

FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

August 2004

Hello Family Members and Fellow Researchers:

The family genealogy website at www.purfeerst.com , which has grown to over 46,000 people, has undergone a major redesign in order improve visibility of sub-sections and to improve movement between them. Please stop by and check us out. While there, please verify that the information pertaining to your family is current and accurate. If you wish to have any changes made please let me know.

My genealogical research efforts began many years ago as investigation of my own ancestral surname of Purfürst as well as its anglicized variations of Purfurst, Purfuerst and Purfeerst. That research has pursued every instance of those names throughout the world. The fact remains, however, that with the exception of pursuing current updates, assorted tweaking and adding to the allied families, I was essentially putting myself out of business.

Knowing that I had ancestors for three other grandparents and three other complete sets of Great-Grandparents to yet pursue, I began to expand the scope of my research. Last year's newsletter outlined my success in going back through the American colony period to England's 6 th century with ancestors of Grandmother Jennie June (Johnson) Purfeerst. I am well underway researching her paternal side of her family which appears to be taking me to the original Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts. I made some great headway with the Johnson's during research trips this past summer while examining the New Jersey Genealogical collection, housed on the campus of Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ. From there I went to the State Archives and the State Library in Trenton, NJ.

Earlier in the spring Martha and I played tourist in Washington, DC. Of course I couldn't pass up playing researcher as well. One of the Johnson ancestors served in the War of 1812 so I went to the National Archives and examined war records for every Johnson who lived in New York at the time. Additional research time was spent at the Library of Congress and also at the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Library because one of my direct ancestors also served in the Revolutionary War. (making my daughters eligible for DAR membership).

I also mentioned in my last newsletter that a cousin had shared her research of our grandparents, William Weiss and Catherine Keller. Over the past year I initiated research back into Germany and successfully extended their respective ancestors back another 100 plus years. I also had considerable success researching their American descendants and that assistance comes from the strangest places. A bank in South Dakota was handing the will probate for one of the Keller family members. They found the web site and contacted me for the names and location of surviving family members. In turn, the bank identified those family members they tracked down.

Grandmother (Keller) Weiss had a brother who had 14 children. The family experienced a great deal of death and tragedy, including a daughter who, along with her husband of only six months, died in a boating accident. From those 14 children, there is but one surviving grandson. Interestingly there are now three sets of Weiss cousins living here in the Phoenix area; descendants of three different Weiss siblings. We had a mini-reunion in August.

Our website Purfurst Family Number 13, London, England, originated with the emigrant who settled in London, England in 1833. This past year I exchanged a series of e-mails with one of the descendants of the family who provided me considerable update on one family branch. This follows my success of last year of having contacted another family branch of the same London family. This is the family group with the Buddhist Monk.

Our website Purfurst Family Number 8, Harris County, Texas, originated with a emigrant illegally entered the country by jumping ship from a German freighter in Galveston, Texas ship channel in 1910. This past year a descendant of a sister of the emigrant's American wife contacted me and shared some update as well. Their whole story is fascinating reading. I invite you to read it.

A number of years back I began highlighting on the web site some of the more noted individuals who share our family tree. Last year I added a series of charts that took you through the various families. This year the charts have been expanded to carry back through various European Monarchs, through the reigns of 23 Kings of Scotland, the reigns of 131 Kings of Ireland and back through the Biblical era to Adam & Eve. You can't miss reading this!

To keep up with the happenings of the family change your web browser so that **www.purfeerst.com** is your opening Internet home page. Those using Microsoft Internet Explorer first go to the web site. Then go to the Toolbar across the top of your window and select TOOLS/INTERNET OPTIONS and click on "USE CURRENT".

About it for now. If your travels bring you to Arizona please let us know.

Please forward this message on to our family members on your personal mailing lists. Don't assume I did so.

Don and Martha Purfeerst
Scottsdale, Arizona
August 2004

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FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

June 2003

Hello Family Members and Fellow Researchers:

The family genealogy at www.purfeerst.com has grown to almost 40,000 people and the web site itself has been completely redesigned due to the major developments outlined below. Over 5,500 people visited our web site last year. Would you please do so? And please sign the guest book while you are there.

