



# Connections

The Newsletter of GENCOM, The Computer Genealogy Group      Editor: Patricia Minton Bettis

## NO AUGUST MEETING

First meeting of the new season

## September 28

### Reviewing the July 13 Meeting with John Andrew Prime

“ John Prime is an outstanding source of information and a delightful personality. I hope we can get him to come back with another interesting subject this next year.”

*This was the response from one of our members after the July meeting,*

I concur— and I am so grateful to John for presenting the most educational and amusing program. —For taking the time to make copies for each of us— Obits from the Times from 1873, of each decade till the present. They make the changes in customs and usage most apparent.

John strongly suggests that we write our own obituary... to ensure that the exact information we want will be published.. We need to remember how often the genealogical information in the obit is preserved by the family for generations to come. Many of us began our genealogical quest with a yellowed clipping from an old newspaper, using it as the basis of our research! So it is most important that the facts are presented.



John Andrew Prime



## Oakland Cemetery: Shreveport's Oldest Landmark

### PUBLIC CEMETERY BURIALS ONLINE FOR FREE

In what could be a first for a major city, Shreveport has almost completed putting burials in its public cemeteries online.

By John Andrew Prime • [jprime@gannett.com](mailto:jprime@gannett.com) • July 19, 2008

As the final stage of a project that began more than two years ago and employed local students to enter data from city sexton records, the project offers visitors to Shreveport's Web site a chance to look people up by name and get data on their burials, including locations. Visitors can download detailed maps of the cemeteries.

"I don't know of any cities that have their cemetery records online, though there is a lot of burial data you can get online," said Shelly Ragle Stone, executive director of Shreveport Public Assembly and Recreation, caretaker of the city cemeteries.

The data have been online for a few weeks. And the city doesn't have a counter on subpages to gauge traffic, just on its umbrella page. So Stone hopes people who use the site will share their impressions and get the word out.

"We're excited to have this information up for people who are looking for relatives, for people doing genealogy, interested in history or doing any of those things," she said. "Now people can come to town and have a map of the cemetery with them so they're not looking wildly. Now they can pinpoint where their family is."

Students started entering data from city sexton records in summer 2006, and the work continues today.

"We have 17,686 graves listed in our database," said Glenda Fitzgerald, also with SPAR. "We have about 300 more to enter." In all, there should be around 18,000 entries, though many more burials are likely unmarked.

The site offers burials at three of the four cemeteries the city maintains. These are Oakland, the city's oldest

cemetery, where burials date from the 1840s; Greenwood Cemetery, which started burials in the 1890s; and Jewella Cemetery, a formerly private cemetery on Greenwood Road the city took over in the early 1960s. The fourth cemetery maintained by the city is Star Cemetery, between Greenwood Road and Interstate 20 east of the Greenwood Road exit. The city's first and oldest cemetery started by and for its black citizens in the 1880s and largely inactive after the mid-1950s has no existing burial database or plat map from which data could be drawn.

"We have very little data" on Star, Fitzgerald said. "The original plan was to have all cemeteries walked off to record headstone information. We completed Oakland and Greenwood but have not had the manpower to complete Jewella or Star." A fire at a previous Shreveport city hall in 1905 destroyed many records, and saving data in the 1800s was hit or miss for the most part.

The city's new Web page "is excellent," Shreveport historian and author Eric Brock said. "I've looked over it. It has all the records that SPAR has, which means, as far as Oakland goes, there are some graves that predate what records the city has. But it has all of Greenwood and most of Jewella. It's an excellent resource and something we've needed for a long time."

The names of many people, such as hundreds who died in an 1873 Yellow Fever epidemic that ravaged Shreveport and were mostly buried in a mass grave at Oakland, are preserved in microfilmed editions of The Times but have never been published. An index of The Times that covered the period 1872-99 lists many deaths in the city but not all. "We're going to expand the site," Stone said. "Hopefully, at some point, we will be able to have it where people can click to see significant burials."

