

WHITEWATER VALLEY GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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COMING EVENTS

Meetings: April 17 - program possibly by Julie Schlesselman of Franklin Co.

May 15

June 19 – election of officers. DUES ARE DUE

Please note: Due to construction at the library we cannot meet there for our meetings. We are presently meeting at Trinity Episcopal Parish House at 6th 7 Eastern behind Church.

April 27-28 Indiana Genealogical Society Annual Meeting and Conference at the Allen County Public Library, Fort Wayne, In.

May 16-19 – National Genealogical Society (NGS) Americas 400th Anniversary at Jamestown, Virginia. See www.ngsgenealogy.org for details and registration form.

August 15-18 – Federation of Genealogical Society (FGS) at Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, In. See www.fgs.org for details and registration form.

Both of the above offer single day registrations and early bird registrations.

WELCOME

Welcome to new members – Dr. Rosalind Webb of Zionsville and Laura Smith of Richmond

NEW ADDRESS

WVGA now has their own post office box.
Mail can be sent to P. O. Box 941,
Connersville, In 47331-0941

SEARCHING

Here are a few of the names our members are searching for:

Bob and Nancy Price – Price, Hall, Askren, Talmadge, Bebout, Lewis, Sherwood, Morford,

Stone, Riggs, Quayle, Sylvester, Chowning, Michener, Mount, Fluke, McGrew, Warne

Lyn Adams – Brinkley, Selby, Simpson

Hope Grissel – Grizzel, Grezzell, Grizzle, Brown, Lovelace, Oliver, Hall, Evans

Ron Wood (someday) Wood, Harvy

Barbara Craig – Brown, Bateman, Brumfield

Eva Miller – Winchell, Brattain

OD & JoAnn Thurman – Grizzel, Grizzell, Thurman, Corn, Jones

Karen Creamer – (Fayette Co) Creamer, McFall, Callaway, Snyder, Mabee/Maybee, Heck, Hood. (Wayne/Henry Co) Condo, Wissler, Klingman, Dickover, Fulton. (Franklin Co) Lewis, Barber, Jackman, Sehi, Personette, Morgan.

Ivory Steinard – Friend, Hine/Hines, Farrell, Swallow, Parrish, Neace, Norris, Allen, Hood, Stephens, Montgomery, Oney, Jones, McDaniel

Everett & Helen McCauley – McCauley, Dye, Smiley, Swishers, Wilsons, Albright, Hartgrove, Acree, Pyle, Lupton, Edwards.

LIBRARY

Wayne County has their own genealogy library at St. Johns Lutheran Church at South 7th & E in Richmond. They are open Mondays from 9-11 and 2-4.

FAVORITE WEB SITE

www.genealogybank.com – you have to pay a fee for this one but you can access little bits from the newspapers before you have to pay.

VINE IS COMING

The Indiana State Library has announced plans for the implementation of VINE (Vital INFORMATION Exchange), a collaborative statewide database that references local history and vital record indexes from Indiana's libraries,

genealogical and historical societies, and related agencies. A web-based service and free to the public, VINE will allow genealogists and local history researchers to quickly and effectively locate a wealth of material, including birth, death, marriage, divorce, court, church, and military records from one convenient online source. To learn more about VINE, visit www.vine.in.gov.

FAIRVIEW CHRISTIAN CHURCH

(although the church is located on the county line and is in Rush County a lot of the information contained in this article refers to Fayette Co.)

“Choir refused to sing at Fairview.” This was the glaring headline on the front page of the July 1, 1880 edition of the Connersville News Examiner. Apparently, strong opposition had arisen against the new organ at the Fairview Christian Church and members of the choir refused to take their places when the organist began to play. The newspaper account stated in part, “Quite a scene followed. Prominent members of the church were denounced in very bitter terms by the organist.”

The Fairview Christian Church has met and overcome the multitude of problems which confront churches from time to time and has faithfully served its membership and community. The church was organized in 1842, only 23 years after Fayette County was established.

