



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

September 30, 2007
Volume 2, Issue 1

"Finding More Ancestors in More Censuses" otherwise called "How to Get the Most Out of the Revolution in Census Availability and Search-ability" at October 4 Meeting

James L. Hansen will be the presenter for the October 4 meeting where he will guide us on the use of census information to further our genealogy. (This is rescheduled from the March 1 meeting that was cancelled due to inclement weather.)

James L. Hansen, F.A.S.G., has been the reference librarian and genealogical specialist at the Library of the Wisconsin Historical Society since 1974, where he assists thousands of researchers a year in their

genealogical and historical research. He has taught beginning and advanced genealogical research courses over Wisconsin's Educational Telephone Network. Among his publications are articles on a variety of genealogical topics, a bibliography of territorial Wisconsin newspapers, and a guide to the library in which he works. He is a nationally-known speaker, having lectured on genealogical topics around Wisconsin and at numerous conferences (national, state and local)

in the U.S. and Canada. He was the 1994-1995 president of the Association of Professional Genealogists, and in 1995 was named a fellow of the American Society of Genealogists. In 2002 he was awarded the Filby Prize for Genealogical Librarianship at the NGS conference in Milwaukee.

Please join us at the October 4, meeting at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, beginning at 7 p.m.

Regular DCAGS meetings are the first Thursday of each month at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, Wisconsin beginning at 7 p.m.

DCAGS Update:

The DCAGS Governing Board meets the 3rd Monday of each month. The next meeting is on Monday, October 15 at 6:30 p.m. at the South Park Library, 2222 Park St. We invite all members to attend. Please join us!

Bylaw Change Vote October 4

In an effort to make the annual election work more smoothly, the Governing Board is recommending the following bylaw change. The bylaws change has been published in the last two issues, more than 30 days prior to a vote. We plan on voting for the bylaw change at the October 4 meeting.

Proposed change:

**Article IV -
Officers, Section 2.
Election, subpart a.**

~~Elections shall be conducted by ballot via the U.S. Postal Service shortly after the Annual meeting.~~
Elections shall be conducted by ballot.
Ballots will be distributed

via the newsletter following the annual meeting. Ballots are to be returned on or before the next scheduled membership meeting. All members in good standing shall be entitled to cast one vote for each office listed on the ballot.

Individual Highlights:

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Genealogy Fair – A Great Success



The DCAGS Genealogy Fair on Saturday, September 8 was a great success. There were 162 people who registered. Throughout the day people were able to visit the 23 vendor and exhibitor tables while Chuck and Marlene Rogers gave demonstrations of PAF and Todd Kienitz spoke on digitally preserving old photos and videos. Tours of the Family History Center were held every half hour.

George Findlen, James Hibbard, Pat Stone and Pat Skubis all gave presentations. A short summary of each will be included in this newsletter.

We'd like to thank those who volunteered. The day could not have happened without everyone's contribution. We'd like to thank the members of Genealogy Fair Committee for all their hard work: Pat Skubis, Pat Stone, Sandra Donner, Bill Bauers, Shirley Levine, Joan Nagle and Ruth Simpson.

Basic Recording Methods for Genealogy with Pat Stone

The first program for the Genealogy Fair, Basic Recording Methods for Genealogy, was given by Pat Stone in the Relief Society Room at the LDS Church. The display boards showed examples of the many paper forms available to keep the family records in order.

The family group sheets are the primary form to be filled out in pencil while compiling your information. This form is the place to record the source information by using a number or capital letter in a circle immediately after each item and to use the same number or letter in a circle at the bottom of the form with the specific information from the source, such as book title and author,

page, microfiche, microfilm, phone call, Bible, census, obituary, headstone, vital record, or family member. There are special forms with documentation lists that help to cross reference the sources. Pedigree Charts show the direct line of ancestors.

Census records from 1790 through 1930, state census records, vital records, church records, cemetery records, headstones, land records from Grantor and Grantee indexes, Mortgage indexes, naturalization, probate, ship passenger lists, military records, tax records, county histories, newspaper obituaries, and the Social Security Death Index are places to search for family information. These supplemental forms are valuable to

record additional family information.

Other helpful forms include keeping a Research Log of the information that you find and also do not find and a Correspondence Record to keep track of the letters sent and received along with e-mail correspondence.

Continued on page 3

Basic Genealogy Continued...

To summarize all the family information, a Timeline can be compiled for an individual listing every single happening including births, marriages, deaths, tax records, land transactions, military service, probate, children and grandchildren happenings along with newspaper items. This serves as a record that can have additional information inserted or corrected by year, month and day as further details are gathered over the years.

Bibliography

Andriot, Jay. *Township Atlas of the United States*, McLean, VA: Documents Index, 1991. [try WHS, libraries, used book stores]

Bentley, Elizabeth Petty. *County Courthouse Book*, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co, 1995.

