

# Mecklenburg Messenger



Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society  
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June 2005

Joan Raney, Editor

## Directions to Aldersgate

Ray Hall Community Center: Aldersgate asks that we use the main entrance and park in front of the Ray Hall Community Center, entering the building by the front door.

Coming from Eastway Dr., turn on Shamrock Dr. Proceed out Shamrock to Aldersgate Main Entrance. You will pass these buildings on Shamrock Dr.: WNC Methodist Center, Museum of History, Asbury Care Center, and Wesley Nursing Center.

At the traffic light, turn right on Willard Farrow Dr. After the Welcome Center (like a gate house), drive 0.3 mi. on Willard Farrow Dr. After the Hezekiah Alexander House on the right, you will see 3 buildings facing a circle.

Ray Hall Community Center is the 2-story building in the middle, between Epworth Towers and Francis Residential Building.

Park in the visitor parking in front of the Community Center and enter by the front door.

## Notes from the May Meeting

by Mary Utting

Pat Cook, a man who was adopted as young child, had not thought about locating his birth parents until he was about to be married. His fiancée thought he should learn something about his biological family so they would know about his family's health histories for the sake of future children. He described this search for his birth mother at the May meeting of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society.

Cook, who is with Wachovia in Charlotte, grew up in New York. He started his search there with the Spence-Chapin Services to Families and Children, a private, nonprofit adoption agency, which had handled his adoption. This was the advice of his sister-in-law, a social worker. Though the agency treated him very politely, he was given one verdict: that record is sealed.

## OMGS Meetings

The June 2005 meeting of OMGS will be held on Wednesday, 8 June 2005 at the **Ray Hall Community Center, Aldersgate**, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte. *See first article for directions.* Our speaker will be Jim Morrill from the Charlotte Observer, and he will speak to us about searching for his family's past. In July we will have either Kristin Toler or Jon Gates from the Latta Plantation. They will be talking about the Latta family and the plantation. Don't miss these great programs!

Failing there, he turned to a private investigator. Cook knew the hospital where he was born, because he had been able to obtain a copy of his birth certificate in New York City; this also gave the name his birth mother had given him. The investigator started work and gave him periodic reports, but as time went on, he obviously was not making great progress.

A woman at the adoption agency meanwhile suggested he sign up for the International Soundex Reunion Registry. He realized that she wanted to help him, and this was one way to circumvent the sealed record. He filled out a form with the information he had and submitted it. If, by some chance his birth mother had ever tried to locate him by this service, which is free, then the Registry could arrange for a time for him to establish a phone contact. In other words, this system works, if both parent and child have started inquiries.

It took three weeks. The woman at Soundex called to say she had information on his birth mother, so in two days he was able to talk to her on the phone.

He learned that she was a secretary, unmarried and 24 years old when he was born. His father, a Marine, was 26, and both were from Boston, not

Manhattan, as Cook had thought. On her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday, Cook flew to Florida, where she was living. He found that she had wanted to know how he had turned out, if he was happy and successful. He was amazed to find how many traits he recognized in her, such as similarity of expression and food tastes.

Unfortunately, she died in January 2005, before the birth of a grandson, who was three months old when Cook spoke to Olde Meck members.

One set of records helping his search were from the New York State Supreme Court. After putting him up for adoption, his mother changed her mind three times. One family was ready to adopt him, but he was returned to foster care because of her suit. Finally, at 22 months, he was placed with the family that adopted him, when the state court did not allow his mother's attempt to reclaim him. The decision was based on her uncertainty and her financial limitations. This family also adopted a girl who has tried to locate her parents, but has not had the success that her adoptive brother had.

He said his biological mother was very emotional at their first contact. His adoptive parents, particularly his father, were supportive of his action, though at age 35, there was no legal barrier for his doing this.

Someone asked if he intended to seek out his biological father as well, but Cook said he did not plan to do more. He knows that his father did not want a baby and wanted his mother to have an abortion. He also knows that his father had a problem with alcohol and drugs, so he believes that there probably would not be a favorable outcome to such a meeting. He is quite certain he is alive, however.

With the growing popularity of open adoptions, such searches may become less common. But the Soundex system, requiring the mutual interest of both parent and child, removes a barrier for many who want to locate their biological roots. [Both the adoption agency and the registry mentioned in this report may be found online.]

