

Who Is Joe Beine?

HAVE YOU OFTEN wondered whether a locale you are researching has online death records available? Questioned whether there are naturalization or passenger records online that might help you? What about military records? If you have answered yes to any of these questions, I have just the group of websites that can answer these questions! What links all these websites? Joe Beine.

Though I am a long time patron of his websites, and I have frequently mentioned them in previous articles, I realized that I have never written an article that just focuses on them!

Joe has quietly continued to update his "stable" of websites and he doesn't seem to get the exposure that other projects do. However, once a genealogist discovers one of Joe's websites, they're hooked. The question remains: how come they hadn't heard of these fantastic online resources before!?

Well, I hope to change that by letting you in on two secrets. One: there is a good chance that you have already visited one of his websites without knowing who was behind it or how it was connected to the other great websites, and two: after this article is published, Joe's websites won't be much of a secret anymore!

Here is a list of some of Joe's available compilations. We will talk in a bit more detail about each of these projects separately.

- Online Searchable Death Indexes and Records

<http://www.deathindexes.com>

- What Passenger Lists are Online? <http://www.germanroots.com/onlinepassengerlists.html>

- Online Searchable Naturalization Indexes and Records <http://www.germanroots.com/naturalization.html>

- Online Military Indexes and Records <http://www.militaryindexes.com/>

- Online Birth and Marriage

Diane L. Richard wonders why so few people seem to know about one of genealogy's best kept secrets!

Records Indexes for the USA
www.germanroots.com/vitalrecords.html

NO FRILLS!

You will find that the information

ing databases that cover statewide records available (e.g., death certificates, obituaries, cemeteries, tombstones, etc.) which are then followed by an alphabetical list (by county) of localized records available. There is also information included about how to order Vital Records for that state and a list of other websites that may "Also [be] Helpful".

This format makes it extremely easy for you to quickly identify what is or is not available for the chosen document type (e.g., online searchable death indexes and records) for the locale you are

1915 Death Certificate for Charley Long.

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is presented in a no-frills manner. For example, for "Online Searchable Death Indexes & Records", you are given an alphabetized list of states. You click on a state, e.g., North Carolina, and you are presented with a list. The list typically starts by summariz-

researching (e.g., North Carolina, Wake County). If you do not see (requires payment) next to an entry, you can assume that it is freely accessible. Notes are also included about the scope of the time period and anything else noteworthy.

Every web page listed above has the same simplified “no frills” presentation and that’s what makes these pages so powerful — they are easy to use, logically organized and quickly get you to where the data is!

For some states, there are several layers of pages, especially if one or more big cities or metropolitan areas exist and for others, there are only a few lines.

You will also find that each website, though distinct, includes a link to a more “general” overview page of what is available — this is that page if you are coming from the “Online Searchable Death Indexes & Records” page, <http://www.deathindexes.com/sites.html>.

Keep in mind that the availability of data online is what drives what is included on these websites. For example, between death indexes, certificates, obituaries, funeral home records, cemetery records, tombstone images, etc., there are a lot of death records to be found. On the other hand, there are currently only a few sources for “Birth and Marriage” records — hence the skimpier pages.

PASSENGER AND NATURALIZATION LISTS

As far as death records, there has been a steady increase in what is available, with much of it available free via subscription-based websites, the same has not been historically true, and also is currently not necessarily true, for passenger and naturalization lists. Their history is a bit different.

How you access passenger information today, versus a few years ago, has changed. Since much of this information is housed on large, dedicated free websites (e.g., Ellis Island, www.ellisland.org and Castle Garden, www.castlegarden.org) or through commercial, pay-per-view websites, it has gotten a bit too confusing to keep track of what passenger records can be found where!

This is why Joe’s website, What Passenger Lists Are Online? <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/onlinelists.html>, is so invaluable.

A black and white photograph of a historical document titled "List or Manifest of Alien Immigrants for the Ship". The document is a large table with many columns and rows of handwritten text. The title is at the top, and the table contains names, birth dates, and other personal information of immigrants. The handwriting is in cursive and somewhat faded.

Above: 1902 Passenger Record for Anton Volk.
Below: Bishop, Phaniel E. (Civil War Pension Card).

A black and white photograph of a Civil War Pension Card. The card is a form with several sections. The top section is for the "NAME OF SOLDIER" and contains the name "Bishop, Phaniel E.". Below this is the "SERVICE" section, which includes "Late rank, Capt. Co. B, 11 Regt U.S.C. H.A.". The "TERM OF SERVICE" section shows "Enlisted" and "Discharged" dates. The "DATE OF FILING" is "1890, Mar 8". The "CLASS" is "Invalid, Widow, Minor". The "APPLICATION NO." is "762,107". The "LAW" is "547,230". The "CERTIFICATE NO." is "374,913". The "ADDITIONAL SERVICES" section contains "B 14 R. I. H. A.". The "REMARKS" section contains "Died".

