



# Austin Families Association of America Newsletter

Look for us on the Web:  
<http://www.afoa.org/>

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## Austin Research to Employ DNA Testing

In the Fall 2002 edition of the Austin Families Association *Newsletter*, it was reported that an historic first had been accomplished in the association's Austin Family Databases project. Two previously separate Austin lines had been combined into one utilizing DNA evidence.

At that time, a DNA sample from Charles E. Austin, Sr., a known descendant of William Austin of Anderson County, Tennessee was shown to have corresponding markers with a DNA sample from a direct descendant of John Austin, Sr. of the southwest Virginia counties, demonstrating that the presumed linkage of the two familial lines was correct.

Recently, Dr. Michael E. Austin proposed the use of DNA to establish whether the line of Samuel Austin of Boston, Massachusetts could be linked to the line of Richard Austin of Charlestown, Massachusetts.

This linkage has long been contemplated by descendants of both Austin lines because of the fact that Annis Austin, sister of Richard, married Edmund Littlefield and lived in Wells, Maine during the time period that Samuel Austin, progenitor of his line, also lived in Wells.

DNA test results could firmly establish a relationship between any number of Austin lines whose progenitor is unknown or uncertain. Conversely, it could firmly establish the lack of linkage in these possible scenarios, thereby allowing researchers to abandon this approach and to look for relationship documentation elsewhere.

In order to answer some of these questions, the two Austin research organizations, Austins of America Genealogical Society (AOAGS) and the Austin Families Association (AFAOA) have agreed to subsidize DNA tests which would establish a database with the correct markers for the three largest Austin lines in the United States, namely Samuel Austin of Boston, Massachusetts and Wells, Maine; Robert of Austin of Kingstown, Rhode Island; and Richard Austin of Charlestown, Massachusetts.

This must be done with people who are known

descendants of these Austin ancestors, and such tests would require at least two male candidates for each line to avoid "paternity events."

Mike Austin's proposed plan would first establish the number of markers we would need to include in the database (the more markers the better, but also the more costly), and to make those markers widely available to Austin researchers for the Robert, Samuel and Richard lines.

To assure privacy, no individual names would be attached to this information. DNA test results would only be identified by "Samuel Descendant 1 - 12th generation" and "Samuel Descendant 2 - 11th generation" or something equivalent to that. Persons of uncertain Austin ancestry would then have a reference database with which to compare their own Austin line DNA markers.

Both organizations have agreed to fully fund DNA testing for selected individuals. A search is on-going for two good male candidates (Y chromosomal tests) for each of the three lines. These candidates must possess documented lineage to Robert, Samuel or Richard. DNA testing kits have been purchased, and will be supplied at no cost to the test candidates.

Two web sites are of interest to researchers interested in this joint project. The first presents an excellent tutorial on DNA, and the various tests used in regard to genealogical research. It can be reached at <http://blairgenealogy.com/dna/dna101.html>.

The other web site is the joint "Austin-Austen DNA Surname Project" site at <http://www.familytreeDNA.com>.

If you look in the upper right hand box labeled SEARCH BY SURNAME, enter "Austin" (without the quotation marks) in the box underneath the box with "Begins with" and click on SEARCH. You will find two projects on the search results page. Click on "Austin-Austen DNA" under PROJECT to view our project details, including an invitation to join with us.

Please e-mail questions or comments to either Mike Austin: [maustin@aoags.org](mailto:maustin@aoags.org), or Art Sikes, Jr.: [artsikes@aol.com](mailto:artsikes@aol.com).

<http://www.afoa.org>

## Membership



## Corner

### ***New Members Welcomed***

#### **Joe E. Austin**

5216 Orchard Hills Ave.  
Las Vegas, NV 89130  
jaustin294@earthlink.net  
*Orville b. 1837 NY; Harry b. 1881 MN,  
d. 1960 NV; Joseph b. 1918 MN, d.  
2000 NV.*

#### **Herbert H. Davis**

3340 S. Oneida Way  
Denver, CO 80224  
(no e-mail)  
*Richard Austin b. 1598 England,  
Anthony b. 1636 England, John b.  
1672 MA.*

#### **Teri Austin Oaks**

PO Box 839, Norris, TN 37828  
oaksgrove@aol.com  
*James J. Austin b. 1822 GA, d. 1887  
TX; James Madison b. 1851 GA, d.  
1917 NM; Thomas Demetrous b. 1883  
TX, d. 1932 TX*

### ***Membership Renewal***

Thanks to all who have renewed their memberships in the Austin Families Association during the past months. Thanks also to those who will renew in the months to come. You not only give financial support to the AFAOA website, the *Newsletter*, the Austin-Austen

Research Center, and now to the Austin DNA Project, but you provide encouragement to those who volunteer their time and energy to keep the Austin Families Association an active force in Austin research. Each renewal is a vote of confidence and each member is important to us. Thanks again for your support!

