



Vice President: Lou Bishop Jr.
21 Schoolhouse Ln, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210
609-463-9277 or 741-5438
southwilriseagain@aol.com

Secretary: Pat Munson-Siter
42 Franklin Ave., Villas, NJ 08251-2407
609-287-5097
ladyzymitar@hotmail.com

Treasurer: Jim Marshall
202 Bartram Ln., Ocean City, NJ 08226
609-602-3243
jim@jimocnj.com

REMINDER:
DUES FOR 2014 ARE DUE NOW!!!!
Send to Jim Marshall, address above

**Cape May County Civil War Round Table
Newsletter
June 2014**

Meeting Schedule

19 June: Don Emsburger will be telling us about the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House. **Refreshments:** Lou Bishop

17 July: Frank O'Reilly, Fredricksburg National Park Ranger, will talk to us about the Battle of the Wilderness, May 5 – 7 1864. **Refreshments;** Wendy & Lisa

14 August: Refreshments: Carol Ruhl

18 September: Tracy Evans of the National Park Service will be lecturing on the Battle of Monocacy. **Refreshments:** Pat Munson-Siter

20 September: *BUS TRIP TO GETTYSBURG!!!* We will have a licensed battlefield tour guide and a buffet lunch, and free time in the afternoon to wander through town. We will leave the Cape May Court House Acme at 7am. Cost will be \$65 (which is a REAL BARGAIN!!!) More information soon.

16 October: Possibly a presentation on the Battle of New Market. **Refreshments:** John Burke

20 November: John Burke will be lecturing on the subject of the Battle of Franklin **Refreshments:** Mike Golla

?? December:

Reminder: If possible, it's best to have TWO folks providing refreshments. Anyone care to volunteer to help out any of the folks who have already signed up for refreshments?

Round Table Officers

President: Marty Runner
1402 Rt 9 South, Lot 193, Cape May Court House, NJ 08210

**Minutes of the Business Meeting
15 May 2014**

John Burke, former CWRT President, called the meeting to order. We saluted the flag and held a moment of silence for those who stand in harms' way to protect the rest of us.

President Runner is currently in Arizona. Our presenter had to cancel due to illness, so there will not be a presentation tonight.

No corrections or additions have been submitted to the minutes for the April meeting, so the minutes were approved as written.

The Treasurer is absent, so there is no treasurer's report.

Pres. Runner has arranged for a guided bus trip to Gettysburg for 20 Sept. We will meet at the parking lot at the Court House Acme at 7am. It will cost \$65 for members, which needs to be sent to Treasurer Marshall. We need at least 40 members. Trip will be open to non members as well. Secretary will contact the County Historical Society to have our trip mentioned in their newsletter. Trip will consist of a three hour guided tour, a buffet lunch at "Pickett's Buffett," and free time in the afternoon to walk through the town, visit the historic houses and other sites, and shopping.

There will be a Civil War event involving a re-enactment of a Courts Martial of the 17th VA at CSV (it will have already taken place by the time this newsletter goes out – one more reason to start visiting our Facebook Page, to get info in between newsletters!). Our Round Table is supporting the event, and the decision

was made to ask for a 'minimum donation of \$5' rather than a set fee to attend.

George Brewer said he had gone on one of the "John Wilkes Booth Escape Route" tour (which shows up in our list of re-enactments every month) by Surratt House. \$70 bus tour, 7am to 7pm. He says it is well worth the price. Starts and ends at the Surratt Museum.

There is the possibility we may be able to arrange a dinner at the Union Club along with a tour of the facility. Bill Hughes from Old Baldy says his group has met there and it is a very nice museum with great exhibits.

Discussion of Friends of the Wilderness Battlefield group. After a discussion of what historic structures, battlefields, museums and so on that they support, we agreed to put them on our list for future donations.

