Ancient City Bulletin

Monthly Newsletter of the St. Augustine Genealogical Society

September 2016

Contents

A Note from New England

The Presidents Line

This is a short note from your President, who remains on Cape Cod for the summer and early fall. Unfortunately, I will miss the Oct.8th meeting due to a wedding in Boston on Oct. 9th (my wife's side). Then, I will miss the Nov. 12th meeting because our own daughter Laurie is getting married in Bermuda on that date – I guess I should make an appearance. Therefore, my first return to a General Meeting will be on Dec. 10th, which corresponds with our Christmas Party. This is not the way I anticipated how my return to St. Augustine would unfold, but these are "one-off" events that are unavoidable.

I continue to participate with the Board via Skype, which has been a most effective tool. We are working on ideas to tweak our meetings a little to make them more useful while everyone is together, and Judy Parrino has a number of new speakers lined up this fall on into 2017.

I hope your researching continues to be productive. Remember that we on the Board are all available to help you take the next steps; we are only an email away. Here are our new SAGS email addresses. So, if you want to send me a note on the Society, just send it to SAGS.Prezident@yahoo.com.

If you have a suggestion for future topics and/or speakers, contact Judy Parrino at SAGS.Programs@yahoo.com. If you have a question about your membership, dues or have other suggestions, contact Sue DiDomenico at SAGS.Members@yahoo.com. The same holds true for Pat Tanner at SAGS.Secretary@yahoo.com, and Neda Makin at SAGS.Treazurer@yahoo.com, Denise Olson at SAGS.Publications@yahoo.com, and Bernie Patruno at SAGS.Communications@yahoo.com. Dave Flemings is available at SAGS.PaztPrez@yahoo.com; Library Liaison Joan Lucian is at jlucian@comcast.net.

I look forward to seeing you all in December when I return.

Writing for the Future

Editoral Notes

 Those of us who have photographs, letters, journals and other writings from our ancestors are blessed with a view of their worlds that no amount of vital records can provide. These are precious treasures which we spend a lot of time, money and effort to preserve. But, what are we doing to document and preserve a personal record of our lives for those who come after us?

In today's digital world we have some amazing tools for capturing photographs, conversations and video clips, giving us the ability to document – and share – all kinds of special moments.

The joys of digital media are tempered with some concerns. At the top of that list is how quickly things change. Anyone who's had a desktop computer for more than a couple of years knows the frustration of documents that can no longer be opened because the software application that created that document no longer exists. Yes, this is a concern, but it's a manageable one.

Sample entry in DayOne journaling app.

Data formats for the written word have come and gone, but one has been around since the very beginning of the digital age – plain text. Unfortunately, it

is just that – plain. There are no font changes, no bold or underline, no colors. It's just alpha, numeric and special characters.

Next up the chain of data formats is something relatively new – markdown. It's plain text with simple codes, created using plain text characters, to represent formatting commands. When viewed in its "plain" state, it's quite readable, but it's also very easy to develop programs that can process those simple codes and reformat the document into something very attractive. And, as technology changes, the original document is still quite readable and new conversion programs can be quickly created to jazz it up.

Although you won't yet find markdown included as a "Save as" or "Export" option on most mainstream word processing applications, it's getting a lot of attention from journaling apps and writing platforms. For example, the Day One app [Mac – $9.99, iOS – $4.99] uses markdown as its standard format and offers export options to PDF and plain text. Writing platforms such as Scrivener and Ulysses support markdown as do many blog platforms.

The data format getting the most attention these days is HyperText Markup Language (HTML). This is the format of the Web and is now also the format of ebooks. Like markdown, it is plain text with codes – known as tags. Unlike markdown it's not so simple. For a simple ebook novel that's all text, the HTML code should be very readable in its raw form. A web page full of graphics, charts and links is quite a different story. Fortunately for us, computers don't have a problem reading and processing the code to present us with a beautiful visual experience. And, because HTML is an industry standard format, it will travel from app to app – even platform to platform – with minimal effort.

How does all this impact the family historian?

One reason geneablogging gets so much attention is its longevity. Not only are blogs built with HTML, they have an organizational standard that means they are very search-engine friendly (which does a great job of attracting research cousins) and can be moved from one blog platform to another. There are services to convert your blog posts into ebooks and even print books. Most blog

platforms offer backup and export options so you can maintain multiple copies – both online and offline. A growing number of journaling and text-editing apps have publish to blog features – giving you an extra layer of archival protection.

