

The

Computer Link

April 2011

The Newsletter of the Northern Neck Computer Users' Group

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Send newsletter
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➔ **DEADLINE** ➔
for NEXT ISSUE,
One week after meeting

Ancestor Search! (or "Digging Them UP!")

Our guest speaker, Ann Thompson, is a member of the National Genealogical Society and is currently engaged in a rigorous eighteen-month study course to become a certified genealogist. She has been involved in family history research since she was a child and joined her father in his searches.

Genealogy is about bloodlines. Family history fleshes out the skeleton. It is a lot of work, and very rewarding. We want to know who we are. Is there anyone famous among our ancestors? Where did they live? What did they do? With a DNA profile, one can identify a group of ancestors, e.g. Ann discovered to her surprise that she counts eastern Europeans among her husband's ancestors. People like to write down a legacy for posterity and future generations. Questions about medical concerns, inheritance, and the history of a home can be addressed. There are many

sources of information available. For instance, there are societies which address lineage, e.g. the witches of Salem, there is even a society of royal bastards.

The study of our ancestors goes back centuries in many cultures. The Chinese practiced

ancestor worship and recorded family relations in a book. During the Cultural Revolution people were ordered to destroy these written records, but fortunately many records were hidden and not destroyed. The Greeks thought men were the descendants of gods; the Romans were preoccupied with the issue of commoner versus royal. In Germany

every son had the same name, and was distinguished by a different middle name. Norwegians had serial names, Lars Johannsen was the son of Johann, and his sons would be _ Larsen. In England there were precise rules for naming based on rela-



Ann Thompson

Photo by Alan Christensen

tionship.

How To Start: Ask relatives, collect documents and photos, record stories and traditions, identify where the family lived, what were the occupations, and who was in the military service. As one collects information, identify any crucial missing information. Read a how-to book on genealogy; there are many such sources on the Internet. Develop a Pedigree Chart, similar to those used by dog breeders. The first person is always you. As one goes back generations, men are easier to trace, there is not always a mention of a woman's maiden name. Another visual aid is a Family Group Sheet, available for free on the Internet.

As the pieces of information begin to accrue, it is helpful to develop a life folder or notebook. **Current software programs are most helpful.** Family Tree Maker is the first Windows program and most widely used, but has been outstripped by Roots Magic and Legacy Family Tree for features and ease of use. The ultimate software program is Master Genealogist. It has a steeper learning curve and is the favorite of professionals. Recently it has provided improved interfaces and is less formidable.

What does software do? Some functions are creation of a migration map; wall charts; citation creator; and database searching. Software programs can help create and maintain To Do lists, including identifying specific geographic areas to explore, create files to share, reports, and help generate a website (BLOG). This is especially useful when you hit a brick wall. The input of others may provide a new way to approach a search! Most of all it helps one to stay organized.

Sources of Records include: birth certificates; marriage licenses; death certificates; autopsy reports; birth announcements; obituaries; Christmas cards; notes written on photographs; newspaper clips; cemetery records; gravestones; census reports; mili-

tary records; deeds; wills and probate records; as well as family Bibles. Details in census records vary by date. In the past some census information was quite extensive, (e.g. 1930's census identified if a radio was in the household).

The Internet has radically changed the logistics of doing genealogical research. Travel to the source of information has been minimized. Instead there are numerous resources that have placed information on the web. A Google general inquiry into "genealogy and family history records" gives multiple pages, including Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, worldvitalrecords.com, footnote.com, genealogybank.com (old newspapers), cyndislist.com and various newsletters and blogs.

Caution! You can completely lose track of time. Legacy Family Tree actually has an alarm clock in the program.

A DNA chart can be helpful. A DNA profile contains multiple individual markers, which can be compared to another person's markers. A very near match is a good indicator of some kind of family relationship. Some DNA resources will provide the opportunity to identify an anonymous contact, however, that person can refuse to further share his or her personal information.

Another research approach is to pursue the persons who lived in adjacent land tracts. Their family history may contain valuable information, frequently additional relatives.

Genealogical research can be used to produce a CD/DVD to share with others. The information can be used for scrapbooks, family tree charts, blogs, an oral history on an audiotape or video, migration maps, photo collections, a book about a particular person, inventory and anecdotal information about family heirlooms, and crafts such as Christmas tree ornaments and quilts.

A genealogical/family history search is an

adventure. One can meet new relatives, visit sites where the family lived, visit archives, attend conferences and join family reunions, both small gatherings and some that include many families.

