

Publication Notes

The BCGS issues a two-part publication each quarter. The first part is the **Newsletter**, which contains news, activities, acquisitions, events, and information of general interest and assistance to members. Part two is the **Notebook**, which focuses specifically on genealogy research.

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Baltimore County Genealogical Society

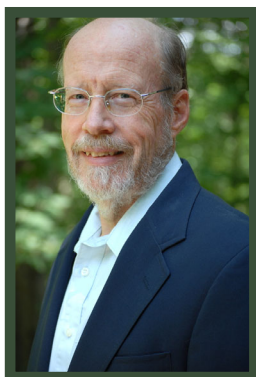
Covering the Baltimore Metro Area and the State of Maryland

Quarterly Newsletter—Sept., 2026



President's Message

It has been a quiet summer largely due to the ongoing parking lot construction at the Parkville Senior Center. This work is supposed to be finished by late October or early November. We are endeavoring to maintain our normal schedule for meeting and research days as much as possible. Please check our web site for current information as we have had to cancel a couple of events due to the construction.



President Dave Powell

We are planning a great series of speakers during the next several months. We start off with a talk by Bob Greiner on finding Maryland vital records at Archive.org. Archive.org has all the Maryland vital records that are currently available but it is somewhat challenging to find them. Bob will lead us through how to do that. Stayed tuned via our website for future announcements on other speakers. Our work continues on indexing birth and death records. Slow but steady progress is being made on these large projects. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Greg Burton or myself and we can fill you in on what is needed.

It is interesting to note that for our large projects, we have been using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to help with indexing both the birth and death records. This has been a learning experience for us but has been a boost to our productivity. We are, of course, doing a complete check of the AI generated date to ensure its accuracy. If anyone is interested in learning more just let us know.

Special thanks to all our current volunteers who keep our society going. Maintaining the library, the computers, the website, arranging speakers, writing and editing the newsletter and notebook among many other jobs are essential to keeping the society running. And welcome to the board our new recording secretary, **Pat Kniffin**

Dr. Miller's Card Indexes

by Carol Porter

The late Dr. Richard B. Miller, of Pasadena, CA, was a well-known and respected genealogist. Those who are familiar with past issues of the Maryland Genealogical Society's *Bulletin* will recognize him as a frequent contributor to that publication. As long-time researcher of many old Baltimore County families, Dr. Miller collected a wealth of information over the years. In the mid-1980s and in declining health, he distributed much of his research to various institutions and individuals around the country. The BCGS Library was fortunate to receive from him four boxes of 3x5 index cards encompassing the marriage and birth records of St. Paul's Parish, St.

John's Parish, and St. George's Parish of Baltimore County for the years 1700-1800—all in areas that later became part of Harford County. Although these records have since been published by Bill and Martha Reamy and Henry Peden, it may still be helpful to check out his file.



Dr. Miller's Card Indexes.

When Dr. Miller abstracted the vital records from these parishes, he arranged the individuals in family groups, therefore, one index card can reflect a husband and wife with their marriage date along with all of their children and accompanying birth dates. Most cards are stamped with his source. Some vestry minutes will also be found.

Abstracts of Baltimore County Wills are included in this file as well. Many were obtained from *The Maryland Calendar of Wills* series of Jane Baldwin Cotton. It is not uncommon to find an occasional will abstract from Anne Arundel and Cecil Counties. When Dr. Miller had knowledge of someone moving to another state, he noted this on the card giving the new county and state of residence. There was an effort to abstract the Administration Bonds for Baltimore County, but only the As and Bs were completed.

Remember! Refreshments!

To help ensure an ample supply of refreshments for our meetings, we request that members contribute munchies and snacks by adhering to the schedule below (but feel free to bring items even when it is not your turn). Please take home your leftovers, & be sure to collect your container if it is reusable.

Directions: Members with a last name beginning with the letters on the left are asked to bring a refreshment item to share for the months indicated.

Member Last Name Initial

A, B, C, D
E, F, G, H
I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R
S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z,
Everyone

Monthly Meeting

January & May
February & June
March & October
April & September
November

Mark Your Calendar!

The library will be open on the regular research days—the 2nd & 4th Thurs. of the month & the 2nd Sat. of the month from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. for research. In addition, meetings are on the following Sundays (opens at noon):

Sunday, Sept. 27, 2 p.m. meeting and speaker.