I've been blogging for almost 15 years. During that time I've documented a lot of family history – one story at a time. While the thought of sitting down and writing a "family history" has always been quite intimidating, it didn't take long to blog enough stories for a book. Is it a complete family history? Not even close. But it doesn't have to be. Using simple tools, I was able to pull out and reorganize the blog stories I wanted into a simple ebook to share with my family. And, as the stories grow, so does the ebook. It's all digital so it's very easy to update and redistribute.

Don't let technology concerns keep you from documenting your family history. Start with a blog on a reputable platform. You can get started with WordPress.com in a matter of minutes – and at no cost. Platforms like Yahoo's Tumblr offer free and easy-to-use blogging, but are not their company's main priority. Take advantage of the growing number of desktop blog editors which make it easy to keep a "desktop copy" of each article along with the online published version. An editor that supports markdown also helps future-proof your stories.

Experiment with some of the new journaling apps – especially those that include companion mobile apps. The mobile journal apps take advantage

A Tragic Tale in Old Savannah

FAMILY TALES

A TRAGIC TALE IN OLD SAVANNAH

September 6, 2015 · Denise Olson · Image · Leave a comment · Edit

This is a photo of William James Barrett, Jr., Elizabeth Carswell Barrett, his wife, and William Henry Barrett. It was taken at Wilson's Studio on Bull Street in Savannah, Georgia about 1897 – probably to celebrate Elizabeth and William's wedding. William James' life is full of tragedy. He was only two years old when his...

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of your device's camera and location services, giving you the ability to easily include photos in your entry, automatically date stamp and even geo tag each one if you wish. Not only is a journal more appropriate for your private thoughts, but often these apps also offer features to publish selected entries to your blog or as a PDF file – saving you time and effort.

Today's technology make it easy to capture and record our family's precious moments in ways that will insure they are accessible for many generations to come. Isn't it time you get started?

The Rymer Family Reunion 2011 by Alicia Bramlett. Found on Flickr.

Not every story is written. This delightful family tree was found on Flickr. Each little graphic represents a fond memory - with just enough info to spark questions. I'm guessing the youngsters attending this reunion couldn't wait to hear the rest of those stories . . .

PDF for Research and Publishing

Research Toolbox

One of the most useful digital tools a genealogist/family historian can have is PDF creation software. PDF (portable document format) was created by Adobe to allow the sharing of digital documents regardless of the software used to create them. As long as a user has a PDF reader application installed, she can read any PDF document – with all the formatting and design elements intact. Adobe offers their PDF reader (Adobe Reader) free for Windows, Mac, and Linux desktops along with a number of mobile devices. Their PDF creation software, however, will cost a pretty penny.

Adobe released the PDF standard to the open source community, making it even more accessible to developers who have started to include it in their own software. Mac users can "print" any document to a PDF file as well as export to PDF from many applications. OpenOffice.org includes an export to PDF option in each of the suite's applications. Take a look at your word processing, desktop publishing or image editing software to see if it includes the ability to export to PDF. If not, Windows users can choose from a number of free apps (PrimoPDF and CutePDF, for example) to create simple PDF publications from apps that don't offer the capability.

Creating a PDF document is just part of the effort. You will likely find situations where you need to combine two PDF files into one or pull out several pages from an existing PDF document. And, then there's the question of converting the PDF document back to a format that can be edited. There are some affordable tools available to help with these tasks. On the Windows side, there is PDF Create 7 ($49.99) from Nuance. If that name rings a bell, it's because they are the people who also bring us PaperPort, OmniPage and Dragon Dictation. PDF Create 7 will provide both creation and manipulation tools. Nuance also offers a free reader application that can fill in and save forms (Adobe Reader can't) and convert PDFs to editable text while using less disk space than Adobe's

reader. Another company, Foxit, offers a wide range of affordable PDF products for both Windows and Android users.

Mac users will find PDFpen ($59.95 standard/$99.95 pro) quite handy. The standard version supports merging and splitting documents, filling in forms and saving them, adding notes and even performing Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on scanned documents. The pro version adds the ability to build your own PDF forms. They recently released PDFpen for the iPad ($9.99) which can sync with the desktop version via iCloud.

With the Portable Document Format becoming a universal standard for distributing publications of all kinds, offering your family history projects as PDF files ensures they can be viewed with all your format and design elements intact. That also includes most of the e-reader devices - like the Kindle Reader - on the market today. As we all know, a digital document has global reach and can be found by any search engine. Distributing it using an easily viewed format only expands its reach. Why wouldn't you want to take advantage of these tools?

