



Austin Families Association of America Newsletter

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

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The Two Austin Family Research Groups

As many of you might know, there are two organizations doing Austin family research: **AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**, abbreviated as AFAOA, and **AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**, abbreviated as AOAGS. The similarity in the names has caused confusion to some people new to Austin research.

Our purpose here is to explain some of the similarities and some of the differences between the two groups.

The AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA was formed in 1942 by Edith Austin Moore and her brother Henry Warner Austin. The main reason for forming this organization was to help further Edith's Austin research, which she had been involved in since 1912.

Upon the death of Edith Austin Moore in 1979, Janet Austin Curtis became the AFAOA Genealogist, followed by Bonnie Bigolin in 1990. Liz Austin Carlin and Jan Austin Untener now carry on the responsibility of preserving and continuing over 60 years of Austin research. At the present time AFAOA has approximately 250 members, most in the United States but some in Canada, England and Australia.

The three main goals of the AFAOA, as stated in the by-laws, are:

- To gather, preserve and disseminate Austin genealogies and Austin family histories.
- To establish a specialized database of Austin information that can assist genealogists and family members to learn as much as possible about their Austin heritage.
- To help foster wider acquaintances and long-term friendships among the members of all branches of the Austin families.

The AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY was formed in 1979 by Dr. Michael Austin. His reason for forming another Austin organization was that he felt there was not enough emphasis in the AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA on publishing Austin genealogical data. At that point in time he was correct in his assessment, but changes were made.

The goals of the AOAGS, as stated on their web site, are: "To serve present and future genealogists in researching Austin family lines, and to provide a place for publishing and preserving Austin family research."

Both organizations provide free research help to their members. The two organizations have worked together in the following ways:

Austin Conventions: The AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA has held annual reunions since 1942 (except for the war years 1943 – 1945) and after 1979 the AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY participated in most of those reunions. From 1998 to 2004, AFAOA and AOAGS have jointly sponsored National Austin Conventions.

The Austin-Austen Research Center: In June 2000 the AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY established a research database of Austin genealogical and historical documents on the Internet, with text search capability. The AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA has contributed all of its digitized text materials, including all family databases in descendency book format and the transcribed research notebooks of Edith Austin Moore, and the States Notebook of Janet Austin Curtis. Both organizations share the operating cost of the AARC. Links to the AARC are available on both organizations' web sites. This cooperation has benefited all Austin researchers and helped us to "disseminate Austin genealogies and family histories".

The Austin-Austen DNA Project: Dr. Michael Austin originated and manages this project. Its purpose is to create Austin profile tables that characterize specific Austin lines through their Y-chromosome DNA properties. Both organizations contribute equal financial support to this research.

The two organizations also differ, primarily in their focus on Austin research.

The AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA places its greatest emphasis on establishing and updating databases on various Austin lines. In 1991 the AFAOA Computer Project was begun and volunteers began converting AFAOA's extensive research collection into computer format. In 1995 the AFAOA

Please see "Two Organizations" on page 6

<http://www.afaoa.org>

Membership



Corner

Confused?

Every now and then someone writes to say that their dues have been paid and that our "reminder" or "final notice" card is in error, only to find out that they have confused the AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA with the AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY. Many of you are members of both Austin organizations.

We realize that the similarity in names can be confusing and is likely to become more so when the AOAGS takes a new name, AUSTIN FAMILIES GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, in February 2005. The name change, removing "of America", is being made to better reflect that organization's focus on international membership and international conventions.

Although AFAOA recognizes that many of us are searching for our roots in other countries, and although AFAOA welcomes and values the participation of our members who live in other countries, we will continue to include "of America" in our name.

The focus of over sixty years of research by AFAOA genealogists has been to establish the family lines of Austins in America, back to their immigrant ancestors. Information on the countries of origin of those ancestors is gladly added to our ever-expanding databases when available.

I send a big "thank you" to all who continue to renew your memberships and support the work of the **AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA**.

New Members Welcomed

Bruce Austin

2701 Sevier Ave. #B9
Knoxville, TN 37290
John b. VA; Thomas Ragsdale b. 1850 Bonham, TX; Ivan Charles b. 1899 Coleman, TX.

