



The Searcher

Suncoast Genealogy Society Newsletter

What's happening in October

SGS Fall Mini-Seminar

Saturday, 24 Oct 2026, 1:00-4:00 pm

Palm Harbor Library

\$10 for Members - \$25 for Non-Members

All walk-ins \$25

**Don't miss out on this incredible seminar!
Register today to join us and hear from our
dynamic speakers.**

**Plus, enter for a chance to win essential
prizes and enjoy complimentary food &
refreshments.**

Check our website:

sgsfl.com

Email us:

info@sgsfl.com

Connect with us on

[Suncoast Genealogy Society](#)
[Facebook](#)

Suncoast Genealogy Society

c/o Palm Harbor Library

2330 Nebraska Ave.

Palm Harbor, FL 34683

Inside this issue

Fall Mini-Seminar.....	2
President's Message.....	3
Board of Directors.....	3
Genealogy & DNA IG.....	4
Our Genealogy Friends.....	5
Book Review.....	6
SGS Minutes.....	7
Ethnicity & Heritage Page.....	8
Christmas Party.....	10

FINDING TREASURES IN THE NATION'S ATTIC:

**Tips and Tricks for Navigating the
Catalog of the National Archives**

Intermission: Snacks & Prizes

STRAPPED FOR CASH:

**Records of Poor Ancestors
and the Stories They Tell**

Proud Partner with



Registration information <https://SGSFL.com>
or call Shari Harmon 727-539-1846



**Suncoast
Genealogy
Society**

Palm Harbor, Florida

SGS Fall Mini-Seminar

FINDING TREASURES IN THE NATION'S ATTIC: Tips and Tricks for Navigating the Catalog of the National Archives



Debbie Smyth
In-Person

The National Archives and Records Administration ("NARA") has been nicknamed the Nation's Attic and contains a treasure trove of genealogical gold. But a researcher may need a treasure map to conduct searches in its catalog to uncover the records buried in its stacks. This presentation will explain the importance of identifying the record groups and record series that might hold items of interest. It will cover how the catalog is organized and how to choose effective search terms. The presentation will conclude with case studies to demonstrate how these strategies can be applied to solve genealogical research problems and uncover valuable historical records.

STRAPPED FOR CASH:

Records of Poor Ancestors and the Stories They Tell

Researching ancestors who had financial struggles often requires a strategic approach and unfamiliar records. Whether they were born poor or fell upon hard times, we'll explore their stories through town minutes, records of almshouses, sheriffs, and charities, legal and financial documents, and more. We'll also consider indirect evidence, such as changes in crop prices and the value of wages, that may suggest reasons for our ancestors' struggles.



Pam Vestal
Live on Zoom

DONATE NOW



As our Fall Mini-Seminar is just a few weeks away, we need your help. Start looking through your genealogy books, resources, and knick Knacks that are related to genealogy that you no longer need.

Donate them to Ann James or drop them off at the Palm Harbor Library in the Genealogy Department.



President's Message



Our Fall seminar is finally here! And we have a great couple of programs for you this year. Have you ever wanted to get your ancestors' military records? Debbie Smyth will help us navigate NARA to order those records and more.

Next we have Pam Vestal, who will help us find the records of our poor relatives. Those records can be few and far between. I have many of those folks and am excited about this program.

We need your support for these programs. Come and enjoy some food with genealogy friends. We speak the same language and we have fun. So come join us the fourth Saturday of October at the Palm Harbor library. I promise a good time.

