

# Footprints

## Upcoming Meetings

*Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held at the Spring Creek United Church of Christ, 4500 Spring Creek Road, Rockford.*

**Saturday, January 9—1:30 p.m.**

***Program yet to be determined.***

Please check the website or newspaper for program information.

**Saturday, February 6—1:30 p.m.**

***Valkommen!!***

Richard Brynteson, Managing Director of the Swedish Historical Society, will share glimpses of Rockford's Swedish history, heritage and homes.

He will be joined by Mrs. Irene Oldson, a Genealogy Consultant at Erlander House, who will speak on Swedish resources available through the museum.

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### **Is Your Membership Current?**

Please check the address label of this issue of **Footprints**. If it does not have the 2010 date on it, or if you are not a life member, it is time for you to renew.



Won't you fill out *all the blanks* on the membership form on page **19**, and mail it with your check today? Thank you.

**Lives of great men  
all remind us  
We can make our  
lives sublime,  
And departing,  
leave behind us,  
Footprints on the  
sand of time.**

— Henry W. Longfellow

## Winnebago & Boone Counties Genealogical Society

<b>ORGANIZATIONAL PURPOSE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ To encourage and support genealogical researchers;</li> <li>▶ To promote the discovering, collecting, indexing, and preserving of valued genealogical resources of Winnebago and Boone Counties; and</li> <li>▶ To encourage publication of county material and family histories.</li> </ul>
<b>MEETINGS</b>	Usually the first Saturday of the month, but see <b>Footprints</b> for particulars. Board meetings precede membership meetings at 11:00 a.m., and are open for all to attend. No meetings in June, July, and August.
<b>OFFICERS</b>	President: Kathy Burfield (815-239-1040) Vice-President: Sharon Thomasson (815-633-3168) Corresponding Secretary: Bill Edmundson (815-654-0452) Recording Secretary: Betty Jane Lagerquist (815-654-2889) Treasurer: Mr. Shirl D. Reed (815-877-1897) — <a href="mailto:sr1954es@comcast.net">sr1954es@comcast.net</a> Immediate Past President: Alice Heath (815-399-7117)
<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>	Robert L. Buckardt (815-399-6406) — Term expiring 2011 Irmine Payne (815-636-2627) – Term expiring 2010 Kathy Kuroda (815-968-7162) - Term expiring 2011 Bill Leese (815-637-6038) – Term expiring 2012 Helen Teter (815-282-8247) – Term expiring 2012 Russ Cline (815-234-2390) – Term expiring 2010 Lila Hatcher (815-547-8730) – Term expiring 2010
<b>HOSPITALITY</b>	Lila Hatcher
<b>RESEARCH</b>	See policy below
<b>PROGRAM</b>	Sharon Thommason (815-633-3168)
<b>PUBLICITY</b>	Bill & Stacie Leese (815-637-6038)
<b>EDITORIAL COMMITTEE</b>	Chair: Karen Clements (815-398-2657) — <a href="mailto:kcllements43@aol.com">kcllements43@aol.com</a> Publisher: (interim) Bill Leese (815-637-6038) — <a href="mailto:ourroots4@sbcglobal.net">ourroots4@sbcglobal.net</a> Circulation: Bob and Liz Buckardt (815-399-6406)



### Footprints

Published five times yearly: January, March, May, September, and November. Subscription is free with membership in the Society.

Editorial Committee: Karen Clements, Chair  
Marilyn Benson  
Kathy Kuroda  
Arlene Outzen

Contributors: Robert E. Ash  
Marty Johnson

### Submissions

The Editorial Committee welcomes articles for consideration for printing in **Footprints**. Such articles should be specific to the history or genealogy concerns in Winnebago and Boone Counties or neighboring counties. They could also be relative to techniques and sources for genealogy or history research and of broad enough interest for any genealogist regardless of name or location of search. Especially if the items are date sensitive, articles should be submitted before the first day of December, February, April, August, and October for inclusion in the January, March, May, September, and November issues, respectively.

Any such items should be directed to the chair of the Editorial Committee, Karen Clements, at 1722 Eastgate Pkwy., Rockford IL 61108; phone 815-398-2657; e-mail [kcllements43@aol.com](mailto:kcllements43@aol.com). The Editorial Committee reserves the right to determine the content of each issue of **Footprints**.

### Requests for Research

Mail requests for research will be forwarded to appointed members of the Society. The fee for an initial request will be \$10, from which \$2 will go to the Society and \$8 to the researcher; this initial fee covers about one hour of research. Fees for further research resulting from initial requests will be negotiated between the client and researcher, and will go entirely to the researcher. Write to WBCGS, P.O. Box 10166, Loves Park, IL 61131-0166; a self-addressed stamped envelope should be included with each request.

### Queries

Members and friends of WBCGS are invited to use **Footprints** for publishing queries to help genealogists connect with each other regarding mutual research interests. There is no fee to members for publishing queries as submitted, and all responses to queries should be addressed directly to the inquirer. Queries from non-members will be published if payment of a \$3

## Society Elects 2010 Board



Officers for the coming year were elected unanimously at the December meeting of the WBCGS:

**President, Kathy Burfield**

**Vice President, Sharon Thommason**

**Recording Secretary, Betty Jane Lagerquist**

**Corresponding Secretary, Bill Edmundson**

**Treasurer, Shirl Reed**

**Board of Directors (*term expirations indicated*):** Irmine Payne (2010), Lila Hatcher (2010), Bill Leese (2012), and Russ Cline (2012).

