

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library
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Content and Context are King
by Curt B. Witcher

I recently returned from the 2015 Annual Conference of the American Library Association (ALA), and as one might guess there was much to see and do when nearly twenty-two thousand librarians and informational professionals get together. As I have been in the past, I again was struck with the amazing numbers of resources libraries and archives have to offer family historians, and the significant commitments so many institutions undertake to preserve local and family history treasures and make those items discoverable for us.

More than occasionally I am also struck by how infrequently many family historians take full advantage of all the resources available to assist them in researching their heritage and in discovering their family stories. There are too many individuals who believe that if something is not online at Ancestry.com it doesn't exist. Undoubtedly, Ancestry.com is a phenomenal collection of records and images. Certainly kudos to their marketing folks for making researching family history synonymous with Ancestry.com for many individuals. However, the idea of any one website or even any collection of information aggregators having everything is simply dreaming at this point. (Who knows what technology will enable us to do in the future.) What you and I need as family historians is an appreciation for the process of finding the largest amount of available data and a commitment to engage such a process.

Appreciating two words--content and context--can have an enormous impact on our genealogical research. Having the most amount of information possible about an ancestor and corresponding ancestral family--content--will prevent us from stumbling into many brick walls; and trying to research our family lines in the most robust contexts possible will drive us to continually exploring for new content. And of course, an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning in the genealogy space will help us increasingly appreciate content and context.

Scattered throughout the four days of the recent ALA conference were numerous presentations on local, state, and regional memory projects. It was exciting to see how these memory programs have

grown-up since the early days of such projects decades ago. Long gone are the simple, tagged photographic collections. Though quite useful in their own right, today's memory projects have numerous additional layers of digital assets, including important historical monographs, letters and diaries, religious histories, maps, court records and documents, scrapbooks and oral histories. And nearly all of these projects continue to support active growth.

Individuals interested in family history must make seeking and accessing these largely free and tremendously important "memory" collections of local history assets part of their research routines. Both historically and contemporarily it is individuals who create, sustain, grow, and shape communities. The stories of their lives are interwoven in to the stories of the communities in which they lived. Actively seek to expand the content in which you are looking for your ancestors by engaging memory projects of all sorts. In doing this, you also will provide the best possible contexts in which to understand the lives of your ancestors--and that may open you up to more content possibilities. It is simply another part of the research cycle.

Two memory projects worthy of highlighting include "Wabash Valley Visions & Voices" and "Orlando Memory." "Wabash Valley Visions & Voices" defines itself as "a digital memory project dedicated to the documentation and the preservation of the region's history and heritage in print, pictures, and sound. As a collaborative effort involving the libraries, museums, cultural organizations and community groups, the project . . . focuses on the Wabash Valley region in west central Indiana and east central Illinois." Many material formats are included in this digital initiative, though, what makes this particular project of great consequence are the number of participating organization. More than thirty-five different organizations are participating in this collaborative project of preserving and sharing, from museums and historical societies to public library and local governments.

Orange County (FL) and Orlando may be known to many as Disney central; however, in the family and local history research worlds, they should also be known for the truly outstanding "Orlando Memory" project. In the description, the project is identified as a "community-based, digital collection of local heritage and traditions." Not only are the project's current resources of interest to family historians, as a community-based project, area resident's photographs, videos, and memories are welcome and can be easily loaded onto the site after engaging in a free registration process. Amazing content and context can be found at OrlandoMemory.info.

Developing a strategy for using memory projects is as easy as finding them. The following three steps are a good start.

- **Explore public library websites in areas of geographic interest.
- **Explore state library websites in areas of geographic interest.
- **Explore state historical society websites in areas of geographic interest.

In addition to memory projects, a healthy number of ALA programs discussed best practices for scanning and creating metadata for local scrapbooks, obituary files, and local historical publications, especially old newspapers. Just think, libraries of all types and sizes are working with diligence to provide increasing amounts of local historical records for researchers like you and me. Consequential pieces of the content they are making accessible are not readily available through the commercial information aggregators in the genealogy space. Our libraries are working hard through

local and state funded projects as well as through The National Digital Newspaper Program (NDNP) of the Library of Congress to digitally preserve and accessible present millions of pages of newspaper--newspapers that chronicle the lives and times of our ancestors, their families, and their communities.

I continue to tell all who will listen that these truly are the best of times for genealogists. We can take fuller advantage of these best of times by persistently looking for more content and fuller contexts.

