

# Prairie Roots

Home is where your story begins



**McMinimy Homestead, Hancock County, Illinois**



**Cranford Homestead, Clark County, Kansas**



**Zant Homestead, Peoria, Illinois**



**Wear Homestead, south of Princeville, Illinois**



# Peoria County Genealogical Society

**Mission:** To identify, preserve, and share the heritage of our Peoria County ancestors

**Vision:** All generations are connected to their heritage.

## Membership

Every PCGS member becomes part of an active and engaged community of family historians—with monthly meetings, small Special Interest Groups, a monthly subscription to *PCGS News*, two annual issues of *Prairie Roots* magazine, and access to an increasing number of records, files, and publications on *Passport*, the members-only section of the PCGS website. Membership renews every July 1.

**\$30 - Regular membership:** One or more persons of the same household, under age 65

**\$25 - Senior membership:** At least one member of the same household, over age 65

**\$50 - Contributing membership:** Regular or Senior members wishing to pay dues plus a contribution

**\$100 - Sustaining membership:** Regular or Senior members wishing to pay dues plus a contribution

## Meetings

**Monthly Member Meetings** are held March through November on the second Thursday of the month at 6:00 PM at the Peoria Public Library North Branch, 3001 W. Grand Parkway, Peoria, Illinois. Meetings are also held online via Zoom. All Member Meetings are open to the public.

**Special Interest Groups** are member-only small discussion groups held via Zoom or in person. Topics change throughout the year, but have included DNA, “brick walls,” local research, writing, and more.

**Special Meetings** are occasional events that provide PCGS members and the interested public with extra content to augment their research. An example of this is a recent series of talks focusing on new methods in conducting research in Peoria County.

## Website

The Peoria County Genealogical Society website includes valuable links to Peoria County records as well as state and national resources. A members-only section called

*Passport* features exclusive content of interest to local genealogists, including the 1888 Peoria Census, area township cemetery records, and more.

**PCGS News** is the PCGS newsletter, which is emailed to members ten times each year. This publication features timely announcements, research tips, calendar items, and meeting information.

**Prairie Roots** is the PCGS print journal that is mailed to each member’s home twice a year. The first issue of *Prairie Roots* appeared in 1974. Today, the publication averages more than sixty pages of member-written articles, photographs, and oral histories.

**PCGS Collection:** The Peoria County Genealogical Society was organized in April of 1973, and charter membership was closed on June 1 of that year with seventy members. Over the years, PCGS has purchased and maintained books and materials for researcher use. The PCGS collection is housed and available to members and the general public in the Local History and Genealogy Department of the Peoria Public Library Main Branch.

## Research

With the growing availability of Peoria County records online, the position of PCGS Researcher has been suspended. The society’s website is being revamped to reflect the numerous databases readily available to researchers. Links to county, state, and national databases, state archives, and local libraries will be frequently updated.

## Volunteers

The activities undertaken by PCGS are only possible because of our many dedicated volunteers. Volunteers help archive collections, type and proofread, post and share items on Facebook, write articles for *PCGS News* and *Prairie Roots*, serve as greeters at meetings, read cemeteries, and much more. PCGS can only continue to grow and expand our activities, offerings, and events with the help of people like you. Please consider giving your time.



## A Message from Our VP

Winter's Greetings to all of you!

What an exciting time to be part of the Peoria County Genealogical Society! We on the board have been inspired and encouraged by the number of you who have attended our monthly programming and special events. Many of you have attracted visitors to our meetings, as well. We want to thank you for helping us grow and spreading the message that family history is exciting and an opportunity to network with people in our research community.



As the temperatures drop here in Central Illinois and we all become more housebound than usual, consider this a time to beef up your online researching and organizing. A great starting point is our website. ([www.peoriacountygenealogy.org](http://www.peoriacountygenealogy.org)) Remember that with your membership you receive access to our passport section of the website where many otherwise hard to find resources are housed. We hope there are undiscovered treasures awaiting you there.

Perhaps you met someone at a meeting this year that you would like to begin coordinating with to team up on your research efforts? Maybe you are curious to dive deeper into your DNA results? Could this be the perfect time to sit with a relative and record their oral history? Whatever route(s) you choose, we at PCGS wish you much luck and return on your invested efforts. Here's to breaking down brick walls chip by chip and discovering new leads that keep us excited (and up until the wee hours of the night) all winter.

Warmly,  
Angie Sneeringer  
PCGS Vice President



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## Cover Photos

- Top** Home of **John James and Narcissa Adeline (Boston) McMinimy**  
 Daughters **Mary Susan (McMinimy) Timberlake** and **Allie Jane (McMinimy) Byers** are pictured in front of their childhood home in this photo dated 1941.
- Center L.** Sod house built by **Houston and Hester (Thompson) Cranford** in Clark County, Kansas.
- Center R.** Home of **John and Angeline Zant** at 211 Charlotte Street in Peoria, Illinois
- Bottom** Home built by **Washington C. and Cornelia (Hill) Wear** on land about a mile south of Princeville that was purchased by his parents, **James and Ellen Wear**.

### PCGS Board of Directors 2023-2024

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Positions Available: **President, Collections & Archives, Projects**



# Getting to know you, getting to know all about you . . .

## The Courtship

Submitted by Barb Cramer Benner

Looking at a suggested *Prairie Roots* topic, I began thinking about my parents' courtship. I can only relate memories given to me verbally over the years. While my parents shared almost 50 years together, each of them would say there was nothing extraordinary about their courtship or their lives. However, an outsider would surely disagree as theirs was a life of commitment, so deep, so sincere and so solid. I can say that is "out of the ordinary" for our current time as near to 50% of today's marriages end in divorce and must obviously lack those basics.



John W. & Helen (Schafer) Cramer  
October 17, 1929

The term "courtship" is somewhat old fashioned, certainly apropos in my parents' time, and generally viewed as one to three years wherein a couple loves each other and spend time formulating their plans and dreams to marry "until death do us part." Rarely did I hear my mom refer to herself as "dating" my dad, and that term was more casual and somewhat meant seeing each other but not serious enough to plan a marriage.

From the memory bank and with the help of a diary, I believe my parents "courted" a little over a year, close to two years. My mother was young, still in high school and my father was ten years her senior. They lived on farms in Peoria County and were relatively near each other. I would think from house to house, the distance would have been two miles, but they were not considered neighbors in the sense of the word meaning adjacent land. My father's family lived on rental property and farmed along with dairy production for the majority of his youth. My mother's father owned their farm and

they produced more crops and dairy was for their own use. Both households were German as a predominant nationality and the ethics, beliefs (except for religion), expectations, and hard work practices were quite similar.

My folks were falling in love in the late 1920's. In this courtship with the opportunity to know each other and spend time together, the activities were limited in variety. An evening at the movies seemed to be most common and recorded in that diary most often, dances at the Inglaterra and the Orpheum appeared about once a month or six weeks. Mom referred to it as the "Ing"! I find that amazing as my dad never claimed to dance, never headed to a dance floor during my entire lifetime when we'd be at such a location. See what people do for love? My dad was from a family of 7 kids, my mom just 3 children. They occasionally picnicked at a Peoria park, often went to "box suppers" at a gathering home in the general neighborhood where the family atmosphere was enhanced in an absolute community environment. If they were involved in activities of their generation, such as old-fashioned sleigh rides, it was in a group, usually not just the two of them. As I write this, I am alerted to the fact that young people of today spend way too much alone time, just the two of them, but here I am the "old fashioned" one!

I don't do diaries; the reason, I found my mom's! It is absolutely funny to me that this was written by a 17 - 18-year-old senior high school student. Her course of study was business and my mother's nature was serious. Certainly, these entries that told of where they went, when they got home, etc. were serious, no silly girl in any of this. However, she entered her dreams and innermost thoughts in "shorthand." Little did she ever in her wildest ideas think that the youngest daughter she had would some 35 years later BE ABLE TO READ SHORTHAND (yes, I took it in high school also). I did not discover the diary, however, until years after her death.

If we stop to think about it, there are similarities in those areas of decisions for "then" and "now." My parents were of different religions; my mother's parents absolutely approved and loved my dad except for his religion. He was Catholic, and they were strong Lutherans. It was understood that she was to finish high school



before any marriage. An interesting entry from the night my dad proposed and gave my mom her engagement ring, was that she knew how much his mother liked her, she was proud and thrilled. Over the time of this courtship, some of the “prejudiced” feelings softened, but when it came the day of marriage, my parents said their vows in the church parsonage with only their witnesses present. Boy, that makes me feel bad, but my folks were OK with it. A couple years later, the first grandchild on either side arrived; that did it—all were happy and my mother’s folks were filled with joy and religion took a backseat. A major reason for that was the date of the wedding had been October 17, just 12 days before the stock market crash! In those days, survival meant survival.

I don’t have any idea who introduced my parents but know they were both known in their community. I once again find their life extraordinary as it was just plain hard, with struggles, hardship, pain and loss. They stuck it out, they were 100% in sync and they had a wonderful life together.

## “That’s the Girl I’m Going to Marry!”

*Submitted by Kathleen Biersdorff*

Surprisingly few stories of courtship and marriage have been passed down through our family, given the number of ancestors we have traced. In fact, there is only one courtship story and the truth of it is not verifiable. It concerns my great, great, great-grandparents **Jane Mitchell** and **John Davis**.

Jane was born on December 25, 1816 in Greenville, Ohio, the third of four children. Her father died three years later and her mother and the children moved back to Wheeling, VA (as it was at the time) to live with an uncle. They were financially comfortable there in a home with rugs on the floor, unlike the more rugged existence in western Ohio at the time. But Jane was a tomboy, fond of playing outdoors.

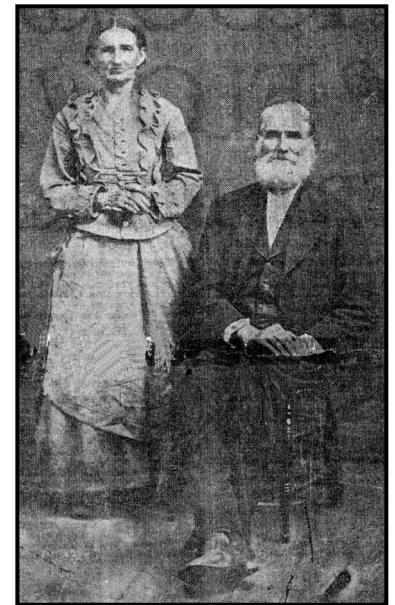
John Davis was born on February 15, 1809 in Hardy County, VA (now West Virginia) and had to take on a man’s role from an early age due to the death of his

father from illness during the War of 1812. He turned his hand to many trades including farming and mining, but appears to have practiced boilermaking in the Wheeling area.

One day, John was riding his horse and saw Jane playing in a field. Something about her struck him, and he said to himself, “That’s the girl I’m going to marry.” There was a 7 ½ year age difference between them, and while we don’t know the age of either at the time, Jane could not have been more than 13 years-old and was probably younger.

He struck up an acquaintance with her, and she soon formed a girlish romantic attachment and they eloped. Her uncle was horrified because of her youth and brought her back. Yet they remained attached to one another. Eventually, they eloped again, this time with her sister **Elizabeth**, who was one year older than Jane, and Elizabeth’s fiancée **William Penn Charnock**. Both couples were married by **Squire Isaac Mayes** on May 19, 1835 in nearby West Alexander, Washington County, PA, just across the border from Wheeling. By this time, John was 26 and Jane was 18. Her family held a council and declared that it was too costly timewise to keep searching for her and bringing her back.

John and Jane settled in the Wheeling area at the time and by 1851 had moved to Illinois where they settled around Lacon in Marshall County. They had 11 children who lived to adulthood. They were parted by John’s death in 1885 after nearly 50 years of married life.



*Jane (Mitchell) & John Davis*





## When Did They Meet?

Submitted by Jackie Safford Krag

Sometimes, after our mother read us a story at bedtime or if our father came home after a church meeting before **Carole** and I were “tucked in,” they told us stories about “the olden days.” We learned a lot about them growing up in the early 1900s.

Daddy was born and lived in the country on a farm a mile east of Washburn, Illinois. He attended a one-room country school a mile down the lane. Mother grew up in a little village and attended the only grade school. On most Sundays, from the time they were in nursery through high school, they attended classes in the Washburn Christian Church.

It was not until they were ready to graduate from high school that they mentioned each other to my sister and me.

Daddy knew he would be going to the University of Illinois in the fall. Mother was not going to college but planned to teach in a country school.

To be certified to teach in September, she needed to pass a state examination. The two-day exam was given in Eureka, a ten-mile horseback ride from Washburn. It was an overnight trip for Mother and her friend. Her father had an acquaintance associated with the Woodford County jail who said there were no inmates in the jail and the girls could stay overnight there. I do have a letter Daddy wrote to Mother, addressed to Miss Mary White, Woodford County Jail, Eureka, Illinois.

When writing “My Story” many years later, Mother mentioned that Daddy had bet her a kiss that she would pass the test on her first try. She was in doubt . . . but she wrote that was her first kiss.

For the next six years she taught in different Woodford County schools every other year when she was not going to the University of Illinois. Those alternate years her older sister stayed home and taught.

At the end of her junior year in college, Mother’s plans changed. She and Daddy were engaged to be married after he finished law school and was established in a law firm, and her education debts were paid.

Because she did not have a degree and certification, she could not teach in a large school district. For the next four years, Mother taught Home Economics in the Alden, Illinois high school near the Wisconsin border. To pass the weekends, she became involved with the high school girls and taught them other homemaking skills.

By train, interurban, or bus, it was a long travel to get to the Wisconsin border from Champaign. Mother told us that the first time Daddy made the long trip to see her, she had to introduce him as her brother. Had it been known that he was her future husband, she would have lost her teaching position.

I think those were happy hears for Mother as she sometimes mentioned rooming at the Strode family’s home. When we were little and she was entertaining, Mother often used a pretty silver tray that she said was a wedding gift from the Strodes.

It all worked out as planned as Daddy finished law school and was invited to join the Clarence Heyl Law firm in Peoria and Mother was debt free when they were married on June 16, 1928 at the Washburn Christian Church.



*Mr. and Mrs. Verle W. Safford*



## A Decade in the Making

Submitted by Alice A. Brophy

I will be forever grateful to my aunts, uncles, and older cousins for the memories of my parents they have shared over the years. Hints from their comments and their old photos have allowed me to piece together a courtship that was longer than any of their seven children could imagine.

Stopping at Brophy's Confectionary on their way home from Manual Training High School in the mid-1930s was pretty common for **Eleanor Burdette, Virginia Anderson, and Florence Behrends** Especially in cold weather, it was a welcome place to warm up before completing the last leg of their walk home. It was also a chance to check out the young guy making sodas, ice cream cones, and sundaes.

A 1928 graduate of Spalding Institute, **Bernard Brophy** worked as a Physician's Assistant at Peoria State Hospital the summer after senior year then drove a big box truck for Merchant's Tobacco Co. By 1933, the confectionery his father opened in 1929 had become quite popular so he was called upon to help there. Bern finally asked Eleanor for a date after she had graduated from high school in 1937.



A set of pictures was delivered to me by my Aunt Pauline when I asked relatives when my parents actually started dating. There was Mom in her heels posing with Dad who had been washing a car. The backdrop puzzled me until Aunt Pauline pointed out she had taken the picture behind Grand-Aunt Moll's home in Chicago. The foursome (Bern, Eleanor, Pauline, Jim) had stayed at Aunt Moll's and were headed to South Bend where Uncle **Jim Brophy** was in his junior year at Notre Dame.

Everyone I've interviewed over the years has indicated that these two were a couple from the get-go despite the 9¾ year age difference. It appears that they

were just too busy to settle down. Eleanor worked as a file clerk at Caterpillar Tractor Company while Bern opened his own store after winning one of the ball pools. He purchased what had been the Humpty Dumpty Ice Cream Shop at 525 Prospect Road.

Then WWII began and Bern headed to the South Pacific where he was stationed on Fiji. Eleanor kept busy with work and frequently visited Bern's large family. The number of pictures she sent to Fiji was staggering and thankfully, Dad brought them home in 1945. While he was away, Eleanor took classes at St. Patrick's and converted to Catholicism to surprise Bern upon his return..

The courting continued with dinner dates, movies, dances, St. Pat's Men's Club events, and most notably, play dates with Bern's Third Street nieces and nephews. That would be followed by card games with his brother and sister-in-law. Naturally, all of these "dates" were usually on a Saturday night because the store was usually open until 9:00 or 10:00 pm .



*Captured by a street photographer - 500 block of Main Street. Note Leka's Sugar Bowl sign.*

In the fall of 1948 this couple eloped and were married by **Rev. W.J. Lyons, C.S.C.** at St. Patrick's in South Bend, Indiana. They would have seven children between 1949 and 1958. Dad died on January 5, 1966 while Mom passed away on June 8, 1976.



*Our last vacation together - 1965*



# The Farm Diaries

Submitted by Karen Seeman

I can't even begin to imagine how lonely it must have been on the farm. When she was a single young woman living with her parents and family, she was always around other people. She was very active in her community, working at her father's dance hall and cooking for the farmhands with other young ladies. Then she met the love of her life, a handsome young farmer, and married him at the age of 19. They lived on his farm some 40 miles away from her family – not a long distance by today's standards, but traveling by horse and buggy could take six hours or more.

Much of the day she had no one to talk to. No one to pour her heart out to, or to be interested in her day. I'm sure her husband was as busy with his farm chores as she was with hers. She had no phone, no TV, and most of her years on the farm were without radio as well. She did not have a neighborhood or next-door neighbors. But she did have pencils and paper. So after her chores were done, she wrote.

And she spent her life writing.



Will and Virta (Graves) Knutz



This young woman was my great-grandmother, **Virta Knutz**. The writings I have from her, just in my possession alone, include:

- ◆ Calendars with happenings noted inside each daily square;
- ◆ Sketches she made of the various farm houses they'd lived in through the years, and little notes about each one;
- ◆ Her daily diary, 525 pages' worth, written in faded pencil on plain white paper, spanning 12 years of her life;
- ◆ A diary of their train trip to the west coast, with vivid descriptions of each town they passed through;
- ◆ 27 pages of memories from her life;
- ◆ 56 pages of car trips, or "joy rides" as she called them, noting the places they went and the things they saw along the way.

What filled a void for her has given me a unique view into my family's day-to-day experiences. Most of what she wrote about was daily life – farm chores done, calves fed, rainfall measured, visitors received and trips into town.

I got to know her and our family as I'd never known them before. I learned she worked tremendously hard. If she didn't know how to do something, she figured it out. I learned she was afraid of storms. I learned she was not a complainer, though her life wasn't easy. I also got to see them in their leisure time - they would take a day off, pack fried chicken and potato salad in the trunk of the car, and drive to town for the fair or other happenings. They loved to take their "joy rides" on Sunday afternoons, eating their picnic lunches when they found a scenic place to do so. Their grandchildren, including my mother, loved to come spend weekends and ride their horses. And I learned that the family stuck together – when one of them had trouble, they all took on the trouble.

I am so grateful to her for putting her life on paper in the way she did – the everyday experiences and relationships and troubles and joys, and for letting us get to know her in ways that otherwise would have been impossible.





*Be it ever so humble, there's no place like home.*

**The Wear House**

*Submitted by Sue Swanson*

About a mile south of Princeville stands a historic Italianate home built by **Washington and Cornelia Hill Wear**. The land on which it was built had been purchased twenty years earlier by **James and Ellen Wear** who had come to Peoria County from Ohio. Elegant and spacious, the white weatherboard house boasted arched windows,



a gabled pediment and ornate window and roof brackets. Inside there were grain painted doors and interior wooden shutters. The downstairs ceilings soared to twelve feet eight inches. Double front doors welcomed guests and at one time spelled W C Wear on the glass above. There were no fireplaces, as by this time fireplaces had proved rather ineffective and heating stoves replaced them.