**Directors who will continue are:** Robert Buckhardt (2011) and Kathy Kuroda (2011).

## New Members

With Surnames and Areas of Research

### **CROSBY, Shelly**

3607 Rural Street

Rockford, IL 61107-3503

E-mail: [KSUHistory@msn.com](mailto:KSUHistory@msn.com)

*Surnames:* Erickson, Crosby, Kliver, Jones, Scott

*Areas:* Iowa, Illinois, Wisconsin, New York

### **DOBRAZ, Mrs. Roegeina**

2333 Randolph Street

Caledonia, IL 61011-9321

E-mail: [tomasefus1@yahoo.com](mailto:tomasefus1@yahoo.com)

*Surnames:* Snow, Helms, Foster, Ferguson, Peck, Dobraz

*Areas:* Virginia, No. & So. Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin

### **FRITSCH, Florence**

2310 Randolph Street

Caledonia, IL 61011-9319

E-mail: [ff16701@verizon.net](mailto:ff16701@verizon.net)

*Surnames:* Burkins, Oleson/Olson, Bjerke, McNally

*Areas:* Clinton, Beloit & Rock Co., WI, S. Beloit, Rockton, Manchester Twp., Boone & Winnebago Cos., IL

### **GULER, Wendy Joy**

1532 Crosby Street - Apt. 2

Rockford, IL 61107-4327

E-mail: [wendyjg@aol.com](mailto:wendyjg@aol.com)

*Surnames:* Guler, Schmidt, Dean, Banks, Melchert, Brickles, Briske, Jordan,

Crombie/Abercrombie, Cheadle,

Cowen/Cohen

*Areas:* Rockford, Rochelle / Flagg, Ogle, Co. IL; Merrill, WI; Indianapolis, IN; Pageville, Meigs Co., OH; Dubuque, IA; Westfield, Union Co. NJ; Switzerland (Klosters?).

### **HALLMAN, Mary J.**

1815 Glenwood Avenue

Rockford, IL 61103-3860

E-mail: None

*Surnames:* Swenson, Hallman, Leshnak

*Areas:* Sweden, Germany, Poland; Berlin, WI, Rockford, IL

### **LIND, Carol M.**

1016 Winthrop Lane

Rockford, IL 61107-3448

E-mail: [cclind1016@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cclind1016@sbcglobal.net)

*Surnames:* Greenberg, Carlson

*Areas:* Rockford, Belvidere, IL, Sweden

### **RUSTON, Dwight**

6435 Field Stone Drive

Rockford, IL 61109-4425

E-mail: [deruston@att.net](mailto:deruston@att.net)

*Surnames:* Ruston, Musser, Tews, Swain

*Areas:* England, Norway; PA, MI, Stephenson Co., IL

### **WILCOX, Ms. Darlene R.**

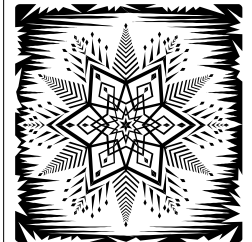
783 Leslie Lane

The Villages, FL 32162-6604

E-mail: [wildarr@aol.com](mailto:wildarr@aol.com)

*Surnames:* Wilcox, Hart, Badham

*Areas:* Iowa, Indiana, Rockford, IL



## NEW LIFE MEMBER

### **FISH, Ms. Betsy (née) Lunde**

521 Vale Avenue N.

Rockford, IL 61107-4650

E-mail: [fishb@att.net](mailto:fishb@att.net)

*Surnames:* Lunde, Nelson

*Areas:* Lacrosse & Stoughton, WI

**November 2009 Program Notes****Everything You've Wanted to Know About Your Family... But Really Didn't When You Found Out! How Genealogy Can Help You Understand Your Family:***Kathy Kuroda*

George Findlen, a Certified Genealogist, traveled from his home in Wisconsin to share how he has handled uncovering embarrassing information in his research.

When we begin researching our family history, we want to know who we are (names), when did we get here? (dates) and where we came from (places). Keys to finding the answers to these questions are birth, marriage and death records. A chart just naming our descendants is boring. A report with just names, dates and places is also boring. Then we expand our search to obituaries, census records and other types of records.

As we research, we have a tendency to want to look good. Negative information is the skeleton in the closet. When you find an awkward situation, write down the known facts. Make a list of details that stand out. George told a story of two brothers who were married to two sisters. One brother lost the family farm.

How could the other brother have let this happen? Was there tension between the brothers? Or a financial panic where although the second brother wanted to help, neither could come up with the money to save the farm? Think of other possible reasons. Look for documents to support why this happened.

We are shaped by our family but responsible for ourselves. Fear causes us to react against negative information, and we rush to bury anything negative. Research negative stories and look into why the person acted as he did. As we research our ancestors, they become real people. They made mistakes and hopefully learned from them. Don't falsely believe you inherit the past. A theory only holds if no known document contradicts it. Do more than record names, dates and places. Don't let shame or embarrassment keep you from understanding your ancestors and telling their story.



**December Program Notes****Tombstone Symbols—Voices From the Past***Kathy Kuroda*

Dr. John Inman, our December speaker, is a retired OBGYN doctor. His interest in cemeteries and gravestone symbolism began when he was young. As a child he would visit cemeteries with his family on such occasions as Memorial Day.

Very early burials were inside a church or in the churchyard. During Colonial times graveyards or burial grounds were around the outside of the church. Garden or rural cemeteries were popular from 1830 to the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Families often packed a picnic lunch and spent the afternoon at the graves of loved ones much like we would picnic at a park. From the late 19<sup>th</sup> century to the present many cemeteries are found with flat markers on large lawns making it convenient for grounds crews to mow. In addition to traditional cemeteries you may find your ancestors buried in a specialty cemetery such as a baby or infant cemetery, a potters field or military cemetery. Secret Societies or Fraternal Organizations can have their own cemetery for burials of members. Victims of plagues could be buried in mass graves.

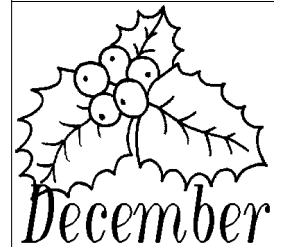
Tombstones can be made of different materials. Grave markers made of wood have a poor survival rate. Fieldstones

were also used to mark early graves. A pile of stones kept away animals. Family members and passerby's would add more stones to the pile. Sandstone, like wood, doesn't last. In the early 1800's we first see marble being used for tombstones. Marble carves well and dissolves slowly. Also used is limestone which is similar to marble. Slate is sometimes used in the south where it holds up well. In the north with its harsher weather conditions, slate delaminates.

What materials a tombstone is made from can help date the time period it was made. Symbols found on a tombstone can do the same thing. Remembering what each symbol means is not as important as knowing where to look it up. Dr. Inman recommends the book, "Stories in Stone" by Douglas Keister as a guide for gravestone symbolism.

The earliest tombstones were devoid of religious symbols. This was due to the Puritan influence in New England. Southern tombstones tend to be more artistic than those found in the northern states.

