ISGS President Column

Welcome!
The Illinois State Genealogical Society has just begun our new year. I recently completed the appointments of our Standing Committee and Special Committee Chairs. What a wonderful group of volunteers!

Did you know ISGS has a Prairie Pioneer Certificate Program? What a wonderful way to honor your ancestor! There are three categories of certificates issued to descendants of pioneers who resided in Illinois: (1) prior to statehood, (2) 1819-1850, and (3) 1851-1880. Documentation proving the pioneer's date of residency in Illinois, along with documentation proving the applicant's lineage to the pioneer, must accompany the application. Full instructions and fee schedule are available on the application form. If you have questions about the program, contact Sandra Parker, Prairie Pioneer Chair isgsprairiepioneer@ilgensoc.org

Currently there are a few Chair positions open, take a look at the Opportunities section of the Newsletter and make this the year that you join this dedicated group!

Dawn Carey Henry
ISGS President

Try-It! Illinois
Available FREE through November 30

Secretary of State and State Librarian Jesse White and the Illinois State Library are pleased to announce that Try-It! Illinois, the sixteenth annual statewide database trial, will be available October 1 through November 30. Try-It! Illinois offers library staffs and patrons an excellent opportunity to survey and evaluate a wide variety of electronic resources. Thanks to partnerships between the Illinois State Library and the participating electronic resource vendors, there is no charge for accessing these databases during Try-It! Illinois.

Libraries are encouraged to share the Try-It! Illinois login and password with their library users, providing them the opportunity to use and recommend electronic resources for possible purchase at the local level. http://www.finditillinois.org/tryit/

* EDITOR's NOTE: Please note that this issue is number Volume 36, Number 6. The other 2015 issues were numbered incorrectly. January/February 2015 issue should have begun Volume 36. The newsletter editor apologizes for any inconvenience. Thank you to the readers who brought this to our attention.
On Sunday August 1, 2015 descendants of three brothers William, Joseph, and David Sherrard gathered in Sherrard, Illinois to celebrate their 100th family reunion.

The town of Sherrard, Illinois was named after David Sherrard who bought 120 acres of farmland in Mercer County, Illinois, in 1854. His brother Joseph farmed with him for two years before purchasing his own land in Preemption Township. Their brother James, a brick maker, and his wife Sarah, came the following year and settled in nearby Cambridge, Illinois.

David donated part of his land for the town to build on and the town was named for him. The plat of the village was recorded in the county seat on May 1, 1894. David's wife Sarah died on January 12, 1895. Her funeral was the first one held in the newly established community. Besides farming David manufactured bricks and built several homes and two stores. For a number of years he served as president of the Sherrard Banking Company.

In 1915 the Sherrard family held their first family reunion and every year thereafter the clan gathered together to share memories and elect a secretary to record all births, deaths, and marriages from the preceding year.

This year one hundred fifteen family members came together from sixteen states all wearing the green t-shirts made for this very special 100th year celebration. The shirts commemorated their centennial reunion and featured a tree with extended roots.

The family was honored by having the mayor attend bringing special gifts. A Quad City television station was also there to film this momentous event along with several newspapers. The youngest person in attendance was nine months old and the oldest were two 94 year olds. Pictures were exchanged and cousins caught up on the latest family news.

The village now boasts a population of 640 residents and is home to the Sherrard Junior/Senior High School and has a new firehouse where the family enjoyed a catered lunch.

Bill and Pat Sherrard Burke, Amboy, Illinois and Milton and Marilou Sherrard supplied the information for this article.

Written by Darlene Hinkle
Book Review


Mexico has a rich culture and an immense collection of genealogical material. Due in part to a big push for items online, records held at a local level are available on the internet. But where to start? And do you really need to know Latin to read church records? Take your first steps on a new genealogical journey with Mexican Genealogy Research Online: A Guide to Help You Discover Your Ancestry by Moises Garza.

Mexican Genealogy Research Online goes beyond browsing and downloading records from online sources. To the absolute beginner, it is the ultimate “how to” for ethnic genealogy and a helpful guide to all the skills needed to engage with all aspects of family history research. Garza covers all topics in this book simply and to the point, which will be a welcome relief to new genealogists.

What sets this book apart on the shelf:

- Simple and easy instructions for searching, collecting, and sharing genealogical records.
- Excellent links and resources for discovering a wide range of vital, religious, and civil records.
- Emphasis on collecting and researching the local events and history in an ancestor’s location.
- Clear explanation and introduction to various religious and civil records available in Mexico across several centuries.
- Excellent chapters detailing Mexican newspaper research, social media networking, and tracking down military service records.
- Wonderful index with all the links from each chapter laid out clearly for quick reference.

I was deeply impressed with the clear and concise manner in which this book presents information. Even if you are well beyond the skill level of a new or beginning genealogist, Mexican Genealogy Research Online is a quick and easy resource to use while leaping into this exciting new area of genealogy research. I would recommend reading this book separately as an introduction, or in conjunction with Finding Your Mexican Ancestors and Finding Your Hispanic Roots by George Ryskamp. When you need to put your reading glasses away, tune into Moises Garza’s free We Are Cousins Podcast Series, which is available for free on iTunes. There’s a lot of great records from Mexico waiting to be discovered, so read Mexican Genealogy Research Online and get ready to start your project!

Reviewed by Debra M. Dudek
Fountaingale Public Library, Bolingbrook, IL
Translations from German, Dutch, and French to English

Gordon Hartig
P.O. Box 2744
Evansville, IN 47728

Telephone: (812) 430-9117
Email: gordon@gartigtranslations.com
website: http://www.hartigtranslations.com
Specializing in Old German Script

Sandra Parker, Chair of Prairie Pioneer Certificates notes that ISGS has 3870 approved Pioneer applications and 5910 certificates issued since its inception! Will you be the next?

