

Walworth County Genealogical Society Newsletter



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November - December 2013

Christmas Pot Luck and Bingo

Tuesday, December 3rd, 6:00 pm: Christmas Pot Luck (main course will be chicken and Bingo. Election of officers (vice-president, secretary, & 2 board members). Don't forget to bring a wrapped gift for the Bingo!

Guest Speakers/Programs for 2014

Tuesday, January 7th, NO MEETING - HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Tuesday, February 4th, 1:00 pm.: Show and Share

Tuesday, March 4th, 1:00 pm: To be announced

Please consider a donation for the food pantry in your area during this holiday season !

IN THIS ISSUE

From the President's Deskpg 62	Do You Know?pg 67
Ketchum's Korner.....pg 63	Program Recappg 68
1st Prize Student Essay.....pg 64	Are You Related to Me..... pg 70
Around the Countypg 66	Publications Page pg 71



From the President's Desk

Mike Hay - WCGS President

In this Thanksgiving Season, I've tried to recall all the things to give thanks for in the past year, and I have decided that, being involved in genealogy, the memories of those who have gone before are of great comfort to me.

We spend a lot of time researching our forbearers and learning as much as possible about how they lived, where they lived, and just who they were. We may not agree with all of their decisions, but we rejoice in the fact that they lived at all, given some of the times they faced.

During the past year, our society has lost a past president, some of our members have lost spouses, and I, myself, have lost a son. That they are gone is sad, but that they were here at all gives me cause to be thankful. The memories sustain me and I hope that others who have lost loved ones also find that their memories fill them with comfort.

It is appropriate in this season to express appreciation for all those members who attended or sent their warm wishes to our 25th anniversary celebration. And, to be grateful for those who have recently joined our organization that it will continue to be a tribute to those who have gone before.

I also want to thank all the members who participated in the Family History Fair. Pat Blackmer and Kay Sargent and Chris Brookes did a heck of a job. We got to meet some members who are not always able to attend meetings.

I also want to thank all the members who participated in the Cemetery Walk helping Deb Ketchum with that presentation. Deb worked hard getting things set up and although the turnout was not what we expected, I guess the calendar was once again to blame.

We did our programs at the Arbor Village and The Terraces in Lake Geneva. The turnout was decent and the presentation well received.

Thanks, too, should be given to Matheson Memorial for their help in our Genealogy presentation at the Library. It gave library goers a chance to meet with us and discover what we offer. Thanks to all the members who participated.

We also thank the members who decorated the Christmas tree for the Walworth County Historical Society's Christmas Tree Walk. The theme of the tree is "Our Family Tree" and is decorated with the faces of members of our society and the founders of our county.

Our presentation that we were planning for the Delavan Parks and Recreation Adult Programs was rescheduled to February 20, 2014. Any members who would like to participate will be welcome.

So let us look forward to 2014 with what joys and sorrows it may bring. In the meantime, have a very happy and joyous Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday season.



Deb Ketchum, Librarian



Ketchum's Korner

Our 25th anniversary year has been fast, productive, and sad. As the holidays approach WCGS would like to remind you that our library will be open through December 10th, then close for the holidays and reopen on January 7th, 2014. WCGS will accept appointments during the closure with a 24 hour notice by calling me at 262-215-0118.

With the holidays coming once again it is the time to get pictures of people, stories, and share family history among your relatives. Be sure to take your notes for questions, a camera (with video) will allow recording of people and voices or taking pictures. A handheld scanner will allow you to scan documents, pictures, recipes and other items for those that have the information but won't let it leave the house. This is the time to get updated information such as mailing addresses, phone numbers, and emails for relatives you may have lost track of or don't have on your radar yet. If you are stuck for getting information let the children be the reporters and ask the questions.

