

Mecklenburg Messenger

OMGS Archives Hours

10-12 AM Tuesdays, 1-4 PM Thursdays
Visit the website for additional information.

Genetics and Genealogy: Exploring the Mysteries, Exploding the Myths

The Robinson-Spangler Carolina of the Public Library of Charlotte & Mecklenburg County and Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society will present Cynthia Wells, Regional Speaker for the International Society of Genetic Genealogy.



Mrs. Wells will conduct a three-hour workshop on March 25, 2006 from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. on the use of DNA as a tool for genealogical research. The workshop is free, but registration is required. Registration begins on February 1, 2006. You may register by calling the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room at (704) 336-2980.

The program will be held at the Ray Hall Community Center of the Aldersgate Methodist Retirement Community on 3800 Shamrock Drive in Charlotte.

Notes on February Meeting

by Mary Utting

Cullen Ferguson moved to Charlotte, North Carolina, in 1968 to take a job as a television broadcaster in a city that was brand new to him. He believed that there was not a relative within 500 miles of his new home. Until that time, he also had not paid much attention to his family history.

Then came a fateful letter from a great-uncle in New England asking if he had looked for some ancestral graves, because he was only a dozen miles from his Ferguson ancestors' home. This relative passed along some names and birth dates, and soon a new genealogist was at work. The only trouble at that stage was time. It has taken a number of years to accumulate data, and only now that he has retired does he have time to devote to what he calls "this addictive hobby."

OMGS Meetings

The March 2006 meeting of OMGS will be held on Wednesday, 8 March 2006 at the **Ray Hall Community Center, Aldersgate, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte**. Remember the "social hour" begins at 7pm with the meeting following at 7:30pm. We will have our very own Paul Buckley! He will talk to us about what our ancestors were really like. In April we will have Beverly Lawing. Her topic is "Carolina Places in Time." Don't miss these great programs!

The Hopewell Branch will meet Saturday, 11 March 2006 at 10am. We will have some instruction in beginning genealogy. In April we will not meet but expect to see you at our tent up at the Loch Norman Highland Games. Come out and join us!

At the February meeting of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society, Ferguson shared some highlights of his genealogical journey. He started his work at the Carolina Room of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Library, where he read information about the pre-Revolution Presbyterian Churches and their cemeteries. He had learned that his great-great-great-great-grandfather, Thomas Ferguson, and son William had settled near Charlotte. The library led him to Steele Creek Presbyterian Church, where he found Thomas's tombstone. He was born in Northern Ireland in 1729 and died here in 1795. Nearby was a stone for a Martha, possibly a sister, and another of son William, 1754-1817.

In reading the church history, he learned that William was known as a Seceder, a member who left the church to form another, because he disagreed with the more liberal pastor who wanted to introduce hymns by Isaac Watts and not just sing from the difficult Scottish Psalter. This movement gave rise to the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, and William helped start Lower Steele Creek ARP Church. Then he and Jimmy Grier started yet another ARP group, Little Steele Creek.

Ferguson soon learned not to trust relatives' stories, but found he had to check and recheck information at least two or three times. He also found that he wanted to collect more than a mere list of names and dates. From the Register of Deeds office he found

that William and a fellow elder collected \$300 to buy a plantation for the widow of Alexander Moore and her children. Then in 1805 William, 51, married the widow Sarah, 24. She produced nine children.

Though Ferguson copied abstracts of wills at the Register of Deeds in Mecklenburg County, he learned that the Department of Archives and History in Raleigh had the original will with William's deathbed signature. This document gave him an insight into the times. William had been a member of Adam Alexander's Militia Company. This was one of the Alexanders who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence.

The Ferguson farm of 800 acres was divided into four sections, one each for William's sons. The estate inventory even told him the names of two of his ancestor's horses. It listed his slaves valued at total of \$30,000.

In 1833, Sarah and her four sons moved to Green County, Ohio, but stayed a year in Knoxville, Tennessee, en route, because she was ill. She did not live long after their arrival in Ohio. When the Ohio church they joined learned that the Fergusons still owned slaves, who were rented out for profit in North Carolina, a meeting of the Session was called. Ferguson found the actual minutes on file in the Presbyterian Historical Society in Philadelphia.

He was able to read the questions and the family response. The Fergusons agreed that they would free these slaves, but could not do so as long as their work contracts were in effect. They expired in January, a bad time of year for travel, so late spring was the soonest possible time. The family could not make a trip then, so they decided on fall. Though Ferguson has continued to dig for information, he can find no record of these slaves' being freed. Instead, he has clues indicating that they remained slaves.

