

## Highlights

- Calendar of Meetings/Events
- NARA Interview
- Federal Land Records Update

## Inside

- Polish-Americans on the 1990 Census
- Ships' Lists Transcribed
- FHC Research Up

# THE MESA DWELLERS

## CALENDAR

### DECEMBER

- 3 Christmas Party

### JANUARY

*Beginning Genealogy  
Classes, contact Museum of  
Western CO, 242-0971.*

- 14 *Estate Administration  
and Beyond.*

*With Baird Brown.*

### FEBRUARY

- 11 Election of Officers.  
*Helping new members get  
started.*

### MARCH

- 11 *The French in Canada:  
Research Made Easy.*  
*With Pat Kemper*

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*Note: Unless otherwise stated all  
meetings are at 7:00 p.m. at the  
C.D. Smith Building, 5<sup>th</sup> and Ute.*

*NARA Interview: Space Study is  
'not just a matter of saving costs. It  
is a matter of finding cost effective  
ways of providing safety and access  
to records.'*

*By William Wong William  
Wong is a freelance writer based in the  
San Francisco Bay Area. He has been  
following the NARA space planning  
process.*

*The following questions and answers are the  
result of an interview conducted at the  
National Archives and Records*

*Administration headquarters in College Park,  
MD, on June 24, 1998, with Gerald W.  
George, director of the NARA policy and  
communications staff, and Lori A. Lisowski,  
assistant director of the NARA policy and  
communications staff, and of subsequent e-mail  
clarifying questions that were answered on July  
7, 1998, by another policy and communications  
staff member.*

**Q:** What is the purpose of the NARA  
space plan study?

**A:** The cost of storing records is  
sizable. The largest volume is in the  
records centers. They have 18 million  
cubic feet of records. The archives  
have two million cubic feet. The cost of  
storing records and acquiring and  
renting space is close to 50 percent of  
NARA's budget. This does not include  
service (maintenance) costs. The  
proportion of funds for space  
maintenance is growing, as the federal  
government generates more records.  
The basis for our concern is that if we  
cannot control our space costs, funds  
for services will gradually be eroded.

With too many fixed costs -- space and  
personnel -- we will not have  
discretionary income for services. We  
are not here just to store and warehouse  
records. We are looking for ways to  
increase our discretionary dollars, and  
we don't want to do that by cutting  
personnel.

**Q:** What percent of the nearly 50  
percent goes to acquiring, renting and  
maintaining the regional archives, and,  
separately, the regional records centers?

**A:** During the fiscal year ended Sept.  
30, 1997, the total NARA operating  
expense budget was \$202,005,000. Of  
this amount, \$88,423,000, or 45

percent, was space costs. Of this  
\$88,423,000, \$29,688,000 was  
associated with Archives II (the  
College Park headquarters and  
archives facility), and \$58,735,000  
with other facilities. The  
\$58,735,000 is broken down this  
way: \$31,753,000 rent,  
\$26,307,000 operation and  
maintenance, and \$675,000 for  
recurring and non-recurring  
reimbursables. Rental costs for  
field facilities was \$30,465,000,  
excluding operation and  
maintenance.

We do not have a breakdown  
between regional archives and  
regional records centers because  
most of them are located in the  
same facility.

**Q:** The NARA space planning  
effort appears to be concentrated  
on consolidating the regional  
archives and regional records  
facilities, excluding Archives I (in  
Washington, D.C.), Archives II (in  
College Park), and the presidential  
libraries. Why are you  
concentrating your efforts on  
consolidating regional centers  
when I have been told by  
knowledgeable outsiders that the  
cost of regional archives space is a  
very small percentage of the  
overall NARA budget?

**A:** The cost of space is what led  
us to these deliberations. The  
question of whether we will come  
out of this process with vast cost  
savings isn't the point. It is not just  
a matter of saving costs. It  
is a matter of finding the most ➡



effective ways of providing safety to records and access to records. We have a real problem of quality of space in the regional centers. Many are at capacity or soon will be. The quality of space is equally important to saving costs of rental space. It is important for us to have enough space and the right kind of space, of having quality security, climate controls, preservation care, trained staff, and sufficient research space. Lots of our facilities are struggling in these terms. By default, the regional system is being studied.

