

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library  
No. 7, September 30, 2004

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**An Autumn of Amazing Happenings**

Curt B. Witcher

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With autumn in the air and the beginning of the last quarter of '04 upon us, many are feeling that extra drive to accomplish a few more things before the year is done. And if you're looking for some amazing things to explore, October is your month!

During October, there are nearly two dozen learning opportunities for genealogists to explore. Be sure to checkout the link further on in this e-zine for a complete list of these Family History Month events. Some highlights worthy of special note include the nine Allen County Genealogical Society sponsored events. In addition to those high quality presentations one will find programs by other renowned experts including John Newman presenting on court records on October 6th, Steve Myers talking about Irish resources on October 7th, and Amy Johnson Crow lecturing on researching Indiana Civil War soldiers on October 15th. The month ends with six extra hours of research, from 6P to midnight, on Sunday, October 31st.

In a celebratory event on September 27th at historical Ford's Theatre in Washington, DC, the National Park Service announced the successful loading of the last two states of data for the Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System. That online "system" was initiated as a joint project of the National Park Service, the Federation of Genealogical Societies, and the LDS Family History Department. Volunteers from the Allen County Genealogical Society and the library coordinated the teams of data input volunteers across the country who actually did the data input. If you haven't been to the website lately, or ever, and you're interested in a very dynamic site containing details about those who fought in the War Between the States, make sure October doesn't go by without your visiting [www.CivilWar.nps.gov](http://www.CivilWar.nps.gov).

Take advantage of the amazing number of autumn activities--it's a great time to get your research organized for those genealogical data gathering opportunities we commonly call holidays! They'll be here before we know it.

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## **Ship, Rail and Wagon Train Series**

Delia Cothrun Bourne

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Lists of immigrants into the United States are common and highly prized by genealogists. Not so easily found are lists of emigrants who traveled across the country to the western states. Often, single people or families would head west with little fanfare. Louis Rasmussen and the San Francisco Historic Records published the *Ship 'n Rail Series* (later the *Ship, Rail and Wagon Train Series*) to provide names for some of the thousands of settlers and visitors to California.

Volume 1 of *Railway Passenger Lists of Overland Trains to San Francisco and the West* (Colma, CA: San Francisco Historic Records, 1966-68. 2 volumes; 929.11/R18R) includes newspaper accounts of railroad passengers arriving in Oakland and San Francisco, California in 1870 and 1871. Volume 2 lists those passing through Carlin, Nevada and Ogden, Utah in 1871 and 1872. These entries will provide the emigrants' names, often including other family members as "wife" or "family," home (sometimes city but often just state), and the date of arrival or passing. Each volume is indexed by name, hometown or state, and subject.

*San Francisco Ship Passenger Lists* (Colma, CA: San Francisco Historic Record, 1965-70; 979.902/SA519R, volumes 1-4) covers arrivals from 1850-January 6, 1853. The information was taken from newspaper accounts and journals, and arranged chronologically. It lists ship name, type, captain, port of origin, length of passage, passengers, and cargo. This material was gathered to replace the official port records that were destroyed by fire in 1940. No lists from Asian ports were included in this series. There is a name index and a geographic and subject index.

The last entry in this series, *California Wagon Train Lists, April 5, 1849 to October 20, 1852* (Colma, CA: San Francisco Historic Records, 1994; 979.4/R18C) lists wagon trains leaving from St. Joseph, Missouri or passing through various cities along the way west. Many of these are just lists of passengers and supplies, but occasionally there are notations of deaths by disease or violence. The entries are chronological, but there is an every name index.

It is important to remember that although most passengers on the ships and wagon trains were people migrating to the west, many on the trains were visitors, either California residents returning after a trip, or easterners traveling on business or pleasure. Whatever the reason for your ancestor's experience, knowledge of travel experiences can add depth to his or her life.

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## **A TIP FOR BEGINNING SWISS RESEARCH**

John D. Beatty

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One of the cardinal rules of successful European genealogical research is the need for determining a family's precise place of origin before its emigration. Usually one can find important congregational and vital records in that town or one nearby. Switzerland, however, offers a twist to this rule. The Swiss hold voting and citizenship rights to specific towns, and they often maintain those rights for generations. When a family member moves to a different community, the bonds to the old community or "home place" often remain, with vital and other court records maintained by its town registrar.

The prevalence of this citizenship custom offers a potential bonanza for genealogists, since certain surnames have long associations with specific towns that stretch back many centuries.

My own ancestral family, the Fiechters of Durrenroth in Emmental, Canton Bern, have maintained citizenship rights there since the middle ages, despite having many branches that have moved around Switzerland since that time.

A useful resource for determining the link between Swiss families and their ancestral towns is the *Familiennamenbuch der Schweiz*, which was reissued in 1989 under a new title, *Swiss Surnames: A Complete Register*. This three-volume work offers an alphabetical listing of surnames, together with the towns and cantons with which they were affiliated according to a 1962 citizenship survey. Surnames with prefixes such as von Allmen appear under the prefix letter, such as "v," though spelling variations are each given a separate listing. After the place name appears the date of the first grant of citizenship, if known, which usually dates from the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. Long ancestral associations that predate citizenship records are marked with an "a." The first volume contains a useful introduction, a more detailed user guide, a list of abbreviations, and a list of Swiss communities that have disappeared because of suburban expansion.

