



THE CIVIL HISTORY

The Regional Newsletter of

The Friends of the National Archives and NARA, Southeast Region

January, 2003

Volume 2, Number 1

Friends of the National Archives Annual Meeting

The Annual Business Meeting of the Friends of the National Archives, Southeast this past Saturday, January 18 was unlike any the organization has ever had. There seemed to be so much riding on ALL the events of that gathering, and members and officers alike were not in the least disappointed!

Of course, the business portion of the meeting proceeded according to the traditional FNAS agenda: greetings, treasurer's report, membership and/or committee reports, old business, and new business, in this case, the new officers for 2003. It was the content of the reports and the number of people present to hear them that were the pleasant surprise, and that was not even the highlight of this annual event. Suffice it to say here that there were 27 members and nine NARA staff members in attendance, with at least five members prevented from attending because of icy road conditions. FNAS member Anne Glankler was recognized as the only charter member present, and Bill and Charline Hall were awarded the gift of guided research with a certified genealogist for having faithfully attended every FNAS meeting for two years. Linda Woodward Geiger was recognized and thanked for her contribution of an FNAS web page, one of our ongoing goals.

I am particularly proud that the Friends' membership responded so generously for a call to update and renew their dues in late 2002. (Members were reminded that renewals will not be due again until January, 2004.) Because of these donations, FNAS was able to offer its traditional annual donation to NARA. This year, the membership elected to set \$3000 as the amount to be expended to purchase research materials for public use.

Once again, a slate of new officers was elected by acclamation: Al Martin, President; George Jacobs, Vice-President; Tia (Clare) Magbee, Treasurer. The organization is still in search of a secretary. While it is true that the various components of the job can be accomplished by other officers, there is no substitute for



New officers President Al Martin, left; Treasurer Tia Magbee, center; and Vice-President George Jacobs, right.

the "real thing." There are many capable people in our organization, and we are just waiting for that particular person to step forward.

The highlight of the meeting was the program by NARA staff following the luncheon. In particular, Regional Administrator Jim McSweeney's presentation of the new Archives facility was inspired and inspiring. He shared with the membership a tentative date for completion-- August or September, 2004. NARA's new address will be 5780 Jonesboro Road, Morrow, GA. 30260.

As FNAS completes another year of service, it is my privilege to proclaim that the organization is healthy and still serving NARA through its volunteers and contributions. We have lived up to the purpose set forth in our Bylaws: to help preserve and protect our heritage while also aiding the public's use of NARA's holdings. The future holds the challenge of relocation and many new opportunities for the Friends to facilitate NARA's achievement of its vital archival and access roles. Our new officers have visions for service that will continue the FNAS tradition of serving and supporting NARA. I personally am humbled to have been just a step on the stairway toward our full potential.

--Rob Snow, 2002 FNAS President

Archival News and Notes

New Accessions

The move to the new archival facility can't become a reality soon enough. Archivist Suzanne Dewberry reports that during the last six months we added 5400 cubic feet of permanent records to the collection.

Among the records accessioned are civil and criminal case files from the U. S. District Courts, many from the tumultuous period of the 1960s and early 1970s. Important desegregation cases; land condemnation cases; cases involving the rights of women, prisoners, and the handicapped; and landmark cases heard by Judge Frank M. Johnson of Montgomery are included in these new collections. We expect historians of the New South will find much essential documentary evidence of the change in American and Southern society in these records.

Archives Staff Spreads the Word

Archival staff have been busy in the last few months presenting programs on the holdings of NARA, genealogical research methodology, and the new archives facility.

Archival Operations Director Charles Reeves spoke to the American Association for State and Local History in Portland, Oregon, on the U. S. District Court bankruptcy cases in the Southeast Region of the National Archives. Regional Administrator Jim McSweeney and Archives Technician Arden Williams spoke to the Daughters of the American Revolution in Griffin, Georgia. Archivist Suzanne Dewberry presented a program on the work of NARA and our most significant collections to a local political group. Technicians Salina Pavlovick and Arden Williams traveled to Anniston, Alabama, to speak to the AlaBenton Genealogical Society, and Arden also spoke to the Carroll County Genealogical Society in Carrollton, Georgia.

