

# Newsletter

Vol

Issue 2/2008



**All articles in this Newsletter are the Copyright of the contributor and must not be reproduced without permission**

## Editorial

Well the Summer will soon be upon us and I wonder if any of our members will be at a loose end during the Summer evenings? Well if you are why not help Rob and the Society by recording some monumental inscriptions. If there is an old church or chapel near to where you live, ask Rob if he requires the monumental inscriptions. Or if you fancy a little run out in the country, Rob will tell you which churches and chapels we require recording. You never know, you might enjoy this valuable work and feel the pleasure of helping others as every bit of family history you obtain from a book or website, somebody has gone out and recorded it for you.

Recently I received an email from someone who was answering my query on Ancestry .com's notice board. Being a bit wary of identity fraud I asked him a few questions that only someone who had delved deeply into my ancestors would know. He knew all the right answers and sent me copies of some certificates he had. I am now in contact with my grandfather's brother's side of the family. The very best part is that he had a picture of my Great Grandfather. Wow, what a find.

john.booth5@ntlworld.com

## Hill Top Methodist Church, Burslem.

Members of the Burslem Wesleyan Society who were expelled in 1836 as a result of a dispute over the running of the Sunday school formed themselves into "The Methodist Society". For a time they used a warehouse attached to the Churchyard Pottery Works as their chapel and Sunday school, but within a few months they had erected a wooden building called the Tabernacle in Moorland Road. This was replaced by the Hill Top Church and Sunday school built in 1836-37 on the corner of Westport Road and Hall Street.



### Hill Top Church

Designed by Samuel Sant, services were at first conducted by the new society's own local preachers and by Baptist, Congregational, and New Connexion ministers. In 1848 the society joined the Wesleyan Methodist Association and in 1849 received its first minister. In 1940 the chapel seated 900 and had three Sunday school halls and twenty three other rooms. The church closed in 1977 and partially destroyed by fire in 1983. Assessed to be beyond repair in 1987 the rear of the church was demolished with only the Grade II listed frontage remaining.

Information from: -

The Victoria County History of Staffordshire Vol. 8

History of Stoke on Trent by Ward.

Hill Top Centenary Book 1836—1936

## Important Records Information

The Family Records Centre closed on 15th March 2008 following which the records and services provided at the Myddelton Street Office are no longer be available. Set below is a summary of answers to questions about future access to the records held by the National Archives and the General Register Office.

Q. Where can I access census returns?

A. The National Archives have transferred census returns and related services to their premises at Kew. These are also available via the internet. For more information please refer to The National Archives web site: >[nationalarchives.gov.uk](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Q. How do I obtain a copy of a will?

A. Wills proved after 1858 may be obtained at:

Principal Registry of the Family Division  
First Avenue House  
42-49 High Holborn  
London WC1V 6NP  
Telephone +44 (0) 20 7947 6000

Q. How do I obtain a copy of a birth, death or marriage certificate?

A. There are a number of ways you can apply for a certificate:

- Online, at [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk)
- By post from GRO, PO Box 2, Southport. Merseyside, PR8 2JD
- By telephoning the GRO at +44 (0)845 603 7788
- From the local register office in the district where the event was registered.

Q. Where can I research the GRO indexes?

A. The full range of GRO indexes held on microfiche will be made available and can be accessed free of charge at the following locations:

- Greater Manchester County Record Office. (During April 2008)
- Birmingham Central Library.(During April 2008)
- Bridgend Reference and Information Library.(During April 2008)
- Plymouth Central Library.(During April 2008)
- The National Archives at Kew. (During March 2008)

The GRO indexes available at each of the above locations include Births, Deaths and Marriages from 1837 – 2006, Overseas from 1761 – 2006, Civil Partnerships from 2005 – 2007, Adoptions from 1927 – 2007 and Provisional indexes for Births and Deaths for 2007. Each of these centres will receive the GRO indexes for more modern events as and when they become available and these arrangements will continue until GRO is able to offer free access to its indexes via the internet.

