

THE GENIE BUG

NORTH CENTRAL IOWA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

P. O. BOX 237 MASON CITY, IOWA 50402-0237

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November 8, 2014 – NOON Clear Lake Public Library, Lower Level Meeting Room

Celebrate a year of success at the Annual society meeting.

The **November meeting will be a salad luncheon** with attendees bringing either a salad or dessert. Drinks/rolls/butter/plates/utensils/napkins/cups will be furnished by the society. Following the luncheon, **Fran Wolbrink** will share some interesting tidbits on the provocative subject of “Unmentionables”. You know, those pages you mother may have torn out of the Sears & Roebuck catalog before you were allowed to look at them. There will also be a drawing for a free year’s membership to the society.

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December 13, 2014 Time off for good behavior! Merry Christmas!

We do not meet in December. Spend the day shopping or preparing for the holidays! Savor the moments with your families, while you ask questions and research into more background on your ancestors.

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January 10, 2015 - 1:30 p.m. Clear Lake Public Library, Lower Level Meeting Room

Tracking and Locating your Native American Ancestors

Do you think or do you know your tree includes Native American ancestors? Either way, you will want to attend the program **Rod Hungerford** will present in January. Rod will explain how to track and locate various tribes. He will offer insights into the cultural beliefs of Native Americans and he will led us through the variety of available records such as tribal and federal government documents.

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In this November 2014 Issue:

Update from the BOARD	2	Librarian’s Column	3
NCIGS Library Encapsulation	4	People with Same Name Related ?	5-6
Alternative Sources for Death Records	7- 9	NCIGS Meeting Room survey	10
Survey & Family questions	11	Genealogy in Time - Tip # 8	12

NCIGS Board Update

Who said Annual Meetings had to be boring? Plan to attend the N.C.I.G.S. Annual meeting on Saturday, November 8th and we will prove otherwise. First off, you will be sure to find a bunch of tasty salads to try at the noon luncheon, plus a delicious cookie or two for dessert.

They say laughter is a good cure for most anything, so stick around for our program. Fran Wolbrink is sure to have you chuckling, as she presents her provocative program on “Unmentionables”. I’ve heard Fran do several programs on the subject of antiques and always come away with some interesting tidbits.

Then.... if that isn’t enough incentive for attending the annual meeting, we are going to have a drawing for a free yearly membership for all those willing to stick around for our recap of the year’s events. So see you all there on November 8th. Oh, by the way, don’t forget to call in your reservation so we can have everything set up ahead of time. We’d also appreciate it if some of you could volunteer to bring some food.

I guess you might say our Executive Board is composed of a bunch of dreamers and if you are going to dream, it might as well be BIG. We thought maybe the Access program would solve our obituary problem, but come to find out, after you have entered a certain amount of data, you need to start a new group and that is not what we want to do. So, we have been advised what we need is a sequel server, which requires a specific program be created for our needs. Several of us met with Kevin and Keith Brunsvold, who are in that type of business. They verified that is the direction to go, but would cost \$5-6000. In order to do that, we would have to apply for a Worth County Development grant in the spring. They require 25% matching, which we can supply from our treasury.

The Access program, which we have been using since this spring to enter obituaries, can be transferred over to the new server, but this project all hinges on receiving the grant or obtaining other donations. So let’s hope this dream will become an eventuality.

Carol Tinkey, Acting President

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Ancestry.com reduced rate!

Did you know if you are an AARP member, you can get a 30% discount on your Ancestry subscription? When you renew or sign up for a new membership, call Ancestry Member Services at 1-800-514-4645 and tell them you would like the discount. Be prepared to give your AARP member number. If you’ve recently renewed or are just partway through the year, you might be able to apply the discount retroactively.



FROM THE LIBRARIAN

The NCIGS Library is located on the 1st floor of the Mason City Public Library, 225 2nd St. SE, Mason City, Iowa. The MCPL and the NCIGS Library are open M/T/W/TH 9 a.m. – 8 p.m.; F/SAT 9 a.m. – 5 p.m. If you need help from one of our library volunteers, remember our library is staffed M/W/F 9 a.m. – noon; 1-4 p.m.

We always need more volunteers at the library. There are so many projects waiting for someone to take on. If you are interested, please call Sandra Turner at 641-380-0339 or e-mail her at ncigso@gmail.com. Volunteering is a wonderful way to become familiar with our collection, share your interest in genealogy with other people and learn new research possibilities.