Oakland is home to the plots of many mayors and soldiers, while Greenwood also has burials of former mayors, artists, musicians, soldiers and at least one former Louisiana governor. "We've walked every cemetery trying to make this as accurate as we can," Stone said.

Data from many of the four city cemeteries' existing headstones have been entered into a national database, Findagrave, which to date has amassed 24 million burial entries, mostly due to the efforts of more than 350,000 volunteers across the world. Many of the entries also have photos of the deceased or their headstones.

FindaGrave lists many, but not all, burials from the three Shreveport city cemeteries, as well as Star and 121 others from Caddo Parish. It has entries from 79 cemeteries in Bossier Parish, 103 in DeSoto Parish and 120 from Webster Parish.

Additionally, the private Oakland Cemetery Preservation Society has just launched its Web site. "Now, in addition to physical visitors, the cemetery can host virtual visitors," said Hines Vaughan, the group's president.

The site was developed for the nonprofit by James Bobbitt, with bandwidth provided by Shreveport Networks. The Web site oaklandcemeteryla.org includes before and after photos of the recent gate restoration project undertaken by the City of Shreveport, which is charged with the maintenance of Oakland, as well as a tour of burial sites of some of the city's notables.

One of the people helping to augment the city cemetery Web site is historian and cartographer Gary D. Joiner, who has students helping him precisely map out Oakland. He also has helped with surveys in Star and Greenwood, where he hopes to use ground-probing radar to locate pauper and other lost graves. Helping with the effort is Dr. Elizabeth Guin, of Northwestern State University, he said. The city Web site "is helpful, there's no doubt about that," Joiner said. "We're compiling a GIS (Geographic Information System) of Oakland, with about 30 columns of data for each burial, and a GPS (geographic positioning via satellite) of every tombstone. We're also photographing the stones, but we're not deploying them. That's for assessment."



*Carolyn's Corner*  
*Carolyn's Corner*

**I hope you all are having a very good summer.**

**This month I am going to share some shortcuts and computer terms.**

### **The Windows Key**

The WINDOWS key is located between the between Ctrl and Alt key and has the Windows logo on it. This key automatically activates the Windows Start menu! Try it now.

1. Press the Windows key. The Start menu appears.
2. Use your arrow keys to move up and down the Start menu until you've highlighted the choice you want and then press Enter.

If you use this key, you can get to ANY program or recently saved document on your computer, **WITHOUT MOVING YOUR HANDS FROM THE KEYBOARD.**

### **Wi-Fi**

When someone is browsing the WEB in a coffee shop, accessing a road map on their cell phone or checking email using a blackberry they are using Wi-Fi. Wi-Fi is short for wireless fidelity technology. It allows you to connect to the internet without plugging into ports or wall sockets.

There are approximately 100,000 U.S. locations known as "Hotspots". They are usually located in libraries, hotels, coffee houses, restaurants or airports. "Hotspots" offer free Wi-Fi.

Go to <http://wififreespot.com>

or <http://ilovefreewifi.com> to find out where you can access the internet FREE.

You may also purchase a wireless router for your home computer. The router allows two or more computers in your home to surf the net at the same time. The average price is about \$50.00. In our house Bob's computer in the bedroom and my computer in the opposite end of the house. We can both be on the Internet at the same time.

### **Planning a Trip?**

#### **Get the Directions and Weather**

This site can help you with your planning. You'll get driving directions and weather forecasts. There's also a map.

This can also help you get from one address to another in your hometown.  
<http://trippish.com/>

### **Dark Text that you cannot read**

**If you** visit a web site or receive an email and it has dark text on a dark background there is an easy way to make them readable. Just hit **CTRL A** All the text on the will be selected (highlighted). The lection color is normally blue with white text which is much easier to read. This works with email in Windows Mail and Outlook Express also.

*Carolyn*





**GENFEST 2007**

**GENFEST 2008**

*Date to be announced!*

GENFEST is our signature event each October. We ask everyone to think of genealogically relevant topics to address, or items to display that we can share at GENFEST.. Invite your friends to come and spend the day with us and see for themselves what Computer Aided Genealogy has to offer.