Jean Turner Van Horn

SGS Board 2026-2028

Board of Directors

President: Jean Van Horn
Vice President: Robert Pierro
VP/Membership: Shari Harmon
VP/Programs: Ann James
Treasurer: Joan Baptist
Secretary: Marianne Bradley
Past President: John Matthews
Directors: Sue Martin
 Peggy Toohey
 Kim Croco-Brooks

Committee Chairs & Others

Education: Ann James & Jean Van Horn
Facebook: Beth Bleich
Help Desk: Marianne Bradley
Historian: Ann James
Library Liaison: Peter Cannon
Publicity: Jenny Kidd
Newsletter: Kim Croco-Brooks
Registered Agent: Shari Harmon
Sunshine: Mary Jane Hough
Web Development: John Matthews
DNA IG: Robert Pierro & John Matthews

Genealogy and DNA IG



Monday, Oct 12 @
1:00-3:00 pm
 PHL Conference Room
In-Person Meeting
 open to everyone

**Topic: YouTube video &
 general discussion**

Next Meeting: Monday, Nov 9

DNA Mentors Available



Are you wondering how to understand your DNA results? Do you have questions about your DNA?

Email info@sgsfl.com to connected with a Mentor.

Board Meeting

All SGS Members are welcome to come to the Board meetings.

Members should contact a board member for the Zoom link.

They are on the first **Monday** of the month on ZOOM.

The next meeting is on Nov 2 @ 2:30pm

Genealogy Help Desk

Tues, Wed & Thurs
1:00-4:00 pm

PHL Genealogy Section

Need help researching online, breaking down a brick wall?

Beginners and members are encouraged to stop by!

Come join us at the Help Desk!

Every 3rd Tuesday Tech with John

DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SHARE?

Do you have an idea on how to improve our newsletter?

Do you have a story or a breakthrough?

Is there something you would like to share -

a genealogy tip,
 a website or a an upcoming event?

Email your ideas to
 Kim Croco-Brooks:

inhislovinghands10@yahoo.com



HAPPY Birthday!
OCTOBER

Ghassan Attiyeh
Ron Harmon
Shari Harmon
Russ Martin
Christina Mason
Henry Pniewski

Clara Barton



This conflict is one thing I've been waiting for. I'm well and strong and young - young enough to go to the front. If I can't be a soldier, I'll help soldiers.

AZ QUOTES



Our Genealogy Friends

Pinellas Genealogy Society

Saturday, Oct 17 @ 11 am- 1 pm

Hybrid Meeting & via Zoom

**Topic: Running a Profitable Life Story or
Genealogy Business**

Speaker Rhonda Lauritzen

<https://pinellaskenealogysociety.com/>



East Lake Community Library

4125 E Lake Rd S, Palm Harbor, FL

Contact the library at 727-773-2665

Largo Public Library

120 Central Park Dr, Largo, FL 33771

Contact the library at 727-586-7410

Florida Genealogical Society – Tampa

<https://fgstampa.org/>

Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay

<http://www.jgstb.org/>

Tarpon Springs Library

Genealogy Research Assistance

(727) 943-4922 ext 6010

Monday, Oct 12 @ 6:30 pm

Topic: Bring your Laptop Workshop

<http://tarponlibrary.org/genealogy/>

**Debbe Hagner available
Appt only**



Manatee Genealogical Society

First Tuesday on Zoom

<https://mgsfl.org>

SAR, Clearwater Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month,
Sept thru May, 11:30 am, The Regency Oaks, 2nd
Floor Conference Room, 2751 Regency Oaks Blvd.,
Clearwater.

Go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/SARClearwater/>
for more information.

DAR, Caladesi Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Monday of the month
Sept thru May, 11:30 am, North Dunedin
Baptist Church. Contact Debbie Smyth,
dsmyth927@gmail.com for more information

Family Search Center

St Petersburg/Seminole

9000 106th Ave N

Largo, FL 33777-1147

Hours:

Tues 10 am-6 pm

Thurs 10 am-9 pm

Sat 10 am-4 pm

FL_StPetersburg@familyhistorymail.org

**Services: Computers, Photo negative
scanner, Photo scanner, Printer**

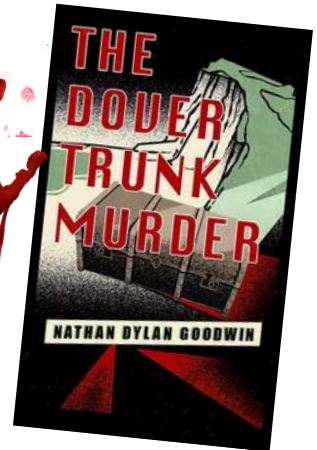


NATHAN DYLAN GOODWIN
GENEALOGICAL CRIME MYSTERY AUTHOR

Paperback version will be released
 2nd November 2026

THE DOVER TRUNK MURDER

Dover, August 1914. Britain stands on the brink of war, readying for battle, and mobilising around the coastal fortress of Dover. While a throng of inquisitive visitors stares out at the flotilla amassing in the harbour, a severed arm washes up on the town's Shakespeare Beach.



