



PIONEER RECORD

Newsletter for the Midland Genealogical Society

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Midland Genealogical Society Programs for 2013 - 2014

Meetings are scheduled on the third Wednesday of the month unless otherwise noted..

Programs for the meetings are as follows.

****PLEASE NOTE LOCATIONS****

February 19, St. John's Episcopal Church. "The Life of Johnny Reb" by Marion Berry.

March 19, St. John's Episcopal Church Society members, Jake and Mary Eichhorn, Thora Goodnight, and Wilma Diesen will present "Preserving the Stories".

Indentured Servitude, a Precursor to Slavery

By Yvonne Ashworth

The Virginia Company of London first announced the intent to ship 800 settlers to Virginia, which included a large majority of indentured servants, on July 18, 1620.

With demand high for labor to carry out tasks such as construction of buildings, planting crops and tradesmen work, indentured servitude was a solution to the labor shortage. (The British Colonies had unsuccessfully attempted to enslave Native Americans, primarily the Powhatan's).

Indentured servants were usually poor youth and young adults from Britain or Germany, who entered into contracts to gain passage to the colonies and in return would be contracted for a fixed term of service, enforced usually by some form of local government. Literate or skilled persons would have shorter terms than convicts who would have terms which could last as long as fourteen years. Indentured persons outnumbered Negro slaves up until the 1850s.

Typically the average term of servitude would last between four and seven years with added time if the indentured person had run away, left without permission, which included

appearing before court for the purpose of filing a grievance against the Master, or in the case of women, becoming pregnant.

Statistically in the 1630's up to two thirds of all males under the age of 25 had contracts of three years or more with one half to two thirds of all immigrants from the 1630s to the American Revolution being indentured individuals.

Masters of the indentured were required to provide clothing, food and basic quarters for the servants. When the servant met the terms of the contract, and was ready for release, the Master was required to pay the servant what was defined as "freedom dues" which varied according to the colony. Basically the dues included a new set of clothing, a ration of bushels of corn for planting, hoes, a musket and between twenty to thirty shillings and twenty to thirty acres of land. This was not true for women, however. Women rarely saw more than their freedom, fifteen bushels of corn and thirty shillings.

The lives of the indentured was so difficult that roughly forty percent of all under contracts did not survive to

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The President's Letter

Brrr! Winter certainly began like a roaring lion and continues with a never ending sequence of snow and zero degree temps. I can hardly wait for the first robin to appear, for maybe Spring will follow not too far behind.

With the advent of this new year, Nominating Committee members Dona McArdle, Joanne Rupprecht, and Ralph Hillman have begun the task of presenting a slate of candidates for elective offices in the MGS for the 2014-2015 year. To quote the late Dr. W. Edwards Deming, a vibrant, viable, successful organization needs "willing workers" to conduct the work of the organization. If you are contacted by a member of the committee, please consider how you can become one of our "willing workers". If you would like to volunteer to be a candidate for an elected position, please contact any mem-

ber of the Nominating Committee. They will be more than happy to hear from you.

This spring, our Society will be co-sponsoring a special program with the Midland County Historical Society honoring the bicentennial of the War of 1812. That battle began in June, 1812 and did not end until July, 1815. Michigan played a significant role in this armed conflict, and the end of the war resulted in the definition of the boundaries of Michigan that we know today. On Thursday, May 15, at the Carriage House, Dr. James McConnell, member of the Michigan Historical Commission and the Michigan Commission on the Commemoration of the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, will present the program on Michigan's Role in the War of 1812.

Keep warm and keep safe!

Faye Ebach

From The Editor ● ● ●

This winter has been very rough on me and I have not wanted to go anywhere. I sit at home and toil or do some internet genealogy research. I have been able to track down a few dead ends this winter and hope to find more in the coming months as I find it good for traveling.

This cold spell has had most of the country in turmoil and finding someplace warm may lead to locations outside of this country. I feel like a vacation to a tropical island in the sun.

There have been much news lately about some of the websites that we use for genealogical

research being bought by some of the larger companies like Ancestry. Although this may not be a bad idea as they have more money to spend to enhance the sites, I hope they will try to keep these free.

