NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS

P. O. Box 304
Ingomar, PA 15127

President: Steph Valentine	Vice President: Laura Kunig	Secretary: Sylvan Kretz
Treasurer: Reed Powell	Membership: Steph Valentine	Editor: Donna Booth
Cemetery Project: Jo Henderson & Irene Dinning	Publicity: Gary Schlemmer 10 issues - August-June	Program: Laura Kunig

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Spring has hit the Valentine household with a vengeance. All the trees are blooming. My garden is planted. And, worst of all, my allergies are kicking up with all the pollen. So, while I have to do outdoor chores, I've got my genealogical priority list that can be accomplished indoors.

It pays to monitor Cyndi's List. I just found that the Italian Genealogical Group has set up a database that will contain all naturalization and vital records for New York City and surrounding counties from 1865 to the 1950s. It also includes the certificate number and a blank form so I can apply for a copy of the original application. Their project is ongoing but I've located and been able to get death certificates on several of my ancestors.

It is important that we support Northland Public Library. They monitor Internet usage of Ancestry and Heritage Quest. If the Library feels that those resources aren't being used, they will save money by discontinuing them. Word to the wise.

Amy Steele, Northland's reference librarian, will be June's guest speaker. She will be discussing genealogical resources at Northland. This will include reference material, how to use inter-library loan for those hard-to-find books, and an overview of the Internet resources at the library.

Our cemetery project is ongoing under the able guidance of Jo Henderson and Irene Dinning. If you are interested in helping out crosschecking all the data collected last year, please drop Jo (Henders2@connecttime.net) and Irene (dinning1@earthlink.net) a line. Our goal is to publish this coming winter.

Our recent board meeting (held the first Tuesday of every month at 7:00 at UPMC Passavant) discussed the status of our cemetery project, upcoming programs, the newsletter and other topics of interest. Our board meetings are open to all members. Please feel free to attend.

Time marches on and I'll be visiting my father in Montana. So I started to think about what questions to ask him. I'm planning on encouraging him to talk about his childhood, parents and grandparents. I'm hoping that he will give me some further information on my grandparents and great-grandparents. It goes without saying that he already has a sizable list of chores for me to accomplish.

I look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.   Steph

WHERE GENEALOGISTS MEET

Tues, June 6, 2006 – 7:00 pm – NHG Board Meeting (UPMC Passavant Hospital Cafeteria) All members welcome.

Tues, June 20, 2006 – Regular NHG Meeting – Amy Steele, Northland Public Library – "Genealogical Resources at Northland Library"

Other Meetings/Events

Thurs, May 18, 7:00 pm – Lawrenceville Historical Society - 19th Century Music of Stephen Foster and the Civil War. Canterbury Place, 310 Fisk Street, Lawrenceville

Monday, May 22, 2006 – 7:00 pm – Greater Pittsburgh Civil War Round Table – "Horses of Gettysburg", Michael Kraus – Sieb's Pub, Babcock Boulevard.

Sat., May 27, 2006 – 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm – Western Reserve Historical Society, Cleveland – Genealogy 101 Class. Contact: Roger Ellsworth at 216-229-7887 or gen05 wr@aol.com

Sat., June 10, 2006 – 10:00 am – WPGS Meeting – Researching Ancestors in Northern Ireland – Fintan Mullan & Dr. William Roulston (from the Ulster Historical Foundation) – Carnegie Lecture Hall, Oakland

Sat. July 1, 2006 – 12:00 noon – 5:00 pm – Stephen Foster Music & Heritage Festival (Doo Dah Days) – Allegheny Cemetery (http://www.doodahdays.com)

Sat., July 14-15, 2006 – Roots in the Boot – American-Italian Family History & Culture Conference (www.rootsintheboot.org)

Sept. 29-30, 2006 – PA Genealogy Conference – Sheraton Station Square (www.PAGenealogyConference.com)

Future Dates

Sat., December 2, 2006 – NHG Christmas Social

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING DATES WHEN NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY WILL BE CLOSED:

May 19 – Service Day

May 28 & 29 – Memorial Day

JULY ITALIAN CONFERENCE NOT JUST FOR ITALIANS

You may be aware of the "Roots in the Boot" conference, a celebration of genealogy and Italian heritage, which will be held at the University of Pittsburgh on Friday, July 14 and Saturday, July 15 (see www.RootsInThe Boot.org). What you may not have heard is that the Sen. John Heinz Regional History Center is sponsoring a free (to registrants) dessert reception and tour of the Heinz History Center including the Italian-American collection and the new Sports Museum. Also at this reception will be a presentation by Christine Crawford-Oppenheimer on "Like Noona Used to Make:Exploring Italian Regional Foods." Christine is a librarian at the Culinary Institute of America in New York and author of the book "Long Distance Genealogy." This should be a fun and delicious evening – "icing on the cake" of our two-day conference.

