

Genealogy Gems: News from the Fort Wayne Library
No. 166, December 31, 2017

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What to Do in the New Year?

by Curt B. Witcher

The question is on many minds at the end of a year: what to do in the New Year? And particularly on the minds of genealogists and family historians is what to do in the New Year that will lead to much greater success in finding, preserving, and telling our family stories, and much more enjoyment during the process. Oh my goodness, many dozens of books and even more articles have been written on the subject. Yet we continue to search. Perhaps the answer rests in simply committing to doing something, and doing it right now. It seems to me that too much time is spent deciding upon the right activity and the right time to do that activity. There may be more wisdom than we think in the old Nike commercials that proclaimed, "Just do it!"

Shortly after Christmas, I, and assuredly many others, received an email from FamilySearch containing an article entitled, "15 International Family Traditions for Celebrating New Year's." It was interesting to read about various traditions from around the world and then to muse about the common threads one finds in many of them. <<https://media.familysearch.org/15-international-family-traditions-for-celebrating-new-years/>> I note with great interest how many traditions involve food. And for us as twenty-first century family historians, we certainly know the amazing role food and holiday meals have played and continue to play in the lives of our families.

When we think of family history and family story activities to persistently do throughout 2018, clearly food may be the common theme that gets us to act. Over this most recent holiday, a number of my immediate family mused about the smells of breakfast cooking, both in their younger years as well as throughout their lifetimes. Stories of the good smells lead to conversations about the

sounds of sizzling food on stove-tops, the clanking of spoons stirring coffee, the shuffle of sugar and flour containers being retrieved from, and then replaced to, their homes on counter tops and above stoves, and the familiar spring-release of the toaster offering up wonderfully warm, browned bread hungry for the butter, honey or jam that would soon be applied. A couple of sentences recorded about meals both past and present could be a great way to begin actively doing something every day, or at least several times a week, that would spark more thoughts, reflections, and investigations into family history and family story.

The FamilySearch piece ends by offering six ideas for creating your own traditions. One has to do with food (of course--a must!), one suggests DIY family projects to celebrate the year, one deals with using stories of traditions to spark more interest (everyone loves a good story!), and one has you adopting a tradition from an ancestor's country. You will need to consult that FamilySearch article to learn about the other two.

Another excellent way to really engage in 2018 is to sign-up for Amy Johnson Crow's "52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks." <<https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52-ancestors-in-52-weeks/>> She describes the engagement as "a series of weekly prompts designed to help you get past the overwhelm and the feeling of being stuck about what to write." It's worth your time to at least take a look--and it's free so there's really no risk involved. Well, maybe some risk--you risk getting past the fear of writing and the mental blocks we often have as we drum our fingers on the keyboard and stare at a blank screen.

The first issue of 2018 for a number of genealogical societies across the country contains lists and suggestions for pursuing and presenting more family stories. "The Prospector" from the Clark County, Nevada Genealogical Society features a ten item "must do" checklist on the first pages of their January/February 2018 newsletter. Some of the ideas presented to entice one to get active include reading a new book on the history of one of your ancestor's towns or counties and taking an online genealogy class.

To the Clark County list, and other really good lists we will see over the next several weeks, I would add two more suggestions. First, help found or join an ethnic society that deals with the history of one of your ancestors. (See an announcement further on in this newsletter about interest in forming a chapter of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies in Fort Wayne to serve Northeast Indiana.) Sharing research successes and challenges is both more engaging and more instructive than you might think. Second, make plans to attend the national family history conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana sponsored by the Federation of Genealogical Societies and hosted by the Allen County Public Library and its Genealogy Center. The dates are August 22-25, 2018. Reserve your rooms today at <<https://www.visitfortwayne.com/fgs2018/>>. It's a great New Year's gift to give yourself!

Search the Meyers Gazetteer
by Cynthia Theusch

Have you ever struggled with using the Meyers Orts- und Verkehrs-Lexikon des Deutschen Reichs? This work, usually called "Meyers" for short, is considered the most comprehensive historical

gazetteer of the former German Empire. First published in Germany in 1912, it was reprinted in a popular edition by the Genealogical Publishing Company in 2000 (GC 943 W93m). While nearly every town, small village, and hamlet is listed, the set poses many challenges for its use. The typeface is in a Gothic German script, and it uses many abbreviations that make it difficult, especially for English-speaking users, to translate. New help for using this difficult source is finally at hand.