During the past three months a lot has been accomplished at the library:

- Kay Mestad completed her work of converting the information contained in the NCIGS library's Accession Notebook into an electronic format. This conversion will allow for more flexibility in identifying category needs, provide us with secured backups and make maintenance of these records easier.
- Carolyn Anderson has almost completed her work on converting our hardcopy obituary indexing into PDF format. This is an excellent way to secure this information. Carolyn has worked on this project for two years and plans to complete it before she goes south for the winter.
- A hand-out for encapsulating fragile materials, including costs, has been prepared. **A copy of the handout is included in this issue of the BUG, just after my report.**
- A Fujitsu ScanSnap iX500 DLX was purchased at a cost of \$449.98. This machine not only scans and organizes documents; it also makes the information within the document searchable. We have a lot of unique information that we can now scan and combine. Want to help? Let me know.
- Carol Tinkey and Marie Thompson continue their work on Mason City Globe Gazette obituaries.
- Dennis Marsh has produced and donated book blocks for the collection. These book blocks are used to re-direct researchers to a different shelving location. Thanks, Dennis, for this contribution.
- A new project has begun. This project is designed to evaluate, catalog/recatalog, and shift many of the classified periodicals to the top of our shelves. This project will free up shelving for new additions to the collection.
- We continue to make progress with our donation backlog:
 - **Finding Your Mexican Ancestors** - Donated by Sandra Turner
Explains Mexican American genealogical research by providing detailed information beginning with the Spanish colonial period. Descriptions & locations of parish, civil and other type of records common in Mexico are included.
 - **Funeral Cards of Mason City, Iowa and the surrounding area, circa 1960-2014.**
Compiled by Patricia Sheehy. Donated by Rita Goranson. Kay Mestad has alphabetized these items and placed them in a 3-ring binder.
 - **2013 Memorial Cemetery, Mason City, Iowa Records** – Donated by the cemetery

2014 society statistics are as follows:

Researchers who signed our register totals 479. Of those researchers 65 were from out-of-state or out-of-country and 321 were not members of our society. We had researchers come from Wisconsin, Louisiana, Colorado, New Hampshire, Minnesota, South Dakota, North Dakota, Washington, Idaho, Washington, D. C., Massachusetts, Texas, Florida, Illinois, Norway and Canada. Documented volunteer hours for 2014 totaled 2782 at a cumulated value of \$62,734.10.

Our volunteers have done, and continue to do, a great job!

Sandra Turner, Librarian

NCIGS Library Encapsulation Fees

Many years ago, the conservation world thought that lamination was a viable conservation method. Lamination would protect documents from rough treatment and hold fragile items together for posterity. Alas, the conservation world discovered that the very act of laminating a document did more harm than good and that lamination is not actually permanent. Over time, the layers delaminate, and the document inside slithers out as dust.

Today, the conservation world is much more wary of doing anything permanent or non-reversible to an archival or historic document. Instead of laminating, we now encapsulate. Encapsulation protects documents from rough treatment and holds fragile items together, but it is also reversible and does not harm the document with use of heat or adhesives.

Encapsulation consists of enveloping a document between two clear pieces of polyester. The edges of the polyester are then sealed or attached together. There are several methods of attaining this – ultrasonic welders, heat welders which touch only the very outside edges of the polyester, double-sided tape, and even sewing. The document itself is held in place by the electrostatic charge created by the two pieces of polyester.

Encapsulation is best used when a fragile document is going to be handled often. The polyester supports the document and protects it from fingerprints, crumpling, and other dangers of being handled. Encapsulation is not a fix-all, nor is it necessarily the best storage solution for all documents.

Encapsulation is entirely reversible; one needs only to slice the edges of the polyester to free the document, and the acid-free polyester will cause no damage. However the static charge can be a problem. Any document with a friable media, such as pencil, charcoal, pastels, colored pencil, etc. can have the media lifted straight off the page when in contact with encapsulating polyester. If a document contains any friable media, it is best to use a permanent paper folder rather than encapsulating it.

Encapsulation also can cause a mini-greenhouse effect if the document is stored in hot, humid conditions or in conditions that rapidly change in temperature and humidity. Encapsulation can accelerate the damage caused by acids inherent in the document, so it is advisable to de-acidify items

to be encapsulated or to back single sided items with buffered tissue. However colored paper and most colored inks, whether they be printer's inks or writing inks, will be discolored by the buffer contained in de-acidification spray or on buffered tissue. A non-colored paper document with colored ink on only one side will be fine if buffered tissue is laid against the back.