Ann then gave us a brief overview of some advanced search opportunities on Google using Boolean search operatives, a.k.a. “Google math”, which has made the advanced state of Internet based research possible. See the Google web site for detailed instructions.

Ann concluded her presentation by offering help and instruction in genealogical research techniques to individuals who joined her at her laptop. Her knowledge and enthusiasm were much appreciated!

Anne Moss

Lancaster Community Library Tech Fair Partnership

My hat goes off to all of you who contributed so willing of your time and energy to help make a success of the Lancaster Community Library (LCL)/NNCUG Electronics Technology Fair that was held on Sunday, March 27.

I was gratified to see all of the NNCUG members who helped the Library staff set up, staff the technology tables, and clean up afterwards. In particular, I would like to single out **George Cadmus**, and **Tom Duke** for helping me with the heavy lifting during setup and cleanup! My praise and thanks goes to the following: **Bruce Mc Millan** and **Jim Sapione** for the camera display and to

Bruce for his digital camera presentation; **B.J. McMillan (and her helpers)** for her strenuous demonstration of the Wii Fit Plus; **Ann Thompson** for her extensive genealogy handouts; and to **Brian Riley** for his removable media demonstration. I also would like to thank **Anne Moss** for her help at the end of the meeting.



Brian Riley and Chris Christensen

Photo by Jim Sapione

We all can all be proud of the contribution NNCUG made to a successful community endeavor to help the LCL celebrate its 50th anniversary.

Chris Christensen

NNCUG Election Results!

The results are in!

NNCUG Officers for 2011-2012 are: **Chris Christensen**-PRESIDENT; **Brian Riley**-Vice President; **Anne Moss**-Secretary; **George Cadmus**-Treasurer; and **B.J. McMillan**-Member-at-Large. Many thanks to “retiring” Vice President Phil Allan, and your officers who will be serving another term!

Ed.

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eBooks

*By Wil Wakely, President, Seniors Computer Group, CA
February 2011 issue, Bits and Bytes, The Official Electronic Newsletter of the SCG
www.SCGsd.org
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It took a long time for e-books to arrive on the scene, but now they are here in a swarm, offering many styles, file formats and displays. In a few years, when standards are established, this confusing variety will disappear. Currently, the major players are Kindle by Amazon, Nook by Barnes & Noble, Sony eReader, and a lot of fledglings trying to get their foot in the door.

The concept of the e-book is great: a portable electronic book containing hundreds of titles; low cost books in digital format so no paper printing is required; variable type font selection for ease of reading; immediate downloads for impulse purchases; access to the Web for blogs, magazines and newspapers; audio text-to-speech for when your eyes are tired. And I know of other advantages besides these. Recently, there has been a price war and Amazon and others have slashed prices drastically. I predict that Walmart will have an e-book for \$39.95 in the not too distant future. The e-book concept has been around for years; I recall promoting the idea 25 years ago, but at that time the technology was not yet available to make it practical. What was missing was an inexpensive low cost display; cheap large memory; a fast computer chip; and a small, lightweight, powerful battery. None of these existed at that time, but now they are here and the concept has been actualized.

Several types of displays are now available: Kindle uses a black/white display called e-ink. It is low power for long battery life and reflective so sunlight doesn't fade it; in fact, it is viewed best in bright light. The downside is that a book light is required to read in bed without disturbing your bed partner.

The Nook is a color display using liquid crystals, which is poor in bright light and a battery power hog. However, it is color and can be viewed in the dark, the darker the better.

Qualcomm has developed a color display called Mirasol that uses interference colors like butterfly wings or oil-on-water; it also uses very little power for long battery life. Like the Kindle, it is reflective for viewing in bright light. Although holding great promise, it is not yet on the market, but is due later this year in some e-book. Every day hundreds more books become available in digital format. Google claims to be converting almost every book in print to digital format, and they have the resources to do it. Amazon and Barnes & Nobel offer huge book selections on their Web sites. Surprisingly, Amazon sold more digital books last year than printed ones.

A major problem is the plethora of file formats that are too numerous to describe here.

For more info go to: <http://bit.ly/fznE77> In time, these will boil down to just a few standard file formats. In the meantime, there are free conversion programs which will allow you to read almost any file format on your e-book, regardless of the model.

If you are an avid reader, I would recommend that you consider an e-book. It will save you money in the long run on the cost of books (NY Times Best Sellers, \$9.99 and many free ones), Plus, all the neat features make it a joy to use.