In the kitchen there was a large built-in cupboard and a pantry with a door on a sliding roller track. There was both a front and back staircase. The front staircase was composed of beautifully turned walnut spindles and the banister provided constant entertainment as a slide for generations of Wears. Upstairs were four bedrooms, each with a transom window for ventilation and a narrow closet, a real luxury for the time. The upstairs bay window boasted a window seat where one could survey the surrounding land. A hired man's room was over the kitchen and reached by the back staircase.

For five generations the home was occupied by the following family members: Washington and Cornelia

Hill Wear, Byron Hill and Lillie Godfrey Wear, Byron Hill Jr and Gertrude Anderson Wear, and lastly Byron F "Tuck" and Marta Johnson Wear and their sons Boyd and Ross.

In 1972 the Wear property was designated a Centennial Farm, and in 1993 it was placed on the National Register of Historic Places and featured in a John Deere calendar. Following the deaths of Tuck and Marta Wear the house was sold, ending over one hundred years in the same pioneering family. Fortunately, the exterior of the house remains faithful to the original to remind us of the beautiful architecture that once graced our area.

**Wear Lineage**

James Wear

- B. May 1794 Pennsylvania
- D. 5 Nov. 1878 Peoria County, IL

Ellen

- B. 15 July 1794 Pennsylvania
- D. 28 Oct 1875 Peoria County, IL

Their Children:

- Sarah Wear Klinck 1828-1881
- Aaron D. 1830-1899
- Washington C. 1833-1899

Washington C. Wear

- B. 16 Apr 1833 OH
- M. 24 Nov 1859 Peoria, IL
- D. 8 Jan 1889 Princeville, IL

Cornelia Hill

- B. 29 Mar 1841 IL
- D. 3 Dec 1892 Peoria County, IL

Their Children:

- Byron 1861-1917                      Lucien 1873-1960
- Elroy 1863-1903                      Rosa 1874-1874
- Lillian Jesse 1864-1939              Freddie 1879-1881
- Daisy 1871-1954



**Wear Lineage** *continued*

Byron H. Wear

B. 1860/61 Princeville, IL; moved to Denver 1903  
due to failing health

M. 1886

D. 3 Apr 1917 Denver CO

Lillie Mae Godfrey

B. 1857/58 OH

D. 21 Sept 1936 Denver

Their Children:

Vernon R. 1886-1918

Cornelia H. 1888-1972

Jesse E. 1891-1901

Byron H. Jr. 1893-1963

Byron Hill Wear Jr.

B. 14 Oct 1893/94

M. 8 Feb. 1916 CO

Gertrude Florence Anderson

B. 30 Apr 1896

D. 28 Jan 1990

Their children:

Phyllis (George Jackson) 1916-2014

Harold 1918-2000

Byron Frederick 1924-1993

Byron Frederick "Tuck" Wear

B. 27 Jan 1924 Princeville, IL

M. 20 Oct 1950 Peoria County, IL

D. 1 Apr 1993 Peoria County, IL

Marta Mae Johnson

B. 28 Jun 1922 Bozeman, MT

D. 22 Aug 2001

Their children:

Byron Ross 1951-2014

Boyd



*In the end, we'll all  
become stories!*

*Margaret Atwood*

**Bibo Family Homestead**

*Submitted by Suzanne Gill*

Until 1980, this farmhouse stood on the west side of Route 40 near where Route 6 intersects with Route 40. The Bibo family homestead was in Section 32 in Medina Township, Peoria County. The original farmhouse was torn down and replaced with a new house in



1906. At that time, the kitchen was saved and moved to the side to be used as a wash house. In 1980, the house was demolished to make way for the construction of Route 6. The rest of the farm ground remained in the family until the last parcel was sold around 2005.

**Anton and Anna Maria (Winkel) Bibo** purchased the property in 1877. After the untimely passing of Anton a year later in 1878, his sons, Martin and Anton took on the responsibilities of the farm. At the time, Martin was 17 years old.

In 1889, **Martin Bibo** married **Elizabeth Marek** and they resided in this house until his retirement in around 1917. After his retirement, Martin and Elizabeth rented the farm and moved to 307 (now 1807) Missouri Avenue in Peoria. Martin and Elizabeth were among the founding members of St. Bernard's Parish. When they lived on the farm in Medina Township, they would use either a horse drawn buggy or sleigh to get to church on Sundays.

Martin and Elizabeth raised four daughters in this house, **Anna Bibo**, **Mary Bibo Schotthoefer**, **Irma Bibo Lawless**, and **Elizabeth Bibo Seiler**. Anna, Mary and Irma all received teaching degrees from Bradley University and taught in area schools. Martin, his wife Elizabeth and daughters Anna and Elizabeth are buried in St. Joseph Cemetery in West Peoria and Irma and Mary are buried in St. Mary's Cemetery in West Peoria.



## Opportunity and Heartache

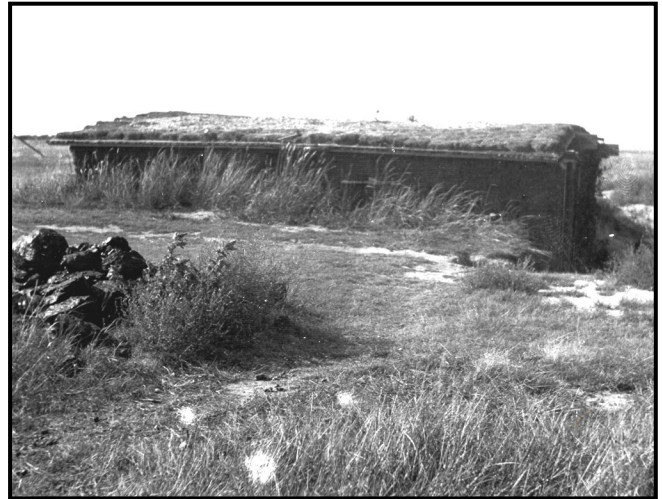
Submitted by Marianne Timberlake Moll

Most of his life, my second great grandfather, **Houston Monroe Cranford**, was a farmer. In the early 1880s, he was living in Macoupin County, IL. When land became available in Kansas through a treaty between the Osage nation and the U.S. government, he couldn't resist the draw of \$1.25 per acre. At the time, an acre of land in Macoupin County cost \$30.<sup>1</sup> So, he and his wife, plus four children headed to Kansas to test their mettle on the plains.

Millions of acres became available for settlement in the Midwest through *The Osage Trust and Diminished Reserve Land Act of July 15, 1870*,<sup>2</sup> with the Osage using the U.S. government as their sales agent. In exchange for their current lands, the Osage negotiated for their choice of lands in the designated Indian Territory of northern Oklahoma. After the Midwest land was surveyed, the government offered 160 acre claims for \$1.25 per acre to the public – to any individual who met the requirements of settlement, cultivation, and improvement of the land. The Treaty gave every settler who met the qualifications, the opportunity to better their financial circumstances. The American dream of land ownership shimmered on the horizon of the plains, attracting many to settle, even in barren and desolate land. The opportunity was unprecedented but the challenges immense for anyone choosing to homestead.

The land was barren of trees. Winds whipped across the plains. Water was scarce. Isolation was constant. The struggle to stay alive was unceasing. Despite the hardships, Houston was able to prove his claim. The Garden City Land Office printed a notice in the October 4, 1888 issue of the *Ashland Clipper* that Houston planned to present final proof of his 80 acre claim before the Probate Judge in Ashland on November 20<sup>th</sup>. He listed four witnesses from Cash City to verify his continuous residence and cultivation of the land.

Houston's wife and two children perished in Kansas. Within a relatively short time after losing his wife, he relinquished his claim by selling the land<sup>3</sup> and moving back to Illinois. Homesteading was indeed an opportunity for many. But for our family, it held heartache. Homesteading was the family's stepping stone back to Illinois and to Peoria for many descendants.



*Family photo of sod house built by the **Houston and Hester (Thompson) Cranford** family in Clark County, Kansas. Date unknown but many years after the family left Kansas.*

<sup>1</sup> Charles H. Barnard and John Jones, "Farm Real Estate Values in the United States by Counties, 1850-1982," Statistical Bulletin No. 751, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Economics Division, Economic Research Service, March 1987; [accessed 5 November 2023]; <https://www.card.iastate.edu/farmland/history/barnard-and-jones-1987-farm-real-estate-values-in-the-united-states-by-counties-1850-1982.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> "Notice to Settlers on the Osage Ceded and Trust Lands," *The Chetopa Advance* (Chetopa, Kansas), July 04, 1869, Vol. 1 Number 26, pg. 1 (col. 3-7); [accessed 4 November 2023 through Kansas Historical Open Content, Newspapers.com Open Access Portal]; <https://kansashistoricalopencontent.newspapers.com/image/78530198/?terms=osage%20diminished%20reserve%20land%20sales&match=1>

<sup>3</sup> United States Bureau of Land Management Tract Books, 1800-c. 1955, Kansas, Vol. 122, pg. 238; FamilySearch.org, image 241; [accessed 31 March 2020]; <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3QS7-99WS-1HSM?i=240&wc=M7WW-MMH%3A356162501%2C356200301&cc=2074276>



## The Zant Homestead

Submitted by Bro. Louis P. Zant



Mrs. Angeline Zant in her front yard at 211 Charlotte St.

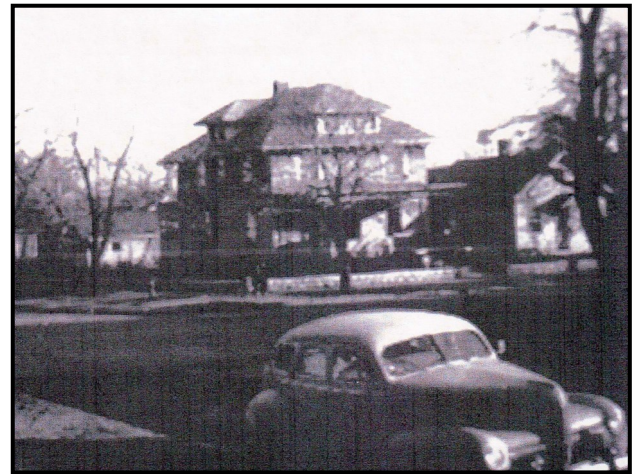
The home above was the residence of **John and Angeline Zant**, my great-grandparents who moved there some time after 1888 from 533 Brown Street in Peoria. By 1915 the street name and numbering of this home had changed to 309 Shelley Street. Their son, **Rudolph**, continued residence there after his marriage to **Helen Feinholz** in 1904. In 1920 his family moved to the 1800 block of Howett Street to run a grocery store. Occupancy of the Shelley Street home between 1920 and 1939 is unknown.

My father, **Russell**, Rudolph's youngest son, took up residence there after his marriage in 1939 to **Marcella Boehle**, and this was our home until 1955. Originally a one bedroom house with outhouse in the back yard, part of a rear porch was made an indoor bathroom; later another part of the porch became a pantry. In the late 1940's a basement root cellar was expanded under the rear of the house to accommodate a furnace, replacing the pot belly stove coal heater in the kitchen and the oil heater in the middle room. As the family grew, my dad and uncles prepared the unfinished second level into a habitable space for most of the children.

Desirous of a larger house, the family moved about two city blocks away in 1955. This home was built in 1913 at 336 Louisa Street. The following year

the house number changed to 902 Louisa as the City of Peoria renumbered street addresses. This 4 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath home was purchased from William Kumpf. This was a comfortable home for the Zants with room for family gatherings such as reunions, Thanksgivings, and more. This home was located just one-block from St. Boniface Catholic Church and St. Boniface School. It was our family home until 1978 when the children were grown and on their own; our parents decided to downsize and move West.

The 902 Louisa house eventually became the last house standing on a city block planned to accommodate a retirement home. The home that once stood at 309 Shelley was damaged by fire and torn down.



Zant Family Home - 902 Louisa Street

## DID YOU KNOW?



Built in 1837, the John C. Flanagan House Museum is the oldest standing home in Peoria. Located at 942 NE Glen Oak, it is owned by the Peoria Historical Society which sponsors tours and events throughout the year.



## The House That Keeps Giving

Submitted by Sue Swanson

Some houses are destined for history because they are architectural standouts. Some are memorable because of the famous people who have lived in them. That is not the case for a humble dwelling located in Peoria's North Side at 711 North Monroe. Of an undetermined age, in 1912 it was sold by **John and Annie Reber** of Tremont to the Apostolic Christian Church to be used as a shelter for elderly maiden ladies who had no place to call home. These women, many of them first or second-generation Germans, came to the Peoria area because of friends or relatives affiliated with the Apostolic Christian Church. They primarily worked as domestics, living with the wealthy families who employed them. But when they became too old to do this work, they found themselves having no place to call home.

Before the Apostolic Church was built on Sheridan Road, it was housed in a plain two story red brick building on Green Street, in stark contrast to the soaring St. Mary's Cathedral which stood next to it. When the church elders realized a need to house the elderly "sisters" as female members were called, they chose the house at 711 N. Monroe. Less than a block from the Green Street Church, it seemed the perfect place. The purchase price was \$3500.

The home was an unadorned building in a working-class neighborhood. Upon purchase, a cement block addition was added to the back, and updating of the original house commenced. A new heating system and modernized plumbing were first on the list. Then followed cement walks, porches, a cellar, screens, china, linens and furniture. These enhancements came to a total of \$8,964.31, all paid for by church members.

Women with no funds were given preference for residency, but those who had some money were asked to contribute \$3 per week. No men were allowed to reside

there. There were rules. In the rule book written in German, it was stated that when God created mankind he gave him a sound mind, and that whisperings, turmoil, disputing and strife would not be tolerated.

The first floor consisted of a sitting room, a dining room and a kitchen. The bedrooms and the one bathroom were on the second floor. Laundry was in the cellar. The ladies took their meals upstairs, carried by two superintendents. Later a dumb waiter was installed. The dining room was used on Sundays when members from outlying churches came to visit and stayed for a roast beef dinner which was cooked by volunteers.

**Carrie Steigle** was the first superintendent in 1912, overseeing two residents. In 1940 **Leah** and **Lillie Hohulin** were appointed. These ladies cared for the resi-



dents, cooked, cleaned, baked, gardened, mowed the lawn and changed the storm and screen windows. The latter they did by carrying the extremely large and heavy storm windows up a ladder to the second story. There was no car so they either walked or stayed home. They grew much of their own food, although a nearby grocery store also

delivered supplies. Apple slices were dried on the roof. A resident of Princeville whom I interviewed for this story remembers coming into town with her mother in the early 1950s, bringing their abundant garden produce and homemade noodles to share. (This family had eight children, yet they still had food to share.)

Guests used the back stairs to visit the ladies upstairs. In summer the laundry was hung outside. In winter it was hung in the attic. The doors to the attic were lined with felt to keep the bats out. If a resident needed to go downstairs, and couldn't do it on her own, Leah and Lillie would put her in a chair and they would carry her down, Leah in back and Lillie in front. Leah went to church in the morning and Lillie went in the afternoon. That way the residents were never left alone.

After 1954 the state required that people in charge of home management have a grade school diplo-



ma. So, Leah and Lillie studied and got the required GED. Several years later a high school diploma was required. Again, the ladies studied and met the requirements.

On September 23, 1962, the home celebrated its fiftieth anniversary attended by 208 people from the churches of Princeville, Eureka, Goodfield, Gridley, Fairbury, Morton, Roanoke and Peoria. Sandwiches, fruit, cookies and a three-tiered cake were served. Flowers from the members' gardens adorned the tables.

In 1965 Lillie left the home and was married at age 57. She moved to Morris, Minnesota and lived to be 105. Leah retired at the same time, returned to her birthplace in Fairbury, Illinois and lived to be 88. She never married.

In 1966 a new home for the elderly had been built on Skyline Drive, so it was time to close up the home at 711, a place that had comforted and sheltered so many. Again, church members stepped forward to help with the move. Because the stairs were too narrow to easily carry things down, it was decided that they would be thrown out the windows where someone was standing in a pickup truck below to catch them. Furniture was lowered down with a rope. Inasmuch as possessions were few, it only took two pickup loads to move the eight remaining ladies and their belongings.

Following the departure of the ladies, the home changed hands a few times. From 2008 to 2012 it housed the Human Service Center. It is now owned by the South Side Office of Concern. Called Veterans' Haven, it is a place for homeless veterans to reside.

For over 111 years the building at 711 North Monroe has given refuge to many who have appreciated and loved the old brick place in return. How many mansions can boast of such a legacy?

Sources:

Coming Together for 100 Years: A History with Memories of Apostolic Christian Skylines 1912-2012

Interview with **Ricky and Sid Stahl**

## Jubilee's Homewood School— Native American Experience

*Submitted by Sue Swanson*

From about 1869 and well into the twentieth century the United States government took up the task of educating Indian children. Perhaps feeling shame at having stolen Indian lands, they felt they could right the wrong by schooling them. It became a popular delusion. When **Thomas Haskins** opened Homewood School at the former Jubilee College, his main goal was to educate students of the Christian faith. But when those student numbers fell short, Haskins saw an opportunity. The federal government was paying good money to educate Indians.

Thomas Haskins, an Episcopalian minister, was born in Massachusetts in 1840, and studied for the ministry in New York. From there he bounced across the growing nation in various ministerial and teaching positions, never setting down roots for long. In 1869 he was at Fort Douglas in the Utah Territory. Six years later he returned to the east coast. In 1883 he was in Alton, Illinois. This pattern of crisscrossing the country would continue his entire life.

In Alton Haskins had come into an inheritance. He had also read **Bishop Philander Chase's** memoirs, and it filled him with a missionary zeal. He decided he would go to the then shuttered Jubilee College near Peoria, Illinois, revive the place, and educate students, preferably between the ages of eight to fifteen. He approached the Diocese of Quincy which held title to Jubilee and convinced them to allow his plan to go forward. The former Jubilee College had remained vacant for about fifteen years following the Civil War and was in poor condition. This would be an answer to the Diocese's problem.

The lease between Haskins and the Diocese would run from 1883-1889. For five dollars a year Haskins would receive use of 400 acres, the college buildings, farming equipment, school apparatus, furniture, and books. In return he was to spend \$5,000 over the term of the lease for improvements.

With great determination Haskins repaired the stone buildings, installed a furnace (later removed for



Payment), hired eight staff, including a gardener house-keeper, music instructor, storekeeper and a farmer. He borrowed money for these projects and also enticed several area farmers into lending him \$250 each to get things started.

Haskins put out a pamphlet advertising the future Homewood School under the umbrella of the Jubilee Industrial Company. It promised the comforts of home and instructions in grammar school, agriculture, mechanics, art, Christian history and the science of health among other things. The school was located away from the “troublesome influences of the city.” All students would work daily on the farm or garden in the care of stock, poultry, bees, silkworm cultivation or in some other essential labor. Area students were encouraged to attend including both boys and girls. Tuition was \$250 per year for two sessions and included tuition, board, washing, fuel and mending. Music lessons were extra.

The school opened sometime in 1883. (Various dates have been listed.) Although there were supposed to be eighty Indians, at most there were probably twenty. Most came from Minnesota and the Dakotas. They showed aptitude in their studies and were hard working. Some made friends with the local students. Given the attitudes at the time, they faced great headwinds. Immediately upon arrival at the school the Indian children were given new names as “theirs are quite unutterable and would strike terror to the hearts of the average reader” according to a newspaper article of the time. Their native clothes were taken away and their hair was often cut off. On at least two occasions Haskins refused shipments of Indians, claiming they were dirty, lice-infected, and uncivilized. This after the boys had been traveling for days, far from home and their native language. The following local news articles illustrate the mindset of the white man of the time, though one must keep in mind that newspapers did not always publish factual information.