Sunday Oct. 25, 2 p.m. meeting. TBD

Sunday Nov. 22 2 p.m. meeting and speaker TBD.

Murphy's Law—If one brother is left out of the genealogy of a family, guess whose ancestor he will be?

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Refreshments

Vacant

New Members

The BCGS welcomes the following new members listed here with the family surnames they are researching. If you need to contact a member regarding any surnames being researched, contact our librarian, **Lorraine Gordon**.

Genealogy Classes at CCBC

CCBC will be offering three genealogy classes during the fall 2026 semester in their Senior Adventures in Learning (SAIL) program. All three classes will be held at their Hunt Valley extension campus at 11101 McCormick Rd.

Find Your Family Roots – Beginners – Course # 30860

Thursdays from 10/1/2026 for eight weeks at 1:00 to 2:30pm.

This course is intended for genealogy beginners. Students will learn how to get started in their genealogical research. An introduction to various family research websites will be presented. Techniques for storing and organizing genealogical data on a computer will be discussed.

Family History Research using Ancestry.com – Course # 30915

Fridays from 10/2/2026 for eight weeks at 10:00am to 11:30.

Discover the power of Ancestry.com for your family history journey. Learn to leverage its vast resources for storing and expanding your genealogical research. It is best to have an Ancestry.com account for this class. Ancestry.com is a subscription site. See the site for costs.

Using Artificial Intelligence in your Family History Research –Course # 31121

Tuesdays from 10/6/2026 for six weeks at 1:00 to 2:30pm

This course is designed to allow students to learn and discover how to use the modern technology of artificial intelligence (AI) and its tools to help further enhance their genealogical research.

All three classes are being taught by David Powell, the President of the Baltimore County Genealogical Society and a Maryland Genealogical Society Board Member.

Register for the course(s) by calling **443-840-2222** or visit this website:
<https://www.ccbcmd.edu/Admission-and-Registration/Register-for-Classes/Continuing-Education/Registration-and-Payment.html>

NEW MEMBER NAME

SURNAMES BEING RESEARCHED

LAST	FIRST				
Barnes	Zola				
Flores	Felicia Kirk	Hooker	Watkins	Comely	
Ross	Linda				
Moore	Lauren	Chew/Wynne	Randall	Dillehunt	Pierpont
Thomas	Michelle				
Szymanik	Pat	Murphy	Thomas	Dimmler	

Ha Ha — “My ancestors did WHAT?”

Hitting a Brick Wall? - Marie Vogelsang

By Lance McPherson:

Brick walls are excellent to have supporting your residence, but not so nice in researching your family tree. I've been chasing my family members through time since the turn of the century...this century. The known family circle has grown from a few dozen relatives to over 11,000 members. Please don't ask me to name them.

Anyway, one of my brick walls blocked knowing more about my mother's line of Hertels. I had the names of Michael Hertel and Maria A Vogelsang as my 2nd- great grandparents. In 2005, I searched Maryland Death Indices for all of the Hertels from 1875 to the 1960s. I pulled all that I could find during numerous trips to the Hall of Records in Annapolis. I had access to several historical newspaper search engines and searched high and low for Michael and Maria with no luck.

Then, in 2020, Ancestry offered 50% off their Newspapers.com clipping service. I dropped one paid service for another at the same cost. They say to never change horses mid-stream, but in this case it really paid off. I searched through my tree looking for more sources of information on their lives. I returned to my search for the

Hertel's. In searching on "Vogelsang," up popped the following article:

