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Our Role in Preserving Our Records
by Curt B. Witcher

The warmer, early summer days already have many genealogists on the road visiting libraries and other record repositories, as well as walking cemeteries, attending seminars and workshops, and joining in the fun of family gatherings of all sizes. I enjoyed a small family gathering myself over the Memorial Day weekend--it seems summer holidays are just perfect for such occasions.

While the summer months have us again thinking about taking a little time off and perhaps doing a few extra genealogical activities, I would urge all of us to also think about our collective role in preserving the records that document our history and heritage. Instead of making New Year's resolutions (which typically don't go very far or last very long!) let's try a new approach--Mid-Year resolutions! Some very concrete, simple, straightforward activities can make a tremendous difference.

Let's take active steps to preserve the family data we have collected and other family information that has been entrusted to us. Each year, regrettably, there are ample occurrences of natural disasters. Flooding from melting snows in the spring and deluges at any time of the year annually cause untold damage to personal, institutional and governmental archives. The ravages of fire, accidental or intentional, have caused great record losses over time. Recall the devastation caused in the south and west with the wild fires of '08. Some areas of the country have experienced wildfires already in '09. And in our own state of Indiana, the Jefferson County courthouse was heavily damaged by fire that started on May 19th. If not microfilmed or digitized previously, many of those early Jefferson County records could be lost forever.

How many times are we going to do nothing after watching a television interview with a family indicating, post disaster, that they have lost *everything*? What steps have you taken to ensure your family records are safeguarded against these natural disasters? You might want to plan a

genealogy "stay-cation" where you spend some time organizing your family documents and then making copies to share with family members and record repositories such as libraries and genealogical societies. The Genealogy Center of the Allen County Public Library continues to welcome organized groups of documents and papers for inclusion in our collections. It truly never has been easier and less expensive to distribute your family data for safekeeping and ready access. Burning a DVD of your materials costs no more than a very few dollars, and typically less than that. Uploading genealogical data to WeRelate.org is free and provides a wonderful way to preserve information about your ancestors, as well as images of the documents and photographs that support your research.

Indeed, what about finally publishing some or most of your family data? Publication is a very good form of data preservation. In addition, publication also has the advantage of providing wider access to copies of documents, information, and conclusions drawn about particular sets of data. In addition to the traditional method of publishing on paper, one can also publish on a personal website, provide a copy of one's data to the Genealogy Center to publish on the library's website, or again, upload the data to WeRelate.org.

Are we being responsible in our collective role to ensure that historical and genealogical data is well preserved for future generations of researchers? Let's take the summer months to get active and make sure we are. Stop by the Genealogy Center and let us know how you're doing.

Searching the Last Frontier: Alaskan Vital Record Notice Compilations
by Delia Cothrun Bourne

For such a large place, the population, and resulting genealogical records, are comparatively light for Alaska, but there are three publications held by the Genealogy Center that have a veritable gold mine of information on the state's residents.

"Death Notices for Persons Born Prior to 1900, Extracted from the Alaska Sportsman/Alaska Magazine, 1960-1989" (979.8 D34), published by the Sleeping Lady Chapter of the D.A.R., is the first of these collections. This three-volume set, divided by decade, lists names alphabetically. As is typical, the obituaries contain varying amounts of information, including age, birth place, brief biography, and date and place of death. Occupations and nicknames, such as that for William "Woodsaw Bill" Sherwin, a woodcutter who died in 1968 at age 90 at the Sitka Pioneer Home, are among the interesting facts contained in some notices. While most entries are transcribed, a few seem to be photocopied from clippings.

"Vital Records of Alaska & Yukon (Marriage, Death, Birth, Divorce, Anniversary & Christening): As Reported in the Weekly Douglas Island Newspaper, Douglas, Alaska" (979.8 V83), published by the Gastineau Genealogical Society, includes entries from 1898 to 1922. The volume contains, first, an every name index that supplies year and page number for each entry. The chronological entries provide date of newspaper, page and column, event, subject, and date and place of event. Christenings often list father and gender of child, but not mother's name. Some death citations will offer additional information, such as that identifying Rita Miller, who died December 28, 1911 in Oregon, as "George Bach's daughter." Native Americans, such as "Old Sunnyheart," Chief of the

Haidas, who died January 18, 1912 in Kasaan, are included.

Betty J. Miller's five-volume set, "Vital Records from Alaska Daily Empire, Juneau, Alaska" (979.802 J95M), covers 1916 to 1936, and is similar in format, starting with an index, and providing citations for funeral, death, marriage, engagement, birth, and divorce notices. Adoptions, such as that of Lavern Campen by William D. and Hansine Gross in 1916, are also mentioned.

All three sources include former residents, visitors and others important to the history and development of the area, as well as people who died elsewhere, such as Fred D. Parr, who reportedly took a load of lumber to the new town of Anchorage in 1915 on the steam schooner San Ramon, and died "recently" at age 79 in Richmond, California in 1965. Remember that your "Lower 48" ancestor may have resided in or visited Alaska for a brief period, and been remembered by friends and acquaintances.