Please notice the renewal date on your address label. Your check for dues - \$15 per year - made payable to "Austin Families Association" should be sent prior to that date to: Lois W. Cody, 336 Pleasant Hill Dr., Cincinnati, OH 45215.

### ***For The Record***

In the July issue of the *Newsletter*, Ruth Marshall Austin's middle and surnames names were inadvertently reversed. Her correct entry is listed below. A thousand pardons Ruth!

#### **Ruth Marshall Austin**

153 Parker Rd. West  
Danville, VA 24540  
(no e-mail)  
*Miles Austin b. 1800 VA, d. 1860 VA;  
Robert b. 1822 VA, d. 1879 VA; Joseph  
b. 1835 VA, d. 1900 VA.*

**Alice Austin Martin**  
**Membership Chair**

## Introducing the Master Index

(Now available at  
[www.afoa.org](http://www.afoa.org))

To those of you who have visited the Austin Families Association's web site, you are aware of the 35 Austin descendency databases that you can search, view and copy in family group sheet format (FGS).

Although each individual database is completely indexed, in the past, you had to know which descendency line your Austin belonged to or else you had to search each database until you found him or her.

To make your search considerably easier, a new database search tool has been added to the web site. It is called the master index.

The master index contains all the names in the 35 databases currently on-line at the site. Each name is linked to its FGS in the proper family database. Simply search for the name of your ancestor, choose among the different possibilities (dates are supplied, if known), and select your person by clicking on his name. In a few moments, the computer will generate your FGS and it will appear on your screen.

Besides finding the data on your ancestor, you will also discover the family database of which he is a member, and can trace the line back to the progenitor (earliest ancestor), or you can traverse that database generation by generation, or person by person using the links provided on the FGS page.

To use the master index, simply go to the AFAOA Web Site, click on "Austin Research", then scroll down to "Master Index Search" and click on "Enter the Master Index". You will see that you can search both Austin (all spelling variations) and non-Austin surnames.

We are confident that this new feature will make your search easier. Please send any comments regarding the master index, or any feedback on the site itself to the Webmaster.

**Joy Davis**  
**Webmaster**

## Privacy Opt-Out Now Available

Austin Families Association members at the 2003 National Austin Convention voted to allow AFAOA and AOAGS members to have full access to all information in the AFAOA family databases on the Austin-Austen Research Center (AARC) site. This includes information on [living people](#). This information would be made available only after the member agreed that their use of the data would be for their own personal genealogical research.

Currently, personal data on living people is suppressed on both the AFAOA web site and the AARC website. Data on living people, which can be accessed by the general public, will continue to be suppressed on the AFAOA site.

If you have contributed any family information to any of the AFAOA Austin databases that you do not want to be made available on the AARC site, please contact database chairman.

**Jim Carlin**  
**Database Chairman**



## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Progress has been made on our Austin Family Association web site [www.afoa.org](http://www.afoa.org) in the form of a new master index for our databases. This should make searching for Austins or any other surname a lot easier. See Joy Davis' article on page 2 for all of the details.

I would like to tell you about another Austin Research web site, the Austin-Austen Research Center [www.aogags.org/ResearchCenter/](http://www.aogags.org/ResearchCenter/). This web site was created by Dr. Mike Austin of the Austins of America Genealogical Society (AOAGS) and is a great resource for Austin researchers.

Consistent with our organization's goal of gathering, preserving and disseminating Austin histories and genealogies, the AFAOA supplies funds to support the AARC web site, and contributes all of our research data to the site. This participation in the AARC allows AFAOA members access to all of the data on the site except the latest newsletter of the AOAGS. The AARC can be a very valuable research tool, so I would like to explain its use to you.