Between the years of 1820 and 1840, the tide of immigration grew steadily in the community. The first house in Fairview was a hand-hewn log cabin built by William Powers in 1828. With the increasing number of log cabins dotting the forest, the rugged pioneers felt the need for a church. In 1842 William Shawhan gave the ground on which the church now stands. Formal organization was made on January 21, 1843.

Prominent charter members were the families of William Shawhan, John Bates, Jacob Parish, Samuel Shortridge, Donovan Groves, Josiah Piper, Ephriam Clifford and John Thrasher Sr.

Toll gates were common along the highways of the county. One toll gate stood at the Fairview intersection. However the residents were so

opposed that they burned the toll house and gate and the church goers were spared from paying tolls to reach the church.

After using the original building for thirty years the members wanted larger and nicer quarters. Plans were made for a brick building and the bricks were made by Stamper and Alfred White from dirt obtained from the Quincy Piper farm across the road from the church. The new brick church building was dedicated in 1872 and the same building, although remodeled and improved many times, is still in use.

Before the turn of the century, the women sat on the north side of the church and the men sat on the south side of the center aisle.

Before daylight on March 11, 1955 a devastating tornado severely damaged the church. The roof was blown off and the chimney crashed into the pulpit furniture. While the damage was being repaired, many improvements were made at the same time.

When the first settlers arrived, they were obliged to cut away the undergrowth in order to reach their homes as there were no roads. The pioneers underwent hardships and endured inconveniences that seem almost unbelievable today. Early history relates that the Josiah Piper family lived by the side of a large poplar tree that had fallen until their log cabin was ready for occupancy. They carried water for family use about three-fourths of a mile and the only vessel was a five-gallon keg. They were so isolated that weeks, sometimes months passed without their seeing anyone outside their own family.

Schools were built. Following the destruction of the Falmouth High School by fire in 1903, the combination of Fairview High School and elementary school were built in 1904 and enlarged in 1914.

Fairview Academy is regarded by many historians as the forerunner of Butler University in Indianapolis. It was an institution of higher learning. It was established in 1848 and operated for 35 years until 1882. The building is located 500 feet west of the church. The second floor has been removed and is a dwelling today.

Hundreds, perhaps thousands of people have attended the Fairview Christian Church. An accounting in 1972 listed those with records of long membership: Minor Thomas, Nannie Parker, Mary Wiley, Doris Scholl, Gertrude Vickrey, Doris Darnell, Alf Sherwood, Guy Wiley, Carl Ging, Walker Daubenspeck, Gleta Dora, Mary Duncan Kehl, Grace Jeffrey, Donald, Fred and Gifford Cook, Ada Daubenspeck and Althea Thomas.

The three bulwarks of pioneer society, the home, the church and the school grew and developed side by side in the Fairview Community and each strengthened the other two.

NICKNAMES

Sometimes we look at old photographs and documents and imagine that our ancestors must have been very stiff, formal people. Life was serious for them; they wouldn't have joked around and been silly like us. But this is just our imaginations. Our ancestors were human too. So while your ancestor's given name as it appears on his baptism record, might have been Hezekiah, he might have been called Zeke, or Hez.

Here are a few proper names and their nicknames.

Ann (Nan, Nancy)
Augusta (Aggy, Guss, Gussie)
Catherine (Cathy, Kate, Kitty, Cathy, Cat)
Charlotte (Lottie, Char)
Dorothy (Dot, Dotty)
Edmund (Ed, Ned, Ted)
Ellen (Helen, Nell)
Elizabeth (Liz, Lizzie, Bess, Bessie, Betty, Beth)
Florence (Flossie, Flo)
Frances (Frannie, Fran, Franny)
Gwendolyne (Wendy, Gwen)
Henry (Harry, Hank)
Honora (Nora)
Jonathan (Jon, Nathan, Nat)
Josephine (Josie, Fine, Fina, Phene, Pheny)
Leticia (Lettie, Lettice, Tish,)
Magdeline (Maddie, Linda)
Margaret (Marge, Maggie, Meg, Peg, Peggy)
Patrick (Pat, Paddy)
Prescott (Scott)
Richard (Dick, Rich, Rick)

Theodore (Theo, Ted)
Wilfred (Fred, Bill, Will, Willy)

HANDWRITING

Reading the handwriting of others requires patience and practice. This is true whether you're reading your neighbor's shopping list or your ancestor's will. It gets even more challenging the further back in time you go, as you encounter older styles of script.