If you're not receiving Research Notes in your inbox every Monday morning, let us know right away and we'll fix it.
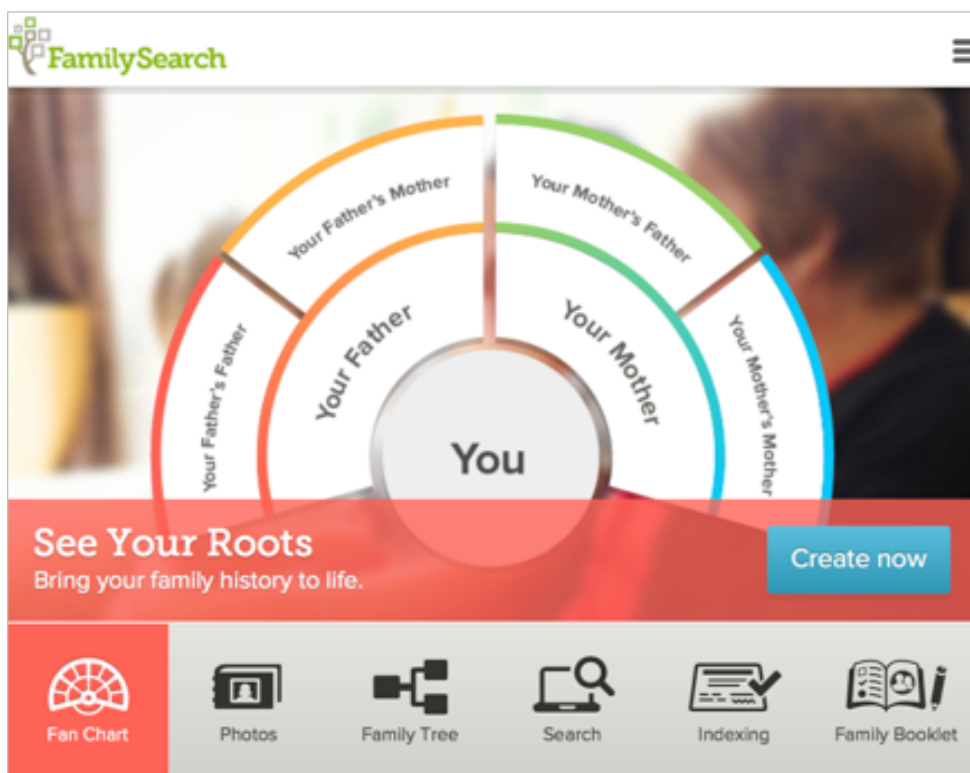
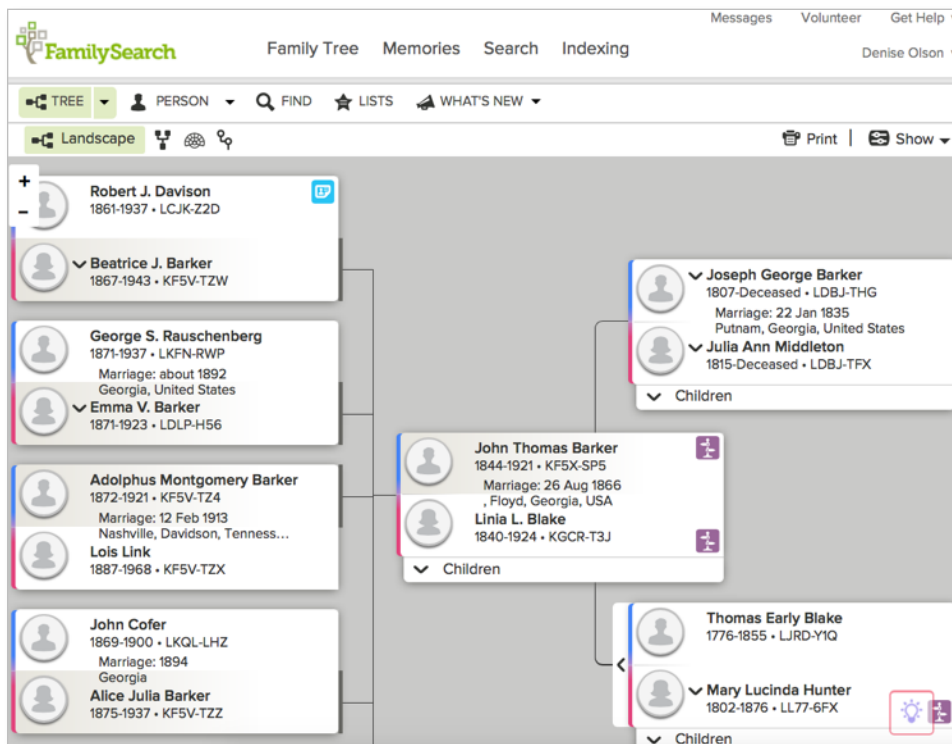Drop us a note at sags.publications@yahoo.com.