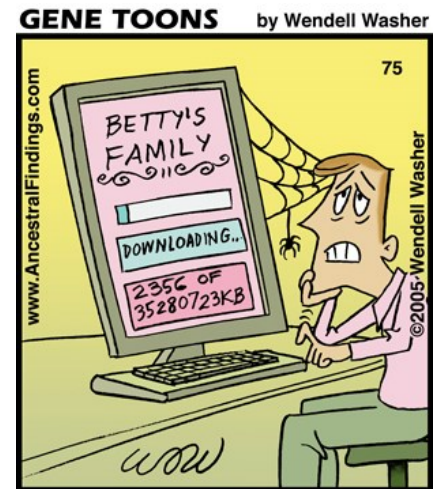
If you come up with a good idea for a website of genealogical importance, you should give the idea your all and make it happen. It could be worth a bundle of money some day.

As always, I will accept newsletter articles written by you. If you have something of interest to us all, please send to my email address listed on the back cover.

Walter Bennett, Editor

"Here lies an atheist.
All dressed up and
no place to go."

—Epitaph in Thurmont, Md.



300 photos on Betty's homepage that just **had** to be there.

MEMBERSHIP DUES 2013-2014

Collection of Dues for the current year has ceased. Collection of Dues for the 2014-2015 year will begin in August 2014.

Letters will be sent out in the mail during the month of August.

Midland Genealogical Society,
P.O. Box 2421, Midland, MI
48641-2421.

Spring Meeting Schedule February-May 2014

The Midland Genealogical Society meetings for the Spring of 2014 will occur as follows:

February 19 – Society Member, Marion Berry will present a program entitled “The Life of Johnny Reb”. This meeting will be held at St. John’s Episcopal Church, at the corner of South Saginaw Road and St. Andrews Drive. Start time is 7:00 pm.

March 19 – Society members, Jake and Mary Eichhorn, Thora Goodnight, and Wilma Diesen will present “Preserving the Stories”, in which they’ll share stories they’ve discovered in their genealogical research. Start time is 7:00 pm at St. John’s Episcopal Church. **PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DATE FROM OUR USUAL THIRD WEDNESDAY, BECAUSE OF HOLY WEEK.**

April 23 – **THIS IS OUR ANNUAL MEETING NIGHT** this year. We’ll meet at the Carriage House on the campus of the Midland Historical Society on Main and Cook Road, starting with a

pot-luck meal at 6:00 pm. Following our meeting, Laessa Northrup will offer a program concerning “Mennonites in the Civil War.” The annual meeting is early this year, to accommodate our program with the Historical Society on May 15. (This change was approved by the membership in the fall of 2013.)

May 15 – The Midland Genealogical Society and the Midland Historical Society will offer a joint program at the Doan History Center beginning at 7:00 pm. Our speaker will be Dr. James McConnell, and his subject will concern “Michigan in the War of 1812”.



B O O K S F O R S A L E

The following books, published by the Midland Genealogical Society, are available for sale at any meeting, at the Midland Genealogy Room, Grace A. Dow Public Library or by mail. Price of each book is \$20.00 plus \$3.00 for postage and handling.

Midland County Obituary Index (#1) – 1872-1927. The book consists of 16,000 abstractions covering 55 years from the Midland Times (1872 -1875), The Midland Sun (1892 -1924) and the Midland Republican (1881-1927). The soft bound 238 page book is 8 ½ by 11 inches.

Midland County Obituary Index (#2) – 1928-1950. The book consists of about 8,000 abstractions covering 22 years from the Midland Republican (1928 - 1937) and the Midland Daily News (1937 - 1950). The soft bound 238 page book is 8 ½ by 11 inches. Note: Both Obituary Books (#1 & #2) are available as a package of \$35.00.

Midland County Obituary Index (#3)-1951-1982 This book consists of 30,900 entries including about 4000 maiden names covering 22 years extracted from Midland Daily News. The 387 page, 8½ by 11, soft bound book consists of two volumes A through L and M through Z. The set costs \$40 plus \$5 postage and handling.

Midland Pioneers, edited by Ora Flaningham. This book is a compilation of the most interesting genealogical, historical and humorous reprints from newspapers published in the Pioneer Record. The book is 6 by 9 inches, soft bound, 259 pages. (Out of print, but orders being compiled at Genealogy desk.)

Midland County, Michigan Marriage Records 1855-1910 including Groom & Bride Indexes. The book is 8.5 by 11, soft bound, 320 pages. \$30.

