



Anchorage Genealogical Society

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August Meeting: The August meeting will be at the Z.J. Loussac Library, ground floor conference room at 7 p.m. on Wednesday the 6th of August 2003. Refreshments will be provided by Mickey Knapp, Mike Naumann, Jim & Kathy Roberts. Juice by Jean Lear. The topics for discussion will include: Kathy Roberts presenting a calendar created by Marjorie Bell for her family and Llana Markey presenting a book on her family history. If there is anyone participating in a family newsletter would you bring it in and share with us please?

July Meeting: There were 18 members and 6 guests present; guests included Amanda Makar, Jim Patros, John Burton, Jim & Lynn Burns, and Terri Foehcherte who became our newest member. Lynn Pikey gave us some information on the Galway Days on G Street (Irish Music Festival) that are being held on the 2nd of August from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. At the Executive Board Meeting it was decided to not participate with a booth this year. The educational program included Bob Waites presenting information on audio reports and filing, including Microsoft Picture It, which is a photo managing program that will allow you to print a photo from wallet size to 8.5 X 11 using a color printer and photo finish paper, Neevia which is a program that will convert and file to PDF, JPEG or whatever you wish for storage or transmission, and Adobe the premier PDF program. Lynn Pikey presented handouts and talk on organizing ideas for new or long-term genealogists. Llana Markey gave us her information on a numerical system of filing all your materials.

2003 Seminar: The registration form and brochure can be downloaded from the website <http://www.rootsweb.com/~akags> for those of you who have internet connections. There will be door prizes presented at the seminar. The Potluck on Friday evening the 6th of September is still in need of volunteers, please contact Merle Carlson at 563-4661 to add your name and or dish to the list.

Upcoming Events: If there is a function concerning the Society please send the information to ags@ak.net so it can be added to the calendar on the website.

Courtesy of Wilma Rookus: Here are some facts about the 1500s:

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May and still smelled pretty good by June. However, they were starting to smell so brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the body odor, hence the custom today of carrying a bouquet when getting married.

Baths consisted of a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house had the privilege of the nice clean water, then all the other sons and other men, then the women and finally the children-last of all the babies. By then the water was so dirty you could actually lose someone in it. Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water."

Houses had thatched roofs-thick straw-piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the dogs, cats and other small animals (mice, bugs) lived in the roof. When it rained it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying "It's raining cats and dogs."

There was nothing to stop things from falling into the house. This posed a real problem in the bedroom where bugs and other droppings could really mess up your nice clean bed. Hence, a bed with big posts and a sheet hung over the top afforded some protection. That's how canopy beds came into existence.

The floor was dirt. Only the wealthy had something other than dirt. Hence the saying "dirt poor."

The wealthy had slate floors that would get slippery in the winter when wet, so they spread thresh (straw) on the floor to help keep their footing. As the winter wore on, they kept adding more thresh until when you opened the door it would all start slipping outside. A piece of wood was placed in the entranceway. Hence the saying a "threshold"

In those old days, they cooked in the kitchen with a big kettle that always hung over the fire. Every day they lit the fire and added things to the pot. They ate mostly vegetables and did not get much meat. They would eat the stew for dinner, leaving leftovers in the pot to get cold overnight and then start over the next day. Sometimes the stew had food in it that had been there for quite a while. Hence the rhyme, "Peas porridge hot, peas porridge cold, peas porridge in the pot nine days old."

Sometimes they could obtain pork, which made them feel quite special. When visitors came over, they would hang up their bacon to show off. It was a sign of wealth that a man "could bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

Those with money had plates made of pewter. Food with high acid content caused some of the lead to leach onto the food, causing lead poisoning and death. This happened most often with tomatoes, so for the next 400 years or so, tomatoes were considered poisonous.

Bread was divided according to status. Workers got the burnt bottom of the loaf, the family got the middle, and guests got the top, or "upper crust."

Lead cups were used to drink ale or whisky. The combination would sometimes knock them out for a couple of days. Someone walking along the road would take them for dead and prepare them for burial. They were laid out on the kitchen table for a couple of days and the family would gather around and eat and drink and wait and see if they would wake up. Hence the custom of holding a "wake."

England is old and small and the local folks started running out of places to bury people. So they would dig up coffins and would take the bones to a "bone-house" and reuse the grave. When reopening these coffins, 1 out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on the wrist of the corpse, lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell. Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night (the "graveyard shift") to listen for the bell; thus, someone could be "saved by the bell" or was considered a "dead ringer."

Now, whoever said that History was boring! ! ! !