Earlier in December, I read Amy Johnson Crow's blog entitled "Finding German Ancestors: Tips from James Beidler." <https://www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/>. At the end of the blog was a link to a new online resource, www.meyersgaz.org. This link takes you to a website containing an annotated version of Meyers Gazetteer that helps you locate all of the information it contains about towns and villages in Germany and Poland. The new version makes it much easier to search than ever before.

At the Search screen, there is a brief "help paragraph" explaining how to do a search in the gazetteer. You can use multiple wildcards in a search, which can be helpful when a particular place name is misspelled in a record. My search was for Pop*lau. I received four results on Poppelau. The correct result was Poppelau, Kolonie Kr. Oppeln, and was listed as D. (village). I clicked on it, and the next screen showed the actual entry found in Meyers Orts. If I clicked on it, I would see the whole page in PDF. Just below this is a current map showing the location of the place. Clicking on this map will toggle you to a historical map of Germany. Drag the little yellow figure onto the map. You will find blue solid lines or blue dots. The solid lines allow you to move through the area as it looks today. The dots will show you well-known landmarks in the area.

Below the map is the translation of the German entry and other details of governmental, administrative, and church entities. Poppelau was located in the German province of Schlesien or Silesia. Following the translation is the "Detail" explaining each segment of the entry.

Click on "Ecclesiastical," and you will find a list of places of worship. This step is crucial for genealogists, since the parish records you need to find your ancestor may be located in a nearby town and not the village in which he or she was born or lived. The resulting list includes both Catholic, Lutheran, and Reformed parishes, as well as Jewish synagogues for each village in the area. The next section, "Related," lists any associated references, though the space is often blank.

To help you in your research, there is also an Email section, where you can add your email to a list of others researching a particular place. By contacting others, you might find distant relatives or other researchers who can assist you in doing research in that area.

This web site is a great way to learn more about the areas where German and Polish ancestors lived, and it provides valuable links to help you with researching them.

In Their Words: A Genealogist's Translation Guide to Polish, German, Latin, and Russian Documents
by Allison DePrey Singleton

Genealogical research in a foreign language can be incredibly difficult. Alas! Some researchers are apt to give up when faced with a brick wall of this magnitude. However, there are tools available to

assist in doing genealogical research in unfamiliar languages. If you are doing online research, you can use a translating tool such as Google Translate, and if you use the Google Chrome browser, it will automatically offer to translate websites in other languages. This feature is only helpful to a point. If you identify a document that may hold the key to a brick wall problem, it could be an item in a foreign language that is not translated. At this point, you need other tools to help. There are plenty of them online, but sometimes the best resources are still books. Online translators will use modern terms and slang, whereas books can provide multiple definitions for the words in question.

Some of these guides are incredibly helpful and important, containing the terms commonly used in that language in historical and genealogical records. For example, the current translation using an online translator tool for the German word "Hut" is hat. Unfortunately, that term does not make sense in context of an historical epitaph on a gravestone. By using a book that references older, archaic terms, we find a better translation, "protection." Thus, in the context of the epitaph, "resting calmly under God's hat" is properly translated as "resting calmly under God's protection."

This example underscores why we still need guidebooks to assist us with our research. An excellent example is the newly-published work, *In Their Words: A Genealogist's Translation Guide to Polish, German, Latin, and Russian Documents*, volume IV: *German* (New Britain, CT: Language and Lineage Press, 2017) GC 929 Sh3in. The authors, William F. Hoffman and Jonathan D. Shea, do an excellent job of walking the reader through research in German records with references to grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, names, and their equivalents, all of which provide a better understanding of German genealogical research.

Much of the book explores the diversity of records you can find through an understanding of the German language. One section focuses on locating records in America that can lead back to an immigrant ancestor's place of origin. Another examines the variety of German-language documents, such as church records and newspapers, created in North America. Many immigrants moved to their new country without ever giving up their language, customs, and way of life. Hoffman and Shea devote another section to understanding local German town records and how to access them. They offer practical assistance in writing to the local record repository in the town of origin. Finally, the authors discuss the variety of German-language documents one can discover in Europe, including vital, church, and governmental records.

Unfamiliar languages can be daunting, and researchers can easily become discouraged in trying to translate them accurately and navigate them effectively. It takes a carefully-written and well-indexed book like *In Their Words* to provide the necessary assistance. Viel Erfolg!

