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IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

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For staff development and training, the entire Main Library, including the Genealogy Center, will be closed from 9A to 2P on Friday, March 9, 2007. Please make a note of this. The Genealogy Center will be re-open at 2P on March 9th and be open normal hours the rest of the weekend. Again, the Main Library will be closed for one half day on March 9, 2007 from 9A to 2P.

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An Anniversary . . . and Other Important Dates!

by Curt B. Witcher

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We're celebrating an anniversary! We have been in our brand new facility for one month! And what an extraordinary month it has been! It is wonderful to have such comfortable research space with such great technology for the many genealogists who have used our collection over the years. It is neat to see so many new faces also stopping by just to "check us out" and see what this "family history thing" is all about. And it is fantastic to welcome the monthly programs of the Allen County Genealogical Society and the meetings of its Computer Interest Group back to the Main Library.

If you haven't yet planned your trip to the library's Genealogy Center, this month's e-zine should tempt you to make some plans now. We have our own version of March madness--an inviting line-up of programs in the middle of the month. We have more information about the Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference this August 15-18 in Fort Wayne. A really strong program of knowledgeable speakers combined with outstanding networking opportunities really make that particular week golden for genealogists and family historians. More information is below.

As the weather begins to thaw, warm-up your research by taking advantage of some of our

program offerings, and using the vast and growing resources of our collection.

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### The Wilbur H. Siebert Collection

by Elaine M. Kuhn

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Researchers with an interest in the workings of the Underground Railroad will want to take a look at the Wilbur H. Siebert Collection, available on microfilm in the *Genealogy Center*. Wilbur H. Siebert was a professor of history at Ohio State University for many years. He began his research in the early 1890s by sending out questionnaires to individuals who may have had knowledge of the Underground Railroad. Siebert himself retraced the routes of the Underground Railroad and visited many of the former stations. He also conducted numerous interviews, all along taking copious notes that eventually became volumes of information.

Organized by state, the collection consists of sixteen microfilm rolls of correspondences, newspaper clippings, magazine articles and chapters from published sources. Anti-slavery pamphlets, copies of slavery laws, reports from abolitionist societies, and related material are also found within the collection. Many of the letters included in the collection contain first hand accounts from former slaves, neighbors to Underground Railroad stations, and from people whose families actually participated in helping slaves flee to Canada. The collection also contains a number of photographs and illustrations of former slaves, Underground Railroad workers and their homes, and other individuals who were active in the abolitionist movement.

Although an every-name index currently does not exist for the entire collection, there are a few finding aids available. A descriptive catalog of the microfilm can be found in the *Genealogy Center* at call number 977.1 Oh3aw. An every-name index covering the Indiana section of the collection is available online at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/historic/adobepdf/siebertindex.pdf>. Selected images from the Siebert collection can be viewed at <http://www.ohiohistory.org/etcetera/exhibits/ohiopix/galleries.cfm?Gallery=18>. The sixteen rolls of microfilm comprising the Siebert collection are located in the *Genealogy Center's* microtext area in drawer 61-B-2.

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### Peeking at Potentates: Masonic Records at the *Genealogy Center*

by Delia Cothrun Bourne

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Between 1850 and 1950, hundreds of societies were founded in the United States as our ancestors tried to create networks of friends and associates. Of course, the Freemasons have been here in America since the 1700s, and although their history has been distorted in film and fiction, the histories and records of state and local lodges can be useful to genealogical researchers.

The *Genealogy Center* has a variety of material for researchers of Masonic ancestors. A

good early history is Steven Bullock's *Revolutionary brotherhood: Freemasonry and the transformation of the American social order, 1730-1840* (973 B87R). State and local lodge histories can be informative, even when a member-ancestor is not specifically mentioned. *Three Centuries of Freemasonry in New Hampshire* by Gerald D. Foss (974.2 F79T) provides the history of the Masons in that state, and also has a biographical section which lists education, business and lodge information for select members, but no family information. On a more local level, John K. Gott's *One hundred years of Cochran Lodge, 1899-1999: Cochran Lodge No. 271 A.F. & A.M., The Plains, Virginia* (975.5 G712ON) includes not only names of members, visitors, and information on members' funerals, but also such notes as the one on 24 April 1906, when \$25 was allocated to be sent "for the relief of California sufferers."

State registers and compilations vary widely. Desmond Walls Allen's series *Abstracts from Masonic Records, Grand Lodge of Arkansas, 1862-1879* (976.7 AL45APA to APC) is typical, with proceedings and minutes of meetings, rosters of lodges, and listings of deaths. She also published *Masonic Death Records from the Grand Lodge of Arkansas* in two volumes covering 1920-1990 (976.7 AL45AMB and AP). *Tennessee Templars* (976.8 R39T) is an 1883 register of names with biographical sketches, but only lists whether a member is married or unmarried. The *Proceedings of the Most Worshipful Grand Lodge of Free and Most Accepted Masons of the State of Indiana, 1962* (977.2 F87P) includes appendices detailing persons granted to visit lodges in other jurisdictions, a list of memorial contributions to the Masonic Home Foundation, enumeration of fifty-year buttons issued, and age and date of arrival for members in the Masonic Home. *Mississippi Masonic Death Records 1819-1919*, by Thomas C. S-Wixon (976.2 SW6M) lists the deceased's name, year of death, and location, and has a few full page memorials.

Also among the Genealogy Center's holdings are a few volumes on the Eastern Star, the Masonic women's auxiliary. One such is the May 1958 issue of *The Star-Dust Bulletin of Indiana* (977.202 IN3ES), the publication of the Indiana Grand Chapter, Order of the Eastern Star. Included in this issue are biographies and photographs of members, current events in the chapters, and obituaries. Another, *Centennial book, 1867-1967*, about the Order of the Eastern Star, Grand Chapter of Michigan (977.4 OR2), includes past state and chapter officers, reminiscences, and long time members.