A collection of "Some Midland Michigan County Records" have been compiled and extensively indexed by Ora L. Flaningam. It is available in PDF format on a compact disc from the Midland Genealogical Society. The collection is mainly out of print books from our society, Harold Moll, and Ora Flaningam. Included are: "Midland County Cemetery Records" 1981, "Midland County Michigan Census 1850-1894 (1983)", "Midland County Michigan Obituary Index 1872-1927 (1994)", "Midland Pioneers", vol 1 (1999) & vol 2, "Midland County Michigan Probate Index 1850-1900", Early Saginaw Valley History", Bethany Indian Mission 1843-1855", Bethany Indian Mission 1851-1868", "In the Wilderness With the Red Indians", "Account Book of Charles H. Rodd", "Indian Build a Birch Bark Canoe", and Index to First Families of Midland County". The cost of this CD is \$25 shipping included in US.

(Continued from page 1)

see the end of their indenture period. Exposed to the elements with meager food rations and exposure to diseases and the elements as well as the physical punishments which were legal, the servants were often treated worse than their African slave counterparts since the indentured were not perpetual property. It was common for pregnant women to receive up to thirty lashings with a whip for having become pregnant, after which one hundred twenty to five hundred days would be added to her contract for days lost from service.

If someone still under contract was found having run away, up to ten days for every one day absent was added to their contract.

In Virginia and Maryland a “headright system” was developed to provide incentives for planters to import workers. Each person brought across the Atlantic resulted in that person being rewarded with fifty acres, with no minimum or maximum numbers required of the Master.

In the 17th century, 90,000 of the 120,000 English immigrants arriving in Virginia and Maryland were indentured and men outnumbered women six to one. The indentured were not allowed to marry or buy property or purchase anything which could be considered an asset.

Quite often persons who were intoxicated in Britain found themselves aboard ships bound for the Colonies having signed papers or



contracts and having no legal recourse. When ships arrived, the Master or Captain would advertise the availability of servants who would be sold with the sale recorded and the Master or Captain receiving his “cut” for the passage and food fed to the servant on the voyage.

Abuses during the voyages alone prompted the Virginia General Assembly to pass laws requiring sufficient diet during the voyage in addition to proper clothing and sufficient drinking water. The Assembly also passed laws which prevented cruel

treatment upon arrival since persons were frequently left tethered out in the elements to prevent escape, and perished as a result.

Family units were never protected from separation. Children were subject to sale to anyone and were victims of longer contracts than convicts. They were also among those assigned the hardest labor (if male) and suffering the highest mortality rates.

For decades, even when freed, the indentured suffered from the stigma

of having been a servant. Many were treated with much discrimination, comparable to their slave counterparts. One exception to this was the fact that fifty percent of the House of Burgesses was of former indentured servants in 1665. Later, Benjamin Franklin and Andrew Johnson would shed the stigma and become prominent citizens.

The cessation of indentured services of the colonial genre would come in February of 1885 when the "Contract Labor Law of 1885" was passed. It forbade American citizens and any U.S. organization from engaging in labor contracts before immigrants entered the United States and forbade ships Masters or ship personnel from transporting immigrants under contract. This law was applicable in the United States, its territories and in the District of Columbia.

This law would come twenty years after the cessation of slavery for Negroes, who had enjoyed freedoms before their economically disadvantaged white counterparts. It also came one hundred and one years after a group of upper class citizens in New York freed a cargo of servants via monetary compensation to the ships Master, citing that the trafficking of white persons was contrary to the idea of liberty established in the United States of America.

Sources:

pbs.org,

dcnyhistory.org,

wikianswers.org,

www.ushistory.org

Google Alerts

Google Alerts have been around for several years, and is still one of the best tools on the internet. It is underutilized but can be useful for many things including genealogy.

Do you have a person or place that you want to follow and do a google search every so often to see if something shows up? You can automate this with google alerts. This service sends you an e-mail digest of new web content related to any Google search.

To set up an alert, go to <http://www.google.com/alerts>. Enter the search query. You can limit results to everything, news, blogs, videos, discussions, or books. Select how often you want to receive the results (daily, weekly, or as-it-happens). How many (all results or only the best results). Then enter your email address and click the "create alert" button. It's that simple and its free.



Find a grave has new owners

In September 2013, Ancestry.com purchased Find a grave. Find a grave has become the worlds leading online cemetery database. There are currently over 100 million graves and 75 million photo's. Find a grave was created 18 years ago by Jim Tipton of Utah as a project to record burial locations of famous people. Find a grave currently has a mobile app, but Ancestry plans to launch a whole new app with significant improvements. Find a grave competes with rival billiongraves.com that has a mobile app that also records the gps location of the grave.

