



NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS

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Mailings: Liz Reilly		
10 issues - August-June		

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Let's hear it for the Steelers! We had some close games but the team pulled through and won the Super Bowl. And most of the players will be back next year. So, let's keep our fingers crossed and see how next season goes.

With the increased postage and reproduction costs, we've been testing creating our newsletter as a PDF file. I've been able to do this by using a free program called Open Office. Open Office is a Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint clone. This gives us several benefits. First, we can reduce our printing and postage costs by sending you our newsletter via email and the money saved can be used to subsidize the publication of our upcoming cemetery book. And second, we can keep back issues of our newsletter on our webpage in case you've misplaced the newsletter. If you would like to receive our newsletter via email, please let me know.

One of our members, Elissa Powell, has published an article in the NGS NewsMagazine titled "Roads, walls and paths not taken." This article discusses means of re-evaluating your genealogical research to overcome problems. Well done!

I've finished making my to-do list for genealogical projects this year. I'm planning several trips - one to Washington, DC and another one to New York City. I hope to spend several days in the Pennsylvania Department at the Carnegie. I find that I can become more efficient by making a list of what I wish to accomplish else I risk getting sidetracked.

Our updated bylaws were approved during our January meeting. The next step is to review and approve policies and procedures that implement the bylaws. The bylaws give the broad outlines of the operation of our organization whereas the policies and procedures give us the specifics.

We are planning on publishing our third cemetery book later this year. If you are interested in helping out cross-checking all the data collected from the current set of cemeteries, please drop Jo Henderson (henders2@connecttime.net) and Irene Dinning (dinning1@earthlink.net) a line.

During our last meeting, a number of you expressed interest in more meetings on Internet research and on using the resources of the Northland Library. We will work toward those goals.

Best!

Steph

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WHERE GENEALOGISTS MEET

Tuesday, March 7, 2006 - 7 p.m. - NHG Board Meeting - UPMC Passavant Hospital Cafeteria. Everyone welcome.

Thuesday, March 21, 2006 7:00 p.m. - Regular NHG Meeting - Mistakes in Stone - Thomas Hannon (see article)

Other Meetings

Monday, February 27, 2006 - 7:00 p.m. - The Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Round Table - "The Crater at Petersburg" - Kevin Green. (see article) - Sieb's Pub, Babcock Meeting Room - Babcock Boulevard.

Saturday, March 11, 2006 - WPGS Meeting - 10:00 am - Finding Ancestral Devils in the Details - James Biedler (more than names and dates in PA records) - Carnegie Lecture Hall

Future Meetings

April, 2006 - The 10 Days That Unexpectedly Changed America - (the Homestead Strike) - on the History Channel

Saturday, July 1, 2006 - The Stephen Foster Music & River Heritage Festival - Lawrenceville Historical Society. (more information later)

July 14-15, 2006 - Roots in the Boot - American-Italian Family History & Culture Conference - held at the University of Pittsburgh - Keynote speaker - John Philip Coletta. Check www.rootsintheboot.org.

Friday & Saturday - September 29, 30, 2006 - PA Genealogy Conference - Sheraton Station Square - Pittsburgh, PA - <http://www.pagenalogyconference.com>

MARCH 7 NHG MEETING

Mistakes in Stone is a presentation focused upon the pioneering era in Western PA, north and west of the Allegheny River, south of Lake Erie and east of the border with Ohio. In that era, 1795 to 1840, illiteracy prevailed because of few educational opportunities and codification of the American version of English was slow to spread. Therefore, a cadre of engravers who were not literate produced tombstones for a clientele who were also largely illiterate. Many surnames are spelled incorrectly because of this fact of pioneer life. Of course many families altered surname spellings as well, most probably reflecting internal family dissension, and/or for reasons not known at present. Many surnames in the later 1800s were changed from eastern European spellings to create Americanized versions. In addition, grammatical errors abound in the realms of spelling, spacing, misuse of exclamatory and interrogatory marks and stones cut out of any regard for symmetry in the "sandstone" or pioneering era.

GREATER PITTSBURGH CIVIL WAR ROUND TABLE

Monday, February 27, 2006

7:00 p.m.