Encapsulation can be done at home for family documents. It is not recommended for photographs. Encapsulation can also be used to protect such ephemera as locks of hair, dried flowers, coins, and the like. The NCIIGS library has encapsulation materials and can encapsulate items for a fee. The charges for encapsulation are as follows:

8½" x 11" or smaller	\$2.00
8½" X 12" up to & 8 ½" x 14"	\$2.25
8½" x 15" & 11" x 17"	\$2.50
Larger sizes (one side cannot be larger than 40")	\$6.00 per linear feet

Prices effective 8/1/2014

Are People with the Same Family Name Related?

Family names (also known as surnames) provide an obvious clue to a person's origin. And yet, as any genealogist can tell you, surnames can be difficult to work with and research into surnames often yields unexpected surprises. In particular, two people with the same surname do not necessarily share a common ancestor. Find out why Surnames in families change more frequently than most people realize. Two people can share a surname and have no biological relationship to each other. Common surnames, such as Smith and Jones, can have multiple independent founders.



As well, adoptions, misspellings, name changes (sometimes used to hide a criminal or immigration past) and non-paternities (the husband is not the biological father of the child) all serve to confuse the picture. In Britain, surnames have been in existence for only about 700 years. This represents about 25 generations of males, who are the ones that typically carry the surname forward to future generations. So what is the probability that two people having the same surname also share a common ancestor? It turns out that for British men with the same surname, there is a 24% probability of having a recent common ancestor.

Knowing the relative popularity of a surname and the likelihood of two people with the same surname being related can help direct genealogists towards certain types of record sets to ascertain if two people really are related to each other.

Turi King, a doctoral researcher at the University of Leicester performed genetic tests on a random sample of 150 pairs of British men who shared the same British surname. King found the probability of having a common ancestor is less than 24% for more common surnames but is greater than 24% for less common surnames, which are more likely to have single founders. The probability of having a common ancestor rises to nearly 50 percent for rare surnames. One interesting outcome of the King study is that it validates genetic testing of people with the same surname to determine if they are related.

There is, however, one major caveat. Private genetic testing can help determine if two people with the same surname are related, but most of these tests would require many more markers than are currently used to determine the specific link between two people. In other words, private genetic tests that are popular with some genealogists can be used to determine if two people are related, but they are not accurate enough to determine exactly how two people are related. -

Here are some factors that increase the probability of two people with the same surname having a common ancestor:

- If the surname is rare.
- If the surname is an unusual spelling of a more common surname.
- If the surname refers to a small town or specific locality.
- If you have evidence your ancestors stayed in the same small locality for many generations and you come across someone with the same surname from the same region.

Here are some factors that decrease the probability of two people having a common ancestor:

- If the surname refers to any occupation (such as Smith, Cooper, Baker, etc.). These types of surnames are not always easy to spot. Many occupations have fallen out of use. For example, the surname Baxter refers to a female baker.
- If the surname is a color, thing or place (such as Black or Underhill).
- If the surname refers to a physical characteristic (such as Small).
- If your ancestors emigrated from another country and you suspect they changed their name, and if the surname refers to the son of someone (such as Anderson or Johnson).

25 Alternative Sources for Death Records

Information found and adapted from Ancestry.com>Learning Center>Research Guides

Death certificates aren't the only place to find details about an ancestor's death. The sources below can provide dates, places, and even causes of death, as well as important clues leading to new sources of information.

1) Mortality Schedules. *Between 1850 and 1880, federal censuses recorded names of people who had died during the 12 months prior to the census on separate mortality schedules.*

2) Coroner's Records. *Coroner's records can often be found in county or state archives.*

3) City Directories. *If your ancestor lived in a city, directories can sometimes help you determine a year of death. When a name that has been listed for several consecutive years suddenly disappears, that person may have passed away. When a man died, his wife might be listed in subsequent years as "widow" or "widow of..."*

4) Heirlooms. *You can often find death dates in or on items found at home. Look for diaries, journals, letters, photographs, jewelry, embroidered items, etc.*

5) Court Records. *In the United States, court records began very early, and in other countries, earlier still. Court records can include probate documents that name the decedent, date of death, and heirs. When a child's parent(s) dies, guardianship records filed in a local court may provide clues to a death date. Check *Red Book: American State, County & Town Sources* (in NCIGS Library or on-line at Ancestry.com) for information on court records.*

6) Cemetery Records. *Don't overlook details that can be found on a tombstone or in the records of a cemetery sexton. Millions of cemetery records have been transcribed and indexed by genealogical societies. Find A Grave.com is a great source for finding cemeteries as well as photographs of millions of graves.*

