D-OGS Newsletter – June 2022

News & Articles of Interest to Durham-Orange genealogists

NCDOGS-admin@rootsweb.com
PO Box 4703, Chapel Hill, NC 27515-4703
2022 dues – $20
President – Ginger Smith

D-OGS MEETING FOR 1 JUNE

Do you have ancestors from North Carolina but don't know where to begin your research or what types of resources and records are available? Your research journey starts here! Please join us on Wednesday, **June 1** at **7:00 PM** at the **OWASA Community Center**, 400 Jones Ferry Rd, Carrboro, OR **ONLINE via Zoom,** to hear ***Kelly Agan*** present **"*Your North Carolina Family History Research Starts Here: An Introduction to Government & Heritage Collections and Resources*".** She will provide a comprehensive introduction to North Carolina family history research at the State Library of North Carolina Government & Heritage Library. Learn about the wide variety of records available for North Carolina, including state and county government records, newspapers, local heritage collections and publications, books on specific family histories, city directories, maps (and more) and where to find them, along with resources available in print and online from the Library.

Speaker Biography
Kelly Agan is the Reference Services Supervisor at the State Library of North Carolina's Government & Heritage Library in Raleigh, North Carolina. She manages the library's public services and a team of dedicated reference librarians. She has a background in public history and many years of experience in North Carolina historical research and reference service, digital collection and digital humanities development, and library outreach and educational programming.

Directions:
The OWASA Community Center is on the right side of Jones Ferry Road heading west out of town. Park in the lower lot on the west side of the facility - the center is the door closest to the street on the lower level.

Recording
This lecture will be recorded and made available on the member-only section of the D-OGS website.

Online Access
We will be using the popular Zoom software which runs on PCs and Macs, as well as mobile devices like phones and tablets. It will be free for you to use. You do not need a microphone or video camera - just speakers and a screen, but it will be easier to ask questions if you have a microphone. There is an option to call in via telephone but note in most cases the presentation assumes you can see the slides or demo.

MONTHLY BACKUP REMINDER

It is the first of a new month. Don't forget to backup your data files.

A BIOETHICS PROFESSOR SAYS PEOPLE DON'T ALWAYS KNOW WHAT THEY'RE SIGNING UP FOR WHEN THEY SUBMIT DNA SAMPLES TO GENEALOGY WEBSITES

How much personal information are you willing to give the government? Would that answer change if your unique data could help solve a crime? Millions of people don't get to make that choice for themselves if they use certain online genealogy kits without reading the fine print.

You can read the full story in an article by Elizabeth Wadas and published in the *NBC15* web site at: https://bit.ly/3wMs2Et.

ANOTHER METHOD OF FINDING CEMETERY LOCATIONS

I have written before about the U.S. government's Geographic Names Information System (GNIS) database at http://geonames.usgs.gov/index.html that provides exact latitudes and longitudes for thousands of cemeteries and other named places within the United States. To find a cemetery, all you do is search the GNIS database, find the latitude and longitude for the cemetery you seek, enter those coordinates into a GPS, and follow the instructions shown on the GPS to drive directly to the cemetery.

NOTE: Nowadays, you do not even need a dedicated GPS device. Most Android phones and all iPhones have available apps that will provide GPS capabilities within your cell phone. Some of them will even display the latest traffic reports along your planned route while you are driving. Many of these GPS-emulation apps are available free of charge while a few cost a modest amount of money, always less than the cost of purchasing a dedicated GPS device.

There is but one problem with the government's GNIS database: it doesn't include all the cemeteries! For years, it did not list the small, rural cemetery where several of my relatives are buried, where I already own a burial plot, and where I intend to spend eternity. However, I checked again when writing this article and found that the *Morse's Corner Cemetery* is now listed in the GNIS database. So much for the idea of my being buried at an unlisted address!

Despite my recent success, the GNIS database still does not list **ALL** cemeteries. Luckily, I found another source of possible information.

The **POI Factory** is an online service that provides exact geographic coordinates to owners of GPS devices, including anyone who owns a cell phone with a GPS app installed. (The letters "POI" apparently stand for "Points Of Interest.") The web site has more than one million locations in the database with everything from highway rest areas to state parks to fast food restaurants. These include a lot of cemeteries. There's even a list of the locations of Red Light Camera intersections and Speed Cameras. That last list is updated weekly.

Like the GNIS database mentioned earlier, not every cemetery is listed in the POI Factory. However, if I cannot find a cemetery's location in one database, I'd quickly look in another.

