



# Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

## Wisconsin Genealogical Resources in the UW Digital Collections at November 6 Meeting

Digital Services Librarian Vicki Tobias will introduce the UW Digital Collections (<http://uwdc.library.wisc.edu>) and some of the many Wisconsin-related resources within this collection that are publicly available online. These include photos, yearbooks, oral histories, plat maps, atlases, city directories, local histories, and more.

Ms. Tobias will present highlights from the State of Wisconsin and UW Collections and provide some basic instruction on how to search for materials within

the collection. For more information, take a look at the University of Wisconsin Digital Collections Center Web site at <http://uwdcc.library.wisc.edu>.

Ms. Tobias began working for the UW in 2004. She has an extensive background in library, archives and information management fields with a concentration on advanced technology applications in library and archives, digital assets management and preservation and information policy.

Prior to the presentation, DCAGS will have a short annual meeting to nominate the officers for 2009. Following the presentation, please join us for cider and bars in the gym.

We are at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 4505 Regent Street, Madison, WI for the Thursday, November 6 meeting. Please join us at 7:00 P.M.

## “Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? – Keeping Track of Your Family”

Rick Pifer, Director of Reference & Public Services Library-Archives Division at the Wisconsin Historical Society, emphasized the value of good record keeping as a foundation of good genealogical research at our October 2 meeting.

Rick started by telling a story about inheriting a suitcase full of stuff – envelopes, pieces of paper and pictures. It was great to receive, but it was not organized. Rick provided tips to help us avoid this same scenario.

Rick explained that when you do good research you work from the known to the unknown. Often when doing research you will be working on

several families, in many places and through many sources. To keep everything on track will require good planning and good record keeping.

The purpose of genealogical research is to gather information documenting ancestral relations. One must compile the information in a meaningful way and evaluate the information so you can draw verifiable conclusions about your ancestry. One must keep asking: What else do I need to know?

The purpose of good record keeping is to keep in touch with the problems being solved. You want to keep track of what has and what has not been done

and document your work.

Rick described going on a research trip where he researched nine different families in three different states. Planning ahead can help you do the research and know what records you want to look for. If you are going to a place the most likely records to review may be at the courthouse, libraries or historical societies.

Rick explained that there are some standardized forms that can help you keep track of the details: correspondence record, research calendar, research extract, source summary for family information, family group sheet and ancestor chart.

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### Annual Meeting on November 6

The Nomination Committee – Jim Benes, Joyce Nigbor and Bob Luening – makes the following recommendations for officers in 2009: President: Roland K. Littlewood (2-year term), Vice President: Donald L. Cole (1-year term) and Secretary: Geraldine A. Schlecht (2-year term).

Nominations will also be accepted from the floor. Ballots will then be distributed in the November newsletter for return on or before the December 4 meeting.

**Regular DCAGS meetings are the first Thursday of each month at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, WI beginning at 7 p.m.**

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#### DCAGS Update:

*The DCAGS Governing Board meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month. The next meeting is on Monday, November 17 at 6:30 p.m. South Madison Library, 2222 Park St. We invite all members to attend. Please join us!*

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## Keeping track of your family continued...

### Correspondence Record

This is designed for keeping track of correspondence. It includes the family surname, the date sent, to whom, the purpose of the letter, the reply and any notes.

Correspondence files can be filed by family surname or chronologically. The correspondence record serves as an index to the correspondence.

### Research Calendar

This logs and summarizes what you are doing, especially while traveling. It includes the date, description, time period, name and search results. The calendar is filed by family surname.

The research calendar and correspondence file are parallel.

### Research Extract

This contains your research information in an abstract form: family name, description, index, time period, names researched, search objective, repository, call number and condition. It helps capture a summary of the research by fitting together the pieces of research you have gathered. You want to make sure you have the information correct so you can find it rather than going back to redo the research. Again, this is filed by family name.

