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Indiana News

3 MAY 2013

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IGS Welcomes New Board Members

Thank you to all the IGS members who participated in our recent election of officers and district directors for the southern tier. We extend a warm welcome to the new members of our board:

- Ron Darrah of Indianapolis was elected as the new Corresponding Secretary. Darrah is a frequent speaker and served as the IGS Central District Director at one time. He is also the chair of our two lineage societies, the Society of Civil War Families of Indiana and the Territorial Guard Society of Indiana.
- Julie Schlesselman of Brookville was elected as the Southeast District Director. Schlesselman has been the Local History and Genealogy Department Manager at the Franklin County Public Library District since 2005, and is also on the board of the Franklin County Cemetery Commission. She also serves as the Indiana County Genealogist for Franklin County.

2014 IGS Conference

Thanks again to all those who attended our annual conference in Bloomington! The Indiana Genealogical Society's next conference will be held on Saturday, April 5, 2014 at the [Allen County Public Library](#) in Fort Wayne. J. Mark Lowe will be the featured speaker. He will offer sessions on:

- Pioneers of the Frontier: Using Online Newspapers to Find Early Settlers
- Quick, Complete and Accurate: Document Analysis for Researchers
- Finding Freedmen Marriage Records
- Out On A Limb: Trapped by Bad Research

Other sessions at the conference:

- Apps & Programs for Genealogy - Dawne Slater-Putt
- Cousin Bait: Using the Internet to Reel In Family Treasures - Tina Lyons
- Writing & Publishing Family History, from a Technological Perspective - Rachel Popma

- Scanning, Digitizing and Records Preservation: High Tech Results on a Low Tech Budget - Diana Biddle

More details, including registration, will be offered at a later date. Start making your plans now to attend.

Indiana Marriage Index Update

FamilySearch has updated the [Indiana marriage index 1811-1959](#) that is in progress. Entries from Shelby County, Starke County and Switzerland County have been added, bringing to 57 the total number of counties that are searchable. There are 10 other counties that have digital images of their records available for browsing, but are not yet indexed.

Social Security Death Index Update

Last month Dick Eastman's newsletter included an [update](#) on federal efforts to restrict access to the Death Master File, which is the basis for the Social Security Death Index.

Access to Public Records

The U.S. Supreme Court [recently ruled](#) on a case in Virginia concerning a request made under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). The case concerned a records request made to state officials by an out-of-state resident, and the court ruled in favor of the state's granting requests only for Virginia residents.

But the court's unanimous decision also included some troubling signals for those interested in maintaining overall access to public records. For example, the decision said that access to public records is not fundamental, with one justice saying the state had the right to stop people from "mucking around" in their records. They also cited the common myth that most of the information is already available on the Internet, anyway.

Hendricks County Probate Records Project



Much thanks to all those who came to our April 6 work session at the Danville library! Among the volunteers were several people from the Brown County Historical Society, who are preparing to work on their own records project (it was fun to compare notes on how similar/different each county's records are). We unfolded 225 probate packets - an all-time record for this project!

Want to see what the fuss is about? Our next work session will be on **Saturday, July 27** from 10 am to 4 pm Eastern at [Plainfield Public Library](#). Please sign up via the library's [events calendar](#) or

contact their Indiana Room - phone (317) 839-6602 extension 2114.

IGS Database Additions

We recently added these premium databases to the [Members-Only](#) area:

[County Records:](#)

- Directory of Selected Residents of Franklin County, Indiana (1876)
- Directory of Selected Residents of Randolph County, Indiana (1876)
- Directory of Selected Residents of Union County, Indiana (1876)
- Directory of Selected Residents of Wayne County, Indiana (1876)

[Miscellaneous Records:](#)

- Criminal Fines Reimbursed by the Governor of Indiana (1852)
- Criminal Fines Reimbursed by the Governor of Indiana (1854)
- Criminal Fines Reimbursed by the Governor of Indiana (1856)

- Prisoners Pardoned by the Governor of Indiana (1852)
- Prisoners Pardoned by the Governor of Indiana (1854)
- Prisoners Pardoned by the Governor of Indiana (1856)

In April, we added premium databases about Purdue University alumni 1875-1904, veterans admitted to the Indiana State Soldiers Home in 1896 and Hendricks County old age pension applications 1934-1936.