Re-boxing WWI Draft Cards Begins

Under normal circumstances the process of checking the alphabetical order and re-boxing cards would not seem to be a daunting task--except when the collection encompasses 24 million cards!!! One of the largest collections in the Southeast Region, the World War I Draft

Registration Cards, were received in Atlanta in 1956 and have been in the same cardboard boxes since then. But, that's about to change! In November staff began the arduous process of rehousing the cards. New containers--which meet stringent archival guidelines--were designed and custom-made for the project.

Guy Hall is managing the task with the assistance of contractors hired specifically for the project. He reports that they are making good progress, and he expects the project to be completed before the move to the new facility.

Cherokee Census Records Uncovered

One of the by-products of our move-related activities is that occasionally we come across records that we want to tell our friends about. One such find by staff is the 1894-1905 census of the Cherokee Indian Agency, a small collection of 43 bound books in pristine condition. They are part of Record Group 75, Records of the Bureau of Indian Affairs and contain a wealth of information on the Eastern Band of the Cherokee Indians. Arranged by tribal group, they contain information on births, divorces, value of houses, taxes assessed, etc., although categories of data are not consistent among the various members. Plans are to describe the records more fully by compiling a box inventory and creating a searchable database of names.

If your family tree includes Cherokee Indians, please stop by and take a look at these records.

**Friends Executive Board
c/o NARA--Southeast Region
1557 St. Joseph Avenue
East Point, GA 30344**

Albert Martin, President albert@martechpc.net 404-233-2794
George Jacobs, Vice-president [gjacob23@alltel.net](mailto:gjacobs23@alltel.net) 706-867-1940
Tia Magbee, Treasurer tiafind@aol.com 404-266-8637

National Archives & Records Administration, SE Region

James McSweeney, Regional Administrator 404-763-7438
Leanne Townsend, Asst. Regional Administrator 404-763-7524
Charles Reeves, Director - Archival Operations 404-763-7065
Richard Rayburn, Archivist 404-763-7066
Suzanne Dewberry, Archivist 404-763-7383
Arlene Royer, Volunteer Coordinator 404-763-7383
Mary Evelyn Tomlin, Editor, *The Civil History* 404-763-7732

Email addresses: firstname.lastname@nara.gov

TO BE OR NOT TO BE . . . ?

The Friends organization is still looking for a person to serve as secretary for 2003. According to the Bylaws (April, 2002), the secretary's duties are to keep the minutes of meetings; to distribute the newsletter and meeting notices; to conduct correspondence; and other duties as assigned by the president. With the Internet and FNAS web page, most of these have become much easier. Would **YOU** please **BE** the new secretary?!

SPEAKING OF OFFICERS . . .

The Friends elected officers for 2003 at the Annual Meeting on January 18. Here are their bios:

President Al Martin. Al is a long-time FNAS member and former officer. He is a native Atlantan, with family roots going back to the 1820s; a U.S. Navy veteran; and a volunteer archivist with NARA-SE and the DeKalb Historical Society. Al has been active in genealogy for fifty years. He defines his goal as president to "... work toward planning for and solidifying the future of the organization. Input is more than welcome from any and all members. NARA needs your help as it prepares for the tremendous task of moving!"

Vice-President George Jacobs. George retired in 2002 from a 31-year career with the U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, mostly Social Security and Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. "Because of my interest in family history and genealogy, I became a member of FNAS in the '90s. . . . As a former federal manager, I realize the tremendous assistance volunteers can provide to the Government's agencies and programs!"

Treasurer Tia Magbee. Tia is a native of Duluth, GA, having lived in Atlanta with her husband since 1954. She graduated from Oglethorpe University and is a past president of the Georgia Genealogical Society. She spends her time now playing tennis, traveling, and working on genealogical research. "I hope that we can get Friends back in good shape and am concerned about the volunteer program when NARA moves. . . . As treasurer, I promise to keep good books and let folks know when they owe dues. [With] e-mails from as many members as possible, we can notify them when they need to renew."