### Family Group Sheet and Ancestral Chart

Both the Family Group Sheet and Ancestor Chart are generally basic tools most genealogists use and the documents are available online or in a genealogy computer database program.

Rick provided the following hint: Good research starts with good planning. Decide what you need to know next and go about planning your research so you can complete your work. The following techniques are important: take good notes and make sure your data is accurate and complete. You never want to be forced to retrace your steps because your notes are unclear. Never lose track of your source. Knowing the sources adds validity and reliability to your work.

### Filing

Rick said that two principles

should guide your filing system: genealogy is surname based and records are geographically based.

Rick felt that record keeping must accommodate tracking lineage with ancestor charts and tracking families with family group sheets.

Your files should include support information – documents, notes and sources consulted. Sometimes multiple individuals will appear in a single record – birth, marriage and land records may include several family members.

Rick gave a couple examples of what to keep track of for sources. Books: You want to include:

- Author, compiler or editor
- Title or edition
- Place of publication
- Publisher
- Page number
- Date of publication
- Call number
- Library where you found book

Rick said that some online catalogs might let you email yourself the catalog record. That way you will have the most accurate information to refer back to.

Original records – like vital records or land records. You want:

- The creating agency
- Title
- Repository where kept (courthouse, state archives, local historical society)
- Volume or case number
- Page number
- Name of Document
- Call number

Rick's hint is that all citations should be complete enough that a stranger could find the information in its original location without your help.

Rick's advice for organizing a file: keep it simple and be consistent. There are many ways to organize files. Find a way that works for you and stick to it. Rick suggests keeping an ancestor chart at the beginning of any file since it includes a basic summary of the family.

The three basic systems are alphabetically by name, alphabetically by family or numerically.

### Individual Name

This is a simple and easily understood approach. Place the

documents in the file after created.

### Family Name

It is done alphabetically by husband surname and given family name. Put the Family Group sheet and supporting information about the family in that file. A person would stay in that file as long as the person is unmarried.

### Ancestor Chart Number

This system is generally related to a number assigned to the record.

Rick said if you have a source with multiple names you should keep a master bibliography arranged by author, which could be a family name. For family record, sort by the family name. For local government records, the bibliography will be sorted geographically. Rick also assigns the source a unique number, which can be easily used on a family group sheet.

Rick suggests creating an alphabetical subject file for source documents.

Rick also suggests using keywords to describe the content of a file and using that word as the folder heading. The files will organize themselves with this approach and it accommodates many different kinds of information. Examples: immigration history and law, state court system, state maps, etc.

Rick said the computer-assisted record keeping programs can be helpful, but one should remember that genealogy programs are like lawnmowers – all reputable lawnmowers will cut your grass. Focus a software decision on the features you need. There are a wide variety of programs to review. Find one that is easy to use that meets your needs. It should have good import and export capabilities and support GEDCOM.

Even with a good genealogy computer program, you will always need paper files. In the end, Rick felt the paper files were more reliable than a computer program.

Rick said there is no silver bullet for organizing your files and no system is perfect. Keep it simple and be consistent. No single system works for everyone, so create one that works for you. Enjoy the search!

## Upcoming events

### Reminiscence Writing

Many of you who attended our July picnic and program stated that you wished Ann Short were still teaching reminiscence writing. Ann retired, but there is a new teacher in the area who is focused on helping you write those interesting stories that make our ancestors come to life. Sarah White, who conducts reminiscence writing workshops will be starting a six week, two hour class at the Oregon Senior Center, beginning on January 14 and ending on February 18, 2009.

Quoting from her web site: "We all have stories worth telling, but it takes two skills to tell them well: an ability to draw universal insights from personal experience, and a grasp of storytelling technique. That's what you'll gain from my memoir writing workshops.

The workshop includes six two-hour sessions. Each week we explore different aspects of the writing craft, and then discuss priming questions to

help you draw out memories and insights about a topic. You will write a few pages on a significant theme of your life history. Each meeting includes time to share what you've written. In our final session we will explore ways to organize and publish your life story for others to enjoy."