Ronald E. Austin

703 West Davis Ave.
Ann Arbor, MI 48103
raustin_48103@yahoo.com
Nathan b. 1783 MA.

Deborah Campbell

780 Old Big Cove Road
Owens Cross Roads, AL 35763
debc78@comcast.net
Nathaniel b. 1743 England

Dr. Edward U. Austin

RADM USNR (Ret.)
5100 John D. Ryan Blvd. # 524, San Antonio, TX, 78245
edwardaustin@worldnet.att.net
Alsey b. ~ 1796 Johnston Co., NC; Elbert b. 1824 NC, Henry Fletcher b. 1857 NC

Jeanine Austin Fairfield

7157 St. Rt. 708, Box 476, Russell's Point, OH 43348
fairfield@loganrec.com
Nathan Austin b. 1783; Nathan Austin, Jr. b. 1802 Eng.; Ira S. Austin b. July 1863 NY

Faithful Members

Special recognition goes to a group of members who have given faithful support to the AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA for at least 21 years:

Edward T. Austin of Lenoir, NC.
James F. Austin of Denver, CO.
Leora A. Austin of Rossville, IN
Lynn S. Austin of Oakwood Village, OH.
Robert Krause Austin of Wilmington, DE.
Wallace E. Austin of Dorris, CA.
Shirley F. Burkhard of Cortland, NY.
Calvin W. Christie of Port Orchard, WA.
Marjorie M. Elmore of San Jose, CA.
L. Blair Hoyt of Neosho, MO.
Robert M. Hudson of Mt. Lebanon, PA.
June T. Ormond of Midland, TX.
Dorothy Davis Smith of Kirkwood, MO.
William J. Stanfield of Kansas City, MO.
Ann D. Tuohy of Snohomish, WA.

New Dues Rate

A new membership dues rate was approved at the 2004 business meeting. Now you can renew your membership for two years for only \$25. The one year rate remains \$15. Which ever term you choose, thanks for continuing your support!

Address Changes

If your address has changed, or is about to change, please notify the membership chairman. Send changes to: Alice Austin Martin, 545 Front Beach Drive, Ocean Springs, MS 39564.

AUSTIN-AUSTEN DNA PROJECT

Carol Robinson Austin has agreed to be the Fund Coordinator for the jointly sponsored Austin-Austen DNA Project. She will set up and manage a special bank account to handle Project funds. Both AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA and AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY will send their contributions to Carol, who will contact donors for the lines to be tested, according to agreed-on guidelines, and order the

tests. She will receive help from the AFAOA and AOAGS genealogists in selecting DNA donors.

Individuals who want to contribute to the project, so that more tests may be funded, should send their checks, to: Carol R. Austin, 9726 Mirage Circle, Garden Grove, CA 92844. Checks should be made out to "Carol R. Austin", with "Austin-Austen DNA Project" on the memo line. Anyone wishing to participate in the

Austin-Austen DNA Project and pay for his own test (currently \$171) is invited to visit the www.FamilyTreeDNA.com web site. After searching for the Austin surname, simply submit the Join Request form. Please note that Y-DNA is passed only from fathers to sons, and not to daughters, so the DNA donor must be an Austin male. If you are not an Austin male you must locate a related Austin male to provide the actual DNA samples.



PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Planning has begun for the 2005 Austin Convention! The place will be Seattle, Washington and the dates will be **June 10, 11, & 12**. Please mark these dates on your calendar and plan to join your Austin "cousins" for their annual reunion.

If there were some activities at past conventions that you really liked, or something that you think should be changed or added to the schedule, please let me know. I will be setting up the convention using phone calls, letters and e-mails. Not being familiar with the area, I could use all the help I can get. I would love to receive comments and suggestions from those who live in or near Seattle, or those who have been there, on places to eat, places to visit and genealogical resources.

The joint Austin-Austen DNA project continues. The Stephen Austin family of New York, that I'm database manager for, now has a possible link to the Robert Austin family of Rhode Island, resulting from a 25 marker DNA test report that shows a close match with a "Robert, Edward, Edward" descendant.

We will be looking for another person to be tested in the Robert Austin line because, although we have two matching DNA tests for the line of one son, Edward, they do not match the test for another son, Jeremiah. Until we get two sons of Robert with matching DNA we do not know which DNA is the correct one.

