



# Newsletter of the St. Clair County Genealogical Society

April 2021

Helping Genealogists Discover Their Illinois Roots Since 1977

## President's Message *by Diane Walsh*



Sometimes the inevitable happens. Sometimes we are forced to *punt*. And sometimes all we have to do is ask.

Just a few days before the March 4th meeting our scheduled speaker regrettably canceled.

Rather than *punt* with a question-and-answer program, a call was made to member Kris Wade who recently volunteered to coordinate the index of births before 1916. You see, during that conversation, Kris mentioned the good luck she had finding probate records at the library, a resource touted at another SCCGS lecture a couple months ago. Within a few hours Kris and her husband Greg agreed to share documents and information that furthered their family research, even though *just a member*.

By the time this Newsletter reaches you their presentation will be available on the member website. Please take a look and join me in saying thank you to Kris and Greg for stepping up, sharing your experience with us, and being *just a member*.

We invite each of you to consider sharing a set of documents on your ancestor and the steps you took to find them. Our Zoom team is willing to walk you through the easy steps to sharing that information. Please email SCCGS, attention Jerome Oelrich, or contact him by phone at (256) 656-9917. We can all learn from your experience.

## A Note From The Editor *by Terry Klingemann*



With the warmer weather of Spring, that only means one thing for me — cemetery hopping!

During the cold and snow of winter is my time for organizing my family records. I have an easy system for tracking cemetery research using an Excel spreadsheet file for all of my cemetery records. Creating a sheet for each cemetery, I populate the appropriate cemetery sheet within Excel while entering my ancestor's data in my family tree database. When it is time to cemetery hop in the warmer weather, the Excel sheets are printed and ready to assist me.

Tracking my ancestral cemeteries using lists makes my research a little easier for me and usually more productive. I can take the list to the cemetery office (if there is one) and document the specific location of my ancestors and family members. After locating and photographing the grave marker, I can write notes about any information found or that may be missing. Next, I check it off the Excel sheet with a feeling of job well done.

This system has worked for me, I just add new names onto the lists making them readily available when cemetery-hopping time begins.

Everybody has their own way of tracking and searching. I would really like to hear how YOU do it.

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## Upcoming Speakers At Monthly Meeting

Monthly meetings are now presented via the Zoom app and scheduled by the 1st Vice President. Topics focus on St. Clair County, its records, and general research tools and techniques. Please email your ideas for monthly meeting presentations including contact information to [sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org](mailto:sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org), attention Jerome at (256) 656-9917.

Please check the SCCGS website or our Facebook page for last-minute updates and Zoom links!

<https://www.facebook.com/SCCGS/>

### April 1, 2021 - Membership Data Within the Masonic Records of St. Clair Lodge No. 24, Belleville, Illinois

William "Bill" Tasso began his involvement with Freemasonry in 2016 when he became a Mason and member of St. Clair Lodge No. 24 (Belleville). An active interest in the lodge's early history led to his appointment as the Lodge Historian. Recently elected as Worshipful Master for 2021, Mr. Tasso has held several officer positions and continues as Secretary for the Belleville Masonic Temple Association, which operates and maintains the Masonic building in Belleville.

Born and raised in a small town on New York's Long Island, Mr. Tasso served for 23 years in the United States Air Force as a meteorologist, an airlift mission planner, and an Executive Officer. Following retirement in 2006, Bill and his family settled in Shiloh, Illinois, where he is employed by Sumaria Systems as the Senior Information Technology Compliance Analyst working on contract for the United States Transportation Command's Communications Directorate at Scott AFB.

Link for Registration: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlrc-6sqzosEtYrX5vbqD0Pgym2OpEVTzvg>

## Query

Kathrine HAUCK (my ancestor) married Carl Hauswirth in 1861, St. Clair County, had several children and died 13 Aug 1873. Carl "Charles" married his second wife, Catherine HALL, in 1874 and had children. I have his will and 1904 burial in Mascoutah City Cemetery. Where is the first wife buried, and who were her parents?

Marilyn E. Troyer  
4020 Vernon Ave  
Brookfield, IL 60513  
[marilynellen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:marilynellen@sbcglobal.net)



### **Belleville Public Library and Archivist:**

121 East Washington St  
Belleville, IL 62220  
(618) 234-0441

Archivist/Reference Supervisor: Anna Kimball  
Requests: [archives@bellevillepubliclibrary.org](mailto:archives@bellevillepubliclibrary.org)

## About SCCGS

### 1. *SCCGS Board Meetings*

The Board meets at 7:00 p.m. at St. Luke Community House six times per year.