To learn more about this application process and to see the Index of Certified Prairie Pioneers, go to www.ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=20

Charles Dobias, Chair of the ISGS Military Certificates wants to encourage you to apply. 324 Military Certificates have been issued so far. This year 2 Revolutionary War Veteran, one War of 1812 veteran and one Black Hawk War veteran were honored with a certificate.

For more information about this application process, please go to our website at http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=125.

Use your mouse to wave over any link, email, or website and you can click to get to that site from the newsletter. All links are live!
Have Fun!!
Welcome New ISGS Members

Kathleen Jacoby, Greenfield, IL
Mark Mraz, Bay Village, OH
Katherine Bedingfield, Arlington Heights, IL
Sandra Barnes, Flossmoor, IL
Priscilla Long Giles, Evanston, IL
Cheryl Davis, Lansing, IL
Laura Papciak Carol Stream, IL
Lyn Stafford, Birmingham, AL
Patrick Shaul, Novi, MI
Kathyrn M. Simmons, Madison, MI
Kristina Freund, Salem, WI
Valerie Swan, Elgin, IL
Penny McIntire, Oregon, IL
Barbara Muschler, Aurora, IL
Catherine Johnson, Evanston, IL
Odie & Pat Washington, Layton, UT
Mary English, Rockford, IL
Gail Butler, DeKalb, IL
Lucas Scroggins & Cody Zellers, Pleasant Plains, IL
Patricia Higgins, Homewood, IL
Catherine Sherry, Granger, IN
Sally DeFauw, DeKalb, IL
Pam Taylor, Midlothian, IL
Mari Collins, Vacaville, CA
Ann L. Wells, Crystal Lake, IL
Karen & Farrell Robb, Edwards, IL
Ami Lilley Plexico, Smithton, IL
John & Nancy Mattson, Morris, IL
Debbie Hamilton, Downers Grove, IL
Terry Hanssen, Mount Prospect, IL
Nancy Marty, Leeburg, FL
Margaret Zientarski Putzke, Vero Beach, FL
Sue Breese, DeKalb, IL
Carolyn Driver-McGee, Chicago, IL
Lois Marie Okonek, Fairhope, AL
Lynn Studebaker, South Whitley, IN
Kathy Patrick, Fort Collins, CO
Dr. Cheryl Gaines, Chicago, IL
Anthony Bengston, Independence, IA
Kathy Murray, Palatine, IL
Michael Hovar, Forest Park, IL
Kathleen McGee, Edgewater, FL
Lexi Donne, Rolling Hills Estates, CA
Joyce Wright, Lake in the Hills, IL
Connie Tensley, Evergreen Park, IL
Cristal Simmons, Chicago, IL
William Wheeler, Spring Grove, IL
Marlene Darenseburg, Evergreen Park, IL
Nancelia Belton, Chicago, IL
Jessica Savalla, San Diego, CA
Barb Francis, Alviso, CA
Linda K. Malooley, Terre Haute, IN
Madeleine Glaser, Tucson, AZ
Karen F. Ogram, Winter Park, FL

Join or Renew Your Membership Online: It's EASY!
You can renew your membership online at http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=8, or mail your renewal to ISGS Membership Renewal, PO Box 10195, Springfield, IL 62791-0195. Individual/Associate/Subscription: $35, Joint (two people at same address): $40

Address Changes
If you have a change of either 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. Your email is how you will receive this newsletter and other “blast emails”. Please keep your email current.

Contact ISGS
Mailing Address: P.O. Box 10195, Springfield, IL 62791-0195  Executive Office: IL State Archives Building, 2nd floor
Office Telephone: (217)-789-1968
Website: ilgensoc.org, Facebook: facebook.com/ILGenSoc, Twitter @ILGenSoc#ISGS
Office Hours: Mondays and Thursdays 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Advertise in Newsletter
ISGS online newsletter is published in January, March, May, July, September, November. Advertising is available by contacting the advertising chairperson at isgsadvertising@ilgensoc.org.

Newsletter Articles
Please send articles for the newsletter to isgsnewsletter@ilgensoc.org. Pictures are welcome (not in a pdf please). Just include your caption with names, places, details. Deadlines: end of the month prior to publish.
VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES: Join in the FUN!

With the generous help of its volunteers, ISGS is poised for continued success. The positions listed below present some interesting and exciting opportunities for you! Please consider helping ISGS achieve its mission to preserve and disseminate Illinois historical and genealogical materials, and to educate and aid those researching their ancestry.

ISGS Board Volunteers Needed

• Publications Chair: This committee coordinates the printing of all ISGS publications except the Newsletter and Quarterly. Inventory is verified and recommendations made to the Board, and files on each publication are maintained.

• Legislative Chair: This committee monitors pending legislation in Illinois that could impact those with genealogical and historical interests, and keeps ISGS, and the genealogical community informed.

• ISGS Quarterly Design & Technical Editor: This position works with the Quarterly Managing Editor, and produces the layout design of the Quarterly. Skills in designing and working with graphics are required.

• Advertising Chair: This committee chair solicits advertising for various ISGS publications and fall conference syllabus.

• ISGS Archivist: The Archivist coordinates activities to properly preserve and maintain the private records of the Society at the Illinois State Archives in Springfield, IL. These records do NOT involve the society’s public genealogical holdings at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

• Long Range Planning: This committee considers plans for the improvement of the Society, solicits suggestions from members, makes regular reports to the Board, and presents projects for action.

• For more information or to VOLUNTEER, contact Susie Pope at isgs2ndvp@ilgensoc.org. Say yes if she emails or calls you!!

ISGS/FGS 2016 Conference
Local/Regional Marketing person needed.
ISGS is serving as the Local Host society for next year’s FGS national conference in Springfield, IL, 30 August - 3 September. We have a special need for a local/regional marketing person to work with Thomas MacEntee, FGS’s National Marketing Chair. Contact Local Host Conference Chair, Laura Kovanri, laura.kovanri.2016@gmail.com for more information.