Q: Assuming NARA decides to consolidate some of the regional archives and records centers, is it your goal to bring the new consolidated facilities up to the standards of Archives II (in College Park) for records protection and preservation?

A: NARA currently is updating its facility standards. The published standards for agency records centers (36 CFR 1228.222) are substantially unchanged since they were published in 1980, and make no distinction between short and long-term temporary records, or between pre-archival and temporary records. They are extremely vague regarding archival records. Some of our regional locations have serious plant problems. It is possible, for instance, to upgrade the San Bruno, CA, facility, but it is unlikely to happen with all of the regional centers. Some don't have the space, or their buildings are too old. Upgrading remains an option (at some of the regional centers). We are still in a fact-finding and information gathering mode. There is the public fact finding through the public forums. We have been meeting with GSA (the General Service Administration) about rents.

We are surveying our facilities. We are doing economic analysis about what makes sense. We are not focused only on consolidation.

Consolidation is a strategy. It is not necessarily an actual plan. It is a strategy, a way of getting to something. It is not a blueprint.

Q: One of U.S. Archivist John Carlin's stated goals is to make archival documents more accessible to the public, meaning greater microfilm and/or digitized access over the Internet. One inference being drawn by archival users is that NARA intends to microfilm and/or digitize all of its archival holdings and making original source material less accessible. Would you clarify NARA's goal of increasing electronic access of documents and records?

A: One goal of NARA's Electronic Access Project (EAP) is to have 100 percent of NARA's holdings described in an on-line catalog by 2007. Only a small group of high interest records (about 200,000 documents) will be digitized and made available on-line. The prototype for the catalog project is the National Archives Information Locator (NAIL). If you have not already done so, you may want to check out the latest update on this project at <http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html>.

Q: You also mentioned that NARA has microfilmed large numbers of genealogical records in the regional centers. Does NARA currently have internal microfilming capabilities?

A: In a partnership agreement, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints has microfilmed many records, most of them naturalization records, in NARA field facilities and made copies of this microfilm available to NARA for researcher use.

NARA-microfilmed census records and other microfilmed records are available

through a nationwide rental program, which currently is handled by a private contractor. NARA's internal microfilming program became inactive about 10 years ago due to budget and other restraints. However, that program is being re-examined as part of the Strategic Plan goal to improve access and as a result of feedback we have received in the space public meetings. At the public meetings currently being held across the country, NARA is asking users to suggest specific groups of records to be microfilmed.

Q: NARA receives 30-percent reimbursement from federal agencies whose records are stored in NARA records facilities. That arrangement will go to 100-percent starting next year. If this is so, doesn't that mean that some of NARA's storage costs will be reduced?

A: NARA is funded to provide storage, preservation and reference on inactive records. The records centers sometimes have provided similar services on active records, but only when reimbursed by the agency requesting the service. An alternative to this reimbursement is for the agency to contract with a private vendor. It is true that agencies will be reimbursing NARA 100 percent for storing their records, but we are not sure what the income will be. Agencies won't necessarily be paying us. Agencies wishing to store active records could contract with a private storage company instead of entering into a reimbursable agreement with NARA. We store without reimbursement inactive temporary records. If we store ➡



active records, we negotiate with the agency and it picks up the cost.

Q: Is the motivation behind NARA's space plan study a reflection of a power struggle between the central headquarters in the Washington, D.C., area and the regional facilities?

A: As with constituent concerns, the people in NARA field facilities have a real basis for concern. All of us in that situation have concerns (about possible loss of jobs and possible closure of facilities). We do not know what we are going to do yet. The field staff is of great concern to us. Since the current Archivist came on board, he has gone out of his way to emphasize that everyone at the National Archives and Records Administration is part of the staff. He has traveled to almost all of the facilities at least once.

Q: What has been the response to NARA's public meetings on the space plan?