Much of this information centers around one son, Alexander, who settled in Memphis. There is evidence he took some slaves there and that they remained in bondage until the Civil War. Though this son had become quite prosperous, he died a pauper. He had adopted a young man who became a lawyer, and he trusted this adopted son with management of his property. Yet another genealogical resource enters into this research, as Ferguson found two boxes of material on the lawsuit brought by the Ferguson family in the Federal Archives branch at East Point, Georgia.

A Google search also unearthed some historical information, so the Internet has become a valuable resource, when used with care. He likes the personal stories of his forebears rather than just charts. He finds it more interesting to learn the truths, not the myths, to discover why they moved, to learn about their tragedies, and in the process to learn about history as well.

Hopewell District News

by Tina Brown

The Hopewell Branch met the second Saturday of February as usual but with a really great speaker. The Rev. J.E. "Didi" Wayland told of his stories of being a Presbyterian minister for over 50 years. He told us of the people that he ministered to in the early 1950s right up to today. He made us laugh and sometimes want to cry but along the way we learned of a different view of our recent past. When he asked the group for questions one responded with "I have no questions but we just want you to keep talking." Thank you Didi and come back again.

In March we will meet on the 11th at 10:00 AM. We will meet in the Wayland Sunday School Room with a program on beginning genealogy. Okay, I know so many of you are not beginners but we are starting to get new ones who are. So I ask the newbies and all of us old timers to come out and help teach a few tricks.

Sheila Weaver just announced that the Mecklenburg Heritage Book has been mailed and should be in the hands of those who had them sent straight to their homes. But for those of you who planned to pick theirs up, Sheila will bring all the Hopewell Branch regulars' books to the meeting on the 11th. If you are not a regular but would like to attend the meeting and pick up your book or just to make sure Sheila brings yours, call her at 704-425-4329 or email her at sheilaw@webkorner.com.

In April we will not have a regular meeting, we will meet at the Loch Norman Highland Games. There is a scheduling change for the Games this year due to Easter. The Games will be April 21, 22 & 23, 2006. We will have a tent, and we have the Whisnants to thank for it.

Hope to see you in March and of course everyone needs to come out to the Games in April. Please pray for Jeff & Vickie

New from the Carolina Room

by Jane Johnson

1/24/2006 to 2/22/2006

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

Below are new titles of interest to genealogists in the Robinson-Spangler Carolina Room, Main Library, 310 N. Tryon St., Charlotte, NC.

War Governor of the South, North Carolina's Zeb Vance in the Confederacy

African Americans in Early North Carolina Alleghany County (W. VA) Heritage, Vol. 1

Around Surry County

British Roots of Maryland Families

Bryson, Families and History to the 1800's

Essex County, Virginia Wills & Deeds
*Tracing Ancestors Among the Five Civilized Tribes-
Southeastern Indians Prior to Removal*
Heritage of Lincoln County Tennessee
In Search of Your German Roots
Looking Back at Monroe's (NC) History
Michigan Genealogy Sources & Resources
Mint Hill (NC)
North Carolina Churches: Portraits of Grace
North Carolina's First Ladies 1891-2001
Robeson County in Vintage Postcards
Ships from Scotland to America-1628-1828
*Southern Diaspora-How The Great Migration Of Black
and White Southerners Transformed America*
The Diary of Colonel Landon Carter of Sabin Hall
1752-1778
Thomas Day: African American Furniture
Tutelo, Saponi, Nayhssan, Monacan aka Piedmont
*Catawba Tribe of the Ohio Valley, Virginia, Carolina,
NY, Pennsylvania and Six Nations, Ontario Canada*
12/23/2005 to 1/23/2005

NC Historians Awards

by Kathy Herran

Our state historical society, the North Carolina Society of Historians, offers all of us the opportunity to receive recognition for completed historical and genealogical work through its very diverse awards program.

[Editor's note: The list of awards is too lengthy for this issue of the *Messenger*, so the awards were listed in last month's *Messenger*, and concludes in this issue.]

[continued from February issue]

Rumley History Book Award is for youth and named for the past director of the society Lynn Rumley and her husband Jim Rumley of Cooleemee, North Carolina.

Paul Green Multimedia Award is given for works created in a broad range of media: historical plays, videos, oral histories, poetry, music, quilts, webpages, reenactments, etc. Entrant does not need to be a resident of North Carolina.