To find cemeteries or any other place listed in the POI Factory's database, go to http://www.poi-factory.com and click on "Search for POI Files."

Next, enter a keyword for whatever you are seeking. In this case, enter "cemetery" and then click on **SEARCH**.

You will then be presented with a list of hundreds of cemeteries, too many to search manually. In the unlabelled box just below the POI Factory logo near the top left corner, enter identifying words or phrases. For instance, in my case I would enter "Maine" or (even better) "Penobscot" (the name of the county where I know the cemetery is located). If I already know the name of the cemetery, I might enter that, such as "Evergreen." Then click on SEARCH once again.

A new list will appear that contains cemetery locations that match your search terms. Latitude and longitude are also displayed.

The POI Factory will even create a computer file containing the names and exact locations of all the locations found. In theory, that file can be copied to some GPS devices, although not all, and then used to easily find locations without any need to manually enter the geographic coordinates. Instructions for use of the files will vary from one GPS to another; see your GPS owners manual for instructions.

Of course, the use of the POI Factory is not limited to finding cemeteries. It will find all sorts of named locations and even many unnamed ones. The list includes country courthouses, hospitals, medical centers, stores, fast food restaurants, and much more. In fact, the POI Factory already contains dozens of pre-loaded files showing the precise locations of many locations of all sorts of common-searched-for locations, including: all the Wal-Mart, Sam's Clubs, and Super Wal-Mart Centers in the United States and Canada, all the Costco locations in the U.S. and Canada, locations of covered bridges, Motorcycle Campgrounds And Lodging, airport and aviation locations, national parks, and lots of cemeteries with a separate file for each of many U.S. states and several other classifications as well (U.S. National cemeteries, Presidential grave locations, and more).

If you own a GPS or a cell phone with a GPS app installed, you need to know about the POI Factory! You may not need to use it often but, when you do have a need, it can be valuable.

The *POI Factory* is available at: http://www.poi-factory.com.

You can find cemeteries by starting at: http://www.poi-factory.com/taxonomy/term/22.

A series of tutorials about the use of the POI Factory web site and about several other GPS-related topics may be found at http://www.poi-factory.com/tutorials.

Now, go visit a cemetery!

(Reprinted from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogical Newsletter)

US IDENTIFIES NATIVE AMERICAN BOARDING SCHOOLS, BURIAL SITES

The following is a press release issued by the U.S. Interior Department:

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP) — A first-of-its-kind federal study of Native American boarding schools that for over a century sought to assimilate Indigenous children into white society has identified more than 400 such schools that were supported by the U.S. government and more than 50 associated burial sites, a figure that could grow exponentially as research continues.

The report released Wednesday by the Interior Department expands the number of schools that were known to have operated for 150 years, starting in the early 19th century and coinciding with the removal of many tribes from their ancestral lands.

The dark history of the boarding schools — where children who were taken from their families were prohibited from speaking their Native American languages and often abused — has been felt deeply across Indian Country and through generations.

Many children never returned home. The investigation has so far turned up over 500 deaths at 19 schools, though the Interior Department said that number could climb to the thousands or even tens of thousands.

“Many of those children were buried in unmarked or poorly maintained burial sites far from their Indian Tribes, Alaska Native Villages, the Native Hawaiian Community, and families, often hundreds, or even thousands, of miles away,” the report said.

A second volume of the report will cover the burial sites as well as the federal government’s financial investment in the schools and the impacts of the boarding schools on Indigenous communities, the Interior Department said.

“The consequences of federal Indian boarding school policies — including the intergenerational trauma caused by the family separation and cultural eradication inflicted upon generations of children as young as 4 years old — are heartbreaking and undeniable,” Interior Secretary Deb Haaland said in a statement.

Haaland, who is Laguna, announced an initiative last June to investigate the troubled legacy of boarding schools and uncover the truth about the government's role in them. The 408 schools her agency identified operated in 37 states or territories, many of them in Oklahoma, Arizona and New Mexico.

The Interior Department acknowledged the number of schools identified could change as more data is gathered. The coronavirus pandemic and budget restrictions hindered some of the research over the last year, said Bryan Newland, the Interior Department's assistant secretary for Indian Affairs.

The department has so far found at least 53 burial sites at or near the U.S. boarding schools, both marked and unmarked.

The U.S. government directly ran some of the boarding schools. Catholic, Protestant and other churches operated others with federal funding, backed by U.S. laws and policies to "civilize" Native Americans.

