

Off the Shelf:

An e-mail newsletter from the Prince William Public Library System

August 17, 2011

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Okay, the pool is now closing early, and it is way too hot to lie out there anyway – and the garden is a disaster. Not to mention it is too stifling inside to think of cleaning house. What to do? The hot dog days of August are a perfect time to sit in a cool air-conditioned library and start digging into your family history. Using *Ancestry.com*, found on any public computer in our libraries, you can trace your family history, whether you are a beginner or an expert. You can also use *Ancestry* as a resource to leap over what are known to genealogists as “brick walls” – when it appears every lead you have on a family line dead-ends with no progress. *Ancestry.com* requires us to provide only in-house use, so come on in where it’s cool.

If you are a night owl or early morning researcher, however, you have some other options in the 24/7 category. Go to the library’s homepage, click on Electronic Resources and chose *Heritage Quest Online*. You can search your family in census records and genealogical books and other sources from your comfortable seat at home, cat in the lap and coffee brewing on the counter. You may also want to try the *New York Times* or *Washington Post Historical Newspapers*, both helpful for finding obituaries and news accounts that may involve an ancestor. Take a look at:

<http://www.pwcgov.org/library/electronicresources/index.htm>

## IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Whether you are a novice or a pro at family history searching, you should plan on attending the 7<sup>th</sup> Annual RELIC After Dark event at the Bull Run Library on Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup> from 7 to 11 p.m. The Bull Run Library is transformed into a research paradise for family historians, with the staff of the Ruth E. Lloyd Information Center, the special genealogical and historical collection at Bull Run, on hand to help. Access to all online resources is available, and printing is included in your admission price. Also included are food, beverages, and – best of all – a stimulating presentation being billed as *CSI Meets Roots*. Forensic genealogist Colleen Fitzpatrick will talk about how to use photos, documents and even DNA to dig deeper into your family history. For only \$25, you will enjoy a stimulating and informative evening in the stacks. Reservations for the program are now being accepted by calling 703-792-4540 or you may email [relic2@pwcgov.org](mailto:relic2@pwcgov.org) for further information.

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