

Penn in Hand

Vol. XX, no. 3 — September 1999

The Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA

GSP NEWS

GSP has a seemingly endless mountain of documents that need sorting, organizing, preserving and indexing. Our dedicated corps of volunteers — some computer literate, others not, are indefatigable. They process materials then place them in the Research Room library at 1305 Locust Street. Following is a list of some current volunteer projects.

1. **Tim Coyne** is compiling a database for the American Mechanics Cemetery, Philadelphia, 1852–1860 which includes name, age, death date, cause of death, burial date and lot number. An index from 1861 is also being compiled. The database with lot numbers is continuing from 1861.

2. **Trudy Slavin** has just completed the *Public Ledger* "origins" from the personal and want ads 1848–1875. She is working on Odd Fellows Cemetery records, and indexing from 1849–1857. Previously completed is one from 1847. The typed index is being worked on.

3. **Frances Smith** is working on the *Public Ledger* "origins" from the death notices.

4. **Sue Wiley** is working on the *Public Ledger* "origins" from marriages from the Philadelphia *Public Ledger* from 1848 to 1875.

5. **Sue Wiley** and **Frances Smith** are working on the Jerusalem Lutheran Church in Carbon County baptismal records. They are also compiling an index to Monument cemetery.

6. **Ann Speece** is making a printout of St. James the Less, P.E. Church, Philadelphia records on computer disc.

7. **Herb Hart** is sorting and compiling the miscellaneous newspaper notices from 1901–1931 in the Dunkerly Collection.

8. **Bob O Connor** is sorting the Ely collection and putting it in acid free folders.

9. **Cass Donovan** is compiling a database of surnames in the Bible records.

10. **Harry Tichner** is copying entrees from Mt. Moriah

Cemetery from the interment list, which is being put in alphabetical and lot order by computer volunteers.

Why not stay at home and charge your genealogy Christmas presents!

GSP now takes credit cards. You can charge memberships, research and copies on sales of \$10.00 or more on your Visa or Mastercard. Credit cards can be used in person, by phone and by fax.

All previous offers for research are available only until the next printing of *Penn in Hand*.

Annual Fund Raising for 1998–99 (continued)

Lani L. P. Mac Aniff
Mr. and Mrs. Russell F. Weigley
Diane G. Groome
Constance K. Tingley

Gifts in Kind

Jane Adams Clarke — return of \$250.00 from honorariums received.

Vivian Taylor — return of \$50.00 from honorarium received

Herbert Hart — donation of computer

L. Jeanne Pontarelli — electric large coffeemaker

Officers, members, volunteers, employees, and others have contributed many volunteer hours, or have contributed needed supplies, books, etc., to the Society. Some volunteers work in excess of 400 hours a years. The "New Accessions" published by GSP lists those who have contributed to the Library. The "Summer Camp" staff have all donated many hours, as have those assisting in the trip to Salt Lake City and other programs of the Society.

GSP RESEARCH ROOM, 1305 LOCUST STREET, 3rd FLOOR, PHILADELPHIA, PA
HOURS: Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday — 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
and the Second Saturday of each month — 10:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

HSP LIBRARY HOURS: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday — 11:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.,
Wednesday—2:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Closed: Sunday, Monday, and major holidays.

Bible Records Available

GSP has a large collection of old bibles. All of the genealogical information appearing in these bibles has been copied and is available for research in GSP's research room. Space limitations dictate that we dispose of these old bibles. We are endeavoring to locate the donors so that they may have the opportunity of retrieving them. From time to time we will publish information on the bibles, with the hope that the owner or his or her heirs might contact us.

Miller's Bible and Publishing House, Philadelphia, dated 1872 or later. This contains bible records of **Thomas Thomson** and his wife **Mary Eyre**. Dates: 1810–1913. Additional surnames: **Taylor, Sullivan, Hallowell, Cooper, Knight, Twining**. Bible in fragile condition.



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Samuel Wood & Sons, Baltimore, dated 1822. Bible records of **William Middleton** and his wife **Mary Wood**. Dates: 1767–1917. Additional surnames: **Hughs, Rough, Davis, Baugh**.