Genealogists with an interest in Switzerland, but who lack the name of their ancestor's hometown, should make *Swiss Surnames* a tool of first resort. With increasing numbers of Swiss parish registers microfilmed by the Genealogical Society of Utah, it may be possible to find the lost immigrant in a Swiss parish record using clues obtained from this source.

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### **FAMILY HISTORY MONTH, OCTOBER 2004 AT ACPL**

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October is Family History Month. A resolution by Senator Orrin Hatch of Utah in 2001 brought attention to this passion of ours--family history research.

In celebration of this special month, the Historical Genealogy Department has scheduled educational presentations on a wide range of genealogical research sources throughout the month. These include how to lectures on computer sources, military sources, African American research materials, Internet web sites, Irish research, British sources and plenty more!!

A \*SPECIAL\* event of our celebration is EXTENDED RESEARCH HOURS on Sunday, Oct. 31. The Genealogy Department will be open from 1pm until midnight. That is an extra 6 hours of research opportunities! To join us on this special day, you must be in the department at 6pm...security won't allow us to let anyone in the building after that time. You will be able to leave whenever you like, but 6pm begins the witching hours.

Come join us, you might find your ancestors lurking in the stacks!!

For a full schedule of events, visit the library website  
<http://www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy/familyhistorymonth.htm>

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## **HOTEL OF THE MONTH**

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Each issue we will feature a local hotel, for visitors from out-of-town.

Quality Hotel Fort Wayne  
3330 West Coliseum Boulevard, Fort Wayne 46808  
(260) 484-7711

This 251-room hotel is four miles from downtown, at the city's western edge. Amenities include an indoor pool, hot tub and fitness center, complimentary breakfast buffet and newspaper. The rooms include a refrigerator and microwave, desk, television with free movies, and dataport. Photocopier and fax are also available. Genealogists' rate: \$59.

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## **AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

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Allen County Public Library  
3<sup>rd</sup> floor atrium display area  
Passages: Immigration

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)

<http://www.ipfw.edu/ipfwhist/historgs/acgsi.htm>

Wednesday, October 13, 2004

Dupont Branch of the ACPL, 536 E. Dupont Road, Fort Wayne, IN 260-421-1315

6:30 pm social time, 7:00 pm program

Curt Witcher: "Off the Beaten Path: Web Sites and Strategies for Finding More Family Data"

Computer Users Group

Wednesday, October 20, 2004 at 7 pm. Aboite Library, 5630 Coventry Lane, Fort Wayne, IN 260-421-1310

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)

First Wednesday of each month in the Genealogy Department 9am – 3pm.

Expert help from members of the DAR in becoming a member of that organization

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## **ACPL LIBRARIANS ON TOUR**

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Steve Myers

October 24-30 National Institute for Genealogical Studies

Research Academy in Salt Lake City: Irish Research

[www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm](http://www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm)

Ryan Taylor

October 2 Barrie, ON: Simcoe County Branch OGS workshop

October 24-30 National Institute for Genealogical Studies

Research Academy in Salt Lake City: English Research

[www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm](http://www.genealogicalstudies.com/SLC.htm)

Curt Witcher

October 9 Lancaster, OH: Fairfield County Genealogical Society Seminar  
October 23 Elkhart, IN: Elkhart County Genealogical Society Fall Seminar  
November 13 Cincinnati, OH: Hamilton County Genealogical Society Program

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### **DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE LIBRARY**

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Wondering how to get to the library? Our exciting transition location is 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana. We will be at this location until late 2006. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?country=US&countryid=250&addtohistory=&searchtab=address&searchtype=address&address=200+E+Berry+St&city=Fort+Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802-2706&search=++Search++&finditform=1>

#### From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Blvd. into downtown. Turn left on Barr Street to Berry Street. The library is located on the corner of Berry and Barr Streets.

#### From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton, the library will be on your left when you cross Berry Street.

#### From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Road. Coming up to an angled street (State Street.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Left on Wayne Street. When you cross Clinton, the library will be on your left on Wayne Street.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

#### From the East

Follow US 30 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Turn right on Barr Street. Turn left on Berry Street. The library is on your left on Berry Street.

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### **PARKING AT THE LIBRARY**

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Lot in front of the library, east side

Available for short-term library parking. Limited to one hour.

#### Tippman Parking Garage

Clinton and Wayne Streets. Across from the library, however the skybridge is NOT accessible. Hourly parking, \$1.25 per hour up to a maximum of \$5.00 per day.

Park Place Lot

Covered parking on Barr Street at Main Street. This lot is one block away from the library. Hourly parking Monday through Friday, 9am to 6pm.

Street (metered) parking on Wayne Street and Berry Street.

On the street you plug the meters 8am – 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

Visitor center/Grand Wayne center

Covered parking at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am – 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then \$1.00 per hour. There is a flat \$2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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**GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT QUERIES**

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The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: [CWitcher@ACPL.Lib.in.us](mailto:CWitcher@ACPL.Lib.in.us). Look for a general genealogy query email address coming soon.

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**PUBLISHING NOTE**

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This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Historical Genealogy Department, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause. If this issue of "Genealogy Gems" has been forwarded to you and you would like to receive your own copy in the future, visit [www.FriendsOfAllenCounty.org](http://www.FriendsOfAllenCounty.org) and fill out the subscription form at the bottom of the page. Another way to subscribe is to send an email to [genealogygems-subscribe@friendsofallencounty.org](mailto:genealogygems-subscribe@friendsofallencounty.org)."

Sue Kaufman, editor