



McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

Connections Newsletter

Volume 43, Issue 2

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society

February 2024

February Meeting

Thursday, 8 February 2024

7:00 PM

Zoom

Register [Here](#)

Claire Gene Esker

Beneficial Records for Polish American Research



Claire Gene Esker is a graduate of University of Strathclyde's program in Genealogic, Palaeographic, and Heraldic Studies Program with an MSc with merit. She obtained her BA in Political Science from Carthage College in Kenosha. Claire specializes in Polish, Polish American, Chicago and Illinois research. A particular interest is in the lives of women and Claire infuses her work with rich social history to bring life to genealogical discoveries. Claire is a member of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois (JGSI) and has been published in their newsletter, "Morasha," with an article focusing on strategies to preserve the genealogical knowledge of the today's women. She is also a member and volunteer researcher for the Polish Genealogical Society of America (PGSA) and has been published in their journal *Rodziny*. Other memberships include the Historical Society of the Episcopal Church (HSEC), the Episcopal Women's History Project (EWHP), and the National Episcopal Historians and Archivists (NEHA). My non-research interests include photography, world religion, and foreign language.

Claire will discuss some of the records and sources that are beneficial to researchers of Polish ancestors. Many of the records may be new to you. As Claire's main research focus is Polish, she is more than qualified to share these sources

From the President...

Salutations! I hope that your 2024 has gotten off to a great start. No matter where you live, I hope you are able to keep warm with all this very wintry weather across the country.

Our MCIGS board had the first meeting of the year last week and I think we're off to a great start. I'd like to welcome Jan Polep who has filled the role of Treasurer to the group, as Tami Allred decided not to run for treasurer again after several years on the board. We will miss Tami, but we wish her well in the future.

The MCIGS board has some interesting projects looming on the horizon. Susan Durbin, who is responsible for our programs, is working on a field trip to the Newberry Library in Chicago, in late April. Our March meeting will host Matt Rutherford of the Newberry, letting us know what we can expect to find and how to use the library.

Nancy Gaynor, MCIGS' librarian, is working on a special event interacting with several local groups. This event will take place sometime in the summer. More details to follow.

If you are a member of MCIGS, you are welcome to attend our board meetings, held on the 3rd Thursday of the month. Currently

we meet at Panera Bakery in Crystal Lake at 7:00 pm. We'd love to have you stop in and be a part of the group. Attending a board meeting is a member benefit. All are welcome to attend.

A few weeks ago (mid-January) our board members recently joined with representatives from several northern Illinois genealogical societies, sharing our successes and concerns.

In closing, I'd like to thank all of our members for their show of support for McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society. I might be biased, but our society is pretty amazing! We continue to strive to support our members as they work to discover their family history. On a personal note, our board members continue to "do more with less." We really do need help. I'd like to encourage all of you to seriously think about devoting a few hours a month to our society. Based on your skills, location, and interest, I feel strongly that we can find a spot for you. Please consider stepping up and joining us. You can contact me at president@mcigs.org if you'd like to chat about ways in which you could help out group.

*Laurie Stage, President
MCIGS*

Upcoming Events...

All events are CST unless otherwise indicated.

Z=Zoom, H=Hybrid, P=in person only

1 February, Thursday, 7:00 PM (H), “Wide World of Passports” presented by Debra Dudek. Kane County Genealogical Society. Meeting at Town and County Library, 320 E North St., Elburn, IL. Register for Zoom: [HERE](#)

6 February, Tuesday, 9:30 AM (H), Elgin Genealogical Society. “Mapping Your Migrating Ancestors” Presenter: Tina Beard. Meeting link [HERE](#)..

13 February, Tuesday, 7:00 PM (P), “Will the Real Sven Larsson Please Stand Up? Presenter, Dan Hubbard. Lake County Genealogical Society, Vernon Hills Village Hall, 290 Evergreen Drive, Vernon Hills, Illinois.

14 February, Wednesday, Available for a limited time. “Cool Tools on Genealogy Databases.” Presented by Suz Bates on YouTube. Fountaindale Library Genealogy Club. Handout: <https://shorturl.at/apsBQ>. View presentation: fountaindale.org/youtube

17 February, Saturday, 10:30 AM, (H) “History of Allen County Genealogy Center Collection,” presented by John Beatty. CAGNI. Free for members, \$5 for non-members. Attend Arlington Heights Memorial Library Cardinal Room, 500 Dunton Avenue, Arlington Heights. Register: <https://caggn.org/event-5535317/Registration>

22 February, Thursday, 7:00 PM (H), “Workshop: Wide World of Passports”. Kane County Genealogical Society. Meeting at Town and County Library, 320 E North St., Elburn, IL. Register for Zoom: contact Kane County Genealogical Society: dkcgsinfo@gmail.com .