But don't miss what has been called "the best conference for Italian genealogy in years." Among the 14 lecturers are three that have the Certified Genealogist credential; 2 with the Accredited Genealogist credential; 2 PhDs and 3 MLS. These talented lecturers are coming from Washington, DC, Salt Lake City, UT, and New York. Please come and join us. You don't have to be Italian to enjoy the lectures on immigration, naturalization, passenger lists, materials preservation, writing the family history, DNA, evaluating sources on the Internet, Catholic Church records and beginning genealogy. Dr. John Colletta is the main speaker. Anyone who has ever heard him knows how he can weave stories, humor and genealogical how-to together in enjoyable presentations.

Do tell your friends, relatives and neighbors about this conference. All are invited to participate. Go to the website listed above to view the program and print a registration form. For more information, contact info@rootsintheboot.org or write to Roots in the Boot, PO Box 8313, Pittsburgh, PA 15218-8313

"BIG BEN" VISITS FAMILY'S ANCESTRAL HOME

"Big Ben" Roethlisberger (you know who that is don't you?) has just visited his ancestral home in Switzerland. His great-great-grandfather came to the US in the 1870's. During his visit to the family hometown he said "It's important to know where your family comes from. I always knew I was of Swiss descent, but I never knew where until recently. It's great to be able to come back to the actual village and see firsthand how it was for my family." A copy of his family coat-of-arms was reproduced from the town's archives.

Could we have another genealogists in the making?

FAKE MAIL ADDRESS FROM ROOTSWEB ABUSE DEPARTMENT
Submitted by Shirley Kuntz

It has come to our attention (RootsWeb) that RootsWeb is suffering from a low-life attempt to infect its users by sending them to an infected website. Basically, if you see mail that is reputedly being stated as being from the RootsWeb Abuse Department and telling you to confirm your email by clicking a link, then just delete it. Please DO NOT click the link. Thanks

(Ed. Note: What is wrong with people?)

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Attention all North Hills members:

As you know, WPGS and GSP are jointly holding a fantastic PA Genealogy Conference.

We have the program set, the publicity is ongoing, great vendors are coming, the syllabus is in progress, the registrations are coming fast and furious, all we need now are YOU, the volunteers.

One of the most enjoyable parts of a convention is helping others, being on the "in" without all the work. We are looking for **75** people to spend time at the registration desk, or help speakers, monitor rooms, or assist vendors, to do work behind the scenes and most of all have fun!

Oh, you will be tired and sore, in my experience, mainly from laughing and smiling non-stop for 3 days! PS – the jokes we tell are on the house – this year the best one wins a prize!

To volunteer please e-mail me at Dunnl@einetwork.net. **In the subject line please use: [PA Conference] Volunteering.** By using that as the subject my e-mail will not delete your kindness as Spam. By the way, be sure to send your name, what you are volunteering for and your e-mail. I will reply and let you know what and when .....

Penn Dot says" "Temporary inconvenience for permanent improvement." We say: "A couple hours of volunteering will give you wonderful memories forever."

Thank you

Lesle Dunn
Conference Volunteer Coordinator

(At the NGS Conference in Pittsburgh, NHG had the most volunteers. Let's do that again.)

McCANDLESS MAN TRACES FAMILY ROOTS THROUGH CROATIA

The April 27, 2006 issue of the *McKnightJournal* had an article about NHG's Frank Thomas about his 16 trips (1981-2001) to Croatia to research his family and his wife's family. Frank brought back more than 12,000 pages of records detailing these families. He made friends in many of the small villages he visited. Frank notes that since the Catholic Church has been given control of the archives it would be impossible for him to get these records today. Frank has shared his information with the Western PennsylvaniaGenealogical Society. They have have microfilmed these records and they are available at the WPGS library at the Carnegie Library in Oakland.

A LITTLE SERENDIPITY
submitted by Sylvan Kretz

I have always believed that serendipity (making unexpected discoveries by accident) plays a huge role in genealogy. I had been visiting my daughter and her family in New York in March. I had just seen the mini-series "The War That Made America" and had been relating some of the information I had found on-line from the Archives about George Washington to my two grand-daughters, 8 and 10 years old.

The two girls have been computer-literate, I swear, since they were able to sit upright. Elizabeth, the older, would sit on her daddy's lap when she was only a year or so and play on the keyboard with a program that her dad, Paul, had written for her. Annie went on-line, and Googled "George Washington" and exclaimed, "Hey I found a history of the Crumley (their family name) Family, and I think we're related to George Washington."

