

# IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

## MISSION STATEMENT

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is a non-profit volunteer group whose mission is to create awareness and preserve family histories within the Ionia County area. The focus of this group will be to develop genealogical resources and to assist all those seeking local history.

Volume 4 - Number 4

October - December 1999

### Adoptive Family vs "Real" Family Ethics in Genealogy

by  
Pamela Swiler, President  
ICGS

At the recent FGS convention in St. Louis, Missouri, Pamela **BOYER PORTER**, CGRS, spoke about the differences in the way genealogists handle research with adoptive and birth families. Her stepfather adopted Pamela after her natural father died.

The question of whether to include adoptive family information in the family history of a person who is adopted is one that has come up several times. Genealogists are always looking for the "bloodlines", but we need to also think about those who have just as deep "roots" in a family situation as the biological ancestor or descendent has. We must not close our minds to the idea of researching both the natural and adoptive families when doing genealogy. Both offer so much to a person as a whole. The adoptive family has provided the hands-on support of raising a child, but the natural family has also provided the genes, health history and family history. They are equally important.

Groups such as DAR and our own First Families of Ionia County Society

require "bloodlines" to prove an ancestor is eligible for acceptance. Proof of a descendent in a birth family can be difficult, if not impossible to prove in most cases. When states open up their birth records this may change the requirements for these types of organizations.

In your own family history, stop and re-think this philosophy of how to handle adoptees. Do you want to delete this person from your family history simply because they do not share your genes and bloodline? Think of the person who has been a member of a family unit all of their lives. Maybe that person did not know they are adopted - are you going to spill the beans? I think not. Think about today's blended families, which include stepchildren and/or multiple marriages. Do you think a child should be excluded from the family history simply because they are not related by bloodlines? Ethically, we need to be sensitive to the privacy of those people. Do not publish information about adoptions where the person is unaware. On the other hand, if they have known about it, and don't mind, document it.

Ms. **PORTER** states, "Even if children grow up knowing they are adopted, they may feel more a part of the adopted family than the original biological family of origin. Today's merged families create further confusion for children who know a stepparent better than they

know a birth parent. Loyalty to an adopted parent may lead to intensive genealogical research on the adopted family, especially if one feels a real part of this family.

Curiosity about physical characteristics, family history, or health issues should also cause adoptees to research their biological families."

As genealogists, we need to be sensitive to the needs of the adoptive families and take care to record and report facts that are not in direct conflict of the privacy of those people involved.

### NEW COORDINATOR FOR THE IONIA COUNTY WEB SITE

by Pamila Swiler

With the recent resignation of Beth **WILLS**, the Ionia County Genealogical Society was wondering if there would ever be anyone to fill her shoes. Beth, a full-time nurse, wife and mother, has been the coordinator for Ionia County for more than 3 years. "She brought us from nothing to a site we can be very proud of," said Pam **SWILER**, President of ICGS. "We are very thankful for all she has done, and we are going to miss her very much."

The new coordinator, Judy **PALMAFFY**, is from Elkhart, Indiana and is a widow and mother of one son, Scott. She states that she "loves (bordering on obsession!) genealogy and computers" which is a



prerequisite for handling a busy site such as this one.

Although PALMAFFY does not have any ancestors from Ionia County, she is familiar with the neighboring county of Kent and plans to visit Ionia County soon. She has pledged to maintain the website in the same manner that Beth WILLS has done in the past. The website can be visited at its new url which is <<http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmiioni/cgshome.htm>>

Items found there include, but are not limited to: Early History of Ionia County including a timeline through 1900; vital records; cemetery records; census records; obituaries; biographies; deeds and land records; military records, just to name a few. It should be noted that although these records are not complete, they are all the labor of a few volunteers who have dedicated countless hours transcribing, scanning, typing, and copying records for this site. "Many people wonder why they can't find their family member listed. It is because no one has provided that information so that it can be included" SWILER states. "I encourage everyone who has ancestors in Ionia County to do their part to preserve their family history."

#### PAST AND PRESENT

Excerpted from *Locating Lost Family Members & Friends* by Kathleen W. Hinckley (Betterway Books, \$18.99)

Lost loves. War buddies. Biological parents. Estranged siblings. Distant cousins. Where are they now?

Locating Lost Family Members & Friends has all the answers. Author Kathleen HINCKLEY combines her skills as a professional private investigator and Certified Genealogical Record Specialist to lead the way on the search for lost

loved ones, no matter who or where they might be today.

"This book will teach you how to be your own detective," says HINCKLEY. "You'll not only discover how to search for people on the Internet, but you'll learn how to access public records in courthouses and how to find information in libraries and archives.

Quick-reference lists, tables and charts make it easy to locate the crucial documentation needed. Names, addresses, phone numbers, occupations and other current data are included as HINCKLEY shows how to access and utilize resources such as telephone and city directories, birth and death certificates, marriage and divorce records, military records, high school and college transcripts and much more.

"Locating a living person can feel like looking for a needle in a haystack. You sift through records and databases that list hundreds, thousands or even millions of people, yet you do not find the person you seek," explains HINCKLEY. "This book will describe several avenues that your search can take. An organized search will point you down the proper roads."

Chapters include instruction for conducting research on the Internet, and HINCKLEY also demonstrates how to overcome common 20th-century research obstacles such as privacy acts, destroyed records and more. Whether searching for a person from the past or piecing together family genealogy, this guide is the key to unlocking the answers.

