

## Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society

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# Cheyenne Genealogy Journal

### Message from the CGHS President...

As the weather begins to cool and the signs of the season become apparent, my mind has wandered to the many simple yet lovely things we do seasonally. Harvesting the garden and setting out the onions and winter squash to harden off. That satisfying feeling as we mow the lawn for the last time. Noticing the quiet in the streets and neighborhood as the children are no longer playing outside, but sitting in their classrooms. Suddenly, it seems we enjoy the cozy feel that a jacket provides as the breeze seems a bit nippy. Last night I realized that the Summer Triangle in the night sky wasn't where it had been.

As I pondered on the events of my daily life that are determined by the seasons, many of them were the very same things that my mother, grandmother and others before me did as they prepared for the changes in the season. We often remember how the lives our ancestors were so different than ours, and indeed, technology, power, and running water have certainly made our life's experiences physically easier than was theirs. But, it has been pleasant to feel connected to those who came before me because of their many life experiences that are the same as mine. We are more alike than we are different. Perhaps, you too may find yourself thinking about the many experiences and feelings you share with your ancestors. I think you will find it pleasant and it will fill you with a sense of peace. Enjoy each day... each moment.

*Gloria Milmont, President*



## FamilySearch Opens Registration for 2017 RootsTech

FamilySearch International has announced that registration to RootsTech 2017 is now open. RootsTech is an annual family history and technology conference where guests of all ages are inspired to discover, preserve, and share their family roots, heritage, and stories across generations—past, present, and future. The 2016 event attracted more than 28,000 attendees from all 50 U.S. states and more than 30 countries. RootsTech 2017 will be held February 8-11 at the Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah. The popular Innovator Summit and free Family Discovery Day are also open for registration. The website for registration is [RootsTech.org](http://RootsTech.org). The four-day conference will offer at-

tendees a full lineup of inspiring and well-known keynote speakers; over 200 informative sessions, including hands-on computer labs taught by industry professionals and leaders; interactive activities and helpful exhibitors in the expo hall; and entertaining evening events. Early bird discount pricing is available for a limited time on four-day passes at just \$159 and \$189 for the RootsTech plus Innovator Summit pass. Passes for the Getting Started track start at \$49 for a single day and \$69 for a limited three-day pass. All passes include access to the popular expo hall and morning keynote sessions. This year's program will feature the popular Italian-American celebrity chef, Buddy Valastro, from the hit TLC series, *Cake*

*Boss™* as a keynote speaker on Saturday, February 11, 2017. Valastro will also judge a local cake decorating contest hosted by RootsTech. The amicable Valastro is a Hoboken, New Jersey, resident and owner of Carlo's Bakery. His staff's creative expertise in designing over-the-top cakes for locals and celebrities is only half the allure. The show's long-running success can also be attributed to the fun, dynamic interactions and involvement of 3-4 generations of Valastro's Italian-American family who help run the thriving family business. "Family is the most important part of my life," says Valastro. "You have to embrace and be proud of where you come from."

### Upcoming Events:

**15 November 2016**  
"The Real Heroes of Stalag 17B"  
Linda Farner  
6:15-8:30 p.m.  
CGHS Monthly Meeting  
Sunflower Room  
Laramie County Library

**2, 9, 16 November 2016**  
"Introduction to Family Tree"\* (Intro, Adding Photos, Adding Sources)  
10:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.  
Gasson, Turner, Milmont  
Online registration required @Family History Center

**17 November 2016**  
"Reflections of Our Gentle Warriors of WWII"  
Brad Hoopes  
6:30-8:30 p.m.  
Larimer County Genealogy Society, Council Tree Library, Fort Collins, Colo.

**13 December 2016**  
"Me and My DNA"  
Elaine Hayes  
5:30-8:30 p.m.  
CGHS Monthly Meeting & Holiday Potluck, Cottonwood Room, Laramie County Library

**8-11 February 2017**  
**RootsTech Conference**  
Salt Palace Convention Center, Salt Lake City  
(Registration required)

### CGHS ANNOUNCEMENT:

Please note that annual CGHS membership dues are delinquent as of October 1 each year. This year the Society will be offering a grace period through November 15 for those who may have forgotten. To be included in the 2016 CGHS directory, please submit your dues to our Post Office Box listed on page 4 of this newsletter before Nov. 15 or bring them to the Nov 15th CGHS Meeting!