THE HOP-PICKER MURDERS

When Molly Moon discovers her aunt's discarded 1920 journal, hidden in the attic of her Kent cottage, she uncovers a chilling claim among its cryptic entries: that four missing hop-pickers, including her own uncle, were murdered. Desperate to learn the truth, Molly turns to forensic genealogist Morton Farrier for help. What begins as a challenging case soon becomes far more complex as Morton delves into a murky world of disappearance,

deception, and murder—while battling an unknown menace bent on destroying his career. This is the eleventh novel in the Morton Farrier genealogical crime mystery series, though it can also be enjoyed as a stand-alone story.

**THE FORENSIC GENEALOGIST SERIES
 (MORTON FARRIER)**

Hiding the Past
 The Lost Ancestor
 The Orange Lilies
 The America Ground
 The Spyglass File
 The Missing Man
 The Suffragette's Secret
 The Wicked Trade
 The Asylum
 The Sterling Affair
 The Foundlings
 The Deserter's Tale
 The Hop-Picker Murders

MRS. MCDUGALL INVESTIGATES SERIES

Ghost Swifts, Blue Poppies and
 the Red Star

VENATOR COLD CASE SERIES

The Chester Creek Murders
 The Sawtooth Slayer
 The Hollywood Strangler

NON-FICTION:

Hastings at War 1939-1945
 Hastings & St Leonards Through Time
 Hastings: Wartime Memories & Photographs
 Around Battle Through Time

<https://www.nathandylangoodwin.com>

SGS MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

SUNCOAST GENEALOGY SOCIETY
MINUTES FOR GENERAL MEETING -
26 SEP 2026

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 1:30PM
by Vice President Bob Pierro

IN ATTENDANCE: 13 persons and 2 on
Zoom

SECRETARY REPORT: Approved as
presented

TREASURER REPORT: Approved as
presented

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: Approved as
presented

PROGRAMS REPORT: Ann advised
about our October Seminar with 2
speakers, Debbie Smyth on finding
Treasures in the Nation's Attic, the
National Archives. Pam Vestal, live
on Zoom will speak on Strapped for
Cash - Records of Poor Ancestors
and the Stories they Tell.
November - no meeting.
December 8- Christmas Dinner Party.
January - to be advised.

February - no meeting as we encourage
everyone to support the Pinellas
Society at their yearly seminar.
The March program will be on DNA
Mystery Matches.

OLD BUSINESS: None to report

NEW BUSINESS: October seminar is only
\$10 for members. Everyone plan to
attend!

GOOD AND WELFARE: none

SHARE THE BASKET: Joan won the prize.

DRAWING FOR DOOR PRIZE: Elaine
Campoli won the book Stranger in my
Genes.

ADJOURNMENT: Motion to adjourn by
John Matthews, 2nd by Shari Harmon

PROGRAM: Via Zoom, Bob introduced
Brian Rhinehart who spoke on
Researching your 19th Century
Ancestors on Fold 3.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:
Marianne Bradley, Secretary

2026 MEETINGS

- 24 Oct: SGS Fall Mini-Seminar - Finding Treasures in the Nations's Attic
Speaker: Debbie Smyth
Strapped for Cash: Records of Proof Ancestors and
the Stories They Tell
Speaker: Pam Vestal
8 Dec: Christmas Party - Johnny's Italian Restaurant



Over the Pond Ethnicity and Heritage

Welsh ancestry can be fascinating but challenging due to the high frequency of surnames like Jones, Williams, and Davies, the mixing of Welsh and English spellings, and the fact that many early immigrants were recorded as English rather than Welsh. Wales' history, from its Celtic roots to the Industrial Revolution, also shapes the stories of its people.