Once the holidays are over and winter settles in is the time to organize all the information you have collected over the summer and the recent holidays. Get this information into your family history file whether manual or computer. You want to do this now while the notes and information are still relatively fresh in your mind and you can still make sense of it. Get identity labels on your pictures and place them with the appropriate families. Make a new list of questions and places to still address. Prepare and send information to those you promised you would. Winter is also a perfect time to check out all the websites on your potential interest list or read that book on a family place or review the possible useful research information you've been collecting to check at a later date. Then when spring comes you'll be ready to head out to further your research.

Great New Research Resource

Submitted by Diana Bird

The Delos Diggins Library, Harvard, Illinois has begun the process of digitizing the films of early newspapers and putting them online. They have completed the first part of the \$10,000 project, completing their local papers from 1867 - 1931.

The url is www.harvard-diggins.org or just Google Harvard Illinois city library. On the left side of the home page under More Links, click on Harvard Newspapers.

This site is free to anyone, no library card needed, and is fully searchable.

The early Harvard papers contain stories, ads, and events from the surrounding area. Personal columns for Sharon, Big Foot, Walworth, Fontana, and Linn township, as well as obituaries and major national news events.

This digitizing project, it is hoped, will be completed in 2014.

History Fair Student Essays Contest

At our History Fair this year, we presented an essay contest, “My Favorite Ancestor”, to the area elementary/middle schools. The first place winner was a young man, Aaron Smith, an eighth grader at Traver School in Lake Geneva, WI. Pat Blackmer presented his certificate and his prize at the Fair on October 12, 2013.



The following is his winning essay:

The steady hum of the Gators engine accompanies Walter and Mary York as they feed the calves at the Merry Water Farms. If you are wondering where the name of the farm comes from, try saying “Mary-Walter Farms” five times fast. Walter and Mary are my great grandparents. His grandfather bought a farm on Mohawk Road in 1895. His grandfather’s name was William Yerke at first. He then changed his name to Yarke, then Yorke, and in 1904 he settled on York. He changed his name because he didn’t want to sound foreign.

Now that William settled on his last name, he would start a trend in the York family. He would settle down and raise a herd of 48 dairy cattle. He had bought 142 acres of land for farming as well. Now it is 133 because they sold some to let the railway run through our area. William did this because he thought that it would benefit the whole community. In 1927 the barn burned down, and William had tuberculosis so he sold the farm to Walter’s father Lawrence. Lawrence would grow the herd to 48 head of cattle. He then sold the farm to Walter.

The Yorks have been farming corn and alfalfa as well as milking the cows. My great grandparents kept farming and in all the time they worked on the farm they found time to raise seven children. Two of whom were adopted, Deanna Giovingo and Bart York. Deanna is my great aunt Dee Dee. She got this name because it’s easier to call her aunt Dee Dee then Deanna. Almost all of the children follow in the family farming path, but my aunt Dee Dee and great uncle Glen both work as teachers at Badger High School. My aunt is married to the assistant principle at Badger High School, Mike Giovingo.

Even though my grandparents own William’s farm on Mohawk Road they didn’t start farming there. When my great grandfather’s father married Eunice Ledger he brought the two families together. The Ledgers owned the farm on Hillside Road (Mary Water Farms) since 1852. The farm was then passed on to a family related to both of the Ledgers and the Yorks which were the Leedles. The Leedle family then sold the farm to my great grandparents. Which is now called Merry Water Farms. Again, if you don’t see where the name comes from just say Mary-Walter Farms fast a few times.

My great grandparents married right out of high school and they had started to farm the Ledger land by buying it in shares. By 1965 they bought the land completely. They still live on the old Ledger property in a small yellow brick house.

If William were here today he might not recognize his old farm. This is because there are many changes going on right this minute. My great uncle Tom, who is now running the farm on William’s old property, is building a large milking barn that will milk all of the cows with the use of a robot. The robotic system will service 200 cows everyday. My grandparents are helping him start this ambitious project. My grandparents are helping my uncle Tom build the 1.75 million dollar project. My Uncle’s

(Continued on page 65)

(continued from page 64)

point of view of this project is that you won't need to pay workers. The thought is my uncle can run this all by himself with only one part-time worker. They hope to have the milking barn running by January.

