

## **THE AMAZING BURGUM FAMILY HISTORY**

An exhibition entitled "**BURGUM 2000**" is taking place at the Dean Heritage Centre from July 17 until August 7. The exhibition begins by outlining the basic ways of beginning your own family history research, using birth and marriage registration, the census and parish registers. It then goes on to show some of the amazing stories that Doug Burgum has uncovered during 15 years of research into the Burgum family."

The Burgums originated in the Forest of Dean and Doug Burgum returned to his roots many years ago. "The chance discovery of two Burgums in a Manchester telephone directory sparked my curiosity," Doug explained. "It was enough to get me interested in family history, which ultimately changed my life."

That is not really an exaggeration. Doug eventually moved back to the Forest where his family had lived for hundreds of years. He began the Burgum Family History Society, which now has members all over the world. He traced Burgums to Australia, Brazil, Singapore, South Africa and the USA. He discovered some still living in various parts of the UK too! "I have been very lucky" Doug said. "I work as an airline pilot so I have been able to travel to the four corners of the earth, visiting my distant cousins."

"I have uncovered many wonderful stories," Doug continues. "The exhibition features many of the stories I have uncovered. Henry Burgum, born in Littledean in 1739, went to Bristol and became a successful pewterer. There he met Thomas Chatterton, the infamous boy poet, who sold him a fake pedigree. That meeting was to destroy Burgum's life."

Another Burgum left the Forest to go to

America, crossing the Mid-West in three covered wagons. Then there is the amazing story of Sidy Burgum who was placed in an institution and forgotten for over 50 years. "It sounds like a story from a Dickens novel" Doug comments.

These stories and others, are all featured at the Burgum 2000 Exhibition at the Dean Heritage Museum.

The Burgum 2000 Exhibition also coincides with a family reunion Doug and his wife Vicky have organised. Vicky tells us more.....

"It's a four-day event taking place at the end of July," says Vicky.

"Over 100 Burgums are travelling from Australia, the USA and various parts of the UK to be in the Forest. They are all returning to their roots. Sixty of them are flying in just from various parts of the United States."

Many of the hotels and other accommodation providers are full with family coming to Burgum 2000. "We've hired Clearwell Castle for one day," Vicky continues. "Then another day, we have a coach tour of the Forest and a boat trip on the River Wye. There's also a party planned at Forest Hills Golf Club."

The whole thing is a massive undertaking" says Doug. "It has taken a great deal of planning. I hope a number of local people will also visit the Burgum 2000 Exhibition at the Dean Heritage Centre and learn more about family history and this Forest family."

The Gloucestershire Family History Society will also have a display at the Dean Heritage Centre during Burgum 2000.