The Crater at Petersburg

Kevin Green

Following the Battle of the Crater on July 30, 1864, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant said: "It was the saddest affair I have witnessed in the war." Pennsylvania miners were involved in the building of an underground tunnel between enemy forces. Was General Grant trying to keep some of his men "busy" or did he, actually, have a plan that he believed would work? What went wrong to what appeared to be a break in the Confederate lines for Union forces on July 30th?

Round Table member Kevin Green will look at some of the decisions that were made by the leaders on both sides and analyze how politics had an impact on this event. He will look at the military hearings and investigations that followed the battle and have an open discussion about the regiments and leaders involved.

ROOTS IN THE BOOT

July 14-15, 2006

Pittsburgh, PA

Roots in the Boot is a non-profit organization dedicated to learning about Italian family history and culture. This three-track conference will include lectures on Genealogy, Italian Culture, Language, History and Technology. The keynote and closing speaker will be nationally renowned speaker and author Dr. John Philip Colleta. He will provide two more lectures on Italian Americans. If you have "Roots in the Boot" this is the conference you will want to attend.

For more information about this conference check the website at www.rootsintheboot.org, by email at rootsintheboot@yahoo.com or by mail at Roots in the Boot, P. O. Box 8313, Pittsburgh, PA 15218

GETTYSBURG MONUMENTS VANDALIZED

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette February 17, 2006

Vandals hit Gettysburg National Military Park overnight Wednesday, damaging three Civil War monuments and stealing a 120-year-old sword.

Park spokeswoman Katie Lawhon said the intruders pulled the top stone and sculpture off the 11th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Monument. They also stole a sword from that monument.

In addition to the Massachusetts memorial, vandals pulled down the bronze sculpture of a Zouave infantryman from the pedestal of the 114th Pennsylvania Volunteer Infantry Monument. The third monument damaged was a bronze sculpture of an artillerian.

This is the third time in 18 months that vandals have damaged Gettysburg monuments.

QUERIES

Compiled by Query Editor, Sylvan Kretz

HODIL/HODILL, Fox Chapel Twp; **PETER/PETERS**, Allegheny City; Emrg. in Buffalo, NY or Millvale, PA. **GRUBBS**, Indiana Twp. or Allegheny Co., PA; **DIETZ, HODEL**, Germany. Contact: *Ronald Hodill, 920 NW 24th Ave., Gainesville, FL 32609*

PINCHOT, Beaver Co., PA or vicinity. Contact: *Hester Keown, 102 Owens Farm Rd., Reynoldsville, PA 15851-6912*

BECKER, Fred & Anna, **WELLER**, Fred, Allegheny City, PA. **WELLER**, Harry & Jennie & son Harry Jr., Marion, OH. Contact: *Virginia Kryl, 236 Columbia Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15229*

MILLER, Frederick, Allegheny City or Reserve Twp., PA. Contact: *Rosemary Miller, P.O. Box 558, Ingomar, PA 15127*

CARNAHAN, LYNCH, Allegheny County, PA. **McMICHAEL**, Beaver Co., PA **ROUSH, ROSE**, Meigs Co., OH. Contact: *Mildred Roush, 351 East Second Street, Beaver, PA 15009-2812*

SIDEBOTTOM, RHINEBERGER, SHARP, MANLY. Contact: *Louise Wallace, 2642 S. 9th Ave, Luray, KS 67649*

GRUBBS, Mary Ann, b. abt. 1810/1811, d 26 Jan. 1894, m. John **RINAMAN**, b June 1804, d 28 Oct. 1876. Children: Elizabeth, Barbara Ellen Morgan, Martha M., William, George, Christopher, Mary Ann, Catherine, Thomas Christopher, Lenora, Charlotte and a son b. about 1837. Lived in Pine Creek (now McCandless Twp) or possibly Pine Township. John's first wife was Susan **DEER**. Need parents of Mary Ann **GRUBBS**. Contact: *Joanne Hopkins, 215 Grove Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 152298*

DILL, Franklin Twp. & Allegheny City, PA. **FERGUSON**, Virginia, Washington City PA & Ohio. Contact: *Bill & Dorothy Ferguson, 55 Wayside Ln., Verona, PA 15147*

OWENS, Vincent, Early - Virginia, later - Brownsville, PA. **LaHUE/LaHEW**, Virginia. **VAUGHAN**, Harrisburg, PA 1840-1890. Contact: *CarolJo Henderson, 806 Laurel Oak Dr., Valencia, PA 16059*

Queries are free and open to EVERYONE. Send your queries to the Query Editor, % North Hills Genealogists. Queries will be published in the newsletter as space permits.