Technology Tip of the Month--Old photographs: Tintypes
by Kay Spears

Now it's time to talk about the Tintype. Probably of all the old photographs from the nineteenth century, the tintype is the kind of picture you will have the most of in your collection. Why? Well, the tintype was easier to produce and cost a lot less than either the ambrotype or the daguerreotype. The tintype can be recognized because it was produced on a thin piece of metal. And you know it is metal because a magnet can stick to it. They come in a variety of sizes; the first ones

were usually encased in a frame and case, just like the ambrotype and daguerreotype. Later, photographers exchanged those expensive cases for paper frames. One of the problems I have run into with tintypes is that they have a tendency to darken over the years, but with the help of Photoshop those images can be restored. You must remember that when photography was in its infancy, numerous inventors competed to come up with the best means of capturing an image. The tintype was one of those inventions that had a number of men doing various things with different chemicals. This may be why you might have heard that the tintype is also called a ferrotype or a melainotype. The tintype process that we know today was patented in 1856 by Hamilton Smith in Ohio. By the way, tintypes are not really tin. They are made out of iron plates that have been coated with a black lacquer.

The Civil War was responsible for promoting the widespread use of the tintype. Families could easily take photos of loved ones to send off to war. Soldiers could respond by having their photos taken by photographers with moveable studios. The tintype became a pretty big business in the United States in 1860 and lasted until the early 1900s, although to a lesser degree.

Tintypes are a little bit easier to preserve than ambrotypes or daguerreotypes. If the tintype has been bent, you should not try to flatten it. Put it away in an archival box. Other tintypes may be stored in paper or plastic envelopes - just make sure they are of archival quality. Tintypes may be gently cleaned with a brush, but under no circumstances should water be used - that could cause rust.

As with all old photographs, tintypes should be scanned, then stored away in envelopes inside of archival boxes. The boxes can then be labeled and stored - away from light sources and dramatic temperature changes.

Technology Tip of the Month: Old photographs: Carte de Visite aka CDV

Quick-Tip of the Month for Preservation--Magnetic Photo Albums

By Kay Spears

Those were the days. Who can forget pet rocks, casual suits, Stayin' Alive - Stayin' Alive, mood rings, and ...magnetic photo albums. What were we thinking? If you have a magnetic photo album, get your photographs out of it. There is nothing magnetic about it. The reason those photographs stick to the pages is because the pages have chemical glue on them. And, what do we say about glue? Glue - bad.

Most of the photographs should come out of those pages easily, but sometimes there is a problem, and there is a chance that you might tear the photograph. Here are a few things you can do - carefully. You may try to insert a micro spatula behind the photo and gently pull up the photo. Some people have also used a piece of dental floss, but be careful with the dental floss. Dental floss can cut paper, so if you are using it, make sure the floss is pulled taut. If you see that it's not going to work, then stop. Once you have removed the photos from the album, scan, record, and store them. Do not store them in the same box as the album - chemicals can still emit fumes which can be destructive to photos.

PERSI Gems

by Adam Barrone and Michael Hudson

Northern Indiana is blanketed with snow and our low temperatures are near zero. If you are in a cold region and looking for a winter-friendly activity, consider gathering near a fireplace to share old stories. Watching decades-old family movies can warm the heart. Instead of going out into frigid weather, busy yourself by catching up on genealogy projects. While the graves of our forebears are covered in snow and ice, our computers and data-entry projects await. Our file cabinets are full of research notes needing review. Piles of papers beg to be sorted. Photos need labeling. PERSI needs searching. Links need clicking:

<http://search.findmypast.com/search/periodical-source-index>

The Periodical Source Index (PERSI) cites articles from many cold places. Antarctica was crossed on skis. Liquor was smuggled in Alaska. Snowballs flew in Coventry. An elderly English woman found a questionable solution to fend off the cold:

Almost true tales of the Yukon, Dog-Gone Tale
Yukoner Magazine (Whitehorse, Can.), n.3, Feb. 1997

Caught by the snow, 1908, Mary Hewitt
Prospector (Antelope Valley Gen. Soc., CA), v.15n.1, Feb. 1993

Cecilie Skog interview, crossed Antarctica on skis, 2010
Viking (Sons of Norway, MN), v.107n.5, May 2010

Daily life in a Klondike cabin
Californians (Grizzly Bear Publishing Co., CA), v.4n.1, Jan. 1986

Fred Tasker hospitalised, age 7, men with dagger-canes angry about snowballs, 1895
Coventry (Eng.) Family History Society Journal, v.1n.2, Mar. 1995

Gentlewoman of 72 years takes to her bed a 23-year-old fellow, to defend herself from the cold, 1741
Essex (Eng.) Family Historian, n.123, Mar. 2007

