JOHN PHILIP COLLETTA PLANS TO BRING “FUN” TO ISGS FALL GENEALOGY CONFERENCE SESSIONS

BY VAL BURD

Whether he’s teaching about the workings of the National Archives or how to breathe life into ancestral records or how to overcome brick walls in researching, John Philip Colletta, Ph.D., can’t get away from using the word “fun.”

“I do indeed have fun,” says the Washington, D.C.-based lecturer and teacher. “We have a ball. I feel enthusiastically about what I teach. My lectures are full of humor, and I teach through real, true stories. I present real examples, showing real documents. No matter what I’m teaching – about the Archives or problem-solving, I am using stories, and that’s what keeps it fun and entertaining.”

The main speaker for the Illinois State Genealogical Society’s (ISGS) “Family History in Profile” fall conference, Dr. Colletta received his advanced degree in Medieval French in the 1980s, but soon switched his career to genealogical research.

Today, Dr. Colletta is a popular lecturer and authority on genealogical research who conducts programs for the Smithsonian Institution’s Resident Associate Program, the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, and Boston University’s Certificate in Family History program. He also is a faculty member of the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research at Samford University.

At the ISGS Conference, Dr. Colletta will be speaking on “Is Any Body There? – Tracking Ancestral Remains” at the Friday dinner banquet at 6 p.m., and will lead three sessions on Saturday, beginning at 9:30 a.m. with “Breaking Through Brick Walls: Use Your HEAD!” The other two sessions include “Our National Archives: The Astounding Institution & How to Use It” at 11 a.m., and “Discovering the Real Stories of Your Immigrant Ancestors” at 1:30 p.m.

The ISGS War of 1812 Pension Match Challenge Is Well Underway!

The Illinois State Genealogical Society is proud to support the Federation of Genealogical Societies’ “Preserve The Pensions” campaign, with the goal of raising $3.7 million to digitize the War of 1812 Pension Application Files. The digitized pension files will be available for free on Fold3.com - see http://go.fold3.com/1812pensions/ to view the files that are available so far. ISGS will MATCH any donation up to the first $10,000 that is made before December 31, 2012. Donate just $10 and ISGS will match your donation with another $10; give $100 and ISGS will give $100. In addition, Ancestry.com will also match the overall amount donated by ISGS: $10,000 raised plus the $10,000 in matching donations will become $40,000!
President’s Message — from Janice A. Fritsch

In May, the ISGS Governing Board, an FGS member society, decided to participate in FGS’s project to raise $3.7 million to digitize the War of 1812 Pension Application Files held at the National Archives and to make them freely accessible online. As the files are digitized, they are made available at [http://go.fold3.com/1812pensions/](http://go.fold3.com/1812pensions/)

In June, ISGS launched its $10,000 War of 1812 Pension Match Challenge. ISGS will MATCH donations up to the first $10,000 made before 31 December 2012. If you donate $10, ISGS will match your donation with another $10; if you give $100, ISGS will give $100. Ancestry.com will then match the amount ISGS donates. Your $10 donation becomes $40, and $10,000 raised becomes $40,000!

THANKS to all who have contributed! The goal will be easily reached if every member gives just $10. Contributions can be made through the ISGS website or by postal mail to the ISGS, P.O. Box 10195, Springfield, IL 62791-0195.

Indexing of the 1940 Census continues. About half of Illinois is completed! Go to [https://familysearch.org/](https://familysearch.org/) and join others who help with this project. My sincere thanks to those who have the time and see the value of giving to the genealogical community.

It is not too early to register for the ISGS Fall Conference, “Family History in Profile” The committee is working to provide an enjoyable, community sharing, educational event. Early registrations help ISGS with conference planning.

Hot weather is currently a part of daily conversation. We could mentally bond with our ancestors who did not have the option of air conditioning! Libraries are usually air conditioned—a perfect place to chill and work on genealogies.

Everyone stay cool!