A: There has been tremendous response by e-mail and regular mail. We have had good turnouts at our meetings. (Right after the June 16 meeting at San Bruno, CA) we got lots of messages from Chinese Americans and from those who have heard rumors about the possible closure of the San Bruno facility and from people who have suggestions and from people who tell us what they are looking for in a regional facility.

*Ancestry Daily News on  
Ancestry.com - July 29, 1998*

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Greetings! It's hard to believe but Christmas is just around the corner. Why am I never ready?!

Our fall calendar has been great. Just to recap a bit: Denis Jenkins presented a lot of information about how to research an ancestor in Federal and State Courts. I am sure many left with a renewed interest in trying to find new information using the American Digest System. An informative and interesting program in October dealt with genealogy software, both new and established programs. Some attendees were fairly new to research: it was obviously helpful to them as well as those of us who think we know what we are doing?!

Dave Fishell, led an interesting tour of the tombstones at the Orchard Mesa Cemetery in October. As usual Dave had a lot of interesting information to impart. The tour was well attended and obviously enjoyed on a rather chilly afternoon. Thanks to those from the Society who assisted the Museum with this fun event.

Just a note about a new internet site with which I have become enamored. My Scotch-Irish lines have been rather difficult to trace. Recently, I joined a mailing list, i.e., [Scotch-Irish-L@rootsweb.com](mailto:Scotch-Irish-L@rootsweb.com). This is not just endless messages about specific families traceable to a Scotch-Irish background, although there is plenty of that. The list owner, and several of the active participants are extremely knowledgeable and I have learned a lot of fascinating history. In just a month, I have accumulated a lot of information which may be useful in my quest. Not only that, but in the first week of membership, a message appeared asking if anyone was researching in Drumore Township in Lancaster

County, PA in the 1700s. Wow! That's me. I answered and the long and the short of it is, I have information possibly leading back to a 6<sup>th</sup> GGF, born in Ireland. I still have a lot of connecting to do but I have my fingers crossed. By the way, I am sure many of you have read with interest about the connection supposedly confirmed between Thomas Jefferson and his slave Sally Hemings son. A list member forwarded a fascinating article written by a Herbert Barger, Jefferson Family Researcher, refuting that Eston Hemings was the son of Thomas Jefferson. The message also stated that there was an article in the first week of November's US News & World Report about this matter.

This is just an example of how history comes alive while pursuing this fascinating hobby of genealogy research. Hope you all have a wonderful holiday season.

## LOCAL FHC LIBRARY USE IS UP

A report done for the Salt Lake City Family History Department shows that the local FHC is fast becoming a busier place.

The report shows 1,080 indefinite loan films, and 2,022 microfisch; and that's only the patrons' fische and film.

Daily attendance increased the last two years, and June, July and August had over 400 visitors each month.

In September, with a few days off for Labor Day, there were 399 visitors.

When asked what the most pressing need was for the FHC they say "more room and ➡



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newer equipment.” Look for a new film/fische copy machine set to arrive soon, and the new set of CD’s covering the North American and British information will be added in the near future.

But, when those of us who use the Library tell others how great it is, they are always envious of the hours and the equipment we have, so we should consider ourselves lucky to have the luxury of this wonderful facility. **Way to Go!**

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Documentation: Family Bible in possession of Aunt Merle until tornado hit Topeka, Kansas, now only the Good Lord knows where it is.....

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## FEDERAL LAND RECORDS - AN UPDATE

by Dennis Jenkins

I reported in an earlier issue of the Mesa Dwellers about a large project within the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to index the Federal Land Patents issued from the early 1800s to the mid-1900s.

To refresh you on the organization of the BLM, there is an Eastern States Office (ESO) in Virginia that manages public lands in the 30 states that are located east of, or bordering on the Mississippi River. Within the eastern 30 states are 13 Public Land States that had Federal Land Patents issued as the Rectangular Survey was completed. There are also eleven western State offices and numerous Field Offices through-out the west managing the Public Lands. These western State Offices and the States they manage are: Montana (including

North Dakota and South Dakota), Idaho, Oregon (including Washington), Nevada, California, Alaska, Arizona, New Mexico (including Oklahoma and Kansas), Utah, Wyoming (Including Nebraska), and Colorado.