Amazon.com has instituted a new sister website which lets you donate a portion of the money you use to buy items from amazon to a charity of your choosing. Go to smile.amazon.com, chose which charity you want your donations to go to, and make your future purchases through that site. You use the same username and password as you do for the main site. If you use a Kindle, don't buy your books through the device, as the Kindle goes to the main site and not smile.amazon.com

There being no further business, the business meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted:

Pat Munson-Siter
Secretary, Cape May County Civil War Round Table



Important Civil War Events that Occurred in July

1861

- 11 Battle of Rich Mountain (now WV)
- 21 Battle of First Manassas (Bull Run)

1862

- 1 Battle of Malvern Hill (VA)

1863

- 1-3 Battle of Gettysburg
- 4 Vicksburg surrenders to Grant

- 13-16 New York City draft riots
1864
- 9 Battle of Monocacy (MD)
- 20 Battle at Peachtree Creek (GA)
- 22 Battle of Atlanta
- 24 Second battle of Kernstown (VA)
- 30 Battle of "The Crater" at Petersburg
- 30 Confederate cavalry burn Chambersburg (PA)

Civil War Re-Enactments and other Civil War Related Events in July 2014

- 1-4 **PA** Anniversary ranger tours and other programs at the Gettysburg National Military Park. Free. Schedule: nps.gov/gett
- 2 **VA** Book talk, "Living Hell: The Dark Side of the Civil War," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 3 **MD** Lecture, "Battle of West Frederick, July 7, 1864," at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. 7:30 pm. 301-695-1864.
- 4 **MD** Living history, special exhibits "Ransom of Hagerstown — 1864," with the Fourth of July celebration at the Hagerstown Fairgrounds, 400 Mulberry St, Hagerstown. 3 pm-dark. Free. hagerstownmd.org
- 4 **PA** Tour and candlelight program, "War Returns to South Mountain, Battle of Monterey Pass Commemoration" at the Monterey Pass Battlefield Park near Blue Ridge Summit. Tour 5 pm, Candlelight tour 8 pm. montereypassbattlefield.org
- 4-6 **PA** Book talks and signings at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 9:30 am-5:30 pm. Free. nps.gov/gett
- 4-6 **PA** Reenactment, "Gettysburg," on Pumping Station Road near Gettysburg. Gates open 8:30 am each day. Battles 6 pm Friday, 11 am and 5 pm Saturday, and 11 am and 2:30 pm Sunday. Ticket info: gettysburgreenactment.com
- 5 **MD** "Frederick Ransomed! 1864: The Final Invasion," in downtown Frederick. See the original ransom note at the Museum of Frederick County, other activities 3-9 pm. Details: 301-698-8118.
- 5 **MD** Talk, "Treating Orthopedic Injuries from the Battle of Monocacy," at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. 2 pm. Free

- with museum admission. CivilWarMed.org
- 5 **VA**  Lecture, "The Nature of Sacrifice — Union Cavalry Officers and the Fight at Mount Zion, at the Mt. Zion Church Historic Park, 40309 John Mosby Highway, Aldie. \$10/adult. 703-327-9777.
- 5 **VA** Walking tour, "Battle of Smithfield," meets at the Isle of Wight Museum in Smithfield. 2 pm. Free. historicisleofwight.com
- 5 **VA** Guided walking tour of Fort Huger, 15080 Talcott Terrace, on the James River near Smithfield. 10 am. Free. 757-357-0115.
- 5 **PA** "Stories and Songs of a Civil War Hospital," music and readings at Christ Church, 30 Chambersburg St, Gettysburg. 8 pm. Free. candlelightchrist.org
- 5 **PA** Living history commemorates the role Monterey Pass played in 1864 raids in the area at the Monterey Pass Battlefield Park near Blue Ridge Summit. 9 am-5 pm. Free. montereypassbattlefield.org
- 5 **PA** Living history, "Confederates Take the Shriver House," annual event at the Shriver House in Gettysburg. 5-9 pm. \$12/adult. shriverhouse.org
- 5 **PA** "An Evening with the Painting," after-hours extended look at the Gettysburg Cyclorama at the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 6 pm. \$20. gettysburgfoundation.org
- 5-6 **MD**  Anniversary medical programs at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Free. civilwarmed.org
- 5-11 **MD**  Anniversary activities commemorating the Battle of Monocacy at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Living history, ranger hikes, special exhibits and more. Free. nps.gov/mono
- 6 **VA**  Living history, "Cavaliers, Courage and Coffee: Cavalry Clash at Mount Zion, July 6. 1864," at the Mt. Zion Church Historic Park, 40309 John Mosby Highway, Aldie. 6:30 pm. \$8/adult. 703-327-9777.
- 6 **VA** Lectures, "Fur and Feathers in the Fight: Civil War Mascots," at the Petersburg National Battlefield visitor center. 11 am and 2 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/pete
- 6 **MD** Kayak tour, "Antietam Creek" focus is on Civil War history. \$110 includes brunch, kayak rental. rivertrail.com/kayak-antietam-creek-brunch.php
- 6 **MD** Music, "Songs From the Camps: A Civil War Picnic Concert," at the National Shrine of St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton, 339 Seaton Ave, Emmitsburg. 4 pm. Free. setonheritage.org
- 7 **MD**  Film, "Heart of the Civil War" helps commemorate Middletown's 1864 ransom during the Early Raid at the town hall, 31 W Main St, Middletown. 8 pm. 301-371-6171.
- 9 **MD**  Lecture and exhibit opening with the original Middletown ransom note from 1864, at the Middletown Valley Bank, 24 W Main St, Middletown. 6 pm. \$35. civilwarmiddletownmd.com
- 9 **VA** Talk, "Early's Threat to Washington," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox. 12:15 pm. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 10 **DC** Behind-the-scenes tour of Ford's Theatre in Washington includes areas not usually open to the public. 5 pm. \$52. fords.org
- 10 **MD** Book talk, "Edward Hanger," Civil War amputee and manufacturer of prosthetic limbs, at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. 7:30 pm. 310-695-1864.
- 11 **VA** "Jackson at Moss Neck" a Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP History at Sunset program, at 18383 Moss Neck Manor Road, near Fredericksburg. 7 pm. Free. 540-373-6122.
- 11 **VA** "Spies, Family Fun Day," at the "In the Cause of Liberty," with talks and living history at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. 10 am-4 pm.. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 12 **MD**  Living history, tours, music and more commemorating Middletown's 1864 Civil War Ransom, in downtown Middletown. 10 am-5 pm. civilwarmiddletownmd.com
- 12 **VA** Car-caravan tour, Brandy Station battlefield (Buford Knoll and Yew Ridge). Begins at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 10 am-noon. \$10/adult. brandystationfoundation.com
- 12 **VA** Van tour, "Howlett Line," guided tour of the Confederate defenses at Bermuda Hundred south of Richmond. Leaves from Henricus Historical Park. 10 am-2 pm. \$15. Register: chesterfieldhistory.com (click Civil War Tours).
- 12 **VA** Living history walking tour, "City Point's Tom Sawyer," civilian life at the Grant's HQ at City Point in Hopewell. 10:30 am, 1 and 3 pm. Free.