Locating Lost Family Member & Friends is available through ICGS for \$18.99, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling

#### From the Lake Odessa Wave, January 13, 1893 JURY LIST FOR THE FEBRUARY TERM OF THE IONIA COUNTY CIRCUIT COURT

L. E. HALL - Orleans  
Henry KRUPP - Otisco  
David HARDY - Keene  
Mertoh K. JEPSON - Boston  
Edward EVANS - Campbell  
Charles BEDFORD - 1st and 2nd  
Wards, Ionia City  
Daniel P. KELLY - 3rd & 4th Wards,  
Ionia City  
Thomas A. LOANER - Danby  
Friend FISHBEEK - Portland  
Nelson BANNING - Lyons  
Byron BRAYTON - North Plains  
Benjamin S. EVERTS - Ronald  
C. T. KIRBY - Ionia  
George DENSMORE - Orange  
George BURHANS - Sebewa  
A.A. WALTER - Odessa  
Phillip TAYLOR - Berlin  
Frank GORDON - Easton  
Albert MEAD - Orleans  
P.F. CURTIS - Otisco  
Jacob KUHN, JR. - Keene  
Percy R. PAGE - Boston  
Jos. HULLBURGER - Campbell  
E. W. MC COY - 1st & 2nd Wards,  
Ionia City  
Allen F. HERBERT - 3rd & 4th  
Wards, Ionia City  
Wm. PRYOR - Danby  
George PACH - Lyons  
A.M. KNAPP - North Plains  
Wesley D. SMITH - Ronald

From the Lake Odessa Wave:  
County News: Belding has a  
dancing school. They have to do  
something to keep warm in this cold  
weather.

Turnkey SMITH, of Ionia, took a  
string of tramps to the house of  
correction at Detroit last week.



**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

♦ Pamela M. **SO**  
4338 E. Marlow Circle  
Colorado Springs, CO 80916  
e-mail: h\_so@pcisys.net  
Researching: **TROWBRIDGE, FOSBURG, GROMMON, JONES, HENDRICK.**

♦ John C. **WILLIS, D.C.**  
Box 239  
996 Queen Street  
Kincardine, Ontario Canada N2Z 2Y7

Researching: **MUSGROVE**

♦ Mary Genevieve **READ**  
3104 VanVleck Road  
Fenwick, MI 48834

♦ Duretha I. **CLEMONS**  
8485 Tasker Road  
Bellevue, MI 49021  
Researching: **CLEMONS, CUNNINGHAM, HERRING**

♦ Dale **JACKSON**  
769 Sherwood Drive  
Aurora, OH  
djax25@aol.com

♦ LaJean C. **BROWN**  
524 W. Center Street  
Hastings, MI 49058  
Researching: **LONGWELL, OLMSTEAD, BURNS, SIBLE, HORTON**

♦ Barbara **DONOHUE**  
10175 Bliss Road  
Perrinton, MI 48871  
e-mail:  
<bdonodue@pathwaynet.com>

Researching: **DONOHUE, O'DONOGHUE, BARRETT**

♦ Linda K. **STRODTMAN, Ph.D., RN**  
6501 Carpenter Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 488197-8861  
e-mail: Strodtma@umich.edu

Researching: **TANNER, STEDMAN, SUMNER, WRIGHT, EDDY, HILLABRANT**

♦ John W. **COOK**  
2182 Musgrove Hwy.  
Lake Odessa, MI 48849

Researching: **COOK, BLACKMER, STANLEY, GIBSON, DOUGLAS, SHETTERLY, HUBBARD**

♦ Cathryn M. **LARSEN**  
774 Sheridan Road  
Kenosha, WI 53140  
Researching: **SMITH**

♦ **Correction:** Rose **HENRY** researching **BAILIFF**, not **BUILIFF** as reported in July/September edition.

**SEE MEMBERS - PAGE 9**

**QUERIES**

Seeking information on Zebulon W. **WHIPPLE** b. 1793 NY; wife Phebe A. **WHIPPLE** b. 1801 NY; daughter Cynthia M. **WHIPPLE** b. 8 Mar 1826 NY, d. 8 Oct 1907 Belding, Ionia County, MI; son John **WHIPPLE** b. 1829 NY; daughter Sarah **WHIPPLE** B. 1835 NY; son William **WHIPPLE** b. 1840. Family came to Ionia in 1836. Cynthia married 1st **HARDENBERG**, 2nd Sylvester **THOMPSON**. Thanks for any help. Phil **SMITH**, 847 Calle Circulo, Camarillo, CA 93010 or [PGSmi@aol.com](mailto:PGSmi@aol.com)

How can I locate information about the family of Mrs. Robert **KELLEY** and some of her children, Edward, Ross and Jessie **KELLEY**.

The father, Robert, died in Canada and the mother brought her children to Belding, Ionia County, MI. One son, William R. was born 1887 and died in Tuscola County. A daughter, Mamie died here age 16, but we do not know when. These two children

lived in Tuscola County with an uncle because the mother could not raise them alone. The other children lived near Belding with the mother. The birth of William is the only solid date we have. Contact me for any research that needs to be done in Tuscola County. Thanks. Gloria **HALL** at [TrischHall@centuryinter.net](mailto:TrischHall@centuryinter.net)

My great-grandfather Charles Nelson **AUSTIN** and wife Evelyn **OAKES** lived in Muir where my grandfather, Frank **LENNEUS** was born June 18, 1889. They came from Chagrin Fall, Ohio. Also looking for information on Charles' father, Thomas **AUSTIN**. Joanne **ADAMOWSKI**. Contact: <13232@msn.com>

Does anyone have any information on the Polish **POWELLS** who used to live in Ionia (and perhaps still do), as well as the **WAYTALIAS** (some of whom changed their name to **WHITELOCK**). Contact Roxanne at <[ROGUE8357@aol.com](mailto:ROGUE8357@aol.com)>

John **CONTRATTO**, 1461 Eden Way, Yuba City, CA 95993 is searching for **MILLS, SHEPHERD/SHEPPARD** in Ionia County. <[johnc@succeed.net](mailto:johnc@succeed.net)>

Scott **BRODIE** is looking for information on Stanley **GILMORE** of Palo who killed his wife, grandson and himself in the 1950's. Is there anyone who remembers the incident, knew members of the family and can fill in missing background. We are looking for other genealogical information regarding the **GILMORE/EDWARDS** family, as what we have is sketchy. Contact Scott at <[sbrodie@online.emich.edu](mailto:sbrodie@online.emich.edu)>

If you have information that may help someone, but you are not on the Internet, please send the information to Pamela K. Swiler, President, ICGS, 13051 Ainsworth Rd., Route 3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849



**UPDATE: HAPPY ENDING FOR THE BARKDULL/VALENTINE MARRIAGE CERTIFICATE**

You may remember from the last newsletter that Debbie EDDY told of finding a framed marriage certificate with original tintypes of both the bride and the groom. The name was recognized by our member Dottie PIECHOCKI and she writes:

"I only recently became acquainted with a new cousin, Thad TAYLOR, who now lives in Las Vegas, NV. Although our shared lineage is not Valentine, I remembered the surname as one he is researching in Ionia County. I forwarded Debbie's message to him and asked whether he recognized these names.

