

YORE LORE

Baldwin County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 108, Foley, Alabama 36536

Volume 29 No 3

March 2021

Baldwin County Genealogical Society Presents
MIKE GLASS
SATURDAY, APRIL 10TH, 2021
10 A.M. MEETING ROOM, FOLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

PRINT, PUBLISH, SELL

Historian, genealogist, and author, **MICHAEL S GLASS** will present program how to self-publish your family history book or any other book for that matter. He has done so himself and will lend his gained knowledge with members and visitors on Saturday, April 10th beginning at 10 a.m.

In 1999, Michael published his family history in *Trails, Trials and Tales, a Glass Family History 1750-1999*, a 120 page spiral bound volume. His latest self-published expanded update of original titled *Trails, Trials and Tales III, a Glass Family History 1653-2018* is a map-covered hardbound book of 637 pages with 66 page Index.

Retired Air Force military, Michael wears many historic hats as member and serving as in offices of Sons of Confederacy, Sons of American Revolution, Baldwin County Genealogical Society, as well as many other patriotic organizations.

Seating is limited to 20 so please call or email to reserve: Tina Graham 251-978-2137 or tdrcgraham@yahoo.com

~~

Obit Committee meet every Wednesday, 1 p.m. in Genealogy Collections Room
BCGS Board Meetings will continue to meet at 10 a.m. Board Room.

~

BALDWIN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY GENERAL MEETING ~ March 13, 2021

Twenty MEMBERS/GUEST present.

Tina Graham read a note from Dot Brown on the History of BCGS. Copy included with minutes.

GUEST SPEAKER (see Yore Lore) Debora Kuhl. "Have Colonial American Roots.? Then There's A Chance Your Ancestors Were Indentured Servants "

CALL TO ORDER: Tina Graham called a meeting to order at 10:50 AM, March 13, 2021.

MINUTES OF PRECEDING MEETING- Are published in "Yore Lore"

TREASURER'S REPORT: \$1177.90 is the balance. There are several dues collected needing to be deposited.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Membership: No new members since last month.

Obituary: is up to date

OLD BUSINESS: We will not be using Zoom for internet meetings anymore, we will be using Google Meet instead if the Speaker wants to do a Virtual Meeting.

NEW BUSINESS:

Volunteers are needed for the Nominating Committee. Nominations are made in April, election in May. New officers take office at the June meeting.

Mike Glass brought up a new web search engine that doesn't collect your information. It is www.find.com It is a stand alone platform.

UPCOMING EVENTS: Janell Duxbury cancelled as speaker for the April 10, 2021 meeting. Instead Mike Glass will speak on How to Publish Your Book. The May 8, 2021 meeting will once again be Debora Kuhl on "Organizing Your Oral History"

Break Thru's: Mike Glass found a book that verifies information on tracing his lineage he has been looking for about 35 years.

May Alenko stated that the BCGS has subscriptions to several Genealogy magazines that are donated to the Foley Public Library Genealogy Dept for their archives. May also stated that the BCGS received an acknowledgment letter from the US Census.

Brenda Jansen, from Texas joined. She was given tips on where to look for information.

ADJOURNED: There being no other business meeting was adjourned to meet again April 10, 2021 at 10 AM in meeting room at the Foley Public Library.

Respectfully submitted, Billie Nardell, Recording Secretary

~~

Around a kitchen table January, 1987, Dot and her friend Berdine, both family historians, decided Baldwin County needed a genealogy group. With help of their husbands, on February 16, 1987, in the home of **Roy and Berdine Rittenhouse**, hosted with **Dot and Tom Brown**, a group met including **Don French, Jane and Bill Jackson** forming a founding- steering committee for a society that would be open to anyone interested in genealogy and family history anywhere. Baldwin County Genealogical Society celebrates thirty-four years of existence and evidence of constant growth in the Alabama, Local History & Genealogy Collections of the Foley Public Library. The following is by founding and charter member of the Society, Dorothy "Dot" Skipper Brown.

The History of the Baldwin County Genealogy Society by founding member Dot Brown.

On October 25, 1981 the Pensacola News Journal published a story I wrote about tracing my family. That started the genealogy movement in Pensacola. I asked for queries which would be published in a new column called "Family Quest". I got buried under responses. Soon, the West Florida Genealogical Society was formed and we were off and running with 180 members. It was a smashing success and we had lots of good people at the helm. One of those people is Berdine Rittenhouse who had a master's degree in history with emphasis on genealogy. Berdine had contacted me after the initial article was published and we met and got to be friends. She had the knowledge and I had the access to the newspaper and lots of enthusiasm. Berdine and her husband soon built a house in Spanish Cove. She suggested starting a genealogy society in Baldwin County, to be specific; in Foley. She booked the Spanish Cove clubhouse and I published notice in the initial meeting in the Family Quest column. We met on St. Patrick's Day, 1987. We probably had about 25 or 30 people at the first meeting. We got a steering committee together to write the bylaws and formally create a society.

