



# Connections

www.mcigs.org

McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society Newsletter



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Contact Us: [newsletter@mcigs.org](mailto:newsletter@mcigs.org)

August 2018

## Probate Records



**Ann Wells**

Probate records are court records created after an individual's death that relate to a court's decision regarding the distribution of the estate to the heirs or creditors and care of the dependents. Come learn how probate records differ from wills and where probate records can be found.

Ann has served on the board of a number of genealogy societies. She is currently the treasurer of MCIGS and the immediate past president. She has also served on the Illinois State Genealogy Society, British Interest Group of Illinois/Wisconsin, International Society for British Genealogy and Family History.

Thursday, August 14<sup>th</sup> @ 7pm

The Pointe Outreach Center

5650 Northwest Highway

Crystal Lake, IL

(Located just west of Target)

## Tagline Contest Change By Claudia Conroy

Thank you to everyone who submitted a suggestion for a tagline to help clarify that MCIGS is for everyone, not just those with McHenry County ancestors. We have received 49 submissions, causing us to rethink the way we originally decided to choose the winner. The committee has narrowed the list to 15 and now we want your opinion. At our meeting on 9 August we will have a ballot so that anyone attending can vote on their choice. We are listing the 15 top submissions in this newsletter so that you have a chance to think about which one you think best describes our society. If you cannot attend the meeting and you want your voice heard, please email [claudia.conroy@MCIGS.org](mailto:claudia.conroy@MCIGS.org) with your vote.

Here are the top 15 tagline submissions:

1. For McHenry Genealogy and Beyond
2. MCIGS – Meeting locally; researching globally
3. MCIGS – McHenry and Beyond
4. Genealogy for everyone – McHenry County and beyond
5. Search and have fun wherever your family hailes from
6. Reaching more than the county ~ Reaching the world
7. Helping you make worldwide discoveries
8. Society without borders
9. Our ancestors are from everywhere
10. Located in McHenry County- Serving Genealogists Everywhere
11. MC is where we're located- not who we are
12. McHenry roots not required
13. Adopt us - even if we're not your biological society
14. A community of family history researchers
15. Open to natives and transplants

## 2018 MCIGS Summer Genealogy Conference By Arlene Basten



### CONFERENCE COMMITTEE:

*back row - Arlene Basten, Ann Wells, Vicki Roberts, Kristen McCallum, Laurie Stage  
- Claudia Conroy, Jan Polep*

Our 5th Summer Genealogy Conference was held on Saturday, 7 July at McHenry County College in Crystal Lake. With 222 in attendance we showed a 24% increase over last year's registrations! 134 of this year's registrants had attended one of our previous conferences, while 88 of them attended for the first time. As a result, we have already seen an increase in new members to the organization.

Putting this event together is a challenge and could not happen without all of the hard work put forth by the entire conference committee. Over the course of several months, all worked many hours to organize the conference and to ensure its success. As conference chairman, I would like to personally thank the other Committee members, which include: Claudia Conroy, Kristen McCallum, Jan Polep, Vicki Roberts, Laurie Stage, and Ann Wells, for all of their hard work and dedication to this event. I would also like to thank our volunteers; Joy Zurek, Deena Galloy, Nancy Gaynor, Alice Hayes, Lisa Inman, Kim McGuigan, Jean Downie and Pam Johansen. Everyone's time and efforts are greatly appreciated!

The committee has reviewed the survey results and overall, the feedback was quite positive. All of the speakers received favorable scores, some attendees even remarked how they wouldn't mind seeing them again as they had so much information to offer. The survey comments also provides us with suggestions on future topics/speakers, as well as ideas on how we can improve next year's conference 13 July 2019.

Some of the more glowing remarks we encountered were; "Thank you to the Committee for giving us another great conference," "I always enjoy going to the MCIGS Conference each year. I enjoy talking to fellow genealogists and I always learn something new," and "This is one of the best local conferences. I'll be back next year."