There are several other DNA tests that are in progress and I'm sure they will come back with some very interesting results. For the latest test results, or to join the project, go to: www.FamilyTreeDNA.com and search for the Austin surname

We would like to print stories from members who have used the new Master Index on the AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA web site and have made a big discovery, learned new information about an ancestor or found some new cousins. You can send your stories to me, or to any of the officers of the Association, to be included in an upcoming *Newsletter*.

We are still short a *Newsletter* Editor. There must be someone out there who would be willing to help organize and put together our quarterly newsletter. If you have questions, Jim Carlin will walk you through what it takes to put a *Newsletter* together. You can contact him at jcarlin@socal.rr.com.

Art Sikes, Jr.



Virgil Austin of National City, IL

Virgil D. Austin was born in 1898 in Keenes, Wayne Co., IL, one of six children of William Jasper Austin and Christina E. Jones. The other children were: Charles Otto, Iva, Imo, Gale, and Donald.

In the early part of the twentieth century William and Christina Austin permanently moved their family from Wayne Co. IL to St. Clair Co., IL. At the time of William's death in 1927 William and Christina were residents of National City, IL, a small town across the Mississippi river from St. Louis, MO. He was employed as a city police officer.



Virgil D. Austin
Circa 1976

Virgil married Hattie M. Hancock and they had 4 children: June Maxine, Virgil Jr., William Jasper "Jack", and Charles Eugene. As a young man Virgil Austin became an employee of the fire department serving National City and the

National Stockyards. Virgil's natural gift for camaraderie, combined with his demonstrated ability to suppress fires and supervise employees, allowed him to advance to the position of Fire Chief.

Virgil was not exempt from a fireman's constant fear - injury. At one time while fighting a particularly dangerous mule barn fire he was seriously injured. His refusal to accept the doctor's verdict that he would probably never walk again led to many weeks of tear filled efforts to walk.

Virgil Austin won! His recovery to full health, with the ability to resume duties of a fireman, may well be considered a minor miracle. He served as Fire Chief until well after normal retirement. For several years, while in his mid-seventies, Virgil was the oldest fire chief in America still enjoying the privilege of daily employment.

National City was a classical example of a "company town", with business centered around the stockyards. The town consisted of two streets, one block apart and each one block long. The city's principal building housed the city hall, mayor's office, police headquarters, jail and a general store. In addition, the city included a grade school and enough family housing to meet the minimum requirements for city incorporation.

When visiting cousins in National City, our conversation usually turned to the police station. The question - "was anyone in jail?"; the answer - always "no". The policeman on duty was generally a middle-aged Afro-American named George. George always had a quick smile, a cheerful greeting and maybe a story or two. In those pre-furnace days, heat was provided by a large cast iron drum stove located on a metal protective plate in the center of the station.

Also of interest, of course, were the fire station and its bright red fire wagon, a hold-over from earlier days. The horses were kept after their use was no longer required, I suppose because of the firemen's long-term attachment to them. On special

Please see "Virgil Austin" on page 7



AUSTIN QUERIES - Please send all new queries to the following addresses. In responding to any of the following queries, please write directly to the submitter, **also sending copies to:**

Jan Austin Untener (Northern Austins)
4601 Eastwood Road
Minnetonka, MN 55345

Liz Austin Carlin (Southern Austins)
23725 Community St.
West Hills, CA 91304-3004

Austin Book Review:

The World of E.J.A.: Life and Letters of Elizabeth Jane Austin, 1827-1905

By Mary Austin Harlan, 2004

According to *The Descendants of Edward Austin*, by Edith Austin Moore, published in 1951, Elizabeth Jane Austin was the oldest sister of my grandfather, Daniel Henry Austin. All the information available about this great aunt was her birth and death dates and the fact that she was unmarried. She died 19 years before my parents married and my Dad never included her in the stories of his youth.

In 2001, I was intrigued with a packet of 32 letters, mostly by Elizabeth Jane's hand, found in materials inherited from my aunt, Edith Austin Moore, and from my father, Henry Warner Austin. Now there was an opportunity of meeting this little known aunt and learning about her life and times. Also available were two Civil War diaries written by her brother, my grandfather, in 1864 and 1865, which included many references to "Liz," his older sister. Putting the information together from the letters and the diaries with entries from Aunt Edith's genealogy resulted in the book: *The World of E.J.A.*

A quote by Alexander McCall Smith, from the opening of the book states, "Who is there to write down the lives of ordinary people." Perhaps my great aunt was an "ordinary" person but it has been with real excitement that I have written this account of the life of Elizabeth Jane Austin.