Using the billiongraves.com app, you go to a cemetery and take pictures of the tombstones with a gps enabled smartphone. When done, you click on the upload button. After you get home, you can then login to the billiongraves website and add the transcription.

Personally, I like using the findagrave website as I find matches in my search more frequently because the site has been around for many years. I like the technology used in the billiongraves app and hope to see it soon in the findagrave app.

The billiongraves site will not allow upload of photos from your computer. These must come from the phone app.

Another site called restingspot.com was shut down in October of last year that had tried to accomplish the same thing with a smartphone app.

By Walter Bennett

The Community of Royal, Two and a Half Centuries Later

by Yvonne Ashworth

Nestled away among the Spanish moss-laden trees and ultra rural farmland is a community in Sumter County, Florida which is the true survivor of the “Forty acres and a mule” promise at the close of the Civil War and one of Florida’s first African American settlements.

In 1865 after the “Port Royal Experiment” which was an economic trial for what would be deemed by the Union as a “necessary trial and experiment for post war and post slavery America”, the community of Pickettsville was established by former slaves once working upon the Old Green Plantation which was located on the Withlacoochee River. The community was aptly named after the rows of white picket fences which marked off the forty acre homesteads which were part of the post war settlement with the former slaves.

William T. Sherman via “Special Field Orders #15 issued a proclamation which set aside “the islands from Charleston, south, the abandoned rice fields, along the rivers for thirty miles back from the sea, and the country bordering the St. Johns
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River, Florida. for the exclusive settlement of slave refugees. The field order was inspired by the need to rid the army of the excessive numbers of escaped, destitute and homeless slaves who followed his army’s flanks on his infamous march across Georgia.

By the end of 1865, 40,000 slaves had settled on 435,000 acres of land in the Sea Islands alone, many who were of Gullah heritage. The demand for land was such that it became sparse and many had to forego the promise of a better life and settle for land which



was far from arable or habitable.

After the assassination of President Lincoln, most of the land awarded was reclaimed via orders by incoming President Andrew Johnson. This would be one of the first acts of what was known as “Reconstruction” as it left many former slaves in worse condition than when working on planta-

tions.

Pickettsville would be renamed Royal, and would see modest growth in the next decade.

In 1891 a post office would be established and a one room school would be constructed.

Sugar cane, cotton and tobacco were grown, churches were built and the community would become “close-knit”. Much later, Royal would have a livestock business, a dry cleaners service, a gas station, a fire station and two cemeteries.

Most of the forty acre parcels are still maintained by the descendants of the original settlers, having been passed down from one generation to the next. Many of the settlers not only had to deal with bounty hunters seeking to ship the former slaves back north, but also had to protect one another from US soldiers who had wanted to ship them west with the Seminole Indians.

Today these descendants still use the old farming methods utilized by their ancestors as they keep to the forefront the history of the settlement via the Royal Historical Enrichment and Art Program. This community holds events through the year to bring the in-

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terest of “outsiders” to their area to share the rich history of the settlement and the plight of those who did not fare as well via the land reclamation by the government post 1865.

The State of Florida has placed a historical marker upon the site where the old Royal school once stood. The only remaining building standing is the cafeteria which was constructed in 1945. The marker was erected in 2010 and it was sponsored by the Royal Library Association, Sumter BOCC, Sumter LLC, T&D Concrete and the Young Performing Artists, Inc along with the Florida Department of State.

Sources: Florida Crossroads Documentary Part One, “Florida’s Black Heritage Trail, The Central Florida Region”, broadcast of November 18, 2013.

Long Hammock Memories by Hulon Nichols, Ideal Publishing Company, St. Petersburg, FL.

Facebook Genealogy

I recently came across this list of facebook pages for genealogy. The list offers both location and family pages. Have a look at

<http://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list/>

The Formation Of North Carolina Counties, 1663-1943

Filed in Book Reviews, County Histories, North Carolina on Feb.13, 2014

You don’t need to be a genealogist to know the importance of counties as records keepers. From birth to death records, and many others in between, county governments and courts have long issued and kept some of the most important records to family history researchers. Unfortunately for genealogists, the past is not the same as the present. The county your ancestors farm was in 100 years ago, may not be the same county it was in 110 years ago. No, the farm did not move. However, just as countries can change their boundaries, so can cities and states. It doesn’t even take wars to make county lines move, there are plenty of other reason.

