The USGenWeb Project

N E W S

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Notes From The Editor
Denise Wells

Do you know what anniversary is quickly approaching? No? Well, it's the 400th anniversary of the founding of Jamestown, Virginia, when the first settlers landed on May 13, 1607. This issue will give you a quick glimpse at what took place 400 years ago, and discuss what records exist and where they are located. We hope you enjoy this article written by Anne J Lex, and Christine Sweet-Hart, CG.

I also want to bring your attention to a new set of records that may be able to provide much information about your ancestors. I was recently contacted by a reader who wanted to discuss water company records. The reader, a researcher and I believe these records could make a difference in genealogy research. Many of these records may be available and we believe it will take committed individuals to bring them into the open for family historians to gain access to them. Be sure to read the article below which addresses this issue.

Also, please join me in welcoming our newest member to the Newsletter staff. Linda K. Lewis loves cemeteries! Her articles, Graveside Chronicles, will bring many interesting discussions of cemeteries and cemetery issues. We believe her expertise in this area will benefit our readers and those transcribing and photographing cemeteries for online projects. Welcome aboard, Linda!

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

As the spring thaws occur and we begin to hunt through the countryside in search of our missing kin, it is my hope that your journeys find new information uncovered and exposed.

Last weekend I had the opportunity to view a long hidden and original cemetery just north of town with stones from the late 1830's and 1840's. No one knows how long ago this cemetery became lost to history, but the few gravestones identified thus far include some of the earliest names in our local history. Only through chance discovery was this found now. The winter storms took down a tree, and the spring thaws and wash exposed stones that had been lost.

Chance occurrence is sometimes the greatest surprise, and often how people find our local sites and projects. Finding just that right piece of data, being on the right Web site, or asking just the right question may yield fantastic results. As each of you research and find new information for your sites, remember those chance encounters that might occur, and provide for our users the best information you can.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank Larry, Jo, and the rest of the Election Committee for what has been a monumental effort in updating and preparing the election software. I never imagined the amount of work these individuals put in on a daily basis in trying to keep the member database accurate and up to date. Added to the difficulty is the new location and updated software, and the learning curve has been steep.

There are important issues to be on the ballot this summer. If you are a new member of the project, please do not forget to register to vote. Being on the Project mailing list is not enough, registration with the Election Committee as a voter needs to be completed as well. For all other members, it may be a wise move to check your registration to make sure your email address, site and project affiliations are correct.

Registration is available now here:
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~usgwelections/registration.htm

Have a wonderful and safe spring, and keep digging for those roots!

[Ed. The E.C. has informed us that on March 16, online registration was opened at http://www.usgwelections.org/USGenWeb/Register.cfm for members to begin registering to vote and/or editing their records; and that registration will close on May 31, 2007 for the nominations and election period]

Search Us Update
By Daryl Lytton, Assistant Editor
During March http://www.USGenWeb-Search.Us added more states: AL, AZ, FL, LA, ME, MI, MO, MS, ND, NE, NM and VT are now searchable. ITGenWeb was combined with OKGenWeb, the last line of each search result lets you know if the page is IT or OK. It's easy to add a link to USGenWeb-Search.Us from your site. Just use the above URL, or go to that URL and find the URL for your state to use (the individual state search pages have no names on them). On April 14th, Search Us reached a milestone - 1,022,363+ USGenWeb pages are now searchable for your site visitors.

USGenWeb at FGS 2007
by Friends of USGenWeb at FGS 2007 Committee
With summer right around the corner, it's time to think about the Federation of Genealogy Societies' annual conference to be held August 15-18, 2007 in Ft. Wayne, IN. Once again, USGenWeb volunteers will sponsor a booth to assist researchers, recruit volunteers, and spread the word about our project.

If you are planning to attend and would like to help out at the booth, please contact Tina Vickery tsvickery@adelphia.net

If you would like to provide a brochure, card, or flyer about your USGenWeb state or county, now's the time to get started. You can find more information here, along with several informative links: http://homepages.rootsweb.com/~binkley/

There is always a lot going on at these conferences, and much to learn. This year you will also have the wonderful opportunity to utilize the outstanding genealogy resources at the Allen County Public Library.