*(Continued on page 15)*

**IN MEMORIAM**

We were very saddened by the news of the sudden death of Betty Harlan on Saturday, November 21, 2009. Betty was the publisher of "Footprints" for the last year. She was born January 25, 1935, and lived her entire life in Rockford. She was married to Roger Harlan on May 19, 1956. He pre-deceased her in 2003. Betty is survived by her son Greg, daughter Carol, and grandchildren Jimmy, Elizabeth, Kayla, and Andrew. Services were Tuesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> with burial in Arlington Memorial Park.



## Calendar of Genealogical Events

### **FEBRUARY 27, 2010, ST.**

**CHARLES, ILLINOIS.** The DuPage Genealogical Society announces its 35<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference "Genealogical Building Blocks". Speakers will be Jeffrey A. Bockman, John Philip Colletta, Kathy Meade and Elissa Scalise Powell. For further information you may e-mail Dorothy Hansen at [DCGSRegistrar@aol.com](mailto:DCGSRegistrar@aol.com), visit the Society's web site [www.dcgs.org](http://www.dcgs.org) or call (630) 665-6599.

### **MARCH 13, 2010. MISHAWAKA,**

**INDIANA.** The South Bend Area Genealogical Society's annual "Michiana Genealogy Fair" for 2010 will feature Curt Witcher, Allen County Public Library and the topics are 1. Marching On: Major Military Sites on the Internet and 2. Non-Population Schedules. The Society's Web site is [www.sbags.org](http://www.sbags.org) where you may obtain more information about this event.

## Notice

Greenwood Cemetery is looking for volunteers to help continue the computerization of their paper records. The project involves inputting data at the cemetery office. If you are interested in volunteering for this project, contact Darryl Johnson c/o Sundberg Funeral Home (815-962-7743) or Diane at the Greenwood Cemetery Office (815-962-7522).

### **Some fascinating things on old tombstones!**

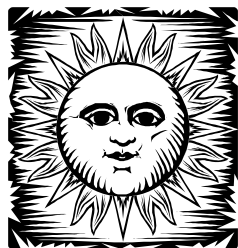
In a Ruidoso, New Mexico, cemetery: Here lies Johnny Yeast....Pardon me for not rising.

In Silver City, Nevada, cemetery: Here lays The Kid, We planted him raw, He was quick on the trigger, But slow on the draw.

A lawyer's epitaph in England: Sir John Strange, Here lies an honest lawyer, and that is Strange.

In a cemetery in Hartscombe, England: On the 22<sup>nd</sup> of June, Jonathan Fiddle went out of tune.

-----from Stephenson County Swoghen , Vol 27 No. 3 August 2009-----



## Salmon Witkin: A man on a Mission

*Robert E. Ash*

Salmon Witkin <sup>1</sup>was born in Vitebsk, Russia on 6 June 1882. <sup>2</sup>He died 4 January 1915 in Oelwein, Iowa, USA. <sup>3</sup>He packed enough experiences into thirty-two years to fill seventy years for an ordinary man. He was on a mission to escape the Pale of Settlement where his family had lived for centuries. The Jews have a Hebrew word, *takhlis*, to describe his mission. He sought to “achieve something, to advance, to get somewhere.” <sup>4</sup>As the nineteenth century was ending, his people were being murdered in shameful pogroms throughout the Pale. To remain with family, to seek political accommodation, to live in religious community that enabled survival in Russia, was tempting. But he joined the thousands of Jews that clawed their way out. They would go anywhere in the world to escape a stifling life or a brutal death.

In recent years, Samuel Witkin, who is my wife’s grandfather, has become my mission. He is a person I would like to have known, a mystery man lost in the shadows of history, and the little I know about him makes me want to know more. In 1904, at the age of twenty-two he reaches for a better life and leaves Russia. He passes through London, <sup>5</sup>New York City, <sup>6</sup>Bethlehem, Pennsylvania, <sup>7</sup>and by 1908 he is in Oelwein, Iowa. In 1915 he dies in a house fire leaving three children and a pregnant wife. What drove him? What was important to him?

Why did he assimilate rather than live in a Jewish ghetto in London, New York City, or Chicago? Was he passionate? Thoughtful? Forgiving? I will never be able to answer all the questions that would help me to know him.

Witkin did not live long enough to leave much of a genealogical paper trail, only a few scraps of history recorded here and there in American records: a ship manifest, a declaration of intention, a letter, probate records, an obituary, and a few other pieces of paper pulled out of archives. From these scraps, I have sketched out a silhouette of his life. I have a photograph: I look at the man. His eyes are fixed; his chin is firm. He appears to be a little sad. He holds his son in his arms in front of a rented house. It could be 209 Second Avenue South. <sup>8</sup> He lives in a neighborhood with fellow employees of the Chicago Great Western Railroad. <sup>9</sup> There are only four or five families of Jews in the entire city of Oelwein. One was a German Jew, a clothing store merchant, probably a tailor. There were several other Jewish families from Russia living in the same neighborhood. One was a merchant of a second hand shop; the merchant’s brother was a machinist working for the railroad. It is the same shop in which Sam works as a machinist. <sup>10</sup>

*(Continued on page 8)*



## Salmon Witkin: A man on a Mission

*(Continued from page 7)*

The pogroms drove Witkin from his family and sent him on his quest. In point of fact, discrimination and violence had long been part of his family's history. Around 1000 AD his ancestors would have immigrated into Poland to escape persecution.<sup>11</sup> It had been hard for the Jews wherever they lived in Europe during the middle ages, but the borders of Poland opened and they came in significant numbers. In 1334, Casimir the Great gave the Jews protection of the law which allowed them freedom of movement and commerce throughout Poland.<sup>12</sup>

By the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century about five million Jews lived within the area of historic Poland. The great majority of them were descendants of the immigrants who came during the middle ages.<sup>13</sup>

They developed their own language (Yiddish), a form of German with borrowings from Hebrew and Slavic speech.<sup>14</sup> They develop unique customs, dress, and had strong imperatives against marrying outside the faith (endogamy). As a result they became a distinct community, often referred to as Ashkenazi Jews (literally "German Jews"). They developed over the centuries a unique gene pool that has given them a set of genetic diseases such as Tay-Sachs, Gaucher's and several forms of breast cancer. These diseases are up to 100 times more likely in Ashkenazi Jews than in other European populations. Also, their IQ is, on average, a notch above the average European, which could explain the many Nobel prizes, scientific achievements (think Albert Einstein), and their accomplishments in the arts.<sup>15</sup>

The end of the Polish Lithuanian Commonwealth began in 1772 when Russia, Prussia, and Austria decided among themselves to occupy part of the Commonwealth. This is known as the First Partition of Poland. There was a Second partition in 1793; in 1795, with the third partition, the nation of Poland ceased to exist. The Ashkenazi Jews now found themselves in new circumstances. Instead of a tolerable relationship with their national government, they were in an unfavorable situation all together. The Jews found their vocations limited, and their area of residence restricted to the geographical area called the Pale of Settlement, which Catherine the Great created from historic Poland in 1791 for prejudicial and nationalistic reasons.