INDEXING PROJECT
The newest ISGS project is indexing ledgers from the IL Dept. of Registration and Education 1877-1952. Volunteers need a computer with CD drive, Microsoft Excel, and Internet. If you are not already in our database of indexers, please contact Clyda.

Clyda Ogle, Indexing Coordinator at isgsindexing@ilgensoc.org
2nd Tuesday of every month, 8:00 PM CDT featuring some of the nation's best known speakers in the field of genealogy!

The following webinars are sponsored by FamilySearch.

10 November 2015 "In-laws and Outlaws: The Bylaws of Talking About the Family Skeletons", Presenter: Janet Hovorka, 8:00 PM, Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1041320337723100418

8 December 2015 "The US Federal Census: Good, Bad and Ugly for Genealogists", Presenter: Gary Smith, 8:00 PM, Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4542747002682234370

Webinar descriptions are available on the ISGS website at http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=234

ISGS Quarterly

The Illinois State Genealogical Society Quarterly is read by over 1000 members and is held in many libraries throughout IL and the U.S. The Quarterly is published four times a year. The editor accepts original, unpublished submissions for inclusion in upcoming issues. If you would like to contribute, please refer to the ISGS website for submission guidelines. All inquiries go to isgsquarterly@ilgensoc.org

If you are interested in advertising in the Quarterly or the newsletter, please contact the Advertising Committee at isgsadvertising@ilgensoc.org

Contribution Match to ISGS

If you're thinking about making a donation to the Illinois State Genealogical Society, please also consider checking with your employer to see if matching funds are available for employee charitable contributions. Many corporations offer this incentive to encourage their employees to contribute to not-for-profit programs; more than half of all Fortune 500 companies will match employee donations. Your contribution can have twice the impact in supporting ISGS by tapping into this source of funding that's often overlooked.

The Illinois State Genealogical Society is a 501(c)(3) organization and contributions are tax-exempt to the extent of the relevant law.

Written by Margaret Truax

Federation of Genealogical Societies FORUM is looking for genealogy and society related articles. Go to fgs.org for more information.
Illinois State Genealogical Society Announces its 2016 FREE Webinar Lineup

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN!
Illinois State Genealogical Society Announces 2016 FREE Webinar Lineup

The Illinois State Genealogical Society (ISGS) is happy to announce the continuation of its popular FREE monthly webinar program in 2016. The 2016 ISGS Webinar Series would not be possible without the generous contributions received throughout 2015 and the generous sponsorship provided by FamilySearch.

Registration for the 2016 webinars is now open! You’ll find a fantastic lineup of presentations and speakers and we hope you will join us for a wonderful educational experience.

The ISGS webinars, which are live lectures/presentations that you can attend via a computer with an internet connection, are held as a live broadcast on the second Tuesday of each month at 8:00 PM Central. The live broadcast of each webinar is FREE to the public. ISGS members who are unable to attend the live broadcast are able to access recordings of all past webinars through the Members Section of the ISGS website, to watch at their convenience.

ISGS 2016 Webinar Schedule

So what does 2016 have in store? Here is our amazing lineup!

January 12 – Organizing Your Genealogy Research Process
Presenter: Drew Smith
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8573458780274373378

February 9 – Reconstructing Black Community Life Through Benevolent Societies
Presenter: Angela Walton-Raji
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/8291948619192469250

March 8 – Researching in Archives & Libraries: Do’s and Don’ts
Presenter: Melissa Barker
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1846416843611494402

April 12 – Letters, Ledgers, and Lodge Books: Finding Ancestors with Ethnic Resources
Presenter: Lisa A. Alzo, M.F.A.
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/3470676992813425922

May 10 – Polish Immigration to America - When, Where, Why and How
Presenter: Stephen Szabados
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/9172454023411073281

June 14 – Using Social Media to Break Through Brick Walls
Presenter: Amie Tenant
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/7540625935675352321

July 12 – Special Delivery: Using US Postmaster Documents in Family History Research
Presenter: Jean Hibben, CG
Registration: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2607347059774722305
August 9 – *Misbegotten Children; Tracing the Family Lines of the Illegitimate*
Presenter: *Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG*
Registration: [https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1406973931847993857](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1406973931847993857)

September 13 – *Butcher, Baker, Candlestick Maker: Using Occupational Records*
Presenter: *Amy Johnson Crow, CG*
Registration: [https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5222129746649412097](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/5222129746649412097)

October 11 – *Midwestern Gems: Back Issues of Genealogical, Historical and Sociological Journals*
Presenter: *Paula Stuart-Warren, CG, FMGS, FUGS*
Registration: [https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4021548811025038081](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/4021548811025038081)

November 8 – *Principles of Effective Evidence Analysis*
Presenter: *George G. Morgan*
Registration: Stay tuned!**
**GoToWebinar only allows scheduling less than one year in advance. Check back after November 8, 2015, for the registration link.

December 13 – *Without the Hint - There is No Story*
Presenter: *Bernice Alexander Bennett*
Registration: Stay tuned!**
**GoToWebinar only allows scheduling less than one year in advance. Check back after December 13, 2015 for the registration link.

Additional Webinar Information

- All webinars take place at 8:00 PM Central time.
- Don't forget to spread the word! Forward this email onto your friends and colleagues, post the information to social media sites and/or your blog/website, or print out a few copies of our webinar flyer to hand out at your local society meetings. The flyer for the 2016 series can be accessed at [http://bit.ly/isgs2016webinarbrochure](http://bit.ly/isgs2016webinarbrochure).

Again, a big thank-you to all of the webinar donation fund contributors and to FamilySearch for sponsoring the entire 2016 webinar series! We couldn't do it without you!!