The Interior Department report was prompted by the discovery of hundreds of unmarked graves at former residential school sites in Canada that brought back painful memories for Indigenous communities.

Haaland also announced Wednesday a yearlong tour for Interior Department officials that will allow former boarding school students from Native American tribes, Alaska Native villages and Native Hawaiian communities to share their stories as part of a permanent oral history collection.

"It is my priority to not only give voice to the survivors and descendants of federal Indian boarding school policies, but also to address the lasting legacies of these policies so Indigenous Peoples can continue to grow and heal," she said.

Boarding school conditions varied across the U.S. and Canada. While some former students have reported positive experiences, children at the schools often were subjected to military-style discipline and had their long hair cut.

Early curricula focused heavily on outdated vocational skills, including homemaking for girls.

Tribal leaders have pressed the agency to ensure that any children's remains that are found are properly cared for and delivered back to their tribes, if desired. The burial sites' locations will not be released publicly to prevent them from being disturbed, Newland said.

Accounting for the whereabouts of children who died has been difficult because records weren't always kept. Ground penetrating radar has been used in some places to search for remains.

The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition, which created an early inventory of the schools, has said Interior's work will be an important step for the U.S. in reckoning with its role in the schools but noted that the agency's authority is limited.

Later this week, a U.S. House subcommittee will hear testimony on a bill to create a truth and healing commission modeled after one in Canada. Several church groups are backing the legislation.

HOW TO PRESERVE YOUR DIGITAL LEGACY (AND WHY YOU SHOULD)

Over the last few decades an increasing amount of our lives has been moved online. With the advent of social media and cloud storage, things that were once analog or physical have become digital. In most ways, this is terrific: we can share and communicate effortlessly, creation has become simpler and more powerful, and we can represent ourselves with a few mouse clicks or taps of our finger. The days of mailing out paper resumes on fancy paper are long gone, for example—nowadays we spend our time building awesome LinkedIn profiles and portfolio web sites.

But as more and more of our lives winds up online, the question of what will happen to it all when we move on from the earthly realm begins to loom. This goes beyond asking your buddy to delete your porn stash when you die unexpectedly—your digital legacy includes just about every aspect of your life these days, from the photos you have on your phone that you never get around to naming and organizing to the social media followings you worked hard to build (and possibly monetize). Some of us put so much effort into our Facebook pages they remain powerful monuments to our lives, complete with photos, correspondence, and major events, and you might want your kids or grandkids to have access to the record of your life, the same way you have an ancestor's photo albums or journals. There's also the question of the stuff you paid for—from music files to digital movies to cryptocurrency. Who controls those when you're gone?

One thing is for sure: We're all going to die someday, and that means we're going to leave behind a mountain of digital files and online accounts. Spending a little bit of time planning what happens to all of that will spare your loved ones (and your lawyers) a lot of trouble

You can read more in an article by Jeff Somers and published in the *Lifehacker.com* web site at: https://bit.ly/3N2UQze.

(Reprinted from Dick Eastman's Online Genealogical Newsletter)

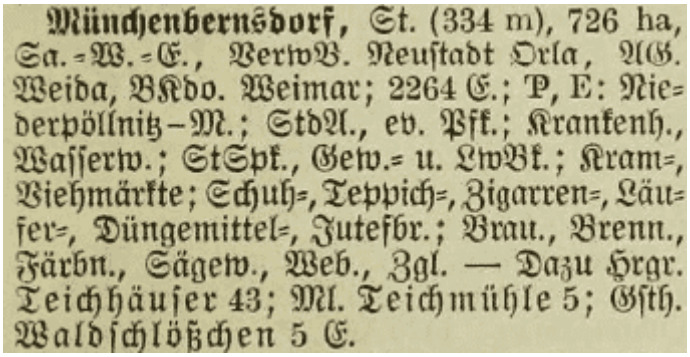
---

6 WEBSITES FOR DECIPHERING OLD GERMAN SCRIPT

By James M. Beidler

Before the 1940s, most records in German-speaking areas (as well as surname books, newspapers, journals and gazetteers) used a Gothic font called *Fraktur*. Handwritten documents were composed in cursive using a type of script known as blackletter. Notoriously difficult to read, the Fraktur form of blackletter has been giving German genealogy researchers fits for centuries.

As a matter of fact, the font isn't just difficult for the human eye. Only within the last couple of years has optical-character recognition software allowed archivists to scan German-language newspapers printed in *Fraktur*/the Gothic script.