- nps.gov/pete
- 12-13 **DC**  Commemoration of the Battle of Fort Stevens at Fort Stevens, near 13th Street and Georgia Avenue in Washington. Keynote speaker 10 am-noon Saturday. Living history, tours and more 12:30-4 pm Sunday. Free. nps.gov/cwdw or 202-426-7723 extension 101.
- 12-13 **MD**  Living history, "Retreat from Monocacy," Civil War weekend at the Ellicott City B&O Railroad Station in Ellicott City. 11 am-4 pm. borail.org
- 12-13 **MD**  "Commemoration of Maryland Emancipation," with living history, music and more at the Monocacy National Battlefield in Frederick. Free. nps.gov/mono
- 12-13 **MD**  Reenactment at Rose Hill Manor Park, 1611 N Market St, Frederick. Focus is on the anniversary of the nearby Battle of Monocacy. Living history camps and demonstrations 10 am-4 pm Saturday and 10 am-3 pm Sunday. Battles at 2 pm each day. \$3/per day. rosehillmuseum.com
- 12-13 **VA**  Reenactment, "Battle of Fort Stevens," at Fort Ward in Alexandria. Camps and demonstrations 10 am-5 pm Saturday, 10 am-3 pm Sunday. Battle at 2 pm Saturday, concert 2 pm Sunday. \$2/\$5 max family. fortward.org
- 13 **DC**  Memorial program commemorating the anniversary of the Battle of Fort Stevens, at Battleground National Cemetery, 6625 Georgia Ave NW, Washington. 2-4 pm. Free. nps.gov/cwdw
- 13 **DC PA** Bus tour, "Three Decisive Days at Gettysburg (Day 1)" with Ed Bearss. A Smithsonian tour. Leaves 8 am from 550 C St SW in Washington. \$185. Smithsonian Associates event. More info, tickets: tinyurl.com/muyaqub
- 13 **MD** Talk, "John Wilkes Booth and Tudor Hall," at Tudor Hall, home of the Booth family, 17 Tudor Lane, Bel Air. 2 pm. \$5/adult. spiritoftudorhall.blogspot.com
- 13 **VA** "Meet the Curator," focus on a special item at the "In the Cause of Liberty," exhibit at the Civil War Center at Tredegar in Richmond. 1 pm. Free with museum admission. tredegar.org
- 13 **VA** "Civil War Songs and Letters," music performed by Dead Man's Hollow with dramatic Civil War letter and diary readings at the Lubber Run Amphitheater, Columbus Street and Secondnd Street North, Arlington. 6 pm. Free. deadmenhollow.com/wordpress
- 13 **VA** Book talk, "Like a Hurricane — Mosby," at the Manassas Museum. 2 pm Free. manassasmuseum.org
- 16 **DC** Lecture with tour, "Clara Barton's Missing Soldiers Office: An Historic Rediscovering on 7th Street." Lecture 6:45 pm at the Ripley Center, 1100 Jefferson Drive SW, Washington. Lecture 6:45 pm. (Tour options on July 17 or 19.) \$57. Smithsonian Associates event. More info, tickets: tinyurl.com/17az56v
- 17 **MD**  Lecture, "The Monocacy Campaign of 1864" at the National Museum of Civil War Medicine in Frederick. 7 pm. 301-695-1864.
- 17 **DC** Seminar, "The Mystery of the Centreville Six: Forensics and the Civil War," at the Ripley Center, 1100 Jefferson Drive, Washington. 6:45 pm. \$42. Smithsonian Associates event. More info, tickets: tinyurl.com/16k23nn
- 18 **VA**  Anniversary car-caravan tour, "Battle of Cool Spring," meets at Our Lady of the Holy Cross Abbey, 901 Cool Spring Lane, Berryville. 4 pm. Free. nps.gov/cebe
- 18 **VA** Walking tour, "History Revealed: Civil War Secrets on the University of Mary Washington Campus," a Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP History at Sunset program, meets at 1004 William St, Fredericksburg. 7 pm. Free. 540-373-6122.
- 18 **VA** Talk, "Recollections of the Battle of the Crater," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Richmond. Noon. Free with museum admission. moc.org
- 19 **MD** Walking tour, "Civil War in Annapolis," two-hour tour meets at City Dock downtown at 10 am. \$16/adult. Reservations: annapolistours.com
- 19 **DC PA** Bus tour, "Three Decisive Days at Gettysburg (Day 2)" with Ed Bearss. A Smithsonian tour. Leaves 8 am from 550 C St SW in Washington. \$185. More info, tickets: tinyurl.com/muyaqub
- 19 **PA**  Commemoration of the Burning of Chambersburg. Tours, talks and simulated burning. 6-10:30 pm. Free. explorefranklincountypa.com
- 19 **PA** "Stories and Songs of a Civil War Hospital," music and readings at Christ Church, 30 Chambersburg St, Gettysburg. 8 pm. Free. candlelightatchrist.org
- 19 **VA** Walking tour, "Hazards on the Homefront," visiting prison and other downtown Richmond