The Indians (1884)

The Indian boys were taken to Homewood School in Jubilee Township in a wagon Wednesday afternoon. They were quartered at Kneer’s Hotel on Hamilton Street, Tuesday night upon orders from Mayor Warner, as the agent was not here to take care of them. They will be educated at the expense of the government.

The descriptive statement of the boys as given by Indian Agent **C.P. Luse** as follows:

Odunin, English name **Robert Washburn**, a full blood Indian

of the Chippewa nation of Milk Sac band.

Simo, English name **Seymour Fairbanks**, a mixed breed of the Mississippi nation.

Memashkawange, English name **Julins Brown**, a full blood Chippewa of the Mississippi band, age fourteen years.

Shaganash, English name **Peter Graves**, a mixed breed Chippewa of the Red Lake band, age thirteen years.

Netchiwabitung, English name **Samuel Mills**, a full blood Chippewa of the Red Lake band, aged fourteen years.

Wawashkeshins, English name **Francis Guerennearu**, a full blood Chippewa of the Red Lake band, aged fifteen years.

Sausway, English name **William Jourdan**, a mixed bread Chippewa of the Red Lake band, aged fourteen years.

Sausway, English name **Frank Guin**, a mixed breed Chippewa of the Red Lake band, aged thirteen years.

Nine Little Injuns

Peoria Journal

Bro. Haskins, of the Homewood school, has been having a time of it. He concluded that he would like to have a few wards of this good government to educate, and he applied for a few noble red children. Brother Haskins had an idea that he would receive a few high toned youths of warm umber, as to complexion, and of generous confiding natures. The government took him at his work, and shipped him down a lot of ragmuffins, to whom the amenities of civilized life were unknown. When the Rev. Haskins saw them he wailed aloud, and as they kept coming, he soon had his whole quarters filled full. He had Injuns in the cellar, Injuns in the woodshed, and Injuns in the barn. His place looked like a reservation, and Homewood school smelled like a pen of goats. Then Bro. Haskins began to think he had altogether too much of a good thing, so Saturday he shipped nine of his charges back, and they have been sent to another school in Pennsylvania. Bro. Haskins will burn his stock of Cooper’s novels before the winter is over, and will come to the solemn conclusion that “Leatherstockings” is a humbuh.

What started out as a promising enterprise soon began to unravel. Thomas Haskins was a dreamer not a businessman. A letter and a diary shed light on Haskins’ inept management practices that ultimately led to the demise of the school. In a letter to his wife on Thanksgiving Day in 1884, school carpenter Benjamin Parker wrote “...the biggest trouble is that Haskins gets all he can on credit and trusts luck to pay for it ... and when he gets cash it is all gone before he can see it.”

An account written in an English newspaper about 1983, *Chard and Ilminster News* relates the tale of a young **Frank Willy** who kept a diary detailing his journey from England to Jubilee. It seems that Willy had a falling out with his father whom he called a hypocrite and



a devil. He decided to travel to Chicago where two of his brothers lived. Willy sailed out of Liverpool on the steamship *Wyoming* and united with his brothers. While in Chicago he met Rev. Haskins who talked him into coming to Jubilee where he was starting Homewood School. He needed a farmer and groundskeeper. The fields and fences had been neglected for fifteen years and with much hard work Willy managed to put things in order. He spoke of 100 degree days and crops he had never before seen, such as melon, salsify, sweet corn, sweet potatoes, and asparagus. Though Willy had yet to receive any pay, the extra job of overseeing the college boys was added to his workload. When fall came and the crops were harvested, Haskins told Willy he simply had no money to pay him. Demoralized, Willy sued Haskins, but Haskins appealed, and the case dragged on and on. In his diary Willy wrote of Haskins: "A nasty mean humbug. Think of calling him a minister of the church. He is none other than the devil." In another entry he lamented, "I am disheartened and disgusted with every American and the country. I wish I had never seen it. God's curse on Haskins."

Willy presumably returned to England. The outcome of the case is yet to be uncovered.

Within two years after it opened, Homewood was falling apart due to poor management, thousands of dollars squandered, and heavy debts. One by one the staff and board members resigned. By May of 1885 Haskins was in Phoenix, Arizona, establishing a new church. He had gone there supposedly on doctors' orders to remedy tuberculosis. The next year he was in Tombstone, Arizona preaching the gospel.

So many questions remain unanswered regarding this little known chapter of Jubilee's story. Did Thomas Haskins abruptly leave Homewood and the personnel to fend for themselves in order to escape financial reckoning? Were employees given their due wages? Did the students remain to finish the school term? Haskins obvi-

ously did not honor his five year lease. In 1886 a Rev. **J.B.Trevett** tried to carry on with the school, but to no avail. It was the end for Homewood.

Where was Mrs. Haskins and the children during these times of turmoil? An article in the *Burlington (VT) Weekly Free Press* dated November 19, 1887 stated: "Mrs, T.W. Haskins and her children who have spent the past year with Mr. J.C. **Farrar** will soon join Rev. Mr. Haskins." It is unknown if Mrs. Haskins was a resident of Jubilee. Son Samuel apparently was a student because his name is listed in the program of closing exercises for the summer term.

Thomas Haskins' final move was to Los Angeles, California where he taught Greek and the Bible. In 1892 he retired from the Episcopal Church. He remained in Los Angeles where he died in 1895 at the age of fifty-five. His long suffering wife joined him in Los Angeles where she died in 1898 at the age of fifty-four.

So ends this short chapter of Homewood School at Jubilee leaving many questions unanswered.

Sources:

1883 Property Report from Diocese of Illinois.

Homewood School Data: An Illinois State Historian Compilation from various sources.

*Home-Wood School for Boys: A Federal Indian Boarding School in Central Illinois* by Tyler Baysinger.

Herschel Collection at Bradley University Special Collections.

*Chard and Ilminster News* May 5, 1983.

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*This beaded necklace is thought to have been made by Robert Washburn, (Odunin), a full blooded Chippewa of the Mille Lac band and gifted to **Robert Tucker**. Washburn attended Homewood School at Jubilee in 1884 and was a good friend of Robert Tucker, a local day student whose family donated the necklace to Jubilee.*





## The Wonderful Trip

Submitted by Al Halverson

I grew up in a foster home in Wisconsin and knew very little about my natural family. I was the ninth child born to a widow with eight other children. I felt that I needed to connect to my mother's side and decided to visit the grave of my 2x Great Grandmother, **Abigail (Havens) Taylor Lindsley**, 1829-1916. We planned a trip to visit 26 cemeteries spread out through Missouri, Kansas, and Nebraska.



9/11/23 Monday, drove to Wathena, KS, we got there around 2:30 p.m. We donated a box of the Acree & Schneider family photos at the Wathena Library. While at the library we got a map layout and an index of the Bellemont Cemetery. We looked up the burial location for 175 relatives we had buried at the Bellemont Cemetery. Then headed to our hotel and had dinner.



9/12/23 Tuesday, Thom and I had brunch with the **Francis Shalz** family, **Linda, Don & Karen**. We met at Karen's home, the special of the brunch was their mom's homemade bread pudding. We spent the afternoon at Mount Calvary Cemetery in Wathena doing "Shalz" family research. That evening we met with **Stephanie (Kline) Clark, Stacy (Kline) Stains & Carrie (Shalz) Green**. It was my first-time meeting, Carrie. We had dinner at a Mexican restraint in Atchison, KS.

9/13/23, we visited Bellemont Cemetery in Wathena. We visited 175 graves and took pictures of same. Later that day we headed to Diane's home. We met **K. Diane (Kuhnert) Rici** & her sister, **Janette Cobb**, for a cookout.

We had a wonderful home cooked meal. We looked at their pictures and listened to their family stories. They had asked a local Missouri geneologist to come meet with us, Margaret was helpful.

9/24/23 Thursday we met with the **Leon Shalz** family. We had brunch with **Ron**, his wife **Sue (Newton), Ruth (Shalz)** her husband **Bill Sparks, Regina (Shalz) Osborn** and **Deb (Shalz) Lawrence**. After brunch we headed to Nebraska. We visited the Sheridan Cemetery in Auburn (15 graves), the Spring Creek Cemetery in Tecumseh (8 graves), Plainview Cemetery in Western (5 graves) and the Fairbury cemetery in Fairbury (16 graves). We stayed at a community owned hotel in Fairbury, it was very nice.

9/25/23, Friday another day of cemeteries: Nora Cemetery in Nora (7 graves), Fairfield Cemetery in Fairfield (5 graves), Edison Cemetery in Edison (6 graves), Arapahoe Cemetery in Arapahoe (5 graves), North Platte Cemetery (15 graves) and Floral Lawn cemetery (17 graves) in North Platte. We stayed a nice hotel in North Platte,

9/26/23, Saturday, visited Overton Cemetery in Overton (4 graves), Elm Creek Cemetery in Elm Creek (6 graves), Riverdale Cemetery in Riverdale. Then, we met my cousin on my mother's side, **Carolyn (Swearingen) Richards**. We spent a few hours with her and her granddaughter Teresa. Carolyn allowed us to scan some pictures and documents she had. We enjoyed the coffee and sweet rolls. We headed to Hazard cemetery in Hazard (4 graves), then to David Cemetery in David City (26 graves). We ran into another new cousin on my mother's side, **Gerry McDonald**, at the Bellwood Cemetery in Bellwood (25 graves). Gerry mentioned that there was another cousin that lived in Bellwood, **Beverly Kallenbach**, another new cousin on my mother's side. Gerry called Beverly. We got to meet her and while at her home scanned some of her pictures and documents. They knew of our interest in the Pleasant View cemetery near Bellwood and offered to meet us there after church on Sunday. We headed to Columbus and stayed the night.

9/27/23 Sunday morning we visited Columbus Cemetery, (14 graves) & Roselawn Cemetery (6 graves) in Columbus and headed to the Pleasant View Cemetery near Bellwood. We met up with Gerry and Beverly, they

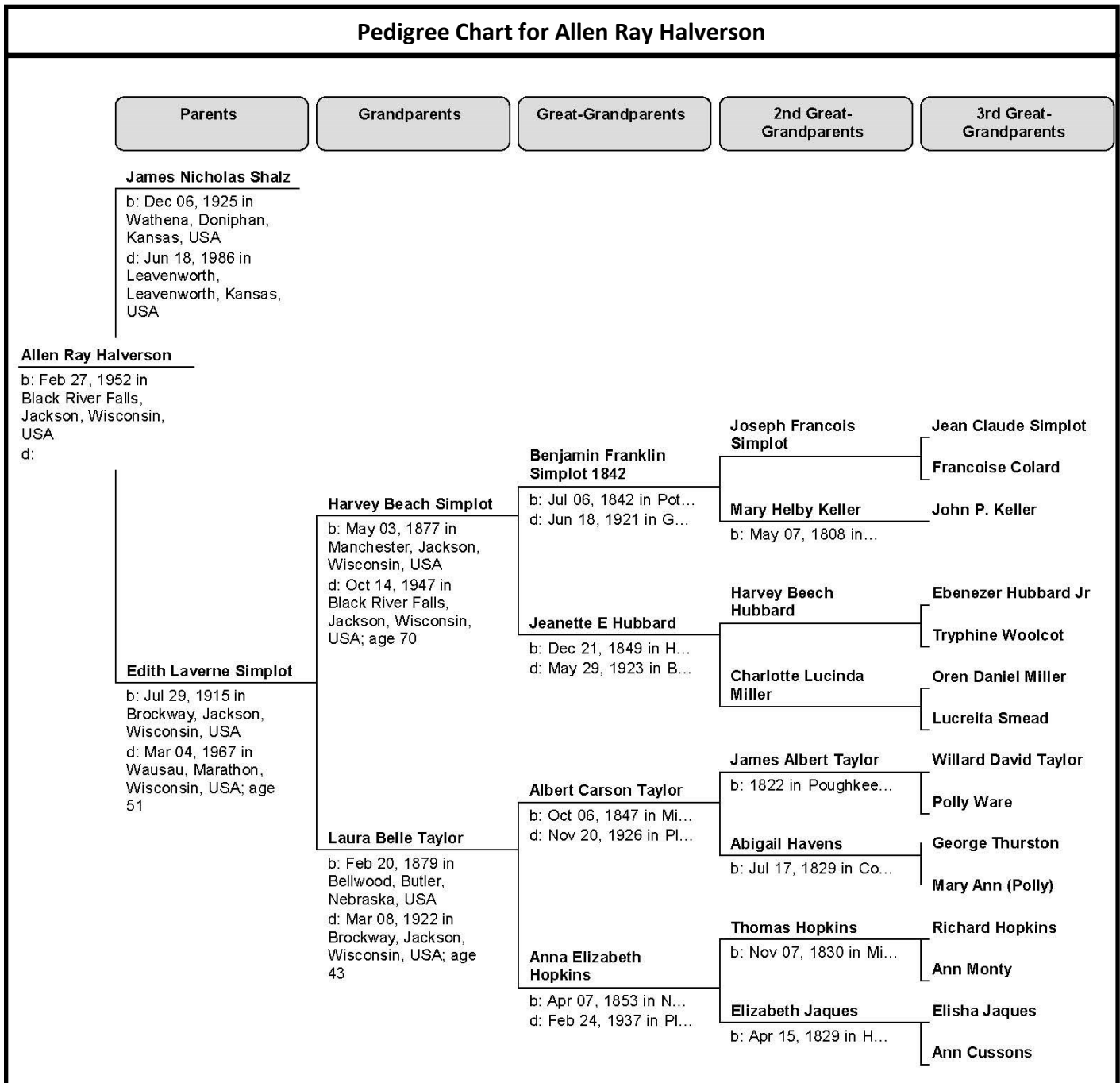




shared some of "Havens" family stories of those buried there. Gerry knew we were headed to Omaha, so he mentioned another cousin, **Judy Ekeler**, who lived in Fremont, which is on our way to Omaha. Judy is recognized by the previous three cousins as the family historian and is registered as a DAR member. We got Judy's phone number from Beverly while driving toward Omaha. I called Judy from the car; she was happy to meet with us. We spent the next few hours talking and scanning pictures and documents. We drove onto Omaha.

We visited the St Mary's Cemetery (4 graves, St Mary Magdalene Cemetery (2 graves), Graceland Cemetery (2 graves), Calvary Cemetery (2 graves), Evergreen Memorial Park (2 graves), and the Forrest Lawn Cemetery (2 graves) in Omaha. Our research had run out and so had the possibilities of the Omaha cemeteries.

9/28/23 Up early - shower, dressed, breakfast at the hotel and on the road by 8:30 and home in Peoria by 2:30 in the afternoon.





# The George Heinz Story

Submitted by E.J. Heinz

Ancestors of this large family were **John Henry Heinz** and **Eva Catharine Ester**, his wife, of Nausdorf, Hesse Cassel, Germany. They never came to America and lived in Darmstadt in the state of Hessen, Germany that was also part of Napoleon's Confederation of the Rhine.

**George Heinz, Sr.** (b. March 28th, 1813, d. March 29th, 1891) was the second child of this family and had five siblings: **Annie Margaret Hoffman Berckler**, **John Henry Heinz** (stayed in Germany), **Andrew W Heinz**, **Wendell Heinz**, and **Fredrich S Heinz**. He was baptized on March 28th, 1813. He married 25 year old **Katherine Henlein**, (b. July 20th, 1813, d. October 29th, 1895) on April 7, 1839 in a Catholic church in Dietersheim, Germany.

George Heinz Sr. and Katherine (Henlein) Heinz were among the first pioneers who came to America. They left Germany in 1839, crossing the ocean in a sailing ship. The voyage lasted ninety days. They landed at Baltimore, Maryland on August 5, 1839. They came through the St. Lawrence River to Chicago, and then down the Illinois River with a tow boat drawn from a long rope by a mule and oxen, and landed at what is now Peoria, IL.

George worked for a while for Captain Moss at a point near Rome, IL. The first year George and Katherine received \$5.00 in money, with both of them working every day and boarding themselves. The second year both worked every day and boarded themselves and received as payment one cow and no money. After working a few years for Captain Moss, George farmed the Bradley farm on the West bluff in the city of Peoria for a few years. This was just opposite Main Street.

Later, George purchased 160 acres of land on Section 16 in Kickapoo Township (now Cramer's as of 1975). He cleared the land for farming and built a log cabin. Later he made his own bricks and lime and built a handsome brick house (The farm is now owned by **Martin Gensler** as of 1975). All of their furniture was hand made. All of their cloth for clothes were hand spun. George's first plow was a wooden moldboard that cut a width of 20 inches and was drawn by oxen. His first wagon was hewn out of logs and not a nail of iron was used in making the wagon. The wheels were sawed out of a log about three feet across and 8 or 10 inches wide. He drilled the hole

for the axle in the wheel with a stone and for axle grease used soap. The pioneer farmers drove these wagons to Chicago and back with grain or dressed hogs to get money since Peoria was only a trading post then. It took six weeks to make one trip to Chicago and back. There were twelve wagons which were called trains, and each wagon was hitched by a yoke of oxen. At the end of one journey only one wagon remained because all the rest were worn out and several of the oxen perished on the way since there were no roads and only trails with no bridges to cross the streams. For lamps, a tin pan with grease or tallow, and a rag or some kind of cord sticking out at one end as a wick, served the purpose. There were no stoves for cooking, baking, or heating, only the open fireplace.

In 1855 Mr. George Heinz donated a small tract of land for school purposes, located in Kickapoo Township and formerly called District 58.



A schoolhouse was built the same year, being occupied until 1904 when the directors thought the building inadequate to accommodate the children attending and proceeded to erect a new building on section 16 in Kickapoo Township. No deed for the ground had ever been obtained from Mr. Heinz, therefore the directors refused to build it until it was granted. A deed was finally secured from Andrew Heinz, son of George Heinz, Sr.

The contract for the new school was let to **J.S. Foster** of Peoria in 1904, to be completed for the sum of \$850.00. The building was finished and ready for occupancy the same year. This school is still standing on Heinz Lane after the interstate 74 overpass on the left off of Route 150.



George Heinz Sr. owned 360 acres of fertile land which was divided among his 5 sons after his death. He was paralyzed for the last ten years of his life.

To the union of John Henry Heinz and Eva Catharine Ester were born five sons and one daughter:

1. George Heinz Sr. (Mar. 28, 1813 - Mar. 19, 1891) had five sons; **Henry** (Sept. 26, 1840 - Aug. 22, 1881), **Frank** (Oct. 19, 1842 - Oct. 22, 1922), **George** (born March 10,



1845), **Andrew** (born Sept. 25, 1847), and **John** (born Dec. 30, 1849).

2. **John Henry Heinz** (born on Oct. 21, Oct. 1815 in Hesse, Darmstadt, Germany; died in 1910 in Germany.) He married **Katherine Margaretha Schneider** on Aug. 30, 1846 in Hesse-Darmstadt.

3. **Andrew Heinz, Sr.** born Feb. 16, 1823, landed at New York in 1848 and came to Peoria by way of the lakes to Chicago and the Illinois River. He worked for his brother **George**, also in brickyard, cut wood and hauled it to Peoria for 75 cents a load, and also worked for C. B. & Q. railroad. He married **Christina Reed** in Kickapoo Township, who was also a native of Germany, a daughter of **Morris Reed**. There were seven children of this marriage: **Fred, Henry, Andrew, George, Katie, Anna, and Theresa**.

4. **Frederick Heinz, Sr.**, born May 19, 1827, landed in America 1848, and came direct to Kickapoo Township, where he joined his brother **George**. He married **Eva Seibert** from Hesse Darmstadt, Germany, who had come to America alone to live with her sister in Kickapoo Township. She died July 6, 1894. Mr. Heinz first purchased 80 acres of land, mostly timber, on Sec. 16, for \$500. He cleared off the timber and built a log cabin, which was later replaced with a brick house. Mr. Heinz at different times served as Supervisor, Road Commissioner and School Treasurer of his Township. One child was born of this union, **Anna M.**, who married **John Brucher**.