Janice A. Fritsch
President, Illinois State Genealogical Society

Together “Honoring Illinois Ancestry”

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**HAVE WE GOT PLANS FOR YOU!**

“Family History in Profile” features two exciting days filled with genealogy education, nationally-known speakers, networking opportunities, meals, and a youth workshop! Please join ISGS and the Winnebago & Boone Counties Genealogical Society on Friday and Saturday, October 19-20, 2012, at the Clock Tower Resort and Conference Center in Rockford, IL.

- **Vendor and Society Showcase:** Friday, Oct 19th from 4:00 – 6:00pm.
  Contact Joan Murray myroots42@gmail.com for Vendor and Society table reservations.
- **Advertise in the Conference Syllabus** for as little as $40 per quarter page to showcase genealogical material for sale, or gain new members for your society! Contact Val Burd isgsadvertising@ilgensoc.org for more information.
- **Donate a Door Prize** to be raffled off during the conference. The prize can be genealogy related or other items that may interest the attendees.
- **Donate White Elephant Items** genealogical related materials such as magazines, books, media, office supplies, etc. to share with your fellow genealogists.
- **Join our Conference Volunteers Team!** Help is needed for Pre-Conference set-up on Friday and Saturday mornings, Hospitality/Information Desk, Greeters/Guides, Room Monitor and Teardown/Cleanup on Saturday afternoon. Contact Karen Heinrich if you can lend a hand isgsvolunteers2012@gmail.com

We have a terrific conference planned and we hope to see you there!

REGISTRATION IS OPEN!
Visit our conference page for full program information and online registration forms:

ILLINOIS STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
2012 FALL CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 19TH - NOON TO 6:00 P.M.
7:00 P.M. DINNER & SPEAKER
OCTOBER 20TH - 8:00 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS

FEATURED SPEAKER
JOHN PHILIP COLLETTA, PHD

♦ OTHER NATIONALLY KNOWN SPEAKERS
♦ 2ND ANNUAL YOUTH WORKSHOP
♦ EXHIBITORS & GENEALOGY SOCIETIES

Friday: Two Different Genealogy Tracks!  Saturday: 12 Sessions!

Photo courtesy Rockford Area Convention and Visitors Bureau

STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
Honoring Illinois Ancestry

Conference Email: isgsconferences@ilgensoc.org
Conference Info: http://www.ilgensoc.org

Best Western Clock Tower Resort
and Conference Center
http://www.clocktowerresort.com/

Co-host: Winnebago & Boone Counties
Genealogical Society
www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ilwbcs/
**ISGS VOLUNTEERS ALERT!**

**Newsletter Editor:** The position of Editor of the ISGS Newsletter is open. Regretably, ISGS will cease publication until the position is filled. The Editor receives articles and information via email. Experience with page layout design and some writing is desirable. Contact Susie Pope, isgs2ndvp@ilgensoc.org

**Youth Creative Contest Coordinator:** The Education Committee would like to implement an annual youth creative contest in 2013. The contest will have three categories (writing, artwork, and photography) and three age group divisions. The Coordinator will fill in the details, and help to implement it. Contact Julie Tarr, isgseducation@ilgensoc.org

**Writers:** Part of the ISGS mission is to educate its members and the public. The Education Committee needs volunteers interested in sharing their knowledge by writing educational articles and guides. We have a lot of ideas on the table, but we need your help to make them a reality. Contact Julie Tarr, isgseducation@ilgensoc.org

**ISGS Quarterly Book Review Editor:** The Review Editor receives books from the ISGS office. A book is reviewed for each of our four issues. Contact Judy Milde, Editor, isgsquarterly@ilgensoc.org and include a sample review.