Now you know they have found the time to raise my grandmother and her brothers and sisters. Not only that but they also found time to travel. Three of their sons have served in the peace corps. Not only that but they were able to visit all of them in the peace corps. This means they've been able to travel all around the world. On their 50th anniversary their kids all chipped in to send them on an Alaskan cruise. Not only that but my Mom and Dad planned a trip to take them to the Pocono Mountains. We also took them on a day trip to the "Big Apple" to visit the 9/11 memorial.

Even through all the travel, farming, and family they still helped and got involved in the community. My great grandfather has served on the Traver school board for twenty-seven years and on the Badger school board for eighteen years. Both of my grandparents were general leaders for the Linn 4-H, which my grandfather was in as a kid, for eight years. My grandfather was also an elder at the Linn Presbyterian Church since he was in his twenties. They also donated the ten acres of land where the new church was built. The old church is located in Zenda, WI.

My great grandfather has had a large influence on my life. He has helped my brothers and me with our pigs that we raise to show at the Walworth County Fair. I also think they have helped my older brother Austin find out what he wants to do in life. He is now in school to become an Agribusiness specialist. They also believe in the good old fashion values of family. Every year we get the York side of the family together again to celebrate Christmas and Easter. They also taught me how I want and should raise my future family. With love, a strong faith, and teaching them life will not always be what it is cracked up to be, and showing that if you work hard enough and have the right mind set, that you can have a good life.

So my great grandfather has taught me many things in the thirteen short years I have been around and still counting, that if you work hard and are honest, loving, and just a good person that life will be good to you in return. I have also learned if you have a dream don't throw it away. No matter how many ups and downs there are it will have its rewards. I am proud of the mark my great grandfather has left on this land that I live on. If it weren't for people like these this nation wouldn't be the way it is today.

"We've been blessed our whole lives. God has been good to us."-Walter York

Found - Something Special

WCGS received the following email:

From: **Frank Robbins** <frobbins@bellsouth.net>
Subject: Found something special

Hi:

In a box of books I bought at a sale, was a diary with an initial entry dated Aug.10, 1877, last entry Mar. 9, 1947. It is in the hands of the wife of Alden Field, Sharon, WI, (she never says her name), mother of Guy and Forrest Field, Forrest born 9/16/1885, died @ 92 in Pomona, CA, 1978. There is an obituary in the diary indicating the writer's father was John Hodgdon,

born 1800 in NH, died 1886 in Sharon. Her mother died there in 1889, and that obituary lists the writer's sisters, Ms. R. D. Stewart, and Ms. Carrie W. Sarasy as then living in Sharon. There are locks of hair, etc., it really is a find, and would have a great deal of meaning for a member of the family. I am not a genealogy person, and wonder if someone in your group might be a descendent, or know a descendent of the family. If such is the case, I would be happy to send the diary to that person.

Let me know.

Frank Robbins



AROUND THE COUNTY TIDBITS

by Shirley Sisk

Darien - Lily Gilbert, next youngest daughter of John Gilbert, broke her arm last week by a fall upon the sidewalk, while returning from school. Dr. Rood set the bones and pronounces her doing well up to date-----The funeral services of Miss Anna Serl, youngest daughter of Oliver Serl, was held at the house, Saturday, March 7th, at 11 o'clock a.m., Rev. Dr. Collie officiating. A large concourse of friends and relatives followed the remains to their last resting place in the Fairfield cemetery.-----Burial services of the infant son of Mr. and Mrs. Asher Johnson, held at the house last Saturday; we did not learn the particulars. (The Delavan Enterprise, Delavan, Wis. Wed., March 11, 1885)

East Troy - Mr. and Mrs. Robt. Potter and little daughter started for their home in O'Brien Co., Iowa, Monday morning last week. A several weeks visit with their brother, Rev. Thos. Potter, of this place, is ended. The brothers had been separated for a good many years.-----Thursday of last week the wife of Mr. Geo. Harlow had a slight stroke of paralysis. One side of the person being affected. Later in the week Mrs. Harlow had another shock, and the family and friends are seriously alarmed.-----Sunday morning, January 20th, Mrs. H. B. Gilbert, in passing to a neighbors, slipped and fell, breaking her arm above the wrist and severely spraining the wrist. Dr. Scott was called and Mrs. Gilbert made as comfortable as possible. (Delavan Republican, Wed., Jan. 30, 1889)