NUMBER CRUNCHING

As many Friends are aware, membership records were not available to the organization until mid-2002. Fortunately, FNAS former treasurer Sue Hatfield-Green retained the information in her computer even after moving to Florida and back to Atlanta. We began with a total membership of 360, which included 80 institutions. Of 280 members, 38 had not renewed since 1999, leaving a 2002 beginning membership number of 242. We lost another 25 members through non-renewal but **gained** 5 new members, leaving a net of 222 members. Of those, 127 members sent in dues in 2002 (THANK YOU!), and 95 have dues outstanding.

FNAS and NARA wish to thank the following members who made additional contributions in volunteer time and dollars:

Cliff Bailey	Bobbie Morris
Carol Barrow	George/Betty Mowery
Carole Feinberg	Bonnie Mullikin
Leroy Gardner	Fred/Susana Munguia
Anne Glankler	Jack W. Newton
Glenn Goodson	Ed/Gena Ryckley
Paulette Guice	Peggy Sides
Mary Ann Hawkins	Gene Sidwell
Estelle Hinde	John E. Smith
Connie E. Hixson	Janet/Rob Snow
Otis (Buck) Jones	John E. Steinhaus
James Lee	Edgar B. Sterrett
Tia Magbee	Patrick E. Stolleis
Al Martin	Nellie D. Tomlin
Betty McGariety	Ed Trippe
Betty McKenzie	Lynn Watson-Powers

(Errors of omission are always possible—please contact Janet Snow at 770-944-1060 to make a correction.)

Year-End Balance: \$8,104.22

Individuals:	945.00
Dual:	600.00
Patron:	600.00
Donations:	255.00

TOTAL CONTRIBUTIONS: \$2,400.00

Jewels in Our Crown

Skeletons in the Closet: Records of the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary, 1902-1921

By Mary Evelyn Tomlin, Archivist

Every family historian, if he delves deeply enough, eventually uncovers the family's secrets. Perhaps one of the illusive ancestors in your family tree (those who may have just wandered off and disappeared) wandered down to Atlanta to serve time in a penal institution.

Some of the most fascinating records in the custody of NARA's Southeast Region are the records of the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. The collection consists of 620 linear feet of inmate case files detailing the lives of those individuals sentenced to incarceration at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary for the period 1902-1921.

Even one of our own Friends of the National Archives located her relative--although we hastens to add that the young inmate in question was an "in-law"—not a blood relative. His offense was "illegal distilling" a further insult to the teetotaling family!!!

The Inmate Case Files are arranged by inmate numbers—numbers which were assigned chronologically as the inmates arrived at the facility. Unfortunately, no index matching inmate numbers to names was transferred to NARA, making it difficult to locate a specific file unless you know the inmate's number.

Arranging, preserving, and indexing this collection is a monumental task, but since it was acquired in 1995, various NARA staff and volunteers have diligently worked to bring order and a point of access to the collection. Approximately 5000 entries have been entered in a Microsoft Access database which is searchable by surname, inmate number, date in, and date out.

The records consist of case files for each inmate who entered the prison before 1921. Files for some prisoners who were in other prisons before 1902 and transferred to the Atlanta facility or sentenced to Atlanta for later offenses may pre-date 1902.

Architectural planning and site acquisition for construction of the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary began in 1899, and the first inmates arrived in January 1902. The prison, which sits on a 300-acre site, consists of 28 acres enclosed by a 4,128 foot long wall that ranges from 18 to 37 feet in height and from two to four inches in thickness. In 1909,

when construction of the wall was completed, it was recognized as the largest reinforced steel-and-concrete structure in the world. The prison was initially designed to house 1,200 prisoners. Two additional wings were added to the facility in 1915 and 1918. It is now the largest of the government's penal institutions, with a capacity of 3,000 inmates.

Information for each inmate might include full name, other names used, inmate number(s), age at date of sentencing, race, date of incarceration, place of conviction, offense (crime), fine amount/court costs (if any), full-term release date, actual release date, and dispensation of inmate (served full sentence, "good conduct time" release, pardoned, medical early release, paroled, deceased).

Additional information also available on most inmates includes a fingerprint card, a "mug shot" photograph, physical description, citizenship, birthplace, level of education, birthplace of parents, and age at which the inmate left home. There is also information related to the inmate's time in incarceration such as any violation of prison rules and punishment received, medical treatment requested or received, incoming and outgoing mail logs, copies of letters sent/received by inmates, education and training received, and work experience and work assignments. Among the files are the famous, the infamous, and thousands of unknowns.



