



Dane County Area Genealogical Society News

September 30, 2008

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“Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? – Keeping Track of Your Family” At the October 2 Meeting

Doing genealogy requires the constant collecting, sifting and winnowing of minute pieces of information. Organizing this mountain of facts and documents will make it easier to plan research trips, find information when you need it and relate facts to each other in the proof of ancestry.

At the October 2 DCAGS meeting, Rick Pifer, Director of

Reference & Public Services at the Wisconsin Historical Society, will focus on systems designed to simplify your work as a genealogist. Rick will emphasize the value of good record-keeping as a foundation of good genealogical research.

During nearly 30 years as an archivist and librarian, Rick has taught numerous classes and workshops on genealogy

and local history. Dr. Pifer is the author of *A city at war: Milwaukee labor during World War II*.

We are at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at 4505 Regent Street, Madison, WI for the October 2 meeting. Please join us on October 2 at 7:00 P.M.

Genealogy Resources at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum

Russ Horton, Reference Archivist at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum (WVM) in Madison, discussed genealogy resources at the WVM at our September 4 meeting.

Russ gave us a short history of the WVM. Originally the museum was housed on the Fourth Floor of the North Wing of the State Capitol and it was known as the GAR Museum. It opened in 1902. The name comes from the Grand Army of the Republic and housed relics from the Civil War, particularly Wisconsin's contributions to the Union's victory.

When the Capitol was remodeled in 1993, the WVM moved to its present location at 30 W. Mifflin Street. A few years later the WVM opened a state of the art Research Center. It contains letters,

diaries, photographs and papers of individual veterans from each war going back to the Civil War as well as records and photographs of state and local veteran organizations. The Center has 16,000 titles in its book collection and over 2,300 periodicals. Over the last several years the Center has recorded over 1,200 oral histories with veterans from the Spanish American War to the present.

Civil War

The WVM has a wealth of information on Civil War veterans. Wisconsin contributed 53 infantry regiments, 4 cavalry regiments, one heavy artillery battery and 13 batteries of light artillery to the Union effort. In addition, numerous Wisconsin citizens fought in federal units. After the war, Civil War veterans

settled in Wisconsin.

Information on these veterans can be found at the WVM.

Many members were familiar with the Civil War Veteran database located at the WVM. It includes the soldier's name, rank, company and regiment, enlistment and muster out dates and residence at the time of enlistment.

One unique item offered at the WVM is a Certificate of Service, which is an official document with the service dates of the veteran.

The WVM has letters and pictures from soldiers as well as the Family Rolls of veterans, which are organized by unit, which list the veteran's name, city and county of residence and the name of the family member

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Regular DCAGS meetings are the first Thursday of each month at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints located at 4505 Regent, Madison, Wisconsin beginning at 7 p.m.

DCAGS Update:

The DCAGS Governing Board meets the 3rd Monday of each month. The next meeting is on Monday, October 20 at 6:30 p.m. South Madison Library, 2222 Park St. We invite all members to attend. Please join us!

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Wisconsin's Veterans Museum continued...

authorized to draw the soldier's pay. It could also include the number of children the soldier is supporting and the date the soldier entered military service.

There are also the State of Wisconsin muster rolls, which contain a wealth of information about the soldier: name, age at enlistment, birth place, occupation, physical description and a few military remarks. They are arranged by unit and then by name.

There are also rosters, published and manuscript, of the regiments as well as regimental histories of the Wisconsin units, which generally includes the battles they fought in. Some of the regiments also have some information on reunions they held.

Finally, there are some records on the veterans from the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, WI.

Spanish American War

During the Spanish American War in 1898, Wisconsin contributed four infantry regiments to the war in the Caribbean, but none to fighting in the Philippines. Many other Wisconsin men fought in federal units during the war.

There are roster cards, which are organized alphabetically. They include information on the birthplace, residence, company and regiment, age, occupation and a brief physical description.

There are also records of Active Duty Rejection Certificates. The certificates document the rejection of various Wisconsin National Guardsmen for active duty.

Mexican Border War

Just prior to WWI, Wisconsin contributed three infantry regiments, one field artillery battery and one field hospital unit to the action on the Mexican Border War.

There are muster-in rolls that list the soldier's name, rank, unit, age, height, complexion, eye and hair color, birthplace, occupation, marital status, residence, emergency contact, date of enlistment and description of prior service in the Wisconsin National Guard. Rosters are arranged by unit and one must know the hometown or home county of the veteran to access this information.

WWI

Most Wisconsin WWI veterans served in the 32nd "Red Arrow" Division during WWI. A number of citizens

served in federal units as well as a number of nurses served during the war.

WWI had a draft so there are draft records. There are central administrative records, property records and county lists of men ordered to report for military duty between 1917-1918. Certificates stating the men reported at mobilization camps are also included.

