

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 9, 2019

March 9, 2019

April 13, 2019

May 11, 2019

June 8, 2019

Queset House 2:30-4:30

Dates in Red are the 3rd Saturday

February Meeting

The February Meeting of the Ames Free Library Genealogy Club will take place this Saturday, February 9 at Queset House from 2:30-4:30.

Projects versus Walls

As genealogists we tend to bang away on those impenetrable walls until we get frustrated and quit. Finding that mysterious ancestor that has frustrated us for years is part of the fun of research, but sometimes its better to leave that research, hoping that Ancestry will publish the key document you need next month. When you hit the wall, its always good to have a project.

A project can be as simple as checking out all the "leaves" in an ancestry tree or getting the official birth, death, and marriage records of everyone on the first page of an Ancestry family tree, or to do the same back to each immigrant ancestor. Another kind of project would attempt to find all the soldiers in your family tree who fought in the Revolution or all the Pilgrims. Still another project would be to map the distribution of immigrant ancestors in a particular country-this one is getting easier with Ancestry's mapping ability. You could also collect occupations. For the last century or so you can also collect causes of death. Are there any patterns? With occupations you might discover how different families met. Any collection of "big data" can have surprising results



2018 at Ancestry.com

Last year Ancestry added 260 million individual records bringing their total number of records to 20 billion. An increasing number of these records are indexed making them available in direct searches and as “leaves.” Many more records can only be found through the card catalog. The 20 billion records come from 80 different countries with any increasing focus on countries outside of western Europe.

Ancestry added 10 million family trees during the course of the year bringing their total to 100 million trees. This is a little misleading as it includes a large number of two generation trees from new people playing around with Ancestry DNA. There is also no guarantee that a particular family tree is actually accurate in whole or in part.

Along with improvements in reporting DNA results, Ancestry reached the 10 million mark in people taking their version of the DNA test.

New Book

The Easton Historical Society is offering a very interesting new book that has some connection to genealogy. This is Vincent F. Luti’s **In Death Remembered: 18th Century Gravestone Carvers of the Taunton River Basin**. The author’s research has uncovered several previously unknown gravestone carvers who developed a unique style not found elsewhere. The book has great pictures and teaches you how to recognize stones by individual carvers. For carver David Linkon of Norton there are actual Easton stones identified. Even more fun is the possibility that there may be currently

unidentified stones by a Taunton carver named Cyrus Deane. The book normally sells for \$35, but due to a special deal worked out by Historical Society Curator Frank Meninno we are selling them for \$15 starting at this Sunday’s open house.

Descendancy

Speaking of projects, one that might be fun to try is a list of all descendants of a particular ancestor. I’m working on one that attempts to trace all the descendants of my great-great grandfather Abraham Hands who died in 1863. He makes an interesting study because he had two sons who came to America and a son and daughter who remained in England. The research has led to contacts with lost relatives in both countries.

In an earlier newsletter I mentioned how this type of research can be used to find relatives to visit in “the old country,” but one problem is that the closer you come to the present the more relatives you’ll have and the more likely their data will be protected by privacy laws such as the 72 year embargo on US Federal Censuses. Crista Cowan has a nice YouTube video on getting around these post-1940 roadblocks. Quickly, one place to start is a search of obituaries. City directories are another source of information. Ancestry’s collection covers 1822 through 1995. At some point your research will turn into a modern missing persons search and there are a whole range of for-pay “white page” websites for that