In 1881, the pogroms intensified when Russian revolutionaries assassinated Czar Alexander II. In the confusion that followed, the Jews were blamed by the Russian government, and anti Jewish riots broke out throughout the Pale.<sup>16</sup> With this first wave of pogroms, the Jews began to emigrate from the Pale to the United States and various European nations. It was a second wave of pogroms that set Sam Witkin to thinking about leaving his family and Russia. They began in 1903 in Kishinev where 45 Jews were killed and hundreds wounded; in September 1903 a Pogrom broke out in Gomel, about 200 miles south of Vitebsk.<sup>17</sup> Witkin must have known it was time to leave, because by 1904 he is in London, England.<sup>18</sup>

*(Continued on page 9)*

***"In point of fact, discrimination and violence had long been part of his family's history. Around 1000 AD his ancestors would have immigrated into Poland to escape persecution."***



## Salmon Witkin: A man on a Mission

(Continued from page 8)

I have been unable to document Witkin's London stay. He undoubtedly lived in the East End in the Jewish ghetto. Within two years he immigrates to the United States. 1906 was a high water mark for Jewish immigration to the United States, including thousands of immigrants from the United Kingdom.<sup>19</sup> The ship's manifest of his entry into the United States, dated August 18, 1906, reports he was going to his cousin's home in New York City. Witkin gave an address on the Lower East Side of Manhattan, in the middle of the Jewish Ghetto. The manifest said he was a plumber.<sup>20</sup>

The next documentation I have is a letter of reference dated November 26, 1907, signed by a Master Mechanic of the Bethlehem Steel Company, South Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. It states that Witkin has been employed as a "machinist and engine tender" for the past six months, and recommends him "as an A No. 1 man."<sup>21</sup> This means that he remained in New York only a short period of time. Because of the thousands of Jews entering New York during the last two decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Jewish leaders of the country were concerned about the high density of unemployed Jews in New York City, and the social problems it was causing. As a result, a social agency called the Industrial Removal Office was established in February of 1901. Its goal was "to assist in making self-supporting those unemployed Jews of New York who were willing to go West or South."<sup>22</sup> Witkin as a healthy, literate, single man would have been a candidate for their assistance. Charles Schwab, who had established Bethlehem Steel Corporation in 1904, would have needed skilled workers. Was this how Witkin got to Pennsylvania? It is a possibility.



The next two documents in the research file are from the *Oelwein Register*; one is a news story describing the house fire that took Witkin's life on 4 January 1915; the second is a follow up story and his obituary notice.<sup>23</sup> The obituary states that he came to Oelwein seven years before his death (1908) and that he married "Miss Jeanette Ewing" in 1909.<sup>24</sup>

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## Salmon Witkin: A man on a Mission

(Continued from page 9)

How did Witkin get from South Bethlehem to Oelwein, Iowa, and meet Jeannette Ewing? My thesis is that while working for Bethlehem Steel, he learned that the Chicago Great Western Railroad Company was recruiting workers for its state of the art round house in Oelwein, Iowa.<sup>25</sup> That upon moving to Oelwein he lived in the Great Western Hotel along with other young, single men working for the railroad. The hotel was operated by Lillie J. Ewing, the mother of Jeannette Ewing.<sup>26</sup> While staying at the hotel, it is entirely logical that he met his future wife and they fell in love.

This comprises most of what I have pieced together about Sam. There are a few more facts scattered here and there to be captured and reflected upon, such as the information buried in his probate records on his medical bills, his charge accounts, and finances. For instance, observe in the nearby picture that daughter, Rachel, appears to have on new shoes. They were probably purchased on credit at J. H. Kerwin & Sons Clothier in the fall of 1914.<sup>27</sup>

Sam's Personality: Family tradition has it that "Sam was very quiet and withdrawn. At family gatherings he would often be apart from the rest of the family and did not participate in the festivities."<sup>28</sup> This would be consistent with my analysis of the man: in a very short period of time he left his parents and brother in Russia,<sup>29</sup> traveled around the world, left the comfort of his Jewish tradition, married outside the faith, and learned a new language. At family gatherings I can imagine the conflicted feelings he experienced, and the memories that tore into him. He is my kind of man: intelligent, honest, and hardworking,<sup>30</sup> a family man who paid his bills. He is responsible, competent, sensitive and respected. I wish I could have known him.

### ENDNOTES:

<sup>1</sup> Salmon Witkin entry; SS *New York Passenger List*, August 18, 1906, page 199, line 1.

URL: <http://www.ellisland.org/default.asp>. There is a broken link when trying to view the ship manifest and considerable searching is required to find it, but it is there. See also Samuel A. Witkin, 1910 U. S. Census, Fayette County, Iowa population schedule, Town of Jefferson, enumeration district 90, Supervisor's district 4, page 192, dwelling 69, family 69; National Archives micro publication T 624, roll 402 where his name has been anglicized to Samuel and the middle initial "A" is included.

<sup>2</sup> Sam Witkin, declaration of intent no. 48 (1911), Clerk of the District Court, Fayette County, West Union, Iowa.

<sup>3</sup> Sam Witkin, certificate of death no. 33-01055(1915), Iowa Department of Vital Statistics, Des Moines, Iowa.

<sup>4</sup> Milton Meltzer, *Taking Root: Jewish Immigrants in America* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1976), 20-24.

<sup>5</sup> Declaration of intention no. 48 (1911).

<sup>6</sup> Salmon Witkin, SS *New York Passenger List*, August 18, 1906.

<sup>7</sup> Letter of reference from Master Mechanic, Bethlehem Steel Company, South Bethlehem, PA To Whom It May Concern, November 26, 1907. A copy is in the author's possession.

