

This broadcast went out *Live* on BBC Radio Gloucestershire at 7.40am and then was broadcast hourly throughout the day.

David Aston: Now we are searching for this, that and the other on BBC Radio Gloucestershire this week and part of next week including the search campaign and this story caught my interest this morning. History will be made in the Forest Of Dean when the first international reunion of the Burgum family takes place. Approximately a hundred people will be meeting up at Clearwell Castle for the start of the four-day event. Family members have flown into the county from as far a field as Australia, New York and California, filling up many of the Forest's hotels. Well, the highlight will be a party to celebrate the Silver Wedding Anniversary of Doug and Vicky Burgum on Saturday night and Doug joins me on the program now. Congratulations and good morning to you, Doug."

Doug Burgum: "Thanks very much. Good morning David."

David Aston: "Now, how did you go about organising this impressive event?"

Doug Burgum: "Well, it all started twenty years ago when I discovered that my family weren't the only Burgums. There were others and they were actually all around the world and I started a family history society and then two years ago, we decided that we were going to organize a reunion"

David Aston: "I think it's something, Doug, that many of us would have thought about. If your name were Smith, it would be more daunting a challenge than Burgum, perhaps. How many Burgums did you discover, do you think, around the world?"

Doug Burgum: "Well, initially when I started around the UK, I found eighty listings of the name, but then I extended the search worldwide and found them in America, in Brazil, South America and Australia. But it is still a very rare name."

David Aston: "So, where does the name originate from?"

Doug Burgum: "It actually came from the Forest of Dean. I came from Essex myself and discovered that my family had lived for hundred's of years in the Forest of Dean and I came to the area, fell in love with it and decided to move down here and I did that fifteen years ago."

David Aston: "Now, are you sure you've got all the Burgums from the country then? Do you thing you have gathered them all together now?"

Doug Burgum: "Probably not. There are still probably some Burgums out there I have not contacted but most who have shown an interest have joined the Society and what I do is, I do research, uncover the amazing stories that the Burgums seem to have had in their past and then I publish those so that people can stay in contact with what's happening."

David Aston: "Yes, indeed, now if anyone with the name, you spell the name B-U-R-G-U-M"

Doug Burgum: "Yes, but there is an alternative spelling and that is B-U-R-G-H-A-M and both those types of Burgums originate from the Forest of Dean and appear to be connected."

David Aston: "Right, now it might just be a shot in the dark but if anyone has that surname and would like to contact you, they can ring us here. Ring Sue on 01452-307575 and tell us. We will

put you in touch with Doug, but certainly what sort of things have the Burgums done then? I've never come across a Burgum before. You're my first!"

Doug Burgum: "Well, one of the Burgums went to America - in fact, lots of them went to America - but one, in particular, went to Boston in 1850. He saw the very highly decorated omnibuses being pulled by horses and they were very highly decorated and he was an artist and he just went to the factory and got a job. The very famous Concord Coaches, the Wells Fargo Stagecoaches that you see in the Westerns on the television, he had painted almost every single one of those and each had a pictorial landscape painted on its doors and he became a very famous painter, you know, decorating these."

David Aston: "Indeed. Now how many of your family - your extended family, let's call them, get into places like Australia, Brazil, South America, the USA? They're everywhere now! How did they get there? In one mass Immigration? Emigration? Or did they sort of drift off over the years?"

Doug Burgum: "No, they went over the years. One chap decided he didn't want his children, family, following him down the mines in the Forest of Dean, so he went across to the United States and then travelled half-way across the United States to the Mid-West and settled there as a farmer and many of the current Burgums from the United States are descended from him. My Great-great-grandfather went to Brazil to help build the drinking water and sanitation plants for many of the Brazilian cities and he went over there. He was an engineer and he went over with two brothers and one of the brothers stayed there, so his descendants are now living in Brazil."

David Aston: "No, I began before I was really into computers about twenty years ago and I went to a library and I looked up every single telephone directory in the UK and then I hand-wrote each of them a letter. Now, nowadays, I obviously use the Internet and e-mails to communicate to everybody, but in those early days it was just telephone directories."

Doug Burgum: "Well, you must have red eyes, I would have thought, Doug, but congratulations for doing it. It's made a terrific story and, of course, you have boosted the tourist trade in the Forest, I would have thought, with all those people coming. That's good news!"

Doug Burgum: "It's been very interesting. The hotel providers, accommodation providers in the Forest have been fairly busy and, as you say, the four days of events, you know the Burgums are here, they are going to Clearwell castle today, they're going to the exhibition at the Dean Heritage Centre on Saturday, and then we are having a big reunion for 250, because a lot of my friends are coming along, on the Sunday."

David Aston: "It puts a new slant on the..., on your name. Mr & Mrs Smith when they check in, and they'll be Mr & Mrs Burgum"

Doug Burgum: "Yes, that's right."

David Aston: "Doug, thanks for joining us."

Doug Burgum: "My pleasure."

David Aston: "Bye, bye. Doug Burgum talking about that reunion in the Forest of Dean this weekend....."

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