L 12, 1906. LIKE WIDOW OF BATH Mrs. McGrath Has Buried Three Husbands And Divorced One. SHE IS NOW WAITING FOR NO. 5 Many Richmonds In The Field — Victor Must Work All Day And Stay Home At Night. After securing a divorce yesterday from her fourth husband, Mrs. Mary McGrath, a rather prepossessing woman of 68 years, who lives at 1224 North Washington street, said she was again contemplating matrimony and that her hand in marriage was most devotedly sought by a dozen suitors. Mrs. McGrath lives by herself in a nicely furnished two story house, and as she owns several other pieces of property it is believed by her acquaintances that she is worth considerable money. "But," said Mrs. McGrath last night, "I am going to see that my next matrimonial venture is as successful as my first three, for my last husband married me only for my money and did not love me." "You see I live here all alone, and my only companion at present is a dog. Now I am getting along in years and think that I should be married, so as to have someone in the house with me. I don't want a man to come in and hang his hat up and then sit around the fire and smoke his pipe all day, but he must work during the day, be a good husband and stay home with me at nights."	As soon as a lot of men learned that I was going to get a divorce from Henry McGrath they began to make love to me, and I have been compelled to eject several of them from the house. One, in particular, insisted that he was just suited to be my husband, but he said that he would not work. Of course, that ended him with me. No. 4 Opposed To Manual Labor. "I believe in marriage, and my first three husbands were as good to me as they could be, but I buried them all. The fourth fellow thought that he was going to sit down and take it easy while I supported him, and when I told him he was wrong and that he had to go to work his love began to grow colder, and we often had quarrels, until finally I drove him from the house." "Among my present suitors are a few young men, but they will never do for me. What I want is an old man without any incumbrances, who has a pile of money. If his income is sufficient he will not have to work, and we could live as happy as two little bees in a hive. Of course, if a nice young man with lots of money would come along I might consider his suit, but he would have to promise me most sincerely to do as I say." "Of my present suitors I do not think there is one who will measure up to all the requirements that I demand, but then I expect others to come along and believe that I will find the right one shortly." Mrs. Grath was born in Germany and her maiden name was Vogelsang. She came to this city when 16 years old and a year later married John Brash. After 17 years of happy married life Mr. Brash was drowned off Henderson's wharf. She remained a widow for about a year and then married Michael Hertel, who died 18 years later of cancer. For a time Mrs. Grath said she thought she would remain single, but she met George Weber, whom she married two years later after a most ardent courtship. Mr. Weber Up To The Standard.	Mr. Weber Up To The Standard. "Poor Weber," she said, "was an ideal husband, and we lived most happily together. Shortly after we celebrated the seventh anniversary of our wedding Mr. Weber was taken ill with cramps and died after an illness of two days." "About six months later along came Henry Grath and he told me that he was a cigarmaker, worked daily, made good wages and had a good account in a building and loan association. He was persistent in his attentions to me and I finally consented to marry him. The ceremony was performed October 10, 1902, by Rev. Thomas J. Murphy, of St. Andrew's Catholic Church. From the very beginning we had trouble and the breach between us widened each day. Two months after our marriage I ran him from the house, but he came back several days later and told me he would do better and I took him back. He soon forgot his pledges and I drove him from the house on February 20, 1902." "From that day until yesterday I had been working for a divorce. Several times Mr. Grath called and tried to fix things up with me, but it was of no avail. As soon as a lot of old men, who are kept by their children and relatives, learned of our separation they tried to court me, thinking that I would keep them, but that is not what I am looking for." The divorce was granted to Mrs. Grath yesterday by Judge Stockbridge. Mr. Benjamin Rosenheim was her attorney. Mrs. Grath said that she enjoyed good health and she looks at least 10 years younger than her age. She has one son by her second husband, but he is married and has a family, and she is not anxious to live with him when she has three houses of her own. Two of her husbands are buried side by side in Home Sweet Home Cemetery, while the third lies in St. Alphonsus' Cemetery.
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Mary Vogelsang was featured in a 1906 Baltimore Sunpapers article for having been married four times and was looking for husband number five. So many surnames make it a bit tougher to find her. I looked back in Maryland land records (landrec.msa.maryland.gov) searching her property transactions. She last mortgaged her home in 1913 under the name of Mary Weber. Apparently, she never married the 5th time and went back to her 3rd husband's surname after divorcing number four. Following that?

Vogelsang Marie Sun 4/12/1906

Searching death certificates for 1913-15 revealed that Mary Weber died 25 Sep 1915 at Bayview Asylum, Baltimore City Hospitals. The home address of 9 N Duncan St is that of her son, Peter Hertel, who also died earlier in 1915. Since Bayview Asylum was a long-term care facility her health or mental health had likely deteriorated after 1906 and she lost her three homes, never remarried, and moved to her son's home. From there she was hospitalized and passed away.

The death certificate was easy to pull thanks to the new BCGS Death Certificate database. She was buried with husband number three, George Weber, at Most Holy Redeemer. I still couldn't find Michael Hertel's death certificate. Using the database, I was able to use wildcards to search using the last name "HE*", Michael" and up popped the index for Michael HEITEL who passed in 1888. One transcription error hid Michael from me for years.