The 2016 ISGS Webinar Series is sponsored by FamilySearch ([http://familysearch.org](http://familysearch.org)).
Governing Board Meetings: Open to Members

Saturday, November 14, 2015 at Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (ALPL)
Springfield
8:30 am Exec Committee Meeting
9:30 am Exec & Gov. Social Time
10:00 am Governing Board Meeting

Saturday, February 20, 2016 - Conference Call/Virtual Meeting
Details to follow closer to the date
8:30 am Exec Committee Meeting
10:00 am Governing Board Meeting

Saturday, May 21, 2016 at ALPL Springfield, IL
8:30 am Exec Committee Meeting
9:30 am Exec & Gov. Social Time
10:00 am Governing Board Meeting

Saturday, August 13, 2016 at Location TBD - due to the State Fair in Springfield
8:30 am Exec Committee Meeting
9:30 am Exec & Gov. Social Time
10:00 am Governing Board Meeting

Everyone is welcome to attend any Governing Board meeting (10:00 AM).

Gifts that keep on digging...

memberships, quality books, and CDs for the family history researcher

These titles and many more, with full descriptions, are available at our website:

www.PGSA.org/shop

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Rodziny & More — CD with 30 years of PGSA research journals

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Research Packet — free with any purchase —
30 pages of helpful tips, (digital format)
Packet offer valid 11/1/15–1/31/16

Polish Genealogical Society of America®
More information is at our website—www.PGSA.org
In the early 1800s, the roadways in Illinois looked like the one in this photo. If you can't see where the road is that's because there wasn't one...just a space of grass and trees to go along, hopefully turning in the right direction at the right time.

They didn't have metal octagonal signs they could paint...but they did have trees. When it was time to turn, they planted a tree and bent its branches to indicate where to turn and how to go.

That was a long time ago, of course, and it is rare that you will see one of these “direction trees”, but there are a few still out there. Keep your eyes open and you may see one, now that you will recognize what they are.

Written by Kristy Gravlin

The Ohio Genealogical Society (OGS) is proud to announce the formation of its fifth lineage society, The Society of Families of the Old Northwest Territory (SFONT). This new lineage society will be open to members and non-members. Applications will be accepted starting on January 1, 2016 with the first induction ceremony to be held during the 2017 annual conference in Sandusky, Ohio.

The Old Northwest Territory, officially called the United States Territory Northwest of the Ohio River, was created by the U.S. Congress through the Northwest Ordinance, and it existed between 13 July 1787 and 3 March 1803. The territory encompassed today’s Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Wisconsin and parts of Minnesota.

It was the first organized area within the United States to outlaw slavery, establish freedom of religion, create public education, and provide inheritance laws for widows and their children. The Northwest Ordinance foreshadows the first ten amendments to the U.S. Bill of Rights.

This new lineage society will not only honor the memory of American ancestors living within the boundaries of the Old Northwest Territory but also those of Native American, French and British ancestry who were living in this area prior to this territory becoming a part of the United States.

The French established Cahokia (Illinois) in 1699 and Detroit (Michigan) in 1701. Other settlements were also founded by the French. The British received this territory after the French and Indian Wars and then the territory became a part of the United States after the Revolutionary War.

The applicants must prove one of three conditions for membership. A) Your ancestor must have lived in what is now Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin or eastern Minnesota (east of the Mississippi River) between 13 July 1787 and when the Indiana Territory was created on 7 May 1800; B) Your ancestor must have lived in what is now Ohio or Michigan between 13 July 1787 and when Ohio became a state on 3 March 1803; or C) Your ancestor must have lived in what is now Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin or eastern Minnesota prior to 13 Jul 1787 as a citizen of either France or Great Britain, or as a Native American.

Approved applicants will receive a certificate and a medal at an annual banquet to be held in conjunction with the yearly spring OGS conference. Only one pin will be issued to each approved member. Applicants are encouraged to attend the banquet to receive your recognition.

For many applicants this will be a challenging undertaking in order to prove ancestry since they will not only be dealing with American records but also French and British colonial records. The application form, rules & guidelines will be available on the OGS website by the end of December 2015 (www.ogs.org).
Genealogy Events: for complete event information, go to ISGS website, events

7 November 2015: NW Suburban Genealogy Society, Lisa Louise Cooke presents WEBINAR “Time Travel with Google Earth”, 10:00 AM, Arlington Heights Senior Center, www.nwsgenealogy.org

10 November 2015: ISGS WEBINAR, 8:00 PM, Janet Hovorka presents “In-laws and Outlaws: The Bylaws of Talking About the Family Skeletons”, register: https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1041320337723100418

12 November 2015: College of DuPage, Glen Ellyn CoD Continuing Ed Lifelong Learning, Rose Lehne presents “House History”

12 November 2015: Champaign County Genealogical Society “Working with Sources” 6-8

12 November 2015: Peoria County Genealogical Society, Dr. Julius Bonnello presents “Assassination of Lincoln” 6:30 PM Peoria Public Library North Branch


14 November 2015: Schaumburg Township District Library 10:30 AM, Larry Olson presents “The Master Genealogist”, caggni.org

14 November 2015: Schaumburg Township District Library, Gail Santrock presents “Genea Quest 2016”


18 November 2015: Decatur Genealogical Society & Library of Macon County Annual Meeting 6:00 PM, $20, “What Ancestor Would You Like to Have with You at Dinner?”

