



Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, August 15th*

Hampden Historical Society, 6:00 pm
83 Main Road South
Hampden Maine

Wednesday, September 19th*

Bangor Public Library Lecture Hall, 6:00 pm
"Oh the ePlaces You'll Go"
presented by Dale W. Mower

Wednesday, October 17th

Bangor Public Library Lecture Hall, 6:00 pm
"Census Research"
presented by Thelma Eye Brooks

See page 4 for more information

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Articles accepted for publication must be of genealogical nature. Share your research experiences (your successes and your disappointments) or information about your Penobscot County ancestors. Submissions should be forwarded to the Newsletter Editor.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings everyone,

Summer is certainly a busy time of year, but I hope this newsletter finds you with still enough time to tackle a few of those knots in the family tree!

It's somewhat bittersweet that this will be my last President's Message. It has been a great experience being your president (both from the things I have learned and the relationships I have formed) and one that I will treasure. I'm proud of what this society has accomplished in its first five years, and I am pleased with the continued support of so many people, since the time the idea for starting it began to form. Many of you are aware of the time commitment I give to Maine Genealogical Society in chairing their annual conferences for the past few years; however, as I begin my role as president of Maine Genealogical Society, the time has come where I really need to review my involvement in a few activities.

Looking forward, the election of officers for the coming year will take place at our September meeting. The Executive Committee that is currently in place is a great group of individuals, but they do need your help. They successfully run the society behind the scenes – planning programs and activities, publicizing the society, trying to help others connect with research issues. One of the key factors to keeping the society fresh is by having new members join this committee and the offering of new ideas and visions.

Continued on page 2

Queries

To post a query, email mepcgs@yahoo.com

NOTE: Nowadays it is difficult to have an email account and not receive SPAM. To help filter the queries from SPAM please type the word QUERY at the beginning of the subject field. Thank you!

COOKSON/TEAGUE

I am looking for information on the families of Irving Cookson and his wife Effie Estella Teague. Irving Cookson's father believed to be Alfred M Cookson. Any help is appreciated.

Dallas Martin

Ddmart@carlsbadnm.com

BROWN

My uncle Benjamin H. Brown died 18 April 1972 in Bangor at the age of 80. I would appreciate it if someone could send me a copy of the obituary.

Sharon Anderson

shopea@yahoo.com

MERRILL

I am trying to find the parents of John Merrill who died in Orono Maine in 1870. He married Belinda Spencer of Penobscot. I believe they had a son, Frank, born in Orono in approximately 1849. I believe his mother was Sally or Abigail.

Thank you, Bev King

bonitasea@webtv.net

Don't forget to check out the website for any updates or changes to meetings.

www.rootsweb.com/~mepcgs

Our July Visit to the Corinth Historical Society

Members of Penobscot County Genealogical Society visited the Corinth Historical Society on July 18th. The faithful remnant in attendance were greeted by friendly hosts, and treated with exceptional hospitality.

We began our visit by examining the gift shop items, such as the reprint of Early Gleanings and Random Recollections of the Town of Corinth, Maine from 1792 to 1883. On display we saw a lovely quilt that depicts the history of Corinth, scheduled to be raffled-off on August 18th when the Corinth Historical Society plans a quilt show. Many members bought tickets for one dollar apiece, or seven for five dollars.

We then munched on the goodies provided. Pumpkin cookies, brownies, and tarts complimented the hot coffee that we drank while listening to an informative lecture on the history of this small historical society, and its contents. We learned, for example, that a Corinth resident by the name of Frank Robinson first scripted coca-cola's famous logo, and headed the company's advertising and promotion department.

The Corinth Historical Society has received much monetary support from the town. They hope to obtain a grant with which to continue restoration of their building, the former Grange Hall, on Main Street, so that this diverse collection of artifacts is protected by climate control. We wish them the best of luck in reaching their goal. PCGS members enjoyed the tour of this fine collection very much!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE CONTINUED...

I encourage each of you to consider to serving on the Executive Committee in some capacity. You'll be joining a fun and interesting group of people! As I am known to say – genealogy is all about sharing – and here's a great chance for you to share some ideas and give a little back to the genealogical community. If you would like to serve or have any questions, please contact Phil Getchell.

Thank you to everyone for their support over the past five years. It's been a good ride!

Dale

Upcoming Conferences

Maine Genealogical Society's Annual Conference comes to town! This is the local genealogical event to attend in 2007!

September 22, 2007 at the Bangor Civic Center.....



Footprints in Time: Discovering Your Ancestors' Lives

With Nationally-Acclaimed Lecturer, Author and Podcaster

George G. Morgan

Author of the

How to do Everything with your Genealogy

And the recently published

Official Guide to Ancestry.com

And

Photo Detective Columnist

Maureen A. Taylor

Author of the

Uncovering Your Ancestry Through Family Photographs

Together with Local Lecturers

Carol P. McCoy, Marlene A. Groves, Earle G. Shettleworth, Jr. and Dale W. Mower

Maine Genealogical Society's conferences are well-received and known for quality sessions.

Visit their website at

www.maineroots.org

Now to learn more!

