



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

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Three Secrets Every Archivist Knows That Will Help You Organize, Preserve and Share Your Family Photographs on January 7

At the January 7, 2010 DCAGS meeting Sally Jacobs will lead a discussion entitled "Three Secrets Every Archivist Knows That Will Help You Organize, Preserve and Share Your Family Photographs."

Sally's presentation begins with archival appraisal, which roughly translates to "what to keep" in non-archival speak. Next up is an introduction to photo preservation, which takes up the bulk of the talk. This section includes advice about the right kind of supplies (boxes, envelopes, etc.) to use and the best room in your house to store important family

treasures as well as a list of things most likely to cause damage to your photos. The final portion outlines the challenges of preserving digital files beyond 5-7 years.

Members are encouraged to bring specific questions about their own collections. These will be addressed after the main presentation.

Sally is the Audio & Accessioning Archivist at Wisconsin Historical Society. She is also the CEO at Jacobs Archival Services (Sole Proprietorship). She is a past columnist at DeadFred.com and a former bibliographer at

Dictionary of American Regional English. She previously was an Image Research Coordinator at American Girl and was a Junior Fellow at Library of Congress Prints & Photos Division.

Please join us on Thursday, January 7 at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 4505 Regent St., Madison, beginning at 7 p.m.

Following the meeting, please join us for a social hour after the presentation. Refreshments will be served.

Remember to
renew your
DCAGS
membership if
you haven't
already.

Pushing Through Brick Walls

Jody Glynn Patrick, nee Webster, had a unique approach to her family genealogy resulting in a huge database replete with stories, photos and facts. But successful as she is, her method probably wouldn't work for most of unless we can arrange large shots of motivation and energy.

Jody, who held us spell-bound at the December program meeting, holds several titles including, Publisher of Madison's *In Business* magazine, and daily radio personality as well as head of Glynn Patrick & Associates. She

launched her talk with answers to three questions she is frequently asked.

First, how did she get involved? Second, how did she assemble thousands of names in her database, and thirdly, how did she approach, push through and climb over brick walls? Answers to the latter part contained many novel pathways in her search for facts.

Ms. Patrick's answer to the first question was a moving Power Point presentation depicting her diagnosis and nine months' treatment for breast

cancer in 2000. Confronting her own mortality led to a quest to learn about herself and to share with her family their common stories.

Most prominent name in her family background is Webster. Could she be related to American educator and writer Noah Webster, born in the early 1700s whose family dated to colonial times? Here is the part you may not want to try yourself. Computer-savvy but without genealogy software, Jody opted for tracing the earliest Websters in our nation,

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Regular DCAGS meetings are generally 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.

DCAGS Update:

The DCAGS Governing Board meets the third Tuesday of each month. The next meeting is set for Tuesday, January 19 at 6:30 p.m. South Madison Library, 2222 Park St. We invite all members to attend. Please join us!

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Brick Walls continued...

and then documenting successive generations – and all their kin. She reasoned that eventually she would come upon names she would recognize. And it paid off!

Still working only from a database she programmed herself, by 2001 she was started on a quest which would come to produce 37,000 names. She believes this is the largest Webster database in the country.

Along the way, Jody learned that volunteering to transcribe census records for *Ancestry.com* earned her research access to that site. It wasn't until 2005 that she acquired her first copy of Family Tree Maker software, at full price, which she now purchases for \$7.98 per copy (at Half Price Books) for clients of her genealogy research enterprise. She maintains a full annual membership in *Ancestry.com*.

Important advice from the speaker: "Never rely on the accuracy of Ancestry records, as they are generated by users." Use them as a starting place, she said, and then seek validation for everything. Through her work, listed in Ancestry, distant cousins were in touch with her and eventually provided a trove of 32 family photos she had never seen.

Jody highly recommended *GenSmarts* software, compatible with most genealogy programs, which performs searches, recommendations and record-keeping for its users. Some members may recall the presentation by *GenSmarts* author Aaron Underwood of Illinois who demonstrated his product in October 2004 to one of our founding groups.

Jody urged us to "give back" in our genealogy pursuits. Just as she was offered information from total strangers, she tries to restore family Bibles she collects to their owners or descendants.