His reply: 'I am very interested in the marriage certificate and photos. I have researched the VALENTINES for years - they were centered in western Michigan. Anna was the daughter of Archibald Nelson VALENTINE and Margaret CLUM, and she was therefore the sister of my grandfather, Samuel CLUM VALENTINE. Do you think I should call the Antique Shop or do you think it would be better if you do?'

Well, I immediately got on Yahoo! Yellow Pages and looked up the phone number for the Windwalker Antique Shop in Charlotte. It was only 7:15 a.m. but with trepidation and prayers that the certificate hadn't yet been sold, I dialed the number and woke up the shop owner. Richard was very sweet about it, removed the sleeping cat from his face, and said, 'yes' he did still have the document. He kindly agreed with me that it was delightful that the certificate was going home to its family. I gave him my credit card number and the address of my cousin in NV, and he promised to mail it that very day.

Richard also passed along a personal message of thanks to

Debbie for her part in this happy ending. My cousin, Thad and I wholeheartedly second that! Thank you, thank you Debbie!

By the way, Thad added this postscript: 'Margaret CLUM was one of triplets born in 1817. All lived and married. My daughter says she can't wait to see Anna's picture - as Margaret CLUM was not a beauty. A very unfair statement.'

Contributed by: Dottie PIECHOCKI, Member, ICGS

**WEB NEWS & NOTES**



**REMEMBER YOU DON'T NEED A PERSONAL COMPUTER TO ACCESS WEB-SITES. MOST PUBLIC LIBRARIES HAVE COMPUTERS FOR PUBLIC USE.**

◆ Indexes to the Grand Traverse County, Michigan marriage and death records are now online. The Traverse Area District Library has made the records available to the public, in cooperation with the Grand Traverse County Clerk's Office. The site says that it has 40,196 marriage and 62,685 death records. Keep in mind that this is an index only. To obtain copies of the original records, you must visit or write to the Grand Traverse County Clerk's Office, 400 Boardman Ave., Traverse City, MI 49684. To search the records go to: <<http://www.tcnet.org/gtcounty/index.html>>

The above article is from Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and is copyright 1999 by Richard W. Eastman. It is re-published here with permission of the author.

◆ The address for the new Ionia County web page is <<http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmiioni/index.html>>

You can still follow the links to the ICGS page:  
<<http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmiion/cgshome.htm>>

**LIBRARY NEWS**

◆ The Abrams Foundation has donated \$100,000 to the Library of Michigan for the purchase of genealogical materials. As of this date, the Abrams Foundation has donated over \$900,000 to the Library over the last 11 years.

The Library is attempting to purchase state census records for California, Oregon and Washington; printed census indexes for California, Connecticut, Florida, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Delaware, the District of Columbia, and 5 other states; Vital Records for Alabama; passenger lists for Boston (1902-06) and Ashland, WI (1922-1954); Impressed Seamen Records (1793-1814); over 1,800 titles of Genealogy and Local History Microfiche; and Records of Mexican Crossings; Manifest of Alien Arrivals to Texas.

◆ Beth WILLS has presented the ICGS Library with a copy of the 1850 Ionia County Census in book form. Thank you, Beth!

**GERMAN TRANSLATORS AVAILABLE**

Mr. Dale CARPENTER of 2105 Coit Avenue, N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49505, phone: (616) 365-9096 has agreed to do translations for our group. You may contact him at the above address for services.

Mr. Joseph WEBER of 8050 Mester Road, Chelsea, MI 48118, phone (313) 475-3262, fax (313) 475-3262

ICGS does not endorse any individual and is not responsible for any services contracted.



Ancestors are most satisfying possessions. They are non-taxable, cannot be stolen, and increase in value as they grow older.  
(Quote from Bierson W. Manning)

ICGS LIBRARY



BOOK REVIEW  
by Teresa Sweet

Early Records of Odessa Township, Ionia Co., MI 1836-1887, Compiled by John R. WAITE

♦ This selection is an excellent resource book of Odessa Township. Mr. WAITE has researched local Odessa Township history from various books, newspapers, tax assessments and other resources. He gives an excellent picture of pioneer day settlers working with the Indians and even the problems both the settlers and Indians gave each other.

♦ With a plat map of Odessa Township, there is a list of first landowners and the acreage that they owned, date of patent and former residence of that settler. There is a list of bonds issued to soldiers by Odessa Township and assessment and tax rolls. A list of Odessa Township Civil War veterans, with the company and infantry that they served in. Mr. WAITE has also researched and included many pages of newspaper articles from the Ionia Sentinel, Portland Observer, Nashville News and other of the people and happenings of early Odessa Township.

A Grand Rapids Sampler by Gordon L. OLSEN, published by the Grand Rapids Historical Commission, 1992.

♦ This book tells of Grand Rapids from the early Indian days to present. There are accounts of many pioneers and their families as they settled along the Grand River to build what is now Grand Rapids, Michigan. It takes us through the development from the primitive days, through wars, the depression and into the industrial development that now stands. Original documents, maps and many photos are used to tell about the people, places, and events that made Grand Rapids what it is today.

SURNAME INDEX CARDS

Thank you to the following people who have submitted their surname index cards and four generation charts. If your name is not on this list, contact Bonnie JACKSON, (bonnjac@iserv.net) our correspondence secretary, for instructions on how to get your information in to us. She has the forms and instructions that you will need. The surname index file is an important part of our research library. We need you to do your part! Thank you!