- sites. Meets at the Museum of the Confederacy. \$15. Registration required: 855-649-1861 extension 121.
- 19 **VA** "Field Music of the Civil War," at the Civil War Center at Tredegar in Richmond. Noon. tredegar.org
- 19 **VA** Van tour, "Dahlgren's Raid" begins at Lee Hall Mansion in Newport News. 8 am-5 pm. \$50. Reservations: leehall.org or 757-888-3371.
- 19-20 **MD** "Children's Experience Weekend," crafts, games and more at the Pry House Field Hospital Museum on the Antietam Battlefield near Sharpsburg. 11 am-5 pm. \$5. civilwarmed.org
- 19-20 **MD** Reenactment, "Battle of Funkstown," at the Funkstown Town Park. Camps, demonstrations and battles on the historic "Retreat from Gettysburg" battlefield. battle-of-funkstown.com
- 19-20 **PA** Living history, "2nd U.S. Sharpshooters," at the National Civil War Museum in Harrisburg. Camps and demonstrations 9 am-4 pm Saturday, 10 am-4 pm Sunday. nationalcivilwarmuseum.org
- 19-20 **VA**  Bus tour, living history, music and more, "Second Battle of Kernstown," at the battlefield off Route 11 south of Winchester. Complete details: kernstownbattle.org
- 19-20 **VA** Anniversary living history camps and special tours at the Manassas National Battlefield. nps.gov/mana
- 19-20 **VA** Living history and tours, "Pringle House Hospital Weekend," medical demonstrations and exhibits at the Ben Lomond Historic Site, 10321 Sudley Manor Drive, Manassas. Modern blood drive Friday. \$5 (free to blood donors). 703-367-7872.
- 20 **VA**  Anniversary car-caravan tour, "The Battle of Rutherford's Farm," meets at the Civil War Trails marker cluster just off Route 11 in the Rutherford Crossing Shopping Center, I-81 (exit 317). 4 pm. Free. nps.gov/cebe
- 20 **VA**  Lecture, "The Siege of Petersburg: The Stories the Cemeteries Tell," at the Petersburg National Battlefield visitor center. 11 am and 2 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/pete
- 20 **VA** Gallery Tour, "Paths to Freedom," at the "In the Cause of Liberty" exhibit at the Civil War Center at Tredegar in Richmond. 1 pm. Free with museum admission. tredegar.org
- 22 **VA** Lecture, "Appomattox: Victory, Defeat, and Freedom at the End of the Civil War," at the Virginia State Library, 800 E Broad St, Richmond. Noon. Free. lva.virginia.gov
- 23-27 **PA** Seminar and tours, "Terror on the Border: Summer 1864" based in Chambersburg. Tours include Shenandoah Valley and burning of Chambersburg. Details and reservations: chambersburgCivilWarSeminars.org
- 24 **VA**  Car-caravan tour, "The Second Battle of Kernstown," south of Winchester. 4-6 pm. Free. nps.gov/cebe
- 24 **VA** Lecture, "From Belles to Battleaxes," at the Museum of the Confederacy in Appomattox. 6:30 pm (reception, lecture follows). \$5. moc.org
- 25 **VA** "Steamships, Slaves, Railroads and Armies," a Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania NMP History at Sunset program meets at Aquia Landing, 2846 Brooke Road, Stafford. 7 pm. Free. 540-373-6122.
- 26 **MD**  Tours, music and more commemorate the 1864 Ransom of Hancock at Widmeyer Park, 126 W High St, Hancock. heartofthecivilwar.org/calendar
- 26 **MD** Living history, "Union Artillery at Antietam," camp and demonstrations at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. Free with park admission. nps.gov/anti
- 26 **VA** Lecture, "Hell is being Republican in Virginia': The Post-War Relationship Between John S. Mosby and Ulysses S. Grant," at Historic Blenheim, 3610 Old Lee Highway, Fairfax. 2 pm. Free. 703-591-0560.
- 26 **VA** Car-caravan tour, Brandy Station battlefield (Beverly Ford and St. James Church). Begins at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 10 am-noon. \$10/adult. brandystationfoundation.com
- 26 **VA** Living history, "Medical Reenactor John Pelletier" at Ellwood, a Union headquarters during the Battle of the Wilderness just off Route 20 near Route 3 west of Fredericksburg. 10 am-5 pm. Free. fowb.org
- 26 **PA** "Stories and Songs of a Civil War Hospital," music and readings at Christ Church, 30 Chambersburg St, Gettysburg. 8 pm. Free. candlelightatchrist.org
- 26 **PA** "An Evening with the Painting," after-hours extended look at the Gettysburg Cyclorama at