<sup>8</sup> The original photograph is in the possession of Janice Linder Wearda, granddaughter of Witkin. The date of 1914 is based on children birthdates; the house address is from "Terrible Fire at Sam Witkin Home," undated clipping (1915) the *Oelwein Register*. A copy is in the author's possession.

<sup>9</sup> See the 1910 U. S. census, Fayette County, Town of Jefferson, Iowa population schedule, pages 150-224, and "Terrible Fire at Sam Witkin Home," newspaper clipping, *Oelwein Register*.

<sup>10</sup> A line by line search of the 1910 U. S. census, Fayette County, Town of Jefferson, pages 150-224, discovered just four or five European Jewish families living in the City.

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## Salmon Witkin: A man on a Mission

### ENDNOTES: *(Continued from page 10)*

<sup>11</sup> The Jews in the Pale of Settlement area of Poland, Lithuanian and Russia were mostly of German extraction. While there were some Jewish settlements in this geographical area prior to the eleventh century, the steady movement of Germanic Jews into the area after the eleventh century made them the dominate genetic group. See Charles S. Bernheimer, editor, *The Russian Jew in the United States: Studies of Social Condition in New York, and Chicago, with a Description of Rural Settlement* (Philadelphia: The John C. Winston Co., 1905), 19. See also Gregory Cochran and Henry Harpending, *The 10,000 Year Explosion: How Civilization Accelerated Human Evolution* (New York: Basic Books, 2009), 187-224.

<sup>12</sup> Leo Errera, *The Russian Jews: Extermination or Emancipation?* (London: David Nutt, 1894), 2.

<sup>13</sup> Paul Robert Magocsi and Geoffrey J. Matthews, *Historical Atlas of East Central Europe* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1993), 107.

<sup>14</sup> Magocsi and Matthews, 107.

<sup>15</sup> Cochran and Harpending, 188.

<sup>16</sup> "Pogroms," Jewish Virtual Library on line at URL: [http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud\\_0002\\_0016\\_0\\_15895.html](http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/jsource/judaica/ejud_0002_0016_0_15895.html).

<sup>17</sup> For a brief discussion of the Pogroms see the Jewish Virtual Library. For a more detailed discussion see John Klier and Shlomo Lambroza. *Pogroms: Anti-Jewish Violence in Modern Russian History*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

<sup>18</sup> Declaration of intention no. 48 (1911).

<sup>19</sup> Samuel Joseph, *Jewish Immigration to the United States, From 1881 to 1910* (New York: Columbia University, 1914), 115-116.

<sup>20</sup> Salmon Witkin, SS *New York Passenger List*, August 18, 1906.

<sup>21</sup> Letter of reference, Bethlehem Steel Company, November 26, 1907.

<sup>22</sup> Bernheimer, 368.

<sup>23</sup> "Samuel Witkin and His Tragic Death," *Oelwein Register*, Oelwein, Iowa, January 6, 1915.

<sup>24</sup> "Samuel Witkin and His Tragic Death," *Oelwein Register* reports that Sam and Jeannette were married in Chicago in 1909. A marriage record has not been found. One of Jeannette's daughters showed Janice Linder Wearda, a Witkin Granddaughter, a paper with the marriage date of January 12, 1909 in Jeannette's handwriting.

<sup>25</sup> From time to time the Chicago Great Western held schools for instructing young men for positions in railway work. See for example "Chicago Great Western's School for Railway Men," *Railway Age Gazette*, Volume 51, (October 6, 1911), 681 on line at Google Books at URL: [http://books.google.com/advanced\\_book\\_search](http://books.google.com/advanced_book_search).

<sup>26</sup> *Lillie J. Ewing, plaintiff vs. Joseph Ewing, defendant*, District Court, Fayette County, Iowa (1902). A copy of the case is in the author's possession.

<sup>27</sup> Samuel Witkin claimant, Fayette County probate file no. 1438 (1915), Fayette County Clerk's Office, West Union, Iowa.

<sup>28</sup> The personality trait is based on oral tradition received from Juanita Blake Hanken, daughter of Jeannette Ewing, passed on to the author by Janice Linder Wearda, Witkin's granddaughter.

<sup>29</sup> "Samuel Witkin and His Tragic Death," *Oelwein Register*, reports that he had parents and a brother living in Russia.

<sup>30</sup> "Samuel Witkin and His Tragic Death," *Oelwein Register* reports that Witkin was "a faithful and competent workman," and that "his associates and friends speak highly of him."



## Tombstone Inscriptions of the Belvidere, Cemetery (Part 1)

*By Martin W. Johnson and daughter Tara Ann Johnson  
Sam Larson and Sue Diamond Belvidere, Cemetery  
Transcribed by Arlene Outzen*

*Tara and I walked the Belvidere cemetery back in the 90's and decided to make a list of old tombstones with their information on them. We do not think we got all of them, but this is a result of the ones we did obtain.*

*Note: Since there were discrepancies between the cemetery records and the stones, we are going to include both. Also included any other pertinent information for each person. A few stones may be memorials only, and the person may not be actually buried in the Belvidere cemetery.*

Abbe, Charles E. – Born: November 27, 1831, in Dalton, Massachusetts, Died: December 24, 1884, Sarasota, Florida. Belvidere Cemetery Obituary indicates Died: December 27, 1884, Burial: December 29, 1884. Was not in Death Book.

Badger, John, Pvt., - Company A. 1<sup>st</sup> Reg. N.Y. Volunteers Marine Artillery, Died: November 21, 1893 Age: 57 years 5 months 29 days. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: November 23, 1893.

Baker, Catherine E. – (Wife of Capt. David L. Baker), Born: December 1810 in the City of London. Died: December 24, 1873. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: December 26, 1873, Husband's Name: Capt. David L. Baker.

Baker, David L. Capt. – Born: August 16, 1812 at Hale, Great Britton. Died: August 21, 1877 Eaton Rapids, Michigan. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Age: 65 years, Burial: August 26, 1877.

Baker, J. H. – Company C., 68<sup>th</sup> N.Y. Infantry. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Name: Joseph Harvey Baker, Born: March 29, 1842, Died: April 18, 1917, Burial: April 20, 1917.

Bancroft, Elizabeth A. – Died: June 8, 1894 in Columbus, Ohio. Age: 76 years. (Wife of Dr. N. Bancroft.) Belvidere cemetery records indicate Born: 1818, Burial: June 11, 1894, Husband's Name: Nathaniel.