When you sign on the site there is a welcoming screen with three buttons. As an AFAOA member, click on the AFAOA button. If you have not entered the site before with the computer that you are using, you will see a registration screen. This screen asks for your name, where you live, e-mail address, earliest Austin Ancestor, etc. After the registration information is filled out, the web site computer tells your computer to remember that data so you won't have to fill it out again.

The next screen is a welcome message with a button to begin researching. Clicking on that button will bring you to the 'Document Search Form' screen. There are two different search screens. The second one is called 'Advance Document Search Form'.

I will go over some features of the basic search first. Enter any form of text such as a word, or words, name, or place, into 'Search Terms' and press the 'Search' button. The entire database will be checked for the text that you entered. For example, I put in 'arthur sikes' and found 13 documents that matched my entry. (Please note the search is not case sensitive - it found my name even though I did not use capital letters.)

I know that my name should appear more often than that so I put in my full name 'Arthur M. Sikes Jr.' and came up with 25 documents. Next I tried to use a special feature of the search engine. I put in 'arthur w/3 sikes', which means find all occurrences of arthur within 3 words of sikes. With this search criteria, I get 35 documents with my name.

The Sikes name has two common spellings Sikes and Sykes. When I searched using 'Sikes,' I got 51 documents; with 'Sykes' I got only 10. But there is flexibility in the search process. By using a '?' in place of the 'i' or 'y' as in 'S?kes,' I got 55 documents. There is also a HELP page that can be opened and printed to help you with your search.

Search results are presented on the screen as a list of documents that meet your search criteria. The documents are numbered and titled and have brief descriptions of their contents.

Click on the document you would like to read and it will open for you. It is displayed using the Adobe 'Acrobat Reader' so this software has to be installed and operating on your computer system before you can see the document. The Acrobat Reader software is a free download from the Adobe web site [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html).

When the document is displayed, the first page of the document is followed by the page with the first occurrence of your search word(s) highlighted. At the far right of the tool bar, which appears at the top of the Acrobat screen, there are two icons that show document pages with arrows, one pointing to the left and one to the right. Clicking on these icons will allow you to move through the document to see all of the pages where the search word(s) are highlighted.

The 'Advance Document Search' form has two additional windows 'Author's Name' & 'Search Title Keywords' where you can specify a class of documents, for example "Census" or "Vital" (records), "Scanned" (for pictures that have been scanned), etc. Consulting the HELP page should assist you in using the advance document search capability.

I hope you make use of the new master index on our site, as well as the data that is available on the Austin-Austen Research Center. I would be interested in any comments on your use of either web site.

Art Sikes, Jr.

### NOTE:

Austin Families Association data appears in modified register format on the AARC web site, and as indexed searchable Family Group Sheets on the AFAOA website. Both formats utilize the same data on over 80,000 individuals linked into 44 separate Austin lines, and contained in the Association's databases, which are constantly being corrected and updated.

Because the AARC utilizes Adobe Acrobat text search technology, the AFAOA is now able to present some of the other text documents created by the Association's researchers. These include:

- All of Edith Austin Moore's Field Notebooks as carefully transcribed by Gay Martin.
- A portion of the transcribed notes of Janet Austin Curtis.
- The Newsletter Archive which excerpts all Austin research data published in the Association's Newsletters from November 1953 until June 1998.
- Complete *Newsletter* editions dating from Fall 1998 up to the present.

Besides this AFAOA data, the AARC also accepts text and photographic contributions from all Austin researchers worldwide. It is not restricted to contributions just from members of the AFAOA or the AOAGS.



*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)**  
11307 Harborview Dr.  
Cleveland, OH 44102

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

**Editor's Note:** All queries submitted by members of Austin Families Association to this *Newsletter* will also appear on our web site: <http://www.afaoa.org>

### **MyFamily.com**

Ancestry.com has created a web site that you can use to share news and genealogy discoveries with family members. You can find it by going to **[www.myfamily.com](http://www.myfamily.com)** where you will find that the site is rather commercial, being sponsored by Ancestry.com which touts its subscription service, its Family Tree Maker genealogy software, etc. If you can get past all of this, Myfamily.com can also be quite useful.

Myfamily.com states, "You can now share genealogical data and other family information through your own private web site at Myfamily.com. This could enable you to share news, photos, calendar events, family history information and more with your extended family in a secure, password protected environment."

One person tried this out and reported the following: "I set up an Eastern Family web site. I read the legal agreement, clicked on "accept" and then filled out an on-screen form asking for basic information. I chose a user name and password and then clicked on "Create Your Family Site" and the site was created within seconds."