The speaker provided several tips for facing and conquering brick walls.

1. Cold search – not many leads: Organize your search by surname; the lowest ranking name in the 1990 census may be the best place to start. In this example, I would start

<http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/freqnames.html>

	A	B	C	D	E
1	1990 Census				
2					
3		Percentage	Frequency	Rank	
4					
5	Surname				
6	Baldwin	0.032	79,584	338	
7	Glynn	0.003	7,461	3591	
8	Little	0.046	114,402	226	
9	Mecum	0		19,969	
10	Miller	0.424	1,054,488	7	

with Mecum. Among the names I seek, it is ranked 19,969th in occurrence in the census. I'd never start with Miller, which has a ranking of being the 7th most common name. Here's where to check:

<http://www.census.gov/genealogy/www/freqnames.html>

2. Consider buying stronger tools. *GenSmarts*, an interactive web search tool, is about \$25 a download on the web. You run your genealogy file through it, and it applies logic.

3. Find out where old plat maps are for the city you're researching. In this example, I went to LaGrange's county seat (Cassopolis, MI) to the historical library, and secured a copy of the map. I found my ancestor's farm and the burial ground, and then laid a map from today over it, to figure out where a cemetery was located in a farmer's field.

4. If you aren't using it, I suggest Family Tree Maker. It's a product of *Ancestry.com*, and usually a period of membership for Ancestry comes with the software. It's worth it.

5. Recovering gravestones. Rubbings can hurt stones and is outright banned in some cemeteries. We don't do rubbings. For family graves, we use a palmitic acid shaving cream (rather than the stearic acid brands). We lather the stone face, then squeegee it (use a soft

plastic squeegee made for window cleaning; you can get them lots of places). The shaving cream will fill in the depressions, making the original words apparent for photography. We rinse the stone completely after using shaving cream, and we dry it. This practice also is controversial; we believe it is a last-measure for saving information that otherwise would be lost forever.

6. Check www.findagrave.com (Find A Grave) for your family members. It's free. (Taking Jody's advice, this writer identified five distant cousins she didn't know about.)

7. Put your information into book form to leave a written record.

a. Use a program like Microsoft Publisher (you have to buy that and it isn't cheap) to create book-like pages, print them, and put them in a binder in sleeve protectors.

b. Use *Blurb.com* or another source to create your own book for about \$30, depending on what kind and size of book you want to make. These places have downloadable templates.

Consult Ms. Patrick's web site – www.glynnpatrick.com – to learn more about how she pursues genealogical research and reports for a growing clientele.

Upcoming events

Upcoming 2010 Genealogy Classes

MATC – Internet Genealogy: Advanced course #65962 (this class is listed in the MATC catalog as an Intermediate class, but it will be the advanced class) Cost: \$44.56. Senior rate: age 62 or older \$4.00. Class will be held at the Fitchburg Senior Center – 5510 East Lacy Rd., Fitchburg, WI on Wednesdays, starting March 17 to April 14 from 6-9 PM. Prospective students can use [InsideMATC](#) to sign up online for Continuing Education classes if they are in the MATC system already and have activated an InsideMATC account. Students will need to log in and add a course in the Student Center using the 5-digit nondegree class number. Students can also phone (608) 258-6301 for more information or (608) 246-6240 to register.

Blackhawk Technical College – Monroe Campus: Genealogy on the Internet Intermediate. Course #103-464-0M9 CRN 38693 starting on Thursday March 25th to April 29th, from 2 to 4 PM. Cost \$34.42. Senior rate: age 62 or older \$4.00. Registration begins January 8. Register online at <http://www.blackhawk.edu/lifelonglearning/index.html> or in person at the Monroe Campus, 210 4th Avenue, Monroe, WI 53566

