



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

June 2017 - July 2017
Volume 11 Issue 5

President's Message from Bob Rettammel

Hello Everyone,

The summer is about to come in a few weeks. I hope that all of you have fun plans and adventures with your friends and families. If you are down at the Dane County Farmer's Market on the Capitol Square please stop and say hi to those who volunteer their time at our table to advertise our society and hopefully recruit new members.



DCAGS display at the Dane County Farmers Market on May 20th with Amy and Bob Rettammel.

The Outreach Committee for our society will be there Saturday mornings between 9am and 1pm, May 20 through July 29th. Let your friends, neighbors and family visitors know we are there during

those Saturdays (except for June 10 and July 8 due to society programs). Our society, like many established organizations, need to grow and think of the future.

This two month effort hopefully will gain us exposure and gain new members to our society. Besides this outreach effort our society is considering other areas that many genealogists, established or beginners, see as ways to connect and learn from other genealogists. One of these is to make our website more visible, develop projects that members can be involved in - volunteer your time to abstracting records, continue to use social media like Facebook and even have a blog done by our Outreach Committee. I welcome current members to reach out to me or send me an email on your own ideas how to grow our society for the future.

Ask DCAGS
We are hoping to help members who are experiencing a problem or "dead end" in their research. At the next membership meeting, stop at the Name Tags table where you can provide us with a description of your problem, with your name and phone number/email address. Joyce Nigbor and helpers will respond with suggestions about how your situation might be approached. They will not do the genealogical work, but will offer ideas.

Regular DCAGS meetings are held on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 11:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI.

The DCAGS Governing Board meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 9:00 am at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI. For more information, see: www.dcags.wildapricot.org

Genealogy-You know You Are Addicted When:

by Cindy Carman (May 12, 2002)

1. You can't pass a cemetery without stopping to see if one of your relatives is buried there.
2. There's a microfilm reader installed in your bathroom.
3. You call traveling 10 miles to the shopping mall a lengthy trip but call a 100 mile trip to a cemetery a quick jaunt.
4. You spend more time in the country courthouse than your local trial lawyer.

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(*You Know You Are Addicted* continued from page 1)

5. You ask every person you meet the last names of their grandparents.
6. You have a massive collection of articles in which your surname is mentioned only once.
7. You have carpal tunnel syndrome from cranking microfilm reader handles.
8. You can recite the day, month, and year of your great grandmother's birth but can't remember your own spouse's birthdate.
9. When someone says they have a new Chicago CD you think they are talking about a vital records CD for Chicago, IL.
10. More than half of the photographs in your photograph albums are of dead people.
11. When someone asks you if you've seen any of the newly released films, you think they are talking about the newly released Federal Census films.
12. You can remember things that happened 100 years ago but can't remember what happened yesterday.

June and July Membership Meetings

June 10 Saturday at 11 am, *Finding Your German Origin and Old German Script*

Where in Germany did your immigrant ancestors come from? Identifying the towns where your immigrant ancestors were born is key to tracing them in Germany.

Professional genealogist Ute Brandenburg will demonstrate strategies for finding your family's home town, and will introduce you to important record sources for research in Germany. Participants are welcome to bring documents in old script for reading assistance following the presentation. Our speaker was raised in Germany and has lived and worked in the United States for over 20 years. Ute specializes in researching German emigrants to the Midwest. She enjoys the challenge of tracing German settlers to their places of origin in Germany. Working with church and civil records online and on microfilm, she builds family trees in Germany. When records are not available in the United States, she travels to Germany for research. Ute has extensive experience translating old German handwriting from four centuries. She is the owner of German Script Experts.

July 8 Saturday at 9:30 am, *Summer Outing*

A Forest Hill Cemetery walking tour is scheduled to meet at 1 Speedway Road, Madison, WI 53705. We will be walking about 1.4 miles. We have been asked to participate in assisting FindaGrave and will check for a list of cemetery plot requests.

2017 Programs

June	10	Ute Brandenburg, (Iowa Genealogist) <i>Finding Your German Origin</i>
July	8	Summer Outing
August	12	Sherry Lloyd, <i>Webinars and Online Genealogy Websites</i> This program will show you where to find education and training to help you pursue genealogy.
September	9	Emil Hoelter, <i>WHS-War History Commission Records</i>
October	14	Richard L. Pifer, PhD, <i>Family History and Genealogy during the Great War</i>
November	11	Thomas MacEntee, Webinar - Live Speaker
December	9	Show and Tell

Recent Meeting Highlights

April

Memory Keepers Guide

In April 2017 we had Carolin Kauten and Jeff Ksiazek from Memory Keepers Guide speak to our society about how to tell stories through family heirlooms and artifacts that were part of our ancestor's past. Their talk provided how to properly care for family artifacts, how you might develop a story and also how to use current resources to share and preserve the story that you associate with the artifact and ancestor who it is linked to. The following are suggested resources:

Saving Stuff: How to Care for and Preserve Your Collectibles, Heirlooms and other Prized Possessions by Don Williams and Louisa Jaggar.