**ISGS Quarterly Design and Technical Editor:** The Design and Technical Editor works with the Quarterly Editor to produce a polished publication. Working knowledge of design and layout principles and the use of Adobe InDesign. Contact Judy Milde, Editor, isgsquarterly@ilgensoc.org

**ISGS 2012 Fall Conference:** The ISGS Fall Conference will be held October 19th & 20th at the Clock Tower Inn and Conference Center, Rockford, IL. Volunteers will help with monitoring sessions, the Youth Workshop, and other essential tasks. Save these dates, and please let us know if you can lend a hand and be a part of our great conference team! Contact Karen Heinrich, isgsvolunteers2012@gmail.com

**Genealogy Committee Chair:** The ISGS Genealogy Committee is in need of a chair to receive requests for research guidance and assign them to committee members. Contact Susie Pope, isgs2ndvp@ilgensoc.org

**Website Indexing Committee:** Indexing projects are based on member submissions, ISGS holdings or other resources. Volunteers will scan images, and upload images and/or data to be indexed. Let us know if you would like to be involved! Contact Susie Pope, isgs2ndvp@ilgensoc.org

**Publicity Committee Chair:** The Publicity Chair coordinates committee activities in the promotion of ISGS via its website and print media. Contact Janice Fritsch, isgspresident@ilgensoc.org

**Military Certificates Chair:** This committee is in need of a chair to receive certificate applications and evaluate the documentation, or assign them to committee members. Contact Susie Pope, isgs2ndvp@ilgensoc.org

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**ISGS 2012 Ancestor Photo Contest Winners**

The Illinois State Genealogical Society is proud to announce the winners of its recent Ancestor Photo Contest held earlier this year. There were 12 photos selected from the many images submitted by ISGS members and they are all available for viewing at the ISGS website. You can view all of this year's winning photos and those from previous years by clicking Free Databases in the sidebar and selecting Ancestor Photos.

**WINNERS:** *Bloess* Family, submitted by Arlene Johnson; William *Driver* and Sallie *Campbell*, submitted by Janis Forte; Stephen *Eswine*, submitted by Sandra Parker; James Bailey *Floyd* and family, submitted by Debra Vordenbaumen; William Riley *Hicks* and Cora Belle *Gore*, submitted by Cleta Shirley; Henry Conrad *Ludolph*, Jr. and Catherine *Vancura*, submitted by Annabelle Caldwell Bradshaw; Jackson *Minor* and Elizabeth *James* and family, submitted by Janis Forte; *Shirley* brothers, submitted by Cleta Shirley; Will *Zachmeier*, submitted by Sandra Parker.
ISGS Website Update

ISGS Webinars — Members Section: Handouts and recordings for The War of 1812 - America’s “Forgotten” War by Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG, and Clue to Clue: Tracking a Family Over Time and Miles by Jean Wilcox Hibben, PhD, MA, CG are available.

ISGS $10,000 War of 1812 Pension Challenge — Check our progress online!

Have You Used the ISGS Forums Yet? We offer the ISGS Forums so members can ask questions and hold discussions on a variety of genealogy-related topics. Members can post messages and/or respond to messages. Check it out at http://ilgensoc.org/forum.php and post your questions and queries.

Surname Research Database — The list of surnames researched by ISGS members is now over 750 names! Add your name: http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=114

Website Suggestion Form — Please visit <http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=87> or email the ISGS Webmaster at isgswebmaster@ilgensoc.org

ISGS Guides—New Editions Coming!

Under the direction of Howard Manthei, ISGS Publications Chair, ISGS is in the process of updating its Speakers Directory for Genealogical & Historical Presentations and its Researchers & Local Societies Guide. These guides list over 200 organizations and individuals.

The Researchers guide lists societies, governmental entities, and individuals who can provide researchers with often unique information. Plans are to make the information available online at no charge to members.

The Speakers directory lists details about individuals who provide genealogical lectures. Any ISGS member in good standing can submit a listing at no charge.

Print copies of both guides will continue to be made available for purchase on our website.

If you or your organization would like to be included in the new editions, please contact Howard at: isgspublications@ilgensoc.org

********** Submit a query to the ISGS Quarterly—members are free, nonmembers are $5.00 **********
“I was so delighted the ISGS chose the “Is Any Body There” talk for the banquet,” Dr. Colletta says. “I am going to present three real experiences I had trying to find the graves of my ancestors. I had one ancestor that was buried in three different graves at three different times. Another story will be about a great great grandfather of mine. I spent 30 years researching that story, but I never did locate a grave for him. I’ll talk about that particular funeral with it rosewood casket, but no bones. His body burned up in a fire. Genealogy can lead you to some interesting stories.”