In my previous newsletter I made mention of an ongoing search for a book that supposedly would connect my grandparents, **Harmon Francis Purfeerst** (1873-1955) and **Jennie June Johnson** (1877-1958), to the throne of England. I am pleased to report that I found the book while on a research trip to the **State Archives in Albany, New York**. Published in 1901 and 1200 pages in length, it indeed took the ancestors of Jennie's Grandmother, **Hannah Bostwick**, back to the throne of England. It did not take me long to further extend the family back through various European Monarchs to the year 635 AD. Her ancestral emigrant arrived during the early colony period of **Connecticut** thus leading to the connection with many exciting individuals, to include George Bush and 10 other past American Presidents. Descendants of Harmon and Jennie will be found in my web site under **Family F-3**; however, to accommodate all of Jennie's ancestral information, I have added a new major section to my web site. The exciting details are in my new **Bostock and Famous Families Sections**. Jennie's Great-Grandfather, **John T. Johnson** was born about 1770 in **New Jersey**. Tracing that very common name back in time is my next challenge. By the way, I have identified ancestors who fought in the Revolutionary War if anyone wishes to join the **Daughters of the Revolution (DAR)**.

In conjunction with a research trip to the **State Archives in Austin, Texas** I stopped in at the Williamson County Court House in **Georgetown, Texas**. I was in search of information on **Anna Engst** (1887-1967) who was born in the nearby town of Tayler and would later marry **Ernst August Purfurst** (1884-1935) of **Houston, Texas**. I was always intrigued by the fact that they married only 90 days after he entered the country illegally by secretly leaving a German freighter, which was berthed in the Galveston ship channel. I often wondered if they were somehow aware of each other's presence by virtue of their respective German parents maintaining contact. At the courthouse I successfully identified Anna's parents, **Herman Engst** and **Wilhelmina Hassendorf**, which will now allow me to pursue that theory. Also found were records on Anna's siblings, which included a set of twins. Anna's citizenship misadventures as a result of marrying a foreign national make for fascinating reading. Those details are found on my web site under **Family F-8**.

While in Houston, Texas to examine the collection at the critically acclaimed **Clayton Research Library**, I met with cousin **Arlene Weiss Ansley**. She had spent a number of years researching our grandparents **William Weiss** (1867-1959) and **Karoline Catherine Keller** (1877-1960). Karoline's parents, **Christian Keller** (1851-1932) and **Katherine Heck** immigrated in 1873. They first lived in Minnesota where some of the children were born; later to move to North Dakota where the remainder of the family was born. Arlene graciously shared with me all of the information she had gathered, which has now been added to the web site along with information on many others who descended from this early Dakota Territory village. I am now embarking on research that will attempt to identify the German ancestors for the Weiss and Keller families. Those of you with an ancestral connection to **New Salem, Morton County, North Dakota** will find the details within the new **Keller Section**.

Speaking of New Salem, North Dakota, I also mentioned in the last newsletter that I had begun research on a new family: **Friedrich Albert Kunz** and his wife **Hulda Clementine Purfürst**. They immigrated from Germany in 1902 along with three children and established their home in New Salem, North Dakota. I have since determined that Hulda was the daughter of **Ernst Friedrich Purfürst** and **Augustine Uhlig**. Hulda was

born in **Euba, Germany** where she and Friedrich Kunz were married in 1894. They have been assigned as **Family F-21** on my web site where additional details may be found. I am now attempting to identify additional generations of Hulda's ancestors in order to determine how and where they connect to the family tree.

As the last stages of **World War I** were being fought in Europe, civil war broke out in Finland on January 28, 1918 between two political factions, each of who enjoyed support from either Russia or Germany. On April 3, 1918 Germany made an intervention into the country and on April 13, captured **Helsinki, Finland**. Killed on April 22, 1918 was German soldier, **Karl Wilhelm Alfred Purfürst**. He thus becomes the newest addition to our world wide geographical study. He was born May 7, 1894 in **Neustadt an der Orla, Germany**, the home town of many of our ancestors. He is buried near the main entrance of the Helsinki train station along with 14 others killed at that location. I have not, as yet, identified his parents or point of connection to the family tree. He has been assigned the **Family F-22** designation simply because I found his presence outside of Germany.