5. **Wendel Heinz**, landed in America 1848, worked for his brother **George**. He had team of horses, harness and wagon; then went to St. Louis to get some more things, but never returned and no word ever heard from him.

6. **Anna Margaret Heinz** (May 1, 1810 - March 11, 1895) married **William Berckler**, first husband, of Hesse Darmstadt, Germany, who was born in 1797; married **Nicholas Hoffman**, second husband, of Sarchbach, Germany, (Jan. 1, 1800 - Nov. 30, 1868). Landed in America July 3, 1853, and to this union were born five children: **John, Nicholas, Peter, Fred, and Eva Hoffman Laszell**.

The history of the Heinz family has been the history of Kickapoo Township.

*Sources:*

Material Furnished by Max J. Heinz, 1928

HISTORY AND REMINISCENCES - Old Settlers' Union of Princeville and Vicinity Vol. 4, 1929

Heinz Family History 1810-1975

<https://ejheinz.center/GedSite/EJ-o/up/index.htm>

## The Lieds Come to America

*Submitted by Michael Lied*

In 1942, when **Wolfgang Amadeus Lied** was still age 14, a German Army Lieutenant came to his school. Wolfgang, along with the other boys in his class, was drafted. He was assigned the position of range finder on a Flugabwehr- Kanone aircraft defense cannon, or FlaK 18, in Frankfurt. His commanders believed his good vision and math skills made him a good fit for such a demanding position. He and the other teenagers tried to shoot down airplanes. We don't know if they were successful. Over the next years, Wolfgang later served briefly in the Luftwaffe, and ended his conscripted military service with the infantry in Nazi-occupied Denmark.

When he learned that the war had ended, Wolfgang did a couple of things. First, he got rid of his black uniform, concerned that he might be thought to be a member of the hated and feared SS. He also literally hung his rifle on a lamp post and decided to start for home. He was almost immediately captured briefly (by either Canadians or English troops – there are conflicts in the reports), but he escaped within a day and kept walking. It took him four weeks to walk (or hitchhike or hop a train if he could find one that was operating) nearly 900 miles back to his family in bombed-out Frankfurt.

Wolfgang later got a job as an apprentice with the German railway system, hoping he would someday be allowed to study engineering. Wolfgang's life changed forever over the following months when he met, worked with, and became a friend of an American GI, **Robert L. Anderson**, of Washington, Illinois. Anderson was serving in the US Army Railway Battalion, in Frankfurt. Wolfgang acted as a translator for Anderson and some of his fellow GIs. After many conversations with Anderson, Wolfgang came to believe that the German government—the Nazis—had intentionally misled the German people about America (“they are all murderers and gangsters”). He expressed a strong desire to visit America. Anderson said he would do whatever he could to make that happen.

Anderson also eventually returned home, taking a position as a machinist at Caterpillar. He had been so impressed with Wolfgang, that he periodically sent the Lied family—father **August**, mother **Katherine**, older brother **Franz**, and younger sister, **Renate**, “care packages” of



food and other items. But Anderson did something even more important. He worked tirelessly at getting Wolfgang a visa to come to the US as an exchange student. This wasn't easy. After all (not that he wanted to) Wolfgang had fought with the German army against the allies. Getting a visa to the US was not a sure thing.

Through the efforts of Anderson and others, Wolfgang had been approved for one year of free tuition and fees at Bradley University in Peoria, Illinois. But he still didn't have a visa. Anderson's many efforts—finally including calling in a favor provided to a US Senator during the war—were ultimately successful. Wolfgang got a student visa. A local Lutheran minister, **Carl Kammeyer**, set up a trust, and collected contributions to help defray the costs of Wolfgang's stay in the US.

In late September, 1948, Wolfgang ended his travel from Germany (on US military transport!) to the US. The bus dropped him off at night at the town square in Washington. He grabbed his duffel and started walking south on Main Street to Anderson's home at the edge of town. A local police officer stopped him, to see who was walking. The cop ultimately was satisfied that Wolfgang was not up to any mischief. Wolfgang knocked on the Anderson's door at 5:30 in the morning. He took up residence with Anderson and his wife, **Ruth**, for the next two years. During those years, Wolfgang made many friends in Washington.

Wolfgang — now commonly called "Wolf"—thrived at Bradley University. Along with studying and attending classes, Wolf was a regular speaker in central Illinois to many groups like the Optimists Club and Rotary. People were very interested to hear what the war was like from the "other side". Wolf told these groups how Nazi propaganda had misled him about America and its people. He now saw the reality of how good, friendly, and welcoming Americans were.

Things went well the first year, and Bradley University gave Wolf another year of free tuition and fees. Wolf really hoped to stay in America.

The foreign student visa, however, required that Wolf now return to Germany for a time. Wolf flew back to Frankfurt in 1950. Though he was a veteran, of the German army, he had trouble finding a job. He eventually worked for the US Army on a construction maintenance crew.

Within a couple of weeks of returning to Germany, Wolf attended his sister's birthday party. He was introduced to the woman who became the love of his life, **Inge Fuchs**.

Fate. It turns out that Inge was a secretary also working for the US Army. They married in September 1951. In 1953, their son **Michael** was born.

Some months later, the Lied family — again with the support of Anderson, Kammeyer and the fund, got immigrant visas allowing them to return to the US forever. The small family, with all their earthly belongings in one steamer trunk, traveled to Rotterdam and boarded the ship to America. Family legend says that Michael learned to walk on

the voyage. Interestingly, the little Lied family's arrival in Washington was noteworthy enough to merit stories in several local newspapers.

The Lied family lived for almost three months in the Anderson's attic. Anderson was an unusual man. Among other things, he was a watchmaker. He also collected weapons. Virtually every horizontal surface in the attic held guns, including fully automatic machine guns.

Also, Anderson may have been poor when he was young, or perhaps it was just living through the Depression. Anderson stuffed money into the walls of his home. More than once he asked Wolf, who had somewhat smaller hands, to fish currency out of the wall. Anderson bought a tiny Saab automobile in the 1960s. They were rare in central Illinois. Just to be safe, he bought another one for parts and put it in his pasture.

The Andersons were childless. Anderson's wife Ruth worked as an accounting clerk at Caterpillar. She was a nice lady. She was deaf. She collected salt and



*Passport pictures of Wolfgang and Inge*



pepper shakers and probably had at least one hundred displayed in their home.

In a few months, Wolf and Inge had enough money to put a down payment on a very small house on the aptly named Brief Street in Washington. There was no money left for furniture, but Wolf's friends in Washington donated used furniture. The Lieds only had to buy a refrigerator.

While Wolf held an entry level engineering job with Honeywell, money was very tight at first. Inge didn't work; she stayed home with her toddler. She didn't speak English as well as Wolf and didn't know how to drive anyway. When the Lieds had visitors, Inge checked under the couch cushions to see if any coins had fallen out of a pocket.

In May 1956, son **Walter** was born, completing the Lied family. In March 1964, Wolf, Inge and Michael became naturalized US citizens, There was a little party at their tiny home on Brief Street.

The Lieds eventually moved to a larger home on Hilldale Avenue in Washington. Wolf advanced in his 30+ year career at Honeywell. Inge finally learned how to



*Rev. Kammeyer, Ruth & Robert Anderson, Baby Walter Lied*

drive, although she never left Washington. She worked for many years as a church secretary.

Over the years, Anderson continued to host soldiers from many other countries. Often

part of the itinerary was a visit to the Lied home, to show how an immigrant could become a success in America, Frankly, Inge and Wolf eventually tired of these visits, feeling a bit like zoo animals.

The United States has hundreds of thousands of immigrant stories. This is ours, a little abbreviated.



## **Martha Rebecca Ballew**

*Submitted by Ruth Byrne*

**Martha Rebecca Ballew**, the first child of **Caleb Jackson Ballew** and **Theresa "Thirsey" Caroline Conley**, was born on 12 July 1856 in Catoosa County, Georgia. The family moved to Fannin County, GA by early 1866. According to her daughter, **Bessie Caroline Campbell**, Martha lived near the site where the Battle of Chickamauga was fought in Catoosa County, the north west corner of Georgia.

Martha married **James Hamilton Withrow** on 12 September 1876 in Fannin County, GA. They were married by **James Withrow, NP & JP**. My "Aunt Gal" (**Gladys Withrow**) remembered her grandmother, Martha as a tiny petite lady.

According to Martha's youngest daughter, Bessie Caroline, Martha and James Withrow were delivered by the same doctor, lived within a few miles of each other, and did not know each other. At a social function, James noticed a small patch on her skirt and decided that he wanted her because it was such a neat sewing job.

Martha Rebecca Ballew, as a young girl, witnessed the horror of the Battle of Chickamauga in northern Georgia, which was fought in September 1863. The Union and the Confederate armies collided in a forested area near Chickamauga Creek. The Confederate's casualties were more than 18,000 compared to the Union's 16,000! More men died here than in any other battle, except Gettysburg. One of our family members recalled that you could walk a mile across the battle field, without touching the ground, there were so many bodies!

After the Battle of Chickamauga, Martha and her mother refugeed behind Sherman's lines, in Chattanooga, where her mother, Thirsey Caroline Conley Ballew, ran a boarding house. The next year, 1866, the family moved five miles west to Ringgold, GA (about 10-15 miles south of Chattanooga.)

We visited the Chickamauga National Battlefield historic site and took a driving tour with a park ranger. The guide explained to us that the battle occurred across the area's farms. They used the farm houses as field hospitals, where if a man was shot in an arm or leg, the doctors cut it off and threw the limb out into the yard



in a pile. The doctors did this, because the wound could develop gangrene, as there was no medication (morphine or quinine) available because of the Northern blockade of the southern ports. As a result of this, the homes and the yards were covered with blood and gore and had to be destroyed. The fields were full of body parts and ammunition so they could not be farmed. Therefore, most of the local families moved away. We had wondered why our Ballew family relocated to Fannin County, GA, which was located in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains! Now we know!

## The WWII Experience of Jack Verbout

*Written by Judy Connor, his daughter*

*Submitted by Mary Kay DeVries*

Nineteen forty-one was a very difficult year for **Phil and Helen Verbout** of Neponset, IL. That spring their 16-year-old daughter was tragically killed in an auto accident. She was buried in her Homecoming dress. In October, the oldest of their three sons, John (Jack), age 18, enlisted in the Army Air Corps. The war was ramping up, and no one knew how long young men would be gone or where they would be.

Jack spent most of his first year of military service training at 11 different US bases. Training included basic, radio, mechanics, aerial gunnery, navigation and bombing. He spent one year in Alaska in very primitive conditions - poor fields, poor communications, poor runways with no ground crews and no navigational charts. He flew 52 missions while in Alaska and the Aleutian Islands and was then ordered to the European theater.



During a brief furlough before leaving in June of 1943, he married his gal back home - **Jo** - the love of his life. A flurry of love letters were sent almost daily after he left.

Jack left the US from Camp Kilmer, NJ heading for Scotland on the Queen Mary. The journey took 5 ½ days, unescorted. He was given more training in high altitudes and gunnery. He was then assigned to Great Ashton, England in early 1944. His missions took him to northern Germany. Many planes were lost. The missions were costly. About this time, Jack got sick and was admitted to a hospital in England. While in the hospital his crew went out on another mission and all of them were killed. Jack claimed that luck had always been on his side. He was sent to a replacement depot and in April of 1944 was assigned to a B-26 bomb group.

While in England, Jack received a telegram that Jo had given birth to their first son, **John Edward, Jr.**, born on May 14—Mother’s Day. More letters!

Jack flew regular combat missions into the low countries and France. He flew twice on D-Day, June 6, 1944. On July 6, Jo received Jack’s last letter. Days, then weeks passed with no communication.

Meanwhile, on July 7 while carrying out a routine mission of bombing bridges and railroads, Jack’s B-26 bomber was struck by anti-aircraft fire. The crew had to abandon the plane. Three in the rear of the plane failed to exit. The pilot ordered the five in front to jump. Jack’s training instantly came to mind. “Do not pull the rip cord until you see the tops of trees.” He waited, pulled and landed first. He found himself in the middle of a hayfield. He hid his chute in a barn and then hid himself in a haystack. (\*As a side note, the four others pulled their cords early, were captured by Germans and sent to prison camps in Poland.) For sustenance, Jack milked a cow in a barn and ate green apples from an orchard. He finally realize he must go to the nearby farmhouse for help.

The farmer didn’t want to house a foreign military person but did have a connection to the French Underground. A hay wagon was sent to the farm. Amongst the loose hay, Jack was hidden. The wagon went to the town of Touques, France where a brave, twenty-year-old woman (Odette), her husband, and 10-month-old baby lived. They agreed to have Jack live with them.

Odette had a false ID made for Jack stating that he was **Jean Hervé**, a deaf mute. He was hidden there for 5½ weeks while German soldiers guarded the street beside the house. One German officer would frequently



enter the house to play the piano. About this time, Jo received a telegram stating that Jack was missing in action.

One day a missile went through Odette's house. They had to move. Odette's plan was for Jack (Jean) to push the baby in the buggy to Odette's parents' house. Meanwhile, Odette screamed to the officers in the street about her damaged house. Jean kept pushing the buggy. Eventually, Odette caught up with Jean. Her distraction worked. Jean was hidden another two weeks at her parents' house before a Belgian Battalion of the British 6th Airborne Division liberated the area.

The Underground helped Jack return to England and eventually the US where he met his son, John Jr. Jack and Jo farmed in Neponset for the next 50 years and raised three sons and two daughters. In 2020, they celebrated 77 years of marriage. In 2000, Jack took his entire family to France to meet Odette



2020 - Jo, Jack, and their children in France



***“Every generation adds another link to the chain that we call history.”***

***David J. Forsyth***

## War History & Last Flight of Byron F. Wear

*Submitted by Boyd Wear*

**Byron F. Wear** was born on January 27, 1924, to **Byron H. and Gertrude (Anderson) Wear** in Princeville, Illinois. He had one brother, **Harold L.**, and one sister, **Phillis**. They grew up in a large farmhouse a mile south of Princeville. Byron dropped out of school at the University of Illinois to enlist in the Army Air Corp. on Dec. 7, 1942, then attended Flex Gunnery Schools in Laredo, Texas. He entered active service on Feb 21, 1943, and became part of the Eighth Army Air Force (8 AAF).

Byron flew out of Bangor, Maine from Dow Army Airfield with the new Flight crew on B-17 *French Dressing* following the North Atlantic Ferry Route through Labrador, Greenland, Iceland and finally to their new base with the 381<sup>st</sup> Bomb Group (532 Bomb Squadron) located in Ridgewell, Essex, England. This crew was led by Pilot **Bruce Rivett**.

Byron flew 25 missions into German territory with this B-17 crew on French Dressing. He was a waist Gunner at first, but then the bombardier (or Toggler) while also operating the chin turret guns. He sat behind the Plexiglas nose cone. Byron flew 25 missions on *French Dressing* and was a Staff Sergeant with considerable experience.

After 25 missions a crew member could return home. Some did and some stayed. The 8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force was in desperate need of experienced flight crews so



Byron and the crew of *French Dressing*



Byron decided to sign on for a second tour to serve his country and the war effort. There was another B-17 bomber that needed an experienced bombardier. That was the B-17 *Little Guy* and Byron decided to join their crew.

The new crew of the B-17G consisted of pilot **Kyle Smith**, co-pilot **Donald McGurk**, navigator **Melvin Lutzerne**, bombardier **Byron F. Wear**, radio operator **Lester Colson**, engineer **Robert Porter**, ball turret **Gustavo Contreras**, waist-gunner **Thomas Arnold**, and tail-gunner **Francis Delange**. The crew wore heavy, sheep shearing insulated flight suits, and later unreliable electric suits and had to use supplemental oxygen at over 15,000 feet.

On Sunday, November 26, 1944, their military target was the Osnabruck train marshalling yard in Germany. This was approximately 240 miles due east from Amsterdam, Netherlands. The crew departed the Ridgewell base and circled to get into their strategic formation. This sometimes took well over an hour for the planes to get into formation.

Over the North Sea, the number two engine began to leak oil. The co-pilot and engineer tried to save the engine but finally gave up, and it had to be feathered. At this point, Pilot Smith had the option to abort the mission and return to base but decided to continue his flight to the target because that is who he was. With only three engines and losing speed, they had to drop behind the formation.

They were attacked by German fighters but managed to make it to the target. They lost the number three engine close to the target, probably due to flak damage or mechanical issue. Pilot Smith had to use all the power to keep up with the formation on the bomb run. Byron opened the bomb bay doors and started to release the eight, one-thousand-pound bombs. Six of the bombs released from the bomb racks but two bombs did not. They became stuck in the rack. Byron walked out onto the catwalk over the open bomb bay doors and tried to pry them loose with a bar, but they were stuck tight. He finally had to give up, close the doors and carry 2,000 pounds of bombs back to base with them.

Then while heading toward home, the remaining two engines were pushed to their limit and number four engine started to act up. At that point Pilot Smith rang the bail out signal as they were continuing to lose altitude. He

then only had one good engine and two live bombs on board while heading down. The crew started to bail out over Apeldoorn, Netherlands. Byron and co-pilot both called out to pilot Smith to ask if he was coming. Smith said he was right behind. As the crew bailed out and floated down, they did not see pilot Smith's chute. They would learn years later the true extent of what happened to their pilot.

The crew was being shot at by German troops while parachuting down. Byron landed on a bridge wall and fractured his ankle. He was immediately set upon by a German soldier who hit him in the head with the butt of his rifle which knocked him out. Byron was taken prisoner. He and other prisoners were taken by coal fired bus at night to Stalag Luft 1 near Barth on the Baltic coast. They moved at night to avoid the dreaded allied bombing during the daylight. He was interrogated at the Stalag and put in with other prisoners. Stalag Luft 1 had up to 3,000 American, RAF and NCO personnel. The B-17 *Little Guy* was the only bomber from the 381<sup>st</sup> out of Ridgewell that failed to return to base that day.

They were treated reasonably well but food was scarce. Byron was in the prison camp for about 6 months and his weight dropped by over 40 pounds by the time of his release. Their meals consisted of turnips, cabbage, potatoes, and sometimes bread. This was not enough nourishment for the prisoners. There were some food parcels from the American, British and Canadian Red Cross that supplemented the camp food, but these were confiscated by the Germans.

The camp was liberated in May of 1945 when the Germans left ahead of the advancing Russian army. The Russians provided no food or assistance to the prisoners. British, Canadian, and American forces finally arrived and evacuated the camp. Byron came home across the Atlantic to Greensboro, North Carolina where he was given an honorable discharge on October 17, 1945.

Byron was awarded the Air Medal with 3 bronze stars, the Purple Heart, the Service Ribbon with 4 bronze stars, Good Conduct Medal, and the Dist. Unit Badge.

After the war Byron said he and other service members were treated as heroes with drinks and dinners, but he was always saddened and humbled that he survived while so many others paid the ultimate price.



But what became of Pilot Kyle Smith? Smith saw that the B-17 was heading for the center of Apeldoorn and the school area. He stayed at the controls and managed to steer the plane to an empty swimming pond area where it crashed and ended his life. Many years later, author **John Meurs** wrote about that day as he was a young boy who witnessed the crash at Apeldoorn. He authored a book Not Home for Christmas about numerous flights and crews who did not come home from missions during WWII. The last flight of *Little Guy* and its crew is in Chapter 11 and goes into more detail about Byron and the flight.

Netherlands Brigadier General **Jelle Reitsma** also



*Jane and Boyd Wear with Ret. Brig. Gen. Jelle Reitsma at the memorial to Kyle Smith near the crash site.*

wrote an in-depth history of that day and the gratitude of the Apeldoorn townfolks. He was instrumental in bringing the town together with the dedication of a monument at the location of the *Little Guy*

crash. The monument is in memory of the courageous and self-sacrificing actions that day of pilot Kyle Smith.