Troy - Mrs. E. T. Adkins met with quite a painful accident on last Monday night by slipping on some ice. She dislocated one of her ankles, but is getting along nicely.-----Geo. Lake and F. E. Loomis are at Chicago receiving medical treatment from Dr. Parks.-----Mr. and Mrs. H. W. Odell were surprised on last Wednesday evening by about thirty of their friends. A pleasant evening was spent and all went home wishing Mary many more birthdays. (Delavan Republican, Wed., April 9, 1890)

Millard - Fred Harrison is moving to the Oren Day farm-----Harry Loomer returned to his home at Paola, Kansas, Friday.-----Miss Alice Rood, of Tibbets, visited her cousin Miss Lillian Snow, Sunday.-----Rev. G. J. Kyle is enjoying a visit from his sister and nephew, of Granville, Ohio. (The Enterprise, Delavan, Wis., Thurs., September 9, 1897)

Delavan - Mrs. Jas. Harris, of Mellette, So. Dak., and sister, Mrs. Laura Kenyon, of Pipestone, Minn., are visiting Delavan relatives for a couple of weeks, and attending the great county fair.-----Burt Hollister and wife, of Winthrop, Iowa, and Albert Hollister, wife and son, of Manchester, Iowa arrived yesterday for a visit with relatives, and to take in the great Walworth county fair.-----Miss Ruby Crumb, of Leonardsville, N.Y., is visiting Mrs. Alice Burton and other relatives in and near Delavan.-----W. W. Lawton and mother-in-law, Mrs. Shaver, of Osceola, Mo., are visiting his niece, Miss Abbie Lawton for a few days. (The Delavan Enterprise, Sept. 30, 1897)

Delavan - Old Settler Dies. Samuel Gregg, who has been a resident of Delavan for 44 years, died at the home of E. Muzzy, Monday at 4 p.m. Deceased was born in 1822, at Whitesboro, N. Y. and came west in 1855, locating at Delavan, and following the vocation of a carpenter. He is survived by three children, Mrs. E. Muzzy and Fred Gregg of this city, and Mrs. Geo. A. Graves, of Racine. The funeral services will be conducted from the house this morning at 10 o'clock, Rev. Manaton officiating. (The Delavan Enterprise, July 6, 1899)

Note: As you will notice from this column, the dates are all between 1880 and 1900. That is because in researching to find people, the big span between the 1880 census and the 1900 census is where it was hardest to locate them, I found.

Shirley



Do You Know?

By Marilyn Traver

When starting your genealogy research, you have been told to talk to everyone you can to collect all the information on your family that is available. After collecting what they have, have you exchanged information that they could use in their research? When doing that you are helping them in return. By doing so, this could get them to try harder to research more and perhaps get you in touch with others who could help you too. You could be lucky enough to find personal letters and memoirs, even someone else who has done the genealogy up to a certain point.

Everybody has his own special technique of researching and this can even lead to more information, which you may not be privy to otherwise. Using the internet message boards can be a big help in connecting with others who are researching the same family, even if a different branch. That alone can provide interesting information, which can tie into your direct family.

I knew my maternal grandfather had a brother who lived in the Philippines. My Aunt gave me their 1980's mailing address but I decided to try the internet instead. Perhaps the snail mail would have been quicker, and then maybe not. Anyway I went on line and 'googled' the name Covey. Under that I found a Covey Message Board website and clicked on that. I looked through it and didn't find my family names, so I left a message to anyone who knew of Alfred Covey, brother to my grandfather, Alva Covey of Wisconsin, USA. I mentioned that I knew Alfred had a large family and I wanted to know where he was buried. Well, I waited and waited and 5 months later I got an answer from the gr-grandson of Alfred. His father was in the Islands at the moment and he gave my message to his dad. To make a long story short, they were invited to our family reunion the coming September and that was the best family reunion I have been at. By the way, they live in New Jersey and I learned quite a bit about how they came to live in the states and because during WWII most records were destroyed so one won't get much, if any documentation, from there.

