

# Past meets future at city library

Godfrey hooks up  
with Mormons to  
offer unique look  
at family histories

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MIDDLETOWN — Say you're looking for information on your long-deceased grandfather from Turkey, but you have no idea when he was born, who his parents were and when he immigrated to the United States. In times past, an almost certain dead end.

But soon, the Godfrey Memorial Library at 134 Newfield St. will be able to help

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**Nancy Doane**  
Director,  
Godfrey Memorial Library

you find the missing branches of your family tree, courtesy of its access to the world-renowned resources of the Church of Latter-day Saints Family History Library. In two weeks, Godfrey patrons can further solidify their own family histories by looking up and renting some of the millions of genealogical records the Family History Library has collected in Salt Lake City.

In January, Godfrey became one of the small but growing number of non-Mormon agencies to become an authorized branch of the Family History Library and a part of the research system of the church-based Genealogical Society of Utah.

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asset for Godfrey patrons," Godfrey Director Nancy Doane said. "They will be able access a million bits of information from the Family History Library's huge amount of historical records and vital statistics."

Doane said the private non-profit library will spend about \$4,000 to create a room dedicated to the services provided by the Family History Library, including computer indexes of genealogical records and microfilm and microfiche systems to read the records.

"We're really gratified to become a part of this worldwide microfilm project," Doane said.

Since 1951, Godfrey has helped state residents map out their family trees using its collection of 16,000 volumes dedicated to family genealogies, local history and biographies covering New England and the original 13 colonies.

But by linking to Utah, the Godfrey will have access to a mammoth collection of genealogical records collected from throughout the United States and the world.

Since 1894, the Family History Library has furthered the church's mission to copy documents such as birth, marriage and death certificates and obituaries.

The library's collection includes 2.2 million rolls of microfilmed genealogical records, 742,000 microfiche records, 300,000 bound volumes and 4,500 periodicals. Also, the library boasts an Ancestral File database containing about 35.6 million names linked into families and an International Genealogical Index of 600 million names.

The library has 3,700 family history centers operating in 88 countries where patrons can

access information from the main collection in Utah.

"We work out agreements with governments and churches throughout the world to get microfilmed copies of their records and allow people to access that information," said Timothy Law, manager of library services in Salt Lake City.

Law said the Family History Library started working with non-church affiliated agencies on a trial basis four years ago.

"We started with about 25 agencies and libraries in the United States, Australia, China, South America and Canada," he said. "And it was a huge success so we try to expand the network by a little more each year."

"Each agency goes through a rigorous screening process and are chosen, like the Godfrey, primarily because there are no other similar services in the area," Law added.

The Family History Library now has about 50 non-church affiliates such as the New York Public Library and the New England Historic Genealogical Society based in Boston.

"The hope is these will be reciprocal relationship where not only do we provide a service, but the branches will offer us copies of any new information they come across," Law said.

Doane said Godfrey patrons will be able to look through the Family History Library's index of materials then order microfilm or microfiche from Salt Lake City for about \$3 per roll for period of 30 days.

"We're looking for volunteers with experience working at (the library's) Family History Center to help patrons use the system," Doane said.

The Godfrey Library will unveil the new service during an April 27 open house scheduled to run from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information on the new service or to volunteer at the library, call (860) 346-4375.