## The Reno Brothers

*Submitted by Ruth Byrne*

**O**ur family had a large farm in Brown County, Indiana in the middle of the county. The Reno Brothers hid out in the dense woods on the back of the property. There was a country store on the road near the property, where the gang got their supplies. At night, they would leave a note for the store personnel of the items they needed. The next night, they would leave the hideout, and retrieve their supplies in the middle of the night.

*\* I was told this several years ago when we visited one of our elderly family members who lived on that farm.*

## THE RENO BROTHERS CARRY OUT THE FIRST TRAIN ROBBERY IN U.S. HISTORY. (This Day in History, October 6, 1866)

On October 6, 1866, the brothers **John and Simon Reno** staged the first train robbery American history, making off with \$13,000 from an Ohio and Mississippi railroad train in Jackson County, Indiana.

Of course, trains had been robbed before the Reno brothers' holdup. But these previous crimes had all been burglaries of stationary trains sitting in depots or freight yards. The Reno brothers' contribution to criminal history was to stop a moving train in a sparsely populated region where they could carry out their crime without risking interference from the law or curious bystanders.

Though created in Indiana, the Reno brother's new method of robbing trains quickly became very popular in the West. Many bandits, who might otherwise have been robbing banks or stagecoaches, discovered that the newly constructed transcontinental and regional railroads in the West made attractive targets. With the western economy booming, trains often carried large amounts of cash and precious minerals. The wide-open spaces of the West also provided train robbers with plenty of isolated areas ideal for stopping trains, as well as plenty of wild spaces where they could hide from the law. Some criminal gangs, like Butch Cassidy's Wild Bunch, found that robbing trains was so easy and lucrative that for a time they made it their criminal specialty.

The railroad owners, however, were not about to sit back and let Cassidy or any other bandit freely pillage their trains. To their dismay, would-be train robbers increasingly found that the cash and precious metals on trains were well protected in massive safes watched over by heavily armed guards. Some railroads, such as the Union Pacific, even began adding special boxcars designed to carry guards and their horses. In the event of an attempted robbery, these men could not only protect the train's valuables, but could also quickly mount their horses and chase down the fleeing bandits - hopefully putting a permanent end to their criminal careers. As a result, by the late 19th century, train robbery was becoming an increasingly difficult - a dangerous - profession.

<https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/first-u-s-train-robbery>



# From one generation to the next and the next . . .

## Can't Swim!

Submitted by Barb Cramer Benner

Just a quirk you say! Did you notice that oddity in your family tree that started to occur generations ago? Or, did you **just notice it** had been there for ages.

I'm not going to study the genes, cells, mutants, heredity facts, etc. I will just say my father's family had several traits that were noticeable. While my poor dad had *cauliflower ears* and can be singly identified in all photos, he seemed to be the only child of seven so blessed.



Wikipedia.com

What I do know is that the lineage from my dad has continued a trait for at least 3 generations. My father and some of his siblings, had "webbed feet". Well, when you define it, it was actually webbed toes and the membrane had

grown between two digits that gave our bunch duck-like features. At least one was curious to see how well each could swim! Another joke that went on for years!

At least two of my siblings had the webbed toes, and my own case seems somewhat mild. I have always been very self-conscious about my feet; I thought all feet were ugly, including mine. Maybe that was an early mental note because of all the family discussion about those funny looking toes!

If you want to look all this up, you will discover that medically the reference is birth defect. The webbing can be fingers or toes, most often toes. This happens in one out of 2,000-2,500 births. I thought it was much more common than that. Surgery is possible to separate this membrane, but it appears folks don't want to at time of birth, then later it just becomes the norm unless it hinders the foot and/or walking.

As far as a genetic trail, it appears my generation is the end of the line; the happy nieces and nephews can swim like "fish" and wear their fashion foot flops.

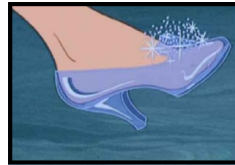
I thought I covered my revelation of Ripley's BELIEVE IT OR NOT FOR BARB, and coincidentally had a phone call from a nephew. I decided to re-confirm that

my brother's very obvious webs had not passed to his son. His reply was no, no webbed toes; I only have a Celtic toe. What? What is that all about? I headed to do research. To quickly answer this question for all the rest of us who wonder, this means the toe next to the "Big Toe" is slightly longer than the big toe and it does stand out to look at.

However, there are distinctive designs of feet that are classified by "podiatry-google writing folks" who want to give us the following categories: **Egyptian, Roman, Greek, Germanic, and Celtic.**



After I'd seen all I wanted in charts and graphs, I felt ready to wrap up this story. Then, my eyes caught the title of **Cinderella feet**, talking about toes too. I had to know. It means that cosmetic surgery has been completed to make the toes conform to the beauty of the eye of the beholder and drastic reduction in shoe size. Your feet will be as dainty as Cinderella's.



So, through the ages, generation after generation, we see inherited "gifts" or "burdens." Maybe it is a perfect time for us genie detectives to re-examine old photos or medical papers to find a new discovery!

## Grandpa's Hands

Submitted by William (Bob) DeVoss

**A**s a child I noticed that my Grandpa Schooling's fingers began to curve as he grew older, as I watched him redo antique furniture. Years later, my mother's fingers began curving also as she aged. This became noticeable as she lovingly knitted or did crochet. She had *grandpa's hands*.

Still years later, I now have those curved fingers myself. As I look at my hands, I see **Grandpa's hands**.



## Inherited Traits

Submitted by Marilyn Voss Leyland

Home from college, my older boy stood before a row of photos of my dad's male ancestors, back several generations.

"Not a good head of hair among them," he muttered.

Needless to say, he now prefers to keep his remaining hair close-cropped, and to protect his head with a cap.

"How do you do that?" The question came from a girlfriend as we exited the original Lakeview pool. She was pointing to the cement deck where our wet footprints appeared. Mine were simply five dots at the top edge of a wet blob, while hers showed a nicely curved arch, with toes. So I tried walking on the sides of my feet, as my Dad had done in order to pass his WWII physical. He knew he had flat feet; and so do I.

"There's Fulcha," my dad's uncles would say, pointing to my middle sister. Giving the German pronunciation, the name stuck in your throat. Fulcha was my paternal great-grandfather's sister, her children the cousins of my dad's dad. It wasn't until the last of Fulcha's children was moving to a nursing home that we saw photos of her family. And there was the image of my sister Susie: light hair, dark eyes, long neck, distinctive nose. Not only that, but the photo of Fulcha's son in his WWI uniform bore a striking resemblance to Susie's older son. An added note: though family referred to her as Fulcha, she had early on changed her name to Flora.

## This Nose Runs in the Family

Submitted by Alice A. Brophy



Grandpa, Madeline, Bea, Bern

It would be wonderful to have a picture of Great-Grandfather **M.J. Brophy** if for no other reason than to study his facial features, specifically his schnoz. From an early age, my generation was

very aware of the size and shape of the noses belonging to Grandfather **John M. Brophy**, his siblings, his sons and daughters. To this day, it is uncanny to study old pictures and see the growth of those beaks over our ancestors' lifetimes.

Some of the families in my generation ended up with a greater percentage of Brophy noses than others. Naturally, the largest family, the Third Street Nine, had the record when it came to being endowed with this famous



Peggy, Diane, Trish, Bobby family feature. Cousins Billy, Johnny, and Bobby were also the ones that did the most teasing of each other and their six sisters. We younger cousins delighted in their comedic remarks about their siblings' beaks.

In the mid 1980's, Johnny, who definitely inherited Grandpa Brophy's proboscis, returned with his family for a visit during the summer.



The next generation was educated on the Brophy nose as they greeted "Big John" at a picnic in his honor and compared their unusual rubber noses to his. A mere ten years later, many of these youngsters pictured were high school athletes often featured in sport recaps as having a "nose for the ball" or "a nose for the net" in their respective sports. Naturally, our monthly family newspaper reported the sportscasters' remarks. Readers could only smile and reminisce about the fun we've had over the years because of that Brophy nose.





## *Genealogists investigate the stories.*

### **Could That Really Be True?**

*Submitted by Carolyn G. Catton*

**M**y maternal grandmother **Nancy E. Symington**

**King** came to live with our family a few years after her husband **Bert King** passed away February 1, 1940 and prior to my being born. My parents **Clarence W. and Grace L. King Catton**, their three children and Grandma King lived on the farm about 3 miles northeast of Brimfield, IL. I



have many great memories of my grandmother (aka Gram to all of us). She would tell me various stories while I fixed her hair or gave her a manicure or pedicure.

One very important memory was when she told me that her father **John D. Symington** (my great grandfather) had died when she was just three years old. Gram was born October 15, 1873 so her father would have died in about 1876 when he was 26 years old. He was



a carpenter and she said he went to help after a flood in the Pittsburgh, PA area. It was believed to be the Johnstown, PA flood since her obituary stated she was born in Johnstown, PA. I felt sad at the time that she never got to know her father growing up or as an adult but accepted the story as fact. Gram died in April 1963 and many years after her death, I began to wonder when and how did my great grandfather actually die. There was a documentary on TV about the Johnstown flood in the early 2000s. I realized the year of that flood did not match with Gram being three years old since the big Johnstown flood occurred May 31, 1889 so that must not be the right flood. I started to research all the floods in the Pittsburgh, PA area. Since it was believed to be the Johnstown flood my research

started there. I tried to find out if there were smaller floods in the area that occurred about 1876. My research did not show any results. I checked flood records; contacted the Johnstown Flood Museum, and they showed no record of a John D. Symington dying in the flood or any smaller flood in the PA area. They said many people would go to an area after a flood to help rebuild and would die from a disease or accident, and there were no specific death records on such events that were not directly related to the actual flood.

So, could Gram's story really be true?

My search for an obituary, death records, census documents, etc. in PA all came up empty. I had really hit a brick wall and stopped my research as I was very busy with my hospital executive responsibilities and adjunct faculty commitments.

It was after my retirement and during the Covid lock down in the winter of 2020 & 2021 that I started my serious genealogy work. I found a document in my grandmother's file that showed Gram's mother **Arvilla P. Merritt** married John D. Symington in Windsor, Henry County, Missouri on September 22, 1869. This added another big question to my research since John D. Symington was from PA and Arvilla P. Merritt was from OH. Was this really even the right John D. Symington (as I found several John Symington's) but no other Arvilla P. Merritt. But how did they possibly meet and get married in Missouri when they were from Pennsylvania and Ohio?

It was in the summer of 2022 that my brick wall came tumbling down. I received a DNA match with a Symington family member who had posted a very informative obituary and life story of my great grandfather John D. Symington on Find a Grave. John D. was the son of my 2<sup>nd</sup> great grandparents **Thomas and Nancy R. Miller Symington**. Thomas was a grocer in Glasgow, Scotland in 1825 and immigrated to the United States in the 1830s. He married **Nancy R. Miller** (born in PA) after emigrating to the U.S. They had two sons, one being John D. Symington born in 1846 and lived in Allegheny, Pittsburgh, PA in 1860 according to the census records.

The life story of John D. Symington stated he



enlisted in the Military at age 16 at the beginning of the Civil War. His unit was out of Philadelphia and merged with two other units from Missouri to form the 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Mississippi Marine Brigade which answered only to the Secretary of War Stanton. Even General Grant did not have any authority over the unit. Much of his service was aboard the Steamer Autocrat protecting the Mississippi River from the Confederates. It was during his time in the service he met his bride my great grandmother Arvilla Priscilla Merritt who lived in the Victoria, IL area at that time (confirmed in U. S. census report) and was originally from Ohio. After he was discharged from the Civil War, they moved to PA sometime in the early 1870s where my grandmother was born in Allegheny, Pittsburgh, PA October 15, 1873. The life story listed my grandmother Nancy E. Symington King as a daughter with a picture of her tombstone in West Jersey, IL and her mother Arvilla P. Merritt as John D. Symington's first wife. However, the shock came when the life story stated John D. Symington had a second marriage in 1874, and there were 12 children born in that marriage. He had moved his family to Ohio in 1876 where he died December 20, 1910. I was able to confirm John D. Symington's life story through military records, his death certificate, census reports, etc.

So, my grandmother's story was not true that John D. Symington died in 1876. He actually was alive in 1876 but moved to Ohio with his new family. It is sad to think my grandmother probably never knew the true story about her biological father living until 1910. The story was most likely he disappeared in 1876 from her life or the area she lived when she was three years old. My grandmother and her mother Arvilla P. Merritt Symington (June 26, 1849-May 19, 1923) moved to central IL in 1876, and Arvilla married **Cosmos D. Stout** (June 8, 1850 - May 30, 1941) in 1878 and had seven children.



Cosmos & Arvilla Stout

My grandmother had a very close relationship with her new family step-father and half-siblings in IL who visited her often while living with my parents.

## Whose Got Mail?

*Submitted by Barb Cramer Benner*

Well, here's a story for you. I've always given you true accounts of information, and I will again do so. Just a couple weeks ago, I was looking on the internet and for some reason pulled up Springdale Cemetery in Peoria. I accidentally got on a type of YouTube narrated by a young man who led me on screen through various roads and sections leading to the gravestone of Captain Jinks and Salty Sam of Peoria television fame in the late 50s and 60s.

From there, I was still watching various markers and all of a sudden, we stopped at a veteran's grave in the section of American Legion Hill. The WWI veteran was named **Albert Van Dyke**, (1884-1956) PFC Co. B, 123 Machine Gun, U.S. Army.

As a somewhat secondary notation made by this "guide," he showed on screen that next to the veteran's grave was a mailbox. Yes, a regular mailbox. He jokingly said, "Oh, that must be for dead letters."

Now, wait! Why is there a mailbox in a cemetery? Could this be true? I called Springdale and asked; the reply I got was they knew nothing about a mailbox. I'm sure they thought this was a pre-Halloween prankster.

On October 27, I asked a good friend to accompany me to the cemetery. I went in to get a map of the vet's grave and off I headed in search. Sure enough, on American Legion Hill, on an empty grave





next to PFC Van Dyke stands a mailbox. The maintenance people have to know it's there because there is a trash container next to the mailbox. I took a photo to verify what I saw.

Yes, I opened the door on it; it was empty. My remaining question is: WHY?

## The Irish Wake

*Submitted by Alice A. Brophy*

On Sunday, May 29, 2016, my sister, **Mary E. Brophy**, and friend, **Michele Plaa Teske**, spent the early afternoon planting the yearly flowers on their respective family graves in St. Mary's Cemetery in West Peoria. Their final stop was the large Brophy stone just off the main road where they added an array of large geraniums in front of the stone as well as flowers on the smaller stones marking the graves of **Madeline Brophy, Anastasia Alice Flanigan Brophy, John M. Brophy, Sr., John M. Brophy, Jr., and Robert E. Brophy.**

As they were packing up their tools, they spotted an older gentleman trying to put a flag in the ground at one of the graves in the O'Connor plot which was close to where they had been working. They asked if they could help with the flag. He told them he was **Willard T. "Bill" Waugh** and would soon be 90-years-old. He welcomed their help in planting a flag on the grave of his father, **Willard M. Waugh**, a veteran of WWI. He pointed out the grave of his mother, **Marie O'Connor Waugh**.

Mary told him she was a Brophy. Well, this guy knew ALL of the Brophys. In fact, he had helped get one of the younger cousins a job in Arizona. He immediately started telling stories of our father, uncles, and numerous cousins. Just when Mary and Michele would get ready to leave him, he'd bring up yet another story about the family. They were fascinated by the details in what he remembered, especially one particular story.

When he was six, Willard and his father attended a wake at the Brophy home on McBean Street. He remembered the house was packed with people. He noted that those gathered in the living room propped up the body in the casket then toasted

the deceased and shared numerous stories. This action scared him half to death so he found the phone, called his mother, and asked her to get him out of there. After hearing this tale, Mary and Michelle couldn't wait to share this encounter with yours truly, the family historian and genealogist.

Hearing the story, I realized that if Willard was 90, he was born in 1928. That meant it was 1932 when this event happened. I cringed!. That would have been the wake for my Uncle John, a recent high school graduate, twin to my Uncle Jim and the "quiet one" of the two. John M. Brophy, Jr. died on August 29, 1932 in St. Francis Hospital, twelve days after breaking his neck in a diving accident at Alfresco Beach.



Having read Uncle John's memorial booklets listing details of the actual service, High and Low Masses to be offered, and floral tributes, it was obvious that John was popular. One entry at the end of the section listing details of the Funeral Mass noted his was "the largest funeral St. Patrick's ever had." Keeping all of this in mind and being quite familiar with the antics of his brothers and some of the twelve pall bearers listed, I can picture the events Willard described as actually happening. The cousins who have heard this story agreed it probably did happen. Unfortunately, relatives who were present were no longer alive by the time we heard this tale.

Willard T. "Bill" Waugh passed away the following January. I would learn from his obituary that he served in the U.S. Navy during WWII and was stationed in the South Pacific. Following his military service, he went to Bradley and then the University of Miami where he earned a degree in architecture. He worked as an architectural engineer for The Stanley Works and its subsidiary franchises in Southern California and Arizona from 1964 until he retired in 1998. He returned home to Peoria in 2000.





## How Technology Brought My Family Back Home

Submitted by Angie Sneeringer

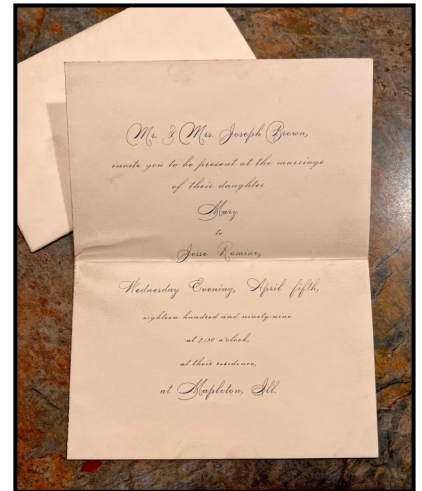
While scrolling through eBay.com on a late night, I made an amazing discovery - my 2nd great-grandparents' wedding invitation!

Jesse and Mary (Brown) Romine were married on April 5, 1899 at the home of her parents, Joseph and Mary Brown of Mapleton, Illinois. The wedding took place on a Wednesday evening - a very curious choice to me.

The near-mint condition paper was folded in half and tucked inside of a church hymnal at a private residence for over a century. An online antique seller based in Hanna City, Illinois bought the book at an estate sale and discovered the invitation within. He did not recall the woman's name whose estate it originated from but said she was a German immi-

grant. He listed the invitation on eBay, and the rest is history. I am absolutely spellbound by its condition and the story of how it made it back to our family 133 years later.

I utilized genealogical research skills to hunt down the property where this wedding took place via the online Peoria County GIS (Global Information System) records, as well. Talk about a trip back in time. I discovered that half of the property is now the parking lot for the CAT Mapleton Foundry. The other half of the property, including the farmhouse, sits across the street.



Here is a picture of the happy couple passed down from my great grandmother and the wedding invitation as references. Now, to track down this mystery German immigrant and discover how she was connected to our family!

## Take MY Picture?

Submitted by Barb Cramer Benner

I cannot stop being curious. The world of genealogy is a melting pot of not only people, namely ancestors, but circumstances, cultures, memorabilia, heirlooms and on and on—history!

Recently, I remembered I once was given a small tintype many years ago. Rather than dig forever to find it, I resorted to purchasing a couple cheap ones on eBay. The story is fascinating regarding the process, history and endurance of this item.

We can start with a man named Adolphe-Alexandre Martin who, in France, invented this process in 1853. For whatever reason(s), it was actually patented in the United States in 1856 by a man named Hamilton Smith. At that time, tintypes were commonly called

ferrotypes or melainotypes. I have no intention to relay much technical description of the process but can say the photographic emulsion was applied directly to a thin sheet of iron coated with a dark lacquer or enamel, thus producing the unique image. Because the lacquered iron support (not really tin but an adapted label) was very resilient, it didn't need any drying time, could be developed quickly and handed to a customer shortly after the photo was taken. Interesting to note this process was done instead of being printed on glass (ambrotype).