Colleen WHORLEY  
Cindy BRYANT  
Donna BERGSTEN  
Larry & Marilyn CAHOON  
Lois CURTISS  
Lori FOX  
Marjorie GIBSON  
Gerald & Dolores GARDNER  
Lola HALLER  
Katherine KNALL  
Alyce J. MORROW  
James MOSES  
Carol MC KELLAR  
Joan MC CONNON  
Regina MASON  
Cheryl O'CONNER  
Pam SWILER  
Duane STRINDEN  
Teresa SWEET  
Fred SLIKKERS

Marilyn STEWARD  
Phillip SMITH  
Cheryl VAN WORMER  
Ford WRIGHT  
Ellen WILLEMIN  
Julia WARD  
John WILLIS



Congratulations to Mr. and Mrs. Harold COMPTON of Southfield, Michigan. Marilyn SWILER COMPTON and Harold COMPTON recently celebrated 50 years of marriage. Formerly of Mulliken, Michigan, they were married in Portland, MI on June 25, 1949 at the Portland United Methodist Church. They have three children and nine grandchildren. Marilyn is a retired school bus driver and Harold is a retired operating engineer. Additional note: Their ring bearer was First Families of Ionia County Society member number 2, and is the Compton's nephew! (Wayne SWILER)

The Ionia County Genealogical Society has a new fax number: 616 374-8424. Please make a note of it.

From the Lake Odessa Wave February 24, 1893:

♦ Lyons had a diphtheria scare this week.

♦ HASKINS, the Saranac Burglar, was arraigned Wednesday in Circuit Court at Ionia. He acknowledged doing the deed, but pleaded mental irresponsibility.

North Berlin news from the Lake Odessa Wave, January 27, 1893:  
A. F. KELSEY & family are enjoying city life now, they are living in Ionia.



North Berlin news from the Lake Odessa Wave, February 17, 1893.

♦ Mr. Frank **SIGNS** of Sebewa and Grace **BUSH** of Berlin were married on February 2nd at the home of the bride's parents.

**OBITUARY OF REVA M. KEEFER**

LYONS. Reva M. **KEEFER**, 81, of 5670 David Highway, died Monday at the O'Neil Convalescent Home in Portland.

She was born Dec. 8, 1898 in Orange Township to Ulysses Grant **KEEFER** and Sadie **PERETT**.

Survivors include several cousins and a close friend, William **JANSEN**.

Services will be held Thursday at 2 p.m. at the Neller Funeral Home in Portland.

Burial will be in Keefer Cemetery.

Pall bearers will be Wesley **DAVIDS**, Harold **SCHURER**, Robert **MAUS**, Donald **NASH**, Richard **KRAUSE**, and Victor **KEEFER**.

Memorials may be left at the funeral home for the Keefer Cemetery Association.

The family will be at the funeral home from 7-9 p.m. today and Wednesday to receive friends and relatives.

From the Ionia Sentinel-Standard, Tuesday, August 14, 1979, Page 3. Ford **WRIGHT** sent this in response to the last newsletter's "Where Are You Reva Keefer"

**BIBLE RECORD**

A copy of a handwritten bible record has been turned in to ICGS. It states as follows:

**Family Record**

Solomon **BEVER** was married to Maria **CROSS** December the 30th (this is crossed out) 16th 1830

Maria **BEVER** died Sept. the 14th 1863 aged fifty five years six months 25 days

Solomon **BEVER** Died May 5th 1882 aged Eighty years and ten months

Solomen **BEVER** was born July 1801

Maria " " " Feb. 19th 1808

John B. " " " March 18 1832

William " " " April 30 1833

Joseph L. " " " Jan 25 1835

Henry " " " Jan 21 1837

Martin " " " May 22 1838

Louisa J. " " " May 21 1840

Alvin " " " August 27 1843 (written in center of page 1842)

Russel B. **BEVER** was born Sep 11 1844 (written in center of page 1843)

Wesley **BEVER** was born Feb 17 1845

Ann M. **BEVER** was born Sep 11 1847

Cecilia **BEVER** was born April 20 1850.

Source: Unknown

**STATE ARCHIVES OF MICHIGAN CERT. OF NATURALIZATION**

Certificates of naturalization give number, name, age, date of transaction, place and date where declaration of intention filed, date and place where petition filed, date and place where order filed, and residence of each.

County	Dates	Record	Index
Ionia	1835-1959	RG 85-32	Yes
Kent	1860-1929	RG 89-28	No
Montcalm	1852-1955	RG82-134	Yes
Muskegon	1850-1941	RG84-119	Yes
"	1929-1980	RG94-302	No
Kalamazoo	1840-1967	WMMU	
Archives			
Eaton	1915-1929	RG 880-120	Yes
Ingham	1845-1931	RG 83-52	Yes
"	1896-1985	RG 90-168	Yes

We will publish more counties as space permits in future newsletters

**ACRONYMS**

- AOH Ancient Order of Hiberians
- ALUH American Legion of Honor
- BPOE Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks
- CK of A Catholics Knights of America
- EBA Emerald Beneficial Association
- FOE Fraternal Order of Eagles
- GALSTPTR German American Legion of St. Peter
- GAR Grand Army of the Republic
- GUO of OF Grand United Order of Odd Fellows
- IOI Independent Order of Immaculates
- IOKP Independent Order of Knights of Pythias
- IOOF Independent Order of Odd Fellows
- KGL Knight Grand Legion
- KFM Knights of Father Matthew
- K of H Knights of Honor
- K of L Knights of Loyola
- KP Knights of Pythias
- MWA Modern Woodsmen of America
- OUAM Order of United American Mechanics
- RK Roman Knights
- RAM Royal Arch Masons
- SAR Sons of the American Revolution
- UR The Uniform Ranks designation found on many swords.