President's Award is given and selected by the president of the society based on the recipient's winning entry.

Ethel W. Twiford Award is presented for in-depth historical accounts of the founding growth and development of religious movements, houses of worship, or religious institutions within North Carolina. Writer need not be a resident, but the material must be in book form.

Clark Cox Historical Fiction Award is presented to authors who have published a significant work of fiction based upon actual historical events, places, and/or individuals in North Carolina history.

Paul Jehu Barringer, Jr., Award is a special award presented to those doing an outstanding or unusual work on behalf of North Carolina history, genealogy,

or preservation. Anyone can be nominated for this award as long as their labor and efforts have benefited North Carolina history.

Evelina Davis Award is given to encourage museums housing significant, interesting, and informative historical/genealogical data, artifacts, or collections; and/or are offering public educational programs, tours, demonstrations, etc. with regard to North Carolina history.

McDaniel Lewis Historian of the Year Award may be split into two divisions, one east of highway 220 and one west of highway 220, thus making a historian from the east and one from the west who are ultimately contributing in some manner to preserve some aspect of North Carolina history.

Upcoming Events

March 5, 2006, A Pictorial History of the Confederacy: A Slide Presentation by Dr. John Griffin, Distinguished Professor Emeritus, University of South Carolina. Sunday, March 5, 3:00-4:00pm at the Union West Regional Library in Indian Trail, NC. Dr. Griffin will have a Q & A after the twenty-five minute program. The program is free and hosted by the Dickerson Genealogy & Local History Room of the main branch of the Union County Public Library. Register: 704-283-8184, ext. 224.

March 25, 2006, Daughters of the American Revolution: Completing D. A. R. Application Forms This family history workshop will be led by Virginia Bjorlin and Judith Yandle, Saturday, March 25, 2006 at 10:00a.m. in the Griffin Room of the Union County Public Library, 316 E. Windsor St., Monroe, NC. All are welcome. Registration: 704-283-8184 ext. 224, Dickerson Genealogy & Local History Room. ppoland@union.lib.nc.us www.union.lib.nc.us April 21-23, 2006, the Loch Norman Highland Games, Rural Hill Farm, Huntersville, NC—fun for the entire family! Visit www.lochnorman.org for more information.

Do you know of an upcoming genealogical event? Let me know and I can publish it here. My email is raney1@earthlink.net

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. Our email address is omgs1775@yahoo.com and our website is <http://www.rootsweb.com/>
Joan Raney, Editor

Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society
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OMGS Publications for Sale

<i>Real Estate and Legal Notices from Charlotte, NC Newspapers, 1835-1847</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<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>1800 Census, Mecklenburg County, NC</i>	\$15.00 PPD
<i>1850 Census Abstract, Mecklenburg County, NC (Includes separate index)</i>	\$17.50 PPD
<i>Index to 1850 Census</i>	\$ 5.00
PPD	
<i>OMGS Surname Index, 2000 Edition</i>	\$8.00 PPD
<i>OMGS Quarterlies: 1983-2003</i>	\$21.50 PPD (4/year) \$8.50 PPD (single) \$2.00 PPD (index)
<i>Cabarrus Revolutionary Patriot Roll, by Cabarrus Gen. Soc.</i>	\$19.00 PPD
<i>My Hometown Pineville, by Joe Howard Griffin, Sr.</i>	\$30.00 PPD
<i>The Presbyterian Gathering at Clear Creek, by Russell Martin Kerr</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>The Spirit of a Proud People, by Lois Moore Yandle</i>	\$40.00 PPD
<i>They Married Confederate Officers: The Intimate Story of Anna Morrison, Wife of Stonewall Jackson, and Her Five Sisters, by Kathy N. Herran</i>	\$24.95 PPD

Books by Herman W. Ferguson

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC—Minutes of the Court of common Pleas & Quarter Sessions</i>			
<i>Vol. I, 1780-1800</i>	\$30.00 PPD	<i>Vol. V, 1841 – 1850</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Vol. II, 1801-1820</i>	\$32.50 PPD	<i>Vol. VI, 1851-1860</i>	\$28.50 PPD
<i>Vol. III, 1821-1830</i>	\$27.50 PPD	<i>Vol. VII, 1861-1868</i>	\$28.50 PPD
<i>Vol. IV, 1831 – 1840</i>	\$25.00 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 & 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

Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society
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