Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library
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Springing into Summer, Remembering Our Veterans . . . and Beyond!
Curt B. Witcher
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This past weekend marked the unofficial beginning of summer, and before the next issue of this newsletter is published the official start of summer will have passed. So, how are those summer vacation plans coming? I hope they include some family reunions, heritage trails to ancestral home-places, and a research visit or two to the Historical Genealogy Department here in Fort Wayne. This is the perfect time to gather those family stories and advance your research so you will have much to talk about when the flurries fly and you're gathered around those holiday dinner tables.

A couple of days ago we had the opportunity to remember in a special way those who gave their lives in service of this great nation--a day to memorialize deceased veterans from our families, our communities, and the nation. Indeed, most genealogists have a very special regard for their military ancestors. I would like to invite you to memorialize your military ancestors in a unique and meaningful way. Between Memorial Day and Veterans' Day of 2006, I invite and encourage you to make digital copies (scanned as uncompressed ".tif" files on CD-ROMs or DVDs) of letters you may have written by your military ancestor(s) as well as discharge papers, awards, certificates and citations, pension papers, and other historical write-ups. Share them with other family members who may not have been so honored as to have access to this material earlier. And seriously consider sharing a copy with our Historical Genealogy Department. (Simply send the disk of military data to the attention of the Historical Genealogy Department at the address on the library's homepage.) The information would be well preserved and accessible to generations of researchers. What a neat way to pay tribute to one's military ancestors.

There has been a lot of recent activity at the FriendsOfAllenCounty.org website. The big announcement is that there are now more than ONE MILLION searchable Allen County, Indiana records at the website! Some of the more recent entries include names from ten more years of the earliest South Side High School yearbooks and the 1940 through 1983 Fort Wayne Catholic Cemetery burials. If you're doing Allen County, Indiana research, you really must peruse that website via the "Site Search" feature. You may be amazed at what you find. In addition, if you have Fort Wayne and Allen County, Indiana data you would like to contribute to the site, please let us know.

These are very exciting days for the Allen County Public Library and its Historical Genealogy Department! The work on the new main library building is progressing very nicely. Recently, library director, Jeff Krull, took a group of more than sixty local genealogists on a "hard-hat tour" of the building. It was a fantastic tour--and a wonderful way to get an up-close look at the expansion and all the improvements! It is really going to be an extraordinary place to conduct family history research! Tentative plans are for the main library to close sometime in early December of this year to move back to the newly renovated facilities, and open some time in January 2007. For those planning research trips in December 2006 and January of 2007, it is imperative that you check the library's homepage at <www.ACPL.Info> for the latest closing and opening announcements. Being subscribed to this e-zine is another excellent way of staying informed. Just think, a year from now, we will be in research heaven!

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Library of Congress G&M Land Ownership Maps
Timothy Dougherty
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The Historical Genealogy Department houses an impressive collection of land ownership maps for the United States. One particular set is reproduced on 1700 microfiche from originals housed in the Geography and Map Division of the Library of Congress. When originally issued, these maps provided more accuracy and detail than had previously existed and were popular among local farmers and merchants. Today's genealogist will find them important because many predate the earliest bound county atlases which they may have already consulted. The maps are invaluable in tracing family background and establishing connections between families, researching the rural landscape of years ago, and reconstructing the cultural life of a vanished era.

The original publication dates range from about 1850 to 1900 or so, though some are earlier. There is a portion of one map from Anne Arundel County, Maryland, for example, that covers 1639-1665. Coverage varies greatly by locality and time period. Arrangement of the collection is alphabetical by state, and by county within the state. Within each county, maps have been placed in chronological order. Most of the maps cover just one county (or a major part of it), but a few feature more than one.

These maps depict the ownership of land by outlining the land parcels that individuals owned. Additionally, the maps delineate township boundaries. The township and range numbers are generally included on the maps. Also illustrated are the chief natural features and man-made structures of the region: the rivers, lakes, vegetation, hills, mountains, valleys, minerals and mineral springs, roads, railroads, towns, villages, post-offices, principle bridges and canals, and the most remarkable public buildings, churches, mills and manufactories. Sometimes, towns or villages within a county are represented by clusters of blocks. In these cases, a separate map for each town or village may appear elsewhere on the microfiche.