The cost of the workshop is \$38.00. You can sign up by contacting Erika Hoke by phone at 835-5801 or email her at [ehoke@vil.oregon.wi.us](mailto:ehoke@vil.oregon.wi.us). She has slots left open in the class.

If you want to read some of Sarah's stories check out her life stories on <http://www.whitesarah.com/news.html> or check out her book titled *Madison Women Remember: Growing Up in Wisconsin's Capital* (Oral History Interviews collected by Sarah White; Arcadia Publishing, 2006, 128 pages, 96 photos.)

## President's Message

Well I bet all of you thought that the elections ended on the 4<sup>th</sup> of November. Well yes the U.S. Presidential election is over, but now you have the chance to participate in our Society's election. The list of candidates is published in this edition and I will be taking any additional nominations from the floor at our meeting on November 6th. I want to thank the nominating committee for all of their hard work putting together a slate for us to vote on. I can probably promise you that the candidates will not be calling you several times a day to solicit your vote.

Please join us for our fall cider and bar informal get together following our November meeting. This will be a good time for you to meet the candidates for office and to meet our new members and visitors. This social event will be held in the gym, following our regular meeting.

On Thursday October 16<sup>th</sup> Shirley Levine and I attended the Ruth and

Hartley Barker Director's Circle Dinner sponsored by the Wisconsin Historical Museum. This dinner was given as a thank you for donors who gave a significant amount to their fund raising events. Shirley and I represented our Society at the event because of the donation from DCAGS given in memory of Jack Brissee. We enjoyed the dinner and the program that followed. Richard F. (Fritz) Klein, who is one of the leading Lincoln actors, gave a speech following the dinner. We were amazed at how much he resembled the real President Lincoln.

I hope everyone enjoyed Rick Pifer's presentation on "Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George?" at the DCAGS October meeting. Come our cold winter months it is a good time to get our genealogy into an organized manner that suits our personal needs.

I am looking forward to seeing all of you at our November meeting.

Pat Skubis

## Where in the World are my Ancestors?

Are you at a loss as to where your surname originated? If so you might like to try out the new World Name Profiler Online Site. The FGS delegate digest printed the following information about the site in its October edition.

### COMPANY RELEASES THE WORLD NAMES PROFILER ONLINE SITE

A team of geographical researchers from University College London have created a website (Public Profiler) that provides an interactive map displaying the modern locations of surnames around the world. The site displays information involving 300 million individuals located in 26 countries, including the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Japan, India, Argentina, and a large number of countries on the European continent. The site allows a researcher to compare the relative frequency of a surname among countries, states, and counties.

To visit the site and use its free World Names Profiler service, go to <http://www.publicprofiler.org/worldnames/>

It will not give you the exact location of your ancestors, but will help you to break down those brick walls by pointing you in a direction to try.

Submitted by: Pat Skubis



## Condolences

We wish to express condolences to John Hicks and his wife Joan on the sudden death of their son. Stuart Hicks, 47, died at his Madison home Sept. 12. He had served in the Army and the Army National Guard. Also surviving are four brothers and two sisters.

Dane County Area Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 5652  
Madison, WI 53705-0652

**Address Service Requested**

We're on the Web!  
See us at: [www.dcags.org](http://www.dcags.org)



**Dane County Area  
Genealogical Society**

P.O. Box 5652  
Madison, WI 53705-0652

**See you  
November 6**

We have a new web  
address: [www.dcags.org/](http://www.dcags.org/)

If you enter the address it  
will take you to the group's  
website on Rootsweb.

