



INDIANA - *Crossroads To Your Past!*

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Indiana News - February 2018

Welcome to the February 2018 edition of Indiana News! This e-mail is sent once a month and focuses on news and resources relating to genealogy research in Indiana. You are receiving this e-mail either because you signed up on our website to receive it or because you are a member of the Indiana Genealogical Society.

MISSED AN ISSUE? Past issues of this e-mail going back to 2010 are available for [download](#) as PDF files.

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IGS seminar in Jeffersonville

The Indiana Genealogical Society's will hold a [Society Management Seminar](#) on **Friday, April 27, 2018** at [St. Paul's Episcopal Church](#) in Jeffersonville, as the lead-up to our conference.

This year's seminar will focus on lineage societies, with sessions on the Daughters of the American Revolution and Ron Darrah using the Society of Civil War Families of Indiana and the Territorial Guard Society of Indiana as examples of how local organizations can start their own lineage societies.



The seminar costs just \$5 per person. Register [online](#) or print out & mail in our [registration form](#).

IGS conference in New Albany

Registration is open for the Indiana Genealogical Society's annual [conference](#), to be held on **Saturday, April 28, 2018** on the campus of Indiana University Southeast in New Albany, Indiana.

The theme is "From Albany to New Albany," and Jane. E. Wilcox from the New York Genealogical and Biographical Society will be the featured speaker. There will be sessions on:

- New York city and state vital records

- New York emigration/immigration and migration
- Sources for female ancestors
- Kentucky vital records law
- Kentucky Civil War ancestors
- Sons of the American Revolution
- Allen County Public Library's collections and access

Pre-registration is \$30 for Indiana Genealogical Society members, \$35 for non-members. Register [online](#) or print out & mail in our [registration form](#).



FindMyPast adds Catholic Church records for New York City parishes

In our [February 2017](#) e-mail, we told you that FindMyPast was creating a Catholic Heritage Archive of digitized records from parishes, with the records from Philadelphia parishes for 1757 through 1916 already online. Now comes [news](#) that FindMyPast - in partnership with the Archdiocese of New York - has added 8 million digitized records from 230 parishes in the New York City area.



The records can only be accessed with a subscription to FindMyPast - for more information on their Catholic Heritage Archive, visit www.findmypast.com/catholicrecords

Indiana State Library to hold extended hours for research

The [Indiana State Library](#) in Indianapolis will hold "Genealogy for Night Owls", an extended-hours research event, on Wednesday, April 18 from 4:30 to 8 pm.



This free event is your chance to get in extended hours of genealogy research. Orientation tours of the library will be given, and you can also have a one-on-one session with these experts: Daughters of the American Revolution; Indiana Chapter of Palatines to America; professional genealogist Betty Warren; Indiana African American Genealogy Group; Central Indiana DNA Interest Group.

[Registration](#) is required - the deadline to register is April 16.

County Roundup

Here are some genealogy-related news items from around the state.

NOTE: Items on other websites often change or are removed without notice - we apologize if you encounter a link that no longer works.

CLARK COUNTY:

In our [November 2017](#) e-mail we told you about how road construction near the Stewart-Emery Cemetery in Clarksville had uncovered the remains of 17 unidentified graves dating back to the 1800's. In February the remains were [reburied](#) at Walnut Ridge Cemetery in Jeffersonville, with a memorial service attended by some of their descendants.

CLAY COUNTY:

The Clay County Genealogy Library recently received a [donation](#) of a quilt covered with local names. The quilt was made in 1896 for the marriage of Lucia Belle Girton and Rev. W.W. Pack and the names of their friends and relatives were stitched into it. The quilt was donated by their grandson and great-grandson.

MARION COUNTY:

The Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church was built in Indianapolis in 1869 and is scheduled to be [converted](#) into a hotel in 2019. Historians are creating a virtual [tour](#) of the church to preserve its history.

PORTER COUNTY:

A Heirlooms Reunited [blog post](#) details an autograph album of students who attended the Northern Indiana Normal & Business Institute in Valparaiso from the 1870's and 1880's. The autograph album belonged to Emma C. Lang of Mishawaka.

SULLIVAN COUNTY:

The *Indianapolis Star* has an [article](#) about a coal mine explosion near Sullivan in 1925 that killed 51 people. The explosion at the City Coal Company mine was the deadliest in Indiana history.

VANDERBURGH COUNTY:

The *Courier & Press* has an [article](#) about the history of the Wabash & Erie Canal in Evansville and how it contributed to the early development of the town.

IGS adds 16 new databases for members

We now have **2,117** total databases for members, including at least 9 databases for each of Indiana's 92 counties.