Bible printed and sold by Collins, Perkins and Co., 2d ed., 1806. Bible records of **L. Caroley/Caroli** and his wife **Mary Ann Walker**. Dates: 1840–1912. **Aaron Ferman Walker** and his wife **Mary**. Dates 1759–1838. Additional surnames **Horneff, Dove**. Bible in poor condition.

Thos. Kelly Paternoster Row, republished by W. Pratt and Co. at the Stanhope Press, 1811 (an English Bible). Records of **John and Mary Cooper** as well as **John Goodill**. Dates: 1790–1866.

HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HSP has re-opened after extensive renovations. Hours are: Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday from 11:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.; Wednesday from 2:00 to 8:45 p.m.; closed Sunday, Monday and major holidays. All readers will be required to re-register on their initial visit. Photo I.D. must be presented at registration.

David Moltke-Hanson, a historian with experience in historical society administration, archives and special collections, is the Society's new president and chief executive officer.

NEWSLETTER EXCHANGE

Penn in Hand has an exchange policy with many family and society newsletters. These can be consulted in the Research Room of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. Items from these excellent publications often appear in *PIH*. To further familiarize you with organizations and the publications associated with them we will, from time to time, review them.

Chronicles, published by the **Jewish Genealogical Society of Philadelphia**, 109 Society Hill, Cherry Hill, NJ 08003. The web site of this Society is <http://www.jewishgen.org/jgsp>. From this site you may receive a library inventory, and also the index to *Chronicles* (1981–1996). Vol. 18: Nos. 1 and 2 contains a book review on the *The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia*, and an article on Harry D. Boonin, the author, and his unusual resources; Philadelphia's Special Board of Inquiry records available at the National Archives Mid-Atlantic Region; Philadelphia Cemetery Updates; and other interesting tidbits that will not only help Jewish family historians, but those of other religious and ethnic groups as well.

Jots From The Point, **Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society (WPGS)**, 4400 Forbes Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15213-4080. This publication contains much information on the western part of the Commonwealth. Their Journal, although not on exchange, is being donated to GSP by one of our members. It includes many cemetery and other records of interest to researchers. WPGS has also released a CD entitled "Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Quarterly 1974–1997, and Other Select Publications." Contact WPGS for additional information.

Bucks County Genealogical Society Newsletter, **Bucks County Genealogical Society**, P.O. Box 1092, Doylestown, PA 18901. Contains articles such as "Delinquents on the Militia Rolls for 1871;" "Anhnentafel of members; queries, etc.

Keyhole, Quarterly publication of the **Genealogical Society of Southwestern, Pa.** P.O. Box 894, Washington, PA 15301-0984. The July 1999 issue contains "The Obstetric Cases of Dr. W. W. Sprowls of Houstonville, PA 1884–1909", giving the child's name, date of birth, gender and mother's name.

The Illuminator, Quarterly Newsletter of the **Zion Genealogical Society**, Kale County, IL. 2400 Gabriel Ave., Zion, Ill 60099. The August 1999 issue contains information on Civil War service records, including where records of men who were rejected for military service may be found; Social Security records, etc.

Der Kurier, the newsletter of the **Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society (MAGS)**, P.O. Box 22642, Kensington, MD 20891-2642 carries an interesting series of articles,

"Fraktur Forum" by **Corrinne Earnest** that provides information on family names appearing in Fraktur, primarily taufscheine, the birth and baptismal certificates of the Pennsylvania German (Deutsch). Other articles of interest to those with "Dutch" ancestry appear in this publication. (This publication is donated by a member of both societies).

UPCOMING EVENTS

2-16 November — On Tuesdays the **Bucks County Historical Society** will present a Genealogical Course: National Archives—How to Find Family History Information, presented at the Mercer Museum 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. by **Fran Waite**.

7 November 1999 — POINTERS (for Italian researchers). To be held at 4:00 P.M. at **Broomall Family History Center**. The speaker **Don Perfetti** will discuss "What the U.S. Would Be Like Without Italians."

10 November 1999 — Tour of the **Balch Institute for Ethnic Studies**. Contact GSP.

18 November 1999 — **Historical Society of Montgomery County** — 7:30 P.M. "What You See is What You Get: Some Problems in Researching" by **Jane Adams Clarke**.