However, there are several tricks you can employ when you come up against a name you can't quite make out. First, try comparing the name you want with all the other names on the page.

Are there any other instances of the same name? Or a similar name? Are the others any clearer?

Next, try reading it up close (or with a magnifying glass) and from a distance. Also, try placing a colored filter over the page (yellow or red seem to work well).

If you're still stumped, start tackling it letter by letter. Compare the first letter with all the other capitalized words on the page. Can you find another word that starts with the same letter? Perhaps that word will be clearer, or more familiar. Then move on to the next letter. Be careful to separate the name you want from whatever is written above and below it, so that you don't accidentally interpret the downward stroke of a Y or J and the upward stroke in the name you're looking at.

Finally, if the record you're looking at is available online, try posting a query to any of the genealogy mailing lists you subscribe to, asking others to look at the page and give you their interpretations. Sometimes all you need is a fresh eye!

GENEALOGY GEMS

www.FriendsOfAllenCounty.org is web site for newsletter for Allen County Public Library. You can subscribe by entering your e-mail address and click on "subscribe."

CEMETERY DO'S AND DON'TS

It's spring and time to think about visiting cemeteries. Here are some do's and don'ts you need to keep in mind.

DO ask permission to go on private property. Just because you have an ancestor buried on a farm does not give you access to their gravesite. Find out the owner of the land and get permission.

DO close the gate. If you open a gate to get to a cemetery, close it tightly and fasten it.

DO wear long sleeves, long pants and heavy shoes if you are going to an area that may not be mowed or maintained.

DO take insect repellent.

DO make a map in your notebook of where your ancestor's stone is located. In larger cemeteries they may give you a map.

DO write down the inscription off the stone. Even though you take a picture, the picture may not be real clear.

DO take several pictures – take one close up on inscription, and take one that shows the inscription and artwork. You may also want to take a picture of the area where the stone or stones are located and a picture of the entrance to the cemetery.

DON'T walk through growing crops to get to a cemetery. The one exception would be a corn field when the corn is small and you can walk between the rows.

DON'T climb a fence to get to a cemetery. Hunt a gate and it is a good idea to look and see if there is livestock between you and the cemetery.

DON'T wear perfumes, aftershave or scented hairspray that will attract insects.

DON'T attempt to clean any stone that is damaged or insecure. Tap on the stone and if it sounds hollow, leave it alone. The tall thin stones are very fragile. Do not attempt to

clean unless you are absolutely sure it is strong enough and then clean gently.

DON'T move a stone that has fallen over. Sometimes this is the only way of marking a grave.

DON'T use any type of cleaner on a stone for cleaning purposes – use only an old bath towel to clean off the moss, an old tooth brush or popsickle stick.

DON'T use any type of sharp instrument on the stone as it can damage the stone.

DON'T use shaving cream to bring out the inscription as the acid can damage the stone. You can use water or reflected sunlight to read the inscription.

DON'T use colored chalk or markers on a stone as this may make permanent marks on them.

DON'T do a stone rubbing unless you have permission of the board or superintendent of the cemetery. The rules of the Fayette County Cemetery Board prohibits stone rubbing in pioneer cemeteries.

DON'T leave anything behind. Take all your stuff with you including your trash.

THINGS TO TAKE TO CEMETERY

1. Trowel or small shovel to clean dirt away from a stone that has broken off and fallen on the ground.
2. Whisk broom – to clean loose dirt off fallen stones.
3. Water in spray bottle such as a bottle used to mist plants
4. Old bath towels, old toothbrush and popsickle stick to clean stone.
5. Garden or work gloves (stones have sharp places on them).
6. Notebook (no loose paper) pencil or pens
7. Mirror – a mirror can be used to reflect sunlight so that you can read the inscription better and get a better picture.
8. Camera – digital cameras are wonderful as you can see right away if you need to take another picture.