REGISTER BY AUGUST 31 TO RECEIVE EARLY REGISTRATION DISCOUNT!



6TH ANNUAL GENEALOGY CONFERENCE AND CRAFT SALE

Hosted by: Silence Howard Hayden Chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution

Saturday, August 18, 2007—First Congregational Church, Lithgow Street, Winslow Maine

Session One (9:00-10:15) Offerings

Lineage Societies (Ann Thomas), French Canadian Genealogy in Maine: Sources and Methods (Robert Chenard),
Having Fun with Your Memorabilia (Dr. Carol P. McCoy)

Session Two (10:45-12:00) Offerings

French Canadian Genealogy in Maine: Sources and Methods Part II (Robert Chenard),
Military Pension Records (Dale W. Mower), Beginning Genealogy: Documenting those Sources (Sharon Ann Paradis)

Keynote Speaker—Dr. Carol P. McCoy—Getting the Most Out of the Census—1:00

For More Information, E-Mail Marilyn H. Dennis (crdennis@colby.edu) or Leilani Stites (excal3@verizon.net)

Our Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, August 15, 2007, 6:00 p.m.

Hampden Historical Society: Visit and Roundtable

83 Main Road South, Hampden Maine

Come and join us at the Kingsley House as Hampden Historical Society opens up their door to us. You'll not only be able to learn about their collection of information, but we will also be having a roundtable discussion on breaking through genealogical brick walls—so bring your dilemmas and/or success stories—as we try to help each other think of new research avenues to get around those detours. Our members who summer in Maine are especially welcome to drop in and get to know us year-long residents.

Wednesday, September 19, 2007, 6:00 p.m.

“Oh, the ePlaces You'll Go!”

Presented by Dale W. Mower

Bangor Public Library Lecture Hall

It's true that Dr. Seuss is one of Dale's favorite authors (and yes, Dale has been compared to the Grinch at times), but don't confuse this program with a nonsensical rhyming voyage through Whoville and beyond. Dale will provide an interactive demonstration of some great internet sites worth visiting, as well as give a tip or two to help with your online research. He'll also show how easy it is to post a gravestone photo online. **This meeting is all about sharing, so...**if you have a favorite internet spot that you would like Dale to share with your fellow members, please drop him an email at dale@mower-family.com.

Maine Genealogical Society Announces its Special Publication No. 51 -

Vital Records of Hampden, Maine, Prior to 1892

Transcribed and Edited by Arthur Gibbs Sylvester and Richard E. Spinney

The town of Hampden, which lies between the north line of the Waldo patent and the city of Bangor, was incorporated February 24, 1794, as Maine's 86th town. More than half of the town was cut from Frankfort. Benjamin Wheeler was Hampden's first settler. He came from New Hampshire and built mills at the mouth of the Souadabscook in 1772. Before incorporation the area was thus usually called Wheelersborough. Its present name was chosen in honor of the English politician John Hampden, known as "The Patriot" and a first cousin of Oliver Cromwell.

Most of the first settlers came from the Cape Cod area. Ephraim Ballard surveyed and lotted the township in 1796 and every inhabitant received 100 acres; if he settled before January 1784 he paid six dollars, but if afterward and before January 1794, then he paid fifty dollars. The government assigned the residue of the town to General Knox to make up for a deficiency in the Waldo patent. By 1850 the town had grown to nearly 3,200 inhabitants.

The Hampden vital records are spread across eight volumes spanning the years from 1768 to 1892. The original records are of variable quality, with parts of some pages being torn and missing, the ink on some pages faded and illegible, and the handwriting in some entries are not discernible. Until now, the only copy of the records was the microfilm available via the Family History Library and at the Maine State Archives, which is of extremely poor quality and completely illegible in many places. The records in this book were transcribed by Arthur Sylvester from digital photographs of the original records made by Richard Spinney at the Hampden town office. The records are presented in this book in their original order and format.

For more information, visit: www.rootsweb.com/~megs/publication51.htm.

Member Spotlight

Contributed by Elizabeth Stevens



I've been an amateur genealogist for a year now. You may rightfully ask what crazy notion could possibly have possessed me, in order for me to immerse myself into this quagmire, this frustrating, confusing mass, of vital records, census records, and NO RECORDS! I cannot recall a more exacting, excruciating, exasperating endeavor than genealogical research. As I delve into seemingly infinite amounts of library resources, and shuffle through my mounting pile of notes, I find myself muttering one of two diametrically opposed pronouncements: "Now, I have it," and "No, I don't!"

Surely, the uninitiated most wonder at the seemingly powerful hold of genealogy over those of us spinning uncontrollably as we are sucked deep into the vortex of ancestry. I feel certain that only the most desperate addict or self-effacing masochist could empathize with our need to punish ourselves in this way. Perhaps, the metaphor of obsessive, unrequited love can best convey what genealogy has meant for me. Genealogy can only be described as a passion for those who fall under its spell. I love it! I can't stop doing it! I don't want it to end, even if it drives me absolutely mad!

Not surprisingly, like any other person similarly "afflicted," I refuse to take full responsibility for my condition. By all right, I can easily blame my paternal grandfather, Alvin Keith, for having taught me to love genealogy so much.