Back then we had no money at all. I went to the News Journal and got some of the newsprint ends and we cut big sheets of paper which we tacked to a homemade easel my husband built for us.

We started this society by teaching basic genealogy research. Berdine was the expert and I was her LOVELY ASSISTANT(You are supposed to laugh.)

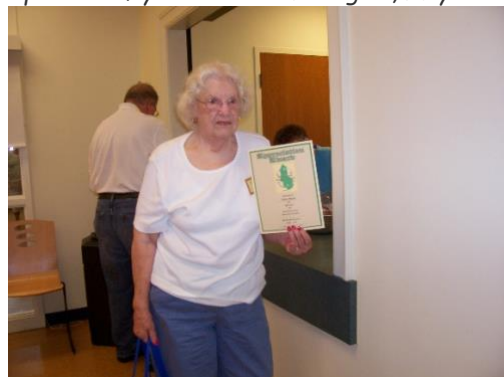
Our first president came to a couple of meetings and then took off for the summer without telling us. We had to scramble around and find somebody to take over the job. Thank God for Herman Baumann, a retired Lutheran pastor, who lived in Elberta. Herman stepped in... He did not know genealogy but he knew how to run meetings. We bounced around from meeting place to meeting place, ended up here at the library. Then, that was wiped out when they started to build the new library. When we started this society the library collection was one book. "The Red Book." I had a lot of books that publishers had sent to me to review in the Quest column. By this time my husband, Tom Brown, was president. I wrote a letter to Molly Peterson and ask if we could house our books here and asked for several concessions; no circulation, etc., etc., Molly agreed. That was the start of the collection.

Then, thank God, for Jeanette. She became the genealogical section librarian and we were home at last.

This is our 34th anniversary, I say prayers of thanksgiving for the joy this society has brought me. Now Berdine is 91 and has been confined to a rehab center with a broken arm and shoulder. I will be 93 in June and I am almost totally blind in my left eye and don't see so well out of my right eye. I quit driving last year. We both walk with walkers and wonder how we have made it this far. But when I look at the library collection I am so glad we did pass this way.

Dot Brown.

Letter read at 13 March, 2021 Baldwin County Genealogy Society general meeting
Dot looking apprehensive as she prepares to fly with the Blue Angels, May 1984



Dot receiving Appreciation Award



Janice Redeker, Dot Brown, J. Earle Bowden

TIMELINE Celebrating Thirty-four Years of Baldwin County Genealogical Society

1987, January: Dorothy “Dot” Brown and Berdine Rittenhouse made plans for organizing genealogy group in Baldwin County, Alabama. The Baldwin County Genealogical Society was born.

1987, February 16: Founding meeting included Dot and Tom Brown, Berdine and Ray Rittenhouse, Don French, Jane and Bill Jackson forming a steering committee for a society open to anyone interested in genealogy anywhere, not limited to Baldwin County or Alabama. Memberships fees set at \$5 per person \$7 per couple. Two goals set: lending library that began with Dot’s own collection and to preserve local resources.

1987, March: News Media carried news of public meeting held in Spanish Cove, Lillian, Alabama which seen about 15 people interested. BCGS’s slogan of *making family research fun* began.

1978, April: 22 people attended

1978 May, 30 people attended and it continued to grow.

1978 Sept: A library was started in the Baldwin County Heritage Museum in Elberta.

1988, January: A newsletter was created for monthly distribution.

1988, April: 59 paid members. Field Trips to Mobile and Gulfport libraries were made.

1988, May: John and Dorothy Leech began clipping, filing an obituary file with volunteers contributing and continues to this day. Through the years some of those serving included Tally Burkhead, Jo Ann McKay, Margaret Kirk, Dot and Tom Brown, Berdine and Ray Rittenhouse, Ed Mueller and his wife, Lennie Harris, James Gossett, and many others coming aboard through the years including Peg Powers and Billie Nardell.

A Cemetery Committee with goal to “read” tombstones in all cemeteries was spearheaded by Evan Strohl, Marjorie Ard, Jan Alison, Mary Jo Bassham, Herman Baumann, and Ed Phillips, among others, collecting data from cemeteries across Baldwin County. Four huge notebooks and CDs of their findings are on the Collection.

1988, June: Meeting place was moved to the Baldwin County Heritage Museum in Elberta. Later, because of time restraints of the Museum’s hours open to public, a pact was made with the Foley Public Library to house our growing collection as a permanent loan. At that time there was only one book in library on genealogy, the ‘Redbook.’

During issuing years and as the collection grew, the Society bought shelving, contributed to half the costs of two large microfilm cabinets, a map cabinet, maintenance of obit files, file cabinets, wrote supporting letters for grants for newspaper and census microfilm, Mary Jo Bassham spearheaded the intense application to become a designated FamilySearch Center. We are the only library in county to have the local newspaper *The Onlooker* on film from 1910 through 2016 as well as many other microfilm including all of Federal Censuses for Alabama.