A second cousin got in touch with me through my brother. Mariem and my younger brother were in the same grade and at their high school reunion she gave her address to my brother for me to contact her. What wonderful people she and her husband are. She sent me ALL the information she has on the family line, both hers and mine and

others on the Wilcox side. Also I received 200 digital photos and she has named most of them. I was able to identify some of the photos she didn't know. These photos related to my father's side of the family. When they did the research it was the hard way, before the internet. I also sent her the photos I had that I knew she didn't have. She did the direct line on husband and wife all the way back to the 1600's. So all I have to do is find the documentation and add the children to the families to complete it for my tree. She also sent a photo of her standing by a soldier's monument in a veteran cemetery in Alabama, telling me it was the brother to my gr-grandfather Franklin Wilcox. That alone was a delightful surprise and filled in one empty space in my genealogy that another person refused to help me with. You will meet some of those who don't want to help for one reason or another and you need to work around it.

At one time I wrote to all the children of Aunt Emma Hoover, my father's sister, using my mother's address book. Back then, once a person settled on a farm or home after getting married, they didn't move, so I thought I had a good chance to reach some of the 7 children. Aunt Emma was great in writing to mom and had given her addresses to all of her children. Everyone told me to get hold of Bob, husband of the deceased daughter. I procrastinated and got another letter asking if I had gotten in touch with Bob. So I made that phone call and when meeting him, he let me copy EVERYTHING his wife had collected on the Wilcox side. She had planned to work on the genealogy when she retired but died before she could. She had a lot of family sheets filled out and even had information I didn't have, so this find was a mother lode. I saw a swatch of the dress gr-grandmother wore when she was killed in a train-car accident. The information I had gotten helped enhance my research.

If I had spent more time in my searching I could probably get in touch with others. Now I know how important it is to network with others.

My advice: don't procrastinate and check out all possibilities of people to contact. Ask them for names of others to get in touch with. Get to networking with others to further your research. Don't wait until after they have passed on. You may be pleasantly surprised.

Program Recap

Our October 12 Family History Fair went fairly well. It didn't help that down the street from Faith Christian School we could hear an auction going on. For most of the day, people came and went. Kudos to Pat Blackmer and Kay Sargent for all the work they put in to pull it off.