Münchenbernsdorf, St. (334 m), 726 ha, Sa.-W.-E., VerwB. Neustadt Orla, AG. Weida, BKdo. Weimar; 2264 E.; P, E: Niederpöllnitz-M.; StdA., ev. Pfk.; Krankenh., Wasserw.; StSpk., Gew.- u. LwBk.; Kram-, Viehmärkte; Schuh-, Teppich-, Zigarren-, Läufer-, Düngemittel-, Jutefbr.; Brau., Brenn., Färbn., Sägew., Web., Zgl. — Dazu Hrgr. Teichhäuser 43; Ml. Teichmühle 5; Gsth. Waldschlößchen 5 E.

An example of the German blackletter typeface, sometimes referred to as Fraktur.

Online German Script Translators and Resources

Old German handwriting in the *Fraktur* script can be hard enough to read, let alone translate. So to make a serious attempt at understanding German genealogy records, you'll have to crack the *Fraktur* code. How? Here are six German script translators that can help:

- Brigham Young University: The German Script Tutorial
- FamilySearch Wiki: Germany Handwriting
- Genealoger: German Genealogy—Language, Handwriting, and Script
- My Ancestors and Me: Helps for Translating That Old German Handwriting
- Omniglot: German
- Suetterlin Schrift: German handwriting (For fun, you can see how your name looks written in *Suetterlin*!)

(Reprinted from the Family Tree Magazine online blog)

ALABAMA SHIPWRECK HOLDS KEY TO THE PAST FOR DESCENDANTS OF ENSLAVED AFRICANS: "BE SURE THAT THAT LEGACY LIVES ON"

Keys to the past and the future of a community descended from enslaved Africans lie in a river bottom on Alabama's Gulf Coast, where the remains of the last known U.S. slave ship rest a few miles from what's left of the village built by newly freed people after the Civil War.

Work performed this month will help answer a question residents of the area called Africatown USA are anxious to resolve: Can remnants of the slave ship Clotilda be retrieved from the water to both fill out details about their heritage and to serve as an attraction that might revitalize the place their ancestors built after emancipation?

A crew hired by the Alabama Historical Commission, working over 10 days ending Thursday, took fallen trees off the submerged remains of the ship, scooped muck out of the hull and retrieved displaced pieces to see what's left of the Clotilda, which is described as the most intact slave ship ever found. The work will help determine what, if anything, can be done with the wreckage in years ahead.

Some want a museum featuring the actual Clotilda, which was hired by a rich, white steamship captain on a bet to violate the U.S. ban on slave importation the year before the Confederacy was founded to preserve slavery and white supremacy in the South.

"The question is, give me a timetable. What's the date for getting that boat out of that doggone water?" Africatown resident and activist Joe Womack asked team members during a public forum as work began. Nearby, a new "heritage house" that could display artifacts is under construction.

You can read more in an article published in the CBS News web site at: https://cbsn.ws/3FOaZpW.

WESTERN CAROLINA UNIVERSITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT ASHEVILLE PARTNERSHIP LEADS TO NEW DIGITAL SOUTHERN APPALACHIAN ARCHIVE

In a collaborative effort, Hunter Library at Western Carolina University has established an extensive, digital collection that will provide improved access to regionally focused materials of Southern Appalachia.

The Southern Appalachian Digital Collections was created with the University of North Carolina at Asheville through a Library Science and Technology Act grant. The partnership began in 2019 to specifically take advantage of combined efforts, such as sharing purchasing power for licensing a content management system and increased staff expertise.

“We are hoping to expand the collection with additional member institutions that reside within Southern Appalachia – Western North Carolina, north Georgia, eastern Tennessee, upstate South Carolina, southwest Virginia – that have a mission to support and preserve the literature, culture, music and historical heritage of the region, and contribute collections to digitize and/or accession into the shared content management system,” said Beth Thompson, assistant professor and head of Content Organization and Management at Hunter Library.

You can read more at: https://bit.ly/3wk1M5D.

WHAT IS RSS?

Depending on who you ask, it stands for “Rich Site Summary,” “Really Simple Syndication,” or “RDF Site Summary.” Regardless of the acronym, it’s actually a very straightforward technology: whenever a website publishes new content, that content can automatically be put into an RSS feed.

Best of all, you can use an RSS newsreader (a bit of software) to quickly and easily check your favorite web sites to see what is new. "Your favorite web sites" might include news sites, the latest stock market prices, weather forecasts, just severe weather updates, your genealogy society's web site, a list of upcoming satellite launches, updates on airline flight prices, some job-search websites, a certain genealogy newsletter (ahem!), Hollywood gossip sites, or if you’re especially interested in one particular topic you can easily and quickly see what is new on that site. The sky is the limit.

