The USGenWeb Project

N E W S

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Notes From The Editor
Denise Wells

CALL FOR NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEERS: Once again, as time passes, people come and go in the different projects. It's that way with the Newsletter also. If you have been harboring a latent desire to become a writer, or just want to help make a difference for our Project and our Coordinators, send me a note and let's talk about what you might do for the Newsletter. Come join us. Thanks, and I look forward to adding some new voices to our little corner of the Project. dawells2@aol.com

Last month, we found out about a CC who has a USGenWeb-wide project called USGenWeb Civil War State Links at http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mocivwar/USAlinks.html

And now we find out about yet another CC with a USGenWeb-wide project, as told in the RootsWeb Review, 14 February 2007, Vol. 10, No. 7 at http://ftp.rootsweb.ancestry.com/pub/review/2007/0214.txt:

"1c. New Page Created to Search USGenWeb. Daryl Lytton, involved with the original USGenWeb founders and the USGenWeb Newsletter Assistant Editor, has recently launched a new page for searching the state sites on USGenWeb.com. I e-mailed Daryl about the project and these are his words on the huge undertaking:

"'The scope of the project is to, for the first time in the ten-year history of the USGenWeb Project, make available for researchers the capability to search all USGenWeb states, State Special Projects, counties within the states (and where available cities within the counties), and USGenWeb Special Projects excluding the Archives and Archives Sub-Projects because they are all hosted by RootsWeb and have their own search capabilities. We do have links to the USGenWeb Archives search, and to the two USGenWeb Census Projects searches, so that the Search Us homepage can be a one-stop shop for researchers wanting to search the USGenWeb.'

"The thirteen original states, plus Alaska and Hawaii (the last two), and the USGenWeb Special Projects have all been indexed and, according to Daryl, the goal is to have the rest of the states done by May, if not sooner. After that, the goal is to enable a USGenWeb- wide search.

"With these new searching capabilities, even Daryl says he has been able to find information on his family that eluded him before. More volunteers are always needed to help with the project. If you're interested, contact UsGenWeb at Comments@USGenWeb-Search.Us.

"Good work Daryl and team!
http://www.usgenweb-search.us/"

In Memoriam

Kenneth D. Johnson died November 17, 2006. Ken was a county file manager for several years, and also Assistant State File Manager for the Georgia division of the USGenWeb Archives Project. His obituary is posted at: http://obit.desmondfuneralhome.com/obit_display.cgi?id=355040&listing=Current

Notes From The N.C.
Scott Burow - USGenWeb Project National Coordinator

Winter is prime time for genealogists - both new and experienced. With the holiday season and family get-togethers, the opportunity to share and gather family history and genealogical information is at a high. It is a chance to fill in some gaps in the old family lines, update information on family members, and maybe . just maybe . find that little piece of trivia than no one else remembers. It might be that very tiny fact that helps you break down the wall that has been blocking your research. With the colder weather, rather than searching cemeteries, we can take the time to sit and study what we've found over the last year and fit all the pieces together.

I spent some time during this past fall reviewing a number of state, county, parish, and special project sites that include veteran and military records in the hopes of highlighting those sites around Veterans Day. I have found that there are simply too many to highlight, and urge you to look yourselves and find ways to honor those men and women who served who were from your locale.

I was spurred onto this when members of our own project were involved in the return of an identification bracelet located near Normandy in France this month. It was lost sometime after D-day and recovered by someone local to the area. With only a name and a location from the bracelet, an Internet search led to the county site of the USGenWeb Project and a person who had submitted information. Military items, from personal effects to weapons and ordinance, are frequent finds in Europe and they say that things will continue to appear for another hundred years or so. For the USGenWeb to play a part in the return of an item to a family is an honor. I remain amazed at the generosity and willingness of individuals to go the extra mile to help.

For researchers, please remember to check the National Archives for military records they may have on file. Military records can often provide valuable information on the veteran, as well as on all members of the family. For example, service records consist of an envelope containing card abstracts taken from muster rolls, returns, pay vouchers, and other records. These can provide rank, unit affiliation, date mustered in and mustered out, basic biographical information, medical information, and military information. Pension applications and records of pension payments for veterans are based on service in the armed forces of the United States between 1775 and 1916.

Pension application files usually provide a wealth of genealogical information. These files often contain supporting documents such as narratives of events during service, marriage certificates, birth records, death certificates, pages from family Bibles, family letters, and depositions of witnesses. One might also find affidavits, discharge records, and other supporting documentation. Bounty Land Warrant application files relate to claims based on wartime service between 1775 and March 3, 1855. If an ancestor served in the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, early Indian Wars, or the Mexican War, a search of these records may contain documents similar to those in pension files, with lots of genealogical information.

If you have a relative who served in the military, remember to get their story for your family history. So many of our heroes from World War II and Korea are being lost, and if we do not get their story, it will be lost with them. If you have a family member who is currently serving, please give that person my thanks.

A belated Happy New Year to each of you, and keep up the good work.

Notes from the E.C.
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~usgwelections/
By Jo Branch, Election Committee Chair
The new members of the Election Committee were seated on 31 Dec 2006. Calls for a first quarter report were sent out to all State and Project Coordinators. Membership spreadsheets are continuously updated with volunteers added and removed from projects.