Dollarhide, William. *The Census Book - A Genealogical Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes*, Bountiful, UT: Heritage Quest, 1999.

Hively, Neal Otto. *How to Plot Land Surveys*, A basic primer for drawing Deeds, surveys and other and descriptions, self published, 2000.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence! Citation and Analysis for the Family Historian*, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1997.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Analysis, A Research Process Map*, The Board for Certification of Genealogists: Washington, DC, 2006.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Evidence Explained, Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace*, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2007.

Mills, Elizabeth Shown. *Citing Online Historical Resources, Quick Sheet*, Baltimore, MD: Genealogical Publishing Company, 2005.

Szucs, Loretta Dennis & Sandra Hargreaves Luebking. *The Source - A Guidebook of American Genealogy*, Salt Lake City, UT: Ancestry Inc, 1997. [there is a later edition]

Local Resource

Origins Book Store, Janesville, WI 53545, 608-757-2777. www.originsbooks.com

Web Sites for Genealogy Forms and Guides

Cyndi's list
www.cyndislist.com – source for any genealogy topic; click on Supplies, charts & forms.

Dane County Area Genealogical Society
www.dcags.org – links to area information and also Roots Web's Guide to Tracing Family Trees-Guide #12: Creating Worthwhile Genealogies for Our Families and Descendants; and Guide #1: Free forms

Ellis Island/Port of New York Records
www.ellisland.org – click on Genealogy, then free charts and forms.

Mid-Continent Public Library, Independence, MO
www.mcpl.lib.mo.us – click on Genealogy and Family history, then Getting Started with Family Charts & Worksheets

Nancy Emmert, C.G., 2820 Marshall Court, #1, Madison, WI 53705
www.nancyemmert.com – click on Beginning Family History Notes, 11 pp

RootsWeb on line
www.rootsweb.com - click on Other Tools & Resources, then on Blank charts & forms.

WI Historical Society
www.wisconsinhistory.org – click on Genealogy – Beginning your Family History

Periodical

Everton's Genealogical Helper, published bimonthly starting with January/February, March/April, May/June, July/August, September/October and November/December, Logan, UT; 435-752-6022; 800-443-6325

Using Traditional Histories to Find Your Ancestors with George Findlen

George Findlen explained that history tries to explain what happened and why. It often focuses on political or military history within a nation or state and the scope is macro. A family history is micro in scope, focusing on one family and the people involved. The larger historical events can have large effects on families and it is important to know them – war service, economic down-turns or upturns – can force families to move or cause injury or death.

While most of our ancestors would not be included in a history of the United States, histories are also written about states, counties and townships. Many local histories include biographical sketches. Local histories also may include information on early churches and lists of businesses and industries. If your ancestors were early settlers, they may well be included in such a book. The Wisconsin Historical Society (WHS) Library has numerous local histories as well as a number of family history books that may be of use to many of you. The collection can be searched by either MADCAT or ARCAT from WHS's website.

Other local information – vital records: marriage, birth and death, deeds, mortgages, court documents, census records or college transcripts – can all

be utilized to further your genealogy searches.

George explained the many records he found that helped him discover the history of his elusive ancestor Michael Findlen. He began asking his relatives what they knew of Michael and the only thing he heard was that he went to the Yukon to find gold. George set about discovering the real story. He was able to find birth records, deed records, court documents and a college transcript to trace the movement of Michael, who lived in four towns in three counties in Maine, British Columbia, Washington state, and Alberta in the Pacific Northwest.

George was able to use the larger historical context to explain certain movements. After the economic downturn in the 1890s, Michael was unable to make his mortgage payments and he lost his farm. Next came the expansion of the lumber industry in Maine and Michael moved to find work. George was able to discover wage assignments in the county court records. Michael left his family in Maine and headed west to Canada and Washington state to work in the lumber industry. He was listed in census in Washington state. One of his sons also traveled west and eventually the two helped start an early Canadian town enroute to the Yukon Territory, but Michael never made it to the gold fields. He died after a



surgery for cancer in Vancouver, B.C.

George provides the following tips for using traditional histories to find ancestors:

- ⇒ Look for a history of the county you are searching. Many include information on townships and biographical sketches.
- ⇒ Search for vital records using female surnames, extended families or neighbors, they may provide new avenues to search.
- ⇒ Look in society archives – fraternal orders (IOOF, Woodmen etc.), churches – in the area. Some minutes and member rolls survive.
- ⇒ Find out what was going on in the community when your ancestor lived there.
- ⇒ When your ancestor moved look for a “push” or “pull” moment – something that may have caused the move, like economic factors. The reasons may not be apparent, but there usually is one.
- ⇒ Construct a timeline for your ancestor. The gaps in time are the areas to explore.
- ⇒ There may be specialty libraries on ethnicities that can be explored.
- ⇒ Look at histories of industry – mining, lumber or agricultural, it may explain when and why people moved.