How to Archive Family Keepsakes: Learn How to Preserve Family Photos, Memorabilia and Genealogy Records by Denise May Levenick.

How to Archive Family Photos: A Step-by-Step Guide to Organize and Share Your Photos Digitally by Denise May Levenick.

Preserving Your Family Photographs: How to Care for Your Family Photographs - from Daguerreotypes to Digital Images by Maureen A. Taylor.

www.thefamilycurator.com, *The Family Curator*-Denise May Levenick's website with a blog about preserving family heirlooms.

May

A Recipe for Family History

This May our program speaker spoke about one type of artifact that can add to the story of your ancestor, place the person in time and provide a glimpse into the past. Jan Bosman spoke to our members and guests just before Mother's Day about old recipe boxes in which many women in the past and currently collect and store their recipes. Like Jan said, "The next time you're looking for information on your ancestors, don't head for the archives. Rather, extricate an old recipe box from under the stairs or up in the attic. You will find a lot of history—real and personal—while reading old handwritten recipes."

During her presentation Jan mentioned the following, "The greatest personal history comes in the original handwriting. When I see my former landlady's writing, or my mother's, or my deceased friends', I am immediately transported to their kitchens or dining rooms from many years ago. I can hear the cooks' voices and see their smiles."

Sponsor a Guest

DCAGS is offering an opportunity for members to sponsor a guest with a one year free membership. Here's how it would work:

1. Current members could sponsor a free one-time guest membership for a new guest and/or family with emailed newsletters and other electronic correspondence. No directories and no printed materials will be sent.
2. Thereafter, the guest may join as a regular member with full member benefits (newsletters, directory, emails, mailings and events).
3. The year for inclusion runs for the membership period-April 1, 2017 to March 31, 2018. Members who wish to sponsor a free guest member would send an email to the DCAGS email address, widcags@gmail.com with the following information:

- sponsor's name
- guest's name
- guest's address
- guest's phone number and guest's email

This is an excellent opportunity to increase the visibility of DCAGS and promote membership.

So, send us the name of a guest.

Book Review

Orphan Train by Christine Baker Kline

Christina Baker Kline has written a thoughtful, memorable story based on the history of the orphan trains. In reality orphan trains transported more than two hundred thousand orphaned and abandoned children, mostly from the northeastern cities, to the Midwest between 1854 and 1929. Charles Loring Brace founded the program and believed that these children could be saved from abject poverty living on the streets or in orphanages by sending them west to be adopted by farm families. Unfortunately in many cases these children became indentured servants to their adoptive families and were often taken advantage of and abused. Such is the case in the book *Orphan Train*.

The story alternates from the present time (Maine, 2011) to the past (Minnesota, 1929-1939). Christine Kline writes about two women. One is Vivian, who is 91 years old, an impoverished Irish immigrant who arrives in New York, becomes orphaned, and is thus chosen to ride the orphan train to the Midwest. Her childhood is laden with misery in the two consecutive families with whom she is placed. The second woman,

a Penobscot Indian named Molly, is a 17 year old girl who is also an orphan and has endured a string of foster families. Molly, troubled and surly, is slated for Juvenile Hall but as a last resort is able to do 50 hours of community service by cleaning out Vivian's attic.

The two women uncover and sort out Vivian's history from the contents in the old attic trunks. Vivian and Molly find that their differences melt away into new understandings as



they become aware they have both survived terrible circumstances and great loneliness in their early lives. Despite the large gap in their ages, a powerful friendship unites them, changing their lives.

I find this book to be a genealogical treasure as the author carefully weaves the past and present together and involves

the interest of a teenager pursuing the personal history of an elderly woman.

The book provides the reader with much insight into a portion of history that has been forgotten over time.

The author has spent countless hours in research to provide an accurate picture of what these orphans endured. She includes a short history of orphan trains and adds actual photos taken in the 1920s of some of the children who rode the trains.

Her book is a testimony to the human spirit that wills to survive despite adversity and how genuine friendship can develop a generous compassionate heart.

*Review by
Barb Abbott*

Remember the War with Spain and Philippines 1898-1902: A Search for US Navy Service Records

As I write this it is the 100th anniversary of official US entry into World War I or the Great War. I am aware of five great-uncles on my paternal side that were in the Army during the 1917-1919 time of our involvement. Many other male relatives in 1917 and 1918 had to fill out draft registration cards; one of these was a great-grandfather on my maternal side named Joseph Charles Podrasky. By the time he registered on September 12, 1918, he was 39, had four children and was living in Des Plaines, Illinois and worked at Benjamin Electric Manufacturing Company. What is not indicated on the draft registration is that he previously had served in the U.S. Navy for four years, enlisting on December 20, 1899, until he was honorably discharged on December 19, 1903. During this time he was active when the United States was involved in the Philippine Island or Philippine-American War of 1899-1902.