The original maps were issued by a variety of publishers. They often include business directories, and sometimes other types of information. For instance, the Carroll County, Indiana map for 1897 lists county trustees by township, county commissioners, county officers and justices of the peace by P.O. address. The Blue Earth County, Minnesota map for 1879 has a section that lists the land owner's name and occupation by town or village. Some include elegantly rendered sketches of local buildings and farms. A cursory examination of several maps, however, revealed that inclusion and type of the additional material fluctuates widely from map to map.

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Researching the Early History of Fort Wayne
John D. Beatty
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Founded in 1794 at the confluence of three major rivers, Fort Wayne was a natural hub of transportation from the time of the French voyageurs to the early Federal period of the United States. It also became a regional center of the fur trade and a distribution center, through its Indian agency, for federal annuities paid to the Miami and Potawatomi tribes.

Conducting historical and genealogical research in the period prior to the opening of the federal land office and the formation of Allen County in 1824 can be challenging. There were no formal land, court, or probate records. Documents from Fort Wayne's Indian agency, including its letterbooks and account books, do offer glimpses of some of the residents and activities that surrounded the fort.

One of the essential sources is Bert Griswold's Fort Wayne, Gateway of the West, 1802-1813: Garrison Orderly Books, Indian Agency Account Book. Published in 1927, the volume contains a transcription of commandant orders and courts martial conducted by the garrison, as well as ledgers of supplies stocked at the agency. Occasionally, lists of debtors of the agency will appear, and the book is enhanced by a full name and subject index.

Two complimentary works are Gayle Thornbrough's Letter Book of the Indian Agency at Fort Wayne 1809-1815, and Nellie Robertson and Dorothy Riker's three-volume John Tipton Papers. Published in 1961 by the Indiana Historical Society, Thornbrough's volume contains a transcription of letters both written and received by the agents John Johnston and Benjamin Stickney. A few local names appear in these records, and there is a useful index, though much of the material focuses on Indian policy at the fort and offers a first-hand account of the tensions in the West that preceded the War of 1812.

The correspondence of John Tipton, who succeeded Stickney as agent, dates from 1809 to 1839 and includes the period when the agency was transferred from Fort Wayne to Logansport in 1828. Numerous references to Indiana residents, both white and Native American, appear in the documents, including an 1831 pay roll of Potawatomi that serves as a kind of census.

Because many of the early traders and residents of Fort Wayne were French Roman Catholics, the parish registers of St. Anne's Church in Detroit (under whose jurisdiction Fort Wayne was located in the early nineteenth century) are a useful source of vital records. Christian Denissen's Genealogy of the French Families of the Detroit River Region, 1701-1936 contains references to many of these families, though they are not always distinguished by their location.

Brian Leigh Dunnigan and Chris Cramton's Biographies of People Who Lived at or near Old Fort Wayne in 1816 employs many of the above works as well as additional sources to inventory all known residents of Fort Wayne in 1816 when the last of several forts was constructed. The work is also useful as a genealogical sourcebook and includes biographical information on garrison soldiers and sutlers, area Miami and Potawatomi tribal members, and French traders.

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Preservation Tip of the Month
Becky Schipper
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Scrapbooks that contain acidic documents and photos should be interleaved with buffered tissue. Store scrapbooks in pH-balanced, lignin-free flat file boxes to protect them from light and pollutants.

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HOTEL OF THE MONTH
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Each issue we will feature a local hotel, for visitors from out-of-town.

By special request, this month we feature a Fort Wayne campground. The Johnny Appleseed Campground is located on U.S. 930 (Coliseum Blvd.) in Fort Wayne behind Memorial Stadium. It is a 10-15 minute drive to the library. The campground's name is based on the fact that Johnny Appleseed is buried here. Among its features are 36 sites, with electricity, dump station, restroom/shower facilities, fishing and playground. Campsites are available on a first-come, first served basis. The campground will be closed to the public 11-20 September 2006 for the Johnny Appleseed Festival. For more information, call (260) 427-6720 during the camping season.

