

Connections

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SEPTEMBER 2006

September 24 Meeting Sunday Afternoon 2:00 at Hamilton Library

Land Records — From Metes and Bounds to Global Positioning System

The descent of land is the purest proof of lineage. — [Jo White Linn](#).

GERALD FUSELL is a licensed Civil Engineer and professional Land Surveyor in the State of Louisiana and has been practicing for over 45 years.

He served as the District Construction Engineer for District 04 supervising the construction of projects in the seven parishes in Northwest part of the State. His projects included the construction of I-49 downtown Shreveport and the rehab of I-20. He began performing land surveys in mid 1960 and still practices today. He is co-owner of Polaris Services, a Engineering and Surveying company.



He was raised in the Florida Parishes on a small farm 10 miles North of Covington, La. His ancestors (Sharp and Fussell) settled in that area in the late 1700 and early 1800s, coming from the Carolinas and Georgia. He graduated from LSU, Baton Rouge, in 1961 with a B.S. in Civil Engineering. After serving in the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey (they make nautical charts or maps for ships to use) for over two years, fulfilling his military duty, he began his career with the Louisiana Department of Highways and retired in 1994.

According to William Dollarhide in [Retracing the Trails of Your Ancestors Using Deed Records](#), nine out of 10 adult white males in America owned land before 1850 and even today the figure is more than 50 percent. There is a countywide surname index to virtually every landowner in America since the early 1600s and it is more complete than any head-of-household census index ever compiled. This means you are most likely to find information about your ancestors in American land records.

ALSO

ROBERT FRANKLIN

WILL CONDUCT

computer related

Q&A



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GENCOM SEPTEMBER 24 MEETING

Sunday, 2:00 Hamilton Library

Gerald Fussell

presents

"Land Records"

**GOING FROM METES AND BOUNDS
TO Global Positioning System**



Land records remain one of the most valuable means of proving relationships in the U.S. Modern surveying methods are providing new results in our searches.

Public Land states vs. State Land states



State Land states include the 13 original colonies (Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia), plus the five states formed from the territories of those colonies (Maine, Vermont, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia), and Texas and Hawaii. In these 20 state land states, the land is surveyed by metes and bounds.

METES AND BOUNDS SURVEYS "Metes" refers to the measurement of boundaries of a tract of land by direction (given in degrees, minutes, and seconds) and distance. "Bounds" refers to physical objects such as trees, creeks, and adjacent tracts of land. Here is an example of a metes and bounds description:

Beginning at a white oak head of branch that falls into Difficult. North 85 degrees West 54 poles to white oak side of branch. South 19 degrees West 220 poles to white oak in poison field. South 64 degrees East 110 poles to red oak on a levell [sic]. North 6 degrees East 254 poles to the beginning. [Mitchell, Beginning at a White Oak . . . The Patents and Northern Neck Grants of Fairfax County, Virginia. (Fairfax, Va.: McGregor and Werner, 1977), p. 6.

Metes and bounds descriptions can be confusing at first when you try to plot them. Fortunately, there are software programs to help with this. One such program, is Deed Mapper by Direct Line Software. This program allows you to do analysis of old deeds, leases, surveys, roads, claims, grants and patents and lets you plot the land description and work with it. One of the features is the ability to drag the plotted land description onto a map of the area being researched. This is an excellent way to get a feel for where your ancestor was in respect to others and to be able to plot the land of all those in the family who were in a particular locality. It enables you to see their proximity to each other and to the rest of the town or county.

The President's Message

Patte Bettis



Greetings everyone! Don't you love this time of year, with Autumn waiting in the wings! The cool mornings and evenings remind us of the treat to come—Louisiana's long and lovely fall season. I remember my surprise during my first year in Louisiana, at an Autumn that lasted till January—and thinking that we were being repaid for enduring the beastly hot summer.

We will feel renewed energy and enthusiasm for all of the exciting activities in store for us.. Remember, that our GENFEST is in October 21, on Saturday; and we should be preparing for it!

We celebrate Family History Month by displaying all sorts of genealogical related items such as books, scrap-books, embellished family trees and such...we are delighted to have new ideas. Lets all prepare some sort of genealogical display—they can be an inspiration for others.

For you who are interested in photography...why don't we make a collage of several generations of a family... I remember a painting of The Adams family with the earliest generations to the back and the present generation in front. It was most impressive. We could achieve the same affect with our digital pictures and some of the editing programs. I will try, who else will join the game! Lets see what we can come up with—and make a display table at GENFEST!



Louisiana irises by Vergalie Cassel.

Do look at the many new sources of research that are listed in this issue of Connections. A lot of truly amazing databases are coming Online.