I previously expressed great pleasure in connecting a **London, England** family to the family tree. **Wilhelm August Eugen Purfürst** (1816-1881) immigrated to England in 1833 where he married **Charlotte Humphreys** in 1836. This past year I was successful in locating surviving descendants here in the United States (New Mexico) as well as in England. It was especially gratifying to send a synopsis of the family history to one descendant in London upon the occasion of his 95 th birthday. This is another of those interesting family groups. William Purfürst's Great-Grandson, **William August Purfurst** became the first Englishman to be ordained, in **Thailand**, as a Buddhist Monk. He became known as **The Venerable Kapilavaddho Bhikku**. You can read all of this on the web site in **Family F-13**.

Please forward this on to other family members on your personal mailing list. Do not assume I have done so. I no longer initiate a postal mailing due to the prohibitive cost. With over 50 percent of the American population having access to the Internet I figure I am getting to many via this method and, with your help, will reach many more.

And to those who obtain this annual report from another family member, I ask that you drop me a line and allow me to get you on my mailing first hand next time.

Because I have a web site, my e-mail address is readily obtainable by the junk mailers. I get hundreds a day. I program my spam filter to automatically delete messages received from the Internet Service Provider (the end part of your email address) of the repeat senders. The danger is that I may also disallow messages from people I wish to hear from. If your mail to me is ever rejected please go to the web site and use the Electronic Form. I know that gets through.

There are many financial scams in the world and the genealogy community is not without one as well. If you ever receive a postal advertisement offering to sell you an "International (..your surname..) Family Yearbook", throw the letter in the trash. Last year a company in Colorado was offering a book on the Purfeerst family, for \$39.95, complete with "factual information on marriages, births... celebrating 2000 years of (surname) History..." Aside from the fact that surnames did not exist 2000 years ago, be aware that the information contained in this publication was simply gleaned from such places as the on-line telephone listings and Social Security Death Index and does not represent family research. And certainly be confident in knowing that none of it came from me. I understand there is another letter circulating this year.

Donald Lee & Martha (Tanguay) Purfeerst
Scottsdale, Arizona
June 2003

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FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

September 2002

Hello Family Members:

A year has passed since my research trip to Germany and, for the most part, the thousands of ancestors found as a result of my parish visits have been incorporated into the family web site at www.purfeerst.com. Not all, however, have yet been connected to the Master Family Tree. Not all of the ancestors remained within the village where I found record of them nor did all records identify the home of origin for those not born in the village where I found them. And obviously I did not visit every parish in old Saxony area. The early naming practices repeatedly used a small variety of Christian names thus in the absence of exact information, an ancestral connection for everyone proves to be a slow, grinding task. I recently entered all of those recently identified names into the Excel program where, by use of various alphabetical and numerical sorts, I hope to find some ancestral connection between currently unconnected family members.

Within the family of **Harmon Francis** (1873-1955) and **Jennie June (Johnson)** (1877-1958) **Purfeerst** (See Family F-3) there was a story passed down that Jennie once had access to a document that could tie her ancestors to the throne of England. No one in the family had a copy of this documentation, however. Researching a common surname such as Johnson can drive you to distraction but I gave it a shot once a year or so. For example, while in **Washington, D.C.** a few years ago, I went to the **Library of Congress** and had them pull from the archives, every biography-related document published on or before 1900 whose title contained the surname of Johnson. (by law the LOC is to be provided a copy of every publication). That was a time-consuming, unsuccessful venture.

This year I was able to identify Jennie's grandparents who were born in up-state **New York**. But this time, instead of pursuing the family name, I researched her maternal side of the family. I took her ancestors back to **Connecticut** and **Massachusetts** (who arrived in America about year 1600) and on back to **Cambridge, England** to the year 1474. My European royalty publications contain references to the maternal surnames (**Bostwick, Parkhurst, Burgoyne**, etc) so now, in order to make the family tale come true, it is a matter of finding the right family member in the right family branch. Such is the life of a genealogy researcher.

Over the course of the past year since my return from Europe I conducted research trips to **Milwaukee, Wisconsin** for Families F-11 and F-12; **Chicago, Illinois** for Family F-20; **Springfield, Illinois** for Families F-3, F-5 and F-20; and **St Louis, Missouri** for Family F-14. Not all would be considered extremely successful but all were exciting and informative.