Grab your notebooks and pencils, pack your bags, and plan on being in Ft. Wayne for the big event!

Project Spotlights
by Darlene Anderson, Spotlights Editor

Venango County, PAGenWeb
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~pavenang/

Are you ready to explore Venango County, PA? This Web site has it all! The Web site opens with a warm welcome and an invitation to search for your ancestors.

Are you interested in school information? What about cemetery or township descriptions? Venango County offers this information and much more! As I began to explore this Web site I was intrigued by all the photos and especially the State Historical Markers. Some of the highlights of this site are the township information which includes a photo and a description of the township and there are many more photos of people and places in this county. The cemetery listings are by township with GPS coordinates and directions to get there.

Sheila, the county coordinator, has included a Guestbook on the site and here are some nice things that folks visiting the Web site had to say: Tam says, "Great Web-Site!" R. G. Phipps says, "Very Nice Site! I intend to explore it a lot more." And, Rick Corbett says, "Great Reading! Keep up the good work."

This Web site is well organized and maintained by Sheila Barr Helser, county coordinator. Sheila, I agree with Rick's comment, "Keep up the good work!"

Cambell County, KYGenWeb
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~kycampbe/

Campbell County, KY here we come! Are you looking for anything and everything to do with genealogy? You've got to visit Campbell County KYGenWeb today! Shirlene Jensen and Jerry Moore are your hosts and I might add that they have done a fantastic job constructing this Web site and including genealogy information that ranges from African American to Wills.

The area I thought was the most fascinating is the Postcards from the Past section. I love old postcards, don't you? This section has photos of 27 old postcards. Here you will find postcards of churches and the Newport Trolley. Campbell County genealogists are fortunate to have a Web site that has something for everyone! You could spend hours reading through the information on this site.

Shirlene and Jerry have a guestbook on the Web site and here are some things folks visiting the Web site had to say: Audrey Westerman said, "You have the most wonderful research site I have encountered. I have found 2 generations of my family, Nichols and Dean, when I thought I never would find any of them;" Don Fuller says, " What an interesting site - I'm sure Peggy and I will be spending some thoroughly enjoyable hours with the many data included in the site. Thank you so very much -----."

Thanks for all your hard work and dedication, Shirlene and Jerry!

Celebrating Jamestown: Its 400th Anniversary
Part 1
by Christine Sweet-Heart, Contributing Editor
On the 20th of December 1606, an expedition sponsored by the Virginia Company of London and led by Captain Christopher Newport, sailed from London on three ships, the Susan Constant, Godspeed , and Discovery. Prior to their departure, the members of the Virginia Company of London swore their allegiance to the King and Church of England and were required to make and post their wills - an indication of the dangers of Atlantic sea travel. One hundred five passengers, all upper-class Englishmen, traveled across the Atlantic on their four-month journey. All but one, who died during the voyage, arrived in Chesapeake Bay in April 1607.

The Spanish had previously explored this area and were likely to return, having befriended the Algonquin Indians and taken the brother of the Emperor Powhatan to Spain to train as a priest. With this in mind and after two weeks of exploration for a site that offered a good defensive position, the colonists landed at what was to be known as Jamestown in May of 1607.

Jamestown, named for King James I the grantor of the first charter in 1606, was initially established as a business venture. In the written bonds of the investors in this Virginia Adventure was a clause stating the settlers were to search for precious stones and precious metals. Although not its primary stated purpose, the members felt it was important to bring the Protestant faith to the New World by converting the Indians to the Anglican religion.

The small English outpost soon developed issues. Although trade was established with the Indians, relations with them remained tenuous. Many of the original settlers were upper-class Englishmen and the lack of laborers and skilled farmers, coupled with an unfamiliar climate, brackish water supply and lack of food, led to much disease and death.