The family web site setup in this way is like a a mini-forum. It has a message board, space to store photos, a files section where you can store any files you wish, a place for reviews of books, CD-ROMs, or whatever you care to review. There is an on-line calendar for birthdays, upcoming family reunions, and events. The forum also has an address book of all the forum members, an on-line chat room, and a list of who else is on-line in the family forum at the time. Instant messages can then be sent to anyone on-line in the chat room. This is an impressive selection of features for a free site.

## **Austin Families Association Database Report**

With the advent of the master index, courtesy of web master Joy Davis' software acumen, we have re-discovered two problems with our databases: duplication and consistency. These problems have always been in the background, but were tolerable when viewing the contents of one database at a time. The master index has forced us to see the various ways individual's names vary between databases. We also discovered that some Austin lines appeared in more than one database, particularly in the unplaced databases.

With the exception of Unplaced Maine, the unplaced databases were collections of linked individuals whose ancestor or progenitor could not be linked with other known immigrant Austins. There are four of these: Northern Unplaced, Southern Unplaced, Southern Counties Unplaced and Robert Unplaced.

Northern and Southern Unplaced collect Austin lines from states roughly above and below the Mason-Dixon line. Southern Counties Unplaced was a collection of Austin lines primarily from counties in Alabama and Tennessee and resulted from Dr. Helen Cook's research. Robert Unplaced was taken right out of the back of Edith Austin Moore's book on Robert Austin of Rhode Island and consisted of Austin lines which Moore thought belonged to the Robert line, but was unable to prove this before book publication.

Maine Unplaced is a special collection resulting from Bonnie Bigolin's research into all Maine Austins. It includes any Austins that were born in or had made their residence in Maine, and as a result, many individuals in Maine Unplaced also appear in other Northern databases. This duplication is acceptable since Maine Unplaced is a State oriented database, whereas the others are family line oriented.

What we are currently doing is to go through each of the Unplaced databases (except for Maine Unplaced), upgrading the entries with data from the vast Austin Families Association archives, and deleting those lines which already exist as stand-alone databases. We have eliminated Southern Counties Unplaced by incorporating it into Southern Unplaced. We plan on eliminating Robert Unplaced by incorporating it into Northern Unplaced.

In the end, this exercise will have reduced the unplaced databases down to three, Northern, Southern and Maine. We have identified a number of these "Unplaced" Austin lines which, with further research, could be added to an existing database or else broken out as standalone databases.

Inconsistencies have resulted from the various methods used by contributors in inputting their data. This shows up mainly in methods used to denote un-named children, spouses (usually women) with unknown surnames, and titles such as Dr., Rev., Jr., Sr.

There are also inconsistencies in documenting research in the note fields of each record. With data on over 80,000 individuals that has resulted from many contributors over the years, the task of making things consistent seems overwhelming. A consistency document is in the works, but one has to first agree on what method should be used. The data is there, use it, and for the moment, please excuse some of the entries that you will find in the master index, and in the databases.

## John Orlando Austin, Chief of Scouts at Fort Dodge, Kansas\*

John Orlando Austin was born 31 May 1835 in Canton, Oxford Co., Maine and was a descendant of Samuel Austin of Boston, Massachusetts (John<sup>7</sup> Hosea<sup>6</sup> Abiathar<sup>5</sup> David<sup>4</sup> Zebediah<sup>3</sup> Thomas<sup>2</sup> Samuel<sup>1</sup>). John's father, Hosea Austin, was one of the five sons of Abiathar Austin, and was the only son to leave a line of male descendants which has continued to the present time.

Hosea soon moved his family from Canton to the nearby town of Dixfield, Maine where he prospered as a builder and as an owner of various mills (grist mill, saw mill, fulling mill, and a clover, cider and threshing mill) as well as a tannery on the banks of the Androscoggin River. Hosea also owned and operated a hand-powered ferry across the river, just north of Dixfield in the village of Mexico, known and described on maps as Austin's Ferry.

Nothing is known of John's childhood or young manhood, except that "J. Orlando Austin" was listed as one of the "managers" for a "Dedication Ball" held at the Dixfield National House Hall on 3 July 1857.

By 1864, John and his first wife Helen Meginnis Coover were living in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where John was serving as an Indian scout, or perhaps as a "route agent" for the Santa Fe Railroad. Their first two children, Maude and Mary Vi Austin, were born in Albuquerque.

