

AMES FREE LIBRARY GENEALOGY CLUB

Who We Are

The Ames Free Library Genealogy Club is a group dedicated to helping each other with genealogical research. The group is free and open to all who have an interest in family history. We meet monthly to use the library's free access to ancestry.com. Research help and access to the New England Historic Genealogical Society databases will be provided by local historian Ed Hands. Now in our third season, the group is adding this monthly newsletter and other features during the year.

Meeting Dates

February 11, 2017

March 11, 2017

April 8, 2017

May 13, 2017

June 10, 2017

Queset House 2:30-4:30

February Meeting

Hi, welcome to the sixth edition of the Genealogical Club Newsletter. **We will be meeting this Saturday, February 11, 2017 at Queset House.** The club is open to all with an interest in genealogy. Please talk up the group to your friends, and if you have any suggestion for changes or additions to our meetings, please let me know.

Ancestry DNA

As regular members of the Genealogy Club know, I have not been overly impressed with my results from Ancestry's DNA testing. The four DNA circles I have definite connections to bring me back to 2nd and 3rd great-grand parents and relatives I already vaguely knew that were out there. The 136 other Ancestry members that might be sixth cousins or closer all have family trees that are "unavailable" so that gives me zero information unless I contact them personally.

My frustration changed the other day when I got an e-mail from Ancestry announcing the discovery of a new 6-8th cousin predicted with moderate confidence. A check of the information led to "lbrand65" in Long Beach, California. A further check of the data show we share a common great grandmother nine generations ago. This is Janet Seaforth, born in Northern Ireland in 1671 who died in Londonderry, New Hampshire in 1732. Thus, she is my first immigrant



New In Ancestry

Here's a tip on doing your own research into what's new on Ancestry. Open the search menu's drop down and go to the card catalog, the listing of all of Ancestry's databases. Access its sort by menu and click on date added. Databases added within the last 90 days will have a New tag. If you hover over a name, the actual date added will pop up.

The next thing you should know is that many of these new databases are not yet indexed which means that names will not show up in a normal ancestry search. You have to open the database and work your way through the database looking for your ancestors.

Last month Ancestry added about 11 million records.

Highlights include:

Selected Lutheran Vital Statistics from Prussia from 1661 to 1844

Church of England records from the island of Jersey (1540-1940)

Belgium, Civil Registration records (1582-1914)

Delaware, Marriage Records (1750-1954)

Moray, Scotland Local Heritage Index (1632-2014)

ancestor to be identified by DNA. Janet married John McKean who died shortly before the family emigrated to New Hampshire in 1717. Janet brought her four children with her and remarried a few years after arrival. My new cousin is a descendent of John McKean, Jr. who became the ancestor of the Nova Scotia branch of the family. The middle brother moved to the Middle Colonies and became the ancestor of Thomas McKean, a signer of the Declaration of Independence. The youngest brother, Samuel, my ancestor, stayed in New Hampshire and became the founder of the New England branch of the family. This line descends directly to my mother who was a McKean. A straight line of descent for eight generations from McKean to McKean back to Ireland is an exciting find and a challenge for further research. The McKean definitely only spent one generation in Northern Ireland after leaving their native Scotland. Did Janet Seaforth's family do the same?

More on Winter Clean-Ups

I'm still working through the results of the winter clean-up of my family tree that I wrote about last month. Things got so complicated that I actually created a new family tree on Ancestry. Last month I predicted that doing the clean-up would allow you to find new relatives. It worked; my Hands line led back to an Elliot family in East Coker, England. My college English major finally paid off when I recognized East Coker as a poem by T. S. Eliot and soon enough I found the genealogical connection. On another line the new information allowed me to make a tentative conclusion that I'm descended from Rebecca Beard instead of Rebecca Bearth. Still suspicious on that one as some family member in Maine must have French-Canadian roots.

Surprisingly, the clean-up also caused me to lose relatives including several generations of the Hands line. The clean-up pointed to too many candidates to be the father of my third great grandfather Richard Hands. That line is already too complex as Richard's grown up son married the grown up daughter of Richard's second wife!