### 2. *SCCGS Officers and Chairmen*

President: Diane Walsh

1st Vice President: Jerome Oelrich

2nd Vice President: Paul Muskopf

Secretary: Johanna Smith

Treasurer: Susan Bohm

Parliamentarian: Samantha Bailey

Education Chairman: Carol Dawson

Cemetery Chairman: Vacant

Publicity Chairman: Janice Carlson

Membership Chairman: Liz Brown

Quarterly Editor: Gloria Williams

Newsletter Editor: Terry Klingemann

### 3. *Newsletter Deadlines*

The last Friday of each month is the deadline for next month. For best results, copy-and-paste your info into an e-mail, and send to the editor at the e-mail address below.

### 4. *General Membership Information*

Purpose: SCCGS was organized in 1977 with the following purposes in mind:

- ◆ to preserve and perpetuate ancestral records for educational and historical purposes;
- ◆ to encourage the study of family history and to teach methods of genealogical research;
- ◆ to promote genealogical publications; and
- ◆ to publish and circulate literature relative to the purposes and acquisitions of the Society.

● Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. (all meetings are virtual using Zoom, a web-based video conferencing tool) with feature programs of genealogical interest that are free and open to the public. Guests are always welcome.

● Quarterly: Four issues per year, indexed.

● Newsletter: Ten issues per year, with free queries for members.

● Publications: A complete list of our publications is available on our website: <https://stclair-ilgs.org>.

● Acquisitions: Housed at the Belleville Public Library for use by Society members and the general public. Recent additions are published in the Quarterly as a service to members.

### **Have a Question?**

Please send your e-mails to:

**[sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org](mailto:sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org)**

Please type in the Subject Line:

**Attn: (Name of the Committee)**

## Membership Report *by Liz Brown*

For a complete list of surnames our current members are researching, please visit the following webpage <https://stclair-ilgs.org/collaborate/>.



### New Members

SEALE, Joyce

### Reinstated Members

SCHMITZ, Ralph

### Life Members

Nothing to Report

### Change of Address

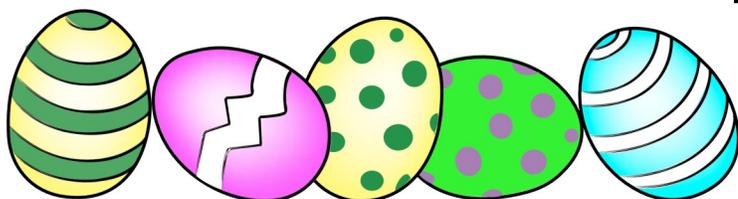
Nothing to Report

### Renewing Members

ARCHAMBAULT, (Florence Wilderman); BELLEVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY; GALE, (Ruth); GENTRY, (Sondra L.); HAYES, (Amber); MANNZ, (Gloria L.); PETTON, (Janet L.); QUINTERO, (Kimberly); TROYER, (Marilyn E.); VOGEL, (Cynthia)

### Membership Totals 2021

	JAN	CHANGE	FEB
Renew 2021	199	11	210
New	15	1	16
Life	51	0	51
Honorary	1	0	1
Ex & Dn	21	0	21
<b>Totals 2021</b>	<b>287</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>299</b>



## Why Do Genealogists Need Standards?

*by Sharon Blaine*

Using genealogy standards helps family researchers minimize mistakes. We use the rule of three to help gather accurate information, yet we find we have multiple name spellings and often conflicting dates. These conflicts even occur on documents, like death certificates and family bibles. These sources which we trust to be accurate often are not.

What to do?

I document everything, every source, and every contradiction. By establishing best practices, documenting not only where I received my information but also when, I can retrace my steps and leave a trail for those who come behind me. Producing an accurate family tree takes patience and an understanding of the paper trail left behind by our ancestors. Sometimes indirect evidence will help prove a relationship and give a bit of interest to the names and dates. Newspapers often will have a reference to a nickname or a visit from a friend. I include these references to my ancestor's story, keeping in mind the report is only as accurate as the reporter. Even church records are known to have errors.

My notes help me the next time I am tracking down a relative. I keep a skeptic's eye on all information, asking myself questions as I go about my research. My practice is always evolving. As I hone my skills not only is digging into the past fun but exciting! When I find an answer to one of my questions I exclaim, "Aha!" And I document that aha moment and keep searching until I am sure I have exhausted all trails, for now.