Congratulations to our talented member Vergalie Cassel. Her painting *Louisiana Iris*, is one of the "Louisiana Icons" on display at the LA State Museum. This picture was featured in the Times story on September 8.

A reception for the artists will be held from 2-4 Sunday the 10th of Sept. at the Museum.

Our summer was saddened by the death of Eddie Huss, our dear Shirley's husband. He was a charming and gentle man... and our hearts are with her in her loss.

Site Seeing



Useful (and Unusual) Web Sites

Describe the Earth:

WikiMapia lets you add a description to a specific spot on a Google map: [Get started.](#)

For instance, Eaton Canyon Nature Center . Click on the box and you'll get more info about it: [Sample box.](#)

You can add a link--but if you do, be sure to choose a really interesting location. My buddy Doran told me about WikiMapia,,,*You do know to turn to Wiki pedia for almost any information you may be seeking!*

Research Guides: Cemeteries & Obituaries

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Online Searchable Death Indexes & Records <http://www.deathindexes.com/>

Rootsweb's Cemetery Database <http://userdb.rootsweb.com/cemeteries/>

Tombstone Transcription Project - volunteer project to record burials <http://www.rootsweb.com/~cemetery/registry.html>

Find A Grave <http://www.findagrave.com/> Interment.net <http://www.interment.net/>

Veterans Affairs Burial Search <http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/>

JewishGen Online Worldwide Burial Registry <http://www.jewishgen.org/databases/Cemetery/> Finding Aids & Indexes for Obituaries <http://www.deathindexes.com/obituaries.html> Cemeteries and Cemetery Symbols <http://cemeteries.wordpress.com/>

-- For more genealogy research guides see... Genealogy Research Guides -

Online Tips & Records <http://www.researchguides.net/> -

Research Guides: Gazetteers (finding places - USA) Research Guides: Gazetteers (finding places - USA) Geographic Nameserver - MIT (out of date, but very basic) <http://stuff.mit.edu/cgi/geo>

Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) [more comprehensive] <http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic>

U.S. Gazetteer - U.S. Census Bureau (results include links to maps) <http://www.census.gov/cgi-bin/gazetteer/> -- For more genealogy research guides see...

Genealogy Research Guides - Online Tips & Records <http://www.researchguides.net/>

Research Guides: Vital Records & People Finding Tools Research Guides: Vital Records & People Finding Tools

Online Searchable Death Indexes & Records (USA) <http://www.deathindexes.com/> Online Birth & Marriage Indexes for Genealogy Research <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/vitalrecords.html>

Where to Write for Vital Records (state level) <http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/howto/w2w/w2welcom.htm>

Vital Records Info for the USA (where to order - county level) <http://www.vitalrec.com/>

Finding Living & Recently Deceased People in the USA <http://www.genesearch.com/people/> -
- For more genealogy research guides see...

Genealogy Research Guides - Online Tips & Records <http://www.researchguides.net/>



ProQuest Launches

the Digital Collection of Obituaries

On the opening day of the Federation of Genealogical Societies' annual conference in Boston, ProQuest Information and Learning made the following announcement:

ANN ARBOR Mich., August 30, 2006 — ProQuest Information and Learning announces the launch of ProQuest Obituaries™, offering access to obituaries and death notices from the full runs of major national newspapers dating back to 1851. ProQuest Obituaries enables users to easily find ancestors and historical figures, and to trace their family histories through a database of more than 10 million names. To familiarize users with the database's rich content, ProQuest developed "In Passing", a free weekly e-newsletter that highlights particularly interesting passages from ProQuest Obituaries, the latest addition to the ProQuest Genealogy Center. Librarian subscribers will be able to use this newsletter to promote the rich rewards of genealogy research during October, which is Family History Month.

"The launch of ProQuest Obituaries furthers our commitment to providing the critical resources necessary to track personal histories," said David "Skip" Prichard, President of ProQuest Information and Learning. "ProQuest Obituaries joins the ProQuest Genealogy Center, our suite of resources tailored to specifically meet the needs of the library community and their patrons."

Now available to libraries everywhere, ProQuest Obituaries offers content unmatched by any other resource, and is suitable for all levels of researchers. Historical obituaries and death notices represent some of the most valuable content available to genealogists, as often they are the only existing biographical sketch devoted to an individual and can provide valuable clues like proper full name; maiden name; spousal information; names of parents, siblings, and children; occupation, religion; cause of death; and more.