Lake Odessa Wave. County News  
December 13, 1892

- ♦ Belding is to have another bank.
- ♦ There is a "screech owl" in Lyons.
- ♦ The machinery for the Lyons creamery has arrived.
- ♦ Six members of the Ionia County Pioneer Society have passed away since the annual meeting in August. Almerston C. **CADWELL** was the last.



July

Beth **WILLS**, our Ionia County webmaster, gave a talk about genealogy on the internet. Beth, who is a nurse, mother of four, and a teapot and Beanie Baby collector, as well as a professional genealogist, has been the coordinator of the Ionia County webpage since 1996. She talked about the history of the USGenWeb project, which was started early in 1996 by some people in Kentucky. The idea of this project is to get genealogical information from all over the country on the internet in a manner that is easy to access and available at no cost to anyone. Every county and every state has a coordinator, who volunteers much time and effort to build and maintain sites for their nation's genealogy. Beth has no family in Ionia County, but has adopted the county because she lives here, and also because she feels that her contributions here are matched by the contributions of the people who work on sites in the counties in which she wishes to do research. Among the accomplishments Beth has had on the Ionia County page are links to search engines, information on over 37,000 individuals with records such as the census, deeds, land records, births, marriages, deaths and cemetery records.

There are articles on Ionia County history, local church groups, the various historical societies in the county and the prisons we have. One big thing she has built into the site is a query area where we may post information that would be helpful to genealogists, and that information is on the web. The Ella Gunn scrap-book is also there, along with the complete list of names in the First Families of Ionia County Society files, and many more. Beth has been able

## ICGS SPEAKERS by Jim Moses

to help people from all over with some of their questions. She asked us to help make the project in Ionia County even better by sending information to her. Some examples are: family stories and biographies, church records of births, baptisms, marriages, deaths, etc., newspaper articles, military information of service persons, plat maps, probate records, and many more. Beth stressed, however, that we cannot post things that are under copyright. Publishing on the internet is the same as printing a book; we cannot put things there that someone else owns unless we have permission.

A problem has developed lately with the freedom of the web. It seems that the people who run a vital computer which makes all of this possible have decided that they own everything that goes on the sites, and the original workers do not have rights to it once it goes into their computer, so Beth, with the complete cooperation and support of the Ionia County Genealogical site, has recently moved our site to a new address. There will be no big difference in the quality of the site, but Beth maintains ownership of the site and can decide to do what is needed with the material there. I have been out to the new site and it has the same quality that we have come to learn Beth provides. Why not try it today? See it at : <http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmiioni/index.html> <<http://www.usgennet.org/~ahmiioni/index.html>>

August

Judge Gerald **SUPINA** spoke at the August 14, 1999 meeting on the subject of Ionia County Probate Records. He is very familiar with researchers who visit the court in Ionia, and told us that there has been a big increase in the number of

people seeking information at the court. The records in Ionia go back over one hundred years, and 90% of the records at the court are from estates and trusts. Most records are public but there are some, like the secret marriage records, that the public is not allowed to see. The indexes, which are the starting point for researchers, are large hand-written books, written with black ink, in good penmanship. These well-preserved books help the researcher and the court workers to know where the records are kept, and possibly what can be found in them. Records are on microfilm, but the microfilm rolls are getting brittle with age, so a project has begun whereby the film will be transferred to film jackets, which will be better protected, and easier to use on the readers. Judge **SUPINA** told us that the process of recording information for estates was changed in the 1960s, and much less information was needed for the file than before, so the older files have more for the genealogist. In 1979, in an attempt at reduction in paperwork, the requirements became even less, so that now some files only have names and addresses of people.

Several terms, such as executor and administratrix, were explained to us so that we would know more about those named in the documents. Calling wills "a dead giveaway", Judge **SUPINA** explained the importance for genealogists in finding the will of an ancestor. Friends and relatives are often mentioned in the file, as well as proof of relationship (birth and death certificates, for example). Judge **SUPINA** also talked about other records; adoption, guardianship and trusts. You can make copies for \$1.00 or take notes. Visit the court on the main floor of the courthouse in Ionia.

SEE SPEAKERS ON PAGE 9



There was once a church at Ritenburgh's Corners, but no one seems to know that it ever existed, not even a man whose family has lived in the vicinity for over 80 years. Many of you may recognize this location as the corner of Kelsey Highway and Grand River Avenue.

The aforementioned man told me that he knew of a school located near the corner, as well as a blacksmith shop (Whose? Does anyone know?). However, he was quite surprised to learn that an M.E. parsonage and a Freewill Baptist Church also shared the corner.

An old 1864 map indicates that a road once angled through here, just to the east of the corner. This would have been the Grand River Trail, parts of which still exist today. The road led to Tremaine's Corners, approximately at M-66 and Peck Lake Road (you'll notice an old building which looks like a store near there as you drive past. It's on the east side of the road).

The 1875 map of Orange Township shows an M.E. parsonage and a school at Ritenburgh's Corner, which the 1891 map indicates that there was a school there, approximately where the old road had been, traces of which are still visible, but what of the church?

The History of Ionia and Montcalm Counties, Michigan by John S. Schenk, Philadelphia 1871, speaks of it on pages 299 and 300 in the section about Orange Township. It states that religious services had been held in various homes, but that, "on February 21, 1849, Rev. Elbridge CILLEY of Boston Twp., formed a Freewill Baptist Church at the log house of Beckett COLEMAN. Mr. and Mrs. Beckett COLEMAN, Mrs. and Mrs. Theodore R. DARLING, Mr.

## MYSTERY AT RITENBURGH'S CORNERS

### Mysterious Rectangle Appears in Lawn by Merrilee A. Morrison-Cotter, ICGS Member

and Mrs. Adam LEWIS, Mr. and Mrs. Wm. H. Allen, and Paul STEELE" formed the first congregation.

This was the first formal church organization in Orange Township, and is also mentioned in the article on Eli COLEMAN. The church is also mentioned in the article on the Coleman School in the Thursday, June 27, 1927 edition of the Portland Observer. Services were held in member's homes and in the old log Coleman school (replaced in 1854).