"Wayward Puritans"

by Dawne Slater, CG(sm)*

Genealogy is part of the larger study of History. That being said, most people come to research at The Genealogy Center looking for books, microfilms and online sources that contain, of course, GENEALOGY. In other words, we are looking for information about specific people - often vital statistics and proof of relationships. Incidentally in our search, we might find evidence of our relatives' occupations, religious affiliations, community activities, and other facts that help bring those individuals to life. It is this other information in many cases that can help us know where to look for additional records that might include our ancestors, or might aid us in distinguishing between people with the same name living in the same geographic area at the same time.

The Genealogy Center has many books that are overlooked by family historians because they include few names and instead are histories of places, social movements, time periods and other not-strictly-genealogy topics. At first glance, it doesn't seem that these volumes will help us advance our family lines - and they don't, in a direct way. But studying books about a geographic area, a specific time period, the experiences of an ethnic group, or social phenomena can help us with our genealogy in a number of ways:

- It helps us place our ancestors into historical context and understand a little of what they experienced and why they acted or reacted the way they did,
- It truly can help us see our ancestors as the real flesh-and-blood people that they were and not just names, dates and places on a pedigree chart or in a genealogy software program,
- And it can give us clues to additional record types we might not have considered

One of these books that is not a genealogy book, per se, is "Wayward Puritans: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance" by Kai T. Erikson (GC 974.4 ER4wa). The purpose of sociologist Erikson's study, he tells the reader on Page vii of the preface, was "to use the Puritan community as a setting in which to examine several ideas about deviant behavior," and also, according to Wikipedia, "to understand the social framework of Puritan life that led to the Salem witch trials." (1.) The book covers much more about Puritans than the witch trials, however. Erikson discusses the Puritans' banishment of Anne Hutchinson, their treatment of non-conformist Quakers, and more. Erikson's conclusion about the Puritan community, and about what is considered deviant behavior in all kinds of groups, is that it is not all negative - it serves a purpose. He says on Page 13, "Deviant forms of behavior, by marking the outer edges of group life, give the inner structure its special character and thus supply the framework within which the people of the group develop an orderly sense of

their own cultural identity."

Did you have relative who were Puritans? Quakers? Accused witches? Reading this volume can give you insight into the dynamics of the community and time period in which they lived. All of us probably have someone in the family who acted outside of the law at some point. What lessons can we apply from Erikson's study to our 19th century ancestor who disturbed religious meetings, was arrested for public intoxication, got into a bar fight, or was brought up on charges of fornication? Did our ancestors' deviant behavior help define the standards of the communities in which they lived? It can be interesting and enlightening to step outside our usual research patterns of computer resources and record books to peruse some of the social and general history volumes in The Genealogy Center's General US area. "Wayward Puritans" is just one of many interesting books that can be found there.

(1.) Wikipedia, "Kai T. Erikson," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kai_T._Erikson

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Historical Atlas of the North American Railroads
by Delia Cothrun Bourne

The settlement of the North American continent is tied inextricably to the development of its railroads, and to research the movements of our ancestors, some attention must be given to the local, national and international routes paved by steel rails. Derek Hayes's "Historical Atlas of the North American Railroad" (973 H326h) provides a wealth of information and images vital to understanding railroad history and how it applies to the United States and Canada.

The volume is filled with colorful images and maps that are fascinating to peruse. It also discusses the origins and beginning of railroads in North America. Included are sections on building a railroad, networking of local lines, western networks, transcontinental railroads, the development of time zones, and activities during war. Hayes provides brief histories of various lines, line maps - some showing each station - and reproductions of flyers for famous routes, such as the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe's San Francisco Chief, Illinois Central's City of New Orleans, Kansas City Southern's Southern Belle and Burlington's Denver Zephyr.

Several of the maps provide unique information, like the Union Military Chart, published in 1861. The Union Military Chart is a "complete map of rail roads, water courses in the United States and Canada," which included rivers and canals that would facilitate movement of troops. Another is the 1917 Military Camps and Winter Resorts map created by the Seaboard Air Line Railway Company that showed military bases in the Eastern United States and Cuba, promoting the idea of vacationing or living near a soldier. Many of the larger maps are like that of the Grand Trunk Railway map. The Grand Trunk was a Canadian company and its map shows main lines, as well as smaller connecting lines - the Canadian Pacific, Great Northern and Northern Pacific - to illustrate how the entire system interconnected and supplied service in southern Canada and the northern

United States.