Preston James, Inmate #1256, sentenced to three years at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary. Age: 12.

✓ ✓ ORIGINAL

United States Penitentiary.
 ATLANTA, GA. 2-17 1907

Convict *Preston James*
 No. *1256* Cell *200* Employed *Stone shop*
 Office *Discipline conducted in*
cell house
 Specification *he was talking to*
Prisoner Freeman 1022
and laughing in a loud
and disorderly way

M. Benson
 Guard.

Action:
 Reprimanded and *Order confined in*
discipline cell
 Reduced to *grade*
 Imprisonment in solitary on restricted diet
 for *15* days, and there-
 after until he shall give evidence of obedience.

E. C. McLaughlin
 Deputy Warden
 8:20 a.m. Feb 18 1907

Preston James was sentenced to three years for embezzling a letter containing an article of value from the mails of the United States. His record indicates that his parents died when he was an infant, that he chewed tobacco, was a Baptist, and listed his occupation as Boot Black.

Write on ruled lines only. Intended letters will not be mailed. William H. Meyer, Warden.

PUT FULL ADDRESS OF YOUR LETTER-RECEIVER HERE:
 TOWN, COUNTY AND STATE. STREET AND NUMBER IN CASE.

Name *Henry Green*
 No. *County Jail Street*
 Town *Jacksonville*
 County _____
 State *Fla*

Instructions to Friends:
 During your absence prisoners will be permitted to receive letters written on the American Standard weight and size paper. Intentional use of postage stamps is prohibited. Letters must be addressed to the prisoner by name and number. They will not be mailed unless they are properly addressed. Letters must be sent by mail or parcel post. Money sent by mail or parcel post must be in the form of a check or money order payable to the order of the United States Penitentiary, Atlanta, Georgia. Letters and money of every kind are subject to inspection. The contents of packages sent by mail or parcel post will be subjected to inspection. Letters and money sent by mail or parcel post will be mailed only if they are properly addressed.

Instructions to Prisoners:
 Write letters in English, printed letters, and use the American Standard weight and size paper. Intentional use of postage stamps is prohibited. Letters must be addressed to the prisoner by name and number. They will not be mailed unless they are properly addressed.

Department of Justice.
 UNITED STATES PENITENTIARY,
 ATLANTA, GEORGIA.

PUT YOUR NAME AND REGISTER NUMBER HERE:
 Name *Preston James*
 Register No. *1256*
Jan 21 1906

Dear Friend,
 I got hear all right and am well. I am in the Barber Shop and hope to learn the trade and I am going to be a good boy when I get out and will not get in trouble any more. You must write to me. I would be glad to hear from you anytime.
 Your friend
Preston James
 Be sure not to sell my watch

Department of Justice,
 United States Penitentiary,
 Atlanta, Georgia.

Reg. No. 1717.
 Name, J. B. Flood.
 Alias, John D. Wagner, Ole Hobek, H. O. Beck, Howard Benson.

Date released, August 27 th. 1909.
 How released, Expiration of sentence.

Criminal History.

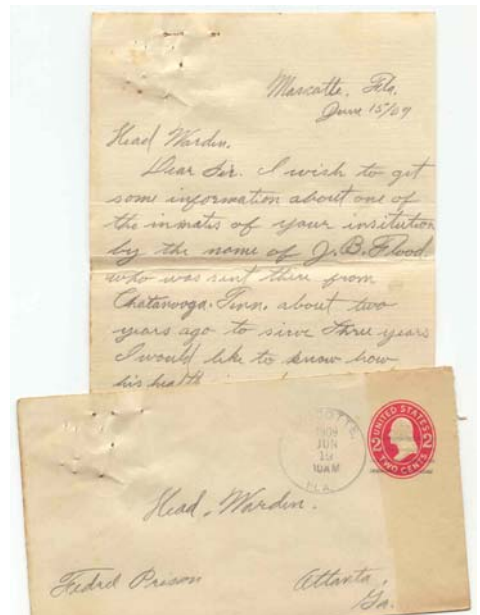
Served 2 years in the United States Penitentiary, at Lowenworth, Kansas, as John D. Wagner, No. 978, for embezzling. Transferred from the Ohio State Penitentiary, at Columbus, Ohio, July 29 th. 1897.