Now you don’t have to wonder or guess what records can be found where, whether they are available free or for a fee. Just check out the site with its directory organized by:

- United States Passenger Lists & Records (Arrivals) — with NYC first, followed by an alphabetical list of other ports
- International Passenger Arrival & Departure Records — listed alphabetically by country

At the click of your mouse, you are now accessing a relevant database.

MILITARY INDEXES

<http://www.militaryindexes.com>

As with the other pages, this one is simply organized — you are first presented a list of the major military conflicts. When you choose a conflict, the top of the page contains links to “general” and/or US-wide resources, which

are followed by an alphabetized state list which lists more locale-specific databases. Click on any link and you are either taken to the resource or to another page with a more detailed list of information.

HELP JOE OUT!

As you can imagine, maintaining these websites is a tremendous undertaking!

One way that you can help is to let Joe know if any links are broken and/or provide information on a resource that he may have overlooked. You can do so via the link on this page, <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/email.html>.

I recently accessed an index and digitized images of Paterson (Passaic County), New Jersey naturalizations, <http://records.passaiccountynj.org/press/Clerk/ClerkHomePB.aspx?op=basic>, for a project I was working on. Though Joe's list doesn't currently include this new offering, I have no doubt that once he reads this article, it will be included in his next update. (And, researching in the records for Passaic County is about the only way you would have stumbled across this website.)

THERE'S EVEN MORE!

We have talked about those websites which I have used extensively and there are even more, but I've probably still missed mentioning a few!

- Historical Newspapers and Indexes On The Internet — USA, <http://www.researchguides.net/newspapers.htm>
- Online County Histories, Biographies and Indexes — USA, <http://www.genealogybranches.com/countyhistories.html>
- US Census Help, Links & Online Records, <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/censuslinks.html>

KEEPING UP-TO-DATE ON THESE WEBSITES

With such a profusion of new indices and digitized material coming online almost every day (or so it seems sometimes), having someone like Joe, who compiles

ABOUT JOE BY JOE

I'm a professional genealogist living in Denver, Colorado. In the late 1990s, I started looking for online death indexes to see if I could find my missing grandfather, who I assumed was deceased. I made a list of the online death indexes that I had searched and I saved this as a text file. In June 2000, I added this list as a single webpage to my German Roots website, www.germanroots.com, and it quickly became the most popular webpage on the site. By 2003, the webpage was getting really long, so I expanded it into a separate site at www.deathindexes.com. I get a lot of e-mail comments, suggestions and encouragement from people who use the website, which is nice. I also seek out more death indexes as I work on various genealogy projects.

While searching for death indexes and other items, I have found more online genealogy databases, and I've also compiled directories of some of these. I have directories of links to military indexes, ship passenger lists, naturalization records indexes, and birth and marriage indexes.

that information in an easy-to-use format for genealogists to access freely, is invaluable. What makes what he does even better is that he posts updates to his Genealogy Roots Blog, <http://home.att.net/~wee-monster/genealogy.blog.html>.

You have two options for subscribing to this blog to make sure that you don't miss any news!

1. Subscribe to the Genealogy Roots Blog (feed), <http://feeds.feedburner.com/genealogyrootsblog>
2. Subscribe to the Genealogy Roots Blog by e-mail, <http://feedburner.google.com/fb/a/mailverify?uri=genealogyrootsblog>

Now, you can sit down at your computer and not have to wonder if a new database of death records is available, for say, North Carolina, since you'll be informed of that via the blog.

For example, the 1 September 2009 blog entry titled "Online Indexes for Obituaries and Death Records — Latest Additions" informed me that for North Carolina, the following is now available:

- Onslow County Death Index 1982-2008 (also has indexes for births 1976-recent, marriages 1962-recent and more)

And, the 15 June 2009 similarly named blog entry let me know that for North Carolina, the following were available:

- North Carolina Deaths 1906-1930 from FamilySearch Labs (includes digitized images of the death records)
- Wake County: North Carolina Family Records Online (includes "Marriage and Death Notices from the Raleigh Register and North Carolina State Gazette: 1799-1893" and 220 family Bible records)

These are all great to know! Now I'll check my current project files and refresh my memory to see if any involved Onslow or Wake county ancestors in the applicable time periods.

CONCLUSION

Whether you are a beginning genealogist or a seasoned professional, the ability to quickly

find what records are available online allows you to develop your research strategy to efficiently incorporate online research and on-the-ground research. With Joe's easy-to-use directory-style listing (each of which use their own logical category breakdown) of the records available online for vital, passenger, immigration, military and other types of records, you are able to directly access these records at the click of a mouse. It doesn't get much easier than that!

DFH

Author Diane L. Richard is a frequent contributor to Discovering Family History magazine.