



THE FAMILY GATHERING NEWSLETTER

To research with love 🐛 To record with care

Volume 30 Issue 2

October 2009

PRESIDENT'S DESK

Hello to all . . .

What Happened ? ?

I recently was going through some old paperwork looking for information when I came upon an old membership list . . . 75 members. To date our current number is a little over 30 members. So, I ask myself after a little math . . . What Happened?

Has the computer age made us obsolete? Is it now easier to Google from home than gather with others? Maybe we should expand our website? And, if so, "How?" Is it our social networking? Do we need better communication? What? How? Do we need more advertising? I'm working on that one.

As the new kid on the block, and being a newbie to genealogy, I'm looking to some of the old timers for some help answering some of these questions. If you have any thoughts, give me a call at home and we'll talk.

Ed Johnson

General Meeting
Tuesday, October 20th
Yucca Valley Community Center
Cholla Room, 10:00 a.m.



Using Google
Tips to Narrow Your Search

Presented by Ginny Lilly
and her assistants



Past Presidents Exhibit Eternal Youth at September Reunion

Past Presidents of the Genealogy Society of Morongo Basin, Helen Dotts, Mona Lowe, Wolf Van Der Gritten, Dorothy Daily and Jeff Teeter shared their memories and reminded us all, newcomers and old-timers, how far this wonderful group has come and how so many enthusiastic members have given so much since it's creation.

We all enjoyed a beautifully decorated anniversary cake that disappeared very quickly. Dorothy, who wins for the most terms served, read one of her fun poems written for the occasion and everyone was thrilled to see Helen who came the furthest and was heralded as the inspiration behind our computer users group. A great time summed up so well by Jeff, *"The only thing I like better than genealogy is genealogists."*



MYSTERY GIFTS WON at the September meeting by Janet Vikdal, Pat Johnson and guests Angelita and Wendy
PLEASE HELP THE SOCIETY PAY EXPENSES BY DONATING DOLLARS OR GIFTS

📢 Thank you Janet Vikdal, Historian, and Kay Finster, Secretary, for stepping up to fill important vacancies - Ways & Means is still open folks!

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THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF MORONGO BASIN
P.O. Box 234
Yucca Valley, CA 92286-0234
www.gsmb.info

General Meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of the month (except July and August) at 10:00 a.m. in the Cholla Room located in the Yucca Valley Community Center, 57098 29-Palms Hwy. (760) 369-7211
 Computer Users Group meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:30 a.m. in the Joshua Tree Room. All *members* are encouraged to attend to share their knowledge and discuss computer genealogy topics.
 Directions: From I-10 take the Hwy 62 exit north toward Joshua Tree National Park about 20 miles to Yucca Valley. Make a left turn onto Dumosa Avenue [two streets past the signal in front of Denny's on Sage Avenue]. Dumosa ends in front of the Hi-Desert Museum - continue past the museum following the driveway to the left into the parking lot.

GSMB is a non-profit community organization founded in October 1979, to encourage accurate research and record keeping in the field of genealogy, family history, and biography.

PLEASE JOIN US!

VISITORS WELCOME AT GENERAL MEETINGS

Annual Membership dues are \$15 per person or non-profit organization and \$20 per family at one address. Membership is open to all who are interested in the fields of family history, genealogy, and biography and will abide by the Society's stated policies.
 Subscriptions to *THE FAMILY GATHERING* are available to non-members for \$8 per year. Members receive the newsletter as part of their dues.
THE FAMILY GATHERING NEWSLETTER is published nine times a year, September thru June. Please send submissions to the editor [at the email or GSMB mailing address] by the 3rd Tuesday of the month.
 Web site: www.gsmb.info. Visit our website for more information about our society and members, scheduled events, newsletter archive, and a surname list that is currently growing.
 Board Meetings (closed) are held monthly on the second 2nd Tuesday of the month in the Joshua Tree Room at the Yucca Valley Community Center.