HINT: The RSS newsfeed for *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter* is: https://eogn.com/page-18080/rss

You don't use a normal web browser to read RSS news feeds. Instead, you use what is known as an RSS newsreader. That might be software that you install in your computer, or you can use an RSS newsreader that is in the cloud (which means you don't have to install anything).

You can get web-based, desktop, mobile, and even browser add-on RSS newsreader versions, most of which let you subscribe to up to 100 sites before asking you to pay to upgrade your membership to access more features. There are dozens out there, but the following are a great place to start.

Feedly (my favorite web-based RSS newsreader (no software installation required!) plus Android and iOS versions are available) at https://feedly.com.

InoReader (Web-based plus Android, iOS, and Windows Phone versions at https://www.inoreader.com/).

NewsFlow (for Windows only) at https://apps.microsoft.com/store/detail/newsflow/9NBLGGH58S5R?hl=en-us&gl=US.

RSSOwl (Completely free for Windows, macOS, and Linux) at http://www.rssowl.org/.

NetNewsWire (completely free for Macintosh or iOS only) at https://netnewswire.com/.

Awasu An advanced RSS newsreader but for Windows only) at https://awasu.com/products.php.

Feeder (an add-on for the Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, and Microsoft Edge web bowsers plus free-standing apps are available for iOS) at https://feeder.co/

There are dozens more RSS newsreaders available, but the above list is some of the more popular ones. I'd suggest you start with one of the above. It is possible that you will want to switch later to something else once you gain experience with the advantages of RSS,

RSS remains one of the best ways to make sure you see everything your favorite sites publish. It also allows you to check dozens of web sites much more quickly and easily than visiting each web site one at a time with a web browser.

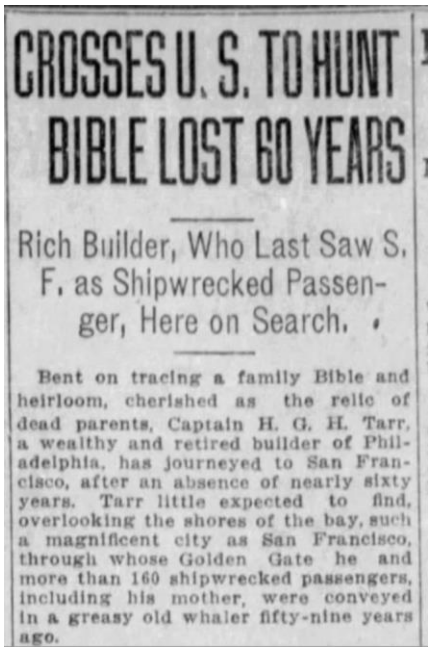
Family Bible Finds in the Newspapers!

Family bibles are a treasure for genealogists and often recorded important events like births, deaths, and marriages. Family bibles were especially popular in the 1700s and 1800s, and families passed them down from one generation to the next. Their popularity began to wane in the 1900s. One 1936 newspaper article bemoaned the fact that family bibles no longer seemed to occupy a conspicuous place in the best room of the house. Family bibles often contain meticulous records and can reveal lost family members or previously unknown details about a family. Have you ever tried searching the newspapers for information about your family bible? We've come across some fun family bible stories over the years.

Marriage register from family Bible

Family bibles can prove a relationship, and historically courts used them as evidence to award inheritances. In the early 1900s, a Delaware man was thrilled to find his family bible housed in a Philadelphia museum. He and other heirs had searched for the book for 30 years to validate their rightful claims to a nearly $2 million family fortune.

In another instance, a Detroit man claimed he found a note inside the family bible in 1931, naming him the recipient of an inheritance. Authorities questioned the note's authenticity, and the case went to trial. Prosecutors charged the man with conspiracy for faking the note. He denied the charge and the courts ultimately ruled in his favor, and he received the money.



CROSSES U. S. TO HUNT BIBLE LOST 60 YEARS

Rich Builder, Who Last Saw S. F. as Shipwrecked Passenger, Here on Search.