7) Body Transit Records. *Health concerns led many cities to mandate record keeping for bodies transported through or into the city for burial. These records can sometimes be found at the local, county, or state level.*

8) Passenger Lists. *Particularly in the age of sail and before there were means to preserve a body, passengers (and crew) who died on board ship were usually buried at sea. Look for notations next to names on the manifest. Also check the end of the manifest, where the captain sometimes noted births and deaths on board.*

9) Apprenticeship and Indentured Servant Papers. *In the early years of the U.S. and in many European countries, children were often indentured or became apprentices. Ancestry.com has a sampling of these records for London, Washington D.C., Philadelphia, and Virginia. In some cases, children were apprenticed or indentured because they had lost one or both parents, a fact the records may mention.*

10) Almshouse Records. *Many counties required institutions that looked after the poor to keep records, and many of those records include death information for residents who passed away at the institution.*

11) Hospital Records. *Unfortunately, most contemporary hospital records are closed to the public. Still, some collections have ended up in archives and other repositories that you might be able to find by typing the place where your ancestor lived and the phrase “hospital records” into a search engine. You may turn up something like the Kansas State Historical Society’s database of burials in the cemetery on the grounds of the Topeka State Hospital.*

12) Insurance Records. *Insurance records are typically found only at home, so ask around to see if a relative has kept them for members of your family.*

13) Military Records. *Military records can contain death information. These include casualty lists and prisoner of war records, among others.*

14) Genealogical and Historical Society Records. *St. Louis City Death Records 1850-1902 is an example of an extraordinary database that was compiled by the St. Louis Genealogical Society. They’re one of hundreds of genealogical organizations whose members spend untold hours preserving their city or county’s history. Genealogical and historical organizations are good sources for learning about cemeteries in an area and may even have created indexes listing the people buried in them.*

15) Mortuary Records (Undertaker’s Records). *Undertaker’s records vary in format and content, but they can all be valuable for determining someone’s death date. The Historical Society of Pennsylvania has a great collection of undertaker’s records, some beginning as early as the 1840s. Check other genealogical, historical, state, county, and local library and archives catalogs for possible holdings.*

16) Necrologies. *Many ethnic, fraternal and religious organizations annually printed names and death dates and sometimes full-length obituaries for their members.*

17) Newspapers and Obituary Collections. *The New York, Death Newspaper Extracts, 1801-1890 (Barber Collection) can be invaluable for finding information about New Yorkers and people who died there. There are plenty of similar obituary and newspaper collections, including Historical Newspapers, Birth, Marriage, & Death Announcements, 1851-2003.*

18) Pension Records. *Pension records often include death dates, particularly when a widow is applying for the pension. Ancestry.com has military pension records from the American Revolutionary War and an index to Civil War pensions among its collections. The Federation of Genealogical Societies is heading up a project to digitize and make millions of pensions from the War of 1812 available online. In addition, the National Archives and Records Administration holds millions of pension records that have not yet been digitized.*

19) Periodicals. *For years genealogical and historical societies have published cemetery records, details from family Bibles, church records, and many other local records that may include death information in periodicals that are sent to members. Check with local societies for availability of past periodicals that may have been combined and published, for location of their archive, or to learn if*

they've been posted on their website. Local libraries may also have copies of periodicals from organizations in the area.

20) Bible records. *Traditionally, pages in family Bibles include spaces for recording death dates and other landmark events. Check with family members to learn whether a family Bible has passed down any of the family lines.*

21) Religious Records. *Religious records often predate civil registration and often document deaths and burials.*

22) Funeral or Memorial Cards. *Funeral and memorial cards have been printed since the 1800s and were often distributed to family and friends. Check with relatives to see if any have been passed down in scrapbooks or among family heirlooms.*

23) U.S. Homes for National Veterans. *Following the Civil War, a network of homes was set up for disabled veterans. If the veteran died in the home, records noted death and burial information and sometimes included an accounting of personal effects and to whom money was disbursed. Records from these homes from 1866 through 1938 are available online at Ancestry.com.*

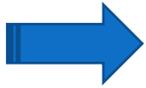
24) 1890 Veterans Schedule. *Though the 1890 Census perished in a fire in January 1921 in the basement of the Commerce Building in Washington, D.C., fortunately nearly 75,000 special schedules with the names of Union veterans and widows survived. In cases where the widow is listed, you may find the place and date of death for the soldier.*

25) Adoption Records. *While most adoption records are closed by law, you can sometimes find information from adoption records by coupling the word "adoption" with the name of the place where your ancestor lived. Some genealogical societies indexed old adoption records before they were sealed from public access.*

Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War

The Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War has created its Grave Registration Project to document the final resting places of both Union and Confederate Civil War veterans. The searchable database is available online and is free for everyone. Visit www.suvcwdb.org.

