Editor’s Note

First, I have an important correction to make from the last issue. The GSV meeting is scheduled for Saturday May 17th, not the incorrect May 15th.

On May 13 at the National Genealogical Conference the Association for Professional Genealogists will sponsor a round table discussion on records preservation and access.

The Mass Genealogical Council held a silent auction to ‘fund efforts to keep public vital records public.’ more than 300 items were donated for the auction.

Take care, Bill

The Care and Feeding of Flash Drives

The following article is from Eastman’s Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright 2008 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with the permission of the author. Information about the newsletter is available at http://www.eogn.com.

In a recent conversation with a newsletter subscriber, I casually mentioned flash drives. These devices are also known as jump drives, thumb drives, USB drives, and probably a few other names as well. The subscriber mentioned that she had purchased a flash drive but didn’t know how to use it. This article is for her and probably for a lot of other people who also have not yet used one of these great devices. I am also including information about programs and advanced uses that may be news even for experienced flash drive users.

First of all, flash drives/jump drives/thumb drives are not drives at all. These pocket-sized devices contain a tiny circuit board, some amount of flash memory, and some supporting electronics. Flash memory is noted for its storage capabilities; when you turn the power off, the stored data does not disappear. It has been saved in the flash memory. You later can re-apply power and all the data will still be available, identical to what it was when the power was turned off.

Flash drives tend to physically imitate conventional hard drives so that they may act as a replacement for hard drives or floppy drives. When you plug a flash drive into your computer’s USB port, it appears
horror stories of late (really late) deliveries (there’s a reason it is referred to as snail-mail), this can be an important consideration. But you say, “I like to get a hard copy to read and keep for future reference”. And then I say, “Well, you can always print out a copy on your home printer, and the previously stated benefits still apply!” You can indicate your preference for emailed newsletters at our website, www.genealogyvermont.org (it’s in the Vermont Content section).

And speaking of the website, do check periodically for Vermont content added for members-only. The Branches & Twigs series continues to grow. Over 17 of the 24 volumes are now scanned and on line with indexes. In addition, recent postings include transcriptions from the Westminster West Cemetery, and Burlington Free Press marriages and deaths from 1848-1855. Please consider submitting some of your data to our Webmistress, Diantha Howard (diantha.howard@uvm.edu) for inclusion in this section. Your fellow members will thank you.

For those of you traveling to Vermont this summer, and for those who are here year-round, it is not too early to start planning a visit to Vermont History Expo, to be held this year at the Tunbridge Fairgrounds on Saturday and Sunday, 21-22 June. This is an excellent chance to visit about 150 Vermont historical societies in one location. The displays put together by those societies highlight a facet of each of their towns, focusing on individuals, industries or other topics. You will find it fascinating and a good opportunity to make face-to-face contacts with folks from the areas in which you have particular interests.

Elections of officers will be coming up at our Fall meeting. I hope to be appointing a nominating committee in the near future. If you have an interest in getting involved in your society, would like to be an officer or help out in some other way, let me or any other officer know. Many hands make light work!

We are still interested in finding someone to handle sales (your President continues to perform that duty), and we have a need for folks to assist in setting up meetings, getting speakers, etc. Our current attempts to rein in costs are showing success, but the downside is that we must help ourselves more in order to do that. Past practice has been to hire an outfit to print, assemble, label and send out all of our publications. Past practice has also been to arrange for our GSV meetings at a hotel or similar venue, and let the hotel handle meeting setup, furnish equipment and food, etc. Both of those past practices came with a cost we can no longer afford, so we are looking for YOU to help. Thanks for your consideration.

Finally, I must put in a plug for the Vermont Historical Society. The library has recently acquired the first series of vital records microfilms, covering the period 1760-1870. They would like to acquire more, but don’t yet have the funds. Hundreds of rolls of microfilm are involved at a cost of $25 each. Please consider a tax-deductible contribution to VHS specifically for this purpose. You may mail your checks, large or small, to Paul Carnahan, Librarian, Vermont History Center, 60 Washington St., Barre, VT 05641. Thanks, and have a productive summer exploring your roots!