President: Ed Johnson
 Vice President: Denise Teeter
 Secretary: Kay Finster
 Treasurer: Sandy Moreno
 Registrar: Pat Heuman
 Parliamentarian: Dorothy Daily
 Historian: Janet Vikdal
 Hospitality: Pat Johnson
 Librarian: Ginny Lilly
 Editor: Mary Ellen DeCremer, whereisgrandma@yahoo.com
 Site Administrator: Jeff Teeter, admin@gsmb.info



Places to Go and Things to do

Local Research - FREE

Visit our collection of genealogy related materials at the Yucca Valley Branch of the San Bernardino County **Library** located behind city hall next door to our meeting site. Library hours are:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday open 10 am to 6 pm

Tuesday and Thursday opens Noon until 8 pm

Saturdays, 9 am to 5 pm. Closed Sunday

View our collection inventory on our website www.gsmb.info
 Or, check out all the great programs and new records at the:

Family History Center

56885 Onaga Trail, (760) 369-7430

FHC Hours: Tuesday 9am - 1pm; Wednesday, 9am - 4 pm;

Thursday, 5pm - 8pm; Saturday, 10am - 3pm

Computers - with access to subscriptions like *HeritageQuest* and *Footnote* - are available for your personal research.



Cabot's Pueblo Museum in Desert Hot Springs has been lovingly restored by local volunteers and is open for tours. Located at 67-616 Desert View Avenue off Pierson with a fantastic gift shop/art gallery on the grounds. The architecture is Hopi Indian style, like that found in New Mexico 1000 years or so ago. The structure is four stories high, contains 150 windows and 65 doors, 17 of which lead to the outside. Tour times are limited to early morning due to the heat, for more information call (760) 329-7610.



Hemet-San Jacinto Genealogical Society Seminar
 October 24 from 8:45 am - 3:30 pm Hemet Public Library
 Speakers: Suzanne Russo Adams and Larry Bowles
 Topics: Personalizing Google.com;
 What's New on Ancestry.com;
 Searching Techniques on Ancestry.com; and
 Google.com Gadgets for Genealogy.

\$10 if registration is before October 15, \$15 at the door
 Call (951) 765-2372 or see <http://www.hsjgs.org> for details.

South Orange County California Genealogical Society Family History Seminar in Mission Viejo City Hall.

October 17 ~ featuring Paula Stuart-Warren

Locating Those Illusive Ancestors

Topics: Untrodden Ground: Sources You May Not Have Encountered; The U.S. Federal Government: 13 Underutilized Resources; Genealogy on the Internet: Make It Work For You; Organizing Your Genealogical Materials

\$20 registration before Oct. 14. Call (949) 492-9408 or see www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~casocgs for more info.

Clark County Nevada Genealogical Society Fall Family History Seminar at the Henderson Convention Center.

October 24 ~ featuring Ceil Wendt Jensen

Topics: Professional Techniques for the Family Genealogist; The ABCs of School Records; The Google Guide; Maps for Genealogy Old, New, and Electronic

\$40 registration before Oct. 17. For more info go to www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~nvccngs

Happy Birthday!

*Helen Dotts, Oct. 7th ~ Mary Ellen DeCremer, 14th
 Florence Rayl, Oct. 30th ~ Nona Pace, Oct. 31st ~
 Carole Schreiber, Nov. 25th ~ John Quinn, Nov. 27th*

Still Young at Heart and Wild About Genealogy!

DEATH MASTER FILE

Seventy-five years ago, President Roosevelt created the Social Security Administration (SSA) in order to provide a retirement system for most (but not all) Americans and eligible citizens were issued identification numbers. Although Social Security records were not created for genealogists, they are one of the first collections researchers consult.

Participants whose death was reported to the agency and/or had benefits paid, are included in the SSA's Death Master File (DMF). The DMF contains about 75% of total U.S. deaths from 1962, when the SSA began to digitize their records, and 100% since the late 1980s. It is these digitized records that have been indexed and are available to the public.