The history starts with James Crumley, a Quaker, age 21 in Chester County, PA in 1732. He migrated to Frederick County, VA where in 1852, he obtained a large tract (742 A) of land from Thomas, the Sixth Lord of Fairfax on "Apple Ridge." It is here that James Crumley is mentioned in George Washington's diary (thus the Google hit). The history relates the descendants of James Crumley to the middle 1800s. I made a copy and tucked it away to check out later.

Returning home, I did some research, using the information that my son-in-law had given me in a Family Tree Maker file years earlier, most of which he had obtained from his aunt. I verified all of his data, tracing his line back to his great-great-grandfather, Aaron Crumley, age 29, married to Mary Ann in Hancock County, Tennessee in the 1850 Census using Heritage Quest and Ancestry.com (both of which are available at Northland Library).

I can't begin to tell you how great these two resources are, being able to research a name by the click of the "enter" key, as compared to using the Soundex and roll (and rolls) of microfilm as was the case just ten years ago.

I dug out the copy of the Crumley Family History, and re-read it, a bit more thoroughly this time. In the last paragraph it states for the 1850 Census, "In Hancock (County, Tennessee) we show William Crumley 61 with his wife". It also states William's five children, including Aaron, b. 1821, married Mary Ann – BINGO!! What a stroke of luck! And the history is fully sourced, with citations, marriage records, deeds and land records, etc. to allow verification.

There's still a lot of work to verify all of this, but this was truly serendipitous –making unexpected discoveries by accident. Sometimes serendipity goes a long way – all the way back nine generations to 1732.

Sylvan Kretz

(Ed Note: Sounds like a good "Show and Tell" for Syl's granddaughters.)

SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBERS

The nine-digit SSN is composed of three parts: first three digits – Area Number; second two digits - Group Number; final set of four digits – Serial Number.

Area Number

The Area Number is assigned by the geographical region. Prior to 1972 cards were issued in local Social Security offices around the country and the Area Number represented the State in which the card was issued. This did not necessarily have to be the State where the applicant lived, since a person could apply for their card in any Social Security office. Since 1972, when SSA began assigning SSNs and issuing cards centrally from Baltimore, the area number assigned has been based on the ZIP code in the mailing address provided on the application for the original Social Security card. The applicant's mailing address does not have to be the same as their place of residence. Thus, the Area Number does not necessarily represent the State of residence of the applicant, either prior to 1972 or since. Generally, numbers were assigned beginning in the northeast and moving westward. So people on the East coast have the lowest numbers and those on the West coast have the highest numbers. Note: One should not make too much of the "geographical code." It is not meant to be any kind of usable geographical information. The numbering scheme was designed in 1936 (before computers) to make it easier for SSA to store the applications in our files in Baltimore since the files were organized by regions as well as alphabetically. It was really just a bookkeeping device for our own internal use and was never intended to be anything more than that.

Group Number

Within each area, the group number (middle two digits) range from 01 to 99 but are not assigned in consecutive order. For administrative reasons, group numbers issued first consist of the ODD numbers from 01 through 09 and then EVEN numbers from 10 through 98, within each area number allocated to a State. After all numbers in group 98 of a particular area have been issued, the EVEN Groups 02 through 08 are used, followed by ODD Groups 11 through 99.

Serial Number

Within each group, the serial numbers (last 4 digits) run consecutively from 0001 through 9999.

A Myth About Social Security Numbers

Group Numbers

Apparently due to the fact that the middle digits of the SSN are referred to as the "group number," some people have misconstrued this to mean that the "group number" refers to racial groupings. So a myth goes around from time-to-time that encoded in a person's SSN is a key to their race. This simply is not true. As should be clear from the explanation of the SSN numbering scheme, the "group number" refers only to the numerical groups 01-99. For filing purposes, the "area numbers" are broken down into these numerical subgroups. So, for example, for area numbers starting with 527 there would be 99 subgroups, one for every number starting with 527-01, and one for every number starting with 527-02 and so on. This was done back in 1936 because in that era there were no computers and all the records were stored in filing cabinets. The early program administrators needed some way to organize the filing cabinets into sub-groups to make them more manageable, and this is the scheme they came up with. So, the "group number" has nothing to do with race.