- the Gettysburg NMP visitor center. 6 pm. \$20. gettysburgfoundation.org
- 26-27 **WV** Living history and ranger programs, "Medical Weekend: Giving Aid and Comfort," at the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. 11 am-4 pm. Free with park admission. nps.gov/hafe
- 27 **DC PA** Bus tour, "Three Decisive Days at Gettysburg (Day 3)" with Ed Bearss. A Smithsonian tour. Leaves 8 am from 550 C St SW in Washington. \$185. More info, tickets: tinyurl.com/muyaqub
- 27 **MD** Living history, "Confederate Artillery at Antietam," camp and demonstrations at the Antietam National Battlefield in Sharpsburg. Free with park admission. nps.gov/anti
- 27 **VA** Lecture, "Mosby and the Lincoln Assassination," at the Graffiti House visitor center in Brandy Station. 2 pm. Donations welcome. brandystationfoundation.com
- 27 **VA** Living history, "Women at War," at the "In the Cause of Liberty," exhibit at the Civil War Center at Tredegar in Richmond. 1 pm. Free with museum admission. tredegar.org
- 27 **VA** Living history tours, "Eyewitness to War," at Historic Mount Zion Church, 40309 John Mosby Highway, Aldie. Donations accepted. 1-5 pm. 540-687-6681.
- 30 **VA** Anniversary programs, ranger tours, "The Battle of the Crater," at the Petersburg National Battlefield. Program at time of the blast (5:30-6:15 am), keynote speech at 10 am, special anniversary tours 7-9 am and 1-3 pm. Free with park admission. Walking tour at nearby Blandford Church 7-8:30 pm (free). nps.gov/pete