The SSA sells the DMF database to companies (like rootsweb, FamilySearch, etc.) who then create a searchable index. Not all indexes are created equally! Each company offers their own formats and search options and update at various intervals so try them all if at first your search is not successful.

The Social Security Death Index (SSDI) lists only deceased persons so privacy rights are not an issue. Some indexes provide only name, age and date of birth but most contain the full record including Social Security Number; Surname; Given Name; Date of Death; Date of Birth; Last Known Residence; Location of Last Benefit; and Date and Place of Issuance.

The Social Security number itself provides a clue to the ancestor's life. The first three digits of the number indicate the state of residence where the application was made. Understanding the locality information is especially important. Until recently, most people did not apply for a Social Security number until they joined the work force or until they were eligible for benefits. Quite often their location at the time of application was not their birthplace. Likewise, the location where benefits were paid was not necessarily the place of death, as is the case when the deceased did not live in the same area as their beneficiary.

☛ Use the "decoder" that instantly deciphers the first 3 to 5 digits of any SSN at www.stephenmorse.com/ssn/ssn.html.

Who Made the List?

"If you are looking for information on someone from the U.S. who died after 1962, the first place to start is the SSDI." -Joan Young, RootsWeb

- ☛ Died 1962-1991: 50 million made the list
- ☛ For the last 20 years: All deaths in the U.S.
- ☛ Most people in the index are from the U.S., but a few Canadians, Mexicans, and individuals of other nationalities are included.
- ☛ Some Americans who worked or died abroad may also be found in the database.

Some Body Missing?

- ☛ The number one reason a person does not appear on the DMF is simple - no one reported the death to SSA.
- ☛ No death benefits were paid.
- ☛ Survivor benefits are currently being paid.
- ☛ Death too recent; not yet indexed.
- ☛ Death occurred prior to 1962 digitization.
- ☛ Person did not participate in the program; prior to 1988, not everyone was required. Farmers, housewives, unemployed people, government employees and persons with alternate retirement programs such as teachers, railroad workers, etc.
- ☛ Human error.

The Social Security Application Form SS-5

Remember, the SSDI is only an index; there is more to be found if you dig just a little further. From 1936 on, anyone who applied for a Social Security Card completed an application (Form SS-5) that the SSA keeps on file. The SS-5 contains the following information:

- Full name
- Full name at birth (including maiden name)
- Present mailing address
- Age at last birthday
- Date of birth
- Place of birth (city, county, state)
- Father's full name "regardless of whether living or dead"
- Mother's full name, including maiden name, "regardless of whether living or dead"
- Sex and race
- Ever applied for SS number/Railroad Retirement before?
- Current employer's name and address
- Date signed and Applicant's signature

As you can see, the SS-5 form is much more valuable to the genealogist than the limited information shown in the online death index. The SSA charges \$27 for each individual SS-5 copy (of the original image) - there is no form but most of the online sites provide a link or printable form.

If you cannot find a person in the SSDI, the SSA may still be able to help with an "SSN search" by trying to find the person's Social Security number, even for deaths before 1962. This service is \$29 and you will need to provide the decedent's full name, state of birth, date of birth, and proof of his/her death.

If you know your ancestor had a Social Security number or may have applied for one, ordering the SS-5 is worth the expense. One of my elusive people applied and received her card but apparently never participated in the program or received benefits. Although she did not appear in the SSDI, she did fill out an SS-5 that provided loads of information.

Online Social Security Death Indexes are available at: Ancestry, Family Search, Family Tree Legends, New England Ancestors, and Rootsweb to name a few.
Still more info: [The Source, A Guidebook to American Genealogy](http://TheSource.AGuidebooktoAmericanGenealogy.com); [Social Security Records](http://SocialSecurityRecords.com); www.cyndislist.com/socsec.htm; and, One-Step tools for searching the SSDI from Stephen P. Morse at www.stephenmorse.com/ssdi/ssdi.html

Joan Young, "Understanding RootsWeb's Social Security Death Index", [Using Rootsweb](http://UsingRootsweb.com); DearMYRTLE, "Social Security Death Index", [DearMYRTLE's Genealogy Column](http://DearMYRTLE.com); Dick Eastman, "Social Security Death Records", eogen.com

RIP at Disneyland



Last fall, attendants watching the security monitors at Disneyland noticed a woman dumping a powdery substance from a boat going through the darkened "Pirates of the Caribbean" cavern. When the attendants confronted her, she told them it was only baby powder, but it later turned out to be the cremated remains of a human being. No one was much surprised. According to some reports, scattering ashes at Disneyland had already reached "epidemic proportions."