It was not until 1608 that the first two English women arrived in the colony. Captain John Smith became the leader of the small colony in September 1608 and established a "no work, no food" policy. He was instrumental in trading with the Indians for food. Injured the following fall, he returned to England where he wrote many books about his experiences in the Virginia colony. Never returning to the New World, he died in 1631 leaving behind a wealth of material for historians.

After Smith's departure, relations between the colonists and the Indians deteriorated rapidly. The resulting deaths of many of the colonists from starvation and disease drove the decision of the remaining settlers to abandon Jamestown in the spring of 1610. Before they could make good on their decision, a group of new settlers arrived with supplies and a second charter issued by King James I.

This second charter provided for stronger leadership under a governor and group of advisors. It also introduced a period of military law that included harsh punishments for those who did not obey. Finally, in 1613, after trying several industries in attempts to make a profit for the Virginia Company, colonist John Rolfe introduced the tobacco crop. He later went on to marry Pocahontas, the daughter of Powhatan. The success of the tobacco crop sent the tiny colony on its way to rapid growth and drew more settlers and an increasing number of indentured servants.

Sources: www.jamestowne.org - history, documents, and chronology sections; www.historyisfun.org/jamestown/jamestownhistory.cfm; downloaded and viewed 4/2007.

Celebrating Jamestown: Its 400th Anniversary
Part 2
by Anne J Lex - Records Editor
The Jamestown Records of the Virginia Company of London consisted of two volumes of court books that established the Jamestown Colony in America. The court book volumes recorded the activities of the original Jamestown settlers from 1606 through 1624. Volume one documented the settlers from 1606 through 1618. Volume two documented the settlers from 1619 through 1624. No one knows exactly what happened to volume one as it no longer exists. Volume two exchanged hands several times before it was purchased by Thomas Jefferson.

Jefferson was interested in the court book volume because he appreciated its historical value. Jefferson eventually sold his personal papers to Congress in 1815. Jefferson's personal papers included the court book volume of the Jamestown Records of the Virginia Company of London. Volume two is currently held at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Series 8: Virginia Records Manuscript Volumes 16 and 17. It is important to mention that these records hold very little genealogical content because only a few names are mentioned. These records are available for research on microfilm at the Library of Congress.

Series 8: Virginia Records, 1606-1737 http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/mtjser8.html

Searchable Database for the Thomas Jefferson Papers
http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/mtjquery.html

According to an article entitled Researching Seventeenth Century Virginians, there are three lists of Jamestown settlers available for research at the John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library. Lists of the Living and Dead in Virginia was compiled in 1623 after the Indian Massacre of 1622. This list was published by J.C. Hotten. The Muster of the Inhabitants of Virginia was published by A.L. Jester in 1624 and 1625. This list recorded the names of most of the settlers, as well as the year of arrival and the name of the ship. The third list is often used as a substitute for a non-existent census. This list contains the names of land owners that paid taxes on their land to the King of England. The list was compiled in 1704 and can be found by researching Annie L. W. Smith.

Researching Seventeenth Century Virginians ~ The John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Library
http://research.history.org/Files/JDRLibrary/17thC_Va.pdf

Jamestown settlers are documented throughout land records as they purchased land and real property. Land records are records that include "deeds, patents, grants, plats, surveys, processioners' returns, and land tax books." Images of these records are available online through a searchable database maintained by the Library of Virginia. These records range from 1623 through 1992. http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/land/index.htm

The Library of Virginia has a vast collection of private records. These manuscripts consist of ten types of records: "architectural plans and drawings, Bible records, business records, cemetery records, church records, family papers, Federal government records, genealogical notes and charts, military records, organization records, and personal papers." http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwehave/bio/index.htm

The private records collection can be researched at the library from several formats. A considerable amount of records from this collection can also be searched through the online database maintained by the Library of Virginia. Family bibles are likely to hold the most genealogical value of all the records from this collection. Family bibles can be searched through the online database.

