



Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies

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Newsletter

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Hello,

Another month has gone by and that means spring is one month closer. Sounds good to me.

Be on the lookout for the registration brochures for our June conference. They should be in Eileen's hands very soon and on their way to your societies. If you don't see one, just go online to our website and download one for your self. We are excited about this conference and our speaker.

Do not forget to sign up for the bus trip to Ft Wayne that Wichita is sponsoring, if you are interested in going. It has been awhile since we have been able to get enough folks to go so that the trip is feasible.

I am looking around for items that I have been saving for this newsletter.

Here is one of them.

Kentucky Death Index for years 2000 to 2012 Is Now Online

The Boyd County (Kentucky) Public Library has announced a major new addition to its online databases: the Death Index for the state of Kentucky online for the years 2000-2012. This is believed to be the only FREE site offering death index for those years.



Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies, Inc.

2015 ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Featured Speaker

Kathleen Brandt

Kathleen is an international genealogy consultant, speaker and writer with more than 10 years of experience as a Professional Genealogist and is a licensed Private Investigator. Her clients include NBC *Who Do You Think You Are?*, and PBS, *Finding Your Roots*, with Henry Louis Gates, and she appeared on the History Channel, *How the States Got Their Shapes*. She has extensive experience in international and nationwide documentation retrieval, free-colored research, military record reconstructions, and tracing slaves, as well as Italian, Irish, Swedish, and German records.



www.KCGS.us

Kansas Council Of Genealogical Societies
PO Box 3858 Topeka KS 66604

Co-Sponsored by the
Wichita Genealogical Society
www.wichitagensoc.org

Plan Now To Attend!
Saturday, June 20, 2015
Wichita, Kansas

According to the Boyd County Public Library's web site:

"This database was converted from PDF files purchased (in early 2015) from the Office for Vital Statistics, Frankfort, KY. It currently contains the years 2000-2012. Database searches have a limit of 500 names. This index is to be used as a reference only, and is not intended to be an official record of death. For more information you should request copies of the actual death certificate from the Office of Vital Statistics. The Death Certificate number was NOT part of the original index purchased from the Office of Vital Statistics. As with any conversion process, there may be occasional errors to have been introduced." You can access the new Kentucky Death Index for 2000 to 2012 at <http://thebookplace.org/genealogy/databases/>.

Companion Companion

For time immemorial, people have been keeping animals as pets. While the choice of pet may differ by region and of course, by individual tastes, the reasoning for taking in a pet is typically similar, and often there's some sense of companionship involved. In Western societies, the guinea pig is a common pet for this reason -- they are low-upkeep animals which are docile, do not tend to stray from their cages (even if open), and [as Wikipedia describes](#), "become amenable to being picked up and carried, and seldom bite or scratch."

And that's great for the human in the relationship -- the guinea pig is there when the person needs a little bit of company. But what about the guinea pig's feelings?

Switzerland was concerned about that question. Veterinary Economics (a niche professional magazine) published a [report](#) of a new law in Switzerland, aiming at curbing animal abuse. The country took a broader-than-usual view of what constituted "abuse," though: "Animals classified as 'social species' -- such as guinea pigs and parrots -- will be considered victims of abuse if they don't live or interact regularly with others of their species," per the magazine. Effectively, it became illegal to own just one guinea pig -- by law, each guinea pig owner was required to provide his or her pet with a friend. (Or, at least, a housemate; there was no requirement that the two guinea pigs actually like each other.)

As Veterinary Economics further noted, there were not going to be door-to-door spot checks to make sure the pets had a bunkmate -- Switzerland required "mandatory training" and hoped that public sentiment would help push others to comply. They were apparently correct. Public awareness of the rule was strong enough where a problem started to arise -- guinea pigs, even though they're a "social species," don't follow each other into death. (As an aside, contrary to popular belief, [neither do lem-mings](#).) When one guinea pig died, its owner would be stuck in an endless cycle. The owner would have to purchase a new, probably younger guinea pig as a companion to the aging survivor, whose eventual death would force the purchase of yet another guinea pig, locking the owner into an endless cycle of guinea pig purchases in order to adhere to Swiss law -- even though he or she may only ever have wanted one guinea pig in the first place. And nobody wants that.