FOUND: Tippecanoe County Photo

Helen Louise Emerson



Shelly Cardiel (e-mail cardiels@comcast.net) is seeking descendants of a Tippecanoe County family to give a photo that she found. The photo is of Helen Louise EMERSON, age 4 1/2, taken in 1889 at the Phillips studio in Lafayette, Indiana. Cardiel has done limited research, which shows that Helen Emerson was born in 1885 in Indiana to Harry Waldo Emerson (born 1855) and Fanny Louise ANDREWS (born 1860). Helen had siblings Thomas W. Emerson and Harry A. Emerson who were born in 1886 and 1888, respectively.

For details on what is known about this family, please read our [blog post](#).

Vigo County Marriage Index

Vigo County (county seat Terre Haute) is not one of the counties indexed in FamilySearch's [Indiana marriage index 1811-1959](#), although the digital images of their marriage records can be browsed in this database. The Vigo County Public Library does have a [Vigo County marriage](#)

[index 1818-1958](#) that can be searched. Entries in their index also include a link to the digital image of the marriage record (PDF format).

Copies of marriage records can be requested from the [Vigo County Clerk](#).

Indiana Offers Digitizing Grants

The Indiana State Historic Records Advisory Board (SHRAB) is offering \$5,000 grants to Indiana non-profit organizations and local government entities. The grants (which must have local funds to match) are to help digitize historical Indiana records, and/or to hire a consultant to analyze local records collections. The deadline to apply is May 31, 2013. Read their [press release](#) and download the [application & guidelines](#).

Uncommon Records: Registrations of Women

Harold Henderson's Midwestern Microhistory blog has a fascinating [post](#) about an uncommon records group that has been found in northern Indiana - registrations of women. The registrations were done in 1918 as part of the effort to mobilize civilians for World War I, and the registration cards included their employer's name and their level of education completed. These registrations were done across the county, but it is not known what happened to the records of other Indiana counties.

County Roundup

Some genealogical and local history news items from around the state:

DAVIESS COUNTY

--The remains of a Washington, Indiana resident who served in the Korean War [have been identified](#). Don C. Faith, Jr. was a Lieutenant Colonel in the Army and he will be buried in Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia.

DECATUR COUNTY

--South Park Cemetery in Greensburg was the [victim of vandalism](#). The tombstones that were damaged date back to 1836 and also include the marker for a Civil War veteran.

ELKHART COUNTY

--The [Elkhart County Historical Museum](#) in Elkhart [recently finished an expansion project](#), which includes a library to house their local history collection.

GIBSON COUNTY

--Gibson County [marked its bicentennial](#) last month. The county was officially organized on April 1, 1813 and several counties in southern Indiana were later formed from it.

HENDRICKS COUNTY

--Avon residents are [attempting to identify and mark](#) where the

Merritt family cemetery is, several years after the tombstones (but not the remains) were removed. There is also a [YouTube video](#) showing satellite imagery of the location and detailing past issues.

RIPLEY COUNTY

--FamilySearch has added a database for [Greendale Cemetery](#) in Osgood. The database consists of digital images of cemetery records, which are not yet indexed but can be browsed. These records are from the Greendale Cemetery Association and cover 1861 through 2007.

NOTE: You must sign in with a free FamilySearch account in order to view these images.

Did You Know: Causes of Insanity

The field of medicine in the 1800's was not as advanced as we know it today. That was especially true when it came to mental health. A 1901 annual report from the State Hospital for the Insane in Evansville listed the various causes of insanity in their patients, including:

- cigarette smoking
- influenza
- epilepsy
- sunstroke
- religious excitement
- menopause
- childbed fever

Source: *Sixth Biennial Report of the Southern Indiana Hospital for the Insane For The Biennial Period Ending October 31, 1900* (Indianapolis: William B. Burford, 1901).

