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Genealogy Notes from Emily June 2015

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Websites to Remember

- MSL Genealogy – www.maine.gov/msl/services/genealogy/index.shtml
- Vital Records Researcher Card- www.maine.gov/dhhs/forms.shtml
- MSL Classes- www.maine.gov/msl/services/classes.shtml
- Maine Genealogical Society- www.maineroots.org
- Maine State Archives- www.maine.gov/sos/arc

Maine State Library
64 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

Hours
M, W and Th: 9-6
Tues: 9-7
Fri: 9-5
Sat: 9-2

Tel. 207-287-5600
Website:
www.maine.gov/msl

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Maine Vital Records... One More Time!

Realizing that addressing this topic is like nailing Jello to a wall, I will try to clarify the situation as best I can! Those of you who've had my classes know that I spend a bit of time explaining the basic rules of what's public and what's not. Access to the records depends on a) your relationship to the person in question; or b) your possession of a researcher ID card. The numbers go like this: the first 75 years following a person's birth in Maine is considered closed; 50 years for marriages and registered domestic partnerships; 25 years for deaths. For example: Mary Smith was born in 1941 in Maine. That's only 74 years ago, so her birth record would not be readily available to you. If her birth year was 1939, that's public. On the other hand, if you could prove your relationship to Mary, had a legal reason to get the record, or had a researcher ID card, that record would be open to you, provided there is no other confidential information-such as adoption...(another can of worms

to deal with). Clear as mud? You bet! It's still an improvement over the first version of the law, which stated that all vital records under 100 years "of age" were private! We have a copy of Chapter 58, LD 258 on our genealogy page, if you want to get the official word, as well as an application form for the researcher ID card, through Maine DHHS. Right now, the fee for the card is \$50.00 per year. Suffice it to say that all facets of this are still being modified, so stay tuned for any updates that may be coming!

The Maine State Archives has been undergoing some changes as well. They have relinquished their vital records from 1892 on, to the Maine Office of Vital Records. To quote the notice on their website: "The records dating from 1892-1922 were previously held at the Archives, but have now been digitally scanned, allowing the Vital Records office to issue these documents." If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Vital Records at 287-3771 or 1-888-664

-9491.

Maine State Library is in possession of delayed vital records microfilm. The delayed returns include only about 20% of Maine's cities and towns which complied with a 1927 law requiring clerks to transcribe and forward to the State Registrar copies of all vital records prior to 1892. This collection does not include every municipality in Maine (ask us for a list), and is additionally complicated by the fact that birth, marriage and death certificates are interfiled alphabetically and chronologically. In order to meet the 75-year closure for births, we will be restricting access to the range of microfilm dated 1937 to 1955. So, be prepared to give us some evidence of your research needs, if your person falls in this time period-we'll be checking you out! For now, hang in there, and thanks!

The Fair is Coming! The Fair is Coming!

The time is finally here-almost-and we want to make sure you have all marked your calendars for this first-ever event, the 2015 Maine Genealogy Fair! It's hosted by the Maine Genealogical Society, and is taking place right in the lobby and atrium of the State Library, Museum and Archives building. Come visit

with genealogical and historical societies from all across the state,

get some (free) advice from the "Brickwall Busters" panel of professional genealogists, tour the State Archives and State Library, and have lunch at the Cross Café in the Cross



Office Building. Even the State Museum is getting in the act by offering free admission that day! Talk with historical reenactors, have some refreshments, purchase a great t-shirt and just generally have fun! **Date and Time: Saturday, July 11th, 9AM to 4PM! See you there!**