Bob Murphy
store, drug store, and other places. A local variety store near me sells smaller capacity flash drives for $4.95. You can purchase a 512-megabyte flash drive (equal to the storage capacity of 355 floppy disks or nearly the storage capacity of a CD-ROM disk) for $7.99 and a 16-gigabyte flash drive for $69. Sixteen gigabytes is roughly the amount of data stored on 11,000 floppy disks. Not bad for something that is about the size of a tube of lipstick! Try carrying 11,000 floppy disks in a pocket or purse! You might find even lower prices if you look around long enough.

Jump drives contain no moving parts. The only thing inside the case is flash memory plus whatever other electronic parts are required to make it work. The entire unit is sealed and is more or less impervious to heat, cold, shock, dirt, or most other physical abuse. They will not withstand extreme abuse, however. I did have one jump drive stop working after I accidentally sent it through the washer and dryer. A few months later I did the same thing again with the replacement jump drive that I purchased. The second one survived and is still in use today.

Using a jump drive in Windows ME, Windows 2000, Windows XP, Windows Vista, or Macintosh OS X is simple: insert the jump drive into your computer's USB connector, wait a few seconds for the operating system to detect it, and then start using it. The jump drive will appear as a new disk drive that is attached to your computer. Jump drives do not work in Windows 98 unless special drivers are loaded first and do not work at all in older versions of Windows.

In Windows, the new disk drive normally appears as the next drive letter in succession. If your computer has a hard drive that appears as Drive C: and a CD-ROM drive that appears as Drive D: and there are no other drives, the jump drive will probably appear as Drive E:. That is the default operation, but it can be overridden. A few jump drives may appear as a different drive letter, but most will appear as the next letter available.

Operation on Macintosh OS X is similar except that Macs don't use drive letters. The jump drive will appear on the desktop with a name assigned to it. I always change the device's name to something that is logical to me by right clicking on the jump drive's icon and then selecting GET INFO. I then change the name that appears in the "Name and Extension" field and give it a new name of my choice.

You look at folders and files on the jump drive the same way as you navigate any other drive. In Windows Explorer, double-click on the drive's letter to open the "tree" of directories and files. Macintosh users can do the same by using Finder.

To execute any programs stored on the jump drive or to open any documents, simply double-click on the file name. This is the same operation you would perform on a hard drive, a CD-ROM disk, or a floppy disk. You can read files or write files from almost any application in the amount of data stored on 11,000 floppy disks. Not bad for something that is about the size of a tube of lipstick! Try carrying 11,000 floppy disks in a pocket or purse! You might find even lower prices if you look around long enough.

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2008 Spring Meeting
Saturday, May 17, 2008
Bennington Museum
75 Main St (Route 9), Bennington, VT
Phone: (802)447-1571

9:00 am: Registration & Refreshments
9:30 am: GSV business meeting, including update on VT Families in 1791 project.
10:00 am: Jamie Franklin, "Art and Artifacts of the American Family"
11:00 am: Linda French, "Adoptee's Successful Search for Birth Parents"

12:00 pm: Box Lunch

1:30 pm: Martin Hollick, "Where The Best Genealogical Research Is: Internet vs. Print Genealogy"
3:00 pm: Adjourn

Registration: Registration is $28.00 for members and $33.00 for non-members. This includes the morning and afternoon program, morning coffee, luncheon. Please make your reservation by May 8, 2008 and mail your check to: GSV, PO Box 14, Randolph, VT 05460-0014.

For further information please contact Joann Nichols at 802-254-9554 or email to jnichols1930@verizon.net. Information is also available at our website, http://www.genealogyvermont.org.

Directions: The museum is on U.S. Route 9, ½ mile west of the intersection with U.S. Route 7. The museum is up the hill on the left.
Backups and Archival Copies: I often keep copies of important files on jump drives. When traveling, I carry all my past newsletters plus copies of the articles I am presently working on. These are backup copies in addition to the copies on my laptop and the copies on the desktop computers at home. Carrying backup copies in your pocket or purse provides a lot of protection against hardware malfunctions or human errors. However, just remember that it is easy to lose these small devices!

If my laptop should fail when I am traveling, I can always borrow a computer, insert my jump drive into its USB port, and start using the files I’ve put on it. Of course, that assumes that the borrowed computer has compatible word processors or other programs installed. (See "A Word about U3 Drives" below for a solution to possible problems with applications.)