Liquor smuggling in AK, 1867-99
Pacific Northwest Quarterly, v.66n.4, Oct. 1975

Nome's first aerial flight, 1920
Alaska History, v.15n.2, Fal. 2000

Passenger arrivals in Anchorage, 1915-16
Anchorage Genealogical Society Quarterly, v.10n.2, May 1999

Utkeagvik Presbyterian Church, Barrow
American Presbyterians, v.67n.1-2, Spr. 1989

History Tidbits: *Gee Whiz! Where do some of our sayings come from?*
by Allison DePrey Singleton

Have you ever taken the time to wonder about the origins and etymology of some of the sayings we use every day? There is usually a reason behind these sayings based in history and logic. We are going to explore just a few of them to discover the origin of some of the wacky things we say.

Bite the Bullet - This saying means to accept pain or hardship. The most common and accepted explanation is that since there was no anesthesia before surgery during battle, the surgeon had patients bite down on a bullet to deal with pain. Another explanation is the process of biting the paper ammunition cartridges to release the powder. The men were biting the bullets to go into battle.

Running Amok - The meaning is to be unruly or exhibit wild behavior. The term began as a medical term to describe otherwise normal tribesmen from Indonesia and Southeast Asia with mental disorders that caused them to go on seemingly-random killing sprees. It is still a diagnosed medical condition despite the term being commandeered into the English language with a milder meaning than the medical term.

Let the Cat out of the Bag - The meaning is to reveal a secret. There are two plausible origins for this saying. The most common and more likely of the two refers to livestock fraud: the process of buying a suckling pig in a bag and opening it up to find a cat. The saying in several other languages actually translates to some variation of buying a cat in a bag. The other plausible origin derives from the cat 'o nine tails or whip used by sailors, which could have been stored in a bag.

Break a Leg - Oddly enough, break a leg means good luck in the theater. Due to all of the superstitions in theater, actually wishing someone good luck is considered bad luck. Therefore, wishing someone bad luck, like breaking a leg, is more suitable, since the opposite will occur.

Don't Throw the Baby Out with the Bathwater - This proverb is meant to teach us not to get rid of something valuable while discarding rubbish. The common misbelief is that it is something that actually happened and not a proverb. The false story holds that in the 1500s, the entire family would bathe in the same tub of water and by the end, it would be so dirty that the baby would be lost in it. Let's begin with dispelling the notion that enough babies were drowning in dirty bath water or being forgotten in it. That is just ludicrous! More plausible is the view that the saying is a proverb like "Two wrongs don't make a right" or "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." The proverb, "Don't throw the baby out with the bathwater" did make its appearance during the 1500s, but that is the only truth in the matter.

A Baker's Dozen - This phrase refers to thirteen or even fourteen of something. The phrase originates in medieval times with the Assize of Bread and Ale law that regulated the weight and

quality of bread and beer. In order to not be fined, flogged, or punished for selling underweight bread, bakers would add an extra loaf or two.

Fly off the Handle - To fly off the handle means to lose control. The handle in question is an axe handle and refers to a loose axe-head flying off. It was first used by the American writer Thomas C Haliburton in 1843.

Gee Whiz! - Gee Whiz is a minced oath or exclamation. It is actually shorthand for Jesus and was first used in the late 19th century.

Gadzooks! - Gadzooks is also a minced oath or exclamation. It is shorthand for God's hooks, referring to the nails on the cross and was first used in the 17th century.

DNA and Genealogy Interest Group

Have you done a DNA test for genealogical purposes? Do you completely understand the results you received? Do you need advice in interpreting your results? Are you interested and wonder what the best test is for you? Come to the DNA & Genealogy Interest Group Meeting on the 1st Thursday of the month from 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. to share and learn from each other! The next meeting is Thursday, January 4, 2018. Come in and share!

Start the New Year with WinterTech!

In January, our WinterTech series offers "Finding Free Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps Online," on Wednesday, January 10, 2018, 2:30 pm - 3:30 pm, in the Discovery Center. Created to provide insurance agents information concerning the areas for which they would offer insurance coverage, the Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps are a valuable resource for historians and genealogists who wish to learn about the neighborhoods in which their ancestors lived and conducted business. Many maps have been digitized and are online at free websites, but finding these resources can be challenging. In this session, Delia Cothrun Bourne will demonstrate what the Sanborn maps can provide and techniques for locating them. And remember, WinterTech is offered in the afternoons of the Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana's monthly meeting, so stay to hear ACGSI Members present "Great Discoveries and Unique Ancestors," in Meeting Room A at 7:00 p.m.

