



The Geneline

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF

Amelia Island Genealogical Society

April 2010 - ISSUE 4

COMING UP!

AIGS General Meeting

Tuesday-April 20, 2010 at 7:00 PM

HELD: FERNANDINA BEACH POLICE DEPT.

COMMUNITY ROOM

Speaker: Terrell Thompson

**Topic: A Nassau County Pioneer
Spicer Christopher**

Terrell's talk will be the story of Spicer Christopher, one of his ancestors, who lived on Talbot Island and had plantations in Nassau County in the late 1700's and early 1800's. Spicer's presentation begins with a biography written by Jerry Braddock, another descendent. Spicer's story includes relationships to many of the other early families in Nassau County. Terrell has documented Spicer's history and will tell us several short stories of his life on Talbot Island and in Nassau County and he will show copies of the baptism records of his children, his will, five different Spanish Land Grants, and several maps of his plantations in this county including Old Township on the Saint Mary's River.

About Terrell Thompson

Our speaker for the April 20, 2010 meeting of the Amelia Island Genealogical Society is Terrell Thompson, a member of The Southern Genealogist's Exchange Society in Jacksonville. Terrell became interested in genealogy when he retired after 50 years in the trucking industry and then read a book called "History of the Snowball Family" published by his great-aunt. She documented his family back to the early 1800's in Nassau County. Terrell discovered that she had minimal information about Terrell's 6th great-grandfather and decided he would try to find more information and documentation. After two years of searching, he found that he was a Spanish soldier stationed on Talbot Island in 1795 named Francisco Diaz Teran. Francisco and his family's life is interwoven with that of Spicer Christopher. Terrell has his family tree called "Florida First Coast Pioneer Families" on Ancestry.com. It focuses on the pioneer families who settled and intermarried in Nassau County and on Talbot Island during the second Spanish period from 1783 to 1820.



**Historic Map
of Florida - 1823**

source:

www.worldmapsonline.com

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

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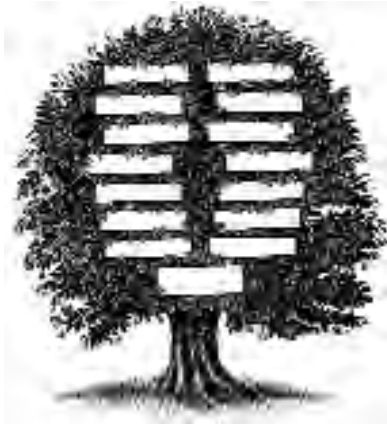
A Family History Library - Source of Valuable Information

If you didn't join us for our last meeting, you missed another good program. Our own Jean Mann told us of the techniques she used to "track down" many living descendants of Domingo Fernandez and his wife Maria Mattair, a true first-family of Fernandina. Jean's program included genealogy, mystery, and intrigue as she shared the history of the Fernandez Reserve (the small fence-enclosed cemetery that lies between St. Michael's Catholic Church and St. Michael's Academy in Fernandina) and the mystery of just who owns that small plot of land.

The program for our next meeting, April 20th, also involves some local history and genealogy research as Terrell Thompson shares the story of Spicer Christopher who owned plantations in Nassau County, as well as Talbot Island.

With the genealogy beginner's class over, I have finally gotten back to doing some personal genealogy research. I was prodded into reviewing my HAILIG ancestors when a distant WEBSTER cousin wrote to AIGS asking for information. I recognized the Webster name - my mother had mentioned the family. I immediately made contact and shared a picture of our Great Grandfather Anton Hailig, who I knew had been a railroad engineer at the Jacksonville Terminal Company when he died in 1922. The picture shows Anton in the cab of his train engine with his crew around him. My Webster cousin sent that picture on to expert railroad historians who identified the train (Engine #2, dated the photo to pre-1902, shared the history of the engine and asked permission to publish the picture on the cover of their next historical journal.)

I never would have thought to send the picture to the "experts", but I am so glad that my new-found cousin did that. It helped place my ancestor in Jacksonville during the period from 1898-1902, as I have been unable to locate him in census records in 1900. *(Continued on pg. 3)*



So, I'm back on the Hailig trail, setting research goals for that ancestor family. I'm also making a plan to continue my Santry research. Once again, I will review everything I have on those two families. I will outline the missing pieces and formulate steps that I will take to find the missing information.

I will do as much as I can at home:

- 1) Check all of the database sites (ancestry, familysearch, genealogybank, footnote, etc) to see if something new pops up
- 2) Search the Family History Library Catalog on familysearch.org for records on microfilm from the locations in which these families lived and order the microfilm through a local Family History Center.

If I have to make a trip to conduct my research, I will check all sources local to that area BEFORE I go, getting operating times for courthouses, churches, libraries, historical and genealogical societies and asking about the collections kept by each group. By the time I leave for a research trip, I will be ready to gather the most information in the shortest amount of time.