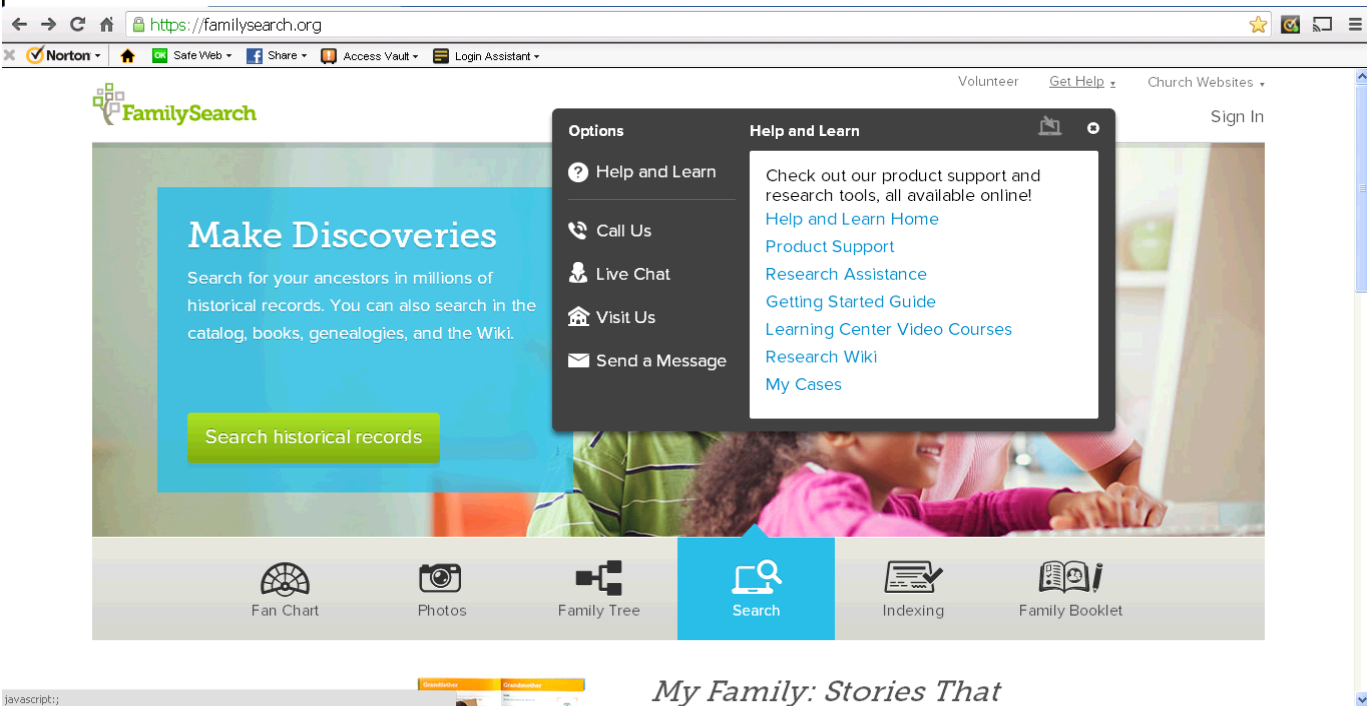


Pat Blackmer presented certificates to the winners of the essay contest, “My Favorite Ancestor”. We didn’t have a lot of entries to choose from. We need to work at getting the younger generation interested in genealogy. Any ideas?

We didn’t get any pictures at the November meeting. Penny Kresl presented a program “DNA Genealogy 101”. She told us how her family handled getting their DNA record. It can be costly, but if the entire family chips in for the price it can be affordable. Penny then had us listen to an audio program about DNA and the different types. It was quite interesting.

M & M Tips

The web site familysearch.org has made many changes. One of the changes is a Learning Center which contains slides, videos, and tutorials. To get to the Learning Center, go to the web site and select the drop down area next to “Get Help”:



Then click on the Learning Center Video Courses. There is a multitude to choose from. Check it out!

I’m inviting members to send me articles to publish in the newsletter or to let me know what they might like to see in future issues.

Are You Related To Me?

The spotlight, this newsletter, is on Harry Stanley Hughes, Jr., submitted by his wife, Jeanne C. Hughes, who has been a member since 1993.

1. How did you get interested in genealogy?

Mostly through family stories long ago.

2. Names, places and date of ancestors.

Chamberlain, Little - 1785; Serl (Serle) - 1792 - England, MA, CT, WI;
Dodge, Stormes - 1838 - WI; Fletcher - 1865 - WI; Welling - 1851 - WI;
Crigen - 1830 - NY, Oshkosh; Beardsley

3. Names and places of interest:

Janesville, Whitewater, Oshkosh, Bradford, Fairfield

4. Burial areas

Fairfield (Old Pioneers) Cemetery

5. Any Vets in your family line?

Yes

6. Have you visited the old homestead? Does it still exist today?

Yes. Grandmother's & grandfather's home in Janesville, Jennie Dell Serl & Ivan Jesse Fletcher. House is no longer in the family.

7. Anything interesting happen while researching?

Many. Found my husband's relatives in Australia & visited them (Hughes relatives).

8. Any surprises in your research?

How far back I could go for some lines.

