

The
Hancock Historian

Newsletter of the
Hancock County Genealogical Society

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**Hancock County Genealogical Society Minutes
8 August 2020**

President Ralph Harris called the Zoom meeting to order at 9:37 am on Saturday August 8, 2020 with eight members and guests present.

The minutes of the July 11th meeting were read and accepted. There was no treasurer's report. Membership reported one new member and one renewed member.

With no new or old business to discuss Ralph turned the meeting over to Patrick McDonald who joined us from his home in Australia. Patrick shared items of local history and his own genealogy with the group. For many it was the first time they had met Patrick, a native of Ellsworth. It was an enjoyable and informative meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 11:00 when our Zoom time ran out.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Clemons, Secretary

**HANCOCK COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MINUTES
12 SEPTEMBER 2020**

The September 2020 meeting, held via Zoom, was called to order by President Ralph Harris, with five members present.

Minutes of the August meeting were read and approved. The treasurer reported two membership renewals for a total of \$20.00 deposits plus a three cents interest for July and August making total deposits of \$20.06. Expenses of \$7.19 in August leaving the balance as of the end of August at \$2,268.70. The report was accepted as read.

Discussion followed on a variety of topics including the newspaper indexing project Wayne and Ralph are working on, research into women who joined the WAAF in World War II, the George Thurber family of Ellsworth, the Bangor Library allowing researchers to come in by appointment and use the Bangor Room, the situation at Maine State Library and their move to temporary quarters for the next two years.

It was decided to ask former HCGS President and MGS Treasurer, Richard Spinney to speak at our next meeting on some of his research.

The next meeting will be held on Saturday, October 10 at 10:00 am using Zoom.

Respectfully submitted,
Charlene Fox Clemons, Secretary

FROM THE LIBRARY

This has been a strange year for all of us and the library is no exception. An unprecedented ten weeks of being closed was followed in June by a month of curbside service only. In July and August, ten people at a time were allowed in the library and for only 30 minutes, with only the first floor open. This month that number increased to 15 people and the second floor was opened, still for only 30 minutes. Masks are required while you are in the building.

The genealogy area is open; however, you are restricted to the 30-minute time limit even there. As always, I am happy to look something up for you if that would help. I am even willing to set up microfilm for you if you call ahead and tell me what year and month you want to see, saving you a few of your precious 30 minutes.

We did purchase the new *Littlefield Genealogy: Descendants of Edmund Littlefield of Wells, Maine Through Six Generations* by Priscilla Eaton, published by Maine Genealogical Society this spring. We were also gifted with several older genealogy books this spring, including one on the *Fitch Family in America*, published in 1930, *The Moor (Moore) Family*, published in 1937 and the *Early Records of Providence vol. XXI Being the Second Part of The Second Book for The Recording of Deeds and Called Deed Book Number 2*, published in 1915.

See you at the library. If not now, soon!

- Charlene

Ann Durgin [adurgin@myfairpoint.net] sent us the following query:

A fellow from Fairfield named Tim Alberts, a teacher at Lawrence High School [email: alberts@msad49.org], contacted me regarding his great grandmother, Alice May (Mae) Clough. He came to the Holt House to look at our genealogical collection, but left with some missing pieces. Here is his brick wall, in his own words:

Is Alice May (Mae) Clough – my great grandmother – the daughter of Charles Wyman Clough and Adelia Milliken and was she adopted by his cousin Erastus (Arastus) Clough and wife Nancy? The 1880 census does not have her living with Charles and Adelia, her parents based on a marriage license of May 2, 1916 (technically her second marriage although the certificate says first). Rather, it has her (Alice) as an adoptive daughter, living with Erastus and Nancy. Finally, I find differing information as to her birth. I have documents saying she was born in Ellsworth and documents saying she was born in Blue Hill.

I wonder if anyone in HCGS can help him?

Request from Charlene -

If you can fit some or all of these photos into the newsletter to see if anyone might know who they are, it would be great. The lady who had them is 93 and would love to know how they are related to her family.

I believe they are from the family of **Carl V. Thurber** (1889-1955) [*b. Ellsworth, son of George W. Thurber (1852-1914) and his wife Harriet Mosley (1854-?)*] and **Gladys Lillian Cousins** (1899-1987) [*daughter of Lucy Adella Jordan (1856-1934) and her husband Eugene H. Cousins (1850-1929)*].



The back of this last photo reads:
"To Uncle Frank and Aunt May with love from Laney [??] And a Merry Xmas. Xmas 1902"

From the Islands of the Atlantic to California and Beyond

by Wayne H. Smith

[Note: In an effort to preserve privacy of the individuals mentioned in this narrative, I have changed all of their names and some of the place names. My purpose in writing this article is to focus on the various sources that I used to learn the identity of my cousin's father, not to present genealogical details.]