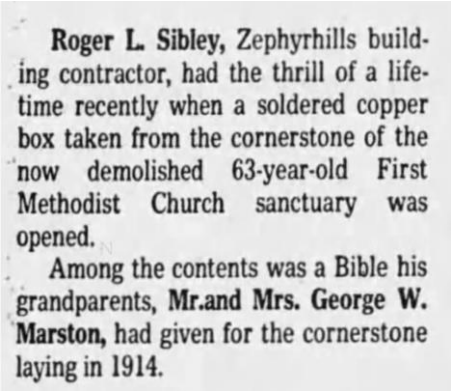
Bent on tracing a family Bible and heirloom, cherished as the relic of dead parents, Captain H. G. H. Tarr, a wealthy and retired builder of Philadelphia, has journeyed to San Francisco, after an absence of nearly sixty years. Tarr little expected to find, overlooking the shores of the bay, such a magnificent city as San Francisco, through whose Golden Gate he and more than 160 shipwrecked passengers, including his mother, were conveyed in a greasy old whaler fifty-nine years ago.

San Francisco Examiner April 5, 1912

In 1912, the *Los Angeles Times* published a dramatic account of Horace G. H. Tarr, a wealthy Philadelphia contractor who first traveled to California in 1853 via the Isthmus of Panama. The paper describes a tragic journey for travelers. Their ship sank, and hundreds of passengers died, including Tarr's father. A whaling boat rescued survivors, including Tarr and his mother, and transported them to California. When they arrived in California, the Tarr family was distraught to find their household goods, including the family bible, were missing. The goods had arrived on an earlier ship, and when nobody showed up to claim them, the shipping company sold them. The bible contained a complete genealogy of the family, and 60 years later, the loss still haunted Tarr. He returned to the state, hoping to find the book. He placed personal ads in the newspapers, but there is no record to show if his efforts met with success.

During WWI, a Canadian stationed in Dublin wrote home to tell his family that he had found a family bible with original military certificates belonging to his 2nd great grandfather. The certificates contained the original signatures of King George II, and the soldier realized for the first time that military service ran in his family.

More recently, some genealogists have discovered their family bible for sale on eBay. In 2011, a South Carolina man came across his family bible and purchased the book for $165. The book originally belonged to his 4th great-grandfather and dated to the 1700s.



Roger L. Sibley, Zephyrhills building contractor, had the thrill of a lifetime recently when a soldered copper box taken from the cornerstone of the now demolished 63-year-old First Methodist Church sanctuary was opened.

Among the contents was a Bible his grandparents, **Mr.and Mrs. George W. Marston,** had given for the cornerstone laying in 1914.

The Tampa Tribune May 11, 1977

Newspapers include many more stories about people finding their family bibles. A Florida man was thrilled to discover his family bible inside the cornerstone of a church scheduled for demolition. Another family found an 1850 bible under their stairway. An abandoned ranch contained a dust-covered family bible still proudly displayed on a table.

Have we piqued your interest? Searching the newspapers for information about your family bible is like a treasure hunt.

(Reprinted from Newspapers.com)

WEBSITES OF POSSIBLE INTEREST

New Resource for African-American Genealogy: IAAM Center for Family History

The International African American Museum (IAAM), open in early 2020 in Charleston, SC, includes a Center for Family History dedicated to helping researchers trace African-Americans in their family trees.

It sounds like a long time to wait, but the center's website is already available, with a growing collection of obituary, funeral and marriage records, as well as research tips in a Learning Library and a blog by professional genealogist Robin Foster.

Toni Carrier, founder of the LowCountry Africana website, is developing the IAAM Center for Family History. Staff will assist researchers in finding resources about their families and help with DNA testing.

The $75 million museum and research center will be located at Charleston's former Gadsden's Wharf, where almost half of all enslaved Africans first arrived in America via the Transatlantic Slave Trade. You can see artist's renderings of the museum here.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL MEMORIAL DAY REMEMBRANCE EVENT - Following the American Civil War, a "Decoration Day" began in communities across America remembering soldiers who gave the ultimate sacrifice. Senator John A. Logan, a former Union officer on staff with Major General William T. Sherman, was instrumental in making this a formal national day honoring our fallen soldiers, which became Memorial Day. Join military historians representing the American soldier of all time periods throughout our nation's history. Program is Saturday 10am-4pm at Bennett Place State Historic Site, 4409 Bennett Memorial Road Durham, NC 27705

HUMOR

Two Reasons Why It's So Hard To Solve A Redneck Murder:

1. The DNA all matches.

2. There are no dental records.

PARTING THOUGHT

'Love is what's in the room with you at Christmas if you stop opening presents and just listen.' Bobby - age 7.

In light of what has happened to our country in the last couple of weeks, let's listen to little kids instead of politicians.

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit for future publication, please contact Richard Ellington at mailto:richard_ellington@unc.edu or 919.932-0516