The article on Maria Vogelsang played fast and loose with dates. She claimed to be 68 but stated that she looked like 58. Her calculated year of birth should be 1838. Her death certificate shows her year of birth as 1850. Other dates for marriages and deaths in the article were misstated as well. I'm just wondering if great, great grandma just wasn't good with dates, or if she was trying to trip me up 100 years later.

Old Saint Paul's Cemetery, Baltimore City

By Dan Phelan

A recently formed Friends group is undertaking the task of coordinating among local patriotic heritage groups including the Sons of the American Revolution, the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Society of the War of 1812 and the Daughters of the War of 1812 in the restoration of Old Saint Paul's cemetery in Baltimore City. The cemetery, owned by Saint Paul's Episcopal Church in Baltimore City, and contained within the bounds of the University of Maryland in Baltimore, is arguably the most historic cemetery in the city, containing the final resting place of a signer of the Declaration of Independence, a Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, governors of Maryland, members of the United States Congress and other historical figures in the early history of Maryland and Baltimore City. Additionally, the cemetery is the final resting place of over 150 veterans of Colonial and U.S wars, from the French and Indian War through Vietnam.

The 225-year-old cemetery has seen better days as conflict continues to swirl between the cost of maintaining a dying cemetery in an expanding city and changing perception of what, if anything, a community owes to its notable dead. Old Saint Paul's provides an interesting study of issues and problems that have attracted the attention of preservationists for decades and whose solutions still elude them. Over the past fifty years, sporadic preservation efforts by individual patriotic societies have stabilized the cemetery for a short period, until interest and money wane. The present Friends group attempts to provide for a more long-lasting approach.

A 2015 assessment report by Mosko Cemetery Monument Repair estimated that a complete restoration of the cemetery would cost 2 to 3 million dollars and noted several major safety concerns. The Friends group has focused on restoring the landscape using primary volunteer efforts, over 200 hours in the past year, as well as a matching grant from The Trader Foundation to hire an arborist for tree trimming and removal. Significant progress has been made. The below photos depict the John Eager Howard mausoleum in 2025 and in 2026, after the volunteer effort.

Speaker?

*One of the highlights of our meetings is exposure to new information and techniques that broaden our genealogy research skills and knowledge. Toward that end, we are always looking for speakers for our meetings to help with that. If you have an expertise to share, or know of someone who might be interested in speaking to our group for an hour, please contact Vice President **Jim Cross**.*



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Old Saint Paul's Cemetery, Baltimore City

Continued from p.5

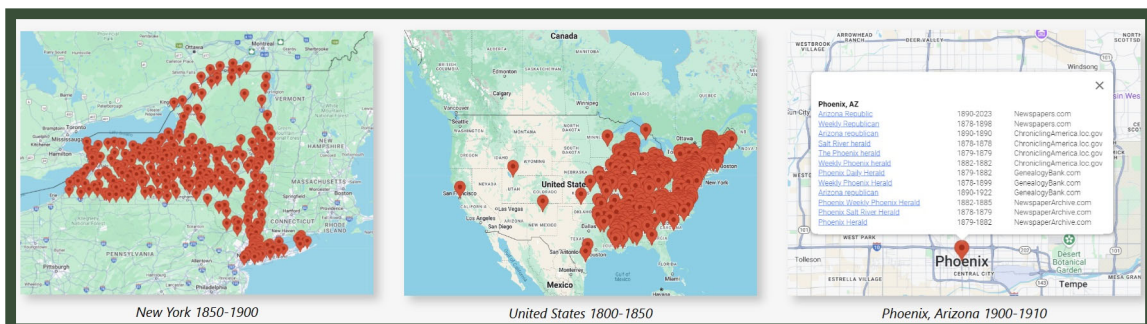
Yet, volunteer efforts can only go so far. The stone walls of the cemetery, originally erected in 1842, are now a safety hazard for cemetery and University of Maryland hospital visitors and pedestrians on neighboring Lombard Street. The below photos show the Lombard Street wall with trees growing through the wall and impinging on a public bus shelter, rocks being pushed through the wall, and a lack of mortar between the rocks making up the wall. Historical grave sites are collapsing. While the cemetery is a registered Baltimore City Landmark, Baltimore City, after repeated notification has not addressed these issues. More information on the Friends of Old St. Paul's Cemetery can be found on Facebook.