The epidemic, if that's what it is, probably is not limited to Disneyland. Cremation has become increasingly popular in America, especially in Western states, where more than 50 percent of the deceased are cremated. The ashes traditionally are sealed in an urn and then locked in an individual vault in the wall of a cemetery. If the sprinkling of ashes in public places is truly becoming common, it would constitute a fourth stage in the evolution of burial places in America over the last 400 years.

This evolution, from the colonial era to the present, has so far produced three kinds of burial grounds. The earliest was the graveyard: a somber place, usually located in town, often next to a church, and typically marked with simple, tablet-shaped headstones inscribed, "Here lies the body of . . ." Graveyards served as grim reminders to passersby that they, too, would die one day.

A second form of burial ground, originating with Boston's Mount Auburn Cemetery in 1831, was the rural or garden cemetery, usually on the outskirts of town in an idyllic landscape of rolling hills, woodlands, ponds and elaborate memorial statuary.

Finally, the third type, which developed in reaction against the sentimentality and ostentation of many garden cemeteries, was the lawn cemetery. Uncluttered in the extreme, lawn cemeteries dispense with most statues and mausoleums in favor of discreet plaques set flush to the ground. Visitors are greeted by an uninterrupted parkland vista, more like a golf course than a garden. Forest Lawn in Glendale is easily the best known.

In a single season in the 1840s, before America's urban centers had parks, an estimated 60,000 New Yorkers made the long trek to Greenwood Cemetery in Brooklyn for picnics and other forms of recreation. This phenomenon prompted the landscape architect and public-parks advocate Andrew Jackson Downing to write in 1849, "Does not this general interest, manifested in these cemeteries, prove that public gardens . . . would be equally successful?" The eventual result of his campaign was the creation of the first public park in America, New York's Central Park.

John Berendt, The American Resting Place by, The Washing Post, 2008

Why Visit Cemeteries?

Why should you visit the cemetery if you already have a birth and death date for your ancestor? Because you never know what you may find. Nearby gravestones can lead you to other family members. Little grave markers can tell the story of children who died in infancy for whom no other records exist.

Other than a few records and documents and, perhaps, some family heirlooms, your ancestor's tombstone is the only physical evidence of the life they lived. There is nothing in your genealogical research that will connect you to your ancestor more than to stand in the one place on earth which contains their mortal remains and to see important pieces of their life carved into stone. It is an amazing, awe-inspiring experience. -*Kimberly Powell, "Tiptoeing Through the Graveyard", Guide to Discovering Your Ancestors in Cemeteries*

Bones are Rattling in Jamestown

☠ Norfolk, Va. - Bones discovered in 2002 at the site of America's first permanent English settlement could be those of Jamestown's founder, a knight, or a captain. A tooth analysis did not rule out that the skeleton is, as Jamestown researchers had theorized, that of Capt. Bartholomew Gosnold, principal organizer of the expedition from England that established Jamestown in 1607. Test results also suggest two other possible candidates: Sir Ferdinando Wenman, the master of ordnance at Jamestown, and Capt. Gabriel Archer, a lawyer who was the first recorder of Jamestown. Some clues:

☠ The skeleton was buried in a coffin - usually reserved at the time for people of higher status - with a captain's staff placed on the lid, in a spot outside Jamestown's triangular fort.

☠ Archer was a captain, but he died during the "Starving Time" winter of 1609-1610. Archeologists believe it is doubtful Archer would have been ceremoniously buried in a coffin outside the fort during that period, when Jamestown was under siege by Indians.

