



# The Geneline

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF  
**Amelia Island Genealogical Society**  
APRIL 2009 - ISSUE 4

**Coming Up!**  
**AIGS General Meeting**  
**April 21st 7:00 pm**



**Our speaker for April is**  
**Michael A. Toomey, Webmaster and Vice President of AIGS.**

Mike is a self-taught genealogist who has been researching his family for over 25 years. Mike loves technology and tries to keep up with the latest changes in technology that help genealogists with their research. He teaches the session on using the computer in genealogical research each year during the Beginners Course for AIGS, and usually presents one program on technology to the general membership during the year. **This month, he will focus on digitized books and maps and lead us through the process of finding them on various websites, determining their content and value, and how to print or save those that are important to your work.** Many genealogical books have been digitized in the last few years making it possible to access them without physically visiting the repositories where they are housed. This is especially important for those books that have been privately published, are now out of print, or are in countries outside the US. Mike retired in 1998 after 34 years of working as an executive in the chemical industry, first for DuPont and then for UCB, a Belgian company. Mike and his wife Gloria moved to the island in 1998 from Atlanta and soon became involved in AIGS.

**AIGS BOARD  
OF DIRECTORS**

**President**

Marie Santry

**Vice President**

Mike Toomey

**Treasurer**

Ken Sturges

**Secretary**

Lori Miranda

**Membership**

**Chairperson**

Judy Bouchard

**Programs**

Gloria Toomey

**Publicity/  
Historian**

Claire Shepherd

**Member-at-Large**

Bob Keane

**Research**

**Coordinator**

Kathy Nemaric

**Past President**

Bob Loveless

**AIGS Librarian**

Nancy Sturges

**AIGS Website**

Michael A. Toomey

**Nassau County**

**Genealogist**

Jean Mann

**Beginners Program**

Marie Santry

**Geneline Editor**

Frances Bartelt

## Message from AIGS President

### MARIE SANTRY

“We can’t do this alone!” That’s what our program speaker, Sabina Murray, reminded us several times during her presentation at our March general meeting. As genealogists, we often rely on the patience of a courthouse records clerk as we attempt to find our ancestors’ wills and deeds. We also turn to each other for advice and recommendations on finding an elusive great-great-grandmother. Other sources of help come at family reunions which bring opportunities to share stories and information about common ancestors. Some of us have used genealogy on-line message boards, like [www.genforum.com](http://www.genforum.com), to find and contact “new cousins” who are able to provide us with the information we seek. And, of course, we share what we have with them as well.

Sometimes, help comes in an unexpected way. If you read last month’s Geneline, you know that I wrote an article describing various tools for translating foreign language documents. In the article, I mentioned that I would someday get around to translating the lengthy Spanish will of my 4th great grandfather. Well, out of the blue, I received an email from a gentleman in Massachusetts offering to translate the will for me. He had read the Geneline and recognized the name. Although we are not related, he had done research on his family with a collateral line that married into my FERREIRA line. Of course, I immediately sent him a copy of the will and, in turn, he sent me his beautifully written and sourced manuscript on his RICHARD ancestors. I had spent a little time researching that family, but had not gotten very far. I thank him for this information and his wonderful offer.

We have had a lot of help in getting as far as we have in our family history search. So, let’s talk about giving back. The internet has provided us with a lot of genealogical information that we may have otherwise spent years looking for. In most cases, that information did not materialize without the efforts of thousands of volunteers who gathered and formatted that information into the databases we use. The AIGS “Obituary Project” involves extracting death information from the historic newspapers of Fernandina and Nassau County and placing that information on our website for all to use. Please consider joining this project by attending the project meeting on Thursday, April 23rd at 10 am at the Fernandina Library.

We also need your contributions for our publications, the Geneline and the Nassau County Genealogist. Writing about your ancestors or using examples from your own family history research in an article may help someone else overcome a brick wall. You, too, may find help from an unexpected source if you publish your information. Our editors welcome your input. Please send your articles about Nassau County ancestors to Jean Mann ([mann14@ix.net-com.com](mailto:mann14@ix.net-com.com)). Send all other articles to Geneline Editor Frances Bartelt ([frances-bartelt@gmail.com](mailto:frances-bartelt@gmail.com)).

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



**Writer, Producer and Director Godfrey Cheshire as seen in his movie Moving Midway**

## **Moving Midway**

**D**uring a visit to his Raleigh hometown in August 2004, New York film critic, Godfrey Cheshire, discovered his cousin, Charlie Hinton, planned to sell his 34 acres of family land to accommodate a shopping center for the rapidly developing town of Knightdale, NC. At the heart of the matter was a bold scheme to move the 1848 Greek Revival house, Midway Plantation, a National Register of Historic Places structure. Cheshire turned his journalism skills toward documenting this event, first as private record, then as commercial venture. *Moving Midway*, released in 2007 to critical acclaim, was released in February on DVD by First Run Features.