In **St Louis** I had the occasion to meet a descendant of **Johann Friedrich Jacob Purfürst** who was part of a contingent of 650 who immigrated in 1830 and established the **Missouri Synod Lutheran Church of America**. The trip to the **Illinois State Archives** in Springfield, Illinois was primarily to find pre-1860 reference to my great-grandmother Mary Jane **BROWN**. She was born in **Pennsylvania**; however, it is believed that a sister was born in **Illinois** where their father, **James Brown**, supposedly worked prior to moving to **Minnesota**. Researching the name of Brown is real fun. Another of those experiences I do only once a year for sanity reasons! For the Brown's I did the **Pennsylvania State Archives** in **Harrisburg, Pennsylvania** and three different societies/archives in **Philadelphia, Pennsylvania** last year. Next year it will probably mean a trip to Indiana.

While in **Milwaukee** I focused on attempting to find three sons of **Ervin Charles Purfuerst** who were adopted by a stepfather back in 1937. Even a name change adoption is a tightly closed court record. While there I

attended the annual **National Genealogical Society** conference. The dozens of lecturers provide many tips to us novices. On the way home I stopped in **Chicago** where the pursuit of records on **Wilhelmine Purfürst** is complicated by the **Great Chicago Fire of October 8-10, 1871**. Few things are as massive as the record offices of Chicago, Cook County.

Equally as important I have had written communication with hundreds of family members and researchers over the past year. The family tree has grown to **26,000 people** through the contribution of many. Without question every family group has undergone some revision. And I added three new Purfürst family groups this year as well. In addition to **New Salem, North Dakota** and **Chicago, Illinois**, the most exciting addition was the family who resided in the country of the **Netherlands**. Don't let anyone tell you the Dutch language and the German languages are the same! It was also a thrill to identify the early ancestors for the **London, England** family group and the **St Louis, Missouri** family group and thus successfully connect them to the master family tree.

You will notice on the web site that I have connected various celebrities to our family tree. This has been truly exciting and apparently never ending. Once you have identified family members who had presence during the days of the **American Colonies** you can be assured of eventual connection to many of the subsequent leaders of America simply because the early arrivals were the basis for all subsequent generations in of our country. For example, in addition to **President George W. Bush** and other well-known names mentioned on the web site I can prove a family tree connection to the following people:

- **Archibald Cox**, the Watergate prosecutor
- **Steve Young**, quarterback for the San Francisco 49'ers
- **Walt Disney**, movie producer
- **Alan Sheppard**, astronaut
- **Elisha Otis**, elevator manufacturer
- **Cole Porter**, composer
- **Thomas Edison**, inventor
- **Norman Rockwell**, illustrator
- **Orville and Wilbur Wright**, aviation pioneers
- **Norma Jean Mortenson/Baker (Marilyn Monroe)**, movie star
- **Susan B. Anthony**, feminist
- **Alfred Fuller**, founder of Fuller brush Company
- **Charles Guiteau**, assassin of President James Garfield
- **Benedict Arnold**, traitor
- **Orson Wells**, actor
- **Harry Lillis ("Bing") Crosby**, singer

I can hardly wait to visit the **Daughters of American Revolution (DAR)** library.

Be sure to visit the family web site.... and sign the guest book while you are there!

Please pass this message and attachment along to family members on your personal mailing list. I do not have an e-mail address for everyone and, due to the prohibited cost associated with a 450+ plus household mailing list, I no longer do a postal mailing.

Regards,

Donald & Martha (Tanguay) Purfeerst
Scottsdale, Arizona
September 2002

FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

January, 2000

Welcome to the new century! We won't say new millennium because it becomes a matter of opinion if that event began at the year 2000 or will actually come in next year.

In any case, the year 1999 was exciting for family genealogy. Over the course of the past year we increased the scope of our research to now include all anglicized spelling variations to the family surname of PURFURST throughout the world. Accordingly, the family headcount is now up to 4,385, an increase of more than 2,000 over a year ago which, in turn, is an increase of more than 3,330 over two years ago.

We choose to depict those spelling variations as separate family groups, based on the geographic area in which they resided outside of Germany. The last six months of the year saw the quantity of those groups increase to seventeen and now include such diverse foreign locations as Sweden and Italy. We also have a new group in Chicago with additional groups just beginning to materialize in Chicago and Milwaukee. A descendant of the London group we tracked all the way to a Buddhist Temple in Thailand. Via the Internet we've been contacted by more than one Purfurst family currently residing in Germany which has exciting potential.