"The Liberator": A Source for Researching Abolitionist and Fugitive Slave Ancestors
by John D. Beatty

One of the most divisive national issues in the antebellum period was slavery. The question of whether enslaved African Americans should be freed not only divided large sections of the North from the South, but also created fissures within many northern communities. Some northerners were willing to leave slavery alone in the interest of national unity. Some advocated its continuance in the South, but opposed its extension to new western territories. Many others opposed slavery in principle, but were divided over how slaves should be manumitted, and once freed, whether they should be allowed to live in the North or colonized in Africa.

William Lloyd Garrison (1805-1879), a newspaper editor, was uncompromising in his demand for the complete and immediate emancipation of all slaves, and in doing so became one of the most visible and outspoken leaders of the abolitionist movement. On January 1, 1831, he began publishing "The Liberator," a weekly newspaper printed in Boston that garnered a national circulation. In the inaugural issue, he pledged: "I am aware that many object to the severity of my language, but is there not cause for severity? I will be as harsh as truth and as uncompromising as justice."

While the newspaper stressed non-violence and passive resistance, it became a catalyst for abolitionist activity because of the news and editorials it circulated. Garrison published letters from many sympathizers. He also issued commentaries, reprinted sermons, reported on court cases involving fugitive slaves, and published anti-slavery constitutions and other resolutions that were frequently signed by local abolitionist leaders. "The Liberator" also printed accounts of anti-slavery activities, speeches, and events held in various towns across the nation.

For example, in July, 1835, S. G. Wilson reported on his efforts to give an abolitionist speech at a Methodist church in Sandusky, Ohio, listing the names of several supporters and opponents that he encountered. Other issues contained copies of wills and other documents that either supported or helped stoke the fires of the anti-slavery cause. Garrison continued to publish until December 31, 1865, well after the conclusion of the Civil War.

The greatest value for the genealogist is this newspaper's record of names and local accounts. If you have ancestors who belonged to abolitionist congregations, especially Quakers, Universalists, and Presbyterians, or if they were "free blacks" living in the North, you might find a reference in "The Liberator." The Genealogy Center has a complete set of the newspaper on microfilm (cabinet 102-B-8). Some academic libraries subscribe to a fully digitized, online version of the newspaper, which can be searched through Gale's "19th Century U.S. Newspapers" collection, but regrettably, the database is not available free on the Internet and the Allen County Public Library is not a subscriber.

Preservation Tip of the Month--Tightening Loose Hinges

by Becky Schipper

Loose hinges are one of the most common problems occurring with books that receive heavy use. If the problem is repaired at this early stage more serious problems, such as detached covers and split or torn endpapers, can be avoided. Materials needed to repair a loose hinge are listed below.

- *knitting needle or small diameter plexiglass rod
- *pH-neutral adhesive
- *bone folder
- *wax paper
- *weights or book press

Coat the knitting needle or rod with pH-neutral adhesive. I store adhesive for this purpose in a taller container with a small opening, such as a liquid dish detergent bottle. Using such a bottle, you can insert the rod through the opening and coat it without making a mess or wasting adhesive. Slide the rod through the gap left by the loose hinge inside the case, turning it to coat the paper. Do the same from the other end if the book is taller than your needle or rod. Rub down with a bone folder. Wipe off any excess adhesive at the top or bottom. Insert a sheet of waxed paper between the flyleaf and the cover, and put the book under weight or in a press.

WeRelate News

by Cynthia Theusch

WeRelate.org has created another way to back up your genealogy files. If you have uploaded any GEDCOM files to WeRelate during 2008 and 2009, you can now download your GEDCOM files from WeRelate. To download these files, just click on "Trees" in "My Relate." Select the download link for the GEDCOM of your choice. Coming soon--exporting GEDCOM from your WeRelate trees.

Palatines to America--German Genealogy Conference--REGISTER NOW

The Palatines to America National Conference and Annual Meeting will be held at the Allen County Public Library, June 18 - 20, 2009--less than three weeks from the time you receive this ezine! Visit their website for all the details. <www.palam.org/> The general schedule is below.

Thursday June 18, 2009 4:45 p.m. - 5:45 p.m.

Workshop A - Palatines Along the Hudson: Researching 18th Century Settlers on Livingston Manor - Steven Myers

Workshop B - Researching Your North German Ancestors - Robert Rau

Workshop C - Advancing Your Research with PERSI - Delia Bourne

Friday June 19, 2009 2 p.m. - 3 p.m.

Workshop D - Researching in Germany - James Feit

Workshop E - Preparing Your Research for Publication - Barbara Gargiulo

Workshop F - Swiss Genealogical Records - John Beatty

Friday June 19, 2009 3:30 p.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Workshops A - B - C will be repeated

Saturday June 20, 2009 1 p.m. - 2 p.m.

Workshops D - E - F will be repeated

Online registration at the National Conference Registration site

<http://palamnationalconference.org/registration/> .