For a second quarter in a row, new members are being added to the membership list, but are not receiving invitations to register to vote.

In October, the Election Committee was donated server space for an online dataset that will allow, you, the member to register and update your own records. During the past two months, the Election Committee has been using a test database to work out the glitches. We expect to do a final testing within the next couple of weeks, barring any unexpected problems with the programming.

Once the dataset is up and operational, all un-registered volunteers will be invited to register to vote.

We, at the EC, appreciate the cooperation and patience of Scott Burrow, National Coordinator, the Advisory Board, Ellen Pack, Temporary Advisor to the Election Committee, Larry Stephens, Election Committee Programmer and all of the USGenWeb volunteers.

Update from Tina Vickery, WIGenWeb SC
WIGenWeb Project Cemetery Tombstone Photo Pages Surpasses 160,000 Photos! The many wonderful contributors the the WIGenWeb Project Cemetery Tombstone Photo Pages have surpassed the 160,000 photo mark. All 72 couunties are represented with 1400+ cemeteries provided.

Visit and explore!
http://usgwarchives.net/wi/cemetery/

My very special thanks to all the contributors. Each of you make Wisconsin Genealogy at its Best!

Site Spotlights
Iowa County, IAGenWeb
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iaiowa/

By Steve Williams, County Coordinator I started as the current host for Iowa County on 12 Oct 2004. My Great-Great-Grandfather, Richard Williams, founded Williamsburg, Iowa Co, Iowa. I am also the IAGenWeb State Census Project Coordinator and part of the IAGenWeb.org Technical Support Team. My interest in genealogy goes back to my teenage years, but I did not really get started until about 5 years ago. I love the personal cultural aspect of genealogy, the detective and problem solving work. I "retired" from software engineer early in life about 5 years ago--note the coincidence ;-) I docent at the Santa Cruz (CA) Museum of Art and History, leading art and history tours for school children. I am not sure if or when I will return to the work-force; I am too busy!

My favorite pages of the site probably are the newspaper pages (example news article: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iaiowa/news/crg/crg-1933-cong_church.htm). Internet surfers should know about Coordinator Assistant Netha Meyer's great obituary extracts database listing spouse and partner; births, marriages and deaths; and mothers and fathers names: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iaiowa/bmd/

Cemetery's are currently being canvassed, histories being typed up, and a slight redesign is happening using a better and simpler Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) implementation. Find a sneak-peek of the new design here: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iaiowa/records-template.htm, and a new feature here: http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iaiowa/news/lostboy/

Mercer County, KYGenWeb
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~kymercer/

If you happen to have ancestors in Mercer County, KY, you're a lucky researcher! Just wandering through this site is fun even if you don't have family members there. Pam Ison has provided a great web site chocked full of information and history. Pam has been hosting the Mercer County, KY page since June of 1996!. As she says, "It's my 'one and only.'" She has volunteered for this county because all of her post-Revolutionary War ancestors came through there. Consequently, she has found "tons of genealogical data" about them in just that county. "How convenient, eh?," Pam smiles.

Pam goes on to say, "I started by putting my own data, or data I'd personally collected on my ancestors, onto the site, and inviting others to do the same. People were so willing to share, that it soon became burdensome to hand-code all the pages, so I started automating the submission process. The success of the site is due entirely to the visitors who are so willing to share. It's my hope that others like myself (who don't live in the county, but have roots there) can find the pieces to help them put their puzzles together."

You will find over 17,000 deaths in Mercer Co. from 1911-1999; a search page for deaths, marriages, etc.; an index to the 1810 Census; index to the 1830 Census; a search page for Mercer (and surrounding) Co. births from 1911-1920; a search page for marriages; cemetery entries; and the list goes on and on. Stop by, put your feet up and "sit a spell" at Mercer County. You'll enjoy every minute there.

City Directories: A Great Resource
By Anne J Lex - Records Reporter
City directories are directories that were published every year beginning in the late 1700's to the early 1800's, depending upon the locality. Most larger cities published city directories each year. City directories are very similar to the white pages without phone numbers and are an alphabetical list of residents, listed by last name and also provide an address. These are a great resource that can help uncover various other records.

Once a locality is determined for a relative, the address for churches in the area can be researched in the business directory. Once a church is found, baptismal, funeral, marriage and other records may be requested. City directories can indicate any of the following: head of household, names of other members of the residence, occupation, renter or owner and whether a woman in the household was a widow. If the head of household is indicated in a census year, the ward and enumeration district can be researched to locate the census record. If a woman is listed as a widow, a researcher can go through past directories to determine when the head of household was last listed.

Once this is found, check the publication dates of the last directory that lists a relative and the first directory where the relative disappears. This will help narrow down a death date to find a death certificate, a will and death notice/obituary.

Finally, if a resident was the owner, a deed may be located.

Many city directories contained a reverse directory. This directory lists street names alphabetically. It's always beneficial to check the reverse directory because relatives with different last names living in the same household can be uncovered. City directories can be found in historical societies, archives and larger libraries. City directories can be researched in books, microfilm and online databases.