MORPHCORP SETTLES IN THE CASE OF DECEPTIVE GENEALOGY “BOOKS”

From the Eastman Online Genealogy Blog, February 9, 2006

MorphCorp is a Denver-based company that for years has produced international (Surname) Family Yearbooks. Insert your name in place of (Surname). For instance, when publishing a book claiming to be about my (Dick Eastman's) family, they would call it the “International Eastman Family Yearbook.” If publishing about the Clark family, they would call it the “International Clark Family Yearbook.”

These so-called books were not worth the paper they were printed on. You can read the review of these books that I wrote eighteen months ago at http://blog.eogn/eastmans_online_genealogy/2004/07/international_s.html. Now Colorado's Attorney General John W. Suther has gone after the company and stopped the scam.

(Another example of “buyer beware”)

ILLINOIS CIVIL WAR RECORDS ARE NOW ONLINE

From genealogyblog.com, February 12, 2006

The Illinois State Archives has expanded the information it now has online concerning Civil War veterans from Illinois at their Illinois Civil War Muster and Descriptive Rolls Database website.

It took historian Greg Koos just a few seconds to offer his review of a new state website.

“That’s pretty neat,” said the director of the McLean County Museum of History after a quick sampling of a new database that allows people to search the names and personal information of soldiers who fought in the Civil War.

“It makes it really convenient for people doing genealogical research,” Koos said. “I can see how it would be useful.”

The revamped research tool, available at www.ilsos.gov/genealogy, replaces large, bulky ledger books that could only be accessed at the state archives building in Springfield (IL).

HELP WANTED

Do you have an idea for a future program at NHG or a program topic you would like to see presented? If you do, let Program Chair Laura Kunig know. She wants to schedule programs that the membership of NHG would like to see. You can give your ideas to Laura at our meeting or send her an email at LauraPSU@aol.com. She would like to hear from you.

HERITAGE CREATIONS FILING FOR CHAPTER 7 BANKRUPTCY

from genealogyblog.com

February 5, 2006

Most of you know who Leland Meitzler is. He has spoken at several NHG meetings and brought his 'store' of books, etc. for us to purchase. The following sad message from Leland recently appeared on his blog.

This is a blog I never expected to ever write, but circumstances have dictated that I do so today. Put in simple terms -- I'm broke and am in the process of filing for Chapter 7 personal bankruptcy.

As most of you folks know, I bought back Heritage Quest Magazine, and much of the Heritage Quest retail operations from ProQuest three years ago. It was offered to me by ProQuest as a 'silver lining' to the fact that Patty and I were both being laid off, after 10 years with AGLL, Sierra and ProQuest. Although I knew that the operation was losing a lot of money, in my arrogance, I thought that I could turn it around and make it profitable. I had little money, but I had substantial credit available to me. I didn't want to see Heritage Quest Magazine go away. Having founded the magazine 17 years previously, my life was wrapped up in its publication. So I set off on the journey that ultimately cost us everything we owned. The operation lost money every month until we downsized in October. Since then, Patty and I have been working unbelievable hours in conditions that I'm sure no sane person would ever put up with. Doing this, I thought I'd found the key to making it profitable -- and I may have, only at that point the hole I'd dug was too deep to climb out of.

We sold our home in November, using the proceeds to finance that quarter's projects. We moved into a motorhome, parked in a local trailer park. In January we were looking at not only magazine publication expenses, but also a fair amount of taxes due. On the 31st, I was prepared to spend my last dime on magazine publishing expenses when it finally hit home that there was no way that I could make it through February. I was about a half million dollars in debt, with debt service alone eating up cash flow. That afternoon I met with my accountant as well as a bankruptcy attorney.