So, start your exploration today!

Upcoming Events

Walworth County Genealogy Society Family History Fair

When: October 13, 2007
9:00 a.m.- 3:30 p.m.

Where: Faith Christian School
W5525 Hwy 67, Williams Bay, WI

The Czechoslovak Genealogical Society International 11th bi-annual Genealogical/Cultural Conference

When: October 18-20, 2007
Where: Alliant Energy Center
Exhibition Hall in Madison

Go to:
<http://www.cgsi.org/whatsnew.asp?intEventID=398> to learn more.

The Illinois State Genealogical Society 2007 Conference

When: October 20, 2007

Where: Elmhurst, Illinois

The Wisconsin State Genealogical Society Fall 2007 Seminar

"Finding Your Roots on the Family Farm"

When: October 27, 2007

Where: Wausau, Wisconsin

Featured speaker: J. Mark Lowe.

Lectures:

- Cheap Land on the Prairie (or That's What the Railroad Man Said)
- Land Barons or Dirt Farmers: Finding Land Transactions
- My Ancestor, the Farmer: Shaping a Profile for Your Rural Ancestor
- Locating Civil War Ancestors.

Go to: www.wsgs.org for more information.

President's Message

What a great day we had for our Genealogy Fair! The weather could not have been nicer. The turnout was great. One hundred and sixty-two people registered and we know that a few missed the sign in sheets.

The cookies and bars went well and only a few were left over. The comments that were returned were favorable and the vendors and exhibitors were satisfied with how the day went. We did learn that we need to allow a bit more time between speakers so that people can have more time looking at the displays.

I want to thank the Fair committee for all the work that they performed since our first meetings in Spring. I also want to thank the members who helped with putting up the posters, setting up the gym, serving the refreshments, greeting the visitors, helping out at the membership table, baking the goodies and with taking every thing down after

the fair was over. With everyone working together we had a successful day.

I also wish to thank the Mormon Church and the Family History Center for letting us use the whole building for the Fair. Having so much space kept things from becoming congested. I know that many of the visitors took advantage of the Family History Center tours and also the presentations on PAF given by Chuck and Marlene Rogers. Todd Kienitz program on preserving video and photos was well received. Thanks for taking part in our Fair.

I also wish to thank Pat Stone, George L. Findlen, and James Hibbard for their presentations. The committee made the recommendation to the Board that we host a Fair or a workshop every other year, rather than yearly.

At our last Board meeting Joyce Nigbor, submitted her resignation as secretary. The Board will miss Joyce and

thank her for her service this past year. Pat Konrad will replace Joyce for the remainder of the year. We are happy that Pat has agreed to accept this assignment.

I am still looking for a person to serve as the Public Relations Chairperson. This person serves on the Board and one of the duties assigned to this position is to help advertise information about the society and its activities. Currently we have developed a list of places willing to publish information and since our Program Committee is planning at least three months ahead, the public relations person will have information in a timely manner. If you have any further questions regarding this position contact me.

Have a great October searching those graveyards for your ancestors and celebrating Family History month.

Pat Skubis

Pat Skubis Shows Gravestone Symbols

Making Connections for Genealogy Help

At the Genealogy Fair we asked people if they would like help in an area or if they would help someone. We received four responses.

Eugene Woehler would like help using the computer to access census and U.W. records.

Christine Molling would like help finding immigration records before 1870.

John Inman would be glad to help someone with the Inman family in Rock County, WI and Luzerne County, PA.

Anne Woodson would be glad to help someone with Swedish genealogy.

Contact Pat Skubis for contact information.

Pat Skubis's presentation on Gravestones and their meanings at the Genealogy Fair provided a virtual tour of cemetery stones found in various cemeteries in the USA and abroad. The designs, architecture and styles of gravestones have changed over the years. Various motifs have certain meanings. Listed below are just a few:

- **Anchor/Ships** – Hope or Seafaring profession
- **Angel, Flying** – Rebirth; Resurrection.
- **Bird, Flying** – Resurrection.
- **Book** – Representation of a holy book: i.e. the Bible
- **Columns and Doors** – Heavenly entrance.
- **Grim Reaper** – Death personified.
- **Hand, Pointing Up** – Pathway to heaven; Heavenly reward.
- **Lily or Lily of Valley** – Emblem of Innocence and Purity

- **Tree Trunk** – Brevity of life.
- **Weeping Willow Tree** – Mourning; Grief; Nature's lament

In recent years gravestones have become functional or in other words flat. It has made it easier for those caring for the cemetery, but to many of us it is making for boring, dull and not very beautiful places to visit.