NEW HOMES FOR HISTORIC DOCUMENTS: The **Library of Congress (LOC)** and **New-York Historical Society** recently made two important acquisitions. Just in time for its Lewis and Clark exhibition opening this month, the **LOC** completed its \$10 million purchase of the only known copy of the 1507 world map by Martin Waldseemuller from Prince Johannes Waldburg-Wolfegg of Germany. Including data gathered by Amerigo Vespucci during his voyage to the New World in 1501-1502, Waldseemuller's map supports Vespucci's revolutionary notion of the New World on a separate continent. It's the first map to show clearly a separate Western Hemisphere with the Pacific as a separate ocean and the new lands named "America." The map originally belonged to Johann Schoner (1477-1557), a Nurembourg astronomer, geographer and cartographer. The Germans believed the map to be lost until they rediscovered it in the Waldburg-Wolfegg castle in 1901. In 2004, the map will be on display in the Thomas Jefferson Building at the Library of Congress. Until then, you can preview the map during the **LOC's Rivers, Edens, Empires: Lewis & Clark and the Revealing of America** exhibit, opening July 24. **Get details here.** Meanwhile, the **New-York Historical Society** has adopted the **Gilder Lehrman Collection** of 40,000 manuscripts, diaries, maps, photographs, books and other treasures documenting four centuries of American history. The collection, which includes signed copies of the Emancipation Proclamation and 13th Amendment to the Constitution, had been homeless for more than a year, since the Morgan Library in New York City, which had housed the collection, closed its doors for renovation. The **New-York Historical Society** will hold the collection in a special, newly constructed area of its 77th Street building, where researchers can access the archives. The historical society expects to reopen the collection in the fall. Learn more about the **Gilder Lehrman Collection** and the **New-York Historical Society.** *Reprinted with permission from Family Tree Magazine Email Update, copyright 2003 F&W Publications Inc.*

WORTHWHILE WEB SITES: Overwhelmed by the number of family history-related Web sites popping up? FamilyTreeMagazine.com sorts through them all--whew!--to bring you only the very best. We recently recommended the following as Sites of the Week:

- * Abandoned Pictures from Around the World Search through old and new photos. <http://www.timetales.com>
- * Library of Congress' "Courage, Patriotism, Community" Virtual Exhibit Discover the songs, celebrations and sacrifices that have identified American culture through the years. <http://www.loc.gov/rr/courage>
- * Immigrant Neighborhoods in New York City Learn about immigrant life in some of New York City's roughest neighborhoods. <http://www.irishinnyc.freesevers.com/custom.html>
- * Canadian Soldiers' World War I Diaries follow your Canadian ancestors' troop through World War I. http://www.archives.ca/02/020152_e.html

Ibid

Resale Cemetery Plots: I was handed a copy of a letter that was in the MIGOGEBI-D Digest Volume 03: Issue 11, this is the list from Gogebic County, MI, that has to do with the sale of cemetery plots that were purchased, perhaps by our parents, grandparents, or great grandparents and subsequently not used. It would appear that the city of

Lansing MI wishes to resell these plots, which they do not own, and reap a substantial profit. This has already been done by the city of Jackson, MI, realizing a profit of three hundred thousand dollars! This is according to an article in the Detroit News Metro/State Section of the 9th of July 2003. I am sure this has crossed the minds of some other city fathers around the country, where the cemetery is owned or controlled by the local government. It would be to your advantage to check and determine ownership of unused plots that may exist in your families' section.

WWII Service Records: The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is the official depository for all World War II veterans' records. The records are actually located in the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) in St. Louis, Missouri. There was a fire at the NPRC location on 12 July 1973 that destroyed about 80 percent of the records for Army personnel from WWII and 75 percent of the records for Air Force personnel with surnames from "Hubbard" through "Z" that were discharged between 25 September 1947 and 1 January 1964.

The remaining records contain millions of personnel, health, and medical records for discharged and deceased veterans from all services during the 20th century.

The veteran or next-of-kin if the veteran is deceased must authorize release of information. The next of kin can be the surviving spouse who has not remarried, father, mother, son, daughter, sister, or brother. The authorization must be in writing and include the signature of the veteran or the next of kin.

The information that is available to the next-of-kin includes the active duty record with any outpatient, dental, and mental health treatment, and inpatient hospital records. Limited information from Official Military Personnel files is releasable to the general public without the consent of the veteran or the next-of-kin.

Certain information is needed to locate military service records. This includes the veteran's complete name used while in service, service number or social security number, branch of service, and dates of service. The veteran's date and place of birth and date and place of death are helpful to separate out people with the same name.

The form that needs to be filled out is Standard Form SF 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records. There are several ways to order the form. Copies of SF 180 can be obtained from NPRC, Military Personnel Records, 9700 Page Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri, 63132-5100. On the internet the form can be downloaded at <http://vetrecs.archives.gov>.