The Virginia Colonial Records Project consists of colonial manuscripts from 1607 through 1783. These manuscripts are surveys of records from Ireland, Great Britain and France relating to Virginia. These manuscripts consist of British business and merchant records, British ship and cargo records, court records and many others. Images from this collection are available through an online database maintained by the Library of Virginia: http://ajax.lva.lib.va.us/F/?func=file&file_name=find-b-clas27&local_base=CLAS27

Finally, there are several repositories were research can be conducted on your Jamestown ancestor. Records could be found at historical and genealogical societies, museums, university and public libraries and at the Family History Center. I would also recommend doing background research to determine if there are any organizations, and any heredity and lineage societies in existence. These organizations and societies could have membership applications, records for dues and attendance records.

The Jamestown Society
http://www.jamestowne.org/

For further reading:

VA-Roots, sponsored and managed by the Library of Virginia is the first Internet list for Virginia researchers
http://www.lva.lib.va.us/whatwedo/lists/varoots.htm

The Settlement of Jamestown, by Captain John Smith http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/tsoj0000.html

The Travels of Captaine John Smith in Two Volumes: The Generall Historie of Virginia, New England & The Summer Isles [published 1624]; Together with The True Travels, Adventures and Observations [published 1630], and A Sea Grammar [published 1627], by Captain John Smith. http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/ghov1-00.html http://www.webroots.org/library/usahist/ghov2-00.html

Virtual Jamestown is an ongoing project that consists of a database of searchable Jamestown records http://www.virtualjamestown.org/prevstaff.html

National Park Service http://www.nps.gov/archive/colo/jthanout/Genealogy.html

Jamestown 2007
http://www.jamestown2007.org/roots-geneaology.cfm

http://www.historicjamestown.org

http://www.historyisfun.org

http://www.beginyouradventure.co.uk

http://www.nps.gov/archive/colo/Jthanout/Genealogy.html

http://www.jamestownlibrary.org/jamestown/localgenealogylibrary.htm

http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/collections/jefferson_papers/mtjessay2.html

NGS Conference May 16-19 Richmond, VA
http://www.ngsgenealogy.org

The May 2007 issue of National Geographic Magazine will feature and article, "America, Lost and Found" about the establishment of Jamestown, by Charles C. Mann.

Graveside Chronicles
by Linda K Lewis, Chronicles Editor
What is a Cemeterian?
I often refer to myself as a cemeterian when talking to people about cemeteries, genealogy or history, and someone almost always asks, "What is a cemeterian?"

Cemeterian is a relatively new term used to describe someone who loves to study cemeteries. Many cemeterians choose to focus on one or more of a number of different aspects of cemeteries. Layout, landscaping, monuments, epitaphs, gravestone art, stone carvers, preservation, recovery, and technology are just a few of many subjects of study.

"Taphophile" is an old Gothic term used to describe someone who loves cemeteries and funerals. While you could say a cemeterian is a taphophile, many of us don't use that term. Anything with "phile" on the end just can't be good! For example, a necrophile is a person who is sexually attracted to corpses. Definitely not good!

If you like to visit certain kinds of cemeteries, or you like to record cemeteries, research who the people are, or collect photos of certain types of stones or inscriptions, you just might be a cemeterian!

More next issue! Have a topic or question about cemeteries? Write to Ask a Cemeterian webmaster@cottonhills.com

Adams Family Cemeteries
~~ Do you like looking at old gravestones? Forget the walking, this notable collection of 1,834 stones are only clicks away. The pages are of thumbnails (they load fast), click on one for a larger view and notes on who is buried there:
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/columbus/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/franklin/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/homecem/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/burton/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/mtpleasant/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/paloma/
http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~iladams/woodland/

Epitaphs

In a London, England cemetery:
Ann Mann
Here lies Ann Mann,
Who lived an old maid
But died an old Mann.
Dec. 8, 1767
In a Ribbesford, England, cemetery:
Anna Wallace
The children of Israel wanted bread
And the Lord sent them manna,
Old clerk Wallace wanted a wife,
And the Devil sent him Anna.
In a Ruidoso, New Mexico, cemetery:
Here lies
Johnny Yeast
Pardon me
For not rising.
In a Vermont cemetery:
Sacred to the memory of
my husband John Barneswho died January 3, 1803
His comely young widow, aged 23, has
many qualifications of a good wife, and
yearns to be comforted.
In Stowe, Vermont:
I was somebody.
Who, is no business
Of yours.
In a Georgia cemetery:
"I told you I was sick!"
Margaret Daniels grave, Hollywood Cemetery, Richmond VA
She always said her feet were killing her
but nobody believed her.
Albany, New York:
Harry Edsel Smith
Born 1903--Died 1942
Looked up the elevator shaft to see if
the car was on the way down. It was.