A New Database for Digitized Newspapers

By Dan Phelan

Newspaper Finder (newspaperfinder.com) is a catalog to find all newspapers that have been digitized on the internet. Whether you are a historian, genealogist, or archivist, you can explore a comprehensive collection in one place and easily find the newspapers you need. You can do a free search by location and time frames. You begin by selecting a time span in years, then select which country or state you are interested. Zoom in on the selected map, select a red pointer that is on or near your town of interest, and you will see which newspapers are available, and which time frames are available for each. The website location where those images can be searched will also be included. Some of those websites are free, while others are linked to pay sites that you may already be member of. Many have free trial periods. Feel free to jump on and look around!



A New and Easier Way to Find Records at the BCGS Library—Introducing the BCGS NAS File Portal

By Greg Burton

The Baltimore County Genealogical Society has created a new way for visitors to find and view records on the library computers. It is called the **BCGS NAS File Portal**.

***What does NAS mean?** NAS stands for **Network-Attached Storage**. It is simply a large electronic filing cabinet connected to the Society's computers. It holds scanned records, books, photographs, family histories, spreadsheets, and many other files.*

The new Portal helps visitors search this large collection without needing to know where every record is stored.

What Can Be Found in the Portal?

The Portal currently lists more than 402,000 files in thousands of folders. The collection includes materials such as:

- Maryland birth, marriage, and death records
- Baltimore City and Baltimore County records
- Records from other Maryland counties
- Cemetery and church records
- Naturalization records
- Family Bibles
- Surname books
- Family trees
- Records from other states and countries
- BCGS research materials



Three of the four library computers

More records will be added as the Society continues to scan and organize its collections.

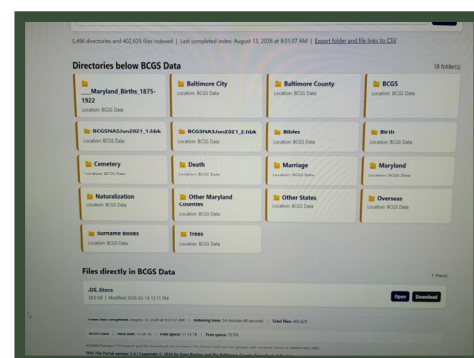
How Do I Use It?

On a BCGS library computer, double-click the desktop shortcut marked: **BCGS File Portal**

A search page will open. Type a name, place, year, record number, or other word into the search box. The Portal will show folders and files that may match your search. You can also look through the collection one folder at a time.

For example, you might search for:

- A surname
- A cemetery
- A church
- A Maryland county
- A year of death
- A certificate number
- A town or city



Current file Portal View

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A New and Easier Way to Find Records at the BCGS Library—Introducing the BCGS NAS File Portal

(Continued from p7)

When you find a record you would like to see, select **Open from NAS**. Windows will then open the original file using the correct program, such as a PDF reader, photograph viewer, or spreadsheet program.

You Cannot Accidentally Harm the Records

The library-user version of the Portal is read-only. That means visitors can look at records, but they cannot use the Portal to:

- Change a file
- Rename a file
- Move a file
- Delete a file
- Add a file
- Download a file through the Portal
- Export the Society's complete file list

This protects the Society's records from accidental changes. The Portal opens the original file from the Society's electronic filing cabinet. It does not place another copy in the computer's Downloads folder.

Files Appear in a More Useful Order

Computers do not always arrange numbered files in the order people expect. For example, ordinary alphabetical sorting may place a file beginning with 1001 before a file beginning with 501.

The BCGS Portal recognizes the numbers in filenames and places the files in the proper order:

- **1-500**
- **501-1000**
- **1001-1500**

It can also recognize Maryland State Archives file numbers, helping related groups of records appear in the correct sequence.

What Does the Administrator Do?

The administrator's computer scans the Society's electronic collection and creates the searchable list used by the Portal. After the list has been checked, it is shared with the library computers.

The administrator's version has additional tools that regular library users do not need, including the ability to update the index and export file lists. Safety checks help prevent an incomplete or incorrect list from replacing the working Portal.

Why Was the Portal Created?

The Society has a very large and growing digital collection. Finding a record by opening one folder after another could take a long time. The new Portal gives visitors a faster and easier way to search the collection while helping protect the original files. The goal is to make the Society's records easier to use for both experienced researchers and visitors who may not be regular computer users.