# If Your CD Collection is Dying...Copy Them Now!

This article is from Dick Eastman's *Online Genealogy Newsletter*, <https://blog.eogn.com/category/cd-rom/>

If you've tried listening to any of your old music CDs lately—if you even own them anymore—you may have noticed they often won't play. The same is probably true of data stored on CD-ROM disks; the older ones are deteriorating and are becoming more and more difficult to use. The data CD-ROM disks are producing more read errors than they used to. Luckily, there are easy solutions available if you take steps **NOW**. CD and CD-ROM data formats were never designed for long-term data storage. Instead, they were actually developed for the ease of mass production. A CD or CD-ROM disk is composed of several layers, such as a plastic polycarbonate layer, a metal reflective layer with all the data in it, and then the coating on top. The problem is, different manufacturers have different formulations; so, it's quite complex to figure out what exactly is causing the deterioration of the disks. Even worse, the various manufacturers changed the formulation along the way, and production changes are considered to be proprietary information. In other words, the manufacturers won't tell anyone what they changed and when they changed it. Even CDs made by the same company in the same year and wrapped in identical packaging might have totally different lifespans. It's impossible to tell just from looking at a disc how it will age. Another issue is that mass-produced disks created in a factory use very different methods of recording the data from the methods used in the "record your own CD disks at home" variety we all use to record data onto one disk at a time. The disk you recorded at home almost certainly has a shorter life expectancy than the commercially-produced disks created in a factory. In fact, a CD or CD-ROM disk is not a single piece of plastic. It is really a "sandwich" consisting of several layers:

- Label and lacquer layers
- Upper polycarbonate layer
- Foil layer
- Dye layer
- Lower polycarbonate layer

**Note:** Rewritable discs like DVD-R, DVD+RW and DVD-RAM lack a dye, but instead use phase-changing crystalline structure alloys at the same layer location. The weakest part of a DVD is in the binders (or glues) that hold the

polycarbonates together, forming the DVD layer sandwich. One of the problems with long-term storage of these disks is that the layers often start to separate over time. Separation is accelerated with variations in temperature and humidity. Eventually, many discs show signs of edge rot, which happens as oxygen seeps through a disc's layers. Some CDs begin a deterioration process called bronzing, which is corrosion that worsens with exposure to various pollutants. The lasers in devices used to burn or even play a CD can also affect its longevity. Then there's the wear and tear that's more in line with what you'd probably expect to happen over time—like scratches and exposure to extreme temperatures. One example is leaving the disks in your car over the summer.

***Hint:** If you like to listen to music CDs in your automobile, the suggestion is to COPY the music CDs and then place only the copies in your automobile. Leave the original disks at home where the temperature and humidity will be kinder to the disks. Once your copies die, you can make new copies from the originals.*

It's also better to not mess up the top of your CDs with gummed labels. The adhesive creates chemical reactions that quickly eat up data. Writing on a CD or CD-ROM disk with a permanent marker, such as a Sharpie, is generally safer than using any sort of gummed label. You can also purchase permanent markers that claim to be "safe for use on a CD." However, the added benefits of such markers has never been proven. The standard permanent marker you purchase at the drug store or office supply store should be as good as any "special markers" for writing on the top of a CD.

## Media Obsolescence

Have you tried to purchase a microfilm reader recently? It is almost impossible today and probably will be completely impossible within a few more years. CD drives and CD players are disappearing from newer models of laptops, usually being replaced either with flash drives or with online storage "in the cloud." CD players are even disappearing from automobiles, being replaced by iPods and flash drives. I suspect you won't be able to purchase a CD drive a few years from now. Flash drives will become obsolete some day as well, to eventually be replaced with

some sort of storage device that probably has not yet been invented. Perhaps a bigger issue is file formats. For example, JPG is very popular today for saving digital images, but will that be true ten or twenty years from now? How about PDF files or music MP3 files? Will there be hardware devices twenty years from now that will read those formats?

The problem is easily solved by copying the older formats every few years to whatever format is popular at that time. For instance, if a new "XYZ format" eventually becomes more popular than PDF, software and

hardware will always be available for a few years to copy from PDF to XYZ. The secret is to not miss that "window" of a few years when conversion is easily accomplished. The more difficult problem arises when proprietary file formats are used by commercial companies in their products. If a genealogy company uses some form of proprietary format for a CD disk containing images of old handwritten records, the only practical method of converting those disks a few years later to a more modern format is to have that company make the conversion for us. However, the company may have since gone out of business (Does anyone remember Banner Blue Software?) or may have since lost interest in the project. Ideally, we should only buy genealogy products today that use commonly-available file formats for all information storage. **If you have CDs or CD-ROMs that are sitting on the shelf, you need to copy them NOW.** You can copy them to new CD disks or to flash drives or to most any other form of modern media. They still won't last forever, but you can get quite a few more years of life from them if you take steps now to preserve the information by copying it to new storage devices. Then, a few years from now, copy them again to even more modern media that comes into common use at that time. If you (or your surviving heirs) take the time to copy CDs, CD-ROMs, DVDs, flash drives, and more digital media to modern media and file formats every few years, your valuable information can last and be useable for centuries.