Beginning Genealogy/Family History classes. Two classes are planned with or without a computer. Class One: will cover gathering the records, following the trail backwards, interviewing relatives, and recording your information. Class Two: Finding vital records, gathering clues from the records, and resources available at the Wisconsin Historical Society. Class Three: Locating records at the Family History Library on/off line. Class Four: Tracing your family using the census, city directories and land records. Class Five: What you can learn from newspapers, obituaries & the society pages and using BadgerLink to round out your family histories. One class will be held and hosted by the Oregon Community Education/Gifted Education department and is open to adults and students. Facilitator, Patricia Skubis, five sessions on Tuesdays, March 2 – April 6 (no class March 30) Times: 6:30 – 8:30 PM Fee: \$44 (drop in for \$10 / class provided minimum class number is met) Location: 219 Park St (Senior Center Lab) Min / Max: 8 / 15. Online registrations will start late in January or early February. http://www.oregonsd.org/community/community_education.cfm. For further information contact: Scott Lein Community Education/Gifted Education, 123 E. Grove Street, Oregon, WI 53575, 835-4097, srl@oregonsd.net

The same class will be offered at the Waunakee Senior Center from 1 PM to 4 PM starting on April 7th and ending on May 5th. Cost \$44.00 Contact the Waunakee Senior Center to register. (608) 849-8385

Save the Date

2010 Gene-A-Rama
April 16-17, 2010
Holiday Inn in Manitowoc
Guest Speaker: Stephen S. Barthel will be presenting programs on German and Polish genealogy subjects



**Happy
New Year**

President's Message

DCAGS just completed an election for offices which begin with the new year. For some elections, people tend to say "Congratulations!" to the winners. For the Dane County Area Genealogical Society, as with many local genealogical and historical societies, we instead say "Thank You!" The society needs, and really appreciates, both those who step forward to carry out the everyday needs of the society and those who step forward to help

create new programs which further the aims of the society. Some make commitments for a year or two at a time, others help out on an ad hoc basis. I certainly notice those who step forward at meetings or at events such as the genealogy fair when they see something that needs to be done or who come forward and ask "What do you need help with?" Even if your name doesn't appear on the marquee, we appreciate your help.

I want to take this opportunity to specifically thank Don Cole and Walker Crawford, who have agreed to new two-year terms as Vice-president and Treasurer, respectively; Beverly Vaughn, who has stepped forward to take on publicity tasks; and Shirley Levine who – after serving several years as the chair of the Public Relations committee – continued to work behind the scenes to get out publicity for us.

Rollie Littlewood

Dane County Area Genealogical Society
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Madison, WI 53705-0652

Address Service Requested

We're on the Web!

See us at: www.dcags.org



**Dane County Area
Genealogical Society**

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

See you
January 7

Check us out on the web:
www.dcags.org.

Have a question? Email
us at
widcags@gmail.com.

DCAGS officers for 2010:

President: Rollie Littlewood
rkittle@wisc.edu

Vice President: Don Cole
846-3819

Secretary: Gerry Schlecht
13gerry@att.net

Treasurer: Walker Crawford
walker@viridis.ws

Past President, Pat Skubis
p318skubis@hughes.net

Standing Committee Chairs

Membership: William "Bill" Baures
bauresb@juno.com

Programs & Education: Vacant

Public Relations: Beverly Vaughn
beverlylmvaughn@charter.net

Historian: Sandy Zart
sandy_zart@yahoo.com

Web Master: Rollie Littlewood
rkittle@wisc.edu

Newsletter: Ruth Simpson
rsimpson@terracon.net

***DCAGS Meeting Cancellation
Policy***

*Since winter weather has arrived, here's
a reminder of DCAGS's meeting cancellation
policy.*

DCAGS will consider canceling a
scheduled meeting if the Madison
Metropolitan School District cancels school or
authorizes early release due to severe
weather conditions (e.g., blizzard, tornado,
etc.) that are expected to continue into the
evening hours. Should school not be in
session, other community-wide cancellations
may be taken into account.

A decision to cancel a meeting due to
severe weather conditions shall be made by a
majority of the Executive Committee.

The decision should be made by Noon if
possible the day of the meeting and notice
should be sent out to members ASAP by
email as well as put on the DCAGS webpage.

Members can also check by listening to
WIBA, 1310 AM, and WOLX, 94.9 FM.
Notice will also be sent to Channel 3 and
Channel 15 TV stations.