Well, well, some of "us" may have a tintype, maybe it was discovered in a corner or box or sewing basket, or wherever! How do we handle it, and can it last? The thickness of the card stock, the color of the borders and the corners (if rounded, they probably date 1870-1900). If they are sharply cut or "squared," they are probably earlier. OK, you busy detectives can think about the dates of the photo, and most of the first



pictures were taken in studios. Often, the photographer would put the tintype in a card, or a cardboard frame, some decorative, and identify his studio in the bottom section of that card. This made a small image easier to handle, offered the idea of gift giving and was inexpensive even for its time.

In that early studio, most likely the subject was asked to pose. You would rarely find a candid, casual pose, formality was the word of the day. Studies of human nature have shown that folks are very often pleased with seeing an image of themselves (photo) regardless of their pleasure of the actual “flattering shot” or not. A large percentage of the tintypes that we find are those taken in an early studio. Then the traveling photographers hit the road to capture the moments of a new house in the background, a recently purchased animal, a family picnic, a park meeting, a circus, a fair, etc. Adventure and excitement took settlers and gold-rush seekers to the wild, wild West. The camera-packed photographers were there too. Their customers were cowboys, prospectors, settlers, outlaws—come one, come all. And then, the rise and fall of the Civil War brought a sizeable revenue as these tintypes were portable, cheap and fast to make. Soldiers would send photos back home to loved ones. And, as settlers moved from east to west, I’m sure there were those who were lonely, homesick folks who jumped at the chance to send word back home that they were alive and OK. It appears that the tintype was available from around 1853 up until 1930. There must be some of you researchers who have one or know where there is one that might identify a relative.

This type of heirloom can last 100 years. It would make sense to secure one that you might have in an acid-free sleeve, hopefully it could make another 100!

My original thought was to secure some sort of tintype and go to our local photo studio, Peoria Camera, to see if such could be used to make a print. Was it fragile, susceptible to sunlight and could it be reproduced? Before I made that trip, I mentioned this idea to fellow PCGS member, **Rich Henz**. Rich told me he used a tintype when completing his family tree book (one of two he and **Kay** have done) and he just photocopied it. Wow! Did not see that coming! So, in my experiment, I will show you what I was able to do. I

will identify the photocopy and the studio reproduced print. This might be helpful to any of you planning to put your history into a book form. I had a copy print made (cost \$3) and had it “enhanced” (\$10) in order to show the quality of a possible end product. Only you can determine how much you wish to spend and how you will apply the photo to your work. My samples are just at random of the three that I bought from eBay. However, I can only hope that one might be a “find” for someone as one of the tins was identified on the back—see the photo for your discovery.

While I am a firm believer of doing the research and legwork, I also have to tip my hat to information obtained on the Internet. For those of you who want more technical information on the process, the little-known facts, etc., please review available data. This product was available to our ancestors and I’m sure many of us have such an item.



Photocopy



Enhanced Print



## Hugo Cemetery

Submitted by Roger Cramer

For more than 80 years the hamlet Hugo, Oklahoma, was the operating base and winter home for as many as 15 circuses at a time– think sawdust under foot, canvas overhead and thrilling memories that have lasted a lifetime for those of us who were in the tent where it happened. As recently as 2018 three shows still spent their off-months sheltering with their *lions and tigers and bears oh my* in Hugo’s mild climate.

Mount Olivet Cemetery in Hugo is the place where town folk and circus people together founded Showmen’s Rest, a sizable site designated for the burial and memorial of circus performers. An endowment takes care of those past performers whose survivors can’t afford a plot or a tombstone.

Mount Olivet, with more than 7,000 graves registered, would be indistinguishable from any community graveyard were it not for the large, dominant section devoted to the final rest of folks from the Big Top. It’s easy to know where to look because the dedicated graveyard is outlined with granite monuments topped with beautiful elephants cast in stone.

Come with me, but step carefully. There is a big genealogical rabbit hole in this place because a closer look reveals that most of the gravestones have handfuls of coins left there in some heartfelt, unspoken tribute.

Leaving coins on graves is a custom as old as human presence on this planet, archaeologists say. Experts explain that in many cultures our dead continue to thrive in an after-life where spirits prevail.

With pockets blessed by coins from their friends, the deceased can bribe their new masters to obtain better accommodations for eternity. Swan Lake Memory Gardens may not provide examples of this practice, but the Arlington National Cemetery does. Writers online even interpret the symbolism of coins left by military personnel and veterans who visit the graves of their comrades. In a column for joincake.com, writer **Sam Tetrault** offers these meanings for coins left at military cemeteries:

**Penny** – means you visited. You have no relationship with the deceased, but you honor their service and their family.

**Nickel** – if you and the deceased person trained at boot camp together.

**Dime** – you served with the deceased person in some capacity.

**Quarter** – indicates you were with the deceased when he or she died.

Coins on graves is a subject worth more in this specialized medium than a rabbit-hole examination, so let’s get back to Hugo. OK?

Ringmaster **Big John Strong’s** life-size image has such fine and dynamic detail that he seems to be stepping from the front of his nine-foot-tall granite marker. The top and the base of his tombstone are shaped like circus tents and the inscription on the back reads, “STRONG. Peace be with you BIG JOHN. The man with more friends than Santa Claus.”

Understatement was never a problem in the circus world.

Elsewhere, hewed from hub to rim in granite with exacting detail is a granite replica of a very fancy circus wagon wheel. It commemorates **Ted Bowman**, and his epitaph says enough: “There’s nothing left but empty popcorn sacks and wagon tracks – the circus is gone.”



Tributes in stone portray the granite carver’s art. **Grace McFarland** smiles and leans back on her trapeze with feet and legs thrust straight forward. **Bonnie “Jean” Warner** and the chimp she trained are captured in photo-



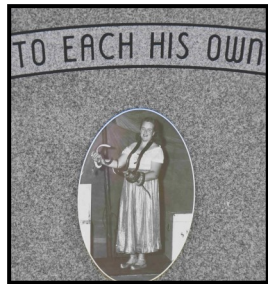
engraved ceramic on her tombstone. A similar method was used to preserve a big photo of a woman with a show horse on the stone of **Zeftha Loyal**, who was a member of the “Original Loyal Repensky Troupe.” Over here



**Dudley Warner Hamilton**, elephant trainer, greets passersby, “May all your days be Circus Days.” Thanks, Dudley!

The show biz dwarf **Ed Ansley** is among those buried here. His tombstone evokes a child’s shoe and we remember him better from the engraved likeness of the trademark Buster Brown and his dog Tige. Ansley reportedly traveled 50,000 miles each of the 27 years he portrayed the boy.

One nods in agreement with the epitaph for **Frances Padilla Loter**. In the large, photo-engraved oval ceramic on her headstone she stands smiling, wrapped with three or four big snakes. Incised across the top is the motto, “To each his own.” Frances probably performed with many



creatures great and small because the Loter family tree is a roster of people who took on jobs in every ring. In a family oral history taped for the Library of Commerce several of her circus-loving descendants said their children were all born in the winter because by spring everyone was back on the road, expected to perform. So far there have been more than eight generations of circus performers in the Loter family.

**Herbert Weber** as The Great Huberto, did a heart-stopping tight wire act in which he danced and wore baskets on his feet. He performed with his assistant Marcella as Los Latinos. She performed in ballet slippers, walking the wire *en pointe*. In the finale she stopped in the middle of the wire and he leaped over her.



**Sarah "Babe" Woodcock's** grandfather **Hiram Horton**, a former sailor and tavern-keeper of English origin, had started a circus in Wisconsin in 1854. The feisty Babe would often say, "My family was in the circus when the Ringling Brothers were still wearing wooden shoes." Her son, **William "Buckles" Woodcock**, was one of the world’s greatest circus elephant trainers. Buckles’ nickname was from the harness his mother used to keep him away from elephants’ feet when he was a little boy.

There are circus animals interred at Showmen’s Rest, too.

It should be noted that there is another burial place sharing the name Showmen’s Rest at Forest Park IL, where the first burial in 1918 was a mass grave for 60 or more performers and working staff of the Hagenbeck-Wallace Circus. They were killed in a colossal wreck at Hessville IN. Their circus train collided with an empty troop train.

Note also that many people have the Hugo cemetery’s name as “Showmen’s Rest and Bull Rider’s Reprieve,” not surprising since the love of all things rodeo seems to be supplied to everyone in Oklahoma with their mothers’ milk. Several prominent competitors for big belt buckles lie proudly remembered at Mount Olivet, along with counterpart arena clowns. Rodeo pros resting there include **Freckles Brown**, **Lane Frost** and **Todd Watley**. Frost’s huge headstone is a rodeo belt buckle in granite to acknowledge him as “A champion in the arena – a champion in life.” On the marker’s flank a stone plinth for floral pieces is engraved, “Lane wasn’t perfect but he knew Jesus.” And as for Freckles Brown? Read the stone: “He was a legend in his own time.”



In the 1930s **Obert Miller** and his sons bought canvas to hand-sew a circus tent 70 by 40 feet.



# Seibold Family History

Submitted by Kevin Thieme

The following lineage of the Seibold family was compiled by descendants of Baldus and Friederike Seibold and presented at the Seibold Reunion in South Park on August 27, 1926. Kevin Thieme proudly shared with PCGS a copy of the original family story from that Seibold gathering in 1926.

## HISTORY OF THE SEIBOLD FAMILY

### 1813–1926

It shall be the purpose of this sketch to record for posterity the lineage of the SEIBOLD FAMILY, so far as it is available at the present time. May its descendants find it a source of inspiration and pride to meditate upon the sterling qualities which marked their worthy ancestors, who, like the patriarchs of old, left their kin and embarked for a new and strange country, never again to behold the place which memory endeared and enriched with all the charm and beauty that the name "FATHERLAND" implies. Cheerfully they bore the hardships and patiently the privations incident to so great a venture; ceaselessly and ardently they toiled to establish their new home.

May they be tendered the admiration and respect they so richly deserve, and may their off-spring constantly endeavor to emulate the example of their fore-fathers. The faith and sincerity; the honesty and integrity; the industry and thrift which characterized them shall be a heritage unto all the succeeding generations. May the memory of those long since departed be cherished in the hearts of those who bear their name.



**Baldus Frederick Seibold**, the son of **Philip Seibold**, was born on July 18, 1813, in the little town of Fellbach near the beautiful city of Stuttgart in southern Germany which was also the home of his ancestors. His father and mother succumbed to a typhoid epidemic and left the hapless orphan, only 1½ years old, and his brothers and sisters to the mercy of relatives and friends. For several years he was cared for by his grandparents, then upon their death, came into a family named Morgenthal, who very diligently collected the allowance which had been set apart for his support and gave as

little as possible in return. He was unceremoniously introduced to hard work and his early years were devoid of the love and sympathy which is a child's rightful inheritance. In the womanly heart of **Friederike Neff** he found that which he had so long been deprived of, and they were wedded in the year 1838 when he had attained the age of 25 years and his wife 23. They operated a small farm and planted their vineyards employing some help.

Eight fine, healthy children came to bless their household: four boys and four girls, as follows:

- Fredericks J.** born Aug. 27, 1839
- Friederike** born Nov. 28, 1840
- Wilhelmina** born Dec. 13, 1841
- August** born Feb. 21, 1843
- Karolina** born Oct. 27, 1844
- William H.** born Apr. 13, 1847
- Ernest** born Sept. 13, 1849
- Bertha** born Jan. 17, 1851

These children were baptized in the Lutheran Church, attended the public schools, and assisted their parents in their work and vineyard.

Bad seasons, crop failures, and a strong immigration to America in 1853 and 1854 gave rise to the thought of setting out for the new continent. Fredericks and Friederike, the two oldest children, with youthful ardor declared their intention of accompanying their father and mother, and jointly they succeeded in converting the other members of the family to the project. The farm was sold, and they left their old home on June 1, 1854, traveling through France to the seaport, Havre, where they set sail on June 16, on a fine new ship from Boston, called the *Marciaday*. They were seven weeks enroute because of a long spell of calm, still weather. About a week before reaching New York, off the coast of Newfoundland, the boat almost ran upon a rock due to heavy fog and a careless sailor on the look-out. Another sailor caught sight of the rock and alarmed the Captain who gave hurried orders and helped the man at the stern. The danger was averted before half the passengers were aware of it. The Fourth of July was celebrated on board ship by the officers and sailors donning their best clothes.

On August 3rd, they landed in New York, and two pleasant days were spent in Brooklyn with relatives of the father. In the evening of the second day, the family



boarded a steamboat on the Hudson River and arrive in Albany before morning. They proceeded in an immigrant train to Buffalo, stopped there one day, thence in a steamboat to Detroit. On Lake Erie the boat carried a cargo of coffee on deck, and the family had been dispersing themselves on these coffee sacks asbest they could. In the evening, a kind-hearted officer directed them to some unoccupied berths in the state-rooms, and they were comfortably established for the night. Some hours later the boat was rammed by another vessel, and the place where they had been was literally covered with wreckage. The protecting arm of God was 'round about them and kept them from harm.

From Detroit they journeyed to Chicago in an immigrant train consisting of cattle cars; then to LaSalle in a passenger train, waiting two days in LaSalle for a boat to Peoria. Progress from there was very slow, as there was not enough water in the Illinois River to float a boat. In Hennepin they were actually grounded. This last lap of their journey required two days. There were no supplies on board, and father was obliged to go on shore to find food. He returned with a basket of

hard-boiled eggs, a pitcher of milk, and some crackers which he had procured at a farm house, and so allayed the pangs of the hungry family.

In Peoria they were met by old friends, the Schwab Family, who had been neighbors in the fatherland, and were given a hearty welcome. They rented a small house in Bloomstown from a man named Bloom, in the territory between Spring and Green Streets, and lived there over the winter with father obtaining work as a laborer. In the spring of 1855, they purchased five acres of land in South Peoria in the Griswold Addition, built a home, and established a market-gardening business which is still flourishing at the present day.

Mother Friederike passed to the great beyond on December 30, 1887, at the age of 72 years. She was indeed a devoted wife and mother; her life was spent in sacrificial service for her loved ones. An injury to her hip, sustained in a fall, hastened her death.

Father Baldus' call came five years later on December 26, 1892, while living at the home of his daughter, **Karolina Krause**, on Griswold Street. He was a man in the deepest sense of the world and word; strong and steadfast; righteous and true, and he enjoyed the esteem of all who knew him. His life was well-lived and his rest well-earned.



Back: Johanna Lemke Seibold, Wm H. Seibold, Frederick J. Seibold  
 Front: Karolina Seibold Krause, Friedericke Seibold Zimmerman, Bertha Seibold Zimmerman

**Fredericks J. Seibold**

The eldest son of the family, at the age of fifteen years secured employment in Stewart's Bakery on North Washington Street. Later, he assisted Mr. Moeninghof in the Peoria House, then a leading Hostelry in Peoria where it was his privilege to see the famous Lincoln-Douglas Party. In 1859, he decided to see more of this country and went to St. Louis. He hired out as a cook on steamboats running up and down the Mississippi River and the Illinois and Missouri Rivers. He

continued this work for several years until the Civil War broke out and the steamboats stopped running.

He enlisted in the Eleventh Regiment of the Illinois Cavalry and served three years, keeping his health until the third year. Then nearly all of the boys became ill, and many, many graves were filled with heroes. When Frederick was paid off at Memphis, Tennessee on December 20, 1864, he was scarcely able to stand on his feet. Home and father and mother were a welcome sight to the sick and weary soldier who arrived on the day after Christmas.



By early spring he had somewhat regained his strength and went to work for his brother-in-law, **Wendelin Kneer**, at the Railroad Exchange Hotel and remained there one year. In February, 1866, he entered into partnership with **George Schaefer** of Henry, Illinois, who had been his comrade in arms, and together they conducted a Bakery and Restaurant. On the 24th of June, 1867 he was married to **Mary Ohl** of Peoria whom he had met several years before, and in May, 1868 they moved to Sparland, Illinois where he continued his chosen profession until he died on February 26, 1926. His beloved wife preceded him on June 21, 1914. Their union was blessed with seven children, four boys dying in infancy

Frederick J. Seibold must be accredited for the assemblage held here today. It was his pleasure to gather the members of his family about him on the anniversary of his birth, August 27th, and from year to year the Company increased until the happy thought of an annual Seibold Reunion evolved. The organization was perfected on August 30, 1924, about 150 members of the clan being in attendance at South Park, and the occasion proved a most enjoyable one to all present, perhaps especially so to Uncle Fred who sensed that I would be his last earthly reunion with the family.

**Friederike Seibold**

The eldest daughter was married on February 28, 1861 to **John Zimmermann** who lived on a farm near Washington, Illinois. They occupied a staunch pioneer log-cabin home, and eleven children were there born to them, one son dying when he reached young manhood. Mr. Zimmermann followed him on January 5, 1905, and for a time the family continued on the old home place. The fourth son, **Fred** then moved to Washington, Illinois and organized the Washington Dairy. This concern has

remarkably prospered, until today Washington Dairy milk is a household word in hundreds of Peoria homes. The business has assumed large proportions, and embraces not only the general dairy products, but also restaurant service and the manufacture of ice cream.

**Wilhelmina Seibold**

At the age of 13 years, Wilhelmina found work in the Washington House where she remained for many years. Her efficiency and superior cooking became renowned. On July 6, 1862, just before her brother Frederick departed for the Army, she was united with Wendelin Kneer in marriage. Mr. Kneer had been



(Undated newspaper clipping)

*Their combined ages are 323 years. Left to right they are Mrs. Andrew Zimmerman, Mrs. Friedericka Zimmerman, Wm. H. Seibold, and Mrs. Caroline Krause. They are brother and sisters, the oldest living generation of the Seibold family, which celebrated its annual family reunion recently with 146 members present.*

working on the farm of Sheriff Riggs in Scotland Prairie. They purchased the Railroad Exchange Hotel and operated the same for 29 years, then retired to a small farm on Lincoln Avenue (Peoria). Mr. Kneer was injured in a fall which resulted in his death on November 18, 1892. Mrs. Kneer continued the farm for a time, but later

upon the advice of her children, moved to a home on North Madison Avenue where she was called to her final rest on her birthday, December 12, 1918, her age being 77 years. Eight children constituted this family, four of whom still live (1926).

**August Seibold**

The second son, when he had reached a man's estate, started out with a friend to see California. They made the trip in a covered wagon, as was customary in those days, and returned home by way of New York. He joined his brother-in-law, Mr. Kneer, in the Railroad Exchange, and together they conducted this hotel for a number of years. He then assumed charge of Central Park, which was Peoria's only recreation place at that time. He found a help-mate in the person of **Susanna Sommers**, and they were wedded in October 1871. To them were born ten children, eight of whom survive. After



leaving the Central Park, they moved to a farm near the upper free bridge, where the widow still resides. His death occurred on May 29, 1905.

**Karolina Seibold**

Karolina was married on October 18, 1863 to **Charles Krause**. His original profession was painting, but ill health forced him to abandon his trade, and he took up gardening. He purchased a number of acres in the Griswold Addition in South Peoria, adjoining his wife's homestead, and this property is still owned and occupied by members of his family after 61 years. Ten children came to grace this household, four preceding their father, wo died November 20, 1922. Mr. and Mrs. Krause in 1892 crossed the ocean and visited Europe and the old home.

**William H. Seibold**

William and Miss **Johanna Lemke** were married on Thanksgiving Day in the year 1871. To him belongs the distinction of literally following his father's foot-steps. The original property and homestead came into his possession in 1872, and the market gardening business established by his father is still carried on by his family, enhanced and enlarged, an unbroken record of 71 years, and one of which he may be justly proud.

The golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. William H. Seibold was observed with appropriate celebration on November 29, 1921. They were nonored by a large company of relatives and friends, who came to offer their congratulations upon the happy event. Fifty years of united effort and endeavor in joy and sorrow, sunshine and rain, is a favor not commonly bestowed on mortals, and this fact was given due recognition.

**Ernest Seibold**

The youngest son remained unmarried. He followed the blacksmith trade for a time and died at the age of 47 years on November 13, 1901.

**Bertha Seibold**

The youngest child of Baldus and Friederike Seibold became the bride of **Andrew Zimmerman** on June 28, 1869. He was a brother of her eldest sister's husband and was associated with the Strehlow and Wetzlau Liquor Firm on Fulton Street. When the call came for service in the Civil War, he enlisted in the Eighty-second Company of the Illinois Volunteers and was

seriously wounded in battle. He succeeded in dragging himself from the scene of action and for four days lay without medical attention or aid. The report came to his family that he had been lost, and they mourned him sadly though prematurely. The hardship and exposure which he endured left a permanent imprint upon him, and he suffered from the effects until his death, January 15, 1915.

Seven children were the pride of these parents, one of whom they mourn,



In conclusion, may it be stated that Mpnday, August 16, 1926 marked the 72 anniversary of the Seibold family in Peoria - a record which but few Peorians are able to boast.

It is meant that a fitting tribute be paid to the brave pioneers, who laid so splendid a foundation in the long ago and contributed so largely to the good of the community,

and, THANKS BE TO GOD, who gave so bountifully of His blessings to this great family; who endowed them with virtue and strength, and gave them both the will and to do of His good pleasure.

THEY TOILED AND PLANTED AND WATERED  
BUT GOD GAVE THE INCREASE.



At our 50th Celebration, Kevin Thieme, a Seibold descendant, shows Carole and Ron Bieber a composite picture of the various Seibold families attending a reunion in South Park (Trewyn Park today).



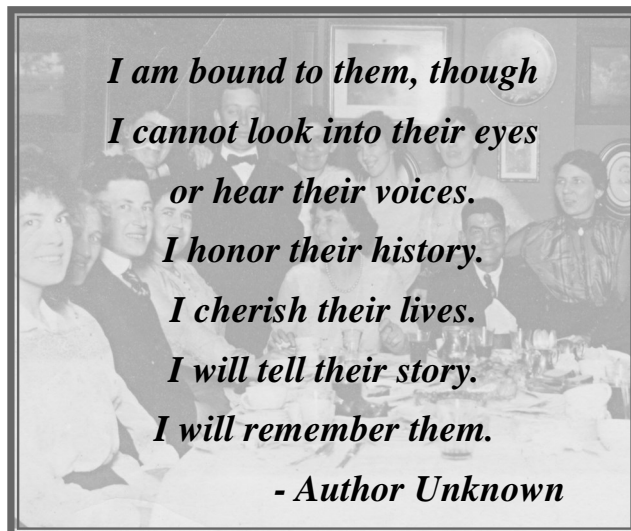
## **In Memoriam**

*Submitted by Barb (Cramer) Benner*

We learned of the passing of **Bonnie Tiezzi** of Brimfield, IL on July 8, 2023. During the years as a member of PCGS, she actively searched ancestors and most recently participated in the Brimfield Genealogy Discussion Group. Bonnie was a loving wife, mother, and grandmother. She kept very active in the community in retail sales, gardening, baking, church activities and volunteering at Jubilee State College. Our condolences to her family.

**Patricia "Pat" Cummings Powers** passed away on September 17, 2023. Those who knew Pat admired her quiet kindness. She had been a teacher, a volunteer at Springdale Cemetery, member of PCGS, and helped with St. Thomas funeral luncheons. Our condolences to her husband, children and grandchildren. She will be missed.

We extend our deepest sympathy to the family of **Mary Michelle Kocher Couri** who passed away on October 4, 2023. A nurse for 42 years, Mary finally retired in June of 2022. She was proud of her Irish heritage and wouldn't miss marching with her large extended family in every St. Patrick's Day Parade. With marriage she became a member of Peoria's large Lebanese family and had the opportunity to visit Lebanon a few years ago. Our condolences to Randy, daughter Maggie (Michael), son John, and granddaughter Lizzie.



*I am bound to them, though  
I cannot look into their eyes  
or hear their voices.  
I honor their history.  
I cherish their lives.  
I will tell their story.  
I will remember them.*

*- Author Unknown*

## **PRAIRIE ROOTS CONTRIBUTORS**

**Fall - Winter 2023**

**BARB CRAMER BENNER**

**RON BIEBER**

**KATHLEEN BIERSDORFF**

**ALICE A. BROPHY**

**RUTH BYRNE**

**CAROLYN G. CATTON**

**RODGER CRAMER**

**WILLIAM (BOB) DEVOSS**

**MARY KAY DEVRIES**

**BETTY SCHMIDT DICKERSON**

**SUZANNE GILL**

**AL HALVERSON**

**E.J. HEINZ**

**JACKIE SAFFORD KRAG**

**MARILYN VOSS LEYLAND**

**MICHAEL LIED**

**RITA MARSH**

**KERRY MIELCAREK**

**MARIANNE TIMBERLAKE MOLL**

**ROSEMARY "PINKY" CHANDLER RIFFLE**

**DONNA SCHLATTER**

**KAREN SEEMAN**

**ANGIE SNEERINGER**

**SUE SWANSON**

**KEVIN THIEME**

**BOYD WEAR**

**BROTHER LOUIS ZANT**



## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

PCGS continues our ongoing activity and is asking for input from our members. We are collecting stories to be maintained on a permanent basis in the Society's archive at the Peoria Public Library-Main Branch. Our next generations will appreciate the effort from our members. If you are a member, consider sharing a memory. It does not have to be from Peoria County, and you don't have to live here to send us a story. Please submit an article,

whether a paragraph or a page. They will be collected at general meetings or can be emailed to: [pcgsoralhistory@gmail.com](mailto:pcgsoralhistory@gmail.com). These stories will be printed one time in PRAIRIE ROOTS and then placed in a notebook. If you have a photo, we'd like to use it, and it will be returned. This collection will offer so much to those who come along after us who want to know what it was like in our generation. Please add your story or memory to the collection!

### Quack Quack

by Barb (Cramer) Benner

I think we've all heard the saying, "if it looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck, it must be a duck!"

However, when we speak to the word "quack" to be used as a noun, somehow it often refers to a doctor or physician. Have you wondered how all that got started?

In the 1600's, London suffered from an outbreak of bubonic plague. Due to rapid deaths and high fear, much of the population fled the city, including their doctors. During this plague or pandemic, the good guys were gone and appearing on the scene were "low-born" or undereducated individuals who offered home made medicines (called nostrums). They even went to street corners hawking their potions, elixirs, cremes, etc., somewhat in voices like ducks or geese.

Europe suffered for years with plagues, with few qualified practioneers to actually help with cures. The Dutch word, "quacksalver" described people offering miracle potions; after a time, it was familiar to hear the word quack to mean a crook or medical imposter.

It took a long time to establish an infrastructure and Venice was one of the first cities to establish guidelines and rules and concrete positives toward treatments and cures. They also initiated the "quarantine" to isolate suspected sick or contagious

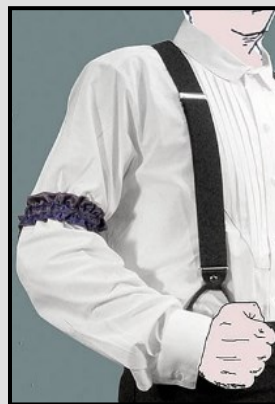
folks. Vulnerable people were easy targets and fortunes were made in early days of severe illnesses. Charlatans and quacks thrived during these occasions.

Rarely do we hear those reps of the medical world labeled as quacks in current conversations. Once in a while, the shock of a super high bill for services might cause the term to spit forth.

### Grandpa at Work

by Betty (Schmidt) Dickerson

When I was a little girl, my grandfather, **Louis Schmidt Sr.**, was the owner and bartender of a tavern in Schmidt Park, near Dutch Hill. He worked mostly days and always made a striking appearance behind the bar. He would wear a long-sleeved white shirt, buttoned at the cuff. And, that shirt had black bands just above the elbow on each arm. They would remind you of garters. As a kid, I never knew why that was part of his attire. Now as an adult, I realize these elastic bands



were worn to keep the sleeve tight to the arm in order that it not get dipped in a drink, slide on the wet bar, or just get dirty. The other small vignette that I do recall is that the bar had a spittoon at each end on the floor.

In those early days, piano players and



## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

bartenders often wore a one-size-fits-all shirts. Now when I see pictures of the old days and saloons, I can figure it out.

As an added note, in later years when my grandfather was ailing and then his final death, my grandmother had the building remodeled to a two-bedroom house and insisted my family move in And, that remodeled tavern was our home until 1949 when we moved. The house still stands today.

### The Games We Played

by Rosemary "Pinky" (Chandler) Riffle

Many things will be forgotten in terms of daily life, including the games we played as children. With today's technology and refined toys, some of the old favorites will be a "thing of the past", or even buried in

our memories. Girls played with jump ropes and had a whole collection of sing-song poems to count out the rhythm of the rope hitting the ground. There was dutch and double dutch with fancier turning of the rope and holding the rope oneself or having two "turners" for a longer rope. Some of it really required skill. Boys played catch and many ball



games. Girls and boys played with a bouncing ball and hit it against a wall with different formulas of bounce, hit wall, under leg, hit wall and a certain number of bounces, etc. Both boys and girls played jacks. Jacks were small metal sort of 3D stars which you would toss and then bounce a small red rubber ball and scoop up the jacks with each throw.

We rode bikes that had brakes that weren't controlled by our hands, but stopped us if we stomped on the pedals. We played a lot of games with the neighbors such as "Kick the Can", "Come to Court", sort of versions of "Hide and Seek", "Mother May I", "Simon Says", "Red Rover" and many others. These

could be played on a playground at school as well.

People have always collected things: Baseball Cards and Pokémon Cards. But back "in the day", I'm guessing around the 1940s, we collected playing cards for the pictures on the back, not the numbers and Jacks and Kings. We kept shoe boxes for files and separated them into Pretty Girls, Florals, Geometrics, Animals and Food. We would trade them with our friends and we went door to door asking neighbors and friends if they had any old cards, they wanted to get rid of. Every so



often we would have "Give Aways" where we would climb the fire escape and toss out the surplus we had and those on the ground would scramble for them. We collected matchbooks and gum wrappers, bottle caps and such. We collected paper dolls and their clothes and carried them to play at someone else's house.

One of the activities I particularly remember was our love of horses. There was a time when movies about horses were very popular: My Friend Flicka, Fury, Black Beauty and National Velvet, to name a few. (Elizabeth Taylor was in National Velvet and we were all enamored with her.) These movies started a whole phenomenon. We were so into horses that we pretended to BE horses. A whole group of my girlfriends would be a herd of wild horses and we would gather and run across the playground whinnying. The pretend extended to our particular parts: the stallion who led the whole herd and the mare and all the others.

I'm sure there were variations from one area of our country to another, but it is interesting how similar we all were having fun with nothing or cast offs. I've talked to several others that remember these things or a substitute as favorite games. Ahhh....the good old days.





## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

### Paper Doll World

by Kerry Mielcarek

Elizabeth Taylor, Debbie Reynolds, Roy and Dale, Janet Leigh, the Lennon Sisters, brides, grooms and attendants, large babies, ballerinas, skaters, and little girls poked out of birthday cards. These were my best friends and playmates. I lived in a paper doll world.

I must have been in kindergarten when I received one of my first paper doll sets, a wedding set, because I named the bride Marilyn after my idolized kindergarten teacher. Having never been to a wedding I asked my mother what the man was. When she replied, "I guess the usher," I thought she'd said "flusher" and thus, Marilyn's husband became Flusher.



My paper dolls were all given last names. There was the Bride family, the Groom family, and the Wedding family. My first Debbie Reynolds was given to me when our family was vacationing in Gulf Shores, Alabama, so she was Debbie Swimming. There were the Card girls, paper dolls that came from birthday cards sent to me from my grandma. The Dance family were ballerinas, Dorothy and Russell, named for singers on "Your Hit Parade," and Tammy, whose name came from the song.



The baby paper dolls didn't quite fit in with the others because they were larger than the adults. I had to make up separate stories for them.

My paper dolls often acted out my own life experiences. They skated through an Ice-o-Rama after my parents took us to see one. We had Miss America

contests thanks to the tv show. After having had my tonsils out, I directed selected paper dolls in a "Tonsils Out" play to which my mother and sister were invited. They must have been so bored.

The vacuum was our worst enemy, and although no paper dolls disappeared to it, there were threats to pick them up or else.

It didn't matter whether my paper friends had missing feet and hands or dangling limbs as long as their heads remained; Scotch tape cured every ailment, just so the body parts didn't disappear. At one time I used a dresser drawer for paper dolls awaiting Scotch Tape surgery.

As time passed, the number of women outnumbered the men (story of my real life) so a few divorces solved that problem. Roy divorced Dale and married Kathy Lennon. Another Roy (renamed Pat because I couldn't have two Roys) remarried one of the ballerinas.

My mother worried that I might never leave my paper doll world, but eventually I chose movie magazines and reading about the real Elizabeth Taylor, Debbie Reynolds, and Janet Leigh.

The paper dolls and movie magazines disappeared when my mother felt they were a part of my past. However, I can still visualize many of those paper doll friends, Roy Rogers, Laurie Bride, Madeline and Dolly Card and Peg Groom.

### Got a Spare?

by Barb (Cramer) Benner

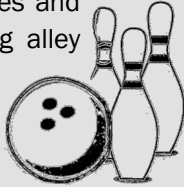
Sometimes we stumble upon a piece of trivia which leads to another. While this little story does not have a bombshell of information, it might be of interest to some of our readers. Back in the year 1886, it appears there was a restaurant here in Peoria, then located at Pacific and President streets (also identified as Frye & Pacific Streets, and later Pacific became



## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

Prospect.) The location known as the **Alps Beer Gardens** was across the street from the entrance to Glen Oak Park.

The Alps Beer Gardens was an attraction where there existed a cave lighted with candles and lanterns that housed a café, a bowling alley and a shooting range. The walls were painted in bright and eye-catching colored murals and this popular spot had 5 acres of outside park-like picnic areas, surrounded by the shade of many trees. Patrons enjoyed a bandstand, a pavilion and a dancing platform.



The cave was reported to be 150 feet long, 20 feet wide and the height of 25 feet. With a cool breeze and an ideal location, the tavern business flourished until 1919 with Prohibition being enacted.

Locals liked to claim this spot as “famous” especially when the Barnum and Bailey Circus was in Peoria. Gen. Tom Thumb would come there to play pool, using custom made equipment to fit his size. As the land deteriorated, with the bowling alley long gone, this property was sold in 1974.

Interesting to note that while our Peoria Flintstones loved to roll their rock, the sport of bowling dates back to 1858 in Peoria, Illinois.

### SOURCES:

- [Peoria Journal Star](#), July 22, 1974
- Google
- Peoria Public Library Staff

## Music Magic

*by Ron Bieber*

I have always had an interest in music since I was pre-school and would go over to my Grandmother's house and play the thick heavy records on Grandma's old upright Victrola. That got me interested in music so I was in the band at the old Garfield school band in Peoria's South Side. That continued through Woodruff High School Band. Bever thinking what would happen in the early 1970's. I was crossing the Murray Baker

Bridge one day going home and there was a truck towing a utility trailer and in the trailer was a Player Piano with the paper music roll flapping in the wind. I followed until we turned off, and I saw who was driving. It was my neighbor, Bob! That was the start of a long and great hobby. He said he was going to rebuild it and that gave me an idea. I am going to look for a Player Piano and try to rebuild it too! Bob and I found one and that became my project. We put them in our own garages and started our projects. I found a material supply company in Wichita, Kansas. First purchase was a book, REBUILDING THE PLAYER PIANO by Larry **Givens**, published by the Vestal Press, Vestal, New York. This was my Bible through all the rebuilds. Yes, Rebuilds! I got hooked on the hobby and rebuilt four player pianos. I gave them to Family and they passed them along.



Building was quite a procedure. The fastest rebuild took about three months and the longest took about six months. It was amazing how they were built in every detail. I even had to make some of my own tools to do the work. When I finished, it was fascinating to watch every piece doing their function all from a vacuum pump .... My Feet! I seem to remember Bob building about the same number of pianos in his garage. Of course, we had to test them in our garages with the door open. People would slow down and wind their windows down and take a listen. Ah, The Good Old Days!

Sadly, our pianos are history. Bob passed on a few years ago and we downsized when we retired. Bless our daughter, Deanne. She gave her piano to a church.



## ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

### Love Thy Neighbor

by Rita (Fox) Marsh

Neighborhoods have changed greatly since I was a kid. Or, maybe, because I'm no longer a kid, I just view them differently. We lived on Empire Street, one house from the corner of Rotzier Avenue. Back in the day, I could name every person living there within a two-block radius. Our neighborhood was made up of mainly older people, or so I thought back then. Mr. and Mrs. Wessel lived directly across the street. They had no children, but they did have a parakeet named Joey. Before retiring, Mr. Wessel worked for the railroad. We spent many an afternoon rocking on their porch talking about his train travels around the country. Mrs. Wessel was always canning something. She'd come walking across the street with a big smile and present us with her latest jar of peach jelly. Next door to them was Mrs. Wipert, she loved to paint flowers. I thought her paintings were absolutely beautiful, someday I would paint flowers too. Back on my side of the street to our right lived Mr. and Mrs. Emerick. They didn't have children either but loved when I would come and put puzzles together with them. To the right of our house lived Grandma Clara, not really my grandma, but she was loved as if she were. Grandma Clara and I spent hours drinking tea out of pretty cups and discussing everything under the sun. She was a very special lady.

There were mainly boys in the neighborhood. My girlfriend Jerene, who was my age, lived behind us. Jerene's mother had gathered for us the best box of dress-up clothes in the whole world — hats, gloves, hat pins, long skirts, high heels, and a special fur cape with a fox head and tails. One summer we strung a rope between her house and my house. Our dads added pulleys so we could send secret notes back and forth to each other attached with clothespins. (I guess that was kind of like texting!)

The boys were always rowdy spending their time throwing water balloons, pinning cards to their bicycle spokes, then racing up and down the alley or playing endless games of football in the empty lot. We all got together for games of Red Rover, Greenlight Redlight, or Hide and Seek.

As an adult we lived in a neighborhood for over 20 years. We knew every person on our street, but rarely interacted with them socially. I guess it was a case of everyone working, busy with kids, and chores. Our neighborhood today is much the same, we live on a cul-de-sac with twelve houses. We know three of the families very well, the others we exchange a wave, and a smile.

Maybe if we all exchanged jars of jelly, we'd get to know our current neighbors better!

### Grab the Bumper and Ride!

by Alice A. Brophy

Today's younger generation has no clue about the dangers Baby Boomers experienced in their youth. While summers were filled with trying the high dive at Logan Pool or seeing how high you could go in the swings of Trewyn Park or even following Kickapoo Creek north from the woods behind the park, it was winter that brought out the true daredevils of Peoria's Southside.

One thing was a given - schools never seemed to close for snow. Add to that you rarely saw a school bus in this end of town so students trudged through the snow no matter how deep. Late afternoons and weekends were spent sledding down the steep hill next to Trewyn Park's pavilion as well as "Dead Man's Curve" the sidewalk that actually curved down the hills. Skating on the park's flooded rink could be a hazard but nothing like riding the streets behind a car.