Suggested reading:
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~rwguide/lesson20.htm
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nygglshp/City_Directories.html

Online Library
Daryl Lytton - Assistant Editor

The North Carolina History and Fiction Digital Library, by the East Carolina University Joyner Library. You didn't have ancestors in North Carolina? Well, don't judge a library by its name, there is more than just North Carolina history, as we will see in this review...

Most of the items in the North Carolina History and Fiction Digital Library are presented in both digital image format and plain text format, with links to images. There is a nice, easy-to-use "tree" navigation system for each item, allowing you to select which part of the item to view. While viewing a particular page, you can switch between the digital and text formats. For the text format, you have the option to view the entire item on one web page, which is really nice if you want to copy/paste the item.

The main page is at http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/historyfiction/ where you will find a fancy, interesting clickable map of counties, as well as a list and a Search button. The Search page allows you to not only search, but also to show lists of the books by subject, title, or author. The search box itself performs full text searches, not just keywords. Search also has a powerful set of optional operators to limit or control your search.

Items are online now for 29 North Carolina counties, including extinct ones, with "coming soon" plans for more counties. Perhaps the best was to get an idea of the scope of this library is to browse the titles of the items, at http://digital.lib.ecu.edu/historyfiction/index_files/titleList.html

You will find a full range of historical items including: reward posters for run-away slaves; an indexed abstract of North Carolina wills published in 1910; books about family life, and autobiographies including the daughter of Virginia Dare; several military-specific items, including Confederate War papers; a 1916 book on early flight; a book about Blackbeard the pirate published in 1847, and one about Buccaneers published in 1898; several religion-specific items, including a history of the First Christian Church; books about early expeditions into and around North Carolina.

Sometimes our interest in old books is not to read about specific areas or events, but rather to gain an understanding of how life was in the old days. This library has many items to help us with that understanding: "The First English Settlement In America" published 1904 by the NC DAR; "The Lost Colony of Roanoke" published 1891; "A General History of the Pyrates" published 1724; "The Monitor and the Merrimac" published 1890 by the Rhode Island Soldiers and Sailors Historical Society; "Norfolk the Marine Metropolis of Virginia" published 1888; "The office and authority of a justice of peace, and also, the duty of sheriffs, coroners, constables, church-wardens, overseers of roads, and other officers. Together with precedents of warrants, judgments, executions, and other legal process....." published 1774; "Plantation Sketches" published 1906; "Some Social Traits of the Quakers" published 1908-09; "Teacher's handbook, 1926-1927" by the Halifax County Board of Education, are some examples.

Prose & Poetry

DEDICATION: To the NL Editor Denise Wells and her daughter, Stephanie Wells, on the passing of Stephanie's father, Thomas Eugene McGranahan, age 57 (Nov. 22, 2006) and her beloved favorite cousin and Denise's nephew, Jeffrey Alan Gorman, age 43 (Jan. 6, 2007).

History of Delaware County, Iowa and its People, 1914, Volume I, Chapter XII, "The writer of the poem which follows, the late J L McCreery, was a resident of Delhi from 1861 to 1865 and edited the Journal during that period of time. He then went to Dubuque and attached himself to the Times of that city....The poem "There Is No Death," was written while he was doing newspaper work in Delhi....The authorship was given to many, among whom was the great classic, Lord Lytton of England."

THERE IS NO DEATH

There is no death! the stars go down
To rise upon some other shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine for evermore.

There is no death! the forest leaves
Convert to life the viewless air
The rocks disorganize to feed
The hungry moss they bear.

There is no death! the dust we tread
Shall change, beneath the summer showers
To golden grain, or mellow fruit,
Or rain tinted flowers.

There is no death! the leaves may fall
The flowers may fade and pass away--
They only wait, through wintry hours,
The warm, sweet breath of May.

There is no death! the choicest gifts
That heaven hath kindly lent to earth
Are ever first to seek again
The country of their birth

And all things that for growth or joy
Are worthy of our love or care,
Whose loss has left us desolate,
Are safely garnered there.

Though life become a dreary waste,
We know its fairest, sweetest flowers,
Transplanted into paradise,
Adorn immortal bowers.

There is no death! although we grieve
When beautiful familiar forms
That we have learned to love are torn
From our embracing arms.

Although with bowed and breaking heart,
With sable garb and silent thread,
We bear their senseless dust to rest,

And say that they are "dead."

They are not dead! they have but passed
Beyond the mists that blind us here
Into the new and larger life
Of that serener sphere.

They have but dropped their robe of clay
To put their shining raiment on;
They have not wandered far away--
They are not "lost" or "gone."

Though disenthralled and glorified,
They still are here and love us yet;
The dear ones they have left behind
They never can forget.

And sometimes when our hearts grow faint,
Amid temptations fierce and deep,
Or when the wildly raging waves
Of grief or passion sweep,

We feel upon our fevered brow
Their gentle touch, their breath of balm:
Their arms enfold us and our hearts
Grow comforted and calm.

And ever near us, though unseen,
The dear, immortal spirits tread;
For all the boundless universe
Is life ------ "there are no dead."

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