☠ Gosnold did not pass the tooth test. However, he cannot be ruled out completely.

☠ Wenman was a Knight and would likely be buried with his sword, not a staff.

Read the entire article by Sonja Barisi at: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/15825262/ns/technology_and_science-science/.

Sonja Barisic, "Jamestown skeleton still a mystery", Associated Press, msnbc.msn.com, Nov. 21, 2006

Just Folks

I am like him, so they say,
Who was dead before I came.
Cheeks and mouth and eyes of gray
Have been fashioned much the same.

I am like her, so they say,
Who was dead ere I was born,
And I walk the self-same way
On the paths her feet have worn.

There is that within my face
And the way I hold my head
Which seems strangely to replace
Those who long have joined the dead.

Thus across the distance far
In the body housing me
Both my great-grandparents
are kept alive in memory.

-Edgar A. Guest, 1934



Genealogy Online

New York Mortality Schedules Online

“... a fascinating glimpse of life and death in late 19th century New York.”

In honor of New York's 400th anniversary, Ancestry.com recently released a complete set of New York mortality schedules for the years 1850, 1870 and 1880 and a partial set of schedules for 1860. Each of those years, the census taker asked each family he visited whether any member of the household had died during the previous twelve-month period. Since the state of New York didn't issue death certificates until 1880, mortality schedules are often the only record of an individual's death.

The mortality schedules recorded the name of the deceased, gender, age, color, whether widowed, place of birth, month of death, occupation, cause of death and length of the illness. Later years added additional fields, including the “family number” in 1870 and 1880 which can be used to locate the family in population schedules. The family number is the number that is found in column two of the 1870 and 1880 U.S. federal censuses. Other information added in 1870 included the places of birth of the decedent's parents, and in 1880 another field recorded the length of residency. For those whose ancestors were immigrants, this can help narrow your search for immigration records.

People who died away from home should still be recorded in mortality schedules for their home state and district. For example, abolitionist John Brown was executed in Harper's Ferry, (West) Virginia, on December 2, 1859 - ten weeks after his raid on the Federal armory there. The raid, which Brown hoped would spur a spontaneous slave uprising, was promptly squashed by U.S. Marines under Colonel Robert E. Lee's leadership. The marines killed nine of Brown's men, including two of his sons, and arrested Brown.

The Mortality Schedule for North Elba, New York, where Brown's farm was located, lists Brown, age 62 (cause of death: “Hung”); his sons Watson, 22, and Oliver, 19; and two other young men who were killed in the raid, William Thompson, 24, and Dauphin Thompson, 21. Compounding the family tragedy, the page also records the deaths of Brown's daughter-in-law Martha (from childbirth) and her 3-month-old daughter, Olive. Historians believe the raid helped trigger the outbreak of the Civil War.

Tips for Searching Mortality Schedules:

- + To narrow your search to a particular census, add the census in the search box for year of death.
- + Search by surname only for the areas in which your ancestor lived. You may uncover the record of a previously unknown child who died young.
- + Look at cause of death. What other records might have been created? Coroners' inquests, newspaper articles, and court records may have also been created in cases of accidents or suspicious deaths. Also, follow up in cemetery records, obituaries, civil registration, church burial records, probates, and any other death-related records you can find.
- + If you don't find your ancestor's death in the ward (NYC) in which they lived, don't overlook the possibility that they died in some type of institution. Bellevue Hospital in 1870 lists 26 pages of patients who died there.

Note: Ancestry.com also has (some are partial) sets of the Mortality Schedules for about 20 other states.

Mortality Schedules have been stored in various locations including NARA, the FHL and the DAR. For a complete list of extant schedules and their locations, see [The Source, A Guidebook to American Genealogy](#), Chapter 5, [Census Records by Loretto Dennis Szucs, FUGA and Matthew Wright](#).

