



The Geneline

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF
Amelia Island Genealogical Society
MARCH 2009 - ISSUE 3



Coming Up!
AIGS General Meeting
Tuesday
March 17th
at 7:00 pm

**FROM SHOEBOX
TO SHOWCASE**

PRESENTER
Sabina J. Murray
Accredited Genealogist

This class gives you ideas on how organize your loose materials so that you have a Family History you can be proud to show your family and friends. We'll follow a research map so that we can find the most information without getting lost. And finally we will learn to store the leftovers of our research.

About March's AIGS Presenter Sabina Murray

I was 12 years old I developed a love for genealogy that has never ceased. I have been blessed to have family that has always supported my endeavors. I was married to Edward H. Murray for 37 years. We have four children and fourteen grandchildren. In 1974, I graduated from the University of North Florida and then taught 6th grade for 26 years.

I have worked at the Family History Center for over 30 years. In 1990, I became an Accredited Genealogist. I enjoy giving workshops to genealogical and historical societies. "Deciphering Old Handwriting" is one of my classes that has been put on Web. I have published two books based on papers I abstracted from the Tattnal County Courthouse. Recently, I began writing a genealogy column for the Clinch County News.

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**MESSAGE FROM
THE PRESIDENT
Marie Santry**

Our annual beginning genealogy class is behind us now, and we had a great time helping our new genealogy enthusiasts begin their family history research. The

classes were well attended and feedback has been good. I want to congratulate the “graduates” and encourage them to continue their “education” by attending our monthly programs. We are also planning a “reunion” in April to see how they are coming along with their research. I would also like to express my gratitude to Mike Toomey and Lori Miranda for their assistance as mentors to these genealogy newbies and to Gloria Toomey for her assistance during our Jacksonville Library field trip.

Need Volunteers for Upcoming Orbit Project

In my January message, I mentioned the need for volunteers to extract obituary information from old Nassau County newspapers on microfilm at the Fernandina Beach Library. We started that project several years ago, and made good progress, covering the 1870s through 1952. The project was interrupted last year when the Library’s laptop computer used to store the data was stolen. It has since been replaced and we are in the process of restoring the data onto the new laptop. So, we will restart our “Obit Project” with an organizational meeting on Thursday, April 23rd at 10 am. Please consider volunteering for this project. You work independently, so you can set your own schedule and pace. We really need your help. Please mark your calendars for this project kickoff date. More information will follow.

Help Increase AIGS Membership

Finally, I also mentioned in January that the society would focus this year on increasing membership. We made a good start on that goal with the largest beginning genealogy class in recent years (nineteen new members). But we need to do more, in order to maintain the level of publications and programs we offer our members. We have another excellent program scheduled for March 17th. I challenge every one of you to bring a relative, friend, or neighbor with you to that meeting. If they like what they see, hopefully they will join.

**Wishing you success in your family history search
Marie Santry**

The Foreign Language Frenzy

BY MARIE SANTRY



Sooner or later, as genealogists, we all face the problem. Not all of our ancestors came from English-speaking countries. We find a document written in some foreign language. It may contain some very important information about our ancestor, but we can't read it. So where can we turn for help in translating that document?

You have several options. Your best choice is to take the document to a professional to have the entire document translated. I have done this with relatively short, simple documents like church baptism, marriage, or death records. The cost is usually not exorbitant, especially if you use the services of the language department in a local college or university. I believe I paid \$25 for the translation services of a professor at the University of Central Florida to translate two baptism records written in Spanish in 1813. Of course, that was over 6 years ago and prices may have changed. Even utilizing a professional may not get you a complete translation. Deciphering difficult handwriting or the use of archaic words and terms in century-old documents may leave you with gaps in the translated document.

While I always think it's best to have the entire document translated, you have several other no-cost or low-cost alternatives that should give you the essential information in foreign-language documents. As genealogists, we look for specific infor-

mation from most documents: dates for birth, marriage, and death; names of sons, daughters, mothers, fathers and other similar data. So, it really boils down to looking for KEYWORDS in these foreign documents. If you had a list of the keywords in the language of the document, you should be able to scan the foreign document for those words to learn the basic content of the document.

The FamilySearch website

The Family Search website has exactly what you need. From their website at www.familysearch.org, place your cursor over the LIBRARY tab at the top-center of the page and click on "Education" in the pop-up menu. Then click on "Family History Library Publications" on the "Education and Training" Page. Click on "Word Lists" (your last choice on the page). You will see a table of Titles and Item Numbers for foreign language word lists. These helpful publications contain the rudiments of the language, as well as a list of translated keywords useful to genealogists. Several of them can be downloaded free-of-charge from the website (Czech, Hungarian, Icelandic, Italian, and Norwegian); just click on "PDF" to begin the download to your computer. The remaining ones must be purchased from Family Search at the cost of \$1.25 each: Danish, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Latin, Polish, Portuguese, Spanish, and Swedish. *(continued on pg.4)*

**Here is an example from the Czech word list for keywords
Father and Husband.**

Father: otec, otcové, otce, táta, ta_ka, tatík, tatínek

Husband: man_el, cho_, mu_

Scanning for these keywords in a Czech document may help you identify the name of the father or husband mentioned in the document. I used the Spanish publication on the eleven-page 1810 will of my 4th great-grandfather Juan Bautista Ferreira. I was able to learn from this Spanish document the date of his marriage to Elizabeth Nixon of Charleston, SC; the names and ages of their six living children; the fact that he and Elizabeth were raising their grandchild, the son of their deceased daughter; the existence of multiple homes and businesses owned at the time of his death. I know that there is more information to be learned from this document; so, I will eventually have the entire document translated by a professional. But I've already learned a lot for my \$1.25 investment.