Bauer, George W. – Born: 1881 Lamoille, Illinois. Died: 1935. Belvidere records indicate Born: January 18, 1881, Died: July 26. 1935, Age: 54: Burial: July 29, 1935.

Bauer, Johanna – (Wife of George W. Bauer) Born: 1871 Lamoille, Illinois. Died: 1947. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Born: March 9, 1871, Died: November 20, 1946, Burial: November 23, 1946, Age: 75, Nickname: Josie.

*(Continued on page 13)*

***I don't know  
who my grand-  
father was, I am  
much more con-  
cerned to know  
what his grand-  
son will be.***

*– Abraham Lincoln*

**Tombstone Inscriptions of the Belvidere, Cemetery (Part 1)**

*(Continued from page 12)*

Beecher, Martha (Foote) – (Wife of Rev. J.S. Beecher), Missionary Tobermah ?. Died: May 3, 1854 on the Ocean. Age: 34. Hiram and Mary Y. Foote's Daughter. Belvidere cemetery records indicate not here.

Cadwell, Catherine (Fish) – Born: December 5, 1821 Boston Massachusetts. Died: March 5, 1884. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Died: March 5, 1884, Burial: November 6, 1925. Catherine was moved from Sterling, Illinois.

Cadwell, W. H. – Born: December 28, 1826 Hartford, Connecticut. Died: January 19, 1892. Belvidere cemetery records indicate, Reburied: November 4, 1925. Moved from Sterling, Illinois to Belvidere cemetery. Name was William H. Cadwell.

Conger, Elizabeth M. – (John Conger's wife), Born: January 11, 1804, Westerloo, Albany Co., N.Y. Died: Age: 87-8-8. Belvidere Cemetery indicates Died: September 16, 1891, Burial: September 18, 1891

Conger, John – Born: August 25, 1806, Westerloo, Albany Co., N.Y., Age: 67-7. The Belvidere cemetery records indicates Born: August 26, 1806, Died: March 26, 1874, Age: 69 years, Burial: March 28, 1874.

Doolittle, Loyal – Died: December 5, 1883 Rochester, N.Y – Age: 78 yrs. 8 days. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Buried: December 10, 1883.

Downs, George.W. – Died: July 21, 1892 – Age: 74 Yrs-3 months 14 days. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Born: April 6, 1818, Burial: July 23, 1892. Military records show Civil War veteran in Co. G, 95<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry.

Downs, Marana – (1<sup>st</sup> wife of G.W. Downs) Died: February 10, 1854 – Age: 37 yrs-4 mo.-12 days. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: February 11, 1854.

Downs, Mercy – (2<sup>nd</sup> wife of G.W. Downs), Died: September 29, 1897, Age: 68 yr 6. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Born: 1829, Died: September 30, 1897, Burial: October 2, 1897, Maiden name: Caswell.

Gibson, Charles B. Dr., – Born: 1854, in Massena, N.Y. Died: 1947 Sullivan, Illinois. Belvidere Cemetery indicates Born: 1855, Died: April 21, 1947, Burial: April 25, 1947.

Gilman, Henry Lyman – Son of W.H. Gilman, Age: 4 days?, Buried in Richmond Co., Canada East. Belvidere cemetery records indicate No name listed but have infant son Born: February 24, 1870, Burial: February 24, 1870, son of Wm. H. Jr. and Sarah.

Gilman, Juliet (Walker) – Born: April 15, 1808, Peacham Co., Vermont. Died: Dec. 24, 1895. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: December 26, 1895.

Gilman, Louisa – Found this baby in paper, which is probably sister to above, Born: February 23, 1870, Died: March 1, 1870.

*(Continued on page 14)*

## Tombstone Inscriptions of the Belvidere, Cemetery (Part 1)

*(Continued from page 13)*

Gilman, Wm Holt – Born: February 4, 1807 in Bristol N.H. Died: October 7, 1877 in Belvidere. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: October 9, 1877.

Greenlee, Charles – Born: April 1, 1830 in Scotland. Died: February 8, 1895. Belvidere records indicate Died: February 9, 1895, Burial: February 11, 1895.

Hagan/Hagen, Wm. – Co. H. 4th N.Y. Cavalry. Belvidere cemetery records indicate not here. Belvidere Daily Republican paper had Born: May 23, 1844 Demmin or Demmier, Germany, Died: December 24, 1930.

Handy, Polly M. – (Wife of Rev. John Handy of Fredonia, N.Y), Died: May 5, 1862. Belvidere cemetery records indicate, Age: 88, Burial: May 7, 1862.

Hawley, Edward – Married Harriet Spicer December 14, 1826 at W. Arlington, Vermont. Born: at W. Arlington, Vermont. Died: September 16, 1887. Belvidere cemetery records indicate not in book.

Hawley, Harriet (Spicer) Died: November 5, 1854. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Age: 48, Burial: November 7, 1854.

Hildrup, Jesse, Sr., - Born: March 10, 1789, Died: August 30, 1865. Says a soldier of the war of 1812 on stone.

Ingalls, Clara C. – Born: December 26, 1870 in Belvidere. Belvidere cemetery records indicate not here.

Ingalls, Cyrus – Born: September 6, 1802 in Denmark, ME. Died: April 21, 1871. Belvidere cemetery records indicate no death date, Burial: April 21, 1872

Ingalls, Gertrude – Born: September 15, 1880 in Belvidere. Belvidere cemetery records indicate not here.

Ingalls, Nancy (Smith), - (wife of Oren B. Ingalls) Born: 1819, Died: October 16, 1892. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: November 18, 1892.

Ingalls, Oren B. – Born: November 26, 1810 in Denmark, ME. Died: April 10, 1889. Belvidere cemetery records indicate Burial: April 11, 1889, Age: 79.

Ingalls, Rufus, General – Born: August 23, 1818 in Denmark, ME. Belvidere cemetery records indicate no General Ingalls. Internet: August 23 1818, Born: Denmark, Oxford Co., Maine, died Jan. 15, 1893 in New York City, Burial: Arlington National Cemetery.

Ingalls, Rufus II – Born: June 11, 1845, Denmark, ME. Died: April 7, 1889. Belvidere cemetery records indicate a Rufus Ingalls Born: 1847, Burial: April 9, 1889. He was moved to Spencer, Iowa in 1934. (Rufus' wife Emily Dunwell).