There appear many revisions and updates on the family groups so you must take the time to look them over. We increased the contents of opening page for each family group which constitutes the history for that family. We encourage each of you to author a little history on your deceased ancestral families and let us add it to our running history. Tell us about their occupations, place of residence, relocations, significant happenings, etc.

Along the way we decided to expand on our knowledge of Martha's family name, TANGUAY. Her ancestors originated in France and settled in Canada around the mid 1600's. The church in Canada kept records from the early days but is sure has been fun to read the French language and figure out the French names given to the children. German naming habits were much more conventional.

The addition of the Tanguay family has added another 2, 017 people to our research effort for a grand total of 6,402 individuals.

From the family parish in Germany, with whom we initially made contact back in 1998, we continue to get extracts of their records every four or five months. However, the families comprising our 17 groups had their origin in different German cities so our research has now expanded to another dozen German parishes in an attempt to tie them all to the same family tree back at some point in their ancestral history.

So what do we have in store for the year 2000 you ask? For one, we hope we can get a few of the family members to complete and return to us some of the forms and questionnaires previously mailed out to them. We'll be contacting some families for purposes of obtaining copies of old photographs. For the convenience of those who are without access to the internet we would also hope to distribute our annual letter but in a more conventional newsletter format. We'll be toying with the first format of a published book.

And somehow we would like to at least begin thinking about a trip to Germany in the foreseeable future.

Our best wishes for the year.

Don & Martha Purfeerst
Sun Lakes, Arizona
January 2000

FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

September 1999

Hello family members:

We've changed the pedigree program on the web site which should allow you to navigate through your own ancestors and descendants. Please give it a try.

In my last family web site newsletter I indicated that our research efforts have now branched out to include all spelling variations of the original Purfürst name.

I also stated that since my initial research efforts had previously centered around the Rice County, Minnesota resident ,Charles Purfeerst. A major objective this year would be to track down surviving descendants of his brothers: Steele County, Minnesota resident Herman Purfeerst and Fountain County, Indiana resident Frederick Purfeerst.

I am pleased to state that both areas of research have gone well.

In the case of **Herman Purfeerst**, his only natural children either died as youths or never married. Therefore my research has centered on his step children, the five children that his second wife Elizabeth Schmidt-Sherning brought to the union from her previous marriage. Of those five children only one, **Charles and Hannah (O'Rourke) Sherning**, has proven to have surviving descendants. Charles and Hannah had two daughters who ultimately migrated from their birth home in Montana to Oregon and Washington. I have, in turn, located their six surviving children along the west coast.

Chasing **Frederick and Catherine (Aubert) Purfeerst's** descendants has proven to be considerably more difficult. Of their ten children I have proven the presence or absence of descendants for all but two: **Barbara** and **Anjeline**. Their oldest daughters, **Nannie** and **Emma** both initially moved to Kansas in the 1880's with Emma later moving on to Iowa. They had five children between them who in turn had seven children, scattered from Iowa, through Wyoming to Idaho and California. I have thus far located surviving descendants for six of those seven children.

Since our last newsletter, **Purfurst** families originating in London, England and St. Louis, Missouri have been added to the web site and I am currently working on other Purfurst families groups originally based in Ontario, Canada and two groups in Chicago, Illinois.

Of course additional information has been added to all families throughout the web site, to include 75 additional early 1800 German ancestors.

I invite you to visit the DOCUMENTS page of families F-4 and F-5. You will notice some great early photographs. If you have some of your respective families I ask that you send them to me so I can get them scanned onto the web. I will return them to you in their original condition.