The ESO Government Land Office Indexing Project has been going on for a number of years and continues today. CD Rom indexes have been issued for Ohio, Michigan, Florida, Louisiana, Arkansas, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Missouri, Mississippi, Alabama, and Indiana. Illinois is done, but I have not seen a CD Rom issued yet. Iowa is still being indexed.

Recently the ESO put the indexes for twelve states on the Internet. Each state can be searched and a copy of the Federal Land Patent downloaded to your computer. The location for this index on the internet is:  
<http://www.glorerecords.glm.gov/>  
You need to have software that will allow you to display and print these graphics images. The internet site above will help you download the needed software.

You might be wondering if the BLM will index the remaining seventeen western Public Land States. Actually, the BLM has a method of locating the land patents for these remaining seventeen states. The Automated Land and Minerals Record System (ALMRS) is an information system that will give the public comprehensive access to public land records. Recently researchers have been given partial access to ALMRS at various State Offices. The current process can be cumbersome since the pre-1908 patents require you to research more than one database. The complete ALMRS project is close to being available in all Field Offices. At first it will be available State by State in their respective offices. Eventually the land

records for all seventeen western states are expected to be available to the public at every BLM office. To check on the current status of the ALMRS project, go to the following internet address:

<http://www.blm.gov/nirmc/almrs>  
We expect the ALMRS to be available in New Mexico in early 1999 and Colorado is not far behind. ALMRS will not allow you to download the actual patent document for the seventeen western states. You will need to write down the specific information that is found in the ALMRS and write or call the state offices to order a copy of the patent for \$1.25 each.

Currently most field offices and state offices have public rooms with a computer hooked up to the Internet and available for the public to use. For example, you can come into the Grand Junction BLM field office, search the Internet for the twelve eastern states mentioned above, print out a copy of the patent for only \$.35 each. Colorado expects to have the ALMRS system running in 1999 at which time the public can come in and access Colorado Federal land patent information. Once the ALMRS is working correctly, access at any BLM office is expected to include all the western Public Land States.

It should be noted that the CD Roms are still a valuable index, since there are methods of searching that can be done on the CD Rom database that cannot be done on the Internet Database.

You can contact me at the BLM at [REDACTED] to get more information on these records.



## IMMIGRANT SHIPS' LISTS BEING TRANSCRIBED FOR THE 'NET

A new website is being developed by a group called "The Immigrant Ships Transcribers Guild". This is a group of over 100 volunteers who have decided to transcribe NARA microfilmed passenger lists so that everyone on the internet can have free access to such lists.

In Addition, the Guild is receiving donations of lists which have already been transcribed from people on the 'net and from webmasters. The Guild is also preparing links to many sites dealing with ships and passengers lists throughout the world.

To date 50 lists have been transcribed by volunteers, another 100 are in the works, 100 lists have been donated to the site, and many sites agreeing to link their ships and sites.

They will accept transcribed lists if you would like to donate your work. You can contact Joan Rasanen, Resource Coordinator at [Joaras@aol.com](mailto:Joaras@aol.com) giving her the name of the ship, ports of departure and arrival as well as the dates of each, and your e-mail address.

You can search the lists at <http://iigs.rootsweb.com/immships/index1.html>

*Information provided by Susan Scott on the Dumfries-Galloway rootsweb list.*

*In England and Wales birth registration did not become mandatory until 1875, when a fine was imposed for non-compliance.*

## POLISH-AMERICANS ON THE 1990 CENSUS

Tom Sliwa, Aurora, IL reports on the Poland-Roots website the following information on Polish-Americans.

There were 9.4 million people who

listed Polish as their ancestry in the 1990 census. The statistics do not include those with any Polish ancestry, only those that have a majority Polish ancestry.