**December Program Notes****Tombstone Symbols—Voices From the Past***(Continued from page 5)*

***I used to think that I was looking for other people, someone from the past. Now I realize that through all of the searching for others, what I found was myself.***

— David Rencher

Early tombstones took a doom and gloom approach with engraving of death symbols and blunt words such as “Here Lies the Body of...”. As time passed the writing became softer (Sacred to the Memory). Willow trees (sorrow) and urns (mortality) replaced skulls. An hourglass represents the passage of time. If the hourglass is on its side it means time has run out. Doves are Messengers of God while grapes stand for the Blood of Christ. Lambs are often found on the graves stones of children conveying innocence. Closed flowers on a young child’s tombstone means a life cut short (not bloomed). Open flowers show a person reached adulthood.

Stones were not always erected at the time of death. You could find the names of two or more children on the same grave marker with different death dates. Families sometimes placed tombstones on the family plot for fathers and sons who were buried at sea or on a battlefield in time of war.

What began as a Jewish custom is the placing of stones on the top of a tombstone. It signifies remembrance. This person has not been forgotten by family and friends.

An anchor (strength of God) or thistles (earthly sorrow) are often found on tombstones of someone who was from Scotland. Celtic crosses or rosaries are Irish symbols.

Among the nature symbols and their meanings commonly found on tombstones are shells (a journey), Morning Glory (resurrection), acorn (life reborn), oak tree (strength) and a palm tree (triumph over death).

Symbols can represent the person’s occupation, military service or membership in an organization such as the Odd Fellows or Masons.

Cemeteries are more than holes in the ground. The genealogy of tombstones tells a lot of a family’s history. When visiting a cemetery, take your children or grandchildren along. Teach them there is nothing to fear in a cemetery. Take your time and discover what the tombstones say about, not only about the lives of your ancestors but also of the lives of those buried nearby.

**Serious Genealogy** is when a magical genie appears and agrees to grant your any one wish, and you ask that the 1890 census be restored.

-----from the *Milwaukee County Genealogical Society **REPORTER**, Vol 40, No. 3, August 2009*-----

### Rockford Library New Acquisitions for the Local History Room July through October 2009

by Jean Lythgoe, Librarian / Setup by: Arlene Outzen

The following is a list of new books available at the Rockford Public Library, Genealogy Department, at 215 N. Wyman St, Rockford, Illinois.

Title	Author	Year	Location
Ancestor Charts Of The Belmont County Chapter, Ohio Belmont County Chapter Genealogical Society. Vol. II	Ohio Genealogical Society	2000	R 929.377193 A 538h v.2
Belmont County Oh Marriages [1803...1917]		1995	R 929.377193 C663b v.1-4, v.6
Cemeteries Of Guernsey County, Ohio		1983	R 929.5 O375 G933 v.19
Cemetery Records: Mount Wood, Ohio County, W V	Wayne, Audra	1976	R 929.5 W516 O373
Diamond Jubilee, Seventh-Fifth Anniversary...Nov. 7 1924	Second Congregational Church (Rockford, IL)	1924	R 285.834 S445d
Diary Of Matilda (Myrtie) Mack And Carolyn Mack	Mack, Matilda	2009?	R 977.331 M153d
Early Families & Businesses On Cedar Street,: Rockford, IL		2009	R 977.331 B571e
Female Index To Genealogical Dictionary Of The First Settlers Of New England	James Savage, Comp. Patty	2008	R 929 S264f
Footsteps Of Our Founding Fathers...Black Hawk War		1964	R 973.56 F689
Genealogy Of The David Smith Shumway Family	Bevens, Marge	2009	R 929.2 S562 B571
George Soule Of The Mayflower, Part 5	Soule, John E	2008	R 929.2 S722 S722 2000-05
Historical Record And Manual Of The Second Congregational Church (Rockford, IL) Church: Rockford, Illinois, Nov. 7, 1849, Nov. 7, 1899	Second Congregational	1900	R 285.834 S445h
If I Can, You Can Decipher Germanic Records	Mbentz, Edna M.	1999	R 431.1 B478 1999
Land Atlas & Plat Book, Winnebago County		2006	R 912.77331 R682Lp 2006
Londonderry Township Cemeteries And Other Historical Data Guernsey County, Ohio	Morton, Alice H	1992	R 929.5 P375 G933
Mayflower Families Through Five Generations		2009	R 929.209 M468 v.11 pt.1 2009
McHenry County Illinois Cemeteries, V. 3		1997	R929.5 I295 M149 v.3
Neither White Men Nor Indians	Waggoner, Linda M.	2002	R 977.5 N417
Ohio County, (West) Virginia Death Records, 1853-1864 V.1	Audra Rickey	1998	R 929.375415 W359o Wayne
Ohio County (WV) Index	Craft, Kenneth Fischer	1997, 2007	R 929.3754 C885o v.1
Passenger And Immigrant Lists Index. Supplement		2009	R 929.373 P287 Supp. 2010
Ralph Chaney's Narrative	Chaney, Ralph	2009	R 977.332 R456r
Scots-Irish Links, 1575-1725 v.7	Dobson, David	2008	R 929.341 D635s v.7
Standard Songs And Hymns For The Use Of The Teachers And School Children Of Winnebago County, Ill.		19 <sup>th</sup> -20 <sup>th</sup> century	R 784.4 S785
Stay Young To 100	Hackin, Charlotte	2009	R 612.68

(Continued on page 17)





### Rockford Library New Acquisitions for the Local History Room July through October 2009

(Continued from page 16)



Title	Author	Year	Location
The Great Migration: Immigrants To New England	Anderson, Robert Charles	2001-2007	R 929.374 A549g v.2-5
The History Of OSF Saint Anthony Medical Center	Gustafson, Gerrie	1999	R 362.11 H673g
The History Of The City Of Rutland, Vermont; Excerpts From History of Rutland County, Vermont		200-?	R 974.3 E961
The History of the Rutland County, Vermont: Compiled from Early Historical Writings		200-?	R 974.3 H673
The Pilgrim Migration; Immigrants To Plymouth Colony 1620-1633	Anderson, Robert Charles	2004	R 974.48202 A549p
Tombstone Inscriptions & Family Records Of Belmont County, Ohio	Powell, Esther Weygandt	2000	R 929.5 O375 B45
Tracing Immigrant Origins: Research Outline		1992	R 929.1072 T759

**So often we rob tomorrow's memories by today's economies.**

— John Mason Brown

## Honor Your Ancestor with an Early Pioneer Certificate

Any direct descendant of an early pioneer who settled in the **Illinois counties of Winnebago or Boone** before 1880 may apply for the Society's Early Pioneer Certificate.