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

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

**There are several projects that
AIGS has taken on for
2010.**

The First Project:

Newspaper Obit Project, is on-going. AIGS is extracting information from each obituary, legal notice, and news item published in Fernandina and Nassau County Newspapers on microfilm at the Fernandina Branch of the Nassau County Library System. Newspapers date from the 1870s to the present.

We have extracted through the year 1954, but there is much yet to be done. We need many more volunteers to help with this project. We will train you in the extraction, data entry, or checking required. You work on your own schedule. *Please call or email Mike Toomey at (904) 491-3275, matoomey@comcast.net to volunteer.*

Some of you may remember the Bosque Bello Cemetery Tour and the St. Peter's Cemetery Tour produced by AIGS in 2004 and 2005. After much request by the public, AIGS is planning to produce a Bosque Bello Cemetery Tour II in the Fall of this year.

**We also need volunteers
in the following areas:**

Researchers, Publicity, Program Development, Sponsor/Advertiser Solicitation, Tour Guides (Docents), First-Person Costumed Presenters and Logistics Coordinator.

Please call or email Marie Santry at 904-321-3460 or mcsantry@comcast.net to volunteer.

Spring Clean Your Research

BY MAUREEN TAYLOR

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Source: Weekly Discovery - Free newsletter



If you've been inspired to dive back into family history by the television series *Who Do You Think You Are*, before you step forward, take one step back. You'll need to assess what you've already accomplished before you add more material to your family tree.

Whether you're buried in paper or digital research files, it's time to organize it. If you're a new genealogist, then you'll first start collecting papers and information from family members then start looking at what you already have. If you don't, you run the risk of overlooking an important find or duplicating your efforts.

File It!

First on the list is to file all those mounds of paper. Whether you're an online researcher or one that likes paper, sooner or later the paper piles will build up. A simple trick is to use color to guide the way. Choose a different color file for each branch of the family. A wide variety of colors and shades are available at online office supply stores. If you prefer notebooks, then pick a color for each of the four grandparents then use dividers. In either case, invest in some inert polyester sleeves to protect important documents by inserting one per sleeve.

All that Paper Adding up to Mountains?

Try scanning each document and adding those digital files to your online family tree photo album. Name your files so that you can find them later—surname and type of record or full name of the person, such as "Smith 1900 census" or "John Smith 1691" The last four numbers are the date of birth. Then organize those digital images on your computer into surname files.

A good rule of organization is to only touch a document once, that means pick it up, scan it, put it in a sleeve and file it. If your pile is overwhelming, set yourself a manageable goal of filing a limited number of items per day or week.

(continued on pg. 5)

List It!



There is nothing like a checklist. It has the ability to direct research, keep you on task and serve as a reminder of your research goals. It also lets you view your research success. Each time you check something off, it's one less thing on the to-do list. The more specific the inventory of tasks the more useful it is. Instead of saying "Find John Smith's birth record" and nothing more, use that as a heading with sub-tasks underneath. In order to compile that register of tasks you'll need to think about how to specifically look for that missing record then add those items to your list such as "search Plymouth (Massachusetts) vital records in print and online (add a note about where they are located)." Genealogical software often includes a research plan that you can use to track what you've done and what's still outstanding.

Share it!

A friend recently started researching his family. Back in the paper based research days, that meant filling in the blanks on a paper pedigree chart, but now it's so much easier. This friend immediately used an online service and connected with a distant cousin on another continent. Now they are working together to find new material.

Want to duplicate their success? Sign up for an Ancestry family tree and start adding your details to it. The web is a dynamic genealogical research environment. Suddenly you'll see these "shaky" leafs appear next to a person's name. Each one of those means that a possible record for that person has been found in the Ancestry database. You'll want to look at each suggestion to see if it fits what you know about that person. You can then attach that document to your person, ignore it or look at it later on.



As you start finding possible matches, you'll see links for family stories or trees created by other researchers. In addition to building a family tree, you'll be creating a network of genealogists all working on the same problem ancestors. However, if you find that no one else is researching your surnames then your family tree will be there for the next genealogist in your family to find. All these connections really do add up to research success.

With a record breaking number of documents online and a staggering number of genealogists searching for their family, odds are pretty good that you'll be able to locate a bit of information you didn't already know. Cleaning up your files and research notes is the first step to new discoveries. All it takes is a little time to organize. It's well worth the effort.

MAUREEN TAYLOR is the author of *Preserving Your Family Photographs* (Picture Perfect Press, 2010) and *Fashionable Folks: Hairstyles 1840-1900* (Picture Perfect Press, 2009). Both are available on Amazon.com. Sign up for Maureen Taylor's free e-newsletter at

www.photodetective.com.

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

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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/>