Alvin Keith, and his wife, Eleanor, spent every summer living on the site of the original Keef family homestead, erected on the Half-Township Road in Lincoln, Maine, back in 1845. Every summer, they would move there from their comfortable home in town (actually a small trailer in later years) to live much like their ancestors had, without such luxuries as hot running water, and electricity. Although they drew water from the well, and used an outhouse, they just couldn't bring themselves to sacrifice the modern convenience of television viewing. They operated their tiny set with a large battery that actually was of almost equal size.

My grandfather's passion for his family history turned out to be quite infectious. My brother, sister, and I fell pray to the genealogy bug, as Grampy Keith contextualized his family story in the fond, familiar surroundings of "the farm." As we trod upon the same soil that Joseph Keef had worked in order to bring in his first crop, we seemed to be transported to an earlier time when our ancestor lived. These stories transported us to another time where we could share our grandfather's youth with him, and make a "direct" connection to the testimony that Joseph Keef had passed on to his grandson Alvin. My grandfather's magical words also transformed our current surroundings to expose another dimension to the land that had appeared much differently when he was our age.

As a child, I accompanied my father and grandfather on their annual ritual of driving up "the hill" to the top of this One-hundred and twenty-five acre property. Bumping along in the back of Grampy's old Turquoise-colored Ford Pick-up, my siblings and I saw much that piqued our interest. Apart from our constant amazement that the old jalopy, that usually stood parked seemingly entombed in a thick overgrowth of tall grass, would actually run well enough to make this mile-long trip to the height above, we found fun in examining the land for ourselves. Grampy would stop periodically to remove felled trees from the road, or to cut some spruce gum from the trees for us, and, of course, to share his insights about this primitive road that meandered upwards through the thick growth of conifers. Although time and nature seemed to have overcome Joseph's efforts to clear the land, undaunted, my grandfather made a noble attempt to preserve this road. He would not lose this concrete portal to the past where Joseph O'Keefe still labors through the sweat of his brow to create a better life for his family than they had known in St. John's New Brunswick, and before in the country of Ireland.

Grandfather was a simple man. He did not speak of the Potato famine, poverty, or persecution. My connection to such aspects of our history can only be left to conjecture at this point. Perhaps, through my own labors, through careful research, and by unearthing the evidence, I will produce a new story for my future descendants to share. As my main tool, I take along Alvin Keith's sense of family, his pride in their accomplishments, and his tenacious sense of belonging, of having inherited a "place" in this world. Standing upon the foundation of my grandfather's love, I find sure footing to remove all obstacles that stand between me, and my ancestry. The history of the O'Keefe family will be cultivated in due season.

~ Share Your Experience—Stories of Our Members Research and Ancestors Are Always Welcome ~

GenBytes

by Dale W. Mower

It's great when you share a little piece of information and hear back from so many people that it proved beneficial. That's what happened when I wrote the article in for the April newsletter on Google Books. My original take on this was it was just a nice, convenient spin of library research, with the library doors open 24/7. But fellow researchers are really finding some interesting material there, and we are seeing that the holdings at this library are quite extensive.

There are some other major sites offering free digitized books as well, some are smaller but the offerings vary so they are worth a catalog search. Some of these I've mentioned before, but a refresher is always nice.

Brigham Young's Digital Collection: www.lib.byu.edu/fhc

MSN Book Search: www.archive.org/details/msn_books

Google Books: books.google.com

Heritage Quest (available thanks to the folks at Bangor Public Library) at www.bpl.lib.me.us/reference/Genealogy.htm

These are all free sites and offer up a whole range of books, the main advantages being speed of searching and all-night accessibility. If you are a subscriber or are at the library, you might also check out Ancestry.com which offers up a collection of books as well.

I would also recommend that if you are researching in a particular geographical area, Google for libraries in that area and see if any of those offer up their own digital collection.

And might I also be so brazen as to recommend attending George Morgan's session at the upcoming MGS conference on September 22nd entitled "Expand Your Research Reach with Interlibrary Loan and Digitized Book Collections Online." This is an exciting new innovation in genealogical research and learning a few tips, tricks and techniques in making our searches more efficient and productive should always be welcome. You can learn more about this talk at www.maineroots.org. A bold recommendation as this session is up against another great internet session being presented by your columnist on using eBay to find your family's heritage.

Has anyone noticed any of the Memorial Plaques around the Bangor area?

Fellow member Paula J. Toothaker has recently noticed a few memorial plaques placed around Bangor. have managed to find three thus far, one of which is the easy one at the Buck Street Irish Cemetery Memorial, the second is the Peter Edes plaque on Ohio Street, and a third at the corner of State and Howard and it commemorates the first frame house in the city of Bangor, built by Thomas Howard (The "Bangor, Maine 1769-1914: An Architectural History" book states that it was built in 1781 and demolished in the 1930's. There must be more of these plaques placed around the city. I would bet that most people don't even know that they exist. Bangor Public Works and the Bangor Museum and Center for History do not have any information on these, so the question is: Does anyone have an idea where there are more or who I can contact to get the information?