Following the standards helps family historians "research thoroughly, document properly, analyze and correlate evidence, resolve conflicts and write clear and convincing genealogical works," as noted in the website at <https://bcgcertification.org/> for The Board for Certification of Genealogists.

The Standards also help make every genealogy adventure a best practice.

My bookshelf now includes *Genealogy Standards*, Second Edition, from the Board for Certification of Genealogists, edited by Thomas W. Jones, and released in 2019. It is a small reference book that gives me guidance.



## Where is the Marriage? *by Mary W. Parker*

Are you searching for an ancestral marriage in St. Clair county or the surrounding areas in Illinois and simply not finding it? Then you should try across the river, the Mississippi that is. You may think it highly unlikely that you will locate anything there. I did too. But I was wrong. It turns out that my St. Clair county ancestors were human, and as today, young people did not always follow the customs and attitudes that we so readily attribute to our ancestors. Sometimes they wanted to marry secretly. Sometimes they wanted to marry quickly. Yes, sometimes they did!

You should try the St. Louis City Recorder of Deeds website at <http://www.stlouiscityrecorder.org/> where you will find an icon labeled *Archives* with a picture of an old record book. Click and you will find information about the St. Louis City Recorder of Deeds archives section. Scroll about two-thirds of the way down and click on *Free Marriage Search* to use their online index. At the time of this writing, 18 Feb 2021, indexing is presently available for years 1881-1892 and 1949-1987. As indexing is completed, additional years will be made available. Oddly enough, when I performed a search on my Neff ancestral name, three marriages from the unexpected year of 1777 were listed below the expected 1882 - 1973 entries. My great-great grandparents Neff and Roth, whose marriage record of 1840 is held in these archives were not listed. I give you the facts, and I have no expla-

nation for the anomaly. If you are interested in years more current than 1987, then click on *Marriages* rather than *Archives* and follow the trail to the search. I did this for my Neff ancestral name and found marriages as recent as 2019 and 2020. However, the three 1777 entries were interspersed indiscriminately among the otherwise chronological list of entries. My advice is give it a whirl. What is there to lose?

Many years ago, when I was searching for the marriage of my maternal Cortner and Etling grandparents, I nearly lost hope. But finally I found it. I know now they were in a hurry and they were being secretive. My lesson learned is if you do not find what you are looking for in the City of St. Louis, then try the County records in Clayton, Missouri. Marriage licenses are available from 1877 to present. Researching their archives will likely require a personal visit, as did my search, but contact them prior to a visit. Their contact information is Recorder of Deeds, 41 South Central Ave, Clayton, MO 63105, (314) 615-5000.

As always, for St. Louis and Missouri genealogy information the best resources are the St. Louis Genealogical Society (StLGS) and the History and Genealogy department of the St. Louis County Library Headquarters where the StLGS houses their research library. Go to [Library - St. Louis Genealogical Society \(stlgs.org\)](http://Library - St. Louis Genealogical Society (stlgs.org)) for detailed contact information. I believe you will find them helpful.

### ***Returned Mail Policy***

Members shall reimburse the Society for postage it paid for returned regular publications that are to be re-mailed plus the cost of re-mailing.

Newsletters will not be re-mailed since these are on the member website. The Quarterly will be held for one month and then returned to the general circulation.

### **Member Website News**

Virtual presentations are now on the Member website up to four (4) months after the program debuted. To locate these, log in the member site, scroll down the right margin to the Classroom topic and click Virtual Presentations. Thank you, Zoom team, for all your efforts.

### **Quote of the Month**

#### **Days Gone By**

The special book upon the shelf,  
Was made with many hands.  
Our ancestors who posed back then,  
All came from different lands.  
Their pictures were all tucked away,  
And rarely did we see,  
The importance of these treasures-  
The start of you and me.  
The history of our families,  
Now here in black and white.  
Preserved with special care and time,  
Each page is done just right.  
When time permits, we take it down,  
And think of days long past.  
Our hopes, our dreams, our heritage,  
All safe and made to last.

*-Author Unknown*

## Don't Get Obsessed with One Ancestor! *by James Tanner*

The reality is that you have thousands upon thousands of ancestors and millions of relatives. Too often, I am approached for help in finding one ancestor's parents. Also too often, I hear the same story about the years spent in researching that one person. I am also guilty of spending an inordinate amount of time researching one ancestral line and focusing on one ancestor. But during the past few years, I have learned that finding that elusive "brick wall" ancestor is often an unrealistic goal. Let me give an example of what I mean.