Genealogy Center Mini-Course: Family History 101

Our very popular mini-course, "Family History 101," will be offered July 10 - 11, 2009. It is time to put this on your summer calendar and sign-up today. The classes, with instructors Margery Graham, CG and Steve Myers, MLS, provide an excellent way for the beginner to get started, for newer researchers to review important concepts and sources, and for seasoned researchers to refresh their skills. "Family History 101" will cover the following topics:

Session 1: *Getting Started on Your Family History*--Start your family history adventure off on the right foot. Learn about important first steps, home sources, interviewing, organizing what you collect, standard forms, using computer catalogs, and more!

Session 2: *Basic Research Methods*--Learn how to plan a successful search, gather evidence, and record and document what you find.

Session 3: *Census Records - A Cornerstone Source*--Learn how federal population schedules, state census records, as well as auxiliary schedules and census substitutes can all help advance your research.

Session 4: *Vital Records - Birth, Marriage & Death*--Learn how to use published and online sources for vital records, how to contact record offices, and how newspaper and cemetery records can fill in the gaps.

Session 5: *Published Local History & Family History Sources*--Learn about the wealth of information

available in local history publications, how to track down obscure sources, and how to find out what others have already done on your families.

Session 6: Directories, Maps & Gazetteers--Learn about the many features of directories, maps and place name dictionaries that can help you pin down exactly where your ancestors lived and what they were doing there.

The registration fee for the "Family History 101" mini-course is \$50. Checks should be made payable to "ACPL Foundation" and mailed to: Genealogy Center, Allen County Public Library, P.O. Box 2270, Fort Wayne, IN 46801-2270. Mini-course attendance will be limited, so register early to avoid disappointment. Additional information and a workshop schedule will be posted soon on our Web site at <http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/programs.html> Margery Graham and Steve Myers are already scheduled to offer "Family History: Beyond the Basics," covering more advanced sources and problem solving, on Friday and Saturday, September 18-19, 2009.

Librarians on Parade

Curt Witcher

June 10, 2009--Fort Wayne, IN, Allen County Genealogical Society Annual Banquet, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, 7:00 p.m. Topic: "This I Believe: The Urgent Need to Record Living History."

June 22, 2009--Mansfield, OH, Mansfield/Richland County Public Library, 43 West 3rd St., Mansfield, 7:00 p.m. Topic: "Finding the World with WorldCat."

June 22-23, 2009--Mansfield, OH, Ohio Genealogical Society Summer Workshops, OGS Library, 713 South Main Street, Mansfield. Monday, June 22nd, 9:30 a.m.--"Doing Effective Genealogical Research in Libraries," 10:45 a.m.--"Using PERSI, The Periodical Source Index," and 3:30 p.m.--"Pain in the Access: Getting More from the Internet for Your Genealogy." Tuesday, June 23rd, 9:30 a.m.--"Using Government Documents for Genealogical Research" and 10:45 a.m.--"All That Other STUFF!: Other Census Records Beyond the Population Schedules."

Three topics on genealogical research methodology.

John Beatty

June 19 & 20, 2009--Fort Wayne, IN, PalAm German Genealogy Conference, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, 2:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. respectively. Topic: "Swiss Genealogical Records."

Delia Bourne

June 18 & 19, 2009--Fort Wayne, IN, PalAm German Genealogy Conference, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, 4:45 p.m. & 3:30 p.m. respectively. Topic: "Advancing Your Research with PERSI."

Steve Myers

June 18, 2009--Fort Wayne, IN, PalAm German Genealogy Conference, Allen County Public Library,

900 Library Plaza, 2:15 p.m. Topic: "German Genealogical Resources at the Allen County Public Library."

June 18 & 19, 2009--Fort Wayne, IN, PalAm German Genealogy Conference, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, 4:45 p.m. & 3:30 p.m. respectively. Topic: "Palatines Along the Hudson: Researching 18th Century Settlers on Livingston Manor."

Area Calendar of Events

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

June 10, 2009 at 6:30 p.m. at the Allen County Public Library's Main Library, 900 Library Plaza, First Floor Meeting Rooms. Annual dinner--includes the election of officers, awarding of certificates for First Families and Homesteaders, and presentation by Curt Witcher entitled, "This I Believe: The Urgent Need to Record Living History."

Allen County-Fort Wayne Historical Society, 302 East Berry, Ft. Wayne, IN

June 7, 2009 at 2 p.m. Jim Sack will present "World War I Repression of Fort Wayne's Germans"

Driving Directions to the Library

Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Center.

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 Ave.* which dead-ends at *West State Blvd.* Make an angled left turn onto *West State Blvd.* 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.

Parking at the Library

At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from *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. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of 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 \$70.

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.

Genealogy Center Queries

The *Genealogy Center* 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.

Publishing Note:

This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, 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.

To subscribe to "Genealogy Gems," simply use your browser to go to the website: www.GenealogyCenter.Info. Scroll down toward the bottom of the first screen where it says, "Enter Your Email Address to Subscribe to "Genealogy Gems." Enter your email address in the yellow box and click on "Subscribe." You will be notified with a confirmation email.

If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of *Genealogy Gems* you just received or send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Steve Myers & Curt Witcher, co-editors