For further information, please refer to:

<http://www.gro.gov.uk/gro/content/news/index-searches-new-arrangements-after-15-march-2008.asp>

Note: Microfiche copies of some of the births, marriages, deaths and overseas indexes from 1837 onwards continue to be available at many other local libraries, record offices and other facilities including third party web sites. For a list of places where microfiche copies are held or to obtain more information please visit the GRO web site: [www.gro.gov.uk](http://www.gro.gov.uk)

## Thank you Internet

I am a member of two Family History societies and a couple of pay to view internet web sites. On every one and on some free genealogy websites I have placed a query on their Notice Boards. The same query reads as follows;

*“Seeking information or ancestors of Edward Booth, born Shropshire c1851, moved to Hanley in Stoke on Trent c1860”*

Well, after about ten years of no answers, I began to think I was the only one of this branch of the Booth family researching our history. Imagine my surprise when I received an email out of the blue asking if I was a long lost cousin. Everyone who uses the internet in this day and age should be wary of identity fraud and carry out as many checks as you can before giving any personal information to a stranger. Anyone who remembers an earlier Newsletter article will know that my Great Grandfather, Edward Booth, was not christened Booth, a fact that caused me a lot of problems in my family history research. I replied to the email by asking why he thought we could be distant cousins. His reply amazed me as he sent me a copy of his family tree which included Edward’s parents and his brothers and sisters. In the next email he sent me an information sheet containing Edward’s marriage and their family and he knew about the name change but didn’t know why.



Where my research had followed the life of Francis Booth, my grandfather, his research had followed the life of Henry, Francis’s brother. It turns out that Henry joined the army and fought in the Boar War. When he left the army he worked as a grave digger and died at the age of 56 of Pneumonia. My new found cousin then sent me a Cabinet photograph of his grandfather with our mutual Great Grandfather sitting beside him. I was really pleased because I had spent four years searching for Edward Booth and there he was. It was another piece in the jigsaw of tracing an ancestor. I have traced Edward from the cradle to the grave with paperwork and now I know what he looks like. The odd thing is that Edward was a gravedigger and died at the age of 56 with Pneumonia too. My new cousin also sent me a picture of Mary, my Great Grandmother who looked the spitting image of my father’s sister.

Francis, my grandfather would not have his picture taken so there is little chance that I will ever know what he looked like as he died four years before I was born.

My new cousin has told me that I have many new relatives that live in North Staffordshire. I look forward to meeting them.

John Booth

## **General Register Office ( GRO ) Open Days**

The Certificate Services Branch will once again be holding Open Days, giving members of the public a chance to find out more about how birth, death and marriage certificates are produced and see inside the wonderful Victorian building which is the home of Civil Registration for England and Wales.

The Open Days will take place on Saturday 7th June 2008 and Saturday 14th June 2008.

Visitors to the Open Days will be given the opportunity to:

Take a tour of the General Register Office ( GRO ) site in Southport and see a demonstration of the certificate production processes.

View exhibitions from various Family History Organisations including The National Archives.

View and discuss issues with other business areas of GRO

Attend talks on various topics connected with GRO and other organisations.

All places need to be booked well in advance. If you are interested in attending on either of the above dates please contact:

Certificate Services Contact Centre

Tel: 0151 471 4508 or 0151 471 4530

8:00am to 4:00pm - Monday to Friday '

From the Federation of Family Histories website.

## **The Great British Body**

A 'New Science and Historical' show is being produced by ITV, who are looking for people who can trace all of their family lines back at least three generations.

This is a programme that aims to inform, entertain and inspire using a combination of science, human stories and history. In particular, ITV are interested in families who can trace their ancestry back at least three generations to perceive what the body inherits genetically and how social and cultural change can affect you. The show aims to audit the British Body and to see how it has developed over the years to eventually culminate in a celebration of the British body, past, present and future and what we represent as a nation.

ITV are trying to find people from every county in the UK to come along to their road shows in Brighton, Birmingham and Newcastle to best see how geographical situation can make a marked difference, as well as more specific reasons that relate to the family themselves.

So if 3 out of 4 of your great grandparents were born in the same county as you were, then Warren Townsend at ITV would like to hear from you, on Tele 020 7157 4732.

or email [warren.townsend@ITV.com](mailto:warren.townsend@ITV.com)

ITV are hoping this will be an interesting experience for the families involved and a chance for them to explore their own ancestry and the way their family has developed.

From the ITV History April website.

---

### **For Sale**

Visioneer OneTouch 9020 Flat Bed Scanner.

A picture quality scanner with an Interpolated Resolution of 4800 dpi x 4800 dpi.

Scans documents, film, slides and transparencies.

Will not work on Windows Vista hence reason for sale. £30

Contact the Editor for details