

**RESEARCHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY AT THE
INDIANA STATE LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW**
by **AUTUMN C. GONZALEZ**

The Indiana State Library houses a major genealogy collection that is well known to family history researchers. However, there are materials and resources of interest to researchers located in a number of other locations within the library. While the Genealogy Division serves as a starting point, genealogists will not want to overlook the valuable resources available in the Indiana Division and the Reference and Government Services Division.

GENEALOGY DIVISION

Established in the 1930's, the Genealogy Division of the Indiana State Library houses one of the major genealogy and local history collections in the Midwest. While the emphasis of the collection is on Indiana, bordering states, and other regions from which Indiana was settled, the collection does contain materials representing all states and some foreign countries. The collection includes numerous printed items, microforms, and electronic materials such as CD-ROMs and online databases.

In the vast array of print materials located in the Genealogy Division one can find indexes to county records, family histories, cemetery transcriptions, passenger lists, DAR lineage books, how-to books, surname files and much more. The periodicals collection includes genealogy-related magazines, as well as family association newsletters and genea-

logical and historical society newsletters from across the country.

Like the print collection, the genealogy microform collection contains numerous sources of interest to family history researchers. Early Indiana county records such as probate, will, deed, and marriage records are available on microfilm, as well as selected records from other states. In addition to county records, there are a variety of sources such as federal census records, Indiana mortality schedules, and mortality schedules for a few additional states.

Also on microfilm are records and resources such as Indiana World War I draft registration cards, passenger lists, and Native American records. Special collections include William Wade Hinshaw's *Index to Quaker Meeting Records*, the Draper Manuscript collection, and U.S. city directories (50 largest U.S. cities) for 1861-1881. Regimental histories of the Civil War, as well as reprints of genealogies, genealogy serials, local histories and primary source materials, can all be found in the microform collection.

Electronic materials of the Genealogy collection include hundreds of CD-ROMs and access to online databases. The CD-ROM collection contains electronic access to compiled family histories and genealogies found on Family Tree Maker, international records, vital records indices, family trees submitted to World Family Tree and much more.

RESEARCHING AT INDIANA STATE LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW (continued)

From within the Indiana State Library there is access to subscription databases which include Ancestry Library Edition, Heritage Quest Online and New England Ancestors.org. Unrestricted databases can be accessed directly from the library's website (www.library.IN.gov). One such database is the **Indiana Marriages through 1850** database, which contains listings of marriages which took place in Indiana prior to 1850. Other databases include the **Cemetery Locator Index**, which assists patrons in locating cemetery transcription indexes and listings within the Genealogy collection, and the **Marion County (Indianapolis) Death Index**, which contains death listings that appeared in the *Indianapolis Commercial* newspaper from 1925-1945.

Another important database is the **Vital Information Exchange**, also known as the VINE. This statewide database contains local history and vital record information from various public libraries across Indiana. This database is an active one, to which new records are continually being added. Additional libraries are also being recruited to contribute to the VINE program.

The information made available in various Indiana State Library databases would not exist without the help of dedicated library volunteers. Library volunteers generously donate their time to a variety of projects, including data entry and working with unique historical materials. Volunteering at the Indiana State Library provides a friendly environment in which volunteers work alongside staff to

provide enhanced access to the library's collections, services, and programs. Library volunteers also receive a 25% discount on books and materials from the Indiana Historical Bureau.

The Indiana State Library welcomes those who are interested in sharing their time and talents through volunteering. Virtual volunteering is available for individuals who do not live close to the library. Additional information about the Indiana State Library Volunteer Program and an online application form can be found on the library's website.

INDIANA DIVISION

The Indiana Division of the Indiana State Library holds one of the largest and broadest collections of material about the state of Indiana and its people, places and events. Within the Indiana Division are the Newspaper Section and Manuscripts Section. The vast amount of print and microform materials, such as directories, histories, and maps, will assist genealogists in expanding their family history or filling in spaces in their research.