But problems lend themselves to creative solutions, and the guinea pig one is no different. A then 41-year-old named Priska Kung, a self-described "animal lover," decided to rent out guinea pigs to owners who needed a companion for their companion. For about \$50 or \$60, Ms. Kung lends out a guinea pig for as long as the renter wishes. When (if) the guinea pig is returned, the renter receives half of the fee back -- think of it as a refundable deposit. Some rented-out guinea pigs were returned within a few weeks, while others never made the return trip home.

Ms. Kung's business wasn't a big money maker -- she described it as a hobby -- and, in fact, she claimed it cost her money in the end.



From The Island at the Center of the World

Anglo-centric American historians have typically featured Jamestown (founded in 1607) and Plymouth (founded in 1620) to tell the founding story of America, at the expense of the Dutch colony centered in Manhattan (founded in 1614 as Fort Amsterdam and the designated New Amsterdam), which was more economically and culturally dominant in the earliest years of American history, and which is arguably more representative of America today:

"We are used to thinking of American beginnings as involving thirteen English colonies - to thinking of American history as an English root onto which, over time, the cultures of many other nations were grafted to create a new species of society that has become a multiethnic model for progressive societies around the world. But that isn't true. To talk of the thirteen original English colonies is to ignore another European colony, the one centered on Manhattan, which predated New York and whose history was all but erased when the English took it over (in 1664).

"The settlement in question occupied the area between the newly forming English territories of Virginia and New England. It extended roughly from present-day Albany, New York, in the north to Delaware Bay in the south, comprising all or parts of what became New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. It was founded by the Dutch, who called it New Netherland, but half of its residents were from elsewhere. Its capital was a tiny collection of rough buildings perched on the edge of a limitless wilderness, but its muddy lanes and waterfront were prowled by a Babel of peoples - Norwegians, Ger-

mans, Italians, Jews, Africans (slaves and free), Walloons, Bohemians, Munsees, Montauks, Mohawks, and many others - all living on the rim of empire, struggling to find a way of being together, searching for a balance between chaos and order, liberty and oppression. Pirates, prostitutes, smugglers, and business sharks held sway in it. It was Manhattan, in other words, right from the start: a place unlike any other, either in the North American colonies or anywhere else.

"Because of its geography, its population, and the fact that it was under the control of the Dutch (even then its parent city, Amsterdam, was the most liberal in Europe), this island city would become the first multiethnic, upwardly mobile society on America's shores, a prototype of the kind of society that would be duplicated throughout the country and around the world. ... If what made America great was its ingenious openness to different cultures, then the small triangle of land at the southern tip of Manhattan Island is the New World birthplace of that idea, the spot where it first took shape. Many people - whether they live in the heartland or on Fifth Avenue - like to think of New York City as so wild and extreme in its cultural fusion that it's an anomaly in the United States, almost a foreign entity. This book offers an alternative view: that beneath the level of myth and politics and high ideals, down where real people live and interact, Manhattan is where America began.

"The original European colony centered on Manhattan came to an end when England took it over in 1664, renaming it New York after James, the Duke of York, brother of King Charles II, and folding it into its other American colonies. As far as the earliest American historians were concerned, that date marked the true beginning of the history of the region. The Dutch-led colony was almost immediately considered inconsequential. When the time came to memorialize national origins, the English Pilgrims and Puritans of New England provided a better model. The Pilgrims' story was simpler, less messy, and had fewer pirates and prostitutes to explain away. It was easy enough to overlook the fact that the Puritans' flight to American shores to escape religious persecution led them, once established, to institute a brutally intolerant regime, a grim theocratic monoculture about as far removed as

one can imagine from what the country was to become."