Water Company Records
by Denise Wells, News Editor
I received the following email after the publication of last month's issue of the Newsletter:

"I volunteer at the Camden Area History Center in Camden, Maine. http://www.camdenhistorycenter.org/index.htm.
Several months ago we had a young woman visit looking for information on her family. She is involved with the water

companies in New England and has discovered that many of the local water companies have billing records and old maps stored in company vaults which in many cases exceed 100 years in age. The records typically list the street address, a bill to person, how many members are in the household, and how many cows and horses are owned by the family, as customers were billed quarterly on an estimated volume as water meters were unknown. The maps typically show streets in town, and the placement of houses with occupant names.

"In some cases, water company records have been destroyed as being deemed useless information to the company, which they probably are. However, there are a few remaining companies with complete records dating into the 1800's (Auburn, Maine has been identified as one) who just haven't bothered to toss out the old books yet.

"Think about it? Instead of census information available every ten years or tax records available annually, we potentially have quarterly or monthly information available to researchers.

"The problems we have encountered so far are:

1. **Water companies are not in the family research business.**
2. **Water companies cannot typically accommodate researchers sifting through their records.**
3. **Local Historical Societies typically lack the space and resources to store and transcribe the raw data.**
4. **Water companies are unaware of the value of these records. (We did draft an article for their industry newsletter which was sent out in March 2007 trying to create some awareness of the potential value of these records.**

   [Ed. This March 2007 newsletter will be located on the new website for this project, which is under construction, and will be located at www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~usgwwcrp/]

"I suspect that if we can identify any existing records, an effort can be made to preserve them until resources are available to store and transcribe the information. I believe an opportunity exists to inform genealogists that potential research documents exist and need to be protected. I thought that the USGenWeb could be the means of communicating the nature of the problem to Genealogists and then let them do whatever is appropriate in their own turf.

"Regards, Sanford R, Delano, Lincolnville, Maine"

With respect to Sanford's request, a new project page has been requested and will soon appear for those who are interested in contacting the water companies in their community and volunteering to bring those materials, where and when available, to the researching public. It may take a public outcry for this to happen and who better than family history researchers! The project will be located at www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~usgwwcrp/. Please be patient as the site is currently under construction.

Free Newsletter - The Global Gazette keeps you up to date with news of online and physical resources for genealogy and historical research. It's published by the Global Genealogy & History Shoppe at http://www.globalgenealogy.com/ for 12 years now. Subscribe at http://globalgenealogy.com/admin/membership.htm

Prose & Poetry
April is Tax Month!

Tax his land,
Tax his bed,
Tax the table
At which he's fed.

Tax his tractor,
Tax his mule,
Teach him taxes
Are the rule.
Tax his cow,
Tax his goat,
Tax his pants,
Tax his coat.
Tax his ties,
Tax his shirt,
Tax his work,
Tax his dirt.
Tax his tobacco,
Tax his drink,
Tax him if he
Tries to think.
Tax his cigars,
Tax his beers,
If he cries then
Tax his tears.
Tax his car,
Tax his gas,
Find other ways
To tax his [censored].
Tax all that he has
Then let him know,
That you won't be done
Till he has no dough.
When he screams and hollers,
Then tax him some more,
Tax him till
He's good and sore.
Then tax his coffin,
Tax his grave,
Tax the sod in
Which he's laid.
Put these words
upon his tomb,
"Taxes drove me
to my doom"
When he's gone,
Do not relax,

It's time to apply
The inheritance tax.

The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors, including newsletter staff, and are not necessarily those of the USGenWeb Project.

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