribe called, I tell the story of my family. It is up to that one called in the next generation to answer the call and take my place in the long line of family storytellers.

Unknown Author

Thanks to Ginny Skander for sending this along.

Deadline for Newsletter information - October
4. Send to address on front marked
"Newsletter" or e-mail the editor at
DJBooth@worldnet.att.net.

GENEALOGICAL TIPS

When making up ancestral photo albums, get copies of signatures from old court records and place them below the respective photos. This makes the album much more personal and brings personality to the photo.

North Hills Genealogists is a group of people who share an interest in genealogy and meet to share their knowledge. NHG does NOT maintain a library and does NOT do research for others. An individual member may choose to handle research requests, but NHG will not be responsible for the quality of the work performed or any fees charged.