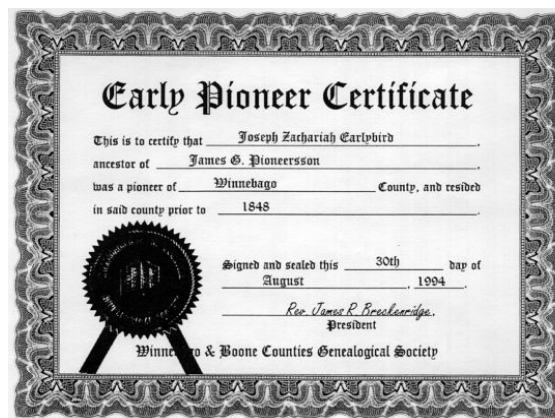
Certificates are awarded in two categories:

1. The pioneer settled in Winnebago or Boone County before **1850**, with the certificate bearing a gold seal with a blue ribbon.
2. The pioneer settled in Winnebago or Boone County before **1880**, with the certificate bearing a gold seal.

To qualify for an Early Pioneer Certificate, documented evidence must be furnished to confirm the lineage from the pioneer ancestor to the applicant. This evidence could be birth, marriage and death certificates, land records, census records, mentions in city, county, and

state histories, etc. The cost is \$10.00 per certificate.

To receive the application for an Early Pioneer Certificate, send your request with a self-addressed stamped envelope to Sharon Carter Thomasson, WBCGS Early Pioneer Chairman, 7617 Eastmont Avenue, Loves Park, IL 61111.



## Publications Available

Winnebago and Boone Counties Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 10166, Loves Park, Illinois 61131-0166



Title	Cost	Postage and Handling	Total
Combine 1871-1892-1905 Atlases of Winnebago County, IL and 1886 Atlas of Boone and Winnebago Counties, IL	\$20.00	\$5.00	\$25.00
1840 Federal Census, Winnebago County, IL, Transcribed and indexed by Ernest H. Jackson	\$3.00	\$1.50	\$4.50
1860 Federal Census, Winnebago County, IL, Transcribed and indexed by Ernest H. Jackson	\$5.00	\$3.50	\$8.50
Pecatonica Burial Permits, 1916-1959, transcribed by Arlene Outzen	\$8.00	\$1.50	\$9.50
Prairie Farmer's Reliable Directory of Farmers and Breeders, Winnebago County, IL, 1917 — Reprint	\$5.00	\$2.75	\$7.75
Winnebago County, IL Cemetery Inscriptions, compiled by Hazel M. Hyde & Taylor Decker, Vol. 1 contains inscriptions from Cherry Valley, Dodge, New Milford & Powell Cemeteries	\$6.00	\$1.50	\$7.50
Winnebago County, IL Cemetery Inscriptions, compiled by Hazel M. Hyde & Taylor Decker, Vol. 3 contains Pecatonica Cemetery	\$6.00	\$1.50	\$7.50

### Hung Up on the Tree

They think that I should cook and clean,  
and be a model wife.  
I tell them it's more interesting  
to study Grandpa's life.

They simply do not understand  
why I hate to go to bed....  
I'd rather do two hundred years  
of research work instead.

Why waste the time we have on earth  
just snoring and asleep?  
When we can learn of ancestors  
that sailed upon the deep?

We have Priests, Rabbis, lawmen,  
soldiers,  
more than just a few.  
And yes, there's many scoundrels,  
and a bootlegger or two.

How can a person find this life  
an awful drudge or bore?  
When we can live the lives of all  
those folks who came before?

A hundred years from now of course,  
no one will ever know  
whether I did laundry,  
but they'll see our Tree and glow...

Cause their dear old granny left for  
them,  
for all posterity,  
not clean hankies and the like,  
but a finished family tree.

My home may be untidy,  
cause I've better things to do....  
I'm checking all the records  
to provide us with a clue.

Old great granny's pulling roots  
and branches out with glee.  
Her clothes ain't hanging out to dry,  
She's hung up on the Tree.

— Unknown

**WINNEBAGO & BOONE COUNTIES GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

P.O. Box 10166

Loves Park, Illinois 61131-0166

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Membership Application****January 1, 2010 to December 31, 2010***(Your newsletter address label shows your current paid membership year.)*

\_\_\_\_\_ New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal

		<i>Amount enclosed</i>
DUES	_____ Individual: \$12.00	\$ _____
<i>(Please check)</i>	_____ Family: \$12.00 plus \$2 per additional person at same address	\$ _____
	_____ Charter (joined before Dec. 31, 1986): \$11.00	\$ _____
	_____ Life: \$120.00	\$ _____
	_____ Tax-deductible contribution (in excess of selected membership category, for funding special projects)	\$ _____
<b>Total amount enclosed</b>		<b>\$ _____</b>

Please make checks or money orders payable to: Winnebago & Boone Counties Genealogical Society (WBCGS). New members, please complete and return the entire page. Renewing members only need to indicate if changes (address, phone, e-mail, etc.) have occurred.

Membership year is January 1 to December 31. New members joining at or after the September meeting shall have their dues applied to the following year.

***Please show name and title(s) as you wish to be recorded (e.g. Mr., Mrs. Miss, Ms., Dr., Rev.):***

Title(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_

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Would you like to help with one of our special projects or serve on one of our committees? \_\_\_\_\_

***We do not sell our mailing list. We recognize new members in the next newsletter, so please advise if you wish certain information excluded.***



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# Winnebago & Boone Counties Genealogical Society (WBCGS)

January/February 2010

*Now's the Time to ....*

*Volume 25, Number 1*

**Renew your WBCGS membership** for 2010 (please fill in application on page 19)

**Visited the Society website lately?**

Find valuable links to local, regional, and national sites!  
Stay up to date on future meetings, events, and projects!

[www.rootsweb.com/~ilwbcgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~ilwbcgs)