The Indiana Division is the largest repository for Indiana newspapers in the world. It includes historical newspapers on microfilm, as well as current editions of over 200 newspapers from across the state. The Newspaper Section is located in the Indiana Division on the library's second floor and is available for use by the public. The Indiana Division maintains a listing of newspaper holdings by county, which is located on the

RESEARCHING AT INDIANA STATE LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW (continued)

library's website and is also available in print within the Newspaper Section. Many micro-filmed newspapers are available for borrowing through interlibrary loan to local libraries across the country; instructions for interlibrary loan can also be found on the library's website.

The Manuscripts Section of the Indiana State Library is an area that is often overlooked and may be unknown or unfamiliar to family history researchers. Several collections exist within the Manuscripts Section, including the manuscripts, picture, and broadsides collections.

The manuscripts collection includes materials such as family papers and materials from organizations, churches, and businesses with Indiana connections. Within the picture collection are Indiana-related photographs, postcards, and other images.

Other collections within the Manuscripts Section are the broadsides collection and the oral history collection. The broadsides collection includes items such as flyers, meeting notices, and political posters. The oral history collection consists of interviews with Hoosiers conducted in the 1970's and 1980's by the Indiana State Library, and donated interviews from local historians and historical societies from across the state. Additional strengths of the collection which may be of interest to genealogists include Civil War-era diaries and letters, and papers of Indiana political figures.

At this time the library's online catalog contains a portion of the Manuscript Card Catalog. Patrons can peruse the card

catalog and picture collection card file index in the Manuscript Reading Room (located on the library's second floor), or submit questions about the collections via the "Ask-a-Librarian" feature of the library's website.

Additional Indiana Division resources include holdings of Indiana city and county directories and Indiana county histories. City directories for larger Indiana communities and county directories for almost all Indiana counties for specific time periods are available in print and on microfilm. Organization directories for various professions, such as legal, medical, and political, are also located in the collection. A broad collection of county histories are also available in print and microfilm. Indexes of county histories have been created by the Works Progress Administration and Indiana Historical Society for many resources.

A final resource available in the Indiana collection is the atlas and map collection. Like the other Indiana Division collections, various maps and atlases can be found in print and in microfilm. The expansive collection includes Sanborn maps, county plat books, county atlases and county maps dating from the 1800's to the present. A list of Indiana Sanborn maps and an online guide to the county maps is available on the Indiana Division section of the library's website.

REFERENCE AND GOVERNMENT SERVICES DIVISION

The Reference and Government Services Division maintains the general print collection, as well as the Federal Documents De-

RESEARCHING AT INDIANA STATE LIBRARY: AN OVERVIEW (continued)

pository Program. Strengths of the general nonfiction collection include an emphasis on American history, politics and government and much more. Materials from the general collection that are of particular interest to family history and local history researchers are located in the History Reference Room of the library. This collection includes biographical dictionaries and encyclopedias, *Who's Who* resources, and selected World War I and II unit histories. Also of interest are indexes and bibliographies to history-related periodicals and literature.

The Federal Documents Depository Library program is administered by the U.S. Government Printing Office through which selected U.S. government documents are made available in libraries throughout the country. The Indiana State Library has been a designated regional depository library since 1963; however, the library's vast collection of federal documents dates back to 1789. Within this collection there are various historical documents of value to genealogists such as military registers, annual lists, directories, and military histories of organizations or campaigns. Also of interest are works such as United States registers, which list federal employees.

CONCLUSION

Whether you are a beginning researcher or an advanced one, the Indiana State Library is a vital resource for Indiana research, with vast collections of materials located among the Genealogy, Indiana, and Reference and Government Services Divi-

sions.

Reference desks are located on the first and second floors of the library to guide patrons to the collections and resources. Patrons may also submit reference questions in writing to a specific library division at:

140 N. Senate Ave.
Indianapolis, IN 46204

or electronically via the Ask-a-Librarian feature of the library website (www.library.IN.gov).

The Indiana State Library is open Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays 8 am-4:30 pm, Thursdays 8 am-7 pm, and most Saturdays 8 am-4 pm. The library is closed on Sundays, state holidays and most federal holidays. The Manuscripts Section is closed evenings and Saturdays. To verify library hours and to obtain additional information, please call (317) 232-3675.

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