The e-newsletter, "In Passing", provides anyone interested in genealogy, history, or the extraordinary stories of everyday people a sample of the historical and genealogical finds available in ProQuest Obituaries. "In Passing" subscribers will learn about the casualties of the 1919 Boston molasses flood; the "Spanish flu" pandemic that killed more than 50 million people worldwide; and the young seamstresses who died in New York's Triangle shirtwaist factory fire and the subsequent laws created that mark their heritage today. This free opt-in e-newsletter will be issued weekly during September, October, November, and December; to sign up please visit www.proquest.com/maillinglist.

U.S. Newspapers On Line

Those who use newspapers for research will be interested in two projects being collaborated on by the US National Endowment for the Humanities, and the US Library of Congress. These projects are the [U.S. Newspaper Program](#), and the [National Digital Newspaper Program](#). For those who are unaware, the National Endowment for the Humanities is an independent grant-making agency of the United States government dedicated to supporting research, education, preservation, and public programs in the humanities.

The goal of the first project, the [U.S. Newspaper Program](#) (USNP), is to preserve on microfilm newspapers published in the United States from the eighteenth century to the present. The USNP supports projects in each of the fifty states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. A project's staff (usually at the state's largest newspaper repository) inventories holdings in public libraries, county courthouses, newspaper offices, historical museums, college and university libraries, archives, and historical societies. Catalogue records are entered into a national database maintained by the [Online Computer Library Center \(OCLC\)](#) and are accessible through more than 53,500 dedicated computer terminals worldwide. Microfilm copies of newspapers are generally available to researchers anywhere in the country through inter-library loan. While perhaps new to myself and many of my readers, the U.S. Newspaper Project has been under way since 1982.

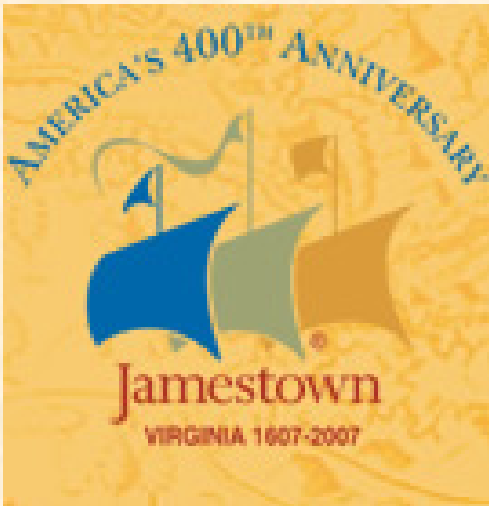
The second project, the [National Digital Newspaper Project](#) (NDNP), intends to carry the work of the U.S. Newspaper Program a step further by creating a national, digital resource of historically significant newspapers from all the states and U.S. territories published between 1836 and 1922.

The U.S. Library of Congress (LC) will maintain a permanent searchable database that will be freely accessible via the Internet. The website will include a national newspaper directory of bibliographic and holdings information that will direct users to newspaper titles available in all types of formats. A significant number of newspaper pages drawn from the Library of Congress collections will also be digitized and contributed to the NDNP database during the course of this partnership between NEH and the Library.

The NDNP project will be completed in phases. At the present time it is expected that it will take approximately twenty years to complete.

[Before you purchase any census check here first](#)

<http://ftp.us-census.org/pub/usgenweb/census/>



GENCOM will focus on our VIRGINIA ancestors in 2007. As William Byrd said, "All of America was once Virginia". Many of us have early Virginia ancestors, with this gigantic celebration publicizing the early records...it is the perfect time to shift our research back to those Virginia families. Last year we studied German Genealogy and it was decided that our ancestors from the British Isles would be our next subject. Most of those early settlers arrived in Virginia and the Carolinas, so the emphasis on those records at this celebration is a most fortunate advantage for our study project.

The year 2007 marks the 400th anniversary of the original Jamestown settlement – the first permanent English colony in what is now the United States of America. Heirlines, Relative Genetics, and GenealogyFound are using traditional genealogy along with genetic genealogy to link millions of living people to their roots in that 17th Century colony. They are building a public database of Jamestown and 17th Century Colonial Virginia descendants that will be available beginning in 2007.