### **New From the Carolina Room**

2-22-2005 to 5-21-2005

To view the Public Library's catalog for a complete list of holdings, go to <http://www.plcmc.lib.nc.us/online/catalog/>.

These are new titles of interest to genealogists in the Carolina Room, Main Library, 310 N. Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC.

*Dark Hours - South Carolina soldiers, sailors and citizens who were held in Federal prisons during the War for Southern Independence, 1861-1865*  
Guide to the Microfilmed Manuscript Holdings of the Tennessee State Library and Archives  
*Some Descendants of Daniel Miller (d. 1816) of Adams Co., Pennsylvania, and Mahoning Co., Ohio Graves Co., Ky. Census of 1840*  
*Our Carson and Kindred Families*  
*Mountain Memories, The Story of Mountain Sanitarium and Hospital School of Nursing*  
*Post Offices and Postmasters of North Carolina Colonial to USPS, Vols. III-IV*  
*Graves County, KY Cemeteries, Vols. 1-3*  
*Duval County Florida Marriages 1823-1867*  
*Bath The First Town in North Carolina*  
*Greene County, Indiana Abstracts of Wills 1825-1905, Books 1-5*

### **Upcoming Events**

8-9 July 2005 South Carolina Genealogical Society Annual Workshop, South Carolina Archives and History Center in Columbia. For more information contact: Lynn W. Lee, Registrar, 2005 S.C.G.S. Summer Workshop, P.O. Box 175, Hartsville, SC 29551 (843) 383-5212 or visit the SCGS Website: <http://www.scgen.org>

July 2005 The annual reunion of Descendants of Richard-I SWINSON will meet at the Beautancus Community Building, east of Mount Olive, North Carolina. For additional information, please contact Wayne Roberts, P.O. Box 398, Davidson, NC, 28036. 704-892-1314. A highlight of the meeting will be a discussion of the book which is being developed about Richard and his descendants. Contact Joyce Jones Franks, [Franksjj@aol.com](mailto:Franksjj@aol.com)

15-16 July 2005 The 2005 DINGLER Family Reunion will take place July 15-16 at Madison, Georgia. Accommodations will be at the Hampton Inn (2012 Eatonton Rd, Madison, GA 30650). Make reservations by calling 706-342-9003; be sure to let them know you are with the Dingler Reunion so that you get the special rate. See: <http://www.dingler-family.org>

14th CROWELL REUNION  
Tour the 200-year-old Michael Crowell house and hear about DNA testing that has connected several Crowell men to Peter Graul, who lived in Langenselbold, Germany, 300 years ago. The Crowell reunion is scheduled for 17, 18, and 19 July 2005 at the Henry Horton State Park near Shelbyville, TN. Contact Tom Crowell for details:

TPCrowell@Rader.com or phone him at 706 864-0410.

The Upton Byrum Family Reunion Sunday, July 17, 2005 (Lunch following worship service at Steele Creek Presbyterian Church in Mecklenburg Co., NC – Covered Dish)

This reunion will be the first for all of the descendants of Upton Byrum (1770 – 1840) of Mecklenburg County, NC. We are trying to locate descendants to be added to our booklet of the family history for the reunion.

Upton Byrum married first to Dorothy McDowell on 13 Dec 1793 and had children: (1) Jenny Byrum; (2) Sarah Byrum b. abt. 1799 m. 1<sup>st</sup> to William McD. Herron and 2<sup>nd</sup> to Alexander McLeod; (3) Possibly Upton Byrum, Jr. b. abt. 1801, m. Mary Cloninger of Lincoln Co. (not proven); and (4) Cynthia Byrum, b. 1804 m. Robert Kerr. Upton Byrum married 2<sup>nd</sup> to Margaret Porter on 15 June 1807 and had the following children: (5) Peggy Byrum; (6) Dorothy McDowell Byrum, b. 1810 (never married); (7) John Porter Byrum, b. 24 Dec 1813 m. Catherine L. Kerr; (8) James Byrum, b. 1815, m. Margaret Hannon; (9) Mary Martha Byrum, b. 1822 m. James H. Grier; and (10) Caroline Elizabeth Byrum, b. 1824, mar. Matthew Rufus Robinson.

If you are descended from any of those listed above, please contact Linda Blackwelder at: llbckwldr@worldnet.att.net or (704) 588-6575 for more information.