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Murphy's Laws of Combat – from the Rainbow Division Reveille Newsletter, January 2008

1. You are not a superman.
2. It it's stupid but works, it isn't stupid.
3. Don't look conspicuous – it draws fire. (This is why aircraft carriers are called 'bomb magnets')
4. When in doubt, empty your magazine.
5. Never share a foxhole with someone braver than you are.
6. Never forget that your weapon was made by the lowest bidder.
7. If your attack is going really well, it's an ambush.
8. No plan survives the first contact intact.
9. All five-second grenade fuses will burn down in three seconds.
10. Try to look unimportant because the bad guys may be low on ammo.

11. If you are forward of your position, the artillery will fall short.
12. The enemy diversion you are ignoring will be the main attack.
13. The important things are always simple.
14. The simple things are always hard.
15. The easy way is always mined.
16. If you are short of everything except enemy, you are in combat.
17. When you have secured an area, don't forget to tell the enemy.
18. Incoming fire has the right of way.
19. Friendly fire isn't.
20. If the enemy is in range, so are you.
21. No combat ready unit has ever passed inspection.
22. Thing that must be together to work, usually can't be shipped together.
23. Radios will fail as soon as you really need fire support.
24. Anything you do can get you shot – including doing nothing.
25. Tracers work both ways.
26. The only thing more accurate than incoming fire is incoming friendly fire.
27. Make it tough for the enemy to get in and you can't get out.
28. If you take more than your fair share of objectives, you will have more than your fair share of objectives to take.
29. When both sides are convinced they are about to lose, they are both right.
30. Professional soldiers are predictable, but the world is full of amateurs.
31. Murphy was a dogface.



Organizing your Family History Research

Those of you who have been following my columns on conducting family history research have, hopefully, been able to obtain at least a few of the record documents you need to start tracing your ancestry. The question at this point is, or should be, what do I do with these bits and pieces of paper, digital images, etc? This column will address building an easily searchable filing system for your documents.

Yes, I mean physical copies. I know that you can obtain a lot of documents online in pdf and other digital files now, and save them to digital family trees, either on your computer or online (or both). I've personally had too much experience with computer crashes, servers dying, genealogy services online shutting down (or pricing themselves out of my price range) or their own servers 'burping' and losing files. I strongly recommend that you keep at least ONE PHYSICAL

COPY of each document you acquire. I also have digital copies of my documents (either downloaded, or ones I've taken photos of or scanned myself) on CD-ROMs and on external hard drives. I like the idea of having at least one copy on a media that isn't likely to get erased by accidental exposure to x-rays, magnetic fields, and so on. And, warning, if you put any sort of magnetic media (such as a credit card, magnetic key, thumb drive, etc.) next to a cell phone, on top of a TV, etc, these devices create magnetic fields that can erase your magnetic media. When I worked at one of the hotels in Cape May, we used magnetic keys. Too many people put their key cards next to their cell phones. The cell rings, or vibrates, and the resulting magnetic field would erase the card. Loads of fun!

Now – look at your basic pedigree tree. Note that on this tree, you are #1, your father is #2, your mother is #3, your father's father is #4, his wife is #5, and so on:

(First Generation)

1 Subject

(Second Generation)

2 Father

3 Mother

(Third Generation)

4 Father's father

5 Father's mother

6 Mother's father

7 Mother's mother

(Fourth Generation)

8 Father's father's father

9 Father's father's mother

10 Father's mother's father

11 Father's mother's mother

12 Mother's father's father

13 Mother's father's mother

14 Mother's mother's father

15 Mother's mother's mother

This is known as the “Ahnentafel Numbering System” and is widely used in genealogy, and I find it is the easiest one to remember. Note – men's numbers are always even, women's numbers are always odd; wife's numbers is always their husband's # plus one. Now, mind, it doesn't really address multiple spouses, or the children other than your direct ancestor; we'll address those items later. For the moment we will stick with your direct ancestors.