19 November 2015: Elgin Genealogical Society, Member Panel presenting “Recapping this Year’s Research”, http://www.elginroots.com


6 December 2015: St. Louis Genealogy Society’s 11th Annual Book Jamboree, 1:00-3:00, StLGS Office, www.stlgs.org


19 December 2015: Wisconsin Historical Society, 8:30-4:30, Thalami Davis presents “African American Genealogy: Telling Your Story, Memory Library, Madison WI, wisconsinhistory.org


5 March 2016: NW Suburban Genealogy Society, Teresa Steinkamp McMillin presents “Reading Between the Lines of the City Directory”, 10:00 AM, Arlington Heights Senior Center, www.nwsgenealogy.org

12 March 2016: DuPage County Genealogical Society, 41st Annual Conference, NIU Conference Center, Naperville, IL, www.dcgs.org

2 April 2016: NW Suburban Genealogy Society, Diane Dassow presents “Get the Scoop: Interviewing to Gather Family Stories”, 10:00 AM, Arlington Heights Senior Center, www.nwsgenealogy.org

2 April 2016: St. Louis Genealogical Society’s 45th Annual Family History Conference “A Whole New World for Genealogists” www.stlgs.org

7 May 2016: NW Suburban Genealogy Society, George Findlen presents “Researching at the Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives”, 10:00 AM, Arlington Heights Senior Center, www.nwsgenealogy.org

18 June 2016: CAGGNI, GeneaQuest 2016 Conference, Schaumburg, IL, caggni.org

Facebook: A Tool for Genealogy Research

At first glance, Facebook doesn’t seem like a good fit for genealogy research. Yet, many genealogists and family historians are using the world’s most popular social media platform to locate other researchers, post queries and lookups, and to harness the power of Facebook Pages and Groups.

Facebook, like many other websites, can be a distraction and time waster. However, with a little practice and a focused approach to using the site, you will be amazed at how much Facebook can help advance your research.

Facebook Overview

For purposes of this lecture, we won’t be focusing on the basics of Facebook such as setting up an account, “friending” other users, etc. The assumption is that you already understand the basic features of Facebook such as how to post to and navigate to your Wall and your News Feed, how to send a Message, etc.

Our focus here will be using some of the basic features such as the Facebook Graph Search, Facebook Pages and Facebook Groups to help us locate even more information about our family history.

Using Facebook’s Search Function for Genealogy

One of the most neglected features of Facebook by any user, not just genealogists, is the search function. By using strategic searches based on place names, surnames and more, you can find new information relevant to your family history research.

Facebook’s Search field is located in the upper left corner. Enter your search criteria and click the magnifying glass icon to see search results.

- **Use Facebook Graph Search**: Create specialized and “compound searches” for not-so-obvious results. Example: enter “Friends who like genealogy” and a list of friends meeting the search criteria will appear. Key function words include “people” and “places.”

- **Explore ALL results**: Click the magnifying glass icon at the top or bottom of the search results list. A new page will appear with results grouped by section in the Result Type sidebar on the left.

- **Use See More option**: Facebook limits the number of results shown for each section. Always click See more at the bottom of the results list.

- **Explore all Result Types**: Use the Result Types sidebar on the left to explore search results for Pages, Groups, Photos and more.

- **Clear Searches**: Yes, Facebook retains a history of everything you locate via Search. To review your past searches, click Activity Log in the upper left corner then click Search in the left sidebar. Your searches will appear. To delete individual searches, click Hidden from Timeline on the right and select Delete and then click Remove Search. To delete the entire search history, click Clear Searches at the top of the page.

Using Facebook Content for Genealogy

Can you use postings, photos and other information found on Facebook as part of your genealogy research? Why not? Facebook is simply another source of content on the Internet. While a post may not be the definitive source to prove a birth date or location, often it will provide clues to actual source documentation for you to use.
Here are some tips for Facebook users on extract the most content from your Facebook searches and postings:

- **Every Post has a link**: Have you ever wanted to link to a specific post on Facebook? To find the link, locate the post and place your cursor on the date/time of the post (below the poster’s name). Right click with your mouse and select **Copy Link Address**. Paste the link in a document or email.

- **Ask permission when using photos and content**: Copyright laws extend to postings on Facebook too! Ask the person posting the info for permission, especially if you are working on a family history book or blog post.


**Facebook Pages and Facebook Groups – What is the difference?**

One of the most confusing issues for new Facebook users is telling the difference between a Facebook Page and a Facebook Group. Using each type is relatively easy; the real confusion occurs when trying to create a Facebook Page or a Facebook Group.

The main difference between the two is interaction of page visitors vs. group members. A group usually requires a user to request membership whereas a page only requires a “like” from a user. A group allows you as the user to post a query whereas most pages only allow the Admin to post content.

Think of it this way: a Facebook Page is more like a news broadcast about a certain topic, company, or even a genealogy society. It leans more towards one-way communication: from the page Admin to those who have liked the page.

A Facebook Group, however, allows the group member more options to communicate with the group Admin and the other members of the community. Groups tend to be more useful to genealogists and are now the main location for specific types of queries and lookups.

**Using Facebook Groups for genealogy research**

Before you can use any of the features of a Facebook Group, you may have to make a request to “join” that group. Most groups have a security setting of Closed in order to ensure that members understand the group’s rules and focus area.

Here are some tips for Facebook Group members on how to get the maximum benefit from your membership:

- **Search within the group**: After joining a Facebook Group, scroll through the recent posts. Before posting a query, use the search box (upper right below the Cover Photo) to see if your question has already been posted and answered.

- **Post only relevant info**: A Facebook Group is not a billboard or a place to have general conversations. If the focus of the group is on German Genealogy, only post articles and queries relevant to that topic. Most group Admins will remove irrelevant posts and will go as far as banning members who don’t follow the group rules.

- **Update posts**: When asking for assistance with a problem, if a resolution has been found, return to the original post, click **Edit** and type SOLVED or RESOLVED at the beginning of the post.

- **Add group to Favorites**: On the left sidebar, under **Groups**, click **More**. A list of groups to which you belong will appear. Click **+Add to Favorites**.