Let's call my ancestor "Mr. X." He was born in the late 1600s but we do not know where he was born. We also do not have either a birth or death date or even a marriage date. We have only the given name of his wife and we do not know where she was born either. We do know his name. On its face, we do not know enough to find this person even if records existed that might help us find him. By the way, he has a common name shared by multiple men living in the same community and during the same time period.

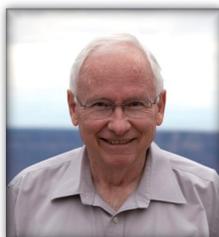
You might think this example extreme but this is essentially what I frequently hear from those seeking my help and in fact, they usually do not know the name of the elusive parent.

What else do I find when I begin to help these people? Almost always, there are family members who are known, such as children, for whom no research has been done. I saw one example about a week ago, where the parents were uncertain but the known end-of-line couple had about ten children listed and only two of them showed any sources supporting their identity in the family.

This is family history, not an individual biography effort. We search for families as units. If you move on to another generation back in any family line before you have researched every member of the family, you are building on sand and not even wet sand.

Here is what I suggest. Take a step back. Look at your research goals realistically. Start with an inventory of your known family lines. Make sure each generation is substantially supported by valid, believable sources from credible records. Make sure every family member is identified and substantiated. You might end up discovering you were never related to the elusive ancestor after all but even if you are related, you might find that it is more productive to focus on a different family line. You may even start to do some descendency research.

I spent about 15 years or more looking for the birthplace of one great-great-grandfather and finally found the location only to further discover that there were no available records and if there are, I would have to travel to another country to try to find the records. Genealogy is not a competitive sport. We do not get ribbons or trophies for finding the elusive ancestor but we do have a better chance of finding him or her if we spend the time to fill in all the blanks before we tackle the difficult elusive ancestor.



*This article was published on the Genealogy's Star Facebook page on January 21, 2021. It is republished in the SCCGS Newsletter by permission from James Tanner at Genealogy's Star. James Tanner is a member of the FamilySearch Research Wiki Support Team and is a Moderator for Arizona and Utah. An Arizona trial attorney for 38 years, he has also owned an Apple Computer dealership. He volunteers at the Mesa FamilySearch Library. Selected by Family Tree Magazine as a Top-Forty Blogger for his blog, "Genealogy's Star," he was also a Blogger at RootsTech 2011, 2012, and 2013. He also writes for the FamilySearch Blog. He has been a partner in Tanner Digital Graphics, a graphics design business for 25 years. He owns PhotoArizona360, a photography company. He has over 30 years of genealogy experience. He has personally digitized tens of thousands of documents.*

### Your Next Step: Write Your Family History

Virtual Event hosted by the Arlington Heights Memorial Library

Sunday, April 18, 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. CST on Zoom.

Writing your family history doesn't need to be intimidating or tedious! Steve Szabados, an author of many genealogy books, will walk you through the process of writing out your genealogy research to share with future generations.

You must register to participate in this live, online event. You will receive a link to participate by email. No library card required.

Register here:

<https://www.ahml.info/scheduling/reservation/63556>



# St. Clair County Genealogical Society

[www.stclair-ilgs.org](http://www.stclair-ilgs.org)

Helping Genealogist Discover Their Illinois Roots Since 1977

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Like Us! [www.facebook.com/sccgs](http://www.facebook.com/sccgs)

Address Service Requested

## SCCGS Monthly Meetings

Meetings are held on the 1st Thursday of the month at 7:00 p.m., and all meetings are virtual using Zoom, a web-based video conferencing tool. See the Upcoming Speakers column in this newsletter to register.

We're always looking for good speakers on genealogical topics. Let Jerome know if you can recommend any speakers who would be interested, or if you can speak on a topic of interest to our Society. Thanks!

For more information, please contact:

Jerome Oelrich, ([sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org](mailto:sccgsoffice@stclair-ilgs.org) Subject Line: 1st Vice President).

## SCCGS Board Meeting

The St. Clair County Genealogical Society will be holding their next Board meeting on May 19, 2021 at 7:00 p.m. The meeting will be held by teleconference.

Perhaps you are considering the possibility of volunteerism with the SCCGS. In addition to attending regular monthly meetings, another way to become more familiar with the Society and its important work is to attend a board meeting to see how the SCCGS operates behind the scenes. While members who attend are not allowed to cast votes on issues, the board welcomes members to voice their opinions on topics of discussion.

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