Research Tip: Government Hospital for the Insane

Do you have an ancestor with military service (particularly the Civil War) that you can't find a burial location for? If so, you might want to check the Government Hospital for the Insane in Washington, DC - later renamed St. Elizabeth's Hospital. It was a federal psychiatric hospital that was founded in 1855 by Dorothea Dix. At its height, it had 8,000 patients. Many Indiana veterans were sent there for treatment and were supposedly buried in the hospital cemetery. FindAGrave has [partial listings](#) of the two halves of the cemetery. Wikipedia has an [entry](#) on the history of the hospital.

Indiana Legislature Settles African-American's Estate (1850)

In the early years of Indiana's statehood, the Indiana General Assembly was often called upon to settle matters that were in dispute at the local level. One act they passed on January 16, 1850 was to settle the estate of an African-American resident. This date is noteworthy, as it was shortly before the 1851 state constitution was passed, which made it illegal for any more African-Americans to enter the state.

According to the legislature's Acts of 1850, Chapter 149, Samuel Brown

died intestate with no known heirs. It was Brown's intention to bequeath to Cain Dockry, a mulatto of Jackson County, all of his real and personal property. Therefore the General Assembly ordered the administrator of Brown's estate to deliver to Dockry Brown's title in the southeast 1/4 of the northeast 1/4 (as well as the northeast 1/4 of the southeast 1/4) of Section 13, Township 5 North, Range 4 East. The administrator was also ordered to hand over all money which may be left from Brown's estate, but in order to receive it, Dockry must first give a bond with good security in the sum of double the amount of the estate.

Source: *Local laws of the State of Indiana, passed at the thirty-fourth session of the General Assembly* (Indianapolis: John D. Defrees, 1850).

World War I in the News

As 2014 approaches (the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the war), the United Kingdom is [working to repair the tombstones](#) of the soldiers at British Commonwealth cemeteries around the world. Those tombstones that are beyond repair are being replaced, with identical inscriptions - machines are going through 50 tons of stone per week.

Civil War in the News

--A relic hunter [recently returned a Civil War soldier's ring](#) to the man's 5th-great grandson. The ring, belonging to Levi Schlegel, was unearthed at a construction site in Fredericksburg, Virginia thanks to the use of a metal detector.

--Confederate General Andrew "Stonewall" Jackson's accidental shooting in 1863 [may have been because of a full moon](#). Astronomers have published an article detailing their theory about how the light from the full moon may have prevented his soldiers from seeing him, leading to the accidental shooting (which proved fatal).

Legal Terms Explained: Noli Pros

Noli Pros is an abbreviation for "Nolle Prosequi," which is a Latin term that roughly translates as "unwilling to pursue" or "unwilling to prosecute." This notation can be found in criminal or civil court cases, particularly in the docket entries. In criminal cases, it means that the prosecuting attorney has dropped the charges; in civil cases, it means the plaintiff has abandoned their cause.

Images of America Books

Images of America book covers



Arcadia Publishing has a series of books, called *Images of America*, consisting of compilations of historic photos. These historic photos can be of one town, a whole county, or a particular subject (such as African-Americans or Crown Hill Cemetery in Indianapolis). Often these

historic photos come from the collections of local libraries and genealogical/historical societies. Indiana has [numerous titles](#). These books can be purchased from all the major book retailers, as well as directly from the publisher. Local groups sometimes sell copies to help raise money.

Genealogy on TV

Megan Smolenyak has an [article](#) detailing the genealogy-related shows that will be appearing on TV in the next year. In addition to the return of "Finding Your Roots" on PBS and "Who Do You Think You Are?" on its new home, TLC, there will be a new show on PBS, "Genealogy Roadshow," and a fictional series, "Family Tree," on HBO.

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