So, just how does a person know what county their ancestors may have lived in a given year? With luck, you can find a book like *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties 1663-1943*. For those with ancestors who lived or passed through North Carolina, possibly leaving evidence in the form of county records, will find David Leroy Corbitt’s book most useful in identifying counties. All counties in North Carolina, whether they exist today or are now defunct, are listed in this book.

Each county, listed alphabetically of course, includes a synopsis of its formation along with quotes from various sources, though most from one or two key legal references, describing the land and the county boundaries. For example: “That part of Albemarle County lying on the West side of Chowan River, being part of Chowan Precinct, bounded to the Northward by the line dividing this Government from Virginia, and the Southward by Albemarle Sound and Morattuck River, as far up as Welch’s Creek, and then including

both sides of said River, and the Branches thereof, as far as the limits of this government...”

This volume thoroughly vets North Carolina county lines. According to the author, “If it does not contain enough to help substantially in locating definite boundary lines.”

Find *The Formation of the North Carolina Counties 1663-1943* and similar books at Family Roots Publishing.

Three Parents Listed on a Birth Certificate

Can your present genealogy software handle this? A Vancouver baby has just become the first child in British Columbia with three parents listed on a birth certificate. British Columbia's new Family Law Act, which came into effect last year, allows for three or even more parents.

"Up until now, a child could only have two legal parents," said lawyer Barbara Findlay — who spells her name without capital letters, and helped the three parents navigate the process. "There is now an upper limit of — we won't know how many parents. There's provision for at least four parents, and possibly more."

The new Family Law Act, which came into effect in March 2013, aims to clarify who is a parent and who isn't as more couples turn to assisted reproduction.

You can read more at <http://goo.gl/zffpla>.

(article from Dick Easman’s Newsletter)

Historical Property Records Go Online at ScotlandsPeople.gov.uk

The following announcement was written by the folks at ScotlandsPeople:

The Valuation Rolls of 1885 offer genealogists and other history researchers a fascinating picture of Victorian Scottish society, including figures ranging from William McGonagall to Dr Sophia Jex-Blake

Property records containing the names and addresses of more than 1.4 million people living in Scotland in 1885 will be released on ScotlandsPeople.gov.uk, the government's family history website, at 9am on Tuesday 11 February.

Called Valuation Rolls, the new records comprise over 77,000 digital images taken from 144 volumes, and cover every type of property which was assessed as having a rateable value in 1885. As the records include details of owners, tenants and occupiers of property, they offer historians and genealogists an excellent online resource for researching Scottish society in the late Victorian age.

Dead Men Tell No Tales... But Their Obituaries Do! Announcing a Major New Indexing Project

The following announcement was released by FamilySearch at today's RootTech conference:

Obituaries + Volunteers = A Treasure Trove of Searchable Stories

FamilySearch has declared 2014 the "Year of the Obituary" and is working with partners and the larger genealogy community to collect and digitize millions of obituaries from the United States, with other countries soon to follow. The goal for this year is to index 100 mil-

lion names from these historical documents, including the name of the deceased, relatives, and all other individuals found in each document.

This massive collection of obituaries will add a fabulous new dimension to online family history research. Obituaries are a "treasure trove" of valuable genealogical information. Each is a unique story of a person's life. Many obituaries include a photo of the person along with the names of generations of family members.

Family History Center Guests and LDS Church Members Will Receive Free Access to More Family History Records

This is a radical new offering for anyone wishing to receive free access to the world's largest commercial online genealogy databases. Earlier this week, FamilySearch.org announced plans to collaborate with several commercial family history organizations to share records, tools and other resources to allow more people to build, preserve and share their family trees online. (You can read that announcement in my earlier article at <http://goo.gl/vL3Bj7> while the complete announcement is available at <https://familysearch.org/node/2523>.)

Another part of the agreement has been announced at the 2014 RootsTech conference in Salt Lake City: free access will be granted to Ancestry.com, FindMyPast.com and MyHeritage.com in LDS Church family history centers worldwide. Anyone may access these commercial web sites at no charge by visiting a nearby Family History Center. You may find your nearest center at <https://familysearch.org/locations/centerlocator>.

Bones of King Alfred the Great Possibly Discovered in a Museum

Several news stories have circulated in the past few days claiming that the pelvis bone of King Alfred the Great has

been discovered in a box in a storeroom at Winchester City Museum. However, a closer reading of the story indicates that bones MIGHT be those of the King of Wessex, Mercia and East Anglia.