The John Porter Byrum descendants have been meeting at Steele Creek Presbyterian Church for reunions for many years and hope others will join them. Upton Byrum and his two wives are buried in the old cemetery there along with many of the above children and their families. Come join us at this old historic church and meet some of your “cousins”.

21-24 July 2005 The National GRIGSBY Family Society announces the 25th anniversary reunion to be held at Natural Bridge VA, the site of the first reunion. Featured are tours of the Lexington area and the seven Grigsby Hill Homes as well as a special Sunday service at the Falling Spring Presbyterian Church, the church of "Soldier John" Grigsby. Activities for all ages make this a

true family reunion. All are welcome! The society website is: <http://www.grigsby.org>. For further information contact: R. Brian Grigsby, 26 Danube River Drive, Cocoa Beach, FL 32931 at [rbgrigsby@aol.com](mailto:rbgrigsby@aol.com) or call 321-783-8303.

23 July 2005 The 2005 POSEY Family Reunion will be held on 23 July 2005 in Blythe, GA. This will be the first reunion that will host the LAKE, BROWN, CARTER, KING and MILES sub-lineages of the Posey family. WALKER Family members who are descendants of Prince, Beatric, Cassie and Lillie Belle are strongly encouraged to attend. For information regarding the logistics and points of contact, please call 1-646-334-1202 and ask for Vince Sheppard. This will be the first no-fee reunion.

30 July 30-4 August 2005 Virginia Genealogical Society announces the Virginia Institute of Genealogical Research (VIGR8), in Richmond, Virginia. Track I is designed for the novice Virginia researcher. Track II is for the more experienced Virginia researcher. Neither track is recommended for the beginning genealogist. Contact [mail@vgs.org](mailto:mail@vgs.org), <http://www.vgs.org/VIGR8brochure.pdf>

2-5 September 2005 The First Worldwide DILLINGHAM Reunion, an event to mark the 375<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the first Dillingham to settle in the New World, will be held in Dillingham, North Carolina, on September 2-5, 2005. This reunion is for ALL Dillingham descendants. Visit the Dillingham Project 2000 website at <http://www.dillinghamproject2000.com>

### **Want to Join OMGS?**

It's easy to join. Annual dues are \$20 for an individual membership, \$25 for a family membership, \$40 for a sustaining membership, or you can pay \$225 for a lifetime membership. Make a check or money order payable to Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society and send it along with your name, address, phone number, email address, and names you are researching to OMGS, P.O. Box 32453, Charlotte, NC, 28232-2453.

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**DATED MATERIAL INSIDE**

**OMGS Publications for Sale**

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 1: North Mecklenburg</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 2: South Mecklenburg</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 3: East Mecklenburg</i>	\$37.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Cemeteries, Volume 4: West Mecklenburg</i>	\$37.50 PPD
<i>1850 Census Abstract, Mecklenburg County, NC</i>	\$17.50 PPD
<i>OMGS Surname Index, 2000 Edition</i>	\$8.00 PPD
<i>Nine Generation Ancestor Chart</i>	\$6.00 PPD (rolled) \$5.00 PPD (folded)
<i>OMGS Quarterlies: 1983-2003</i>	\$21.50 PPD (4/year) \$8.50 PPD (single) \$2.00 PPD (index)
<i>The Spirit of a Proud People, by Lois Moore Yandle</i>	\$40.00 PPD

**Books by Herman W. Ferguson**

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. I, 1780-1800</i>	\$30.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. II, 1801-1820</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. III, 1821-1830</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. IV, 1831 - 1840</i>	\$25.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. V, 1841 - 1850</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC, Minutes of the Court of CP&amp;Q Sessions, Vol. VI, 1851-1860</i>	\$28.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Genealogical Deed Abstracts Books 10-14</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC- Abstracts of Deed Books 15-23 1794-1830</i>	\$35.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Will abstracts, 1791-1868, Books A-J/Tax Lists 1797-1799, 1806-1807</i>	
(transcribed by Ralph B. & Herman W. Ferguson)	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: A Petition, 1792; Tax Lists 1797-1799, 1806-1808, 1810-1811, 1815, 1823-1824</i>	
(transcribed by Ralph B. & Herman W. Ferguson)	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg &amp; Cabarrus Counties, NC: Decedents for Whom Loose Estate Papers are Extant</i>	\$16.50 PPD

North Carolina residents please include 7.5% sales tax. Send name, address, order, and payment to

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