Use another no-cost alternative

Use one or more on-line automatic translators on the Internet. I particularly like the **translator at <http://translation2.paralink.com/>**. This one will translate numerous languages into English (French, Spanish, German, Russian, and Portuguese are in one pull-down menu to the left; numerous other languages are in the "other languages" pull-down menu to the right).

Step One:

You first choose the language from one of the pull-down menus and then type in the foreign word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph into the top (input) window.

Step Two:

But what do you do when you come to a letter in the document that is not on your keyboard (for example, an "o" with two dots above it)? No problem; just click on "keyboard" to bring up an on-screen keyboard, choose the language, and use your mouse to enter individual letters of the words to be translated. Or, use your computer keyboard

for most of the letters; then use the menus of vowels for those letters which have no English equivalent (located below the input window).

Step Three;

After you have entered the words, phrases, or sentences in the top window, click on translate and the translation will appear in the bottom window. Again, you may not get an exact translation for every word, but you should get enough to determine the important content of the document. I've had great success in using this translator for German documents.

Another popular online translator

Another popular online translator is Yahoo's Babel Fish at <http://babelfish.yahoo.com/>, but it does not have the "special" characters required for some languages.

I hope this gives you some encouragement to tackle those foreign-language documents as you find them in your family history research. It's not a hopeless situation and it won't cost you a small fortune to get the information you need from these documents.

**Missouri History Museum launches the
Genealogy and Local History Index**

<http://www.mohistory.org/genealogy>

Includes references to hundreds of thousands of our St. Louis ancestors. In this index, you can search by personal name, business/corporate name, or street address. (The latter search option is designed primarily for those researching the history of their home and its former residents.) You can also sign up for their email list to receive monthly announcements of new sources that are added to the index.



CALENDAR OF GENEALOGY EVENTS

There are a number of interesting genealogical conferences coming up in the next few months.

Saturday, March 14th: Ancestry.com is Coming to Jacksonville

The Southern Genealogists Exchange Society is sponsoring a free seminar from 9 am - 3 pm for those who want to learn more about ancestry.com. Author and lecturer Lisa Parry Arnold will present several informative lectures. Topics include Getting the Most out of Ancestry.com and Ancestry.com Online Family Trees. Lisa is a graduate of Brigham Young University with a degree in Family History. She has been doing client research for years, has authored a book entitled Finding Your Quaker Ancestors, and is the former Director of the Family History Center in Valley Forge, PA. You may have seen her column "The Ancestry Sleuth", which appears regularly in Ancestry Magazine. The seminar will be held at the Riverside Presbyterian Church, 849 Park Street, Jacksonville, FL. To register on-line for the free seminar, go to <http://www.sgesjax.com/> and click on the icon where it says **CLICK HERE FOR SPECIAL ANCESTRY.COM SEMINAR REGISTRATION ANNOUNCEMENT** and fill in the information needed to register.

Saturday, April 25th: Spring Seminar and Genealogy Fair.

The Jacksonville Public Library in cooperation with The Southern Genealogists Exchange Society is presenting a free seminar at the Jacksonville Public Library (downtown Jax) from 10 am - 4 pm. Nationally recognized genealogical lecturer Jana Sloan Broglin will educate and entertain you with Hookers, Crooks and Kooks: Aunt Merle Didn't Run a Boarding House (presented in costume); Hot off the Press: Newspapers over 3 Centuries; When Johnny Comes Marching Home (A Civil War Case Study); and The Key to the Courthouse (techniques to make the most of your courthouse research visit). Ms Broglin is a highly effective speaker and this seminar is a must see. To register, call the Jacksonville Library at (904) 630-2740 and ask for Jenny Mooney at extension 7084.

Wednesday – Saturday, May 13 – 16: National Genealogical Society (NSG) Family History Conference 2009, Raleigh, NC.

This is a national annual four-day conference that is well worth the trip. With 97 speakers presenting over 160 lectures and workshops, you will have trouble choosing which ones to attend. There are also 100s of vendors to visit in your "free time" between lectures. It is truly an education. Topics are categorized in eight "tracks": Skillbuilding, Migration, The Carolinas, Ethnic Research, Working with Records, State Research, Methodology, and Technology. The conference is pricey at \$210 for non-NGS members registering by March 31st or \$245 after March 31st. Then there's the cost of transportation to the conference and a hotel (unless you have friends or family in the area that are willing to put you up). But, on the other hand, you are getting the best speakers with decades of experience to share with you. You can download the registration brochure at http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cs/register_online. The brochure contains the complete schedule with descriptions of each topic; a list of hotels; the registration form; and other pertinent information.

Visit our Website: <http://www.aigensoc.org/>

Find Information about Amelia Island Genealogical Society

Access old and new GENELINES.

A special reminder to our members: GENELINE is your Society's publication.

Each member is encouraged to contribute material to it

All GENELINE articles are indexed by PERSI

Send GENELINE comments & submissions to Frances Bartelt - Francesbartelt@gmail.com

The Amelia Island Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 6005

Fernandina Beach, FL 32035-6005

The Society's Library Collection is housed in the Fernandina Beach Library

The membership packet includes AIGS information and all current year issues of Society's quarterly

The Nassau County Genealogist, and the GENELINE, AIGS's monthly newsletter.

Family history research training is offered through classes, workshops and ongoing programs

Membership dues are \$20.00 per person and \$25.00 per two-person family.

The membership year is January 1st through December 31st

To join, send application form, along with the appropriate fee to:

The Amelia Island Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 6005

Fernandina Beach, FL 32035-6005

To print an membership application or for more information check our web site:

<http://www.aigensoc.org/aigs/meetings.asp/>