- **Manage Notifications**: If you belong to an active group, click **Notifications** and decide how and when you want to be notified of updates.
Check Files section: Locate the Cover photo at the top of the group and click on Files. Often, the group Admin and members will post templates and other downloadable files for genealogy.

Use hashtags: Did you know that you can use hashtags in a Facebook post and it becomes a search tool for that group? Enter #genealogy or #software at the beginning or the end of the post. Then click on the hashtag to find similar posts within the group.

Creating and running a Facebook Group
Managing a Facebook Group is a big commitment, much more than managing a Facebook Page. A group requires daily monitoring by at least one Admin to make sure that the topics and group members are staying focused on the group’s topic.

Creating a Facebook Group

- To get started, click Create Group in the left sidebar under the list of your favorite groups.
- Add a Title, add one Facebook friend (required), click Add to Favorites, select Privacy Level (Closed is recommended) and then click OK.
- Next, select an icon representative of your group. This action is not required, click Skip or OK.
- Now customize your Facebook group:
  - Upload a Cover Photo. The recommended size is 851 (wide) x 315 (high) pixels.
  - Click Add a Description and enter a brief description about the group and its goals.
  - Click the ellipsis (...) and select Edit Group Settings.
  - In the Membership Approval section, select Any member can add members, but an admin must approve them.
  - In the Web and Email Address section, select Customize Address and enter customized info. Your group is now set up and you can begin adding new members and posting relevant information!

Here are some tips for Facebook Group Admins on the best way to set up and maintain a group:

- Select the right Privacy level: There are three levels of security used when setting up a Facebook Group: Open (anyone can join), Closed (an Admin must review and approve the member) and Secret (Admin must approve member AND the group cannot be located via Facebook Search).
- Write an accurate Description: For Open and Closed groups which can be located via Facebook Search, provide an accurate Description for the group under Settings.
- Create a READ FIRST post: Many group Admins like to set the “tone” of a group with a brief Welcome post pinned to the top of the Wall. Outline the focus of the group, what types of content is permitted, and how violators will be handled.
- Claim a vanity URL: When first created, Facebook assigns a long multi-digit number to your group. In the top-right corner, click Edit Group Settings (you must be a Group Admin with rights to change the Settings). Scroll down to Web and Email Addresses then click Customize Address.
- Enforce group rules: If you set out rules for your group, take time to check group member posts and enforce those rules. Otherwise you risk a lack of member participation and members will leave the group.
- Ask before adding members: One of the more annoying features of Facebook Groups is the ability to add any of your Facebook Friends as group members. You’ll have a more engaged group of users if you first message or email potential members, and ask if they would like to be added to the group. Better yet, send them the link to the group and let them join on their own!
• **Watch the spammers!**: If you have group security set to Open you will definitely have spammers join; they will post anything and everything much to the aggravation of other group members. For Closed groups, you will have to review each request to determine if the potential member is legit. Things to look for: if the member has been on Facebook for one month or less OR if they don’t have a Profile photo, it is likely they are a spammer. Make sure you click Block when processing these requests so they don’t try to join your group again.

• **Select a second group Admin**: Facebook allows multiple Admins for Facebook Groups. Select a “backup” person who you trust in case you get sick or you no longer want to run the group.

### Using Facebook Pages for genealogy research

Facebook Pages have limited use for genealogists and family historians; think of a page as a news channel where you receive updates. Pages don’t allow much interaction with those who “like” or follow a page; the conversation is often “one way.”

Here are some tips for users of Facebook Pages on how to get the maximum benefit from your using pages:

• **Use Facebook Page as an information feed**: Click Like on a page to follow any updates made on the page. These updates will appear in your News Feed.

• **Use Facebook Pages for vendor customer service**: If you encounter an issue with a genealogy product or service, try sending a Message to the page Admin; most vendors monitor their pages for customer-service related inquiries.

• **Get Notifications**: Make sure you are notified when new items are posted to the page. Click the down arrow next to Liked and select Get Notifications.

• **Add page to Favorites**: On the left sidebar, under Pages, click More. A list of pages you follow will appear. Click the “gear” icon for a page and then click Add to Favorites.

### Creating and running a Facebook Page

Managing a Facebook Page is relatively easy compared to a Facebook Group which requires constant “care and feeding.” Think of your page as a billboard; check in occasionally to add new content to keep your followers interested in you page.

#### Creating a Facebook Page

• To get started, click Create Page in the left sidebar under the list of your favorite pages.

• The Create a Page dialog appears. Select the type of page you want to create (you can always change the type later). Click Get Started.

• Next, customize your Facebook Page using the Setup dialog which has four sections:
  o Click About and add information about your page, including a Description and a link to a Website. Also enter a vanity URL for your page under Facebook Web Address.
  o Click Profile Picture and upload a photo representative of your page topic.
  o Click Add to Favorites and then add your new page to your list of Favorite Pages.
  o Finally, click Preferred Page Audience. Use the various fields to target a specific audience or click Save Info and complete the Set Up process.

• Your new Facebook Page appears. Click Add a Cover and add a cover page. The recommended size is 851 (wide) x 315 (high) pixels.

• Click About and add more information to your page under Page Info.

Your page is now set up and you can begin posting relevant information and getting other Facebook users to like the page!
Here are some tips for Facebook Page Admins on how to set up and maintain a page:

• **Do not set up a separate Facebook account**: Facebook has been cracking down on accounts not connected to a real person. Also, you can set up as many Facebook Pages as you want under one Facebook account.

• **Complete the About section**: Enter as much of the Page Info as possible in the About section. This allows other Facebook users to find your page easily during searches.

• **Use as Page as a broadcast channel**: Share articles, blog posts, coupons, offers etc. all relevant to your Facebook Page topic.

• **Take advantage of Schedule function**: Click the down arrow next to Publish after composing a post. Select **Schedule** and schedule the post to appear at a specific date and time.