Sources: Julianne Moore, “Spotlight on New York Mortality Schedules, 1850-80,” [ancestry.com](#), Sept. 10, 2009; Stefanie Condie, “Finding Family History Clues in Mortality Schedules,” [ancestry.com](#), Sept. 08, 2009; Alice Eichholz, [REDBOOK](#)

Milestones

FamilySearch Volunteers

Index over 300 million names

Expecting to transcribe more than 325 million names by the end of 2009, FamilySearch has reached a milestone once thought impossible to reach in such a short period of time. FamilySearch credits continuing advances in technology and a growing number of volunteers throughout the world for the 500,000 individual names that are currently indexed each day.

Public Affairs Manager, Paul Nauta, expects that 500 million names will be transcribed by the end of 2010 but warns “We are not catching up. In preserving records alone, there are more records created in one year than we could ever film in years with current technology.” Read the full article at <http://tinyurl.com/lzgo9n>.

Dick Eastman, “Technology Helps FamilySearch Hit Major Milestone”, Current Affairs, Sept. 18, 2009

Footnote.com Marks Family History Month with the addition of its 60 Millionth Image. Footnote has hundreds of rare and unique record collections including: Historical Newspapers, Revolutionary War Documents, Civil War Records and Photos, The Interactive Vietnam Veterans Memorial and the WWII Collection. Footnote is a subscription website that features searchable original documents where visitors are encouraged to share and preserve their own family histories including photos, letters, and documents by scanning and uploading them to the site.

WorldVitalRecords.com announced on August 11, 2009 the addition of the largest number of records to be released in a single day since the site launched in 2006. WorldVitalRecords is a subscription site that boasts access to more than one billion records in over 11,000 databases from around the world including newspapers, census, birth, marriage, death, immigration and military records; family trees; stories and publications; and yearbooks.

Both Footnote and WorldVitalRecords can be searched FREE at the Family History Center.

* * * * Wild Cards ??


Wildcards are special symbols that are used to represent unknown letters in a word or name. Ancestry.com uses both the asterisk and the question mark for keywords and names with at least the first three letters.


✓ Use wildcards to search for words or names with alternate spellings to view fewer hits than a soundex search. For example:


Search for fran* and get Fran, Franny, etc. Search Johns?n and get Johnsen, Johnson.


✓ Search alternate spellings with the asterisk, which represents 0 to 5 unknown characters. Searching Johann* will search Johann(es); Smel*er will search Smeltzer, Smelzer, etc.

Reading and Viewing


 [A Guide to Massachusetts Cemeteries, Second Edition](#) by David Allen Labert. As the title implies, this is the “everything you wanted to know but didn’t know who to ask” reference book about burying grounds in the state. Lambert’s guidebook is organized alphabetically by town, then by graveyard name. He often mentions key sources that refer to the cemetery. He also lists the date that the town or city was established as well as what town it broke away from, if applicable. A must-have for every genealogy library that has any information on New England ancestors. - Dick Eastman’s Book Review, Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter - Plus Edition, July 13, 2009. Published by the New England Historic Genealogical Society, \$17.95


 [Patriot Pirates: The Privateer War for Freedom and Fortune in the American Revolution](#) by Robert H. Patton, 2008. From the sixteenth through the nineteenth centuries, governments enlisted private citizens to man warships and plunder the shipping of unfriendly nations. Privateers operated outside the constraints of “civilized” warfare and were viewed as one step removed from pirates; governments that employed them preferred to look the other way when informed of some their less-savory exploits. Still, their contributions to naval success in various wars were substantial, and the American War of Independence was no exception. Patton has chronicled the achievements of these morally ambiguous men who helped to drain the British treasury with their depredations while enriching themselves as well as many American merchants. They operated with the tacit support of many prominent citizens, including Benjamin Franklin, Silas Deane, and Robert Livingston. Whatever their motives, the actions of many of the privateers were daring, and even heroic, as they navigated the gray area between profit and patriotism. This is a well-written examination of an obscure aspect of American military history. - *Jay Freeman, Booklist*