Even if the Genealogy Center does not have records for a specific state or local lodge, examining a few of these volumes can help a researcher know what type of records might be available at a local level.

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Countdown to Conference 2007!

by Elaine M. Kuhn

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The month of February may have been a cold and snowy one for many folks, but it didn't slow down the researchers coming to the newly re-opened Genealogy Center! Thousands of visitors have passed through the Center since the library re-opened on January 27th, and the majority of remarks about the new area can be boiled down to one word - "Wow!"

The chilly climate also hasn't slowed down the plans for the FGS/ACPL 2007 Conference to be held in Fort Wayne on August 15th through the 18th. The conference program is set and what a fascinating lineup of presentations it is! There will literally be something of interest to everyone who is engaged in genealogy and family history research. To see the roster of speakers and the topics they will cover, go to the conference website at <http://fgsconference.org/program.php>.

Have you made your hotel reservation for the conference yet? If not, you might want to make that a priority on your "to-do" list in the coming weeks. Rooms are going quickly! Two of the FGS/ACPL Conference hotels, the Hilton Fort Wayne at the Grand Wayne Center, and the Holiday Inn Hotel Downtown are now sold out. Do not despair - there are still plenty of lodging facilities within a short distance of the Grand Wayne Center. To see a list of other conference lodging in the Fort Wayne area, go to the website at <http://fgsconference.org/lodging.php>. Additional lodging information is available at the Fort Wayne/Allen County Convention and Visitors Bureau website at <http://www.visitfortwayne.com/lodging.html>. Also try some of the major travel reservation websites such as Travelocity (<http://www.travelocity.com>), Expedia (<http://www.expedia.com/>), or Priceline (<http://www.priceline.com/default.asp>).

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#### March Madness - Genealogy Style

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Programs in the month of March you definitely will want to add to your calendar!

"Creating a Family History Website 101," Monday March 12, 2007, 2P.

Presented by: Mary D. Kraeszig. Computer Classroom, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza. Designed for genealogists having little or no experience with web site design (HTML/XML), this introductory class will enable you to find free or inexpensive web hosting for your site, and create/upload a basic family history website, including formatted descendant charts, photographs, document images, etc.

"Using Ancestry.com," Tuesday March 13, 2007, 2P.

Presented by: Delia Cothrun Bourne. Computer Classroom, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza. This talk will provide search instructions and tips for Ancestry's many databases, such as census and passenger records, and the historic newspaper collection.

"Using HeritageQuestOnline.com," Wednesday March 14, 2007, 10A.

Presented by: Elaine Kuhn. Computer Classroom, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza. This presentation will cover searching and printing from Heritage Quest Online, which includes federal censuses, Revolutionary War pension files, books, Freedman's Bank information, and the Periodical Source Index.

"Brick Wall Climbing," Thursday March 15, 2007, 2:30P

Presented by: Shirley Husband. Meeting Room B, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza. Shirley will share the method used to overcome her unique brick wall.

"Using Irish Manuscript Collections," Friday March 16, 2007, 2P.  
Presented by: Steve Myers. Orientation Room, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza.  
Learn to successfully utilize Irish manuscript sources through a survey of indexes and finding aids, and an examination of the types of records available.

"Beginners Workshop," Saturday March 17, 2007, 9:30A to 12N.  
Presented by: Marjorie Graham. Orientation Room, First Floor, Main Library, 900 Library Plaza. Organizational tools and proven methods to get you started on the right track to successful searching.

All sessions are free but you do need to register. Contact the Genealogy Center at 260-421-1225 or [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info) to register for any, or ALL of these events.

There is no charge to attend these presentations, but registration is required. Contact the Genealogy Center at (260) 421-1225 or send an email to [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info) to sign up.

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#### Preservation Tip of the Month

by Becky Schipper

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A great resource for librarians, genealogists, and others interested in preservation and conservation is Northeast Document Conservation Center. Their website <[www.nedcc.org](http://www.nedcc.org)> has a Q & A section that covers the most common questions asked on the subject. They also provide imaging services, workshops, preservation resources, and disaster assistance.

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#### Area Calendar of Events

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Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

Refreshments at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. Questions: contact Katie Bloom

[kathrynabloom@verizon.net](mailto:kathrynabloom@verizon.net)

Wednesday, March 14, 2007, Main Library at 900 Library Plaza: Ronald Darrah will speak about using maps in genealogy.

Computer Users Group--Third Wednesday of each month.

Questions? Contact Marge Graham, [gramar57@aol.com](mailto:gramar57@aol.com) or 672-2585.

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) "First Wednesday" program is suspended for January of 2007 during the Genealogy Center's major move to its newly expanded location at 900 Library Plaza. Look for them on February 7, 2007 in the new department from 9A - 7pm. Expert help from members of the DAR in becoming a member of that organization

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#### Driving Directions to the Library

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Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne,

Indiana, on the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Webster Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

>From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Road. Coming up to an angled street (State Street.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

>From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

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Parking at the Library

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**At the Library**, underground parking can be accessed off of Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ALPC card holders may use their cards validate the parking ticket in the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual

Subscription Card is \$65.

**Public lots** are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

**Street (metered) parking** on Ewing and Wayne Streets. On the street you plug the meters 8am - 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

**Visitor center/Grand Wayne Center garage** at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am - 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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#### Genealogy Center Queries

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The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: [Genealogy@ACPL.Info](mailto:Genealogy@ACPL.Info).

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#### PUBLISHING NOTE:

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This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Historical Genealogy Department, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause.

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Curt Witcher, editor pro-tem