Most requests are processed without cost. Response time varies, but you should plan on three to seven months. The facility has a backlog of over 200,000 requests and receives 5,000 requests daily. The National Archives has a list of WWII Casualties on their website. This includes the name of the soldier, serial number, rank and type of casualty. Entries in the list are arranged by name of county and then alphabetically by name of deceased.

Find this list at http://www.archives.gov/research_room/arc/index.html, that is an underscore (_) between research and room.

The Forum Insider, Volume 15, Number 1, July 2003. G.F.O., Inc, P.O. Box 42567, Portland, OR 97242-0567.

Macie's Grudge: James Macie was illegitimate, a stigma which would cling to him for the rest of his life. He died wealthy; he died a revered and renowned scientist. But such were the laws of 18th century England that James Macie was denied in life the right of the most ordinary citizens, denied rights because of his illegitimacy. So James Macie held a grudge. A lasting and bitter grudge for the lifelong deprivation of his honor. And we, you and I, benefited from that grudge in the most remarkable way.

James Macie was born in France in 1765, the illegitimate son of a British Duke. With Jim's father more or less out of the picture, the boy's devoted mother, herself a woman of wealth, returned to England with him and immediately set about achieving her son's official acceptance. She got this far: Jim was decreed a naturalized British subject. Still because of his illegitimacy, his rights were restricted at almost every turn.

He could not enter Parliament, He could not hold public office, He could not hold a civil service job

He could not enter the army, navy or the church; He could not receive any grants of property at the disposal of the crown

Perhaps lest fair of all, he could never hold the title of his true father, the Duke of Northumberland.

Jim grew up knowing these restrictions, maybe that accounts for his desire to excel at everything. Whatever the motivation, he did excel, In 1786. Jim graduated from Pembroke College and shortly thereafter launched himself on a scientific career. Many sophisticated experiments and published results later Jim became a respected scientist. Wilier his scientific colleagues. No more talented than he, were knighted for their accomplishments, Jim was denied that honor. Through no fault of his own, but because he was born illegitimate. It is no wonder that James Macie held a grudge. He vowed never to marry, knowing the stigma of a lifetime he conceived another form of immortality, and the idea in itself would serve as his personal rejection of the country which had rejected him. When he died in 1829 with no heirs, he got revenge on England by giving his fortune to the United States, specifying that

the money was to be used for the foundation of an establishment which would increase and diffuse knowledge among men and which would perpetuate his family name: SMITHSON, which he adopted later in life. And thus the gift he gave us – the establishment that in reality represents the torment of his illegitimacy – is today our country's most magnificent storehouse of cultural and scientific accomplishment. It is called **The Smithsonian Institute**.

George Thrasher, The Sequoia Genealogical Society, Inc. Newsletter, Volume 30, Number 5, July 2003.

HONORING WORLD WAR II VETS: If your American relatives served in World War II or supported the war effort from the home front, you can add their names to a registry on the National World War II Memorial Web site, <http://www.wwiimemorial.com>. Organized by the American Battle Monuments Commission (ABMC), this free registry honors the 16 million Americans who served in the US armed forces during World War II, the more than 400,000 who died and the millions who contributed to the war effort from America's factories, farms and neighborhoods. May 29, 2004, the ABMC will dedicate the National World War II Memorial, still under construction, on the National Mall in Washington, DC.

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ANNUAL FGS CONFERENCE: The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the Florida State Genealogical Society (FSGS) invite you to "Countdown to Discovery: A World of Hidden Treasures," Sept. 3-6 at the Renaissance Orlando Resort At SeaWorld, in Orlando, Fla. The conference will feature more than 200 topnotch genealogy presentations by American and international speakers, including Family Tree Magazine contributors and Betterway Books authors. Lectures will cover genealogical techniques and records, Internet resources, US and international research, and much more. (For a complete list of Betterway Books authors' lectures, see the Speakers' Schedule below.)

In between lectures, you can browse 150 booths offering genealogy products and information. And you'll get the chance to meet other folks who are just as excited about genealogy as you are. Everything you'll need during the week--lodging, lectures, meals and the vendor hall--will be conveniently located under one roof.

Register now for one of the year's most exciting genealogy conferences. The conference price is \$189. And don't forget to sign up for the meal events, where you'll hear a well-known speaker and get to talk with other genealogists. To register, visit <http://www.fgs.org>. You can also sign up for the free conference e-mail newsletter by e-mailing fgs2003-announce-on@lists.csc.cc.il.us. You don't need to add a subject or message; you'll receive a confirmation message to which you must reply within 24 hours.

Ibid

See You at the Meeting!