Mary Austin Harlan
Staunton, VA

Editor's Note: We are very grateful to Mary for donating a copy of her book to AFAOA. Jan Austin Untener has agreed to review it for a later Newsletter article.

Austin/Keith Clan Connection

Although the Austin name is generally thought to be English, and a derivative of St. Augustine (345 - 430) the first Archbishop of Canterbury, there are many indications that variations of the name occur in other Celtic societies.



One source says, "The name Austin has existed in Ireland since the fourteenth century. Oistin and Mac Aibhistin are the Gaelic forms of the name that can be found throughout the four Provinces of the country."

Another source, *The Ancient World of the Celts* by Peter Berresford

Ellis, lists an Irish astronomer named Aibhistin writing in AD 655. *The Surnames of Scotland* by George F. Black, says, "Austin. (1) a diminutive of Augustine (majestic). The name of the great Father of the Church, Augustus of Hippo, and of his namesake, the first Archbishop of Canterbury. (2) an Englishing of Uisdean (Huisdean) 'one of the many instances in which classical names are utilised to represent Gaelic names of a somewhat similar sound'."

The Austins appear first on the record as allies and supporters of the Keiths. The name was generally begun with Ou or Ow. Of curious interest in showing an early connection between the families is the occurrence in 1587 of the name Alexander Oustean, Burgess of Edinburgh, as one of the cautioners for George Keith, Earl Marishall, in an action raised against him by Margaret Erskine, Lady Pitcarie.

We note in D. W. Stewart's *Old and Rare Scottish Tartans*, "In 1589 Walter Oustene, a tenant of Lochquhan (a possession of the Keith family), was one of the subscribers to a Bond of Caution imposed upon a number of landed men in the shires of Aberdeen and Kincardine, binding them to keep the peace in the struggles with the Catholic party headed by Huntly." This work goes on to list several other "Austins" of various spellings in Scottish history.

The Clan system in Scotland began to evolve around 1200. In post-Roman Britain, the north (Alba) was populated by four cultural groups, three of whom were Celtic: the Scots, from Ireland in the west; the Picts in the central and north Highlands; and the Britons on the south and southwest. As we can see, the evolution and inter-mingling of the peoples, Scots, Picts and Britons, and the development of the Clan system in the Highlands resulted in a close alliance between the Austins and the Keiths. The Austins are listed as a Sept family of the Clan Keith, as are: Achindachy, Cate, Dick, Dixon, Falconer, Faulkner, Harvey, Haxton, Hurry, Lumgain, Marshall, and Urry.

The 2005 Highland Games in Las Vegas, NV is hosting a historic, first ever Gathering of the Clans. I am hoping to have a Keith Clan Gathering, and so I am inviting all of the Sept families to attend to make the Keith presence the largest Clan. I hope the Austins will respond and make their presence the largest family in the Clan.

Joe Austin

Meet our Association Officers:

Lois W. Cody, Secretary-Treasurer

Lois Elaine Whitmeyer was born in 1934 in Nevada, Ohio – one of the small farming communities in northwestern Ohio, about 50 miles north of Columbus. Lois, a depression baby, was the oldest of the four children of Russell and Clara Smith Whitmeyer. Lois' maternal grandmother, Lillie May Austin Smith, is her Austin connection. Despite the depression, Lois' dad had steady work for the National Lime and Stone Co., so she was able to enjoy a stable small town childhood, with frequent visits to and from her numerous Smith and Whitmeyer cousins.



In 1952 Lois left home to attend nurses training at the White Cross Hospital in Columbus. She received certification as a Registered Nurse in 1955. While at White Cross, she met her future husband, Robert Cody, who was studying Chemical Engineering at Ohio State. After Bob graduated in 1956, they married and moved to Cincinnati, OH, where Bob started working at Procter & Gamble and Lois began a career as a Delivery Room Nurse.