 [The Pirate Wars](#) by Peter Earle, 2006. A history of the much maligned pirate that follows their culmination and demise from the Caribbean, Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas over a period of about 230 years. Well researched and informative without overlooking the realities of robbery, torture, and murder on the high seas pirates were a part of. “Along the way Mr. Earle spreads a web of tales and stories, supported by research that should entertain many a reader that would otherwise find history a dry meal.” - *David Stapleton, Amazon Review*. St. Martin’s Griffen Publisher, ISBN 0312335806

 [The American Resting Place: 400 Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds](#) by Marilyn Yalom, Photographer Reid S. Yalom, 2008. Like a travelogue of some 250 cemeteries she visited in the course of her research, cultural historian Yalom approaches burial places with enthusiasm, as if she were an archeologist sifting for clues to America’s cultural, social, ethical and political history. From the ancient Native American Etowah mounds in northern Georgia (abandoned around 1550, when the tribes were presumably destroyed by European diseases) to Rhode Island’s Touro Jewish Cemetery, established in 1677. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, ISBN 0618624279.


THE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF MORONGO BASIN'S LIBRARY COLLECTION LIST AND INVENTORY is now online at www.gsmb.info. A total of twenty-six pages which you can search, download and/or print. Thank You Ginny!

 [5 Paths to Researching your Ancestor](#) by Gena Philibert Ortega in the WorldVitalRecords.com Family History Bulletin, October 2, 2009. Not for those who just want to collect names and dates - this article follows Gena’s proven methods of discovering an ancestor’s “life and times” and how to find the records that document that life. A detailed five-step research plan simply presented and, as we have learned to expect from Gena, packed with great ideas and new places to “peek” in. *Celebrate family history month by learning more about your own ancestor’s life and times.*

 [The National Parks, America’s Best Idea](#) is a 12-hour documentary by Ken Burns that is now running on PBS. Filmed over the course of more than six years at some of nature’s most spectacular locations, Burns and Dayton Duncan tell a story about the people who were willing to devote themselves to saving the land they loved “through the uniquely American mix of salesmanship, appeals to virtue, and good old down-and-dirty democracy.” The first segment tells the story of how Yosemite, Yellowstone, Sequoia, and King’s Canyon national parks were born. The cinematography is so spectacular you will want to get out the tent and go.

“And in the end, the American people gave themselves a gift unmatched anywhere else in the world: lands that belonged to themselves, as a people, forever. The best idea we ever had? Some might argue there are others that beat it. But the national parks have got to be the best idea we ever pulled off.” -Edward Ebbert, “Ken Burns & the National Parks: The Beauty That Selfishness Hath Wrought”, *Esquire.com*, 9/25/09

IN THE GSMB LIBRARY COLLECTION

 [Virginia Immigrants and Adventurers: A Biographical Dictionary, 1607-1635](#) by Martha W. McCartney, 2007. This exhaustively researched volume lists the original colonists as well as several thousand planters, merchants, haberdashers, laborers, mariners, maidservants, transported vagrants, and others who came after them, along with some of the Indians they encountered. For many there is little surviving documentation, and these are given just a line or two. For others there are more detailed histories. Indispensable for collections in the region and all comprehensive history collections. - *Mary Ellen Quinn, Booklist*

Maps provided here identify the sites at which Virginia’s earliest plantations were located and enable genealogists and students of colonial history to link most of the more than 5500 people included in this volume to the cultural landscape. Also includes an overview of local and regional settlements and histories of the plantations established in Tidewater by 1635. GPC, ISBN 0806317744.

View this and so many others in our library collection.

In the Mailbox

Newsletters

CGS News (California Genealogical Society)
 CSGA Newsletter (California State Genealogical Alliance)
 DGS Newsletter (Decatur, IL)
 LEGGS, (Lake Elsinore)
 Newsletter (San Diego Genealogical Society)
 Pedigree Searchers (Palm Springs GS)
 Rootdigger (Solano County, CA GS)
 YVGS Family Finders, (Yucaipa GS)

Magazines

FGS Forum
 The Searcher