## Member Spotlight By Arlene Basten, Membership V.P.

Please help us welcome the newest members to MCIGS:

- **Kathleen Getz**, Beach Park, IL
- **Penny Butler**, Gurnee, IL
- **Janna Heuer**, Ringwood, IL
- **Mary Hill**, Hawthorn Woods, IL
- **Rommy Lopat**, Lake Forest, IL
- **Carolyn Satrum**, Downers Grove, IL
- **Mary Sima**, Woodstock, IL
- **Vickie Speck**, Trout Valley, IL
- **Peggy Baer**, Broomfield, CO



Peggy Baer and her husband, Roger are retired and live in Broomfield, CO. She and her husband Roger visited Marengo in June 1978. "I was

beginning genealogy research into my husband's maternal family and they lived in Marengo in the second half of the 1800's. With internet research and digital newspapers, I'm filling in a lot of information about this family in Marengo. They lived in McHenry County from about 1855 to 1910. I joined the McHenry County Genealogical Society to learn more about the society's resources and to receive the newsletter".

- **Diane Lukas**, Woodstock, IL



Diane has lived in the Woodstock area since the mid-70s. She joined MCIGS at the Genealogy Conference in July "to try it out". Her ancestors came from Ireland, England, Bohemia and Germany. I retired at

the end of 2014 and I'm finally making a serious effort to organize my information and research further back into European roots. Outside of family history, I also enjoy playing with my grandsons, gardening, feeding and watching birds, taking photos, reading, fishing and taking little road trips

- **Laura & John Dendor**, McHenry, IL

Laura began her genealogy research in May 2013 because she wanted to know her great-grandmother's name. She went to McHenry's library to use their resources (Ancestry.com). When she began researching her paternal grandfather's side she was met with great difficulty. Laura found that it took many years to tease out valid leads, sift through many name changes and misspellings, and follow their migration from the Midwest, to North Dakota, to the State of Washington.

- **Diane Miller**, Janesville, WI

Diane Miller says she joined MCIGS to support the Summer Conference. The workshops are diversified and the vendors are interesting. "My interest in genealogy started at age 8 when I "interviewed" my grandparents about our family. It has been an off and on journey until a few years ago when there has been more time to pursue leads. Some of Diane's other interests include: U.S. Presidential history, country line dancing, and colonial style decorating.

## Iroquois Theater Fire 1903 - Chicago IL by Dolores Schutt

A first cousin twice removed of Peggy's and mine, Rena Knopp, along with her fiancé, Joseph McClelland attended a theater performance on December 30, 1903, at the Iroquois Theatre. They had just become engaged and this was to be an engagement celebration.

The theatre had opened in Nov. of 1903 and was considered the most modern in design and technology as well as 'absolutely safe'. It was a Christmas-New Year holiday weekend with mostly women and children in the packed overcrowded audience. A single spotlight started a small fire which erupted into an uncontrollable blaze that killed over 600 people including Rena and her fiancé.

The couple were brought back to their hometown of Harvard, IL. A double funeral was held, and was attended by an immense crowd. They are buried side by side in the Mt. Auburn Cemetery in Harvard. A large tombstone tells of the tragic death.

For more information on this tragedy the Harvard Diggins Library has a book titled "Tinderbox: The Iroquois Theatre Disaster of 1903" by Anthony Hatch.

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(Editor's note: It was tragedies like these that resulted in the No Smoking laws for all theaters. Of course the movie film of the era was also very flammable.) Even *more reading on this at: "Chicago death trap: the Iroquois Theatre fire of 1903, 2003" by Brandt, Nat; Publisher: "Carbondale, IL." Southern Illinois University Press; c2003*

### Hint of the Month - Larry Wood



Stay focused. It's easy to get overwhelmed with all of the information that's available to family historians. Remember to have a clear idea of what you are looking for and why you started the search