**Find A Grave** is a [website](#) allowing its users to access, \ maintain and expand an online [database](#), currently totaling over 22 million [burial](#) records.



(Editors Note: John Prime is very active in this group. He has placed online all the Civil War Burials and many others. He feels it is a remarkable source of information And encourages us all to access the site and search for our family burials)

### Content and features

The site's [FAQ](#) states that the site strives for a comprehensive listing of the burial places of everyone in the world.<sup>[3]</sup> The website contains listings of cemeteries and graves from all around the world. American cemeteries are organized by state and county, and many cemetery records contain [Google Maps](#) (with [GPS](#) coordinates supplied by contributors and the [U.S. Geological Survey](#)) and photographs of the cemeteries. Individual grave records contain some or all of the following data fields: dates and places of birth and death, biographical information, cemetery and plot information, photographs (grave marker, the individual, etc.), and contributor information. The vast majority of records have been contributed by dedicated site contributors, field volunteers or family members and friends of the deceased.

Members are allowed to place on-line [memorials](#) for relatives and friends. There is no cost for this service and users receive editing privileges over the memorials. Members may also request photos of graves which volunteers are notified by Find A Grave and often can fulfill.

## Find A Grave community

Find A Grave counts an increasing number of members, who over the years of the site's existence have formed a community. The Find A Grave Forums is a [message board](#) for contributors to the main website and many persons who are interested in [genealogy](#) or cemeteries. Many of the members engage in a hobby that has been referred to by cognoscenti as "Tombstone Tourism"<sup>[*citation needed*]</sup> (the practice of visiting cemeteries purely for personal enjoyment) and which the people of the site often refer to as "graving". Sections of the forum cover a variety of posts by subject:

- Cemeteries and Genealogy, for discussions of cemeteries and [burial](#) data.
- Finding Famous Graves, for discussing aspects of visiting and researching the graves of notable people.
- Help With Find A Grave, one of the most useful areas for getting prompt answers to problems with the site and/or to list changes that require a Find A Grave Administrator's action.
- The [American Civil War](#), American Civil War graves questions and information.
- Cemetery Preservation, discussions of issues and techniques for cemetery preservation.
- [Mourning](#), [Grief](#) and Emotional Support, "support group" to receive and offer support to others over the loss of loved ones.
- The Lounge, social "anything goes" forum which just about says it all.
- [Surnames](#), for discussion on issues of genealogy related to a specific surname.



John with Ross Henderson and guest Vernon Love, Shreveport's best known bagpiper.!



Our first President Gerald Fussell with John and Margaret Clark



May meeting with Clif Cardin, Bossier Parish Historian



John discussing the Shreveport on-line obituary files with guest Claudia Rogers, daughter of new member Fran Hawkins.



May Meeting

## The President's Message



Bob Franklin



August starts a new year for GENCOM, and as usual we will not have a general membership meeting in August. However, GENCOM officers and the Program Committee will have an August board meeting to make plans for the upcoming GENCOM year. Our next general membership meeting will be Sunday September 28, at the Shreve Memorial Library, Hamilton/South Caddo Branch.

GENFEST is just a couple of months away, so I urge you to be thinking about programs you would like to see or would like to present to the group. GENFEST is scheduled for October. More details will follow, as we are still in the early planning stages.

I want to close on a hot note... and boy has it been hot lately! Now is a good time to take advantage of this hot summer weather by staying inside where it's cool and catching up on some of your genealogy research. That's what I've been doing these hot days. Good luck on your research, and hope you find a crack in your brick walls.

Bob Franklin

## WELCOME

### NEW MEMBERS

Fran Hawkins  
Jean Whitaker

### GUESTS

Claudia Rogers  
Vernon Love

# GENCOM

## Officers

2008-2009

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"Connections" Editor: Patricia Bettis

pmbettis@comcast.net

"Connections" Columnist: Carolyn Franklin

Dues are still just \$15.00

Checks may be sent to Treasurer

Charles Byrd

2529 Brown Circle

Bossier City, LA. 71111