Roster books describe the men and women from Wisconsin who joined the Army, Navy, Marines and Nurse Corps during WWI. The books list each person's name, rank, residence, serial number and the unit in which they served. They are arranged by county in which the men and women resided at the time the war began, then by the branch of service and then alphabetically.

WWI information also includes Bonus Cards, which are payroll cards listing soldiers, sailors, nurses and marines who received bonuses for their service. The cards originated from the Secretary of the Service Recognition Board. Information on the cards includes name, address, service number, unit and occasionally service details.

The WVM also has a WWI database, regimental histories, rosters, and records from American Legion and VFW chapters.

Veterans of WWII, Korean War, the Vietnam War and Recent Military Conflicts

Military records from conflicts dating back to WWII are kept at the Federal level. Many of the records are available only to the veteran or his or her next of kin. Contact either the National Archives, www.archives.gov, or the National Personnel Records Center in St. Louis, MO, www.archives.gov/st-louis/.

There are discharge documents, known as DD 214s, for veterans who settled in Wisconsin after their military service and used benefits available to veterans. DD 214s are available only to individual veterans, or if deceased, to their next of kin. Some veterans have registered their DD 214s with the Register of Deeds in Miscellaneous Records. Veterans did this to protect them from being lost.

Russ noted that Wis. Stat. § 45.04 does restrict the release of veteran information to the veteran or his or her duly authorized representative.

Other Research

The WVM also includes a Burial index for every veteran buried in Wisconsin from the Department of Veterans Affairs.

The WVM has manuscript collections with over 15,000 images, letters, diaries, photographs and other materials concerning the military service of Wisconsin veterans from the Civil War to the Iraq War.

There is a Wisconsin National Guard collection, which includes the records of the 32nd Division – photos of individuals and manuscript collections of those who served – records from the Department of Military Affairs and Adjutant General's Office concerning both Wisconsin Army and Air National Guards.

Veteran's organizations of local Wisconsin posts can be located at the WVM from the GAR, National Women's Relief Corps, United Spanish War Veterans and the American Legion.

The WVM also has specialized collection of Wisconsin and American military history with published memoirs of Wisconsin veterans. There is a newspaper and periodical collection with a special focus on newsletters of Wisconsin veteran organizations.

The WVM has information and images of memorials dedicated to Wisconsin veterans located in Wisconsin, the U.S. and throughout the world.

One important new addition to the WVM is the Veterans oral history collection. To date, over 1,200 interviews with have been conducted with veterans from the Spanish American War to date. Right now the WVM is transcribing the interviews. It is looking for volunteers to help them transcribe them. Contact Russ if interested to volunteer. His email is Russell.Horton@dva.state.wi.us. Also the WVM welcomes donations of veterans' letters, diaries, photos, maps or other papers that document a veteran's military service.

People doing research on Wisconsin veterans can start with the WISCAT website. Go to http://museum.dva.state.wi.us/RC_searchcollections.asp. You can also visit the Research Center's public reading room from 9-3, M-F.

We thank Russ for letting us know about the valuable information genealogists can find at the WVM.

Upcoming events

WSGS Fall Seminar

What: Wisconsin State Genealogical Society will host Craig R. Scott, owner of Heritage Books. He will speak on researching military history.

When: October 11, 2008

Where: Janesville, WI, Holiday Inn Express and Conference Center

Registration Information:
www.wsgs.org

ISGS: 40 Years of Discovery – Portals into the Future

What: Illinois State Genealogical Society Fall Conference. The emphasis will be on use of computers in genealogy. Featuring D. Joshua Taylor, Beau Sharbrough, Eric Basir, Lou Szucs, Susan Anderson, Debra Mieszala, Lori Bessler and Kathy Carey.

When: October 18, 2008

Where: Elgin, IL, Elgin Community College

Registration Information:
www.rootsweb.com/~ilsgs

Genealogy Classes for the Fall at the Wisconsin Historical Society

The Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives will offer the following classes this fall:
“[Ancestry.com](#)” (12/6, Lori Bessler), “[From Daguerreotype to Digital File: Organizing and Caring for Family and Personal Photographs](#)” (11/8, David Benjamin), “[Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? Organizing and Compiling Your Research](#)” (10/18, Rick Pifer), and “[Immigration and Naturalization Records](#)” (11/1, Dee Grimsrud). Click on the title of any class for further details (time, fees, location, class coverage) about that class. A discount on the registration fee is offered to those who are members of either the Wisconsin Historical Society or the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society. To register, download, print, and mail or FAX the [required registration form](#).

For further information, go to <http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/library/archives/classes/>

I found society notes about birth announcements, showers, wedding announcements, election results, and information about organizations and hobbies that my relatives engaged in the 1930s.