Author: Russell Shorto

Title: *The Island at the Center of the World*

The Simon Brothers Baseball Team of Pottawatomie County, Kansas

When John M. Simon and his wife Minnie (Hagerty) Simon had their first son in 1893, they had no idea that their farm in Olsburg, Kansas would one day host a baseball diamond or that the team that played there would be comprised of their ten sons. Oldest son John A. Simon had clear memories of his father's dream and how the older boys would work with the younger ones to teach them how to play the game.

In the 1920s, baseball became synonymous with Babe Ruth and towns throughout the country formed teams and played teams from neighboring towns. Though many took the sport seriously, these were largely groups of amateurs who played on weekends and the games were a town event. Cars were still a luxury for most families, so local teams rarely traveled far.

By the mid-1920s the Simon Brothers Baseball Team played in several towns in Pottawatomie County, Kansas in Northeast Kansas. The teams they played would often be from Manhattan or Westmoreland, the county seat. Though the brothers enjoyed playing, it was hard work. The older ones farmed or had other jobs, and practice was in the evenings with most games on Sundays.

In the late 1920s the family team was "discovered" by Kansas Senator Arthur Capper, who was well known as the founder of Capper's Weekly, a popular weekly tabloid that published from 1913-86. He bought the brothers their first set of professional uniforms and paved the way for the team to play an exhibition game at the 1930 World's Fair in New York. Twenty years later John (Jack) Simon was still describing the awe the brothers felt after traveling from the Kansas prairie to the big city.

The brothers were:

John Alma (Jack) Simon (1893-1954)

Jacob (Jake) William Simon (1895-1964)

Floyd Walter Simon (1898-1982)

Glenn E. Simon (1901-1974)

Roy Raymond Simon (1903-1983)

Clyde E. Simon (1906-1978)

Bert Simon (1907-1993)

Nile (Cricket) Simon (1909-1987)

Herman (Ted) Simon (1909-1987)

Ernest Edward (Ed) Simon (1913-2010)

While some brothers left the state for military service, they generally stayed in Kansas. Only Floyd died outside the state, in California. John and Jake were barbers. Floyd and Glenn farmed in Pottawatomie County in 1930. Ed was living on the family's farm when he became the last surviving brother in 1993. He lived to be 97.

FamilySearch Opens First Family Discovery Center in Salt Lake City

[Dick Eastman](#)

I recently had a chance to visit at a new offering from the FamilySearch department of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The first FamilySearch Discovery Center is being demonstrated in Salt Lake City this week and will become available for general use next week. The plan is to refine the new product for a few months, prove the concept, get the bugs out, and then to replicate the concept in other locations around the United States. After translation of the software and all the historical information, Family Discovery Centers will also be introduced at a number of locations around the world.

The new center is designed to allow visitors, especially children, to experience the history and social influences that influenced the lives of their ancestors. It uses the latest technology to give patrons a personally immersive experience into their family's history.

The Family Discovery Center uses the latest high-tech gadgets (I'd love to own one of those 80-inch monitors!) along with information from the visitor's own family tree and a lot of historical facts to show what life may have been like for earlier generations of the family. In fact, the new Family Discovery Center has been described as "a Star Trek-meets-genealogy type of experience." There are also fun, hands-on activities for children of all ages that encourage family discoveries.

The experience works best if a visiting family uploads their family tree information to FamilySearch.org before visiting the center. Upon arrival, each visitor is handed an iPad for use while in the center. By connecting the iPad to each stop along the way in the Center, each visitor sees his or her genealogy information displayed in large fan charts and then merged into maps as well as historical and lifestyle information of the time in which those ancestors lived. Each visitor also has an opportunity to take part in audio and video interviews where they can add more family stories as well.

The Discovery Center is located in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building. Walk-ins are welcome, but it is recommended that individuals, families, and groups reserve a time at [FamilySearch.org/discoverycenter](https://familysearch.org/discoverycenter).

You can read more in the FamilySearch Blog at <https://familysearch.org/blog/en/familysearch-opens-discovery-center-salt-lake-city/>.

Till next time

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