• **Pin important posts to the top**: To maintain the focus on a specific post, click the down arrow in the upper-right corner of the post and select **Pin to Top**.

• **Claim a vanity URL**: When first created, Facebook assigns a long multi-digit number to your page. Click **About** and scroll down to **Facebook Web Address**. Hover the cursor pointer on the right and click the **Edit** icon to make changes.

• **Review Page Insights**: Click **Insights** to see how your page is performing. You can also research trends, demographics, and the best time to post to your page.

**Understanding Privacy on Facebook**

Privacy continues to be one of the features most criticized by Facebook users, despite the fact that many users haven’t taken the time to understand how the privacy functions work.

• **Get a Privacy Checkup**: Click the padlock icon in the upper right corner and select **Privacy Checkup**. Walk through all the steps to review your current privacy settings.

• **Always check your posting status**: Facebook remember the status you last used for posting. So if you posted an article using Public, it will use that same status for your next post. Always determine the post’s audience before clicking **Publish**.

• **Use View As**: Want to know what your Friends or others see when they look at your Facebook Timeline? Click the **ellipsis** (...) on your profile and select **View As**.

• **Control photo and post tagging**: Under **Settings**, select **Timeline and Tagging**. In the section **How can I manage tags people add and tagging suggestions**, click **Edit** and select **On**. This setting will then allow you to approve when others tag you in posts and photos.

©2015, copyright Thomas MacEntee. All rights reserved. For more information, please visit High-Definition Genealogy at [http://hidefgen.com](http://hidefgen.com).
Resource List

- **Genealogy on Facebook List**
  An amazing list of over 5,300 Facebook groups and pages related to genealogy.

- **Facebook for Canadian Genealogy**
  [http://genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=7656](http://genealogyalacarte.ca/?p=7656)
  A list of Facebook groups and pages for Canada genealogy.

- **Facebook – Customized Web and Email Addresses for Groups**
  [https://www.facebook.com/help/206871819351594](https://www.facebook.com/help/206871819351594)

- **Facebook – How Do I Create a Group?**
  [https://www.facebook.com/help/167970719931213](https://www.facebook.com/help/167970719931213)

- **Facebook – How Do I Create a Page?**
  [https://www.facebook.com/help/104002523024878](https://www.facebook.com/help/104002523024878)

- **Facebook Privacy Basics**
  [https://www.facebook.com/about/basics](https://www.facebook.com/about/basics)

- **Facebook Search**
  [http://search.fb.com/](http://search.fb.com/)

- **Facebook Search Basics**
  [https://www.facebook.com/help/460711197281324/](https://www.facebook.com/help/460711197281324/)

- **Facebook Tips for Group Admins**

- **Facebook – What Other See About You**
  [https://www.facebook.com/about/basics/what-others-see-about-you/](https://www.facebook.com/about/basics/what-others-see-about-you/)

- **Five Tips for Running a Successful Facebook Group**
  [https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-tips-running-facebook-group-successfully-jason](https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/5-tips-running-facebook-group-successfully-jason)

- **How to see (and erase) your Facebook search history or else**
  [http://www.komando.com/tips/12436/how-to-see-and-erase-your-facebook-search-history-or-else/all](http://www.komando.com/tips/12436/how-to-see-and-erase-your-facebook-search-history-or-else/all)
Interesting Article: Don’t Miss This!

Check out this Illinois Times Magazine online article about the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library: “Ghost of a Library”. ISGS is mentioned in the article! Click here: http://illinoistimes.com/mobile/articles/articleView/id:16114

Looking for Volunteers

Ancestors unKnown, a nonprofit organization introducing high school students to untold histories and genealogy research via classroom curriculum are partnering with schools in low-income/underserved communities, providing teachers with a unique curriculum to amplify their history and English classes.

Genealogy volunteers are a key piece to our approach, mentoring and assisting students with their genealogy research projects. Students are instructed to complete oral history interviews, construct their family tree charts, and pursue archival research. In Chicago, Communities in Schools of Chicago is interested in taking the volunteer researchers a step further as in-person mentors for local students. Students will be predominately working on African American research.

If you are interested contact Dana Saxon, Executive Director

718-340-3652 http://ancestors-unknown.org

Sacramental Records

The Catholic Post, The Newspaper of the Diocese of Peoria, Illinois highlighted their archives in an article called “Stalled with Family Research? Try Diocesan Archives”. This article can be found in the October 25, 2015 Catholic Post or online by clicking here.

You will learn about the sacramental records they hold, some of them predating to 1877. Sacramental request forms can be found on the website of the Diocese of Peoria, cdop.org. Click on the link for “FORMS” and then “ARCHIVES” or call 309-671-1550.

Strutt Your Stuff! Reducing Pesky Stains

Enjoy this informational article on the National Library of Australia’s website on how their Preservation team takes off those stains left by sticky tape.

Go to their blog here.
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

The International Society of Family History Writers and Editors (ISFHWE) is reminding writers IN ALL MEDIA (magazines, newspapers, journals, websites, blogs) that the 2016 Excellence-in-Writing Competition is now open for entries through 15 June 2016.

The competition is open to both MEMBERS and NON-MEMBERS of ISFHWE; both published and non-published authors may enter (see category list below). **Members of ISFHWE receive a discount on the entry fee (after logging in to the ISFHWE members’ corner; new members allow up to ten days to receive login information).**

The categories are:

**Category I – Columns.** This is for columns of original content, published on a regular basis, in any medium, published in 2015. Each entry must consist of 2,000 words or fewer. These are entries from the author’s regular column—not features. Note that these may be print or online columns (including blogs).

**Category II -- Articles.** These one-time articles (not part of the author’s column) must have been published in 2015 in a journal, magazine, newsletter, blog or website. Entries cannot exceed 5,000 words. Note that these may be print or online articles, including GUEST entries on a blog. Footnotes are not included in the word count.