Melissa Tennant will finish the series with "On the Record: African American Newspapers" in February. For more information about each session, see the WinterTech brochure at <http://www.genealogycenter.org/docs/winterTech20172018> . To register for any of these free events, call 260-421-1225 or email Genealogy@ACPL.Info.

Interested in Jewish Genealogy?

Work is underway to establish a local chapter of the International Association of Jewish Genealogical Societies to serve Northeast Indiana. Activities would include exchanging ideas,

working on projects of interest, and connecting to the broader Jewish genealogical community. If you are interested in becoming a member, please send an email confirming your interest to the Allen County Public Library' Genealogy Center at Genealogy@ACPL.info.

Staying Informed about Genealogy Center Programming

Do you want to know what we've got planned? Are you interested in one of our events, but forget? We are now offering email updates for The Genealogy Center's programming schedule. Don't miss out! Sign up at <http://goo.gl/forms/THcVOwAabB>.

Area Calendar of Events

Allen County Genealogical Society of Indiana, Inc. (ACGSI) Monthly Program
January 10, 2018 - Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, refreshments & networking begins at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m. ACGSI Members will present "Great Discoveries and Unique Ancestors."

Mary Penrose Wayne DAR Chapter Library Help Day for Prospective Members
January 3, 2018 - The Genealogy Center, Allen County Public Library, 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 10 - 4 p.m. Members of the Mary Penrose Wayne Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution will provide help to those interested in joining the D.A.R. who would like advice and assistance in their research. No appointment is necessary.

The George R. Mather Lecture Series
January 7, 2018 - The History Center, 302 East Berry Street, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 2 p.m.
Jason Kissel presents "ACRES Land Trust: Preserving Places and Their History."

Driving Directions to the Library

Wondering how to get to the library? Our location is 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, in the block bordered on the south by Washington Boulevard, the west by Ewing Street, the north by Wayne Street, and the east by the Library Plaza, formerly Webster Street. We would enjoy having you visit the Genealogy Center.

To get directions from your exact location to 900 Library Plaza, Fort Wayne, Indiana, visit this link at MapQuest:

<http://www.mapquest.com/maps/map.adp?formtype=address&addtohistory=&address=900%20Webster%20St&city=Fort%20Wayne&state=IN&zipcode=46802%2d3602&country=US&geodiff=1>

›From the South

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 302. Drive east on Jefferson Boulevard into downtown. Turn left on Ewing Street. The Library is one block north, at Ewing Street and Washington Boulevard.

Using US 27:

US 27 turns into Lafayette Street. Drive north into downtown. Turn left at Washington Boulevard and go five blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the North

Exit Interstate 69 at exit 312. Drive south on Coldwater Road, which merges into Clinton Street. Continue south on Clinton to Washington Boulevard. Turn right on Washington and go three blocks. The Library will be on the right.

>From the West

Using US 30:

Drive into town on US 30. US 30 turns into Goshen Ave. which dead-ends at West State Blvd. Make an angled left turn onto West State Blvd. Turn right on Wells Street. Go south on Wells to Wayne Street. Turn left on Wayne Street. The Library will be in the second block on the right.

Using US 24:

After crossing under Interstate 69, follow the same directions as from the South.

>From the East

Follow US 30/then 930 into and through New Haven, under an overpass into downtown Fort Wayne. You will be on Washington Blvd. when you get into downtown. Library Plaza will be on the right.

Parking at the Library

At the Library, underground parking can be accessed from Wayne Street. Other library parking lots are at Washington and Webster, and Wayne and Webster. Hourly parking is \$1 per hour with a \$7 maximum. ACPL library card holders may use their cards to validate the parking ticket at the west end of the Great Hall of the Library. Out of county residents may purchase a subscription card with proof of identification and residence. The current fee for an Individual Subscription Card is \$70.

Public lots are located at the corner of Ewing and Wayne Streets (\$1 each for the first two half-hours, \$1 per hour after, with a \$4 per day maximum) and the corner of Jefferson Boulevard and Harrison Street (\$3 per day).

Street (metered) parking on Ewing and Wayne Streets. 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 garage 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.

Genealogy Center Queries

The Genealogy Center 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.

Publishing Note

This electronic newsletter is published by the Allen County Public Library's Genealogy Center, 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 follow the link at the very bottom of the issue of *Genealogy Gems* you just received or send an email to kspears@acpl.lib.in.us with "unsubscribe e-zine" in the subject line.

Curt B. Witcher and John D. Beatty, *CG*, co-editors