Here are all the premium databases (accessible only to IGS members) that we've added recently:

College Records:

- Franklin College, Franklin - students (1943).
- Indiana University, Bloomington - graduates (1910).
- Purdue University, West Lafayette - graduates (1912).
- Tri-State College, Angola - graduates (1917). NOTE: Tri-State College later changed its name to Trine University.

County Records:

- Boone County - township schools graduates (1913).
 - Elkhart County - Elkhart High School students & teachers (1923); alumni (1922).
 - Fountain County - Veedersburg High School students & teachers (1928).
 - Jefferson County - Madison High School students & teachers (1950).
 - Tipton County - Windfall High School students & teachers (1923).
 - Wayne County - Hagerstown High School students & teachers (1944).
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Legal terms explained: Rescission

Rescission is a form of the verb "to rescind." It occurs when a contract is made void by a court ruling, often because there was fraud involved. Because the contract has been voided, the parties involved must return whatever property or money had already been exchanged, so that their status before the contract can be achieved.



RESEARCH TIP: Marriage mills in Indiana

A "marriage mill" is an area that encourages couples to come and get married, either because the law is lenient or because local officials refuse to enforce existing law.

The concept of marriage mills is nothing new - Gretna Green was a village in Scotland that first became popular in the 1700's as a place for English couples to elope without anyone knowing. The "Gretna Green" idea was carried over to the American colonies, especially when area businesses realized they could benefit from the influx of visitors. It wasn't just the marriage officials (justices of the peace, judges and ministers) who would receive a fee for their service, but hotels, restaurants, photographers and even florists who stood to gain.

Today the most famous of marriage mills is Las Vegas, Nevada - couples come from all over the world to get married because the law requires no waiting period to issue a marriage license, and there is no requirement to get blood tests. As a result, marriages are performed 24 hours a day and there are even drive-in chapels, where you can get married without ever leaving your car.

Indiana has its own history of marriage mills. You may have heard of the town of Crown Point (Lake County) in northwestern Indiana. Crown Point was advertised in Chicago newspapers as being the "Gretna Green of the Midwest." More than 175,000 marriages were performed from 1915 until 1940, including that of silent film

actor Rudolph Valentino, who wed under the name Rudolph Guglielma in 1923. The justices of the peace performed marriages 24 hours a day and the booming business of marriage was estimated to have brought in \$300,000 a year.

The popularity of Crown Point was a large reason the Indiana legislature passed a law in March 1940 requiring a 3-day waiting period to issue a marriage license. In 1958 they added a requirement to get a blood test for venereal disease, adding to the delay in getting married.

Another marriage mill was Jeffersonville (Clark County) in southern Indiana, whose proximity to the border made it a popular destination for Kentucky couples wanting to elope. One justice of the peace, Eph Keigwin, presided over 10,000 marriages in his lifetime - he was famous for having a giant horseshoe at his house and advertising that couples should get married there for the good luck. He had help from an assistant who (for a share of the marriage fee) would wait at the dock of the Ohio River for the ferries to arrive and then direct couples to Keigwin's house.

For Ohio couples, Lawrenceburg (Dearborn County) in southeastern Indiana was a haven. Lawrenceburg's justices of the peace would advertise in Cincinnati using giant signs. Their fees would go up if they had to perform the ceremony after 5 pm.

For Michigan couples, Angola (Steuben County) in northeastern Indiana was definitely a destination. In the 1950's, the population of Marion County (Indianapolis) was 30 times larger than Steuben County, yet Steuben County was issuing 1,000 more marriage licenses each year. One church led the way - the First Congregational United Church of Christ in Angola had a chapel in the back, known as The Chapel in the Garden. That chapel was the site of over 12,000 marriages in one five-year stretch in the 1900's, with the couples from that time representing 37 states and 8 countries. In 1956 alone, the church received \$20,000 in marriage fees.

Even after Indiana imposed the blood test requirement in 1958, Steuben County remained popular - it normally took 3 days to get the results of blood tests, but Angola's two hospitals had state-approved laboratories that could give the results in 1 hour.

RESOURCES FOR INDIANA MARRIAGE:

-FamilySearch's [Indiana marriages, 1811-2007](#) database includes:

- Clark County (Jeffersonville) - 1808 through 1952.
- Dearborn County (Lawrenceburg) - 1826 through 1921.
- Lake County (Crown Point) - 1837 through 1957 (marriage returns only; no marriage applications).
- Steuben County (Angola) - 1851 through 1950.

NOTE: This database is free, but you must sign in with a free FamilySearch account.

-The Indiana State Library has an Indiana marriage index for [1958-2015](#) which covers all 92 counties. This database is free.

-Ancestry.com has an Indiana marriage index for [1958-2005](#), which covers all 92 counties. This database requires a subscription.

Indiana Genealogical Society | www.IndianaAncestors.org

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