In fact, the bones were excavated from the grounds of Hyde Abbey in Winchester, then kept in a box in a storeroom at Winchester City Museum since 1999. Many other bones were excavated at the same time. Carbon dating has since verified that the pelvis bone dates from 895 to 1017. The other bones found nearby apparently were newer.

Given the location of the bone, it is probable that it is that of a king. However, since the age can only be narrowed to a range of 122 years, the bone might be that of King Alfred or of his son Edward the Elder. Then again, there is a possibility that it might not be that of a king. Indeed, Alfred's body was known to have been moved at least once after New Minster in Winchester, his first burial place, was demolished in the early 12th century.

National Library of Ireland is now Sharing Pictures on Google

An online collaboration between the National Library of Ireland and Google could be the first step in the creation of a virtual Irish museum. The National Library has digitised items from three of its past photography exhibitions and made them available free online on the Google Cultural Institute.

Katherine McSharry, head of services at the library, said the library intends to make significantly more items available: "The National Library has 5.3 million photographs so that's definitely the tip of the iceberg; the plan is to facilitate as much of the material as possible, ultimately millions and millions of items."

You can read more in the Irish Times at <http://goo.gl/vL81Hc>. That article does not list the URL but it appears that the collection is at <http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/collection/national-library-of-ireland>.

Coming Events

March 29, 2014 GSMC Annual Spring Seminar. Monroe County Community College, Monroe Michigan. Curt Witcher will present four interesting subjects:

- Using Military Records for Genealogical Research
- Effective Use of the Allen County Public Library Genealogical Center
- Mining the Mother Lode: Using Periodical Literature for Genealogical Research
- Historical Research Methodology: Engaging the Process to Find all the Answers

<http://gsmcmi.org/upload/menu/2014GSMCSeminarFlyer.pdf>

April 5, 2014 Indiana Genealogical Society Annual Conference. ACPL, Fort Wayne, Indiana. <http://www.indgensoc.org/conference.php>

Apr 26, 2014 Lansing Family History Seminar. Lansing family history center. 421 E. Saginaw, East Lansing, MI.

April 30-May 3, 2014 Annual OGS Conference. Sandusky, Ohio. <http://www.genex2014.org/>.

May 1-4, 2014 "Genealogy without Borders—Ontario Genealogical Society Conference". This will take place at the Brock University in St. Catherine's, Ontario (near Niagara Falls).

July 18-19, 2014 Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar. Archives of Michigan. **Michael Leclerc**, Chief Genealogist, Moca-vo.com will be the featured speaker for the 2014 Abrams Foundation Family History Seminar at the Archives of Michigan.

August 1-2, 2014 Midwestern Roots Family History and Genealogy Conference. Indianapolis, Indiana. <http://www.indianahistory.org/our-services/family-history/midwesternroots>.

Oct 10-11, 2014 Got Ancestors? Western Michigan Genealogical Society. 60 years! Are We There Yet? With Dick Eastman.. <http://gotancestors.com/>

One to look out for! Good news about forthcoming online service for birth, marriage & death records from Northern Ireland

Firstly a little background: in Ireland, civil registration started in 1845 for some marriages & was extended in 1864 to cover all births, marriages & deaths, so those are the starting dates for records that GRONI holds (the General Register Office for Northern Ireland).

GRONI have in recent months started to reach out to the community & if you have been at one of their talks then you'll have heard about their imminent new search system, but have you seen the legislation about proposed prices? For everyone else, there are some more tempting details available about the new online search facility for Northern Irish BMD records.

Recent Wednesday lunch-times have seen a well-attended series of family history talks at PRONI. This week's talk was by Alistair Butler from GRONI. In the main, the talk covered information about how GRONI can help genealogists grow their family trees. Later the talk covered the fact that GRONI spent about 3 years & a lot of money digitising their records. A by-product of the registration efficiency-drive, is that GRONI will shortly be able to offer a "ScotlandsPeople" type service to genealogists. After the talk, a little on-line digging for the legislation showed that the proposed costs seem VERY favourable compared to the existing situation.

The draft legislation "The General Register Office (Fees) Order (Northern Ireland) 2014" was published on 24th January & has yet to be approved by the Assembly. However, if it remains unchanged, it seems that the earliest the new fee structure, & therefore presumably the new system, can go live is 10th March 2014. Going back to the talk, Alistair did say that the new system is currently undergoing testing & that while there is no firm release date yet, he did hope that the system will go live before April. He said that there will be extensive publicity about the go-live date & also noted that detailed help notes will be available.

The index includes ALL the bmd records that have been registered with them from 1845/64.