Family Search

In the Archives

FamilySearch (https://familysearch.org) is the online genealogical archive and family tree sponsored by the Church of Latter-Day Saints. They recently celebrated 120 years of support to the genealogical community.

What started as a charge to begin gathering its first published family histories and historical records from around the world to help its members (predominantly Mormon immigrants at the time) with their genealogical research, today, has morphed into the free public family history mega-site, FamilySearch.org. It entertains millions of patrons a month seeking to find, connect, preserve, or share their ancestral roots and memories, and publishes hundreds of millions of new historic records online each year from archives around the world.

Today, the FamilySearch website has more than 1billion historic documents availble online and hosts more than 250,000 visitors each day. Even better, access to all those records is free.

The Search feature includes online records, the FamilySearch catalog (for items that haven't been digitized yet) along with more than 200,000 digitized genealogy and family history publications from the archives of some of the most important family history libraries in the world.

Records aren't the only thing you'll find at FamilySearch. There's the online Family Tree where you can add your ancestors and easily make connections to others researching your families. You will also find an online Help Center (https://familysearch.org/ask/), Learning Center (https://familysearch.org/learningcenter/home.html) and a comprehensive Research Wiki (https://familysearch.org/wiki/en). It doesn't matter if you are a beginner or a seasoned veteran, FamilySearch has what you need. You'll find video lessons, guides, resource descriptions and much more.

The Society Page

The September meeting will be held on Saturday, September 11th, beginning at 10:30am, at the Southeast Branch Library, 6670 US 1 South. Our speaker is Jack Butler presenting *DNA 101 - Checking Out the Genes in Genealogy*. Learn how to incorporate DNA data as part of your research.

Research Notes

The 2017 North Florida Genealogical Conference is scheduled for March 4, 2017. This one-day conference offers a broad range of presentations that can help your research effort. But that's not all! The conference gives you opportunities to meet other area genealogists and share ideas. The Help Desk returns, offering one-on-one support to anyone who is interested. A delicious box lunch is included in the $25 registration fee and there will be raffles for all kinds of genealogical goodies. Mark your calendar now!

SCGS isn't the only source for useful webinars. Check out the online calendar of GeneaWebinars, Hangouts and other online events at GeneaWebinars.com.

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Gentility is what's left over from rich ancestors after the money is gone.

John Ciardi

Society Services

The Research Help Desk supports our members with research assistance either at meetings or via email. Members can complete a research help request form at any meeting or email your request to Sue Gill at suecarl@aol.com. The Research Committee will respond with suggestions on search options and sources.

Members with research experience are encouraged to volunteer on the Research Committee.

There are a number of ways SAGS members can connect online. These include:

- SAGS Online - The society's public web site and records archive.

- SAGS Facebook Group - This is a public group and once you join, you can set it to notify you when items are posted to the group. It's a great place to share useful research resources, ask questions or share a success story.

- **SAGS Mailing List** - The mailing list is used to keep members informed on upcoming meetings, announcement and other activities. To join, send an email message to SAGS-L-request@rootsweb.com with the word **subscribe** in the subject line and in the message body. You will receive a return message asking you to confirm your subscription. Follow the link included in the message. Once you confirm you will receive a welcome message providing instructions for using it.

- SAGS Publications Library - This online library is open 24/7. Here you will find current and past issues of the Ancient City Bulletin along with other society publications.

- SAGS Writers Group - This blog supports our writers group.

Publishing Guidelines

We accept articles related to genealogy, family history and research methodology from our members for publication in the Ancient City Bulletin.

Submissions should be sent as an electronic file in either rich text format (.rtf) or MS Word (.docx) format via email to sags.publications@gmail.com. Please keep formatting to a minimum as the article will need to be styled to match the Bulletin's design. The article title should be on a separate line at the top of the page with the author's name listed immediately below. Photos included as part of the article are welcome, but please also send a copy of each photo as a separate file. Captions are always welcome and please include the photographer's name for proper credit. Including a list of sources is also encouraged.

Articles will be edited for grammar and style and any edits will be reviewed with the author prior to publication.

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