25 February, Sunday, 2:00 PM, (Z) “Learn Just Enough Russian for Genealogy” presented by Jane Neff Rollins. The Jewish Genealogical Society of Illinois. Register: <https://jgsi.org/event-5513892>

29 February – 2 March 2024 – RootsTech. Hosted by FamilySearch. The online version is free but you do need to register [here](#).

Websites of Interest

1931 Canadian Census – recently released can be found at [FamilySearch](#) and at [Canada Library & Archives](#).

History Hub – part of NARA (National Archives and Records Administration). History Hub [link](#). A research support community for everyone – genealogists, historians alike.

U S Census Records - <https://www.archives.gov/research/census>
Understanding the census returns is as important as finding them for your ancestor. This site has the census returns, the instructions to enumerators and other necessary information.

Recap of Last Meeting

Contributed by Sandra Braid, Secretary

Denise Cross was our speaker for the meeting. Denise's topic was *Bridging the Gap 1700s and 1800s: Uniting the Identities of Samuel Fletcher of Vermont and New York*. Denise stated that when she began searching for Samuel Fletcher, she could find no records in New York before the 1800s with Samuel Fletcher's name. She also said that none of the children who had the last name of Fletcher, stated Samuel was their father. But there were associations among neighbors and siblings.

The first step is to define an individual whose address is unknown. Denise started with a woman, Betsey, who she believed was Samuel's daughter. Research produced two men who might be Betsey's father: Thomas ca, 1813 and Samuel ca, 1801. In order to further her research, Denise used both Cluster Research as well as learning the local history. She said both are important. She said that identity fragments she found hinted that VT Samuel and NY Samuel might be the same person.

Denise pointed out that groups usually migrated either together or in chain fashion. She suggested creating a biographical sketch of the person for whom you are searching. To do that, use local and county histories, vital records, religious records, census and tax records, land records, family papers and newspapers. Be sure to take note of the neighbors in each record. You also need to understand how the boundaries change over time. One way to understand boundary changes is maps4us.com can show you an

Interactive Map of County Formation for wherever you are searching.

Taxes – both personal and Real Estate as well as Land records are reliable sources to check for individuals. Check various libraries (university as well as historical and genealogical societies) for local history collections. Archive Grid is also a good place to search. Keep a log of what newspapers you searched and when. Newspaper collections add new “issues” quite often so check back regularly.

Denise's timeline for Samuel Fletcher showed that he was in the same area of New York from 1800 the 1826. He was included in a list of earlier settlers of New York. She then took us to the other side of the gap (that is in Vermont) in order to complete her research. Her first step was to eliminate people of the same name one by one. Maps created “in the time period” are extremely helpful. Denise narrowed the gap for VT Samuel Fletcher to between December 1798 and August 1800. The neighbors match migration with Samuel during that time period.



Thank You!

Many thanks to all those of you who have donated to MCIIGS above and beyond your dues. Your donations are used to those things our budget doesn't cover and also to help support the annual scholarship. This month the thanks go to: Rosemary Alfredson, Janis Bohner, Joyce Brown, Claudia Conroy, Marcia Flanagan, Lawrence Hartman, Jeffrey Hill, Sr., Marlene Keenan, Margaret Kuhajek, Celeste Kuta, Diane Lucas, Mary McCoy, Carol Mosher, Bruce Peterson, Jan Polep, Carolyn Purcell, Mike Reall, Shirley Schwemm, and Leanne Wiedemann.

Protecting You and Your Identity

Contributed by Bill Wheeler, Webmaster

In October of 2023, an anonymous hacker accessed the user profiles of 23andMe customers and posted them for sale on the Internet. The hacker used a process known as "credential stuffing" where the hacker took stolen credentials to log on to approximately 14,000 (about 0.1%) of 23andMe's 14 million customers. Through these 14,000 accounts that the hacker had compromised, the hacker was able to access the information of millions more who had shared their information through the 23andMe platform. 23andMe later announced that it wasn't the hack that caused the breach but the reuse of passwords that had been exposed through infiltrations of other organization.

23andMe is one of many organizations that has been compromised through bad passwords or an infiltrator being able to get

access to a password through social engineering (using human psychology to gain access to information). Recent examples include Clorox, MGM, T-Mobile, and Sony, to name just a few. And when I say recent, these are all within the last twelve months. A little closer to home, many of us have seen friends and family get compromised on Facebook, which is typically because another individual was able to 'guess' or get access to the password. If you aren't seeing the trend, passwords are bad.