The "First Social Security Number (SSN)

Issued through Local Post Offices

Since the Social Security Board did not have a network of field offices in late 1936, it contracted with the U. S. Postal Service to distribute and assign the first batch of Social Security numbers through its 45,000 local post offices around the country. Of these 45,000 post offices, 1,074 were also designated as "typing centers" where the cards themselves were prepared. The procedure for issuing the first SSNs were that the SS-4 application forms were to be distributed by the post offices to employers beginning Monday, November 16, 1936. These forms asked the employers to indicate how many employees they had at their place of business. Using the data from the SS-4 forms, the post office then supplied an SS-5 form for each employee and these forms (on which the assignment of an SSN was based) were to be distributed by the post offices beginning Tuesday, November 24, 1936. The completed SS-5 forms were returned to the post office where an SSN would be assigned and a card typed with the name and SSN. This step could happen in one of several ways. The person could return the card in person and wait while the "typing center" prepared their card, or they could hand the form to their local letter carrier, or they could put it in the mail. Once the SSN was assigned and the card typed, the local letter carrier then returned the card to the place of business as a piece of regular mail. The record of the SSN assignment was sent to Social Security headquarters in Baltimore, MD, where the master file of SSNs would be hept.

So the first card was issued, sometime in mid-November, 1936, somewhere in one of 1,074 post offices to someone whose identify and SSN are unknown. In theory, the first card should have been issued on November 24th, but there have been reports of cards showing earlier dates. It is not clear whether the cards with earlier dates were actually issued on that day or whether some post offices predated some of their cards. If the 45,000 local post offices followed their procedures, no cards could have been issued before November 16th and none should have been issued before November 24. But here again, there is always the possibility that some local post offices failed to follow their instructions. The best we can say with certainty is that the first SSN was issued sometime in mid-November, 1936. In any case, on whatever day the first card was issued, hundreds of thousands of SSNs were probably issued on that same day, so many people had Social Security cards issued on the very first day they became available.

First Official SSN

Once the SSN records were received in Baltimore, they were grouped in blocks of 1,000 and the master records were created. On December 1, 1936, the first block of 1,000 records were assembled and were ready to start their way through the nine-step process that would result in the creation of a permanent master record and the establishment of an earnings record for the individual. When this first stack was ready, Joe Fay, head of the Division of Accounting Operations in the Chandler Bldg., walked over to the stack, pulled off the top record, and declared it to be the official first Social Security record. (This was the first point in the process where there was enough control to designate an official first card—it would have been impossible to try to identify the first card typed in one of the 1,074 typing centers around the country.) This particular record (055-09-0001) belonged to John D. Sweeney, Jr., age 23, of New Rochelle, NY. The next day, newspapers announced that Sweeney had been issued the first SSN. It would be more accurate to say that the first Social Security record was established for John David Sweeney, but since master records were invisible to the public and the Social Security card was a very visible token of the program, the newspapers overlooked the nuance. And so John David Sweeney, Jr. is the closest thing we have to the first person to have received a Social Security card—although his status is more symbolic than actual. We do know who received the Social Security card with the lowest number, card 001-01-0001. Since the Board controlled the issuance of the account numbers to the post offices, and since they were to be distributed geographically by area number, the agency was in a position to at least control where the number was issued—and it tried to control who it was issued to.

Social Security numbers were grouped by the first three digits of the number (called the area number) and assigned geographically starting in the northeast and moving across the country to the northwest. But if you

look closely at the distribution pattern you will see an apparent anomaly. The lowest area numbers are assigned to New Hampshire, rather than to Maine, even though Maine is the most northeasterly of the states. This was apparently done so that SSN 001-01-0001 could be given to New Hampshire's favorite son, Social Security Board Chairman John G. Winant (Winant was the former three-time Governor of New Hampshire). Chairman Winant declined to have the SSN registered to him. Then it was offered to the Federal Bureau of Old Age Benefits' Regional Representative of the Boston Region, John Campbell, who likewise declined. It was finally decided not to offer this SSN as a token of esteem but instead to issue it to the first applicant from New Hampshire. This proved to be Grace D. Owen of Concord, NH, who applied for her number on November 24, 1936 and was issued the first card typed in Concord, which, because of the area number scheme, also happened to be the card with the lowest possible number.

What information is available from Social Security records to help in genealogical research?

A: You might want to start by checking out the Social Security Death Index which is available from a variety of commercial services (usually the search is free). The Death Index contains a listing of persons who had a Social Security number, who are deceased, and whose death was reported to the Social Security Administration. (The information in the Death Index for people who died prior to 1962 is sketcky since SSA's death information was not automated before that date. Death information for persons who died before 1962 is generally only in the Death Index if the death was actually reported to SSA after 1962, even though the death occurred prior to that year.