Genealogy SIG Meeting Notes

Please **see the NNCUG Web site** for a very interesting article on Y-DNA and the Internet. This is a summary by Ann Thompson, Genealogy SIG leader, of Mr. **Bob Lumsden's** presentation at the March 10 SIG meeting.
Ed.

NNCUG Minutes: March 19, 2011

The meeting began at 10 a.m. There were 39 members present and three guests.

TREASURER'S REPORT: *Current balance is \$3,717.83.* Although this amount is less than that at the same time last year, there have been several onetime expenses, including a new projector (\$491.00), the purchase of Adobe Elements for the PhotoSIG group, and donations to RWC and Lancaster and Northumberland libraries, (\$300.00). There are 93 active members and 21 family members. Total membership is 114.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS: President **Chris Christensen** said that 29 proxy votes had been received. The total of 68 voters constituted a quorum. **Roger Fortin, Chair of the Nominating Committee** presented the **slate of candidates: President - Albert "Chris" Christensen; Vice President - Brian Riley; Secretary - Anne Moss; Treasurer - George Cadmus; and Member at Large, BJ McMillan.** It was moved and seconded that all be elected by acclamation. The **vote was unanimous.**

PHOTO SIG meets the second Tuesday of

the month at 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Community Library. Assignments are identified the prior month. Participants are encouraged to bring a laptop and engage in an interactive learning experience. The **April 12 meeting topic will be "Cropping"** –ways to train the eye to "see" the best picture.

GENEALOGY SIG met on March 10. **Bob Lumdsden** presented using DNA matching to find relatives, including some he never knew he had. **On May 25, the group will carpool to the Library of Virginia in Richmond.** Contact Ann Thompson for details.

Chris thanked the officers who served last year, with a **special thanks to Phil Allan who is "retiring"**.

NEW BUSINESS: A Microsoft Office tutorial library of DVDs is available to members. If interested, contact Betty Lehman.

A question was asked about Apple MAC software. There is an Apple Computer users club that meets the second Saturday of the month at RWC from 10:30 a.m. to Noon.

SPEAKER: Ann Thompson spoke on Genealogy and Family History.

Membership Report - March 2011

Welcome - None

RENEW April 2011 - Mahlon Brown, David Alberts, Marianne Miller, Jane Savin

RENEW MARCH 2011 - Linda Boyatzies, Maurice Dickerson, Karen Edwards, Rich Emery, Jim Harnsberger, John Helm, Lloyd Hill, Louise McIntire, Linda Small, Thomas Southard, Jeffrey Vail

Membership dues are \$20 annually. Please send to:
George Cadmus, Treasurer, NNCUG, 150 Pine Drive,
White Stone VA 22578

RAFFLE: There were five prizes from which to choose. **Winners** were: first choice, **Bob Flore** selected the San-Disk 4GB Flash Drives and Case Logic Flash Drive Case; **Bob Schultz** chose the Logitech HD Webcam; and **Roger Fortin** picked the Targus retractable Optical Mouse.

This ended the formal business session of NNCUG. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m., and Ann stayed on to address individual search requests.

Submitted by Anne Moss, Secretary

The Computer Link

Northern Neck
Computer
Users' Group
150 Pine Drive
White Stone, VA 22578

NNCUG Meeting Dates

NNCUG GENERAL MEETING
Third Saturday, 10:00 a.m.

Rappahannock Westminster-Canterbury Meeting Room

BEGINNERS SIG

*Meets three times a year. Those interested, contact
B.J. McMillan at 580-8666*

GENEALOGY SIG

*Meets bi-monthly, 2nd Thursday, 1:00 p.m.—RW-C
Contact Ann Thompson at athompson@kaballero.com
to get on the mail list for announcements.*

PHOTOSHOP SIG

*Second Tuesday, every month, 9:30 a.m.
Lancaster Community Library, Kilmarnock
For more information, Call Jim Sapione, 804-462-5831
or message Bird@kaballero.com*

For a photo treat visit
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Computer Help available by appointment. Call Betty Lehman 435-2011 or B.J. McMillan 580-8666

Coming Attractions

*Membership - Apr. 16, 10:00 am, 3D Animations and Artwork
Genealogy - May 25, Wed., Field Trip to Library of Virginia
Photo SIG - Apr. 12, 09:30 am, Kilmarnock Library*