**Category III – Genealogy Newsletter.** This category is for society or family association newsletters published in 2015. Entries should consist of two issues, each submitted as a single file in PDF format. The judging will be based on originality, content, visual appeal, writing and editing quality, and accuracy. The award is to the editor of the publication. These may be print or online newsletters. The once-a-year newsletters usually sent at Christmas do not qualify for this competition as two issues from the same calendar year are needed.

**Category IV – Unpublished Authors.** Entrants in this category aspire to be published writers or columnists in the field of genealogy, family or local history. The submissions in this category are original and unpublished, between 500 and 2,000 words. Since these are UNPUBLISHED, blogs are not eligible for this category. The articles should be unpublished at the time they were submitted to the competition.

**Category V – Unpublished material - Published Authors.** This category is for original unpublished genealogically related articles by previously published authors. Entries should be between 500 and 3,000 words. Since these are UNPUBLISHED, blogs are not eligible for this category. The articles should be unpublished at the time they were submitted to the competition.

**Category VI – Poetry.** This category is for original content (published in 2015 or unpublished), that is related to family history. Entries should be no longer than 1000 words and have a title. This may include song lyrics (music is not judged).

Winners (1st, 2nd, 3rd) in each category will be awarded a cash prize and a certificate. Emailed certificates may be awarded for Honorable Mentions. The awards will be announced during FGS Conference 2016.

Entries must be submitted in PDF, Word, WordPerfect, or JPG format by e-mail in time to meet this deadline. **Please note: Footnotes will not count toward word count.** Send entries to: Competition@ISFHWE.org

Appropriate entry fee(s) - and membership dues to receive the discount - may be paid via PayPal on the ISFHWE website at ISFHWE.org

Full information on the competition is available on the ISFHWE website in the “2016 Excellence-in-Writing Competition - Information and Online Entry Form” link, which leads to: http://www.isfhwe.org/competition.php

For questions, contact the Competition Coordinator at: competition@ISFHWE.org
Finding the Dead: Illinois Death Certificates Lookup Service at ISGS

Among the many services available to the public, as well as members of the Illinois State Genealogical Society, is the Illinois Death Certificate lookup service. Not only can ISGS members receive copies of Illinois death certificates from 1916-1950 at a discount, anyone using ISGS can save considerable money compared to county-based services.

The current pricing for one certificate is $6.00 for ISGS members and $10.00 for non-members (you can order as many as you would like). Compare that to the current $15.00 rate at sites such as Genealogy Online for Cook County (https://www.cookcountygenealogy.com/).

Currently, only those certificates listed at the Illinois Death Certificates 1916-1950 database at http://cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/databases/idphdeathindex.html can be obtained through the ISGS lookup service.

Requesting a Death Certificate: The Process

To obtain non-certified copies of death certificates from the 1916-1950 timeframe, please follow these steps:

- Search for the individual death certificate(s) you want.
- After you find the correct certificate(s), print or copy down the information exactly as displayed on your screen.
- **Order Online**: To order online using a MasterCard, Visa, Discover, American Express or a PayPal account, use our shopping cart at http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=59. Your information is kept safe and secure by the PayPal payment service.
- **Order by Mail**: To mail your request, print out the ISGS Death Certificate Request Form (click here) and transfer the death certificate information to the form. Mail the form along with your check made payable to the Illinois State Genealogical Society to the address shown on the form. (Note: Credit card payments are only available online.)

If you have any questions, visit http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=59 for more information, email isgsoffice@ilgensoc.org or call (217) 789-1968.

Revenues Support ISGS Operations

In the past few years we have seen a marked decrease in income from the ISGS death certificate lookup service. Proceeds directly support ISGS office operations. So remember to take advantage of this service, whether you are a member of ISGS or not!
The Illinois State Genealogical Foundation was established in 2012 as a wholly non-profit tax-exempt corporation, organized and chartered under the laws of the State of Illinois, with charitable and educational purposes.

All donations to the Foundation are tax deductible per Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

The purpose of the foundation is to

• Assist in developing and increasing educational opportunities for the genealogical and historical community of Illinois

• Provide service for students and organizations whose primary interest involves the study and education of genealogical and historical events in Illinois

• Encourage gifts of money, property, historical papers and documents, and other material having educational, artistic, scientific and/or historical value and by such other proper means as may be determined. The Foundation will receive, hold, and administer such gifts with the primary intent of serving the genealogical and historical community in Illinois.

The Illinois State Genealogical Foundation is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of nine members.

Shirley Aleguas, Waverly, IL
David Kent Coy, Decatur, IL
Mary Lou Delahunt, Galesburg, IL
Jean Jung, Waterloo, IL
George F. Perkins, Normal, IL
Steve Black, President, Phoenix, AZ
Michele Claypool, Champaign, IL
Gary K Hargis, North Aurora, IL
Carole McCarty, St. Charles, IL

An annual meeting of the Foundation is held each year according to the by-laws.

The Foundation is an opportunity for individuals, businesses, and other organizations to contribute to genealogical and historical research and educational opportunities relating to people and events associated with Illinois. Projects will be selected for funding based on specific criteria to be developed by the Board with the intent of making information available to researchers and genealogists. The initial strategy is to build the assets in the Foundation and then begin providing funding/grants for various genealogical research projects in the state.

For further information about the Foundation, contact any of the Foundation Directors or Steve Black, President at 623-466-3545 or steve.black531@gmail.com.

ISG Foundation address: 906 Switchgrass Lane, Champaign, IL 61822
Illinois State Genealogical Society
2015—2016 Governing Board

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ISGS 50th Anniversary History: **David Kent Coy**, Decatur
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Website Administrator: Open

Office Secretary—**Evelyn Edwards**

Illinois State Genealogical Society