Educate yourself relating to the history of the Welsh immigration.

WEBSITES

The Best Welsh Genealogy Resources

<https://bespokegenealogy.com> › [welsh-genealogy-resources](#)

Welsh Genealogy Heritage

<https://www.gwirachau.cymru>



WELSH FAMILY HISTORY
DISCOVER YOUR WELSH HERITAGE

welshfamilyhistory.com

The National Library of Wales

<https://www.library.wales>

<https://welshfamilyhistory.com>

Findmypast

<https://www.findmypast.co.uk> › [blog](#) › [family-records](#) › [welsh-records](#)

5 unique record collections for tracing Welsh family roots

GENUKI

<https://www.genuki.org.uk> › [big](#) › [wal](#) › [Genealogy](#)

GENUKI: Wales:- Genealogy, .All of Wales

Forebears

<https://forebears.io> › [wales](#)



SEPTEMBER MEETING

19th Century Ancestors on Fold3

Fold3.com features the web's largest collection of military records and indexes. During the presentation, Brian Rhinehart demonstrated effective strategies for retrieving these documents.

If you are unable to find a specific record or run into trouble finding what you need, Brian offers professional research assistance available if you hit a brick wall in your research. He is happy to assist you directly if you are unable to find a specific record. Brian offers professional research assistance for a fee.

I am extremely grateful for the research Brian provided. He located the widow's pension records for two of my 2nd great-uncles, yielding over 150 pages per file. Among these documents was a long-sought marriage license that my cousin and I had previously been unable to find. Beyond the official records, reading handwritten letters from ancestors, discovering the everyday health challenges they faced, and learning about their surrounding communities made our family history truly come alive.

www.CivilWarRecords.com



Elaine Campoli won the book *Stranger in my Genes*.

Coastal Voices and Visions is a collection of short stories, essays, and photos of Florida's Coastal Communities, all written by nine Florida authors. The book Editor is Suzanne Norman, with Carlene Cobb being the Contributing Editor.

Coastal Voices and Visions recently won a bronze medal at the 2026 Florida Authors and Publishers Association President's Book Awards.

The book's editors have also been invited to participate in the 2026 Palm Harbor Library Local Author Showcase on November 7th from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm.

As a contributing author of the book, SGS member Joan Baptist made an announcement at the SGS September meeting, encouraging everyone to come out to support the Palm Harbor Library and local authors.

The book is available for purchase at Amazon and a few local book stores, as well as for loan at the Palm Harbor Library.



**Suncoast
Genealogy
Society**

Palm Harbor, Florida

Holiday Party

**Tuesday, December 8, 2026
at Johnny's Italian Restaurant**

2907 FL SR590, Clearwater

6 pm - Social; 6:30 - Dinner

Buffet Cost: \$36 per person, gratuity & tax included

Buffet in private MESSINA DINING room for our group

Buffet includes:

CHICKEN MILANESE - VEAL MARSALA - SALMON PICCATA

includes Fettuccini Alfredo, salad, bread & non-alcoholic drinks

Full bar available from your server

Send reservation request and check to: **Joan Baptist** at

2284 Philippine Drive #29, Clearwater, FL 33763

by 1 **December 2026**. No refunds after 4 December 2026.

See you there!

PS - Register early as the room only seats 35 people.





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Full bar available from your server

Reservation Required - Prepaid \$36 Per Person

Complete the form below and include your check. Hand it to the Treasurer at our
Oct meeting or mail it to her postmarked no later than **December 1, 2026** to:

Joan Baptist, 2284 Philippine Drive, #29, Clearwater, FL 33763

Reservation Form for SGS Holiday Party - December 8, 2026

Names: _____

Email: _____ Phone: _____

Total Amount Enclosed for _____ Person(s) X \$36 Each = \$ _____

Make check payable to Suncoast Genealogy Society