Dr. Colletta has written a book about the graveless great great grandfather’s story entitled “Only a Few Bones.” It recounts not only the facts about this grandfather’s life and death, but also the world he lived in – from Buffalo, New York, to post-Civil War era Mississippi. Putting one’s ancestor into context is a thread that runs through many of Dr. Colletta’s lectures.

“You always begin with the biographical facts,” he says, “but then you explore the time and place where those events were lived. You investigate what the land was like, what people were around them, what religious groups were in the area. You pull it all together so you see each ancestor as a distinct individual, and you then can see how vastly different their stories are.”

Dr. Colletta says many people have wonderful things they have inherited – jewelry, furniture, clothing, and oral histories. But they don’t pull these things into the story of their ancestors.

“Doing that brings your ancestors so much more vividly to life,” he says. “It takes more time, but when I lecture on how to do this, it’s the kind of talk that really gets people excited to go learn more about their ancestors.

“I don’t think anyone can go away from this Conference without gaining some information about new sources. There’s bound to be something there for anyone who comes.”

For more information and to register for the ISGS Fall Conference, which is co-sponsored by the Winnebago & Boone Counties Genealogical Society, visit the ISGS website at www.ilgensoc.org. To learn more about Dr. Colletta, visit his website at www.genealogyjohn.com.
Since April, I’ve had the privilege of working with a wonderful group of nearly 100 genealogists. We have been diligently indexing the 1940 census Illinois records as part of the community project supported by Family Search, Find My Past, the National Archives, Archives.com, and ProQuest.

Since the beginning of April, our group has indexed 283,864 records and arbitrated 50,303; that is as of July 4, 2012. Also as of this date, Illinois is 53% indexed. We will keep at it until our State is searchable online for free for now and for the genealogists to follow.

Of course, we could always use more help. To become part of this great project, go to the1940census.com and click on the blue button called “Get Started” and follow the simple instructions. The first time you run the software you’ll have the opportunity to choose your group. Click the radio button “Other” and, using the dropdown menu, choose Illinois State Genealogical Society. It’s as easy as that.

Come on along and join in the fun!! What better way to be part of such a worthy project and still be able to work from the comfort of home – no meetings, no phone calls, no cost. Wow, what a deal!!

Advertising Opportunity!

Take advantage of a fantastic opportunity to advertise your services and/or business or showcase your society in the ISGS Newsletter, Journal and/or Conference Syllabus for 2012! These publications are read by thousands, and many use the syllabus after the conference for the outlines and information from the presenters.

For further information email: isgsadvertising@ilgensoc.org

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### ISGS Executive Committee Elected Officers 2012

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<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>President</td>
<td>Janice Fritsch</td>
<td>2012 Directors—Becky Higgins, Jayne Cates, Tony Burroughs</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st Vice-President</td>
<td>Jane Haldeman</td>
<td>2013 Directors—Ann Wells, Annabelle Bradshaw, Dan Dixon</td>
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<tr>
<td>2nd Vice-President</td>
<td>Susie Pope</td>
<td>2014 Directors—Cheri Hunter, Karl Moore, Jennifer Holik-Urban</td>
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<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Michele Claypool</td>
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<td>Recording Secretary</td>
<td>Julie Cahill Tarr</td>
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**Address Changes**

If you have a change of either a mailing address or an email address or both, it is important to let the ISGS office know. We cannot be responsible for resending issues that could not be forwarded to a new address.

**Contact ISGS**

ISGS, P.O. Box 10195, Springfield, IL 62791-0195
Executive Office: Illinois State Archives Bldg., 2nd Floor
Website: [http://ilgensoc.org/index.php](http://ilgensoc.org/index.php)
Published in January, March, May, July, September, November.
**Newsletter Article Contributions due the 30th of the month prior to publishing.**
**Advertising options available**
Newsletter Editor: isgsnewsletter@ilgensoc.org

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Springfield, IL 62791-0195

Individual/Society/Library: $30
Joint (two people at same address): $35
Charter (before 1969): $29
Contribution: $55

**ISGS Office Hours**

Mondays and Thursdays from 10am until 1pm