Addresses of where relatives lived and who their friends were are some of the other tidbits that I found. You can download the articles in PDF format and save them, print them or include them in your family histories. Be sure to try it out at <http://www.badgerlink.net>

I want to alert you that following the November 6 program the Board would like to invite all members and prospective members to meet in the Gym for apple cider and bars. This social time will allow everyone a chance to talk to old friends and meet new ones. Please join us.

I hope all of you enjoyed Russ Horton's talk on the information that you can find at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. Thanks, Russ, for a very interesting talk.

I am also looking forward to Rick Pifer's talk on October 2 on “Oh Darned! Where Did I Put Uncle George? – Keeping Track of Your Family.” I hope to see all of you at our October meeting.

Pat Skubis

President's Message

At the last board meeting the other night, the group was discussing the information we had located in regards to the several inquiries DCAGS had received. I asked Shirley Levine where she had located the newspaper articles she had found. Her reply was on BadgerLink.

You might be asking, “What is BadgerLink?” BadgerLink is a project of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI), Division for Libraries, Technology, and Community Learning. Its goal is to provide access to quality online information resources for Wisconsin residents in cooperation with the state's public, school, academic, and special libraries and Internet Service Providers. You can use it from home to search EBSCO, NewspaperARCHIVE, ProQuest, African American Biographical Database, LitFINDER, and TeachingBooks. It also has links to other resources.

I had tried to use BadgerLink one time long ago and because I receive my Internet connection via a satellite dish I could not get it. Shirley told me that I should be able to get into it with my South Central Library card.

So I gave it a try.

I went to the South Central Library home page and clicked on the access newspaper archive link. It took me to a message that said it did not recognize me as living in Wisconsin, but there was a link to another page where I could enter my library card number.

I then proceeded to try out NewspaperARCHIVE. After six hours or so I had amassed 15 news articles on my Bergstrom relatives, 6 on the Madsen's, 14 on the Skubis in-laws, 4 about my children and 3 about my husband.

I learned information about my father, who died six months before my birth. I found that he won the wheelbarrow race at the OddFellows picnic in 1935, and that he received a promotion to route supervisor for Bake Rite Bakery in May 1937. I also located the article on this page from the *Stevens Point (Wisconsin) Daily Journal* on September 27, 1937. My mother had told us that the doctor had requested an autopsy after his death the next day, September 28. He wanted to know for sure why these two young men had suffered CVA.

TWO STEVENS POINT MEN ARE STRICKEN, HOSPITAL PATIENTS

Two Stevens Point residents who were stricken with cerebral hemorrhages over the week-end are patients at St. Michael's hospital, Harry Bergstrom, 417 Dixon street, and Anton Pliska, 1514 Clark street.

Bergstrom, who had been ill for several days, was removed to the hospital by ambulance Saturday night. Pliska was taken to the hospital Sunday night after returning to Stevens Point from a week-end trip to Winona, Minn., to visit relatives. Accompanying him on the trip were Mr. and Mrs. Peter Feltz and daughters, Evelyn and Phyllis, 421 East Lincoln avenue. He was stricken while seated in his car in front of the Feltz home. The condition of both men was reported as serious today.

Dane County Area Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 5652
Madison, WI 53705-0652

Address Service Requested

We're on the Web!

See us at: www.dcags.org



**Dane County Area
Genealogical Society**

P.O. Box 5652
Madison, WI 53705-0652

See you
October 2

We have a new web address:
www.dcags.org/

If you enter the address it
will take you to the group's
website on Rootsweb.

DCAGS officers for 2008:

President: Pat Skubis
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Vice President: Tom Glassel
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Secretary: Gerry Schlecht
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Past President, Shirley Levine
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Standing Committee Chairs

Membership: William "Bill" Baures
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***Bob & Dottie Luening: Living the
Wisconsin Idea***

A recent issue of *Columns*, the bi-monthly newsletter of Wisconsin Historical Society, spotlighted two of our valued and veteran members, Bob and Dottie Luening.

Citing their life-long dedication to realization of the Wisconsin Idea, the publication lauded the Luenings' support of the Wisconsin Historical Society and particularly their foresight in estate planning which has enabled them to both enjoy their retirements and give generously to a myriad of Society programs and services.

Bob was a member of the organizing committee for one of our predecessor organizations - Computer Assisted Genealogists of Southern Wisconsin. And if you've ever visited WHS microfilm archives on a Friday, most likely Dottie was the volunteer who helped you. Their contributions of time as well as funds have benefited us all.

The Luenings met in Racine and later re-located to Madison where both have retired from lengthy careers in state government and the University. Latest move was from their Westside home to Oakwood Village.

The WHS is indeed grateful to the Luenings; we're glad to count them as friends, too.