9 December 1999 — 1:00 at GSP — "Griffith's Valuation" by **Kathryn Donovan** following by "Using American Records To Locate Your Irish Ancestor" by **Susan Koelble**. (This is the GSP program cancelled because of Hurricane Floyd).

22 March 2000 1:00 P.M. — GSP Annual Meeting. Talk by **James M. Beidler** "Genealogy's Lighter Side."

12 April 2000 — 6:00 P.M. — Informal discussion group at GSP.

29 April 2000 — **Bucks County Genealogical Society** Spring Genealogy Conference

20 May 2000 — Tour of the Adams Family Research Center in Reading. Tour this historic Frank Furness house and browse in the extensive library of southeastern Pennsylvania county records with David S. Adams.

31 May-3 June 2000 — The **National Genealogical Society Conference in the States** hosted by the **New England Regional Conference** in Providence, Rhode Island. Contact NGS, 4527 Seventeenth Street, North, Arlington, VA.

19-21 June 2000 — **Palatines to America National Conference**, Harrisburg, PA

19-23 June 2000 — **GSP Summer Camp**

13-16 September, **Federation of Genealogical Society National Conference** in Salt Lake City. Contact: FGS Business Office, P.O. Box 200940.

23-24 September 2000 — **Family Ancestry Fair**, Bucks County Genealogical Society.

Editor's Note: Also see additional listings in "News of Other Societies and Agencies."

NEWS OF OTHER SOCIETIES AND AGENCIES

The **Free Library of Philadelphia** Central Library, 1901 Vine Street is offering the following free class, that begins at 6 p.m. No charge or pre-registration is required:

Monday, 25 October 1999 — Passenger Lists, Immigration and Emigration Information, Naturalizations, Oaths of Allegiance and Passports.

The **Mid-Atlantic Region, National Archives and Records Administration**, 900 Market Street, Philadelphia is offering the following workshop from noon to 1:00 pm. The non-refundable, non-transferable registration fee is \$5.00. Advanced registration and payment is required. Checks should be made payable to the National Archives Gift Fund.

22 November 1999 — Military Records.

The **New Jersey Archives** will double its research capacity when it moves to 225 W. State in Trenton (old Education Building at Calhoun and W. State streets). Expected closing schedule: Microfilm — 15 September to 1 October; Manuscripts — 14 September to 31 October. Mail services will be suspended during the move. For information: call 609-292-6260.

The **Biographical Dictionary of Pennsylvania Legislators** is an independent historical research project. Their published volumes offer a wealth of information for historians, genealogists, and other students of Pennsylvania history. Two works have been published (available in GSP's Research Room) and a third is in progress. For information on this project and volumes contact **Dr. Craig W. Horle**, Biographical Dictionary of Pennsylvania Legislators, 917 Gladfelter Hall, Berks Mall, Philadelphia PA 19122.

For information on the **National Genealogical Society's** on line genealogy course contact Suzanne Murray at NGS, education@ngsgenealogy.org

PUBLICATIONS OF INTEREST

The Jewish Quarter of Philadelphia — A History and Guide 1881-1930, Harry D. Boonin, Philadelphia. Price: \$29.95, Pennsylvania residents: add 6% tax; Philadelphia residents add 7% tax. Shipping and handling \$3.00 per book. Contact: Jewish Walking Tours of Philadelphia, Inc., P.O. Box 52160.

SAR Patriot Index CD. This new edition contains over 610,000 family history records of Patriots and their descendants collected from membership applications submitted to the Sons of the American Revolution between 1880 and 1998. The first edition published in 1998 contained over 470,000 records. Cost: \$39.95 plus \$5.00 for shipping. Owners of the 1998 Edition may upgrade for \$19.95. Contact: Progeny Publishing, Olympic Towers, Ste. 200, 300 Pearl St., Buffalo, NY 14202, or call 1-800-565-0018.

GSP member, **Lowell V. Hammer**, has published *Johann Frantz Hammer, Palatine Pioneer in Pennsylvania And Maryland And His Descendants*. Price \$49.00, including shipping. Contact Lowell V. Hammer, 1592 S.E. Ballantrae Ct., Port St. Lucie, FL 34952.