And I shouldn't necessarily say "passwords are bad." We are just bad at creating good passwords. In 2022, the most common passwords were:

- 123456
- 12345678950
- 12345
- qwerty
- password

Even if the system requires a long password, say 12 characters which includes numbers and special characters, the most common password is "Password1!@#". For these reasons, two-factor, and multi-factor authentication (MFA) was created. Essentially, MFA requires more than just one way (a password) to confirm who you are. You may be asked to enter a text number that you receive in email or your phone. Or, you may have an application on your phone that provides you with codes to confirm who you are.

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Using MFA is highly effective in reducing risk to companies and individuals.

According to Microsoft, MFA can prevent 99.9% of attacks on your accounts. And while it is less convenient to have to verify who you are twice (once with something you know, and a second with something you have), we all agree that a minor inconvenience is a small price to pay to protect our information and our privacy.

While many organizations have been requiring MFA for some time, genealogy organizations are now beginning to follow suit including NGS and 23andMe.

Ancestry.com and MyHeritage both offer MFA but don't yet require (if I had to guess, it isn't far off).

MFA is a smart and straightforward way to enhance your account security. Through the use of MFA, you can protect your identity, your data, and your peace of mind. Don't wait! Activate MFA on your accounts today.

BIBLE RECORDS

From MCIGS Quarterly, Vol. I, # 1, January -March 1983

The Bibles are in the possession of the McHenry County Historical Society in Union, IL. It's important to look at originals and not use only the following. Look for entries before publication dates, different handwriting, and ink. All of these things can offer hints for accuracy. While mistakes can be made at the time of event, the further away events are recorded from the actual event, the more likely mistakes can be made. An example would be if the birth date occurred many years before publication date

of the Bible, or if the handwriting was the same throughout. If a family Bible is handed down through the family, one might expect the writing to change, but if the writing is the same throughout, then the record was created at some point, probably far away from event date.

BRINK/THROOP/SMITH

The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments.../New York: printed by D Fanshaw for the American Bible Society, 1837

From Family Records Pages:

MARRIAGES:

John Brink married at the mouth of the Grand River, Kent County, Michigan to Catharine A Throop, March 5th A. D. 1840

Celestia Brink married James R Smith in the town of Algonquin, McHenry County, Illinois, November 17th, 1855 (the "55" was crossed out and a penciled "64" was inserted.)

BIRTHS:

John Brink born in the town of Phelps, Ontario County, New York, January the 12th A. D. 1811

Catharine A Throop was born in the town of Barnard, Win[d]sor County, Vermont June the 26th A.D. 1817

Celestia Brink was born in the town of Algonquin, McHenry County, Illinois, May 9th A. D. 1843

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Phebe Brink was born in the town of Dorr, McHenry county, Illinois, August 31st, A. D. 1853

Here the handwriting changed: Brothers and sister of John Brink:

Jane Brink born March 1, 1807

Henry W Brink born July 26, 1808

Abraham Brink born December 14, 1820

Lemon H Brink born July 10, 1822

Phebe Windfield Brink born September 8th, 1788

Louis B Smith born September 11, 1865 (this number corrected in brown ink to a "65: in the town of Dundee, Kane County, Illinois. Louis B Smith is the son of John R Smith and Celestia Smith. /Celestia Smith her maiden name was Celestia Brink.

DEATHS

Celestia Smith died November 24th A.D. 1865 (same corrected as a above) in the town of Dundee, Kane County, Illinois.

Louis B Smith died January 23 A. D. 1867 in the town of Dundee, Kane County, Illinois. Louis B. Smith is the son of James R and Celestia A Smith.

Different handwriting:

"Brothers and sister of John Brink"

Jane Brink died September 29, 1808

Abraham Brink died February 25, 1814

Grandfather John Brink died February the 7th, 1821

Phebe W Brink died May 16, 1841

Simon Brink died August 24, 1828

To be continued

McHenry County Illinois
Genealogical Society
2024 Officers and Board

Term of office ends in December of year in parentheses.

OFFICERS

President Laurie Stage (2024)
laurie.stage@mcigs.org

1st VP – Programs Susan Durbin (2024)
susan.durbin@mcigs.org

2nd VP – Membership Ann Wells (2025)
ann.wells@mcigs.org

Secretary Sandra Braid (2024)
sandra.braid@mcigs.org

Treasurer Jan Polep (2025)
jan.polep@mcigs.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Nancy Gaynor - Librarian (2024)
nancy.gaynor@mcigs.org

Bill Wheeler – Webmaster (2025)
bill.wheeler@mcigs.org

Vacant – (2025)

COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Early Settlers Chair – Claudia Conroy
Claudia.conroy@mcigs.org