A large oral history project on VHS from high school students in the 1990s was transferred to more compatible DVDs, thanks to member Glen Wilson. The Society generously bought books for the Collections. Word was *and is* out about our library with donations given from interested public, from private genealogy collection. Folks annually donated generous monetary support as well as their own time such as Harold and Clareen Wells.

Countless volunteer hours for the preserving primary resources included Maryjo Bassham, Janice Redeker, multi-tasking with Censuses for the County, Family Surname files collection through the years. Our Surname files number in thousands. The Society was large contributor in Library’s subscribing to Ancestry.com, ProQuest for public use.

Workshops in-house and through ESLL classes were given, guest speaking to other groups.

In the years prior to the 2020 fear of Covid hitting us, the monthly meetings of the Society had been cancelled only three times in memory; it was in three consecutive months one summer each due to a hurricane threat, Hurricane Katrina being one of them.

One cannot dismiss our infamous yard sales to raise money, sites that included Sausage Festivals, and in-house sales at meetings. Many came with armloads and left with armloads. One man’s trash, another’s treasure.

The Baldwin County Genealogical Society is an organization that loves what they are doing, allowed to do what they do best in an environment that is easily accessed by public today and continues to grow unbelievably.

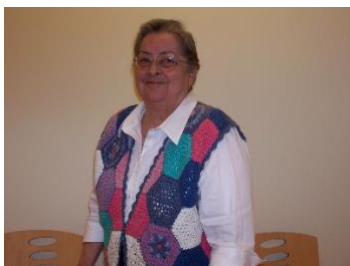
Foley Public Library’s total collection is 78,251 items. Over 15,000 of that number is Alabama, Local History & Genealogy and many more waiting to be cataloged. The nucleus collection which began with Dot Brown’s books and contributions from Berdine Rittenhouse has become the largest in the county.

As a research assistance center, requests spans North America, and “across the pond.” And it all began with an idea of Dot’s and Berdine’s to begin a family research group and making it fun. Thank you, Dot and Berdine.

Looking Back, Seeing today, and Onward we go.... 34 years and counting for Baldwin County Genealogical Society
There is no way to capture all the photos taken by Lennie Harris but here are a few, my apologies, if you are not here. More to come.



Speaker John Jackson, Mike Glass



Doris Allegri 2008



May Alanko



Glen Wilson



Tally Burkhead, Jo Ann Mckay



Lennie Harris



Christmas 2011



Speaker Claudia Campbell-Fort Mims



Speaker Ione Swift Jurkewicz



Tina Graham, then & now current president



Dot Brown doing Hostess duty for umpteenth times



Harriet Outlaw, Sheila Stone-Schoen 2010



Maryjo Bassham



Trond, Lillian Manskow, others 2012



Maurice Johnson



Gloria, Alan Griggs, Jerrie Wilson 2010



Christmas 2008 Refreshments



Maureen Lee, Christmas



Richard Chastang

You will often see photos of members and guests around refreshments as we have always allowed the hospitality of food and drink lend a congenial air to meetings, talking and helping others with researching their families. Many have met mutual surnames here in our meetings



Shirley Byerly 2008



Carmen Perkins, Don, Pauline Quellette Glenn, Elois Wilson, others, 2008



Richard Washburn 2012



Diane Bland, Margaret Kirk 2007



Janice and Ben Redeker



Double Trouble, Jeanette and Dot



Mary Adams



Singing Trio from Riviera Utilities



Singing Ladies from Lillian



Evan Strohl



Olive, Ray Williams, others



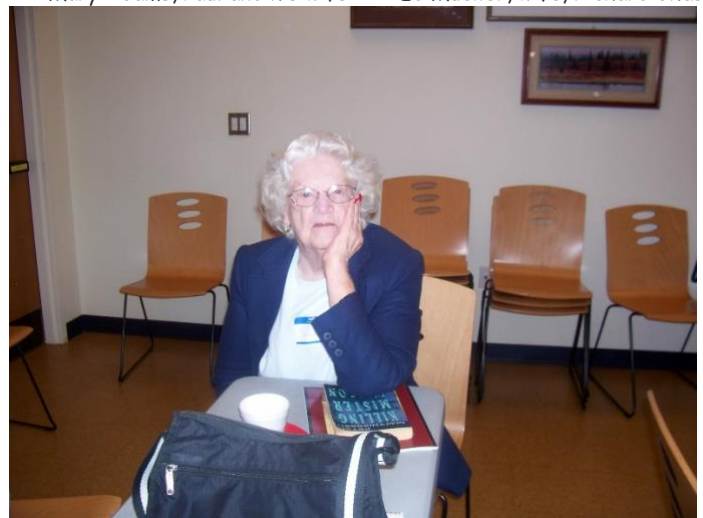
Rev. Herman Baumann,



Mary Adams, Paul and his wife



Ed Mueller, wife, Richard Chastang



Berdine Rittenhouse, above right, and Dorothy "Dot" Brown, Founders of the Baldwin County Genealogical Society in 1987 now going on 34 years as of March, 2021.