For those not visiting the GRONI offices but searching from home, only "historic" records will be available. This means: births – over

100 years, marriages – over 75 years, deaths – over 50 years.

Historic & more recent records, ie right up to current registrations, will be available via computers in the Search Room at GRONI in Belfast.

The basic index search will be free & has limited details such as the year of the event & some names to hopefully narrow down the results. An enhanced search is chargeable & will show the actual date as well as more names & details such as ages. You can then decide whether or not to pay to view the actual record.

There will be an option to automatically search for name variants eg to search for Smith & Smyth in case different spellings were used.

And now for the best bit! The draft legislation shows that the proposed costs for the on-line records are much lower than current prices (albeit current prices are for an official, stamped paper certificate).

For anyone who visits the GRONI offices, the cost of using the Search Room facilities will reduce from £14 to £7 per day. The current verification process will be replaced by personal access to records via the computer terminals, ie this should be much quicker.

According to the draft legislation, the basic index search will be free, the enhanced index search will cost 1 credit (£0.40) and viewing an actual record will cost 5 credits (£2.00).

It also seems that the search element of the current fee for an actual certificate will be removed as the price of a certified paper certificate will drop from £15 to £8 (if ordered on-line quoting its unique reference number).

In other words, it will, in the very near future, be much simpler, quicker & cheaper to trace ancestors from Northern Ireland than ever before! Fantastic news!

NOTES:

Link to the draft legislation: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/nidst/2014/9780337992551>

Source: North of Ireland Family History Society

Maximizing Genealogical

Value

of Obituaries

Prepared by: Melanie Walters

Obituaries offer a wealth of information about your family. They have important facts about the deceased and important dates that you can use to piece together clues about the history of your family. Here's how you can find details to research from obituaries.

We all think differently and we all have different ways of processing information, which makes genealogy and ancestry research very confusing. Different historians and different family members keep records in different ways so sometimes finding the facts you need to piece together a family history are elusive.

There are thousands of databases out there claiming to have the answers, but in reality if you are disorganized, those databases are only going to make the confusion worse. And to top it off repetition in names, facts and even certain dates can cause further confusion. To clear up the confusion, here is the basic guideline of what to look for in an obituary and how to keep it all organized.

Searching for Clues in Obituaries

An obituary is the final record of a person's life, information is included that can lead you to some amazing discoveries about your family. When you look at an obituary it is important that you pinpoint those bits of information and make a note of them. First read the obituary through once or twice just to get an idea of the information included. Then underline the important pieces of information. Read it over again to make sure you underlined everything of importance. Here are the things you will want to look for in an obituary:

- The deceased's full name
- Age
- Gender
- Date of birth
- Date of death
- Place or City of Residence
- Occupation
- Military Service
- Church Affiliation
- Life events
- Awards or Accomplishments
- Names of survivors
- Place where funeral or memorial service is held
- Place of internment

Maximizing the Genealogical Value of Obituaries

Once you've read and reread the obituary and you've underlined the important pieces of information, the next step is to organize the information in a way you can access later and have a complete understanding of what it is you found important. You can download forms for free that can help you research genealogical clues from obituaries at Obituarieshelp.org

The first thing to do is copy down the information point by point. Then make notes about each point.

Questions to ask yourself as you go through each point are:

- ⇒ What information does this clue provide?
- ⇒ What public or historical records exist that will provide further information?
- ⇒ Where can I find those records?

The notes you make about each point can be anything related to genealogy research:

Personal notes - maybe you were reminded about a conversation you had with a relative about this point.

Family history notes - maybe another ancestor was a member of the same organization.

Notes about what you'll want to research about this information - perhaps you want to look up how long this person was a member of this organization.

Where records that expand on this information might exist - make notes as to where you can find the answers to your questions.

Other notes might include tidbits of information from:

Phone book

City business directory

Internet

Church directory

School databases

Taking the time to go through obituaries carefully can go a long way to helping you find clues to your family history and connecting you to your ancestors and relatives. Names, places, and dates are just the starting point. There is so much to learn from obituaries, but you have to read between the lines. Not all the information will be there ready for you to see, you'll have to do a little digging and a little research. Making notes and keeping your notes organized will help you get the information you are looking for.

Melanie Walters recommends ObituariesHelp.org for Newspaper Obituaries free genealogy resources, guides to building a family tree, sample letters of sympathy and condolence, written examples of eulogies as well as help with all aspects of funeral planning.

Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Melanie_Walters

Looking Back in Midland County

RUNS PERE MARQUETTE ENGINE THRU MIDLAND NEARLY FIFTY YEARS WITH- OUT ACCIDENT

by Claire Morrill

Midland Republican — Consolidated with — The Midland Sun, — Thursday, August 15, 1929 — Engineer Thomas H. Sharpe climbed down from the cab of Number 393 at the Pere Marquette water tower here Monday morning, with his long-pointed oil can in his hand. Engineer Sharpe has been climbing down from his engine at Midland almost every day for fifty years.

We were waiting for him Monday, when the 8:57 passenger train pulled in, and he had no more than tipped his oil can up two or three times at strategic points in his engine when our journalistic companion approached him and extended greetings.

Sure, he said, he had a few minutes to spare while they were transferring baggage.

"Understand you've been running through here fifty years," said our spokesman.

"Went firing in '79," assented the engineer. "I was promoted in '83, and I've run an engine ever since -- on this run, all except two years on a Detroit run. Never had an accident in all that time.

"We come near having them every day, though, with all these automobiles on the road. Why, one time when we were going in to Evart, a man drove across in front of us, and we took the back tire off his car. He didn't even know it. Two other cars

were waiting for us, and someone told him his tire was gone. It rolled off and went over into a field. I don't see how we can help killing people like that," he said, shaking his head.

He explained that he runs from Saginaw to Ludington, arriving here at 7:57 a. m. one day and coming back the next morning at 10:54.

Rob't Tremper

"Did you ever live here in Midland?"

"Oh, yes, I lived right next to Fred Sias in the Fourth Ward years ago. Then I moved to Saginaw, and have stayed there ever since.

"Another old-timer and I were in Midland last Friday looking up old friends -- Robert Tremper, he was. He used to live in Midland, too, years ago. He's an engineer of 29 years experience. Now he's General Chairman of the Railroad Brotherhood -- goes all up and down the lines and looks after our interests, wage scales and so on.

"Mr. Tremper entered the service of the P. M. R. R. in 1886 as warehouse man at Midland, went firing in 1887, was promoted in 1893, and ran a locomotive constantly until 1922 when he was chosen to represent the men as general chairman, a position carrying with it great responsibility. It requires a man of exceptional executive ability.

"He spent his boyhood days in Midland and still cherishes in his heart a fondness for the old town.

"We went over and saw old Johnnie Johnson, the barber, you know. When we were kids, we used to go into Johnnie's barber shop on cold days to get warm, and if there was a vacant chair, why he'd let us sit there. When we grew up and another generation of kids

came up, he'd do the same for them. We wanted to see Byron Burch, too, but we missed him.

In The Cab

"Yes," said he heartily. "I've got a lot of sympathy for this little place. I remember when we used to haul logs through here, we didn't have curtains on the cab like we have now, and this wind used to blow through something terrible. We'd sit there for hours when we were almost frozen.

"I can tell you one thing -- in all those years, I've never had an official come up and dig into me. That makes you feel pretty good toward the company."

"How many engines have you worn out?"

"Oh, a good many. There's a faithful old machine, there," he said, glancing up at Number 393. "I've only had her about two years, though."

"Do you like to do this sort of thing?"

"Sure," he said. "I was born right to it."

Engineer Sharpe pulled out his watch and started toward the cab. "Almost time to pull out," he said. "Would you like to come up and get warm?"

Going Strong

Accepting the fireman's canvas gloves, we grasped the hand rails and, assisted by our companion, ascended to that paradise dreamed of by all small boys.

Two neat leather seats beneath the windows indicated the vantage points from which the engineer and fireman surveyed the landscape o'er. Levers and handles suggested the brakes and whistles obedient to their move.

Pioneer Record

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Information about Midland Genealogical Society

The MGS meets on the 3rd Wednesday of Sept., Oct., Nov., Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr. & May at 7:00 PM in the lounge of the Grace A. Dow Memorial Library, 1710 W. St. Andrews Dr., Midland, MI 48640 or at the St. John's Episcopal Church on the corner of Saginaw and St. Andrews Streets in Midland. Visitors are always welcome. Watch the Midland Daily News or local Midland MCTV channel 189 for upcoming speakers, dates and times.

Membership dues are \$14.00 for single and \$17.50 for a couple and can be paid after July 1, but must be paid by Nov. 25, to continue receiving the Pioneer Record. Dues may be paid at any MGS meeting or may be sent to the Membership Chair,