Doug Arnett, COB of GenealogyFound, a non-profit foundation promoting historic event genealogy projects world-wide, said he thinks the Jamestown 2007 project will awaken the spirit of family history in many Americans as well as people in many foreign countries. "We want to build an Internet research database for everyone, and spark a patriotic sense that 'Maybe my ancestors came through Jamestown' so people will be excited to tie into this historic location," he remarked. Peggy Hayes, director of sales and marketing for Relative Genetics, commented that she expects this database to leave a lasting legacy. "This project will give people a connection to a great part of their history," she said. "Knowing where you come from gives you a sense of identity and a renewed desire to search out your roots." "Traditional and genetic genealogy are proving to be very symbiotic," Arnett said. "Combining the two services is becoming standard in finding ancestry." Genealogists can use DNA data to overcome gaps in family trees, establish biological links to specific ancestors, and identify other living family lines to which one is related. Genetic genealogy is useful in proving or disproving family legends. "Many people think they're descended from Thomas Savage, the founder of the first continuous family in America," Arnett said. "You'll hear stories that are passed on from generation to generation; and sometimes, much to their disappointment, they have no relationship to him at all. But other times we find out these family stories are accurate." Hayes said if the Jamestown 2007 project goes well the two companies may work together on many other historical event genealogy projects. Doug Arnett concurs. "I find genetics and genealogy fascinating," he said. "We're going to find out, sooner or later, that we're all much more closely related than we ever thought." To find out more about the Jamestown and Colonial Virginia Genealogy and DNA Project go to GenealogyFound www.genealogyfound.org. For information on the upcoming celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Jamestown colony go to <http://www.jamestown2007.org/home.cfm>.

Jamestowne and Colonial Virginia

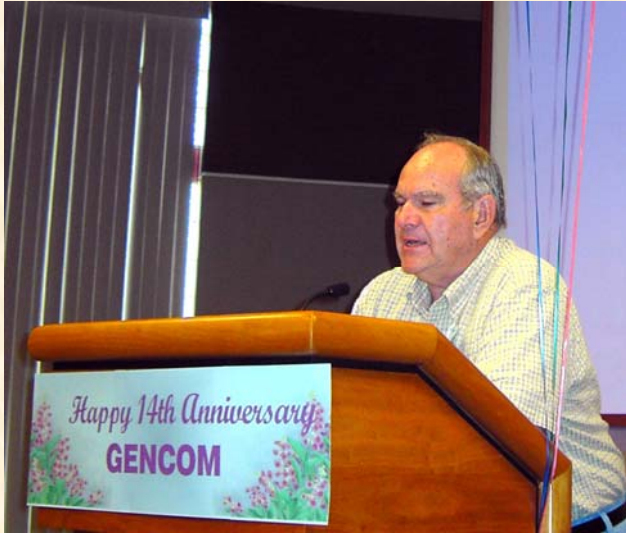
“AMERICA'S 400TH ANNIVERSARY”

Who could have imagined, 400 years ago, that an adventurous and hardy group of “Colonial Settlers” would establish a small colony which they called “Jamestowne” from which sprang the greatest people and nation on the earth?

That Nation, the United States of America, was to become the mightiest of nations, having the greatest economy, become the most industrially developed, become the world leader in diplomacy, all the while having the most ethnically diverse population of any nation in the world.

A nation which would welcome the tired, the hungry and poor from all other nations and would give emigrants the opportunity to become anything they desired to become. All that was required of them would be desire, dedication and determination. With these attributes almost any emigrant could succeed and that's what they did....Succeed!

“Honoring our Presidents” July 14th Anniversary Celebration



Our 1st President Gerald Fussell



2nd President Hugh Rutherford



7th President, and founder, Patricia Bettis



3rd President Julious Windham



5th President Don Davis



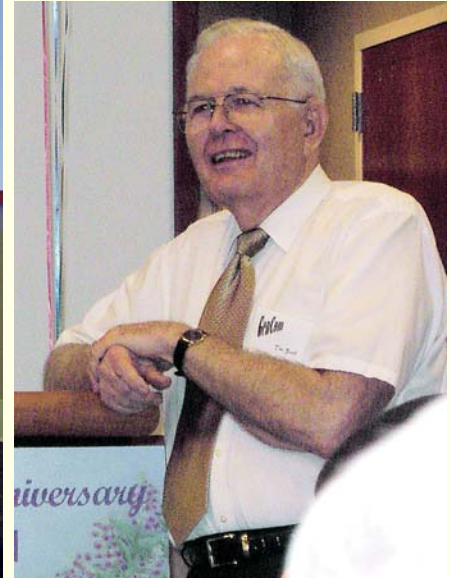
Gerald and Charter Member Delight Nelson
talk over old times~

July Meeting Highlights

Hugh Rutherford closed his presentation on Confederate Research...
with a moving poem recalling "The Lost Cause."



Don Zesch led a spirited discussion of the most successful methods of sharing the results of our research.



GENFEST 06
Saturday October 21
10:00 till 3:00
Hamilton Library
Dinner on the Grounds
Special Presentations
Genealogical Displays

Guests Welcome!

A large graphic for GENFEST 06. The text is centered on a white background with a circular glow. The entire graphic is framed by a border of colorful autumn leaves in shades of red, orange, and yellow.