Ireland: 1841-1851 Census Abstracts (Northern Ireland) by Josephine Masterson. Contact: Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc., 1001 N. Calvert St., Baltimore, MD 21202

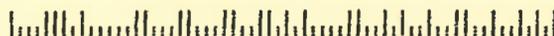
Printed Sources: A Guide to Published Genealogical Records, edited by Kory Meyerink. Price \$49.95 plus \$5.50 postage and handling. Contact: Ancestry, P.O. Box 476, Salt Lake City, UT 84110-0476.

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They Became Americans: Finding Naturalization Records and Ethnic Origins, by Loretto Dennis Szucs. \$19.95 plus \$6.00 postage and handling. Contact: Ancestry, Inc., P.O. Box 476, Salt Lake City, UT 84110-0476.

The Cemeteries of Marion and Walker Townships, Centre County, Pennsylvania. Contact: Centre County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1135, State College, PA 16804-1135.

ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK

The Philadelphia Branch of the Family History Library of LDS has moved from North Broad Street to 5236 Rising Sun Avenue.

Patricia Wellingham-Jones's print run of *Stories of the Ancestors: Clunn, Horan, Robinson and Mackintosh Families of New Jersey and Pennsylvania* exceeded actual sales. Rather than recycle, she will send you a copy for the cost of postage, \$5.00 per copy. Order your copy from PWJ Publishing, PO Box 238, Tehama, CA 96090-0238.

A recent article in the *Philadelphia Inquirer* (11 July 1999), "Where the Water Ran in Philadelphia" contains a map of existing waterways, dry or diverted creeks and streams, roads, parks and landmarks. For information about conditions under your house, they suggest visiting the U.S. Geological Survey web site at <http://www.mapping.usgs.gov/mac/findmaps.html>. Click on mapping to identify the most recent topographical map for your region. These maps may be purchased through the web site. They can also be examined in the map section at the Free Library of Philadelphia, 19th and Vine Street. Contact the Library at 215-686-5397 on their map collection. Once you have a current topographic map, compare it with an old one for the same area to see if the soil elevation has changed. Topographic maps before 1898 are out of print but on file with the USGS and the Free Library. Contact the geological survey at 1-888-ASK-USGS.

Editor's note: The early topographic maps will help locate ancestral properties that border streams or rivers.

VISIT OUR WEB SITE:
www.libertynet.org/~gspa

E-MAIL YOUR COMMENTS:
gspa@libertynet.org OR gspa@aol.com

PRESERVATION

by

Jane Adams Clarke, FGSP

The move from traditional paper format to electronic or digital format is nothing short of revolutionary. Computer software programs, with their elaborate searching capabilities, allow genealogical researchers to instantaneously retrieve, at the very least, catalogs of records in archives and repositories worldwide. Before the advent of CD-Rom and Internet technology, very few people could afford the time (or money) to consult the centralized resources of the Genealogical Society of Utah or the ponderous prospect of traveling to remote locations in search of family records.

Microforms (film and fiche) were the first bonanza of the technological age, but they have a shorter life expectancy than either paper or parchment. Likewise, computerized records from the Korean War, for example, have been lost as the programs used to store and retrieve them are now obsolete, and many originals were destroyed after they were filmed. The ongoing preservation and maintenance of original records must be encouraged.

Of great importance are records such as the very vulnerable documents in southeastern Pennsylvania, some dating back to 1682, that have never been restored. Thousands or possibly millions of intestate records for Philadelphia alone, when taken from storage, literally crumble and fall to pieces. Intestate records exist for those individuals with property or money who die without having prepared a will. Many intestate records do include handwritten wills, but when testators fail to sign or date their wills or fail to name an executor, these wills cannot be authenticated. Check the Research Tip on "Serendipity: Hidden Documents in Philadelphia Probate Records" in Vol. XVI, no 4, December 1995 issue of *Penn in Hand* for additional items that may appear in these important documents.