If you find a person in the Death Index you will learn the date of birth and Social Security Number for that person. (The Social Security Death Index is not published by SSA for public use, but is made available by commercial entities using information from SSA records. SSA cannot offer support for these commercial products nor can they answer questions about the material in the Death Index.)

Other records potentially available from SSA include the Application for a Social Security Number (form SS-5). To obtain any information from SSA you will need to file a Freedon of Information Act (FOIA) request.

CEMETERY BOOK COMMITTEE
Jo Henderson

The Cemetery Book Committee has completed all readings and proofreadings for the seven cemeteries slated for Vol III "Pioneer Cemeteries of North Hills." Of special interest is the fact that three of the cemeteries –Trinity Lutheran, Ingomar Methodist and Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian—had exceptionally complete church records. Thus many maiden names, birthplaces and other data have been captured plus people whose gravestones are no longer standing or whose inscriptions have weathered to illegibility. With official records not kept until 1906, the only record of someone's life may well be his or her tombstone. NHG may be proud of its three volumes-and-growing series.

The next Steering Committee meeting of the cemetery book group will be 7 p.m. Wednesday, May 24 in the UPMC Passavant Cafeteria.

CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

The annual NHG Christmas Social will be held on Saturday, December 2, 2006. We will have a tour of the newly renovated Fort Pitt Museum followed by lunch at the Spaghetti Warehouse in the Strip District. More information, menu choices and a reservation form will be in a future newsletter. RESERVE THAT DATE NOW!

2006-2007 NOMINEES FOR NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS OFFICERS

PESIDENT

Maureen Dimond Durstein, MLIS, is a professional genealogist with over 20 years experience specializing in Western Pennsylania and Ireland research, having completed her 14th trip to Ireland and England in 2004. Holding a Master degree in Library and Information Science from the University of Pittsburgh, she is working toward genealogical certification and is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. Maureen served as Charter Secretary/Treasurer and Newsletter Editor of the North Hills Genealogists and Treasurer of the Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society. She has lectured on genealogical research in Ireland and Oral Family History at the University of Pittsburgh. Maureen also is currently involved in broadening her knowledge of Jewish emigration to the Pittsburgh area.

VICE PRESIDENT

Amy E. K. Arner is a professional genealogist specializing in Western Pennsylvania research She is the president of the Great Lakes Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogist and a frequent book reviewer for the *Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society Quarterly.* Amy is a volunteer at the Cranberry Family History Center and the treasurer and webmaster for the Cranberry Genealogy Club where she also is a past-president. Her early interest in a box of old family documents led to her taking courses at Westminster College and Brigham Young University. She has applied her knowledge in researching both personal and clients' families.

Patrick Danahey was a Social Studies teacher at North Allegheny for 31 years and taught courses on Civics, American Political Behavior, American History and Anthropology. Since retirement, Patrick has become the current Chairman of the Marshall Township Republican Organization and is also running in the spring primary for a position on the Republican State Committee. His interest in genealogy was piqued on his father's side since both his grandparents were deaf mutes and died before he could learn anything about the family history. With little or no oral history and his grandparents' children also deceased, Patrick realized he was completely unarmed for such a battle and took a class on genealogy offered by Elissa Powell and as they say, the rest is history.

Secretary

Sylvan Kretz is a retired Civil Engineer. For a retirement gift, his daughter enrolled him in Marilyn Holt's "Climbing Your Family Tree" class at the Carnegie. He joined the North Hills Genealogists in 1997, and has served as the vice president, president and is currently the recording secretary. His involvement has been rewarded ten-fold in the wealth of knowledge that he has gained from participation in the group.

Treasurer

Reed B. Powell is the current treasurer. He has worked in the computer industry since the early 1970s and now works for an Internet company in Bridgeville developing Internet database applications. Reed is the webmaster for the North Hills Genealogists, the North Allegheny Band and helps maintain the Western PA Genealogical Society website. He is the chair of the WPGS Ancestor Charts computerization project. Reed also gives lectures locally and nationally on the use of technology in genealogy research

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Ballot on last page – Return by July 1, 2006

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NORTH HILLS GENEALOGISTS
P.O. BOX 304
INGOMAR, PA 15127

FIRST CLASS MAIL

| TUESDAY, JUNE 20,2006 – 7:00 PM |
| AMY STEELE |
| GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES AT NORTHLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY |

BALLOT – BOARD ELECTIONS 2006-2007

PRESIDENT:
Maureen Dimond Durstein, MLIS   _____

VICE PRESIDENT
Amy E. K. Arner   _____

Patrick Danahey   _____

SECRETARY
Sylvan Kretz   _____

TREASURER
Reed B. Powell   _____

All ballots must be received by July 1, 2006. Results will be announced at the July meeting.