Killed by Express messenger while attempting to hold-up Southern Pacific train No. 9, near Sanderson, Texas, March 13 th. 1912, in company with John Arnold, No. 1035, of the United States Penitentiary, at Atlanta, Georgia.



John B. Flood, Inmate #1717. The file shows that he was almost completely bald when discharged in 1909.

J. B. Flood, alias John D. Magner, Ole Hobek, H. O. Beck, Howard Benson, was sentenced to three years for counterfeiting. He was an accomplice of Ben Kilpatrick and was killed in an attempted train robbery near Sanderson, Texas, in March, 1912. The warden at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary assisted investigators in identifying him from his prison file. Above is a document showing his criminal history. In addition to official prison records, many of the files contain prison correspondence. The letter to the right is an inquiry about Flood.



Genealogical Research

Finding Your Ancestor's Voice

By Mary Evelyn Tomlin, Archivist

“A family separates. Brothers and sisters move away. Some get rich and some go to jail and some get religion and some wander off.”

--Susan Puckett on Eudora Welty's epic family history, *Losing Battles*.

It's those ancestors who “wander off” that perplex family historians. We hear from researchers every day who say that they lost track of someone. “He was living in Atlanta in 1845, but then he disappeared. How can I find out where he went?” A more fascinating question is not “Did he die?” or “Where did he move?” but rather “Why did he wander off?” Did he die in a far-off land valiantly defending a cause he believed in? Or maybe he made a bad decision in a card game, lost the family farm, and ran away.

The answers to these questions can bring life to your ancestors. But, you may need to look beyond the traditional research paths--beyond the census, military pensions, deeds, and cemetery records. Among less frequently consulted sources at NARA are:

1. **Passenger Arrival Lists.** The records of arrivals of passengers at American ports are a rich, widely used source of genealogical information. The passenger arrival records available at the National Archives consist of customs passenger lists, transcripts and abstracts of customs passenger lists, immigration passenger lists, and indexes to some of these lists. They are an important genealogical resource because they document a high percentage of the immigration during the century between 1815 and 1914--the period during which the majority of immigrants came to the United States.
2. **Nonpopulation Census Schedules: Mortality Schedules.** In the years 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880, the census was expanded to collect information on persons who died during the 12 months prior to the date the census was taken. The entries in these schedules vary somewhat with the year but often include name, age, sex, race, whether married or widowed, place of birth, occupation, place of birth of father and mother, month of death, cause of death, number of days ill, place cause of death was contracted, and name of attending physician.

3. **Naturalization Records.** One of the richest sources of genealogical information for immigrants who arrived in the United States in the twentieth century are the records of naturalization proceedings in federal courts. A federal naturalization record generally includes a Declaration of Intention and a Petition for Naturalization. Information contained in these records includes name, date of birth, occupation, personal description, date and place of birth, vessel and port of embarkation, and port and date of arrival. Some documents include photographs. There are some indexes, but the researcher should know where and when the subject of research became a citizen before beginning to look for documentation of naturalization.

4. **Internal Revenue Assessment Lists.** Federal tax records do not contain information about family relationships; however, some tax assessment lists may lead to interesting information about a family's financial circumstances. Extensive and detailed tax lists were made under the supervision of district assessors appointed in each state and territory under the provisions of an act of 1862. The law provided for specific monthly and annual taxes to be assessed on goods and services at the level of production and distribution, including taxes on licenses, income, and personal property.

With the exception of the naturalization records, all of the above are available on microfilm in the microfilm research room.

Almost never does a researcher uncover a complete, fully developed family history. Hours spent bent over a microfilm reader and years of visiting archives, courthouses, and cemeteries may eventually produce a perfect family tree. But, the historian still has to write the story. He has to give a voice to his ancestors. Our ancestors were vital, interesting people whose lives were filled with unbelievable hardship, suffering, love, friendship, and sometimes even great wealth. The writer's challenge is to take the facts and fragments collected and turn them into a story--a story that reveals the heart and spirit of a people who lived in a world which has vanished.