Additionally, there are sections in the book on the use of the railroads by the military, development of central traffic control, commuter rail lines, such as the Metra Line in Chicago, and many images displaying the changing profiles and styles of engine from the early days to the streamlined models of mid-20th century. The volume also provides fascinating aspects of history, such as the advertisements to businesses promoting placement of factories near specific railroad lines, and the ad campaign of 1945 explaining that Pullman car passengers might not be able to purchase sleeping car accommodations because returning servicemen, especially those who were wounded would take priority.

The volume ends with a discussion of the coming of Conrail and Amtrak, and the possible future of high-speed rail. The images are well-cited as to the location of the originals, and a bibliography provides a large collection of material for further research. This is a valuable resource for anyone interested in exploring how railroads influenced the development of this continent.

Technology Tip of the Month--Exploring the Joys of a Microsoft Upgrade - Office 2013

by Kay Spears

Recently, the Allen County Public Library computers were once again upgraded to a new Microsoft Office version. This time, it was Microsoft Office version 2013. Did it go smoothly? Mostly. Were there any changes in Office? Need you even ask? I'm sure there was a good reason for these changes. And, here is the first one I encountered and modified:

When you open any of the Microsoft Office products in the 2013 version - Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Word, or Access - you are greeted with a Template page. While some people may find it helpful to have the templates at the very beginning, for those of us who do not use templates, this can be a bit irritating. There is a very simple solution to this problem.

Before I begin to tell you how to disable the Template Startup you should know that this does not work for Microsoft Access. So, for Word, Excel, Publisher, and PowerPoint this is what you do: Go to File>Option>General>Start Up Options> and uncheck "Show the Start Up Screen when this application starts." That's all there is to it. You do have to do it for each application, but it's really not that hard, and when you're done, you don't have to look at all those templates.

Next: Disabling Smooth Font Animation.

Quick-Tip of the Month for Preservation--Portable Scanners

by John D. Beatty, CG(sm)*

Have you ever been somewhere and needed a tool to make a quick scan of a photograph or document? Maybe you are at a family reunion or visiting the home of a relative, and someone has pulled out a family photograph that you have never seen. You would like to copy it, but your cell phone camera isn't quite good enough, and of course you don't have your large, flatbed scanner with

you, the one you keep at home by the computer. A very handy device in such situations is a portable scanner. One example is a FlipPal. It can scan photographs or documents, and it is small in size, fitting easily in a briefcase or purse. It will even knit together a larger-sized photograph or document, if you take care to make overlapping scans. This preservation tool is highly recommended for any genealogist one the go. <http://flip-pal.com/>

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Start a Family History Journey Summer Series--July Event

This summer, you can go "Beyond Just Starting" your family history journey when you join us on Saturday, July 25, at 9:30 a.m. in Meeting Room C. You will learn how to verify the family information you find, as well as the importance of documenting what you find and where you found it. You can also discover how to harvest as much information as possible from various records. We will show you how to use the free FamilySearch website, and provide a virtual tour of The Genealogy Center's licensed databases. This 90-minute class is designed for beginners - or for anyone who wants to ensure that the best paths to success are being utilized.

The series will continue on Saturday, August 29, and Saturday, September 26, with "Following Up With More Records" and "Beginners Guide to Genealogical Software," respectively. Mark your calendars now to attend!

For more information, see the brochure at <http://www.genealogycenter.org/docs/GettingStarted2015>. To register for these free events, call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info.

Area Calendar of Events

Miami Indian Heritage Days

4 July 2015 - Chief Richardville House, 5705 Bluffton Road, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1 to 4 p.m. Craig Arnold and George Strack, "Then and Now: Tools of the Miami."

DAR Research Help

8 July 2015 - Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) is available to help prospective DAR members research their lineage to prove ancestry to an American Revolutionary Patriot.

Revolutionary War - The Western Front 1777

11-12 July 2015 - The Old Fort, 1201 Spy Run Ave., Fort Wayne, Indiana. 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Sunday.

Last Saturdays

25 July 2015 - History Center, 302 East Berry St., Fort Wayne, Indiana, Noon to 5 p.m. Half-price admission.

Driving Directions to the Library

Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the *Genealogy Center*.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

>From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

Using US 24:

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

>From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

Parking at the Library

At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$70.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. 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 garage 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.

Genealogy Center Queries

The Genealogy Center 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: Genealogy@ACPL.Info.

Publishing Note:

This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, 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.

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