This is another forgotten and undeclared war the U.S. was involved with that history has not looked at in great detail or wishes to

remember. There are various places if one is interested in learning about this history on the internet and in books. One example is a source I found by doing a search for research theses done by graduate students. I found a good source by a Navy officer in 2004 that has excellent information on the ships my great-grandfather stated in a letter he was stationed as a coxswain. [U.S. Navy Lieutenant Carlson, Dec 2004].

My purpose is to explain what I have first learned about my great-grandpa's time in the Navy at the turn of 20th century.



Joseph C. Podrasky (right) in Hong Kong later 1900

Research

At this point I learned when he enlisted, the ships he was assigned to, the possible dates he served on each ship, some information on these ships, pictures, and a

letter that my great-grandfather wrote to the Veterans Administration in 1933 to explain his service and wound(s). This was for a pension application he had started in 1926. At end of this brief article, you will see one of many reported paintings he did years after his service, showing his love of the seas and ships. He must have loved the water and ships he saw on Lake Michigan as a child growing up in the last two decades of the 19th century in Chicago, IL.

Chronology of Ship Service

Joseph Podrasky
1899 – 1903

Enlisted December 20, 1899.

Assigned to Receiving Ship - USS Franklin (1864 - launched) Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia.

Sent to USS Dixie and sailed to Manilla, Philippines, arriving around May 15, 1900.

Transferred to USS Glacier about May 20, 1900.

Transferred to USS Zafiro about June 15, 1900.

Transferred to USS Oregon in Hong Kong about June 20, 1900*.

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(Search for Navy Records continued from page 6)

Stranded on reef June 26, 1900, off Taku (located by the Hai River [Peiho River]) estuary, in Tanggu District, Tianjin northeastern China; remained there for about a month.

Arrived in Kure, Japan about August 1, 1900. Arrived in Woosung, China, about September 9, 1900.

The USS Oregon was a battleship stationed in area for protection of U.S. interests (Lieutenant Carlson, Dec 2004).

Left Woosung, China for Hong Kong about February 22, 1901.

Transferred to USS Zafiro about April 15, 1901.

Transferred to USS Princeton about May 1, 1901* (injury to head).

Transferred to USS Buffalo about August 1902* (sick list).

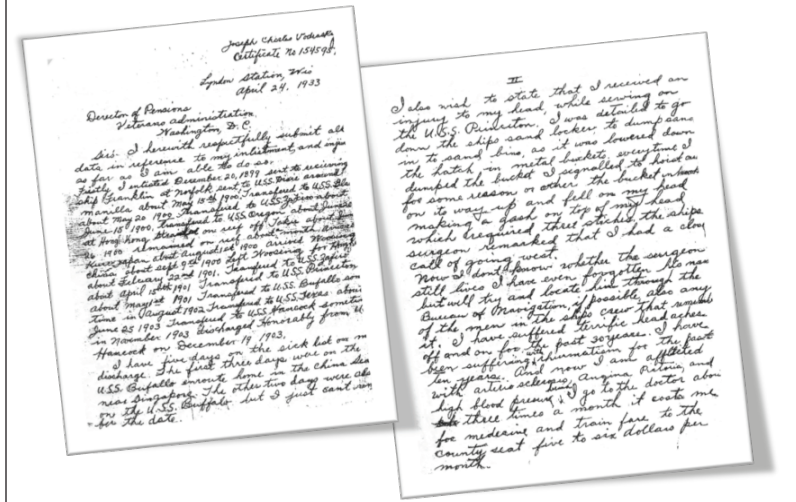
Transferred to USS Texas about June 25, 1903.

Transferred to USS Hancock about November 1903 (came home).

Discharged on Hancock on December 19, 1903.

by Bob Rettammel

Letter written on April 24, 1933, in Lyndon Station, WI to US Veterans Administration



1928 painting done by Joseph C. Podrasky - ©Robert J. Rettammel, 2017

References

Web search done on April 21, 2017, by Bob Rettammel found following:

1. Graduate Thesis
THE PHILIPPINE INSURRECTION: THE U.S. NAVY IN A MILITARY OPERATION OTHER THAN WAR, 1899-1902
by Ted W. Carlson, Lieutenant, United States Navy B.A., San Diego State University, 1999
Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in National Security Affairs from the Naval Post-Graduate School. December 2004, Author: Ted W. Carlson
Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited
<http://www.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a429668.pdf>
2. Research done by 4th cousin of author in 1999.
3. Author'

My Favorite Relative

This is about ‘a family relative’ - a composite of all my immigrant ancestors. These people held the values that I admire even today, and, of course, without them, I wouldn’t be living in the great land of America.