In 1957 their oldest son, Richard, was born. David, their second son, was born in 1961, and Lois ended her brief nursing career to become a full time Mom. After the boys were in school, Lois began a new career as a volunteer. She first volunteered at the Cincinnati Zoo. This turned into a 25 year, 11,000 hour involvement during which she scheduled and trained other volunteers, set up a data processing system, coordinated buying activities, and was shop manager for the Zoo Gift Shops.

Recently Lois has moved on to a different, but very fulfilling, volunteer job. She coordinates the Children's Book Area for the Friends of the Cincinnati Public Library Warehouse. She is also active in Forest Chapel United Methodist Church, where she is Membership Secretary and a co-head of Chapel Creations, one of the church's mission fund-raising activities.

Lois' interest in genealogy began in 1991, when Bob retired from Procter & Gamble. She had a great head start on her Austin line since her great uncle, George Austin, had already completed her ancestry back to Richard Austin and was a contributor to Edith Austin Moore's original Richard Austin book. Her involvement with the AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA began in 1995 when she and Bob attended an Elderhostel genealogy course in Fort Wayne, IN. While there, they learned that there was to be an Austin convention later that summer in Fort Wayne. The rest is history. Lois has been Secretary-Treasurer of the AFAOA since 1999.

Lois enjoys her four grandchildren who live nearby in the Cincinnati area and also her on-going reading, sewing, and crafting hobbies. Lois and Bob like to travel - yet another benefit of belonging to the AFAOA, whose annual meetings held in different cities afford them the opportunity to travel to new places while enjoying the company of both known and new-found cousins.

Edward Austin Williford

Edward Austin Williford (called "Austin"), eldest son of Julia Ann Austin and Claude Williford, was born May 14, 1906 in Florence, AL.

Austin's grandfather, Edward Austin, was born August 29, 1842 in Plymouth, Hancock Co., IL. His grandmother, Susie Winter, was born in Cincinnati, OH on November 23, 1839. They married on October 17, 1861. Edward and his brother, Calvin, inherited considerable money and both of them settled in the small town of Effingham, IL. Calvin had a big, fine home that, after his death, became the Illinois College of Photography, one of the largest and best known institutions of its kind in the country before World War I. Edward and Calvin endowed Austin College at Effingham; it operated until the building burned in the 1920s.

Edward and Susie Austin had nine children: Harry, Frank, Will, Charles, Cornelia, Calvin, Augustus, Julia Ann and Gertrude. They lived the life of wealthy country people on a large farm about 3 miles from Effingham. The house, built in 1890, was frame, but quite large – 3 stories, 18 rooms including a large library, a billiard room and a living room plus parlor with a piano in each.

Austin Williford wrote "a bit of history for his grandchildren". He recalled visiting the farm several summers with his mother and how much he enjoyed it. He remembered going there in December 1910 for his grandfather's funeral and in March 1917 for his grandmother's funeral.

Austin's mother, Julia, attended Austin College where she studied, among other subjects, literature, Greek, Pittman shorthand, typing and bookkeeping. She later taught at the college until her marriage on March 19, 1904 to Claude Williford. In addition to Austin, they had three other sons: Elbert Douglas, born October 6, 1908 and died June 13, 1909; Ralph Almon, born April 26, 1912; and Claude Worthington, born October 6, 1914. Around 1913 the family moved to Washington, DC. Through the sponsorship of their Congressman they toured the White House and met the President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson. This occasion was a highlight of young Austin's life.

When Austin was about 11, and the family was living back in Alabama, his parents were divorced. His mother took the boys and moved back to Effingham. She worked for her brother Gus while the boys lived with their Uncle Cal and Aunt Neal.

When Austin was 16 he lied about his age and joined the Marines. He was 6' tall but weighed too little, so the sergeant told him to eat all the bananas he could, drink lots of water and come back. He still weighed only 122 pounds but the sergeant got permission to pass him. After boot training at Paris Island, SC, his group was sent to Haiti. There it was discovered that he had studied shorthand and typing, so he was moved to the regimental headquarters where he became the court-martial recorder. He was made a corporal. When he was 17 he made sergeant and his pay jumped to \$64 a month.

He took and passed a competitive examination for Annapolis. Unfortunately the Sergeant Major persuaded him that he didn't want to be a career Marine officer and that he wouldn't be able to continue sending his mother \$25 a month, so he turned

Please see "Edward Austin Williford" on page 7

Robert Austen Clarke

United States Navy Test Pilot

Robert Austen Clarke was born in 1920 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Robert Clarke and Ruth Hazel Austen. He was the eldest of three boys, the others being James and Thomas (now deceased).