When I travel to genealogy conferences to make presentations, I always have a copy of my PowerPoint slides stored on a jump drive that I keep in my pocket. More than once I have encountered a laptop that wouldn’t work or was not compatible with a presentation room’s projector. It is a great relief to pull the jump drive out of my pocket, insert it into a borrowed laptop, and start my presentation without missing a beat.

Jump drives are great storage media because they are small, lightweight, and impervious to normal handling problems when being jostled around in a pocket or purse. However, the life expectancy of data stored on a jump drive has not been proven. I would suggest that you use jump drives only for short-term storage: a few weeks or a few months. Don’t count on them for long-term archival purposes. They might save data for years, but there is no guarantee.

Programs: Not only can you save documents on a
### GSV Publications

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**Genealogical Society of Vermont, P. O. Box 14, Randolph, VT 05060-0014**

**Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 1** is out of print.

**Vermont Families in 1791, Vol. 2.** Scott A. Bartley, ed., 1997, 304 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 5; $27.00 members, $30.00 non-members. This second volume covers 107 families, has improved formatting and more complete information on the third generation of early Vermonters.

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town. All the civil books were transcribed as well as the records from the Georgia Plains Baptist Church, Congregational Church, and Methodist Church of Georgia and North Fairfax.

**Windsor County, Vermont Probate Index, 1778-1899.** Scott Andrew Bartley and Marjorie-J. Bartley, compilers. 2000, 560 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 6; $45.00 members, $50.00 nonmembers. This is a comprehensive index of all files in the Windsor County Probate Court Districts—Windsor and Hartford. The records cover the period from the earliest 1778 records through the end of the nineteenth century, more than 20,000 probate files. The files are indexed by the name of the major party in the case, place of residence, probate district, type of record, year, and probate record volume.

**Index to Branches & Twigs, 1972—1995.** Robert M. Murphy, ed. 2000, 572 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 7, $58.50 members, $65.00 nonmembers. This is the every-name index to GSV's Branches & Twigs, published for 24 years in 96 issues. The 180,000 entries include every genealogically important name mentioned in every issue. Separate sections of this work list the coverage of each Apple Orchard installment, and provide a full author and title index to book reviews. Branches & Twigs included large quantities of information of interest to family historians.

**Sudbury, Vermont: Transcription of Vital Records and Genealogies of Residents.** Mary Ann Z. Wheeler, 2000, 416 pp., hardbound. Item No. GSV 9; $44.55 members, 49.50 nonmembers. This book is a comprehensive transcription of census and vital records for Sudbury, plus carefully compiled genealogies of families. This book is among the very best genealogical resources about a Vermont town. This is a cooperative publication between GSV and Picton Press.

**A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy, 2nd edition.** John A. Leppman, 2005, softbound. Item No. GSV 10, $9.00 members, $10.00 nonmembers. (Mail orders should add $1.50 for postage and handling, not the $3.50 normally charged.) This is a new edition of A Bibliography for Vermont Genealogy was released in April 2005. It includes more listings than the first edition, most published since 2000. It is keyed to Drew Bartley’s Genealogies Found in Vermont Histories (Vol. 10, no. 1 of Vermont Genealogy, also designated GSV publication number 10.).

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Dues are $25.00 for US addresses. Canada and Mexico are $30.00, all other foreign addresses are $35.00 in US funds.

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GSV Membership Chairperson
57 East Shore North
Grand Isle, VT 05458

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operation is only possible on U3 firmware version 2.1.5 or newer. Even the newer U3 jump drives will generate lots of Vista pop-up warning windows when trying to execute programs.)

U3 jump drives typically cost $10 to $20 more than a standard jump drive of similar capacity.

A wide range of U3-compatible programs are available, including word processors, web browsers, e-mail programs, games, music players, Skype telephony to make free or low-cost telephone calls over the Internet, virus scanners, text editors, encryption programs, checkbook programs, dictionaries, medical reference books and much more. Some of the U3 programs are available free of charge while others are sold for a fee. Almost all U3 programs can be downloaded directly from http://www.u3.com. For more information about U3 jump drives, look at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U3.

Is a Jump Drive a Good Choice for You? I would say, "Yes." I suspect that everyone can use a jump drive. It is a great tool for short-term backups of your own data. It is also a great method of taking some of your data to a friend or copying data from your friend's computer to take home. Anyone who owns both a desktop computer and a laptop also needs either a jump drive or a network – and a jump drive is a lot cheaper than a network.