Helen died 19 January 1867 while giving birth to their third child. It is family tradition that John and Helen, while in Albuquerque, lived in an adobe house which formerly belonged to General Philip Sheridan of Civil War fame.

It is intriguing to speculate on John's transition from "J. Orlando Austin" the Dixfield young-man-about-town in 1857, to "Johnny Austin" of the old west, Indian scout and railroad route agent, only a few years later.

His sudden cross-country leap to adventure is also hard to explain, except that there was a certain wanderlust among Abiathar's sons. Oxford County, Maine, with its steep and rocky terrain, was a tough place to make a living. Perhaps John was just following family tradition: John's uncle, Isaac Bradley Austin, disappeared from the Maine census before 1820, but was found on the 1850 census of Arkansas with a wife who had been born in Georgia. Another uncle, David Austin, went to Florida after having spent his working life in Boston.

The record of John's life in the west is a little less sketchy than that of his early years in Maine. After Helen died, John returned briefly to New England via Junction City, Kansas where

his visit was recorded in the *Junction City Union* for March 16, 1867: "Late in February, 1867, a Mr. J. O. Austin of Albuquerque, NM, spent a day or two in Junction City, while on his way to Boston." The article further stated that "He reported a large number of New Mexican trains on their way in, for whom he was acting as a sort of route agent. He also reported a few cuts on the road between Junction City and Fort Larned that needed repairing immediately."

On 23 November 1868 John married Jemima Sparks (1849-1883) in Kansas. During this period John became friends with William F. "Buffalo Bill" Cody. The Sparks family and the Cody family were friends, and their children had all attended school together in Leavenworth, Kansas. It is possible that Buffalo Bill was instrumental in introducing John to Jemima, or perhaps John met Bill as a friend of his new wife's family.

During 1868 and 1869 John served variously as an interpreter, scout and chief of scouts at Fort Dodge in Kansas, according to pay records. In his autobiography, Buffalo Bill tells of a journey he had made from Fort Hays to Fort Larned by way of Fort Dodge where "after delivering the dispatches to the commanding officer, I met Johnny Austin, chief of scouts at this post, who was an old friend of mine," at whose house Bill took a brief nap before setting out for Fort Larned. John was able to tell Bill about recent Indian activity between Fort Dodge and Fort Larned.

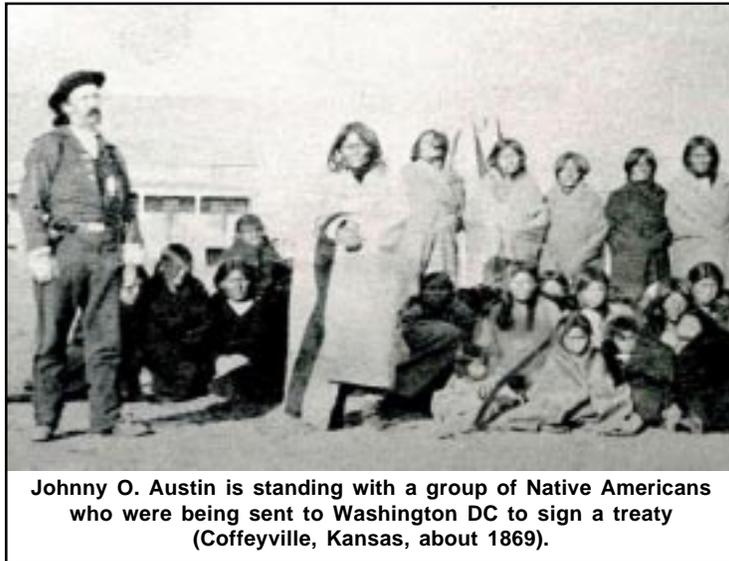
By May 1869, John was an interpreter at Camp Supply in Indian Territory (later Oklahoma). It was there that John and Jemima's first child, Freddie, was born. [Freddie died in August 1870 and two other daughters were born and died between 1871 and 1879.] Sometime between 1870 and 1875 the family moved to Detroit, Michigan where their fourth child Charles Peck Austin was born 9 June 1875. While in Detroit, John was an employee of the Grand Trunk Railroad in 1880.

Jemima died in 1883 in Kansas, and John returned to Maine with his two remaining children Mary Vi and Charles Peck [Maude had died in 1873].