The following counties had over 10% of the population who listed Polish first as their ancestry:

Illinois: Washington; Indiana: St. Joseph; Massachusetts: Franklin, Hampshire, and Hampden; Michigan: Iron, Presque Isle, Alpena, Otsega, Manistee, Arenac, Bay, Huron, and Macomb; Minnesota: Marshall, Morrison, and Benton; Montana: Wibaux; Nebraska: Valley, Sherman, Howard, and Nance; New York: Erie, Montgomery; Pennsylvania: Erie, Lacawanna, Luzerne, and Northumberland; Texas: Karnes, Wilson; Wisconsin: Milwaukee, Trempleau, Green Lake, Portage, Marathon, Rusk, and Marinette.

Only five states have no counties with at least 1% Polish-Americans: Hawaii, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Kentucky. Metro areas with 10% or more Polish-Americans: Chicago/Gary, Cleveland, Toledo, Baltimore, Detroit, and Pittsburgh.

Most counties of Connecticut and New Jersey have 5-10%.

Many counties of Wisconsin, Michigan, New York and Pennsylvania have over 5%.

## WAS IT MEG, OR WAS IT PEG?

Surname spelling variants and nicknames are stumbling blocks that can confuse our research effort. Of these two, nicknames may be harder to associate with a specific ancestor. Most nicknames are endearing diminutives that parents used, but over the life of our ancestor they may have almost entirely replaced that name that was given at birth and the letters that we have inherited may refer to them only by nicknames.

For example, the first name Margaret, from the Greek meaning "a pearl", has several nicknames, some of which may not be obvious. Among these are

Marguerite, Margarita, Rita, Maggie, Meg, Meta, Maddie, Madge, Marjorie, Margery, Margie, Margot, May, Mog, Mimmi, Maisie, Daisy, Peggy, Pet, Pog, Greta, Gretel, and Gretchen.

(Note: Thanks to member Liz Mustee for passing along the above article which she found in the Sept./Oct, 1998 issue of Heritage Quest magazine.)

## CELTIC SOCIETY FESTIVAL DREW LOTS OF INTEREST

Membership Chairman Ron Knapp reported the Society's booth at the September Highland Games drew a good crowd of interested people; many of whom took membership information.

Ron sends his thanks to all those who volunteered to help at the booth, and he looks forward to doing it again next year.





# MESA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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## 1998/1999 OFFICERS

President, Jody Nestler,  
Vice President, Donna Roberts  
Secretary, Diana Sheldon,  
Treasurer, Laveta Kay,  
Corr. Sec'try, Wynona Hennessey

## ELECTED OFFICERS

One Year - Norm Kronvall  
Two Year - Joan Chaffin  
Three Year - Betty Jane Grosskopf

## COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

AGLL Librarian, Betty Jane Grosskopf,  
Historian, Jeanne Edwards,  
MCGS Librarian, Gloria Heitsman,  
Membership, Ron Knapp,  
Programs, Dennis Jenkins,  
Computer/Web Page Editor, Rick Sheldon,  
Newsletter Editor, Juanita Moston,

The Mesa County Genealogical Society was established in 1980 as a non-profit organization to promote an interest in genealogy. A Newsletter is published in March, June, September and December. Regular meetings are held at the Museum of Western Colorado, C. D. Smith Building, 5th. and Ute Ave., Grand Junction, CO at 7:00 p.m., on the second Thursday of each month. Visitors are welcome. Annual Dues \$10 Singles; \$12 Family. Membership period is March 1st to April 30th. Those with **UNPAID DUES** (after April 30th.) will not receive the Newsletter. **Send a SASE to receive a current membership card if you do not attend regular meetings.**

Contributions, or written stories, requests, queries, or other information of importance are welcomed. Please direct your information to Editor Juanita Moston, [REDACTED] Grand Junction, CO 81504-4219, or [REDACTED]. The Society reserves the right to edit or refuse submissions.

*Welcome new members Townsend "Tony:" Hooper, Elaine D. Eddy, and Tammy Nelson.*



Mesa County Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 1506  
Grand Junction, CO 81502

Our 2nd great-grandfather was found dead crossing the plains in the library.