The Ionia Sentinel, May 11, 1880, page 1 and the Portland Observer, May 12, 1880 each ran a paragraph about the dedication of the church. It wasn't until 1880 that the congregation was able to raise a church, which was located at Ritenburgh's Corners.

The guest speaker was Professor Ransom DUNN of Hillsdale College, who was a prominent speaker throughout the midwest. The pastor was I. P. BATES, in charge since 1878. The deacon was Ebenezer WRIGHT and the clerk was Clarence HOUSEMAN. The membership was about 50 and they had a strong Sunday School.

The building which cost about \$1700. was free of debt at the time of dedication, a frame church, and from the Portland Observer, June 27, 1927, "nicely frescoed and furnished, and ...a credit to the neighborhood"

"Other pastors included Rev. Elbridge CILLEY of Boston Township, and Rev. Myron TUPPER of Odessa. Later pastors were Elder REYNOLD, J. L. SANTEE, Benjamin MACOMBER, WHITCOMB, SUMNER and FERRIS." Theodore R. DARLING was a deacon for 22 consecutive years.

The only other mention I have found about this church is very brief: "South Orange - The Baptist Church has closed their meetings". Published in the Portland Observer, February 6, 1884, page 8.

The story goes that the church then joined with the Hall Methodist Church at Grand River Avenue and Sunfield Highway (N.W. corner), kitty-corner from the Coleman school.

Mrs. Esther PHILLIPS, now deceased, and daughter of Eli Coleman, told me that when the Hall Church closed, they went to LeValley Methodist. This was confirmed by the minister I spoke with, but unfortunately, the church burned down, and with it, the records, around 1924.

A family who now owns property Ritenburgh's Corners told me that, during times of drought and in late August, a faint rectangle appears in their lawn. They assume that it's the foundation of an old building. There were four that we know of to choose from, plus there was probably a buggy stable behind the church, which was a common practice of the times.

The questions are: which building shows a ghost of its former self? Does anyone have any information about the church, or any other buildings at Ritenburgh's Corners?

So, now that you know there's a mystery, I'm hoping it can be solved. The landowners are too.

If you have information about this church, please contact Merrilee MORRISON-COTTER at 1080 E. North St, Ionia, MI 48846.



SPEAKERS - Cont'd from Page 7

September

The September 11, 1999 meeting of the Ionia County Genealogical Society featured Wilma **ACKERSON**, who spoke to our group about the history of Lyons and Muir. She started by stating that the Indians (at least four different tribes) used the area between the two towns as a farming area in ancient times, and even during the early years of white settlement in the area, still used the flats for their "Green Corn Dance". Near the flats on Arthurburg Hill, they built earthworks for defense, and Ms. **ACKERSON** told of a battle involving Chief **COCOOSH**, who is rumored to have been a black man who was kidnapped by the Indians during the War of 1812.

The first white man in Lyons was William **HUNT**, who came in 1830. He and others started a trading post. Lucius **LYON**, for whom the town is named, arrived in 1836. He built a bridge across the Grand River. First called Maple Township, and incorporated in 1837, the town was named Lyons and incorporated under that name in 1859.

Several other prominent early people were mentioned in Wilma's talk, including Dr. David **KELLEY** and his son, John, who both served in the Civil War.

Muir was first settled under the name of Montrose, and had several saw mills. J.D. and Washington **BLANCHARD** came to Montrose early in the town's history. A.L. **SOULE** bought their land started his lumbering business there.

A battle between the two towns was won by Muir, which was the first town to raise \$10,000, which was the price for getting the railroad to go through

the town. This was a very important step for the small town as it allowed transport of their lumber, where Lyons was forced to move lumber further. As a result, there were eight saw mills in Muir (along with 16 taverns). Wilma told us several other things about the early history of both towns, and the importance of disasters in their growth. There were floods and fires which greatly affected the people of two small towns. Lyons has a few distinctions which gave the town its five minutes of fame--until a recount of vote the following morning, Lyons was the Capital of Michigan for one night, losing out to Lansing in the recount. It also had the first "comfort station" in Michigan along the busy Riverside Drive.

Although both towns were once more prosperous than now, with mills, casket makers, buggy and button factories, the Dilley washing machine factory, and other industries, they are still prosperous and have that small-town atmosphere many people like. There are historic buildings to see, and places to talk about, so why not pay a visit?

CONDOLENCES

The ICGS would like to express our condolences to member Ellen **WILLEMIN** who lost her husband, Richard, suddenly this past summer. Our thoughts and prayers are extended to Ellen and her family.

MEMBERS - Continued from Page 3

♦ Garry A. **SAVAGE**  
1622 Ginger Quill Dr.  
Grayling, MI 49738-7522  
Researching: **HENDERSON, BENSON**

♦ John J. **CURRIGAN**  
1932 Dean Avenue  
Holt, MI  
Researching: **CURRIGAN, BELL, CROSS, HOUSE, MORSE**

♦ Bruce & Roslyn **FAHRNI**  
10978 W. Portland Rd.  
Clarksville, MI 48815  
e-mail: fahrni@iserv.net  
Researching: **FLETCHER, COLES, STEVENS, TOWNSEND**

♦ Master Gerald W. **GRIESER II**  
Gerald is a minor child (grandson of Fahmi) therefore we will not be posting his address.

♦ Oren W. **DANIELS**  
238 Bippley  
Lake Odessa, MI 48849  
Researching: **DANIELS, JACKSON, INNEY, LINDLEY**

♦ Polly **MC KENDRY**  
345 Bellamy Road  
Ionia, MI 48846  
Researching: **DARLING, SELDEN, GRINNELL, HARNISCH, HICKS, HOLLY, SLAGHT, SPARKS, ZANDER**

For Marriageable Gals  
Do not "choose an opposite" You will be opposite enough in time  
Take your mother's advice on the questions of a husband, provided she took her mother's  
Either put your foot down on his cigar before marriage, or else make up your mind to keep quiet about it afterward  
Learn to cook and sew if you can, but above all things learn to keep still and look sweet when mad enough to take the roof off  
From the Portland Observer, Vol XVII  
September 22, 1886



**PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR  
PRESERVING OLD DOCUMENTS**  
by Diane Nichols 150atf@sgi.net

Old documents are often rolled or folded and stuck in cedar chests and drawers for years before someone moves them to another drawer. They are aged into their shape and can break with handling. They are dry and need to be hydrated.