*Membership forms are  
included with this newsletter.  
Please fill it in and return it  
to DCAGS. Membership has  
two levels, individual, \$15, or  
household, \$20. Members  
receiving the newsletter only  
electronically can save \$5.00  
a year on the membership  
fee. Membership is for  
calendar year 2009.*

DCAGS officers for 2008:

President: Pat Skubis  
[p318skubis@hughes.net](mailto:p318skubis@hughes.net)

Vice President: Tom Glassel  
[tglassel@gmail.com](mailto:tglassel@gmail.com)

Secretary: Gerry Schlecht  
[13gerry@att.net](mailto:13gerry@att.net)

Treasurer: "Walker" Walker-Crawford  
[walker@viridis.ws](mailto:walker@viridis.ws)

Past President, Shirley Levine  
[shirts26@sbcglobal.net](mailto:shirts26@sbcglobal.net)

Standing Committee Chairs

Membership: William "Bill" Baures  
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Programs & Education: Joan Nagle  
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Web Master: Rollie Littlewood  
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Newsletter: Ruth Simpson  
[rsimpson@terra.com.net](mailto:rsimpson@terra.com.net)

*Announcement*

The Wisconsin State Genealogical Society (WSGS) is reducing the inventory of books stored in its office in Madison. WSGS is holding an **"Inventory Clearance Sale"**. The books will all be priced at 50% of their original prices. The majority of the books are indexes for the Wisconsin county histories that were published in the late 1800s or the early 1900s. Many people doing genealogy research find these indexes for the counties they are researching to be very helpful. They are all available now at the low prices of \$2.50 to \$4.00 per book. There are also past issues of the WSGS Newsletter on sale.

To purchase the books or past newsletters, contact the WSGS office at P. O. Box 5106, Madison, WI 53705-5106 or [wsgs@tds.net](mailto:wsgs@tds.net) before the end of November 2008.

Libraries or Historical Societies in your county may also wish to take advantage of this opportunity to get a copy of these books & newsletters or to replace copies they already have on their shelves. So please pass the word along about the big sale to those societies in your area.

**Site to Behold**

Sherry Lloyd told us about the [www.rootstelevision.com](http://www.rootstelevision.com) website at the October 2 meeting. It features a number of genealogy programs shown over the Internet, including seminars like the FGS conference in Philadelphia in September.

**Dane County Area Genealogical Society**  
**P.O. Box 5652**  
**Madison, WI 53705-0652**



**2009 Membership Application**  
**[ ] New [ ] Renewal**

*www.dcags.org*

**Individual Membership**

- \$15.00 annual dues. USPS MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.
- \$15.00 annual dues. USPS and E-MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.
- \$10.00 annual dues. ONLY E-MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.

**Family Membership: 2 individuals living in one household. Each is a voting member.**

- \$20.00 annual dues. USPS MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.
- \$20.00 annual dues. USPS and E-MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.
- \$15.00 annual dues. ONLY E-MAIL Delivery of DCAGS Newsletter.

Make checks payable to Dane County Area Genealogical Society. Return to address above.

**NAME (s)** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS** \_\_\_\_\_

**CITY** \_\_\_\_\_ **STATE** \_\_\_\_\_ **ZIP** \_\_\_\_\_

**PHONE** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**PRIMARY GENEALOGY SOFTWARE YOU USE** \_\_\_\_\_

**OTHER GENEALOGY SOFTWARE YOU USE** \_\_\_\_\_

What are your AREAS OF INTEREST?

Same as last year? Yes No

Foreign Countries \_\_\_\_\_

U.S. States \_\_\_\_\_

Wisconsin Counties \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**-Please turn over to finish the form-**

What SURNAMES are you researching? (Please put in alphabetical order, no more than 15 names.)  
Same as last year? Yes No

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Do you give permission for DCAGS to publish this information in a membership directory for the benefit of other members?  
 YES  NO (If neither YES or NO is checked, YES will be assumed)

**Please help the Program and Education Committee in planning and setting up programs and activities that would interest you by answering the following questions.**

1. I would like to see the following topics presented.

_____
_____
_____

2. I would enjoy helping the DCAGS by volunteering to:

_____
_____

3. I would like to serve on the following committees:

- Membership
- Public Relations
- Program and Education
- Newsletter
- Historian
- Webmaster

Other comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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