I've hurt a lot of people in attempting to operate this business as I have -- and a large number of those folks have been personal friends -- some for over 20 years. There are very few within the genealogical community that I don't owe in some way. I owe dozens of suppliers for product not paid for. I owe authors for articles written and not paid for. I owe subscribers for magazine subscriptions, both Heritage Quest, as well as Genealogy Bulletin. My friends have defended my integrity when times have been rough before. Now I'm letting everyone down, including those friends. I wish I could apologize to each of you personally, but that isn't humanly possible. At this point, all I can do is say that I'm sorry -- and I know that isn't enough.

On a slightly brighter note, I'm quite sure that Heritage Quest Magazine and Genealogy Bulletin will find a new home, and the subscribers will get what they paid for. The subscriber-base of these two publications is substantial. This will have to be done with the blessing of the courts and ProQuest, who according to contract, gets all this back if I default. How long that may take I have no idea.

I will continue to blog, although my personal blogs may be a little thin for a few weeks. Joe will probably be doing a better job at that than I do anyway. I have a ton of paperwork to do, and that will continue to eat up all my time for a bit. My commercial websites will be coming down shortly. I have no idea what I'm going to do to earn a living. But maybe I'll go back to research -- which I love. I also plan to continue to operate a "Christmas Tour" to Salt Lake City -- as I have for over 20 years.

Please don't think too poorly of me, although I don't blame you if you do. I feel I gave it my best -- and that wasn't good enough.

Leland K. Meitzler, Heritage Creations

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN GENEALOGY

From www.rootsweb.com ROOTS-L

How many times have you seen abbreviations in genealogical research and weren't sure what they meant? The following are some of the abbreviations from the ROOTS-L list.

1C	First Cousin (2C, second cousin, etc.)
1R	Once removed (2r, twice removed, etc.)
AFRA	American Family Records Association
Ag. Lab	Agricultural Labourer (British censuses)
AMINDEX	Index of emigrants from British Isles to USA and West Indies
AIS	Accelerated Indexing System
Bp	Bishop
BT	Bishop's Transcript (British parish registers)
C18	Eighteenth century (etc.)
CANINDEX	Index of emigrants from British Isles to Canada and Newfoundland
CC	County Court (USA)
Chr	Christened
CRO	County Record Office (British)
DC	District Court (USA)
DRO	Diocesan Record Office (British)
d.s.p.	Died without issue (from Latin: decessit sine prole)
FFHS	Federation of Family History Societies (British)
FOIA	Freedom of Information Act
geb	Born (from German: geboren)
gest	Died (from German, gestorben)
GOONS	Guild Of One Name Studies
GRO	General Registry Office (British)
HMSO	Her Majesty's Stationery Office (British)
IGS	Irish Genealogical Society
IOOF	Independent Order of Odd Fellows
IRAD	Illinois Regional Archive Depository
MG	Minister of the Gospel
MI	Monumental (or memorial) Inscription
NLW	National Library of Wales
OPCS	Office of Population Censuses and Surveys (British)
OPR	Old Parochial Records (for Scotland)
o.t.p.	Of this parish (British records)
PCC	Prerogative Court of Canterbury (English wills)
PCY	Prerogative Court of York (English wills)
PRO	Public Record Office (British)
PRONI	Public Records Office of Northern Ireland
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SoG	Society of Genealogists (British)
USIA	U. S. Information Agency

Hope these abbreviations help you in your research.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

MISTAKES IN STONE

Thomas Hannon

March 21, 2006 - 7:00 pm

REASONS TO JOIN A GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Here are some of the reasons for joining a genealogical society.

1. Opportunity to network.
2. Blast through research roadblocks.
3. Travel the proven past.
4. Fly with birds of a feather.
5. Access to resources.
6. An open door to subject matter experts.
7. Linguistic support.
8. Newsletters and other publications.
9. Help yourself while helping others.
10. Share & celebrate the obsession.