Look around your home for a container with a tight fitting lid (not so tight fitting that the container needs to be tipped for a grip to take off the lid). I used a new galvanized garbage can, but a small one will do if all you have is a few letter size documents.

Inside the (clean) container, place a heavy bowl with a flat bottom. Inside of THIS bowl, place a glass of water. Documents can be placed, several at one time, around outside of the bowl in the large container (outside of the water please). Make sure they are stable enough not to tip over to the water. Place the lid on the container and leave it alone for several hours. Needless to say, this whole thing should be out of the way of dogs, children and mothers who insist on constantly dusting! Put it in a spare room and close the door.

After several hours, check the paper. Flex it to check how well it unrolls, unfolds or just feels right. (It's like making dough - you learn the feel.) Some papers hydrate very quickly. I have already left a super thick post-Victorian wedding certificate in as long as 24 hours, but many papers hydrate in six.

Purchase white blotter paper in an art supply store. Lay one sheet of blotter paper down on a table, and spread the documents flat as possible on the blotter paper. Check to make sure folded edges are unfolded, and torn edges close

together. A set of stamp collector tweezers is perfect for this job and other steps to follow. Place another blotter on top. Weigh down this whole thing with heavy books (one use for an encyclopedia set).

The blotter paper will absorb any excess moisture and I've never had a problem with mold. Leave the documents pressed for 12 to 24 hours. If they roll when uncovered, they either need to be pressed more or they possibly need hydrated more (although that's very rare).

After uncovering the documents, you can begin repair. Odd smudges of dirt and pencil can be encouraged off with a Pink Pearl eraser. Don't use another kind. Other types of cleaning products should only be used by professionals, and the Pink Pearl should be used with extreme caution.

A company called Light Impressions (more information about the company at the end of this article) sells a Filmoplast P repair tape (transparent). I always mend on the back of the document. The tape is PH neutral and doesn't yellow. It also can be removed and applied again during the taping process, which is a big help for those doing this for the first time. Don't use scotch tape--ever. Remove old tape if it won't destroy the document finish. It usually falls right off.

The mylar top-loader envelopes are fine for storing small documents. I buy mine at one of the discount chains on sale (I sometimes pay \$4 for 50). Archival companies charge a lot more. But many documents need bigger storage. From Light Impressions I also bought a pack of large size mylar sheets and a heavier mylar roll in a very large size. To use these, you need double-sided tape. Make sure you purchase Ph neutral tape.

Cut two pieces of mylar about one inch larger than the document you have. Lay the now repaired and flat document in the center of one mylar piece. Unroll a length of double-sided tape and carefully

place it from one corner of the document to another corner, leaving at least 1/4 inch of air space from the document to the tape. Repeat on each side, leaving an "air hole" of 1/8 inch or slightly larger at each corner. There will be a paper lining on the top side of the tape. Leave it in place for now.

Lay another piece of mylar on top. Set a gentle weight on top of the stack, so that your sheets don't move as you work. With your tweezers, work one edge of paper lining off of one length of tape. Strip it off, and then press the two mylar pieces together on that side. Repeat, one side at a time. It can be tricky to do this without make a ripple, but the tape stays removeable for a long time. I use an old squeegee roller to set the tape after I check it. Trim the outside edges, if needed. Store flat in an archival box or artists portfolio for best preservation.

The first document is nerve-wracking to do, but it is really easy.

More information can be found at the following websites:

I purchase from a company called Light Impressions, (<http://www.lightimpressions.com/>), 439 Monroe Avenue, P.O. Box 940, Rochester, NY 14603-0940. I have dealt with them for about 13 years and have never had an ordering problem. They have a graduated pricing system, which means that if you buy in bulk, it costs less, so ask your friends who have documents before you order. Get the best price possible. But you CAN buy one or two of an item, something many archival companies don't do.

Check out Preserving your photographs and records - Suite 101.com <  
<http://www.suite101.com/article.cfm/genealogy/13518>> or  
Abbey/Watchung at  
<<http://www.abbeyw.com/index.html>>  
>

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## 1999 Calendar of Events - Ionia County Genealogical Society

### OCTOBER

- 5 7:30 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at Swilers
- 9 1:00 p.m. ICGS Regular Membership Meeting, Patricia Brown, Author of The Diaries of Lizzie A. Dravenstatt 1870 - 1928
- 15 Deadline for Reservations for First Families Banquet
- 23 5:00 First Families Banquet - LeValley United Methodist Church, Ionia, MI
- 28 7:00 p.m. ICGS Board Meeting at Swilers
- 30 10:00-2:00 Depot Museum open to public for researchers

### NOVEMBER

- 2 7:30 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at Swilers
- 13 1:00 p.m. ICGS Regular Member Meeting, Pamela Swiler and Lori Fox will present information they learned at the Federation of Genealogical Societies annual convention.
- 18 7:00 p.m. ICGS Board Meeting at Swilers
- 26-27 Christmas 'Round the Town at Depot

### DECEMBER

- 1 Annual Reports Due from Board Members  
NO REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING - MERRY CHRISTMAS and MAY GOD BLESS  
NO BOARD MEETING OR FIRST FAMILIES COMMITTEE MEETING

### JANUARY 2000

- 4 7:30 p.m. First Families of Ionia County Society Committee Meeting at Swilers
- 8 1:00 p.m. Regular Membership Meeting, Shirley Hodges will speak on "The Joys of Genealogy"
- 27 7:00 p.m. ICGS Board Meeting at Swilers
- 29 10:00-2:00 Depot Museum open to public for researchers