John Orlando Austin died in 1887, and shortly thereafter Mary Vi married, and raised her young half-brother, Charles Peck Austin, to adulthood.

\* \* \*

\*Charles Ward Austin of Garden Grove, California is the grandson of Charles Peck Austin and the great grandson of John Orlando Austin. Charles wrote the story of his great grandfather's family based on research done by his wife, Carol Robinson Austin. Carol is a former Vice President of the Austin Families Association.



Johnny O. Austin is standing with a group of Native Americans who were being sent to Washington DC to sign a treaty (Coffeyville, Kansas, about 1869).

## Five Austin Generations of Firefighters in Holbrook, Massachusetts

by Donald E. Austin, Sr.

The Austin firefighters' legacy of five generations all began when the town was incorporated February 29, 1872. In 1872, John B. Austin joined the Holbrook volunteer call fire department and he may have served on the department for about twenty years, but past records for the fire department are spotty.

Great-grandson and retired firefighter Donald Austin, Sr. said back then the firefighters were notified about a fire by the bell at the Winthrop Congregational Church. The equipment they used was horse drawn.

John B. Austin's son, Edroy W. Austin followed in his father's footsteps and was the fire chief from 1905 to 1912. Grandson Donald Austin, Sr. said that his grandfather Edroy quit the fire department because the town would not vote him a new pay raise of \$25 dollars more per year.

Edroy Austin also owned a peanut butter factory in Holbrook called 20<sup>th</sup> Century Peanut Butter. Donald Austin, Sr. said, "My mother and father told me that Edroy had ordered peanuts from Venezuela and the ship that was bringing the peanuts was sunk by torpedoes from the German Navy. He was not insured and lost all his money." Donald speculates that this took place in the 1920s and was the reason the company went out of business. Edroy died in 1931.

Before Holbrook had a motorized fire truck the department had a horse drawn apparatus. Donald Austin, Sr. said that the horses were kept on Plymouth Street next to his grandfather Edroy's peanut butter factory. When the alarm sounded someone would turn the horses loose and they would automatically run down to and back into the fire station. The harnesses would then be dropped down on the horses, they then would be hooked up and off the firemen and horses would go.

Edroy W. Austin's son, George B. Austin was appointed to the fire department in 1929. George's brother Wilfred D. Austin was on the fire department for a short time in the 1940's.

Donald Austin, Sr. joined the fire department as a call firefighter on August 1, 1952 and was appointed full time in 1959. His brother John B. Austin went on as an call firefighter on October 31, 1956 and was appointed full time in 1965.

In 1965 three Austins worked as firefighters: father George and sons Donald and John. Sometimes their shifts would overlap but not often.

In 1966 George retired. Both brothers are now retired, Donald at the rank of Lieutenant in 1991 and John in 1994. In 1976 the fire department got its first ambulance. Both John and Donald were trained to be E.M.T's soon after its arrival.

John has been married to his wife Rita since 1965. They have three grown children, Jeffrey, Brian, and Paula.

Donald, Sr. has two children, Donald, Jr. who is a lieutenant on the Holbrook Fire Dept., and daughter Deborah. Deborah married Ronald Keeman who is a firefighter in Easton, Massachusetts. Donald, Sr. was married to Margarette Infinger for forty-two years but she passed away in September 2000.

Donald Austin, Jr. was hired onto the Holbrook call fire department in 1978. He was appointed full time in 1980. He is married to Sheleen Blume and they have four boys, Kevin, Christopher, Eric and Dylan.

Six Austins, in five generations have served over a span of 130 years in time for the Town of Holbrook.

Donald's line runs: Samuel, Thomas, Thomas Jr., Isaac, Isaac Jr., Frye, John B., Edroy W., George B., Donald E., Donald E. Jr.

## Wanted: A Few Good Article Managers

Your loyal *Newsletter* Staff has decided to ask for help in preparing this *Newsletter*. Because titles seem to go along with opportunities of great import, we have decided to call such persons Article Managers.

An Article Manager's task would be to process appropriate material (text and/or photographs) and to send these on to the editors for potential use in the *Newsletter*. This involves receiving, collecting, or creating new articles of a genealogical or historical nature, hopefully with an Austin/Austen slant.

The Article Manager would commit to monitor various genealogical publications and web sites looking for things that would be of interest to people receiving the *Newsletter*.