Grabbing the bumper of a car or truck, squatting and hanging on for dear life was something to witness. The Urban Dictionary labels it as skitching and notes that "children wait at a stop sign to grab on to unsuspecting cars when they stop." That's not quite what happened in front of Dad's store on Starr St. Those teen boys made running leaps for the bumper as a car sped down the street, and they then held on for dear life!





## Trinity Lutheran Church of Peoria, Illinois

### Confirmation Records 1941 - 1945

Submitted by Donna Schlatter

NAME	BIRTH DATE	FATHER'S NAME	BIRTHPLACE	BAPTISM PLACE
<b>6 Apr 1941</b>				
Carl ARNOLD	27 Jul 1925	Ernest	Germany	Germany
Reuben Walter COULTER	14 Jan 1925	John	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Clifford Walter MOEHRING	15 Jul 1928	Henry	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Dale ENDSLEY	4 Feb 1928	Frank	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Edward Carl MOELLER	19 Mar 1928	Carl J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Walter BARNEWOLT	10 Sep 1928	Adolph	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Rudolph Edward KNOLL	25 Aug 1927	Rudolph E.	Cortland, NY	Cortland, NY
William George GOOD	25 Jan 1928	George	Zanesville, OH	East Moline, IL
John HAVERA	19 Nov 1911	Thomas	Cherry, IL	Cherry, IL
Harold Peter BRAUTIGAM	6 Jan 1923	Peter	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
William Morris BRAUTIGAM	2 Aug 1924	Peter	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
John Israel McKENNA	24 Aug 1892	Benjamin	Canton, MO	Peoria, IL
Henry Gottlob AUPPERLE	3 Sep 1926	Gottlob	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Malcolm Dean WINKLER	31 Jul 1927	Dewey	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Eugene Oscar MOSSNER	29 Jul 1927	Ralph J.	Decatur, IL	Decatur, IL
Edward KELLER	15 Jun 1878	John	<i>not given</i>	Peoria, IL
Frieda Rosa BROWN	28 Jul 1887	Christian HENNE	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Eleanor May BRAUTIGAM	1 Dec 1925	Peter	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Kathryn Edna BRAUTIGAM	2 Jun 1921	Peter	<i>not given</i>	Peoria, IL
Barbara Jean Johanna LOOCK	11 Aug 1926	Frederick	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Doris Louise SAMMIS	4 Nov 1927	Edward	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Bernice Roxanne FOLKERS	24 Sep 1900	Mason BLACK	Green Valley, IL	Green Valley, IL
Ruth Aileen HAHN	18 Jun 1899	<i>not given</i>	Jacksonville, IL	Peoria, IL
Evelyn Ethel COULTER	24 Jan 1927	John	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Alice Ann WOELLER	24 Aug 1927	Paul	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
Jacquiline Jean RINGEL	20 Oct 1927	Stanley	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Ruby Jean MIESNER	18 May 1927	Charles	Deshler, NE	Deshler, NE
Marcella Elizabeth GIEBELHAUSEN	2 Jul 1922	Gustar	Tazewell Co, IL	Tazewell Co, IL
Merideth Elouise SMITH	21 Jul 1914	Jesse M.	Storington, IL	Sal-onia, IN
Ruth Alberta PEYER	8 Nov 1928	Carl	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Elizabeth Henrietta SCHROEDER	9 Oct 1879	Henry G.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Grace Evans HAGEL	18 Jan 1885	John HUSEY	Hudson, IL	Hudson, IL
Betty Marie TULK	10 Apr 1925	Arthur	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Eunice Gwendolyn CLAWITTER	26 Feb 1909	William C. WILSON	Oak Grove, IL	Oak Grove, IL
Dorothy Jean MAUS	1 Jan 1928	Albert F.E.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL



## Trinity Lutheran Church of Peoria, Illinois

### Confirmation Records 1941 - 1945

NAME	BIRTH DATE	FATHER'S NAME	BIRTHPLACE	BAPTISM PLACE
<b>6 Apr 1941</b> ( <i>continued</i> )				
Bertha Agnes HAVERA	4 Feb 1912	Wife of John Havera, confirm/Evangelical church Join our church on this day, attended classes		
<b>29 Mar 1942</b>				
Edwin Leo STAHL	23 May 1921	Louis	Dunlap, IL	Peoria, IL
Loren R FRAZER, jr	5 Jan 1900	L., sr.	Oak Grove, IL	Peoria, IL
Charles Thomas WILHEM	13 Jan 1929	Charles M.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Ronald Arthur JOHNSON	22 Aug 1926	Arthur W.	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis, MN
John Andrew GOOD	10 Oct 1929	George	Rock Island, IL	E Moline, IL
Donald Vernon THOMALLA	4 Feb 1923	Carl E	Bartonville, IL	Peoria, IL
Harry Leslie GAUWITZ	31 Mar 1891	Jacob	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Leslie William GAUWITZ	29 Dec 1923	Harry	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Charles Raymond GAUWITZ	27 Dec 1925	Harry	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Wilbur Carl GAUWITZ	21 Jul 1930	Harry	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Vernon Thure ERICKSON	28 Aug 1927	Thure R.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Eugene Donald BENGARD	24 Jul 1927	Hans Hanson	Pontiac, MI	Pontiac, MI
Robert James DITCH	10 Dec 1928	John R.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Elizabeth Lee THOMALLA	10 Jan 1900	James W HARRIS	Mason City, IL	Peoria, IL
Maxine Arlene SCHERFF	28 Nov 1917	Riley WOODS	Oseo, IL	Peoria, IL
Bessie Ismay GAUWITZ	14 Dec 1889	William D LOWER	Oneal, NE	Peoria, IL
Lavina Mabel GAUWITZ	3 Mar 1919	Harry	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Grace Mardell GAUWITZ	24 May 1921	Harry	Peoria Co, IL	Peoria, IL
Evelyn Clara KILGUS	26 Oct 1917	Andrew	Fairbury, IL	Peoria, IL
Helen Frances RINK	3 Sep 1918	Frank TUNER	Princeville, IL	Princeville, IL
Barbara Louise GRANT	18 Oct 1928	Walter O.	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
Frieda Elizabeth AUPPERLE	3 Jan 1929	Gottlob	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Anna Bernadine FLANAGAN	7 Nov 1928	John O.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Helen Olga MEYER	5 Jun 1927	Otto	Ottawa, IL	Ottawa, IL
Helen Elizabeth HULKA	6 Jun 1918	Frank WARNOCK	Des Moines, IA	Peoria, IL
Mary Alice EGGENA	22 Mar 1917	Fred PURDY	<i>not given</i>	Peoria, IL
Ruth Marie PLACK	4 Nov 1928	Walter	Oak Hill, IL	Peoria, IL
Shirley Irene KRAPS	2 Dec 1920	John FRANK	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Sherry Dale WILTS	8 Nov 1929	Gerald W.	St. Paul, MN	Washburn, IL
Marion Louise HOMANN	25 Jan 1928	Theo	Mattoon, IL	Mattoon, IL
Ila Lavina REICHENEKER	1 Sep 1928	Phillip	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Mabel Pauline LAPSLEY	12 May 1926	Paul	Rosefield Twp, IL	Peoria, IL
Virginia Victoria PETERS	15 Jan 1927	Ono H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Lois Evelyn BENGARD	28 Sep 1928	Hans Hanson	<i>not given</i>	Charles City, IA
Doris June SCHLICHENMAIER	6 Feb 1929	Walter	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL



## Trinity Lutheran Church of Peoria, Illinois

### Confirmation Records 1941 - 1945

NAME	BIRTH DATE	FATHER'S NAME	BIRTHPLACE	BAPTISM PLACE
<b>29 Mar 1942</b> <i>(Continued)</i>				
Joanne Lucille KIRCHHOFF	21 Jan 1929	Henry	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Elsie May SCHERMER	5 Aug 1930	Frank	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Virginia May COULTER	17 Oct 1928	John J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Phyllis Jean KAUFMAN	15 Dec 1928	William	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Ellen Colleen DUNNING	16 Jun 1928	Carl S.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
<b>18 Apr 1943</b>				
John Henry HEIDELK	13 Dec 1886	John	Fairbury, NE	Fairbury, NE
Kenneth Gene DURDLE	4 Oct 1925	Walter H.	New Canton, FL	Peoria, IL
Harold Leroy COONS	11 May 1913	Clarence L.	Buffalo, IL	Peoria, IL
Albert Henry STAHL	7 Aug 1903	Louis	Dunlap, IL	Peoria, IL
Elizabeth Ann DURDLE	19 Sep 1897	George K. BEHREND	Easton, IL	Easton, IL
Dorothy M. SEABURG	22 Sep 1913	August	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Louise Ann PERINA	2 Oct 1917	William LAKEMPEE	Toluca, IL	Toluca, IL
Marcella Ann FLIEGE	20 Jul 1918	Walter C. SEBREE	Canton, IL	Canton, IL
Mary Augusta SMITH	18 Jul 1887	Siebo J. BARNEWOLT	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Josephine GLENN	8 Jun 1919	Lester FISHER	New Canton, IL	Peoria, IL
Mary Ann STAHL	11 Sep 1909	John WEIGAND	East Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Ida May SMITH	6 Jun 1912	William A.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Dennis Gary PETERS	25 Jan 1929	Onno H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Emil Francis STEINSEIFER	3 Jan 1930	Emil	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Gerald Ray HAEDICKE	11 Oct 1927	Arthur C.	Tazewell Co., IL	Peoria, IL
Alfred Ernst ARNOLD	7 Aug 1930	Ernst J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Robert Lee PARADIECK	17 Jul 1929	George W.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Harold Walter WINKLER	18 Jun 1929	Walter	near Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Raymond Dale WINKLER	22 Oct 1927	Peter G.	Woodford Co., IL	Peoria, IL
Russell Elwood WINKLER	15 May 1929	Peter G.	Peoria Co., IL	Woodford Co., IL
Norman Leroy WIESEHAN	26 Sep 1929	Christian	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Charles Edward SMITH	29 Oct 1929	William A.	Hammond, IN	Peoria, IL
Edward Albert FRITZ	22 Jul 1928	Edward A.	Rancine, WI	Peoria, IL
Elisabeth Nesche HERKENS	27 Jul 1929	Herken H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Carolyn Virginia DOUGLAS	18 Feb 1930	Roderick M.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Delores Lorraine BERGMAN	29 Apr 1929	Leroy M	Moline, IL	Princeville, IL
Norma Marie WUKASCH	1 Mar 1930	George A	St. Louis, MO	St. Louis, MO
Bernadine Dorothy BECKER	24 Sep 1929	Bryon	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Elsie Marie PEYER	2 May 1930	Carl H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Shirley Janet PLACK	13 Aug 1929	Harold J.	Davenport, IA	Davenport, IA
Donna Jean HAGEMEYER	26 Jan 1930	Walter G.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Arlowyne Ann KANNENBERG	9 Oct 1918	Charles H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL



## Trinity Lutheran Church of Peoria, Illinois

### Confirmation Records 1941 - 1945

NAME	BIRTH DATE	FATHER'S NAME	BIRTHPLACE	BAPTISM PLACE
<b>2 Apr 1944</b>				
Jesse Edward WHITE	28 May 1873	Michael E.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Emil Emmanul STAHL	8 Jan 1902	Louis	Dunlap, IL	Peoria, IL
Gordon Lee LOVESTRAND	22 Aug 1933	Buren L.	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis, MN
Robert Stanley RINGEL	26 Jul 1930	Stanley O.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Gerald WILTS	27 Dec 1931	Gerald	Peoria, IL	Washburn, IL
Raymond Joseph PLACK	3 Sep 1930	Walter J.	Peoria Co., IL	Peoria, IL
Clarence Herman STUFF	17 Jun 1923	Herman H.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Melvin Eugene COULTER	2 Nov 1930	John J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Richard Hastings REECE	9 May 1930	Glen H.	Des Moines, IA	Ogden, IA
Thomas Jefferson LAPHAN	9 Feb 1931	Thomas J.	Peoria, IL	Winden Park, IL
James Rolland MILLER	15 Dec 1930	Rolland L.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Leota Mildred VAV DAN ACKER	24 Oct 1920	Samuel KUNTZ	Oakville, IA	Peoria, IL
Marilyn Shirley JOHNSON	16 Sep 1928	Arthur W.	Minneapolis, MN	Minneapolis, MN
Ethel Mildred JOHNSON	25 Mar 1900	Alfred J. HAGLUND	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
June Laurene WEGNER	23 Jun 1918	Louis TAYLOR	Chillicothe, IL	Peoria, IL
Thelma KLEPZIG	18 Dec 1912	William THORNTON	Arcola, IL	Arcola, IL
Dorothy Mae JUNK	17 May 1921	Chester A. WHEELER	Akron, OH	Bartonville, IL
Jacqueline Dorothy HARKINS	27 Jun 1927	Carlyle M.	Ottawa, IL	Peoria, IL
Alice Anna LUEPKE	27 Jan 1914	Jos. MERCHENTHALER	Morton, IL	Peoria, IL
Mary STAHL	26 Feb 1908	John TRAUB	Forrest, IL	Peoria, IL
Mary Kathleen HOFFMAN	10 Jul 1930	Joseph E.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Harriet Ann COLBY	21 Sep 1931	Hubert E.	Des Moines, IA	Lake Mills, IA
Colleen Carmen FLANAGAN	8 Apr 1930	John O.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Ardith Elaine MEHRINGS	10 Nov 1930	Frank	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Virginia Elizabeth DURDLE	16 Aug 1932	Walter H.	<i>not given</i>	Peoria, IL
Shirley Jean BACKVOLD	10 Jun 1931	Earl E.	Moline, IL	Champaign, IL
Erna Vera MOELLER	19 Oct 1930	Paul P.	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
Patricia Joan DUNNING	9 Sep 1930	Earl	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Claryce Arlene MIESNER	27 Feb 1931	Carl	Deshler, NE	Deshler, NE
Theresa Celestine CORDOVA	8 Mar 1930	Vincent	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix, AZ
Judith May CORDOVA	19 May 1931	Vincent	Phoenix, AZ	Phoenix, AZ
Doris Ann REICHENEKER	4 Aug 1930	Philip	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Frieda Irene GERRIETTS	10 Jun 1929	Fred	Tazewell Co., IL	Tazewell Co., IL
<b>25 Mar 1945</b>				
Carl Albert ANDERSON	21 Oct 1931	Carl A.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Richard Walter O'CONNOR	27 Jun 1931	Walter	Kewanee, IL	Kewanee, IL
Charles Walter BRAUER	20 Jun 1930	Walter J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Harold Jay MEHL	17 Dec 1932	Harold J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL



## Trinity Lutheran Church of Peoria, Illinois

### Confirmation Records 1941 - 1945

NAME	BIRTH DATE	FATHER'S NAME	BIRTHPLACE	BAPTISM PLACE
<b>25 Mar 1945</b> <i>(continued)</i>				
Albert Paul KETTNER	29 Jun 1931	Albert F.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
William Eugene HEITZMAN	19 Sep 1931	William F.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
John Carl WAGER	1 Jun 1932	John F.	Beardstown, IL	Beardstown, IL
Richard Theodore MOEHRING	3 Sep 1931	Henry	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
John (Jack) Neal HOMANN	31 Oct 1930	Theodore	Mattoon, IL	Mattoon, IL
James Walter MOELLER	4 Mar 1932	Walter C.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Carl Joseph MOELLER	28 Feb 1902	William	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Marilyn Louise VOIGT	26 Jan 1932	Henry V.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Marian Joan WIESEHAN	23 Jan 1931	Harry F.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Marilyn Joan LOOCK	22 Jan 1932	Lambert E.	Chicago, IL	Chicago, IL
Shirley Rose MAU	23 Nov 1929	Carl W.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Joan Frances BRAUER	16 Dec 1930	Walter J.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Bonnie Adeline STEINSEIFER	5 Apr 1932	Emil F.	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Donna Lee LITTLE	3 Nov 1926	Elmo D.	Decatur, IL	Decatur, IL
Genevieve Margarite MOELLER	28 Dec 1907	Herbert JULIEN	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Dorothy Mae COULTER	13 Mar 1922	Royal J. ZERWEKH	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
Melba Arlette WILTS	15 Aug 1923	Howard BREHM	Peoria, IL	Peoria, IL
<b>9 Sep 1945</b>				
Robert Fred KOZLIK	3 Sep 1922	Frank R.	Haugen WI	Peoria, IL
Mary Kathryn GICK	2 May 1917	Harry BROWN	Fort Wayne, IN	Peoria, IL

## Thank You!

You never cease to amaze us! Months before each issue's deadline we fret, wondering if we will have enough stories to fill the magazine. After all, once you get rave reviews, you really want to attain that level again and again.

For this issue of Prairie Roots, we offered four possible themes, hoping to entice writers. Members added another theme to the mix. Thankfully, several of you had a different story to tell, and you did! This is exactly what makes this endeavor worthwhile for our society. We appreciate every one of you who took the time to write and answer the call.

Now, we are putting out a theme for the next issue: WOMEN IN YOUR TREE. Think about your mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, grand-aunt, etc. Tell us their story! Check with your relatives to find what they know or have heard. Let's honor the women in our family trees!

Alice Brophy & Barb Benner



## 2023 - PCGS Delivered an All-Star Line-up

### MARCH

#### Bringing Your Relics Back Home



Angie Sneeringer kicked off our 2023 schedule by pointing us to a number of places where we just might locate family treasures. In this issue, Angie tells us about a recent find on eBay. Keep searching, PCGS members!

### APRIL

#### Immigration Points of Entry



While many of us concentrate on New York or Boston as places where our ancestors may have entered the country, Christine Cohen's presentation covered entry points we may not have searched. Her detailed listing was impressive.

### MAY

#### Oral Histories 101



Amanda Riegenbach highlighted the basics of oral history and noted how it was used in Tumultuous 2020, an oral history project she oversaw for the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library that focused on the impact of Covid-19.

### JUNE

#### How Family Research Has Changed

For our 50th Anniversary, Susan Kaufman returned to join the celebration. We revisited the "old days" of searching for ancestors and most agreed that we really wouldn't want to go back in time.



### JULY

#### Understanding DNA Test Results

We've taken a test and received our results . . . now what do we do? VP Angie Sneeringer facilitated a video presentation by Diahn Southard, an authority on using your results to find family. The three short videos are available on YouTube for review.

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### AUGUST

#### Photograph Dating and Novice Restoration

Following Ann Conner's presentation, many of us found our "bushel basket" of photos and began looking for hints of a date. What fun it was to become a restorer too!



### SEPTEMBER

#### Documenting Family & Local History Stories



Peorians are quite familiar with Phil Luciano's brilliant writing. His presentation showed us how he decides on a topic, researches, and then presents it to his audience. Now, if he could just find Lucianos!

### OCTOBER

#### Peoria State Hospital Museum

Christina Morris and museum staff presented a detailed history of the hospital's creation and Doctor Zeller's method of treating patients with dignity. A lively discussion followed.



### NOVEMBER

#### Stories in Stone

Have you always been curious about those intricate carvings on your ancestors' stones? PCGS members wonder no more after Debra Dudek explained the story behind numerous unusual carvings.





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Peoria County Maps

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Peoria, Illinois Family History Center

Family Search Peoria County, IL

Peoria County Genealogy Trails History Group

Springdale Cemetery Grave Finder—Peoria, IL

Peoria County, Illinois GenWeb

*History of Peoria, Illinois*, Charles Balance 1870

*History of Peoria County, Illinois . . . 1880*

*Portrait Biographical Album of Peoria County, Illinois—Vol 2, 1890*

*Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and Peoria County, Illinois, Vol. 1, 1901*

*Historical Encyclopedia of Illinois and History of Peoria County, Illinois, Vol. 2, 1902*

Peoria City and County, Illinois: a Record of Settlement, Organization & Achievement: Col. Rice . . . Vol. 1, 1912

Historical Peoria County Map—1896

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March through November  
6:00 pm

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