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Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, December 16th
Bangor Public Library, 6:00 pm

Please check out our Society's website for up-to-date information on events and programs
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mepcgs/>

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Articles accepted for publication must be of genealogical nature. Submissions should be forwarded to the Newsletter Editor.



Genealogy For Kids

The next *Genealogy For Kids* (*Gen4Kids*) day will be Tuesday, December 29, 2009, between the hours 11:00 - 12:30 in the Children's Story Room at the Bangor Public library.

It is open to all children between the age of 8 - 14. A Bangor Public Library staff member will provide a guided tour of the "Bangor Room", to see what is available, how to use the microfilm, card catalog and how to start climbing their "Family Tree" to preserve memories for the future.

Phil Getchell, Pete McClarie and John Nelligan will be available to provide assistance. Registration may be made at the "Children's Desk" or by calling 947-8337, Ext.110.

Refreshments will be served.



The Gen-Tripper

Here we are at last in the midst of the 2009 holiday season! Given the historically low turnout at our PCGS December meetings, I believe that few of us have much time to conduct genealogical research these days.

Whether one observes Christmas, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa, or Eid, we tend to focus our energies upon re-enacting cherished family traditions rather than researching family history at this time of year. Your Gentrripper also must negotiate her way through the myriad distractions and the holiday hubbub.

This year, my column's deadline coincides with my annual Post-Thanksgiving sugar spike crash. I can barely concentrate now, as I'm undergoing the physiological effect of consuming six pieces of my sister's homemade pies in a short twenty-four hour period. Robin's pecan, pumpkin, apple, peanut-butter, and famous graham-cracker pie not only adhere to my hips, but visions of them also continue to dance in my head, leaving precious little room for anything else!

I'll spare my readers a lecture on the topic of "demon sugar" for now, and write instead about another familiar topic. What could be a more accessible source of information than my name? Why, it's just the thing at this busy time to ease the typical genealogical research rigors without slacking-off altogether. Ask yourself this question: Do I know why my parent(s) named me as they did? Whether or not you know if you were named after a particular grandparent, a family friend, or your Great-uncle Gustav; you may want to take a look at the website, **Behind the name: the etymology and history of first names** at

<http://www.behindthename.com/>.

One aspect of names explored by the above website would be the popularity of certain names in certain historical periods. Upon examination of a graph that shows the trend in the popularity of my given name, "Elizabeth," I learned that the use of this appellation for girls has steadily declined in the United States since 1880 when it stood at 2%. By the year 2005, my name's popularity had dropped to only .5% in this country. I found that back in the day, specifically be-

tween the years 1880 and 1889, "Elizabeth" was actually the fourth most popular name for girls in the United States. Other names listed in the top ten in this era were Mary, Anna, Emma, Margaret, Minnie, Ida, Bertha, Clara and Alice. Last year, the ten most popular names for girls listed are Emma, Isabella, Emily, Madison, Ava, Olivia, Sophia, Abigail, Elizabeth (you can't keep a good name down), and Chloe. Such listings indicate not only which names endure over time, but also which ones fall into disuse either temporarily, or seemingly permanently to become yet another passing fancy.

Like social mores and values, names inevitably ebb and flow, or die out altogether. I have always been intrigued, or disturbed by, the names made popular by this country's Puritan ancestors. In New England these religious men built their "City on a Hill," and proceeded to make sure that their religious hegemony influenced social mores and practices, and seemingly names. In this period, we find many girls/women named literally for the virtues revered by the devout. This practice continues today, though not all names that promote the parent's religious views and values are literal, nor do parents chose the literal name out of some religious conviction. I once had a friend named, "Constance." Ironically, this woman continuously insisted upon changing the way that her living room furniture was arranged much to her husband's dismay. Upon further thought, Connie may have been aptly named after all, as the old adage claims "the only thing that remains the same is change." Whether or not virtues change over time, I'm glad to see that the name "Silence" has fallen out of vogue!

It's seems a reasonable conclusion that "Elizabeth" will endure as long as the Judeo-Christian religious ideology. This name has existed since Biblical times and in Hebrew means, "my God is an oath." For those who are unfamiliar with the Biblical record, "Elizabeth" is he mother of John the Baptist. History reveals that I share my name with many other important women with no fewer than six saints, two queens of England, one tsaritsa of Russia, and three first ladies of the United States. Though my personal history is rather mundane in comparison, I still derive much pleasure in claiming the fame of that name!

Continued on next page

QUERIES

To post a query, email mepcgs@yahoo.com

PLEASE NOTE:

We are getting an overwhelming amount of SPAM in our email account each month. To make sure a legitimate query is not missed please type the word QUERY at the beginning of the subject field. Thank you!

