

SAVE THESE DATES!

August 14

Peoria Architectural Salvage
Monthly Member Meeting
6:00 pm CDT

Peoria Public Library North Branch

August 25

Zion Episcopal Church Tour
6:00 pm CDT

Brimfield Genealogy Discussion
Group

September 11

Photograph Restoration
and Preservation
Monthly Member Meeting
6:00 pm CDT

Peoria Public Library North Branch

November 1

PRAIRIE ROOTS

Deadline

Coming this month:

Peoria Architectural Salvage



How many of you remember the fascinating features found in the family homes, schools, and churches of your youth? Are you still able to picture the unique chandeliers, sconces, detailed woodwork, hardware, or perhaps the stained glass in buildings that are now gone? If so, our August 14th presentation by Jeanine and Thomas Wester, owners of Peoria Architectural Salvage, is a must on your calendar.

The Westers will share discoveries and tales about their experiences rescuing irreplaceable materials from some of the area's oldest homes before their demolition. Not only are these treasures being saved from the landfill, but they are being reused in homes being restored and preserved. This couple works with private homeowners, companies and municipalities to salvage materials.

Register for the August 14th Meeting via Zoom

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/
Hx3AydKRGuqqJrvnUzfTg?#/registration](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Hx3AydKRGuqqJrvnUzfTg?#/registration)

Member Spotlight - August 2025

Kathleen Close (Heise) has been a member of the Peoria County Genealogical Society for seven years. She is also a member of the Chillicothe Historical Society and the Peoria Historical Society. Kathleen's love of family history started when an elementary teacher instructed her class to go home and talk to their grandparents. It started a lifelong genealogy quest.

Kathleen was born and raised in Peoria, Illinois. Her mother was a nurse, and her father owned a grocery store. Her brother is just thirteen months younger. As a child, Kathleen was a tomboy who rode motorbikes and ponies. She attended a very small school, Limestone Walters. It had only four rooms, and the students were required to take their own lunches to school every day.

Her favorite memories of her youth involved climbing elm trees and her wonderful little dog, Ruffie.



As an adult, Kathleen graduated from Illinois State University and briefly taught elementary school. She switched careers to work at IBM and then retired from Caterpillar. She had been a systems engineer and technical support.

Kathleen's plans involve further entering genealogical information into her Ancestry account. However, in the next six months she will be traveling to Canada, Michigan, Wisconsin, Italy and New Zealand.

Married twenty years to the late Ralf Jay Close, Kathleen has been widowed nine years. She recommends that people talk to family while they can. It is how she learned that her male ancestors walked from Lancaster, Pennsylvania to Pekin, IL to purchase land for settlement. Kathleen is inspired in life by good people, good family, and her faith.

With this issue PCGS Project Director Jennifer Scott-Dewar will be shining a spotlight on members and their interest in genealogy. Watch for Jennifer at our August meeting and volunteer!

Write Now . . . Beat the Deadline!

Granted, you have 92 days until your Fall-Winter Prairie Roots article is due. Why wait? Write about one of the following suggestions or your own research.

- ◆ Recipe - What family recipe is still being used by family members today?
- ◆ Words of Wisdom - What ancestor's phrase(s) do you still remember? Tell us about its origin.
- ◆ Mystery Solved - Give us details.
- ◆ Ancestor Interview - What do you know and what would you like to learn?

Memory Keepers Writing Group

Hesitant to write an article for *Prairie Roots* or even family members? Why not join the new writing group at the Peoria Public Library to begin composing unique stories? Memory Keepers will start out each session reminiscing about a certain topic and then move to the computer lab to organize thoughts and compose your original story. Check the events calendar for more information: peoria.librarycalendar.com/events

Memory Keepers Writing Group
Friday, August 15 10:00 - 11:30 am
Main Library LL2 Conference Room

Caller ID in 1913 . . . What an Amazing Find!

Last December both *PCGS News* and *Prairie Roots* introduced you to Ross Brocksmitth, administrator of the *Memories of Peoria Area* Facebook page. On July 29th, Ross posted the amazing document pictured below which he found while perusing the Historical Index of records maintained by the Peoria County Clerk. What interesting information will you find? Visit <https://recorder/peoriacounty.gov/recorder/web/>

Miscellaneous 409

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FILED MARCH 25TH A.D. 1930 AT 10:05 A.M.

DECLARATION OF CONCEPTION.

State of Illinois;

ss

County of Peoria:

This statement is to certify that Gladys Graham Fox, who resides at 1625 Greenleaf Avenue, Chicago, Illinois, believes herself to be the original inventor of a device briefly described as follows:

This device is to be attached to an ordinary telephone in home or office of subscriber and it is to enable a telephone operator to leave in said device a record of the telephone number of the party or parties calling during the absence of the subscriber. In this manner if the party calling wishes to leave his telephone number with a request for a return call he can do so by asking the operator to make such a record in the device attached to the telephone of the party called. This is to be done by means of characters making a record upon a paper tape or upon other material. The device is to be attached to the subscribers telephone and controlled and operated by the telephone operator from a central office. It is to be operated upon the same circuit which now rings the telephone bell in the ordinary telephone.

The said Gladys Graham Fox, wishes to further affirm that she first conceived the idea of such a device on March 20, 1930.

Gladys Graham Fox

The above statement was subscribed to and sworn to by Gladys Graham Fox this the 25th day of March, 1930.

* Chas. T. Edwards *
* Notary Public *
* Peoria County, Ill. *

Chas. T. Edwards
Notary Public, Peoria Co. Ills

Brimfield Area Museum

106 E. Knoxville Road
Brimfield, IL 61517

brimfieldareamuseum@gmail.com

After months of gathering and organizing artifacts, documents, and collections, the Brimfield Area Historical Society will proudly open its museum doors for the following upcoming events:

Super Cruise In

Saturday, August 2nd 10:00 am - 7:00 pm

Brimfield Old Settlers

Thursday, August 7th 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Friday, August 8th 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Saturday, August 9th 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Regular Hours: August 11th - October 1st

Tuesdays & Thursdays: 4:00 pm - 7:00 pm

Wednesdays & Saturdays: 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Brimfield Genealogy Discussion Group



Zion Episcopal Church
205 E. Van Buren, Brimfield

Monday, August 25

6:30 pm

Meet at the church for this tour.

It Was There All Along

Do you ever return to the saved records for an ancestor to take another look? Rhonda McClure, a senior genealogist for American Ancestors.org will provide strategies for finding overlooked details that can provide clues about your ancestors' lives and the times in which they lived.

Register for this FREE webinar on August 26, 2025 from 3:00 - 4:00 ET:

www.americanancestors.org/events

Your 2025 - 2026 PCGS Board

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