This is a 1913 immigration card from Niagara Falls, New York. Note the physical description of the person along with the name and address of the relative living in the United States. These cards can provide valuable clues as to where and why the person immigrated to the United States (as this card demonstrates, most immigrants from Canada moved to the United States seeking employment).



Meeting Room Survey

At a recent Executive board meeting it was decided to evaluate our move to the Clear Lake Public Library meeting room. As you may recall, the Mason City Public Library notified us in late 2013 they would not be scheduling meetings in the Mason City Room on Saturdays. As a result, we gratefully accepted an invitation from The Manor to use their room **free of charge**. It is a delightful facility that worked well for us, except there was no access to the Internet and the screen provided was too small to easily read projections.

Scouting around in Mason City for a different **free** meeting place which met our needs was unsuccessful. Hence it was proposed to the society members we move our meetings to the Clear Lake Public Library, which offered the use of the room at **no charge**. The membership voted approval for this change of venue. To meet the needs of Mason City members who did not want to drive to Clear Lake, we set up a carpooling network. Individuals are picked up and returned to their homes. This carpooling seems to be working fine, but not many people have taken advantage of this service.

Since we began meeting in Clear Lake, we have found the lower level meeting room adequate for our needs, with close parking, an elevator, free use of the library's equipment, access to the Internet with a good set up for viewing projections plus a warm welcome extended to us by the staff.

Did we make the right decision? The Executive Board would like to hear from you. Do you like this arrangement? Do you have concerns? Are there improvements we should consider? Please contact any board member with your verbal comments or e-mail us at ncigso@gmail.com.

Thank you for your input.
NCIGS Executive Board

THE GENIE BUG is published in Feb, May, Aug & Nov. A benefit to members of the non-profit

North Central Iowa Genealogical Society, PO Box 237, Mason City, IA 50402-0237 c.NCIGS



A few Family interview questions..... for your next holiday gathering.

Did you have any special interest when you were growing up (sports, hobbies, crafts, etc)?

What kind of games did you play?

Did your family ever take any trips or go on vacation?

Did you have family reunions?

Describe the personalities of your family members.

Were there any serious illnesses in your family?

Were there any memorable traditions that your family practiced?

Can you remember any stories that were told to you as a child (fictional, folklore or real life)?

What events stand out in your childhood (historical, personal, storms or disasters, fire, etc)?

What inventions or developments changed your life and how?

Did anyone in your family play a musical instrument?

What were your family's favorite meals?

Are there any special recipes?

Were you ever mentioned in the newspaper?

How did you meet you husband/ wife?

.....



New Members !

We welcome you and look forward to seeing you soon.

Cheryl Bitker Steven Honken Rod Hungerford Alan Neve Charles & Donna Schilling

2015 NCIGS Membership Application

Household dues are \$12.00 per calendar year (Jan-Dec). Dues paid after October 1 will extend to the next full year. Annual membership includes: quarterly newsletter with one free query, monthly meetings, support and friendship of like-minded folk, opportunity to participate in a variety of projects and use of NCIGS Library.

In addition to my 2015 membership, I would like to make a tax-deductible gift of \$ _____.

I am interested in volunteering as follows: Library Website Membership Programming

New Membership **OR** Renewal

Today's Date _____

Name _____ Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

E-mail _____ Newsletter to be sent via: E-mail **OR** Post Office

Amount Enclosed: Cash \$ _____ **OR** Check \$ _____

Mail application and monies to: North Central Iowa Genealogical Society, Box 237, Mason City, Iowa 50402-0237

NORTH CENTRAL IOWA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

BOX 237, MASON CITY, IA 50402-0237



Tip 8: Computers - At [GenealogyInTime Magazine](#), the number one thing people write to us about is font size. People often complain to us because they struggle to read the small fonts on many websites. Well, we have a simple solution for you.

To increase the size of any web page simply hold down the Ctrl key and press the + (plus) key. Pressing the + key several times while holding down the Ctrl key will make the web page even larger.

You can also do the reverse. Hold down the Ctrl key and press the - (minus) key to make the web page smaller. This works great if you are using a smart phone or other device that has a small screen. This simple solution works on all browsers and on all operating systems.