My ancestor became a citizen in 1885. Do you have his naturalization records?

Perhaps. Most naturalization records in our custody form part of our collection of U. S. District Court records since only U. S. District Courts granted naturalizations after 1906. Prior to the Naturalization Act of 1906, granting citizenship was not solely a federal responsibility. Before that date aliens were naturalized in federal, state, and local courts. To locate a naturalization record, you need to be able to provide the name of the naturalized citizen, the date of naturalization, and the name of the court that granted the naturalization. If a Federal court granted the naturalization, those records may have been transferred to the custody of the National Archives. If the individual was naturalized in a state or local court, you will need to contact the court directly to obtain information regarding the disposition of its records.

What are "first" and "second" citizenship papers?

Declarations of Intention are frequently referred to as "first papers," and Petitions for Naturalization are referred to as "second papers."

Do you have a copy of my ancestor's certificate of naturalization?

No. Two copies of this certificate were issued by the naturalization court. The original was given to the naturalized citizen as proof of his citizenship. The duplicate was sent to the INS in Washington, D.C.

What is the Soundex?

The Soundex is a coded surname (last name) index based on the way a surname sounds rather than the way it is spelled. Surnames that sound the same, but are spelled differently, like SMITH and SMYTH, have the same code and are filed together. The Soundex coding system was developed so that you can find a surname even though it may have been recorded under various spellings.

Can NARA help me find someone?

The National Archives does not have information to help you locate living individuals. The records in the custody of NARA are usually at least 20-30 years old. Information on living individuals is protected by the Privacy Act. NARA

records, therefore, are not helpful in providing current information about individuals.

I think I have a valuable book from the 1860s. How much is it worth?

The National Archives does not appraise or look at privately owned documents, books, or artifacts. To find an appraiser, you may contact the Antiquarian Booksellers Association of America or a reputable antiques dealer in your area.

How do I preserve a photo or other family documents?

Personal documents are no less valuable than government records and care should be taken for their proper storage. You can find complete information on the preservation page of our web site at www.archives.gov.

Why can't I use my pen and notebook in the research room?

Because many archival materials are fragile and irreplaceable, restrictions for their protection are in place. We will provide blank paper and pencils.

Do you have draft cards from World War II?

No. Records of registrant's from the World War II era are currently in the custody of the Selective Service System. That agency is able to provide information from records kept on men currently registered, as well as on men who were registrants as far back as World War I. Requesters must provide the registrant's full name, date of birth, and address at the time of registration (usually when the registrant was 18 years old). Send your written request to Selective Service System, National Headquarters, Records Division, Arlington, VA 22209-2425. The Agency carefully follows the provisions of the Privacy Act and will not release a registrant's home address, phone number, Social Security Number, or any other protected information without the express consent of the registrant.

Who can use the National Archives?

Anyone can use the National Archives. To use original textual records, you must complete an application for a researcher's card, which requires that you present a picture identification card.

You are invited to join your Friends for a party!!!

Actually, a **work** party. Members of the Friends will gather in the textual research room of the NARA office on the following dates for much-needed preservation work on historic records. We would like for you to join us on:

Saturday, February 8 9:00 - 3:00

Saturday, March 8 9:00 - 3:00

Saturday, April 12 9:00 - 3:00

We hope you will be able to attend. This gathering will give you an opportunity to socialize with other Friends and exchange ideas with NARA staff and the Friends Board. Please bring your lunch.

If you can attend, please send an e-mail to www.FNASEXEC@hotmail.com or call Rich Rayburn at 404-763-7066. If he's not in, please leave a message. Rich will be getting everything ready for the party, so he needs to know approximately how many to plan for.

Important Dates to Remember!

February 15, 2003	NARA Microfilm Research Room Open 8:00 - 4:00
February 17, 2003	President's Day - Federal Holiday - NARA Closed
March 15, 2003	Maritime Research Workshop led by NARA Archivist Suzanne Dewberry Hours: 9:00 - 11:00
	NARA Microfilm Research Room Open 8:00 - 4:00

Friends of the National Archives

1557 St. Joseph Avenue
East Point, GA 30344

Address Correction Requested