## Genealogy News You Can Use...

### Rutgers University Libraries Receive Grant to Digitize Historical NJ Papers

With a \$186,204 grant New Jersey becomes the 44th state to participate in the National Digital Newspaper Program, supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities.

**New Jersey Digital Newspaper Project** is a collaboration of Rutgers University Libraries, the New Jersey State Archives and the New Jersey State Library that will make the history of New Jersey known to its citizens and the world. The plan, according to project director and Rutgers University digital archivist Caryn Radick, is to scan existing microfilm from the New Jersey State Archives and to make searchable digital files available through the Library of Congress website *Chronicling America*. Over a two-year period, the project will digitize and catalog at least 100,000 newspaper pages, originally published between 1836 and 1922 and not currently available in digital format.

"Our goals are ambitious," explains Radick. "We will meet with the advisory board to identify the newspapers that are in greatest need of digitization and hope to have the first batch, encompassing about 25,000 pages, completed by October 2017. We will focus on influential newspapers and historically important news or themes to maximize the benefit to users of *Chronicling America*."

Newspapers may have been slow to gain a foothold in the colony—New Jersey was the last of the original thirteen colonies to publish its own newspapers—but when they finally appeared they were as energetic as the colony itself, which became a state of many newsworthy "firsts." In its Constitution of 1776, New Jersey was the first state to prohibit discrimination. The state became a leader in technology and invention, from the first commercially manufactured lightbulb to the telegraph to the drugs streptomycin and tetracycline. New Jersey has also seen its share of unrest with the bitter strikes of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, such as the 1913 Paterson silk strike.

New Jersey's unique contributions to culture, politics, innovation and society are built into the historical fabric of the United States and digital access to this newspaper heritage is critical to an understanding of the sometimes painful, but always exhilarating growth of the nation. Ron Becker, head of special collections and university archives

at Rutgers University Libraries, predicts this material will have a significant impact on new scholarship. "From the *Whig Papers* to *The Star-Ledger*, New Jersey has a strong tradition of journalism. Prior to this digitization project, historians would travel to the New Jersey State Archives in Trenton or to a similar research institution and scroll through microfilm to find what they need. Having this material at their fingertips in a searchable, digital format will be tre-

mendously beneficial to those who study and write about the history of New Jersey." Prior to receiving this grant, New Jersey was one of only eleven states whose newspapers were not included in *Chronicling America*. Other new state recipients for 2016 include Alaska (Alaska Division of Libraries, Archives, and Museums), Colorado (Colorado Historical Society) and Maine (Maine State Library).

### National Archives Shares 2016 Virtual Genealogy Fair Videos on YouTube

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration has posted the broadcasts from their October 2016 Virtual Genealogy Fair to YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OayTDyoHHOU>.

Individual sessions include:

—**Introduction to Genealogy at the National Archives:** Claire Kluskens, Reference & Project Archivist, will discuss basic genealogical research techniques using Federal records at the National Archives, including census, immigration, and military service and pension records.

—**The Best National Archives Records Genealogists Aren't Using:** Lori Cox-Paul, Director of Archival Operations explores underutilized National Archives records of interest to genealogists. The records include: Relinquished, Rejected, or Canceled Land Entry Case Files; Rural Rehabilitation Loan Case Files; War Risk Insurance Court Case Files; and Veterans Home Case Files.

—**National Archives Innovative Online Resources and Tools to Help With Genealogical Research:** the National Archives has many tools to help with genealogical endeavors for both novices and experienced researchers alike. Sarah Swanson & Kelly Osborn, Information Technology Specialists, will walk you through History Hub, NARA's brand new Q&A platform designed to help you crowdsource your research and get direct help from experts, as well as show you how to navigate resources for genealogists on archives.gov and social media.

—**You Too Can Be a Citizen Archivist: Getting the Most Out of the National Archives Catalog:** NARA offers many opportunities to participate in their online catalog through citizen archivist projects such as tagging, transcription

and citizen scanning in their Innovation Hub. This session presented by Suzanne Isaacs and Meredith Doviak, Community Managers for the NARA Catalog, will explain how citizens can contribute to these projects & how these contributions can help you and other users locate records online, and benefit your research.

—**Department of State Records for Genealogical Research:** David Pfeiffer, Archivist at College Park; will discuss Department of State documents including passports, visas, birth, marriage & death reports; and personnel records.

—**Grave Yards and Genealogy: American Battle Monuments Commission:** Ryan Bass, Archives Technician at College Park will discuss the American Battle Monuments Commission's records useful for genealogy including interment, decimal subject files, lists of soldiers dead or wounded, headstone inscription & records and cemetery & memorial files.