As before, not all news is good news. A senior member of the family, Helga Olive (Hansen) Purfeerst of the Seattle, Washington area passed away on August 13, 1999. She was age 91. One of nine brothers and sisters, Helga was the daughter of Axle (1876-1925) and Olive (1877-1942) (Nelson) Hansen who emigrated from Norway in 1903. They settled in the Morton County, North Dakota area. Helga was preceded in death by her husband George William Purfeerst (1904-1959). George was one of three sons born in Kenyon, Minnesota to one of our early Rice County, Minnesota ancestral families, Harmon (1873-1955) and Jennie June (1877-1958) (Johnson) Purfeerst. Helga and George met in Morton County, North Dakota where Harmon and Jennie had moved after leaving Minnesota prior to moving on to Seattle. Helga is survived by two sons, Robert and Harmon and two daughters, LaVerne Robbins and LaJean Jackson all of the Seattle area; 12 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Our current total is 4081 family members.

Stay informed. Change your web browser and make the family web site your home page.

Regards,

Donald & Martha Purfeerst
Sun Lakes, Arizona
September 1999

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FAMILY GENEALOGY NEWS

May 1999

The Purfürst and Allied families of the world welcome you to our web site. We only recently opened for business therefore all the news for awhile will be initiated by the author. But family members should know that this space is for their use. "Blow your own horn" if you want, make an announcement about a forthcoming graduation or family picnic or inform us about a recent marriage or birth in the family. Or just say hello to someone on the other side of the world.

In the meantime, while they get geared up, I'll take this opportunity to bring the family up to date with research activities and other happenings within the family that have taken place since our annual mailing this past January.

Those on my mailing list may remember me mentioning that Charles Purfeerst of Rice County, Minnesota, Herman Purfeerst of Steele County, Minnesota and Frederick Purfeerst of Covington Indiana, who immigrated during the 1850's, were proven to be brothers. In addition I mentioned that another brother and two sisters also immigrated during the 1860's as did their mother (my Great-Great-Grandmother). As you will read in the accompanying Family Histories I was most pleased to locate them all, including the mother, Wilhelmine. Now I must see if I can find some surviving descendants.

You will also read where I have branched out my research to now include families who have alternate spelling of the family name: Purfurst and Purfuerst. Of course we are all descendants of Purfürst's but some of our ancestors changed their names somewhat differently than others upon arrival. Two families have prove out to be from the same German home town (Neustadt) as did the "Purfeerst's" mentioned above. But the other families have introduced eight new German cities as points of origin so my research game goes on.

One of the more interesting aspects was encountering the Purfurst family who had ancestors born in London, England prior to immigrating to America from Germany. And when I started researching London I found additional Purfurst's residing there two decades before the first known family came to America. They may turn out to be the ancestors for the Purfurst's living in Canada and maybe this was that quick accessible stopping place for others in route to other places in the world.

We have made great strides on researching the Indiana families. The three oldest children were all girls and, upon the occasion of their marriage all moved away from the Indiana home town. Although Leaneta only moved across the state, Nanny and Emma moved to Kansas and Iowa. Well we've tracked them all down as well as their children whom went to even more distant locations such as Montana and Idaho. We are now in search of surviving descendants.

Of course not all news is good news. On March 22, 1999 Raymond Louis Purfeerst of Rockford, Illinois, age 75, passed away. He was survived and his wife, Ethel Lee (Israel) Purfeerst; daughters Brenda Gibson, Anne Grindle, Beth Paul-Peterson and son Stephen all of Rockford; brothers Edwin and Donald of Tucson, Az and sisters Marcella Reif of Clinton, Iowa and Patricia Vogel of Rock Island, IL. Ray was the second oldest of five children of the Louis and Luella (Byrnes) Purfeerst, formally of Pierce County, Wisconsin.

And on March 23, 1999 Effie Loretta (Egan) Paquette died. She was age 96. Effie was the mother of Rose (Paquette) Purfeerst, wife of Clarence Purfeerst, Faribault, Minnesota. Effie, the daughter of Michael and Ellen (Kelley) Egan, was preceded in death by her husband Eugene Joseph Paquette.

But life goes on. Martha and I received our first granddaughter, (adding to the four grandsons) on March 24, 1999 born to Bradley and Karen Purfeerst while Richard and Faith Austin were the proud parents of their SECOND set of twin sons on April 15, 1999.

We need someone in each of the Purfurst/Purfuerst, Purfeerst families to volunteer to assembly information from family elders and write their "Family History" for that family group.

Visitors to our web site will find over 900 different family groups and almost 4,000 names. And growing every week. Come back often. Good hunting!

Donald Lee Purfeerst
Sun Lakes, Arizona
May 1999