Two weeks ago, a cousin of mine [*I'll call him David*] informed me that at long last he had learned the name of his father. His mother, while she was living, refused to tell him anything about his father, apparently preferring to forget what she regarded as a negative period in her life. So David grew up knowing only that his father's first name was Paul and that he worked in some way in the airline industry. David has a dark complexion and he had reason to believe that his father was at least part African. After David and I first met in person, I urged him to take an autosomal DNA test at Ancestry, which he did. The test confirmed that he had ancestry from the Azores, specifically from the easternmost islands of São Miguel and Santa Maria. Also, since he was looking for information on his direct paternal line, I suggested that he take the Y-DNA test available at FamilyTreeDNA. This test pointed up a number of distant matches, but significantly showed a relatively close match with a woman who responded to our inquiry saying that her family originated in the Cape Verde Islands, now an independent country off the coast of Africa and formerly a colony of Portugal.

More recently, David began checking into other possible sources of information. He told me the name of the lawyer who had represented his mother at various times throughout her life. I googled the lawyer's name online and found him, alive and well at the age of 98. David cautiously contacted the lawyer who, remarkably, remembered his mother quite well and provided David with two key pieces of information. He gave him the name of the district court which had handled his mother's request for child support, and also gave him the name of the home for unwed mothers that had provided cost-free care for his mother during her pregnancy. [David's grandmother had refused to provide any assistance to her daughter after she told her she was pregnant.] David subsequently communicated with the district court archives in Boston where his mother had filed for child support. He was informed that a contractor, while doing repairs on the building, was believed to have tossed out some of the older court records and it was doubtful if the records David needed could be found. David then contacted the home for unwed mothers to see if they had any information on his father. David received a simple reply to his communication saying [*again, all names have been changed*]: "Paul P. Gomes is your father. He used to work at Eastern Air Lines in Fall River, MA."

At that point, David emailed me with this important piece of information and I spent two entire days exhausting all sorts of online resources to fill out the picture of his father's life. Armed with a name, I went first to the 1940 census of Fall River where I found Paul Gomes, age 10, and a brother João, age 12, living with their mother Joana, born in Massachusetts, in the home of a Marta Gonçalves, born in the Azores. Joana was working as a "winder tender" in a cotton mill. Jumping back to the 1930 census, I found Joana and her son João living with her parents Bernard and Marta Gonçalves and two apparent siblings: José and Elena. Paul must have been born after the census was taken. Bernard was working as a "speeder tender" in a cotton mill and they were paying \$22 per month for their apartment.

The 1920 census provided more information with regard to their origin. Bernard Gonçalves is listed, along with his daughters Joana and Elena and his son José, as being "Mu" (mulatto), whereas Marta was listed as "W" (white). Bernard said he was born in the Cape Verde Islands, as was his mother, and his father was born in Portugal. His wife, Marta, as well as her parents were all born in the Azores. I couldn't find the family in the 1910 census, but the 1900 census gave Bernard's race as "B" (black), his wife Marta as "W," and their only child, Maia, was also listed as "B." Bernard and his wife both said their parents were from "Portugal," as Cape Verde was then part of Portugal. [Subsequent research showed that Bernard had come from the tiny yet lush southernmost island of Brava.]



Missing from all of these records so far was any mention of the father of Joana's children. Looking through year after year of the Fall River city directories, I finally found, in the 1928 directory, "Gomes Arturo F (Joana) sausage mkr" followed by an address. Another Ancestry search pointed up a ship's passenger list in which Arturo F. Gomes is shown arriving in Providence in 1920 at the age of 17. He said that he was formerly a resident of Ribeira Grande on the island of São Miguel in the Azores. His nearest relative was his father Manuel F. Gomes. Apparently Arturo and Joana did not live together for very long for in the 1930 census Arturo was listed as a "roomer" in a Wilkins family. Ten years later, in the 1940 census, he was still living as a boarder, this time with a Rodgers family in nearby Fairhaven, Massachusetts. He must have left Massachusetts soon after as on Feb. 14, 1942, Arturo was registering for the World War II draft while living in Oakland, CA. The registration card listed his birthdate as 1902 in St. Miguel, Azores and said that he had a dark complexion, brown eyes, and black hair. Just six months later, Arturo traveled to Reno, Nevada where he filed for divorce from Joana. In the meantime, he enlisted in the Army in October 1942, and was released in December of the same year. His divorce was granted and published in the Reno newspapers in late August of 1943.

Newspapers.com and Ancestry.com became important sources of information in obtaining information about the lives of Arturo, Joana, Paul, and João going forward. From city directories and various articles and notices published in newspapers in Massachusetts and California, I learned of Paul's marriage to a total of four wives, learned that he had as many as four other children (besides David), learned of the death dates of his father and mother, learned of his own and his brother João's military service, learned of the many different addresses which he called home up until the time of his death, and learned of his death in 2012 and burial in California. To top it off, through Facebook I was able to find David's half-brother, Paul P. Gomes Jr., living in the far northwest.

To summarize, I learned that a careful perusal of the resources available through Ancestry.com, Newspapers.com, Facebook, and plain old Google can help build up an arsenal of information on a given individual in a relatively short time. I must stress that none of the information that I found on Paul and his family came from online family trees submitted by other researchers. It came completely from first-hand government sources, contemporary newspapers, and other records that are provided to Ancestry users for a fee, but it's a fee I have learned is well worth paying. I can't imagine the expense and time that would have been required to get this information on my own.

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