When you start your filing system, use the Ahnentafel numbers to file your ancestors' information by. Your own birth records, marriage records, etc go into file #1. Your father's information goes into file #2. (I normally put the marriage record and the children by that union into the father's file. If you'd rather put it into the mother's file, that's fine, too. I find it easiest to put it in to the man's file mostly because, as you get back into the early 1800's and before, there are times when the mother's name may not be known, but usually the father's name is. The main thing is to be

CONSISTENT.) I usually number the children, from oldest to youngest, as, say, 4/5-A, 4/5-B, etc. for the children of my paternal grandfather and grandmother.

I also color code my files. There are lots of colors available in either notebooks or filing folders. I am listing the colors I use; you can use whatever colors you want. But I find it a lot easier to find the right files and documentation when the file folders, etc they are in are color coded. My files, and those of my mother and father, are in yellow folders. My paternal grandfather, and all his ancestors, is in blue. My paternal grandmother and her line are in green. My maternal grandfather's line is orange, and my maternal grandmother's line is in red. (One of the people I am doing research for is proving a line for DAR. All her ancestors going back to the Revolutionary War ancestor are in purple. If she wants me to continue her research after we prove her line, those files will go back to the colors of the line they occur in.)

Correspondence files are in white. Background information of one sort or another (county histories, etc.) are in brown.

Family group sheets are placed in the father's file.

Census records for the family are also in his file. Any records that list not only him but also other members of his family are in his file. For me, the actual images of the census records the family appears in are in the father's file; transcriptions for each person in the family in the line, and a few collateral people, are in that individual's file. Exceptions would be where the woman has had more than one husband; the family group sheets for her other husband(s) and children, if any, would be under her file.

If you are fairly new in conducting your family history research and all your documentation can still fit into one notebook, use colored tabs matching the colors you have chosen for your family lines, each one marked with the number of the individual. I start each person's section in a notebook with the individual documentation check sheet, with all entries in pencil. (It's amazing how often you find out that dates and places you thought were pretty much good, are actually inaccurate and you have to change them... much easier to write in pencil so you can erase when you have to!) I then stick a colored tab with that person's number on it, and put it in numerical order. That individual documentation sheet becomes the first page of each person's section. Next comes the family group sheet, if any. Documentation goes into the person's section in timeline order – birth info first, and finally death info, burial info, gravestone photos, etc. If I have any material that I think may pertain to the individual, but am not sure; or if I have unsourced family tree info off of ancestry, they go at the very back of that person's section. (I also recommend that you go ahead and print out any info you run across that you aren't sure if it belongs to your family or not; better to have it and later prove it isn't your ancestor than not print it out, and then find info that indicates it may be correct, and not be able to find it. Yep, guilty... Better to make copies of questionable info than not; just make sure it goes into the 'questionable' section...) I also try to have at least a few photos of each person into their file.

I've been at this long enough that I have four family notebooks, one for each grandparent's family. Admittedly, one only has three people in it; but most of the others go back into

the early 1800s / late 1700s, so have at least five generations worth of material in each notebook. I found notebooks in each color, and then used only two colors for the individual tabs – one for the women, one for the men. I use these notebooks when I'm going out to research a single family line, as if I take the BIG family history notebook with all lines – well, we're talking about a notebook with a four inch spine... Too darned heavy if only researching one of the lines. Mind, I also have a research notebook that I use for researching only one or two people; I take the files out of a family notebook pertaining to those folks – or sometimes just the family group sheets – and just take those.

I also have file folders in plastic filing 'tubs' using hanging file folders. Again, the file folders and their tabs come in colors, and I color code them to match my other files. ORIGINALS of documentation go into these file folders, as well as excess material that aren't really important FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH in them. I don't need photos of embroidery my ancestors have done, letters to friends, etc in the research notebooks; but they are important in figuring out who that person is – so I keep the info, but it's in the filing tubs, not in the research notebook. A lot of times I keep the actual census record images in the filing 'cabinets' and just keep the transcriptions in the research notebooks.

I'll talk more about organizing your research next column, including setting up a list of documentation you have, lists of what information you still need, etc. The important thing is to organize it, and do it EARLY in your research. One of the ladies I had in my genealogy class a few years ago had been researching for 6 or so years, and had just basically

thrown all her documents into boxes. She had no idea what she had, sometimes made copies of stuff she already had when researching, didn't make copies of things she needed... You don't want to get stuck, like she did, with five or six boxes of documents you then have to go thru and try and get organized. I will bring some of my family history notebooks with me to meetings so anyone who is interested can see how I have organized them.



Cape May County Civil War Round Table

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