Charles Austen
1818-1895

Robert's Austen ancestry has been traced back from Pennsylvania to England. His great great grandparents, Charles and Sarah (Pearce) Austen immigrated in 1820 to Pine Creek, just north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, from Middlesex, England, with Sarah's brother and sister-in-law, Richard and Susan Pearce.

At the same time, Charles' parents, Ambrose and Susannah (Beard) Austen and four other children - John, Charlotte, Joseph and Ambrose Jr., emigrated to Jeromesville, Ohio. In England, before immigrating to Ohio, Ambrose Austen was a Baptist Minister, hop grower and sheep farmer. His father was Thomas Austen of Yalding in Kent. Susannah Beard was born in Rottingdean to Nathaniel and Mary Beard, a well established Sussex family.

Charles and Sarah (Pearce) Austen and their children, Thomas, Charles Jr and Susan eventually settled at McCandless Township, Pennsylvania. Thomas stayed on the farm till 1844 when he moved to Richland. Charles Jr. became a carpenter and married Anna Jones. Susan married John Grubbs of a neighboring farm and later moved to Oregon. In 1927 the original farmland was acquired for a public park.

Robert Clarke's mother, Ruth Hazel Austen, born October 19, 1895, was the granddaughter of Charles Austen, Jr. and Anna Jones, and the daughter of Robert Edwin Austen and Lydia May Hogan. Robert Austen Clarke attended Colgate University where he studied Political Science. He joined the US Navy Blue Angels flight demonstration team on Christmas Eve 1946, flying wing, flying Beetle Bomb and acting as announcer at air shows.

In May 1947 he replaced Butch Voorhees as leader of the team for the 1947-1948 seasons. He was responsible for the

Blue Angels' current "four plane diamond" trademark formation; initially the team flew only three aircraft in a "V" formation.

This honor and achievement followed a career as a naval



1947 Blue Angels Flight Crew (l to r) Lt. Bob Thelen, Lt. Chuck Knight, Lt. Cmdr. Bob Clarke, Flight Leader, Lt. Cmdr. Dusty Rhodes, and Lt. (jg) Billy May

aviator, flying fighter aircraft in the Pacific during World War II

and later serving as one of the US Navy's top test pilots. On his retirement from the Navy in 1965 he entered a career with the commercial division of Boeing Aircraft in Seattle, Washington. During his career with Boeing he held responsibility for the Pacific Rim and was based in Australia for a number of years. Following his retirement from Boeing, he elected to stay on in Australia.

Throughout his life Robert Austen Clarke has been an avid sailor, political commentator, and a student of the history of explorers like James Cook, Lewis and Clark and others who undertook epic journeys. He has two children, Robert Austen Clarke, Jr. (born in 1949, living in Massachusetts) and Thorne Page Clarke (born in 1950, living in Hawaii).

Brian Austen

www.trump.net.au/~austen/austenhist.htm

"Two Organizations" Continued from page 1.

In 1995, the AFAOA web site was created – the first genealogy databases on the Internet. On-line databases include over 90,000 individuals in more than 38 Austin lines, using a family group sheet format. These databases are also published as searchable descendency books on our Austin Research CD-ROM and on the Austin-Austen Research Center (AARC).

In 1998 AFAOA published a hard-cover book, *Some Descendants of Richard Austin of Charlestown, Massachusetts, 1638* - a revision of Edith Austin Moore's book on Richard Austin which had been published three decades earlier. This informal Newsletter is published four times a year.

The AUSTINS OF AMERICA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY emphasizes the gathering, publication and distribution of Austin genealogi-

cal and biographical information in a formal, indexed newsletter, copies of which are also bound and published in hard-cover books. Besides managing the AARC and the DNA Project, Dr. Michael Austin is the administrator for the Austin List on Rootsweb.

The AOAGS is now moving to a more international focus and is planning a name change. A reorganization announcement appears on their web site and in their latest newsletter. The new name will be AUSTIN FAMILIES GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY and they are currently preparing to sponsor the first International Austin Convention, to be held in England in September 2005. Therefore they have declined an AFAOA invitation to co-sponsor the 2005 National Austin Convention in Seattle.