## Upcoming Events

- 9 Aug 2018 MCIGS – *Probate Records*** at The Pointe, Crystal Lake, IL, 7pm.  
<http://www.mcigs.org>
- 11 Aug 2018 – NWSGS -- *Finding Dead Ancestors is Easy; Finding Living Relatives Can Be a Challenge***, Arlington Heights Memorial Library, 10 am.  
<http://www.nwsgenealogy.org>
- 13 Sep 2018 MCIGS – *What's New At Family Search*** at The Pointe, Crystal Lake, IL, 7pm. <http://www.mcigs.org>
- 14 Sep 2018 MCIGS – “*A Guide to Overseas Genealogy*” By *Jacquie Schattner***. Lake County Genealogy Society. 7pm.  
<http://lakecountyilgenealogy.org/>
- 29 Sep 2018 MCIGS – *25th Annual Conference 9-4 at the Fox Valley Genealogical Society of Naperville, IL***. The speaker is Jill Morelli CG.  
<https://ilfvgs.org>
- 6 Oct 2018 – NWSGS -- *Newspaper Research: Beyond the Birdcage***, Arlington Heights Senior Center, 10am.  
<http://www.nwsgenealogy.org>
- 11 Oct 2018 MCIGS – *What's New On the Internet*** at The Pointe, Crystal Lake, IL, 7pm. <http://www.mcigs.org>
- 26-27 October 2018 – Illinois State Genealogy Society Fall Conference**, President Abraham Lincoln Hotel, Springfield, IL <https://ilgensoc.org>
- 3 Nov 2018 – NWSGS -- *DNA Doubleheader***, Arlington Heights Senior Center, 10am.  
<http://www.nwsgenealogy.org>
- 8 Nov 2018 MCIGS – *Ancestry.com Library Edition*** at The Pointe, Crystal Lake, IL, 7pm. <http://www.mcigs.org>
- 8-11 May 2019 National Genealogy Society Conference – *Journey of Discovery***, St Charles, MO  
<http://www.conference.ngsgenealogy.org>

## Editor's Corner - Larry Wood

As you pore through history and read about ancestors you might come onto some interesting characters. Ida Ellen Walsh was one of these. She is not exactly a relative, but the divorced 3rd wife of Congressional Representative Benjamin Wood, elected from NY to the 37th and 38th Congress. Source: COX, Joseph A. (1964) "The Recluse of Herald Square". This book is really a wonderful read and a true story.

COX says - "Seventy-two years ago this week, on Dec. 6, 1932, the Boston Globe broke a startling story, an heiress found living in squalor as a recluse in a Manhattan hotel."

A fantastic hoax, her name and family cannot be explained or understood without reading the source materials, but here is at least part of the story.

NEWS October-November-December..1931  
Brooklyn Standard Union. 7 October 1931

### RECLUSE, 93, HOARDING MILLION DEFIES TREASURE SEARCHERS

#### Rare Laces and Gems Found Hidden in Hotel Room

A frail but spirited little lady of 93 years, once the belle of mid Victorian days, today stomped her defiance of searchers spurred by discovery of nearly a million dollars in currency she hoarded in her hotel room "because she was afraid of banks." They found \$400,000 in a little paper bundle a few days ago. Now they have found a half million more in \$10,000 bills hidden within the folds of her voluminous dresses.

Rare laces, gems and period costumes that rate as museum pieces have been revealed in trunks within that same room in which Mrs. Ida E. WOOD had dwelt for many, many years.

Next week, trunks now in storage will be searched for possible rare treasures such as have been revealed daily hidden away in rubbish, under carpets, within mattresses and bed clothing and in her own garb of a mode a half century old.

## Volunteers Wanted - Kimberly McGuigan

MCIGS has volunteer program in order to help members and non-members become a part of our events and projects and need your help. Below is a short list of volunteer opportunities available right now which include:

- Indexing the Woodstock Sentinel newspaper
- Assisting with the MCIGS blog
- Digitizing the Quarterly back issues for uploading onto the members website
- Compiling the master surname index
- IT assistance during general meetings such as help with setup, video taping, computer assistance, and sound.
- Local history information
- Distributing handouts during general meetings

Some of these activities do not require that you live locally. Please email me if you would like more information on any of these volunteer opportunities, For more information please contact Kim McGuigan, Volunteer Coordinator at [Volunteer@MCIGS.org](mailto:Volunteer@MCIGS.org).

# THANK YOU

