

Mecklenburg Messenger



Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 32453
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December 2003

Joan Raney, Editor

Directions to Aldersgate

Fellowship Hall, 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. Instead of turning on Cole Drive, 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.

From the President

by George Sutcliffe

Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society is coming to the end of a successful year. I hope all of you have reserved your seats at our annual Christmas Dinner Party and are looking forward to it as much as I am. We all enjoy seeing old friends and fellow members, many of whom we have not seen for some time, at the dinner. I hope to see you there for the fine food and festivities.

Membership renewals are progressing at a rapid rate, and a number of members have included a holiday gift to the society. Thank

OMGS Meetings

The December 2003 meeting of OMGS will be held on Wednesday, 10 December 2003 at the Fellowship Hall of Aldersgate, 3800 Shamrock Drive, Charlotte. *See first article for directions.* It is our annual **Christmas Party!** Right here in Aldersgate!! I hope all of you are planning to come! In January we will have Joe Griffin, and he will speak to us about the history of Pineville. He will share excerpts from his book, [My Hometown: Pineville](#) and will have some books available for sale. Don't miss these great programs!

The Hopewell Branch will meet on Saturday, 13 December 2003 at 11am, Hopewell Presbyterian Church. It is our annual Christmas dinner. Come and bring a covered dish! In January we will have Joe Brickey back for a return engagement. She is always great, so come out and join us.

you for rejoining our OMGS, and for your generosity.

Best wishes to all for a happy holiday. Let us look forward to an even better new year.

Notes from the November Meeting

by Mary Utting

When it comes to genealogical research, it might be said that Bill Cowan, has the "luck of the Irish." In tracking his Scots-Irish Cowan ancestry, he has encountered some remarkably generous and helpful people.

Cowan related the story of his research at the November meeting of Olde Mecklenburg Genealogical Society. He believed that his forebears immigrated to America from County Down in Ireland, so he sought out a book on the subject that had been recommended.

That's when he met his first benefactor, a nice lady at the Presbyterian Historical Society in Montreat. He called to inquire, and the obliging lady copied all 500 pages and mailed them to him. Sad to say, he did not find his family in this volume.

So he started with those he knew. The Cowans, as so many Scots-Irish did, went first to Pennsylvania before migrating South to Rowan County, N.C. He searched the books at Barnes & Noble and Genealogical Helper and hired a genealogist in Utah to check the LDS records. The genealogist sent packets of material; one included the name of Eric Montgomery in Georgia, who shared his findings. He was directed to a woman in Cowan, Tenn., who had done 30 years of research, but she felt she had done her research and did not really want to unearth the records.

Cowan drove to Tennessee and met the woman, who belonged to his direct line, at her gift shop. He took her to lunch and persuaded her to share her box; it advanced his family research by years. Generally, he has found people willing to share their work, so he, in turn, believes in being generous with anyone who sends him an inquiry.

He did not yet have a family tree when a letter written Dr. J. B. Cowan of the Civil War era led him to Londonderry. He also found records he thought to be in Tennessee were next door in Alabama. One story he found was that of his 6th great-grandfather who was killed by Indians in 1776 in that area. He swapped records with a Katherine Cowan in Iowa and also made friends with a Floridian, John Giacoletti, whose mother was a Cowan.

He and Giacoletti decided to start searching Scotland, to find where their ancestors had lived before going to northern Ireland. He knew his Cowans had all been merchants and thus were a fairly prosperous group. The land near Stirling, Scotland, and in Derry was not profitable for farmers; it was too cold a climate for growing important crops like grain. The two men decided to take a trip to Ireland.

They planned to visit the Public Record Office in Belfast, but first went to Derry to get a feel for the land. When they found minute books of baptism and death records in the cathedral, Giacoletti, who is patient and very organized, stayed to study them while Cowan went

exploring. He found some bell ringers, and an Aubrey Fielding let him look at an old book too fragile to copy, so he made notes.

A Canadian informant, Alex Latta, had advised them to see Joe Fleming at his Derry factory. Fleming said that the family had been in Ireland for 400 years, and he took the two Americans under his wing for three days. His mother was a genealogist, so again the luck persisted. On to Belfast they went only to find it was the Queen's Jubilee and the Public Record Office was closed. This gave them an unexpected two-day holiday. In PRO, researchers have a reader ticket issued and then are brought documents in blue and red binders. Cowan said it meant handling everything with white gloves. Luck continued.