Encounters... of the Ancestor Kind?

I really do believe that our ancestors are having fun with us. There are too many co-incidences to be random!

What are the chances that at the 2000 Salt Lake City National Austin Convention, a young woman walked up to the only person in the conference room (me), who knew anything at all about the 2nd person on her name-tag, Morris Austin? (I had previously done research on him because he was in an adjoining township to my ancestor in Erie Co., PA). The day before, my husband Jim had discovered, in the LDS Library in Salt Lake City, Morris' father's affidavit as a Loyalist in Ontario, Canada with details of his family! I had a whole notebook at home on her family, and was able to connect her to much research.

What are the chances, 10 years after Joan Phillips submitted her husband's information to the Austin Families Association genealogist Bonnie Bigolin, that:

I would meet her at church, AND mention that I was going that day to the Los Angeles LDS Family History Center, AND mention that I was doing Austin research on the William Austin of Kent, MD database AND discover that her husband's Austin ancestor, Samuel Austin, was a contemporary of William Austin in Kent County, Maryland?

It causes one to stop and appreciate the domino effect of this discovery in contributing additional knowledge of a Samuel Austin connection to the William of Kent County, MD database, which has previously been related via DNA testing to the Samuel Austin of Massachusetts database.

Just recently, on my weekly day at the library, I had dragged along all the papers and e-mails piling up at the computer in order to sort them out. Only then, did I discover that the subjects of two e-mails concerned the same family, proving that the writers were cousins. The family was in the Southern Unplaced database, and needed to be moved to the Bartholomew of Virginia database.

So, please, let us know of your "co-incidences", or ancestor-directed encounters.

Liz Austin Carlin

AUSTIN FAMILIES ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA Genealogist

"Edward Austin Williford" Continued from page 5.

it down. He later realized he was doing most of the Sergeant Major's work and he didn't want to lose him.

At the age of 19 Austin left the Marines and moved to Oklahoma. He found work pumping gas for Marland Oil Company, which later merged with Continental Oil Company (Conoco), with whom he spent his entire career. A few years later he met and married Mary Adelyn Carter. They had four children: Mary Roberta, Sue Anne, Edward Austin, Jr. and George Alan. At the time of his death in 1963 Austin and Adelyn were living at Signal Mountain, TN. He was executive vice-president of Kayo Oil Company, a subsidiary of Conoco. At that time they had eleven grandchildren; three more were born later.

Sue W. Harris

Pedigree Resource File

For a great number of years the LDS (Mormon) Family History Department had only two major databases for genealogical research: Ancestral File and the International Genealogical Index (IGI). The Ancestral File is a database of family trees submitted mostly by Mormons. The IGI is a database of some 250 million people for whom a Mormon ordinance has been performed, usually posthumous baptism. In fact, the IGI is a misnomer. It is more an International Baptismal Index than an International Genealogical Index.

The Family History Department has always talked of having a database of lineage-linked data that did not mix Mormon religious practices with genealogy. That database has now come to pass. It is called the Pedigree Resource File (PRF). The Pedigree Resource File is a database of lineage-linked (family tree) data that contains 40 million entries and, it is claimed, is growing at the rate of one million entries per month.

You can only browse relationships to ancestors, not descendants, possibly as a privacy feature. A great advantage of PRF is that it includes the name of the submitter making it possible to contact the person who did the original research.

The easy access to the PRF on the Internet makes it worth searching. It is located at the main Internet site of the Church at: <http://familysearch.org>.

Adapted from:
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"Virgil Austin" Continued from page 3.

occasions the fire alarm would sound, alerting the horses to assume their assigned places so they could gallop off to suppress the simulated fire.

Today all has changed. Time's passage and technological advances caused the National Stockyards to be closed in 1997. National City is only a barren field and the city's charter has been surrendered.

Virgil Austin died Aug 1, 1982 in St. Louis Co., MO. Hattie died March 1986 in St. Clair Co., IL. Both are buried in Lakeview Memorial Gardens, Fairview Heights, St. Clair County. At the time of Virgil and Hattie's death they had 9 grandchildren and 13 great grandchildren, all living in the general area of St. Clair Co., IL.

Eual J. Austin

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