Fees for the 2006 camping season:
RV per night fee--$15
RV per night w/phone--$18
RV weekly fee--$90
RV weekly w/phone--$94
Tent per night fee--$12
Tent weekly fee--$73
Only 2 adults per site. An extra fee is charged for any additional adults ($3/adult per night).

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AREA CALENDAR OF EVENTS
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Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana (ACGSI)
Refreshments at 6:30, meeting at 7:00. Questions: contact Marge Graham, 260 672-2585 or gramar57@aol.com
Wednesday, June 14: American Legion Post 330, 330 Entrance Dr., New Haven.
The annual dinner will feature the presentation of First Families and Homesteaders certificates and the election of officers.

Computer Users Group
The computer group does not meeting during the summer. Join them again in September!

Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR)
First Wednesday of each month in the Genealogy Department 9am – 7pm.
Expert help from members of the DAR in becoming a member of that organization

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ACPL LIBRARIANS ON TOUR
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Ryan Taylor
15 June: Ottawa, Ontario. Canadian Library Association.

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DRIVING DIRECTIONS TO THE LIBRARY
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Wondering how to get to the library? Our exciting transition location is 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana. We will be at this location until late 2006. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Department.

To get directions from your exact location to 200 E. Berry, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:
http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?country=US&countryid=250&addtohistory=&searchtab=address&searchtype=address&address=200+E+Berry+St&city=Fort+Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802-2706&search=++Search++&finditform=1

From the South
Exit Interstate 69 at exit 102. Drive east on Jefferson Blvd. into downtown. Turn left on Barr Street to Berry Street. The library is located on the corner of Berry and Barr Streets.

From the North
Exit Interstate 69 at exit 112. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton, the library will be on your left when you cross Berry Street.

From the West
Using US 30:
Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Road. Coming up to an angled street (State Street.) make an angled left turn. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Left on Wayne Street. When you cross Clinton, the library will be on your left on Wayne Street.

Using US 24:
After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

From the East
Follow US 30 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Turn right on Barr Street. Turn left on Berry Street. The library is on your left on Berry Street.

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PARKING AT THE LIBRARY
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Lot in front of the library, east side

Available for short-term library parking. Limited to one hour.

Tippman Parking Garage
Clinton and Wayne Streets. Across from the library, however the skybridge is NOT accessible. Hourly parking, $1.25 per hour up to a maximum of $5.00 per day.

Park Place Lot
Covered parking on Barr Street at Main Street. This lot is one block away from the library. Hourly parking Monday through Friday, 9am to 6pm.

Street (metered) parking on Wayne Street and Berry Street.
On the street you plug the meters 8am – 5pm, weekdays only. It is free to park on the street after 5pm and on the weekends.

Visitor center/Grand Wayne center
Covered parking at Washington and Clinton Streets. This is the Hilton Hotel parking lot that also serves as a day parking garage. For hourly parking, 7am – 11 pm, charges are .50 for the first 45 minutes, then $1.00 per hour. There is a flat $2.00 fee between 5pm and 11pm.

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GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT QUERIES
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The Historical Genealogy Department hopes you find this newsletter interesting. Thank you for subscribing. We cannot, however, answer personal research emails written to the e-zine address. The department houses a Research Center that makes photocopies and conducts research for a fee.

If you have a general question about our collection, or are interested in the Research Center, please telephone the library and speak to a librarian who will be glad to answer your general questions or send you a research center form. Our telephone number is 260-421-1225. If you'd like to email a general information question about the department, please email: Genealogy@ACPL.Info. Look for a general genealogy query email address coming soon.

Publishing Note: This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Historical Genealogy Department, and is intended to enlighten readers about genealogical research methods as well as inform them about the vast resources of the Allen County Public Library. We welcome the wide distribution of this newsletter and encourage readers to forward it to their friends and societies. All precautions have been made to avoid errors. However, the publisher does not assume any liability to any party for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions, no matter the cause.

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If you do not want to receive this e-zine, please send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Ryan Taylor, editor