BLANCHETT

I'm looking for anyone related to Jeanne Blanchett (may have had a middle name of Charlene). She was said to be French Canadian who married into Roberts family and had 3 children, one was a girl named Jackie. One son became an architect in Florida. Jeanne Blanchett had an affair with a man with the same last name as her husband, his name was Donis D. Roberts from the Penobscot Co. area and he was a black American Indian. From that relationship Donna Jean Roberts was born in Surry, Maine on 10/14/1949, she was my biological mother. Trying to trace and piece together my family and beginnings. Donna has since passed away as well as her dad, Donis. Any help would be greatly appreciated.

Michelle Emery
mjemery08@sbcglobal.net

INMAN

I am looking for Burial information for Joseph Inman and his wife Amble. Joseph is believed to have died in Oron between 1830-1840 and his wife Amble in Newburgh between 1840-1850 (this was narrowed down with Census Records).

Amble is believed to be the daughter of Joseph Page. Joseph Inman, Jr is also found on the census records there until the 1840 census. I am looking for burial records.

Thanks,
Brenda Ozog
ozog@hotmail.com or ozog@comcast.net

Continued... The name, "Elizabeth," holds universal appeal though it varies somewhat from region to region, and beyond certain national/ethnic borders. Surprised, I printed out four whole pages of translations and diminutives (a short and/or affectionate form of a given name) of my name from the above-mentioned website. Because Scotland is the ancestral home of my mother's family, I decided to explore the variations of "Elizabeth" in that country. Maybe, I could find names that have been passed down to ancestors born long after the Munro castle was built. Though I found Beileag, Ealasaid, Elspet, Elspeth, Iseabail, Ishbel, Isobel, Lileas and Lillias listed, I could find no similar name in my ancestral chart. These Scottish variations of my name are not nearly as popular as the English versions like Beth, Betty, Liz, and the much-hated by me (listen up, Phil Getchell) Lizzie.

My advice to PCGS members is to have fun with your research this month. Postpone your labor-intensive searches through vital records, obituaries and court records. Play the delightful and informative name-game at your family's holiday gatherings. Whether you actually learn something new about your name, your parents, or some ancestors, I assure you that this pastime will be its own reward through the bonding of reminiscing, or the healing of owning the less-than-ideal, about your memories. If you must spend the holidays alone, or if you just choose to be a Scrooge about it, you can always "work" at discovering more about your name online. If the results do not benefit your genealogy, then at least you may find some cool trivia about your name.

By now, you may be wondering why my mother named me, "Elizabeth." Well, it just so happens that my mother told me whom I was named after when I was a young girl. My lofty name may be universally pervasive, appreciated, and enduring. My name has been given to queen and saints. However, my mother named me after a certain person, who just happens to be a famous actress. I'll give you a hint. She won two Oscars and married eight men. I'm sure that by now you've guessed the identity of my namesake. If not, we'll talk later. Right now, I've got to go take a nap and dream about my next New Year's Resolution: no Sugar!

Elizabeth



A Family Tree can wither
if nobody tends its roots.

GenBytes by Dale Mower

Have you tried researching Maine probate records online? They are there. At a recent tour of the Piscataquis County Registry of Probate hosted by the Wassebec Genealogical Society, Judith Raymond, the Register of Probate, introduced the group to this fantastic resource – www.maineprobate.net.

The home page provides a map of Maine allowing you to click on the county you want to visit. Each county page has information about the Probate office (hours, location and contact information).

At the top of the page, you can click on search. This brings up a search form so you can search for your ancestors. This is an ongoing project, so we have to keep in mind that what information we find here is not an exhaustive listing. Each county is responsible for uploading their information, so it comes down to manpower and funding. Piscataquis County for instance has uploaded a complete index of their probate files from 1838, the date at which the county was formed. There is the ability to actually scan in the documents and have those available on the website as well, very labor intensive, but a project that county hopes to chip away at. The documents once online will be able to be viewed for free, or paper copies can be easily ordered from the site.

More recent probate activity will be more inclusive, including not just an index, but will include the listing of the documents filed with Probate, as well as a listing of all of the interested parties. Many of those documents are scanned at the time of filing and are available now for viewing. There are a few restrictions so you won't find scanned copies of some documents – such as estate valuations – online. The form will be listed so if you have an interest, you can either order it or contact the probate office.

I've been searching around on the site and have viewed the images of complete wills of some of my relations. In searching the Mower name in Penobscot County (and you have an option to include the surrounding counties in your search), I find the file for my grandmother who passed away in 2002. It doesn't show the listing of interested parties, but does include the listing of forms and documents in her file – her last will, appointment of personal representative, request for informal probate, findings of the registrar, and certificate of value. Her probate file images are not available on line, but I now know what documents there are that I might want to track down.

So go out and play with this site. If you ever have an opportunity to research in Piscataquis County, I will tell you they are the nicest group of individuals there – not only in the probate office, but in the Registry of Deeds as well.

Dale

President, Maine Genealogical Society

St. George, Charlotte County, New Brunswick Church & Cemetery Records

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~nbpstgeo/stge4.htm>