Most (but not all) of these relatives are German, and they came into America at various time periods. The first Germans that I know of are in my Boyer line, and Johann Andreas Beyer came to America on September 5, 1738 with a large wave of Germans that settled Pennsylvania. In fact, so many Germans came that a book by Professor Israel Rupp states: “So vast became their number in Pennsylvania as to excite public attention as early as 1717, and lead the provincial council to adopt on September 14, 1727 and enforce the following resolution.....That a list be taken of all these people, their several occupations and place from whence they came and shall be further examined touching their intentions in coming hither; and that a writing be drawn up for them to sign, declaring their allegiance and subjection tot the King of Great Britain, and fidelity to the propri-

etary of this providence, and that they will demean themselves peaceably towards all His Majesty’s subjects and observe and conform to the laws of England and the Government of Pennsylvania.”

As far as I know, my relatives did just that until the Revolutionary War arose, and then, Christopher Boyer, a son of Johann Andreas, sided with the Patriots by signing the Oath of Allegiance and Fidelity in Berks Co., PA on May 25, 1778. He also served in the Militia, was active in his community, and was aware of the bigger picture at our Nations birth. Many of these early Germans were satisfied to remaining in their communities but Christopher’s grandson Daniel, broke that mold and headed west moving to Ohio. His son, William Henry Boyer moved further to Illinois. Since I have lived in many places, and enjoyed the adventure of each move, I can appreciate the early pioneer’s desire for new lands, and adventures.

A parallel line of English ancestors arrived in Virginia around the middle of the eighteenth century.

The Elmores generally appeared to be law abiding and they had wanderlust. By at least 1767, they moved further south to North Carolina and by 1767 and by 1790 they were in Kentucky. They didn’t appear to be Tories or Patriots and they seemed to avoid military service. They were average ‘hard scrabble’ folk, who seemed to inhabit a place for a while, hear of greener pastures, and move on. By 1830, they were in the Petersburg area of Illinois with Lincoln and other Kentucky families. They owned land, occasionally held office, and pushed the frontier forward. I admire their grit and survival skills.

The 1850’s brought two more of my German immigrant families -the Harseims and the Asbachs. Patriarch, Johann August Christian Harseim paid the price early for his dream to come to America. He came with his grown sons, wife and daughters-in-law but sadly passes away 5 days after he stepped off the boat in New Albany, IN. This was after he endured the ocean crossing, a

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(My Favorite Relative continued from page 7)

landing in New Orleans, and a trip up the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. His dream did not die with him for the rest of the family continued to the Peru area of Illinois, and prospered.



The Asbach's, from the Rhine River area of Germany came to America April 1, 1853 and settled near Leon, Iowa. Johann Wilhelm must have brought some money with him for he purchased 3 parcels of land for his farm and he became the postmaster of his area. His family also paid a price for coming to America for their oldest son, John, enlisted in Company M, 3rd, Iowa Cavalry during the Civil War and was killed at the Battle of Osage, Kansas on October 25, 1864. I imagine it was a difficult blow to the family as letters show them to have been close. They are to be admired for stressing education, patriotism, and a close-knit family.

My father's family, the Hasselmans's from Mecken-

burg/Streitz area of Germany came to America during the Civil War in 1865. This was a very unusual move for this period as immigration went way down during the war. Johann Frederick Theodore followed his brother to America and had to endure the death of his first wife from TB, which was rampant at the time. Being resourceful, he sent back to Germany for her sister, married her and founded our family with her. He was practical and patient for he worked for seven years in a LaSalle, IL foundry before he had money enough to buy the farm of his dreams. He and his wife suffered their sorrows in America as two of their adult children died of typhoid fever. I admire this family for their courage to come to a new country, and for their thrift and resourcefulness.

The last family to research is the Miller family on my mother's side. Unfortunately, I know the least about this family's origins. I know Andrew was born in Germany around 1824, but for the present, I do not know definitively who his parents were, though they much have come to America shortly after Andrew's birth. One census says that Andrew was born

in Payerne, Switzerland, and if that is the case the family was probably part of a group of German Baptists that were persecuted and fled Germany. They went up the mountains of Switzerland before immigrating to America. I do know that a Joshua Miller, a blacksmith in New Salem, IL was a devout Baptist and had five children. Stay tuned to see if I am able to link Andrew to Joshua. For now, there are only clues. I admire the Millers for sticking to their religion and enduring the hardships of a new world.


As you can read from my ancestral study, all of these people were ready to take a chance on finding a better life than they had in Europe. They worked hard, often on a farm and they had tenacity and prided themselves on assimilation. They are to be admired like millions of other immigrants.

by Joyce Hasselman Nigbor

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