Early Pennsylvania records will need restoration before they can be mechanically duplicated. This is true of the Wills of Philadelphia. Microfilm records of The Genealogical Society of Utah were not filmed from the original records but from Will Books, which contain

only copies of the Will written by the clerk. These records do not include all the other important information that is filed with the original, nor does they include signatures of the deceased. And these are just some of the important records that we are about to lose through deterioration. Restoration and electronic scanning of these documents should be considered if we wish to have a duplicate of the original rather than a mere transcript. Copies should be made on acid-free archival paper and stored in a controlled environment.

Will methods being used today or in the future survive for the next ten, twenty, fifty, one hundred or more years? This determination is important before more damage is done by destroying, or haphazardly copying primary sources.

Too often, archival and historical records have been copied and then destroyed. Have you had the experience of looking at a roll of microfilm and not being able to read it? GSP is in the process of restoring and placing on acid-free paper collections filmed some 20 years ago. Not only are many unreadable in the microfilm copy, but whoever did the filming did not copy everything. A record is just as good as the person recording it, whether it be by hand, microform, CD, or methods not as yet discovered. Only the primary record or a facsimile in its entirety will provide comprehensive information. Fortunately, some GSP records have survived intact due to the foresight of conservation-minded members who stored them in the basement of HSP many years ago. We discovered this material during our relocation. The destruction of records is antithetical to the mission of GSP.

Several years ago a consortium formed of many historical and patriotic societies in the Philadelphia area and GSP published two books, *Guide to the Mortgages of the General Loan Office of the Province of Pennsylvania 1724-1756* and *Guide to Records of the Sale of Commonwealth Property in the County of Philadelphia, 1780-1798*, both compiled by James M. Duffin. Each book lists records stored at the Philadelphia City Archives. Because

it was impractical to use these unindexed and fragile records, The Consortium supplied the money to have a computer database compiled. Using these paper indexes, researchers can now easily locate these records at the City Archives. So, when you locate the desired document in these volumes using their multiple indexes, you can send the proper fee to the Archives and a copy will be sent to you. Projects such as the Consortium's are invaluable, but originals must also be preserved and maintained for future reference.

There are other possible problems with computerized processes. I, for example, recently purchased a house with my sister. Because of mail we started to receive, it soon became clear to me that my name was not on the deed. I went to the Recorder's office and found that my sister's name was the only grantee appearing on the computer index. When the actual document was checked, however, my name did appear. The clerk explained that the computer would only accept one name, and since my name started with "C" and her's "A", the name starting with "A" was the one selected. Suppose that 50 years from now someone were looking for family relationships in a deed. They would find only one name. How many of us have located as many as three generations of a family, all because that wonderful Latin phrase "et al." appeared in the index?

Numerous published articles have addressed this problem. Chat-room participants bandy about the pros and cons. Many assume that all Internet information is correct. How can a novice—or even an experienced user—judge what is or what is not accurate? Little or no documentation appears. By sending undocumented information via e-mail or posting it on the Internet, or publishing by any other means, often creates a large problem for those of us who want an accurate family

history rather than a fictional one. This problem is further complicated by the sheer volume of undocumented and documented materials.

Some people expect non-profit organizations such as GSP to spend resources that can better be used to benefit their members. Others generate income by selling access to their indexes, and companies sell CD-Roms of articles, books, or donated works. The publishing program of GSP includes funding earmarked specifically for publications. Any profits gleaned from publishing keeps annual membership dues low. Profits are used for new publishing projects and for the Society's general expenses.

Many people don't own or have access to a computer. In the future we may assume that every library and genealogical society will have Internet access or the funds to purchase the latest software, but as of today this is not the case.

As a rank amateur in the digital age but more or less an expert in researching I feel that

1. We must preserve and keep our original records.
2. Whenever possible these records should also be converted to an electronic format with the caveat that digital formats will probably change in the future.
3. Societies that cannot afford to digitize should continue to preserve records the old fashioned way by copying them on acid-free paper, and by indexing and abstracting records. Keep the original and hope that permanent electronic facsimiles of original documents will eventually be produced so that we are not overwhelmed with paper.
4. Access to records, either through the Internet or through governmental and other agencies, at a reasonable cost, is another challenge facing the genealogical community.