—**Nonpopulation Census: Agriculture, Manufacturing and Social Statistics:** How many acres of wheat? How many cows? And more! Claire Kluskens describes the details you may learn about your ancestors' lives from the 1850, 1860, 1870, and 1880 census schedules of agriculture, industry, mortality & social statistics as well as the 1935 census of business.

—Other topics feature discussions of **Army & Air Force Morning Reports, Marine Corps Personnel Records as related to the Iwo Jima flag raising controversy; the Latest Accessions at the National Archives at St. Louis; and Personnel Folders of the Department of Interior & the National Park Service.**

**Cheyenne  
Genealogical &  
Historical Society**

P.O. Box 2539

Cheyenne, Wyoming  
82003-2539

Website:  
[www.cgshwyoming.org](http://www.cgshwyoming.org)

To contact CGHS or to  
submit newsletter  
suggestions and/or  
articles, send a note to  
Wendy at  
[wendywy04@aol.com](mailto:wendywy04@aol.com)

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The Cheyenne Genealogical &  
Historical Society welcomes  
these new members who have  
recently joined the organization:

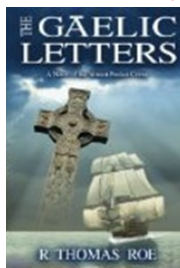
—Patricia McCabe

—Dale Wilen



## "Check This Out"

Family history-related fiction & nonfiction  
book reviews by CGHS members & others



### ***The Gaelic Letters: A Novel of the Almost Perfect Crime***

by R. Thomas Roe

(2010—Fiction; Signalman Publishing)

Shut down the computer, set aside those census records, sit back and relax. It's time to indulge in a little pleasure reading that just happens to be related to family history. Recently I learned about an intriguing book that's shot to the top of my "to be read" pile which is mounting on the end table next to the couch. I heard about it from my new friend Nancy, who just happens to share my maiden name—Desmond—though we've yet to prove we're related. It's called ***The Gaelic Letters: A Novel of the Almost Perfect Crime*** by R. Thomas Roe. There are plenty of historical novels and thrillers out there to capture the imagination, but one reason this book appeals to both Nancy and me is because the fictitious ancestor being traced by the main character, an amateur genealogist, is named "Desmond"—Jeremiah Desmond to be precise. That also happens to be the exact name of my own great-grandfather who, like the one referred to in this novel, was born in Ireland in the early 1800s, abandoned his homeland during the famine, and began a new life in America. But I digress—this book is fiction. It's not about my great grandfather or anyone related to my newfound friend.

It is the kind of genre I enjoy though (suspense), and about some topics very close to my heart (ancestor hunting, Ireland, and the Great Potato Famine). And it's all served up by R. Thomas Roe with a present day genealogical twist. Here's an abbreviated synopsis of this enticing novel as provided by Amazon.com:  
"Quinn Parker, a retired attorney, begins a family history project to learn about family members that his grandfather, Jeremiah Desmond, may have left behind in Ireland when he fled during the Famine. Quinn's family history project takes a turn he regrets when he discovers a packet of old, yellowed letters written in Gaelic stored in his mother's basement. He receives more than he bargains for when he reads the translations. His search for answers takes him to genealogy libraries in three states and eventually to Ireland where he finds himself embroiled in far more than he ever expected... forged documents, the fraudulent conversion of massive family wealth and eventually murder..."

To determine how I'll spend my literary time and money...I seek out book summaries provided by publishers and booksellers, reviews by librarians and professional book reviewers, and most importantly, comments made by everyday readers who've read the book. Based on reader comments from the Amazon website I decided that for me, ***Gaelic Letters*** is one book that may very well be worth investing my time and money.

—Book review by Pat Biallas, a writer, editor and family historian with a passion for Irish, Civil War, and Chicago history. In addition to penning "Pursuing the Past with Pat Biallas" at [theindepthgenealogist.com](http://theindepthgenealogist.com), Patricia maintains her own blog, [Geneajourneys](http://Geneajourneys.com), at [www.geneajourneys.wordpress.com](http://www.geneajourneys.wordpress.com), where she recounts stories of ancestors who struggled, succeeded and simply survived the challenges of the times they lived in. A degree in journalism prepared her for a communications career as a magazine editor, newspaper columnist and public relations professional. Patricia is a member of several local genealogy organizations, two Civil War heritage societies and the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors. A relative newbie to the genealogy field, Patricia is part of the Pro-Gen 18 Study Group, and recently accepted a position to serve as editor of ***The Quarterly***, a scholarly publication of the Illinois State Genealogical Society. This article originally appeared in ***The In-Depth Genealogist*** and can be found at <http://theindepthgenealogist.com/?=gaelic+letters> (Book review reprinted with permission)