He found a letter by a Sir Robert Cowan of Londonderry, who was an employee of the East India Company. This detailed his origins and his career with the company.

In conclusion, Cowan read an essay by his traveling companion, Giacoletti, that gave a colorful picture of this land that had been their ancestors' home.

Hopewell District News

by Tina Brown

The Hopewell Branch met for our November meeting at Historic Rural Hill Farm. We were a small group but we had a great time and I think everyone enjoyed my tour.

Our December meeting is our annual Christmas lunch. We will meet on December 13th at 11:00 AM at Hopewell Presbyterian Church. This year we will eat in the basement area of the Educational Building. This is the building to the right of the one we usually meet in. Freddie & I will provide a spiral sliced ham as usual and if no one lets me know I will provide the plates, cups & cutlery. Everyone else should bring side dishes and desserts.

In January Joe Brickey will once again be our speaker. We always love having Joe and she is so educational. She will speak on educational opportunities in Genealogy-on-line and in person. She will point out those that cover Scottish research specifically.

After January I have no speakers lined up. I really need ideas for the upcoming meetings.

Please let me know if you can provide us with one or a name and number for me to call.

Hope to see everyone at the Christmas lunch.

News From the Carolina Room

by Jane Johnson

10-19-2003 to 11-19-2003

New exhibits on CMStory.org are:

38th Evac, the entire book about the medical MASH unit from this area during WW II
Known Cemeteries and Burial Records of Mecklenburg County - burial records are being added to the previously listed cemeteries
To view the latest web exhibits on CMStory.org, please go to <http://www.cmstory.org>.

School publications and manuscript collections in our vault, items not cataloged in the Carolina Room, can now be viewed online at <http://www.plcmc.org/libLoc/mainCarolina.asp>.

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.

Palmetto Women: Images from the Winthrop University Archives
Parris Island
Winston-Salem State University
Clemson University
Winthrop University
Winthrop University: Memories and Traditions 1886-1945
Columbia College
South Carolina State University
Raleigh's Reynolds Coliseum
Lancaster County and the Great War
Piedmont Soldiers and Their Families
Rural life in the Low Country of South Carolina
Alamance County
Ashe County Revisited
Beaufort County, North Carolina
Washington, North Carolina
Bertie County, an Eastern Carolina History
Concord and Cabarrus County in Vintage Postcards
The Crystal Coast
Edenton and Chowan County, North Carolina

Shelby and Cleveland County
Cleveland County People and Places
Craven County

The rest of the new titles will be listed in next month's *Messenger*.

Do You have High Blood Pressure and/or High Cholesterol?

Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services and UNC-Charlotte are seeking individuals interested in participating in a research study of seniors with cardiovascular disease who may benefit from nutrition counseling and/or diagnosis-specific meals.

All participants will receive 3 free health screenings and a series of gift certificates. Individuals may also receive nutrition counseling and/or home-delivered meals. Study-related services are available for qualified participants who:

- Are 60 years or older
- Have a diagnosis of High Blood Pressure and/or High Cholesterol
- Live in Mecklenburg County

For more information, please call the Recruitment Specialist at (704) 687-2317.

Upcoming Events

A Scottish Christmas Walk, 6 December 2003, (1st Saturday in December) in Alexandria VA. For more information, email campagna45@aol.com.

Olde Towne Scottish Walk at Portsmouth, VA, 28 December 2003 (last Sunday in December). For more information email scocke@whro.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.

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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>1850 Census Abstract, Mecklenburg County, NC</i>	\$17.50 PPD
<i>OMGS Surname Index, 2000 Edition</i>	\$8.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC Waterways Map (by William T. Skinner, C.S.R.S.)</i>	\$3.50 PPD
<i>Nine Generation Ancestor Chart</i>	\$6.00 PPD (rolled) \$5.00 PPD (folded)
OMGS <i>Quarterlies: 1983-2002</i>	\$21.50 PPD (4/year) \$8.50 PPD (single) \$2.00 PPD (index)

Books by Herman W. Ferguson

<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. I, 1780-1800</i>	\$30.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. II, 1801-1820</i>	\$32.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. III, 1821-1830</i>	\$27.50 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. IV, 1831 - 1840</i>	\$25.00 PPD
<i>Mecklenburg County, NC: Minutes of the Court of CP&Q Sessions, Vol. V, 1841 - 1850</i>	New! \$27.50 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 & 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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