As Pat worked on developing this slide show, she received input from several members. Pat Stone recommended reading, "Your Guide to Cemetery Research" by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, Betterway Books, 2002.

If you want to visit some online virtual cemeteries try the links listed below. Also remember to Google the name of any cemetery you want to locate and see what happens.

The Friends of Mount Hope Cemetery Rochester, New York 14620-2752
<http://www.fomh.org/>

Cemeteries and cemetery symbols:
<http://cemeteries.wordpress.com/>

Online searchable death index:
<http://www.deathindexes.com/>

List of the meanings of various grave symbols:
<http://olivetreegenealogy.com/misc/grave.shtml>

Department of Veterans Affairs: available emblems of belief for placement on government headstones and markers:
<http://www.cem.va.gov/ce/hm/hmemb.asp>

More photos of cemeteries are being added daily so check back often and you might find the tombstone that you are looking for right there in cyberspace.

Genealogy Classes Offered by the Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives is proud to offer another season of classes on special topics in genealogical research. The very knowledgeable Library and Archives staff will present programs that focus on collections and research techniques. All dates are on Saturdays. The workshops take place from 9:00 a.m. to Noon. The fees are generally \$25 for WHS members or \$30 for nonmembers and class registration is limited.

October 13 – *Metes, Bounds, Ranges and Towns: Deciphering the Foreign Language of Property Research.* By Rick Pifer, Director of Reference and Public Services.

December 1 – *Ancestry.com.* (Class will be held in computer lab.) By Lori Bessler, Outreach Coordinator and Microfilm Librarian. (Fees are \$35 for WHS members and \$40 for non-WHS members.)

December 1 – *Tracing Your Immigrant Ancestors: Naturalization Records and Passenger Lists.* By Jim Hansen,

Reference Librarian.

December 8 – *It's All Online! Or is it?* (This class will be held in the computer lab.) By Lori Bessler. (Fees are \$35 for WHS members and \$40 for non-WHS members.)

December 15 – *Writing Your Family's History.* By Michael Edmonds, Deputy Administrator, Library Archives.

Descriptions of each event are found at www.wisconsinhistory.org/archives/classes.

James Hibbard Explains that Records that Can Provide New Avenues for Research

James Hibbard, UW-Archivist at the UW-Platteville, used pictures to describe research resources available at Area Research Centers (ARC).

The Wisconsin ARC Network consists of 14 archives at 11 University Campuses – La Crosse, Platteville, Whitewater, Kenosha, Milwaukee, Oshkosh, Green Bay, Stevens Point, Eau Claire, Menomonie, River Falls – and the Superior Public Library and the History Center and Archives in Ashland as well as the Wisconsin Historical Library in Madison.

Each ARC houses manuscripts and local government records from the surrounding geographic areas. In addition, people doing research may borrow from collections at the State Historical Library or another Center.

Each ARC contains some unique records, but in general you can find the following related to the geographic regions:

- ⇒ Manuscripts collections – business records, community organization records, diaries, letters and scrapbooks
- ⇒ Census records
- ⇒ Maps and atlases
- ⇒ Vital Records (pre-1907)
- ⇒ City Directories
- ⇒ Local and County Histories



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- ⇒ Local Government Records – court records, citizenship records, tax rolls, school record book and city and county board minutes
 - ⇒ Local newspapers
 - ⇒ Genealogy books
 - ⇒ Oral Histories
 - ⇒ Photographs
 - ⇒ University Records

Each ARC has its own hours and each can be accessed from the WHS website, www.wisconsinhistory.org/arc_hives/arcnet/

James displayed pictures from 19th century homes in Mineral Point to illustrate how to research the families that owned them. He recommended accessing circuit court records, including divorce records. James noted

that if the ancestor owned a business, it was not uncommon that he was sued. He also recommends searching tax rolls for real and personal property. Probate records may help establish a death date.

If your ancestor farmed, James suggested viewing the agricultural censuses for each federal census – 1850 – 1880.

James also suggested looking at newspapers, especially society pages for information on parties and visiting relatives. James especially liked it when the families had young daughters, who were often featured on the pages.

James stressed utilizing the inter-library loan program as an important avenue for research.


Dane County Area Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 5652
Madison, WI 53705-0652



Address Service Requested

We're on the Web!

See us at: www.dcags.org



**Dane County Area
Genealogical Society**

P.O. Box 5652
Madison, WI 53705-0652

**See you
October 4**

We have a new web address:
www.dcags.org.

If you enter the address it
will take you to the group's
website on Rootsweb.

DCAGS officers for 2007:

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Upcoming Programs

November 1:
George Findlen, "Not
in MY Family! How
Genealogy Can Help
You Understand Your
Family"

December 6: Show
and Tell with Potluck