The editors and proof-readers would have final say in what ultimately gets placed in each edition since layout boundaries often force us to cut or request additional material.

Article Managers would assume the same commitment that the Editors have, that of publishing a *Newsletter* the required four times a year. Please give this your serious consideration and volunteer.

\* \* \*

One of our devoted readers (actually prime proof-reader, and now ex-publisher and mailer) sent along an excellent suggestion. She proposed that we "...create a US History column, one that doesn't have to be in every issue, but could provide a good framework for people when they are viewing the actions and movements of their families in the New World. It wouldn't necessarily be Austin specific, but then neither was the settlement of the country."

There are other great ideas for filling these pages that you, our readers, have. Please communicate these to the Editors by e-mail or s-mail - addresses are on page 1.

We promise that should you suggest something, we won't make you the leader of that task (unless you absolutely beg us). But we can still hand out titles - that's the easy part. Try us!

Thank you,  
Jim & Liz

### DAR Lineage Books On-line

Military Records for Genealogists with links to transcriptions and indexes of the military and service records are online for the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Civil War, Indian Wars, Spanish-American War, World War I and II, Korean War, Vietnam War, Medal Recipients and other Military Honorees, Academy Graduates, 1890 Veterans & Widow Census, Miscellaneous and How to do Genealogical Research in military records can be found at <http://usgenweb.com/military/index.htm>.

# Austins in the Settlement of Virginia

Virginia, the home state of many of our Southern Austin families, is also the home state of eight U. S. Presidents including four of the first five: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, James Madison, and James Monroe.

Besides being the "Mother of Presidents", it is also "Mother" to all or part of eight states once part of the western territory claimed by Virginia: Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, West Virginia, and Wisconsin!

Virginia's first settlers were actually a group of Spanish Jesuits who settled on the York River in 1570. No doubt, our history would have been quite different had not the local Indians destroyed the settlement soon afterward.

In the 1580's Sir Walter Raleigh's attempts at establishing a colony on Roanoke Island failed. The Virginia Company of London was formed in 1607 to settle Virginia as a profit-making venture, and Jamestown became the first permanent settlement in the present United States. The first representative legislature in America, the House of Burgesses, was formed in 1619.

Water being the "highway" available, settlements followed in the Tidewater region along the rivers feeding into Chesapeake Bay, notably the James, York and Rappahannock rivers.

In 1612, John Rolfe introduced tobacco into the colony as its main cash crop. This reliance on tobacco had profound effects on the history of Virginia and the United States. Because the cultivation of tobacco is so labor intensive, more and more people had to be recruited to the colony. Some of the first Austins were part of the "King's Passengers to Maryland and Virginia, punishment of rogues, vagabonds, and sturdy beggars." These "exports", as well as volunteers from England, were eligible after their indentured service to receive their own land.

The continuing need for field labor ultimately was responsible for the evil of Slavery whose effects are felt even to this

day.

By the middle 1600's small farmers had reached the "fall line", the place where you could no longer navigate up a river, and began to push further west into the Piedmont region, where their separation from the "Establishment Tidewater," and differing needs, caused resentment and discontent with ruling England. Piedmont Austins were the ancestors of many North Carolina, Kentucky, and Tennessee Austin families.

The last great region of Virginia is the Mountain region – the Shenandoah Valley, the "Great Valley" between the Blue Ridge Mountains on the east and the Appalachian Mountains on the west, part of an extensive geologic feature of the eastern U. S.

Because of its NE-SW orientation and mountain isolation, this region was settled beginning in the 1730's with immigrants from Pennsylvania, primarily by non-conformists (i.e. non-Church of England) such as the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, Quakers, and German Mennonites. Those who love the music of Copland's "Appalachian Spring", and Blue Grass Music can thank these early settlers. Their relative separation from the more established regions of Virginia allowed a

separate and independent culture to develop.

In southwestern Virginia and eastern KY, there is another group called today Melungeons. Their ancestry includes Portuguese and Spanish (some "conversos" - forced Jewish converts), Turks, Moors, Arabs, and Native Americans. Descendants of John Austin of Southside Virginia include Melungeons in this group.

I didn't realize before that Virginia was such a microcosm of the different threads that make up the fabric of our American heritage, but I'm glad to have found it and shared it.



**Liz Austin Carlin**  
Austin Families Association Genealogist

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2. 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.
3. To help foster wider acquaintances and long-term friendships among the members of all branches of the Austin families.