**\*\*All regular membership meetings are held on the second (2nd) Saturday of each month, except December, at 1:00 p.m. at the Lake Odessa Historical Society Museum Depot on Emerson Street, Lake Odessa, MI. The public is welcome, and refreshments will be served.**

ICGS Newsletter:  
Editor: Pamela Swiler  
Asst Editor: Leora Slosser

NEED TO REACH US? ICGS, 13051 Ainsworth Rd., Route #3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849, PH: (616)374-3141  
FAX: 616-374-8424 or e-mail: [pkswiler1@juno.com](mailto:pkswiler1@juno.com) or [pkswiler@voyager.net](mailto:pkswiler@voyager.net)



## Highlight on our First Families of Ionia County Society Members



### Member Number 1 Duane Norman Strinden

Duane and his wife, LaDonna, reside in Sedro Wooley, WA. Duane, born in Fargo, Cass Co., North Dakota, is a retired teacher and has spent an extensive amount of time researching the families' surnames, **CHURCH**, **SNEATHEN**, **GREEN** and **TRAIN**, just to name a few. He and his wife were married 17 June 1949 and they have three adult children, Christopher Norman, Eric Norman, and Tina Marie.

In 1997, the Strindens extended their research efforts all the way from Washington to Michigan, connecting them with another ICGS past board member, Richard Heaven, who was gracious enough to not only assist them with their research, but also hosted them in his home in Clarksville, Michigan. Duane, Richard, and their spouses spent hours pouring over volumes of information and travelling through cemeteries to visit ancestors.

Duane is a descendent of Marvel **CHURCH** father of, Harley B. **CHURCH** who was born 26 April 1821 in Lysander, Onondago Co., New York. Harley and his wife, who was Delia Mary **TRAIN**, born 10 Nov 1826

in Turnbridge, Orange Co., Vermont, were married on 19 Jan 1842 in Boston Twp., Ionia County, Michigan. They had a son, Calvin **CHURCH**, who was born 27 July 1854 at Boston Twp., Ionia County, Michigan.

Calvin **CHURCH** married Flora Jane **BOSTWICK**, born 9 Nov 1860 in Barry County, Michigan, on 15 May 1878 in Barry County.

Their daughter, Delia Mary **CHURCH** was born in Lowell, Kent County, Michigan on 15 Aug 1881. She was the wife of Edward Henery **GREEN** who was born 13 Sept 1877 in Otsego, Allegan County, Michigan. They were married 24 June 1903 in Page, Cass Co., North Dakota.

Their daughter, Lucille **GREEN** was the mother of Duane Norman **STRINDEN**. Lucille was born 22 Feb 1906 in North Dakota and married Norman I. **STRINDEN** on 9 Nov 1922 in Moorhead, Clay Co., Minnesota.

Duane continues to add to the original information, which qualified him as a member, and we now are on our second volume, as well as a c.d. full of valuable information on these families. Because of his untiring efforts, we have been able to add over 350 names to our index, which may be viewed on our web site! Thank you Duane.

You, too, can be a member of the First Families of Ionia County Society. The requirements are that you be a member of ICGS, be a descendent of an ancestor who resided in the county prior to December 31, 1880, and be able to prove the connection! If you are interested, contact Jim Moses, Chairperson of F.F.I.C. Society and he will be happy to help you apply.



## October is Family History Month.

Now is the time to begin to teach our youth about their heritage. You can begin by spending a little time with a youngster coloring and filling out their family tree. We have enclosed one in this newsletter especially for you.

The child's name goes on the trunk of the tree. Any brothers or sisters go in the signs below the trunk. The box to the left, above the child's name is for the father. The one on the right is for the mother. Above the father's name, in the box to the left is the grandfather's name, and next to it the paternal grandmother's name (maiden name of course). Above the mother's name is her parents, father on the left and mother on the right. You may include birth dates if you choose.

This is a very basic beginning to sharing your youngsters how to start their own family tree. It also gives you the opportunity to share those wonderful stories about each of the members on the tree. It is quality time spent with our youth as well as sharing the family history.

We would like you to bring your child's completed page for display at our next meeting in November. For those of you who do not live in the area, send it to us! We will be sure to return it afterwards. Be sure to complete the information in the form at the bottom of the page so that we can return them after our meeting.

We look forward to seeing LOTS of family trees!

Now available to  
members....

**HandiLens<sup>®</sup>**  
Bookmark/Wallet  
Magnifiers

The cost is \$2.50 for the bookmark size and \$2.00 for the wallet size. These are great when working on those hard to read census records, courts records, etc. Several members have already used them and can attest to how well they work! To order, complete order blank and return to: ICGS, 13051 Ainsworth Road, Route 3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849. **Make checks payable to ICGS.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

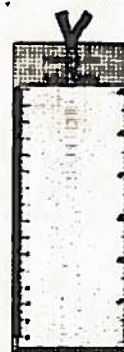
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Quantity: \_\_\_\_\_

Style:        Book Mark or Wallet (Circle one)

Help us cut costs by including a SASE! Thank you!

Bookmark  
Style  
7 ¼ x 2 ½"



Wallet Style  
2 ¼ x 3 ½"





Those interested in becoming a member of the I.C.G.S. complete the form below and send it with \$15.00 annual membership fee made payable to the Ionia County Genealogical Society. Mail it to: ICGS c/o Pam Swiler at 13051 Ainsworth Road, Route 3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849.

**Membership Information:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Home Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

List five Ionia County Surnames you are researching: \_\_\_\_\_

*Note: All information may be published in upcoming newsletters or placed on our internet web site unless you indicate in writing otherwise.*

**IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**  
c/o Pamela K. Swiler  
13051 Ainsworth Road  
Route 3  
Lake Odessa, MI 48849  
**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

**TO:**

**Don't miss  
Depot Day!  
July 31<sup>st</sup>  
Lake Odessa, MI**