From the beginning of the film it is clear that the clock is ticking for Midway in its original setting. Surrounded by strip shopping and bordered by a major thoroughfare, it's a long way from the wilderness deeded by royal grant to founder John Hinton in 1739. Back in New York City, Cheshire's chance reading of a letter to the editor leads him to Dr. Robert Hinton, Associate Director of Africana Studies at New York University, also a Raleigh native, and a descendant of Midway slaves whose family took on the surname of the plantation owner. Hinton soon became the film's historian and assistant producer, joining Cheshire in exploring the concept of plantation in both black and white Southern culture. Further serendipitous events lead to Brooklyn teacher, Al Hinton, and a reunion with dozens of African American cousins – descendants of a relationship between a widowed common ancestor, Charles Lewis Hinton, and a plantation slave, Selanie.

*(continued on pg 4)*



At the center of the ongoing swirl of family opinion – and an interesting tangent on how unseen ancestors still in residence might react – is the house itself. A year after the announcement of the sale, Mike Blake, third-generation house mover, had the nail-biting job of wrangling 280 tons of building off its foundations and three miles to its new site. A phalanx of building professionals and another year-or-so later, the family returned to the newly-restored home, celebrated with a house warming for many of the film's subjects. Today Midway once again sits in a bucolic clearing accessed by dirt road, removed from the 21st century by a thick screen of trees.

Part family drama, part social history, part architectural make over, this film is made for genealogists. Godfrey Cheshire's digging into the past gives us all something to consider. He explores each road as it opens to him. The viewer is left to decide for himself if the center of family tradition is place, thing, person, concept, or all of the above. Is it unchanging or continually reinventing itself?

**Learn more about the Moving Midway, the film, at [www.movingmidway.com](http://www.movingmidway.com).  
Learn more about historic Midway Plantation at [www.midwayplantation.com](http://www.midwayplantation.com).**

And just for fun, trace the path of Midway Plantation to its new home from Google™ Earth coordinates 35° 47'53.56" N, 78°30' 28.69" W to 35° 49'24.79" N, 78°29' 39.25" W.

### **Margery Huston Freas 1924-2009**

Until last year, Margery and her husband, Arthur, were 'snow birds' to our area. They made many friends as they participated in local activities at the AIGS, Amelia Island Museum of History, Newcomers Clubs, and various lineal organizations such as DAR. Margery also published genealogical articles for several groups. These may be accessed on-line by entering her name on Search. The family requests any memorials be made to the York Co. Heritage Trust, 250 E. Market St., York, PA 17403, or Susan P. Byrnes Health Education Ctr., 315 S. George St., York, PA 17403. Thank you, Margery, for touching our lives!

# JACKSONVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY AND SOUTHERN GENEALOGIST'S EXCHANGE SOCIETY PRESENT: Spring Seminar and Genealogy Fair



**SPEAKER: JANA SLOAN BROGLIN, CG**

**SATURDAY, APRIL 25 @ 9:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M.  
MAIN LIBRARY • 303 N. LAURA STREET**

- \* This is a free event, open to all. Call 630-2409 to register.
- \* Genealogy Fair begins at 9:00 a.m. in the Conference Center Gallery.
- \* Lectures begin at 10:00 a.m. in the Auditorium.

## LECTURE TOPICS:

**Hookers, Crooks and Kooks  
or Aunt Merle Didn't Run  
a Boarding House**

A light hearted look at searching for the black sheep in the family. Presented in costume.

**"Hot Off the Press":**

Examine the changes in the reporting of information in the newspapers over three centuries.

**"When Johnny Comes Marching Home":**

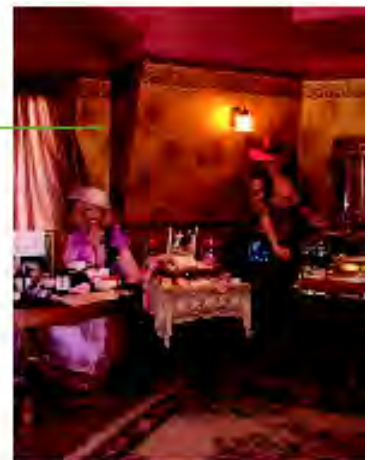
A case study of the four Barton sons of Fulton County, Ohio. Learn the types of records found for this military family in the Civil War.

**The Key to the Courthouse:**

Do you want the magic key? The key to the courthouse? The way to unlock all the records found within? Learn techniques to make the most of your courthouse visit.

**Genealogy Fair Exhibitors include:**

Jacksonville Public Library, Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society, Jacksonville Historical Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Children of the American Revolution, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Colonial Dames, Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, Mandarin Historical Society & Museum, and many, many more...



Start Here. Go Anywhere.

[japlpubliclibrary.org](http://japlpubliclibrary.org)

**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](mailto: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/>