9. Please contact WCGS to network with me.

I'm looking for more members to fill out the "Are You Related to Me?" form. If you need a form, email me at wcsnewsletter@gmail.com and I will be glad to send it to you. I have a Word document form that you can type directly into and email back to me, or you can print it out and send it in through snail mail. You never know which of our members is a distant relative.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE BY WCGS

Walworth Co. Probate Record Index - 1848-1930	\$35.00
CD in pdf and searchable	\$25.00 plus \$1.00 s/h
1857 Walworth Co. Atlas - township maps and index	\$16.00
1873 Walworth Co. Atlas - maps & Index (soft cover reprint)	\$20.00
Walworth Co. - Directory of Prairie Farmers & Breeders (soft cover reprint)	\$30.00
1882 Walworth County Index to History Book	\$30.00
1912 Walworth County Index to History Book	\$29.00
Area Research Center UW-Whitewater Resource Guide	\$12.00
Declaration & Naturalization Papers Vol I \$18.00 Vol 2 & 3 (combined)	\$15.00
Walworth County Pre-1907 Death Index	\$22.00
BLOOMFIELD - Hillside Cemetery- Genoa City	\$23.00
DARIEN - Darien Cemetery	\$22.00
DELAVAN - Delavan Area Cemeteries (Spring Grove, Old Settlers, St. Andrews, Arboretum and some church burials)	\$ 3.50
East Delavan Union Cemetery	\$25.00
History of Delavan School 1982 - index only	\$18.00
EAST TROY - Oak Ridge Cemetery	\$18.00
GENEVA - Lake Geneva Area Obituaries (updated through June 30, 2010)	\$25.00
Pioneer Cemetery	\$15.00
Union Cemetery- plus some Geneva/Lyons Townships	\$20.00
LAFAYETTE - White Oak Cemetery	\$ 7.50
Hartwell-Westville-Sugar Creek Lutheran Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
LAGRANGE -LaGrange Pioneers (reprint of 3600 names, full index)	\$27.00
LaGrange Township Cemeteries	\$10.00
LYONS - Hudson/Lyons (Old Quaker) / Wija Farm Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
St. Joseph & St. Killian Catholic Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
RICHMOND - Richmond & East Richmond Cemeteries	\$10.00
SHARON - Oakwood	\$15.00
SPRING PRAIRIE - Hickory Grove	\$25.00
German Settlement / Mount Hope / Diener Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
SUGAR CREEK - Millard Cemetery	\$15.00
Hazel Ridge Cemetery	\$20.00
Mount Pleasant Cemetery (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$15.00
Mount Olivet Catholic Cemetery (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$15.00
TROY - Little Prairie	\$15.00
WALWORTH - Walworth Center (Walworth Village listings)	\$20.00
Brick Church Revised 2007	\$20.00
Cobblestone, WI/Bigfoot, IL (two different cemeteries in one book)	\$18.00
WHITEWATER - St. Patrick's Calvary	\$15.00
Hillside Cemetery	\$25.00
Unknown Burials	\$18.00
Index to the Annals of Whitewater	\$12.00

AA

Shipping and handling as follows: \$4.00 for the 1st book and \$2.00 for each additional
 To order these publications, circle the selection(s), make check payable to WCGS and mail to:
 WCGS, PO Box 159, Delavan, WI 53115.

Membership (Jan 1st- Dec 31st) is \$12 individual, \$15.00 family, \$7.00 student

NAME _____ email _____

ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ SURNAMES _____

I do ___ or do not___ give my permission to have my information printed in any WCGS media.

WALWORTH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

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OTHERS:	Newsletter Editor: Martha Hay wcgnewsletter@gmail.com Past-President: Deb Ketchum Historian: Pat Blackmer			

Regular meetings of the WCGS are the first Tuesday of each month at the
Delavan Community Centre, 826 E. Geneva St., Delavan, WI.

Library Hours: Matheson Memorial Library, 101 N. Wisconsin St., Elkhorn, WI- Every Tues. 10-3pm
other times by appt - call 262-215-0118 or 262-728-6182

The membership year runs from Jan. 1st thru Dec. 31st. The newsletter is published bi-monthly.

****Dues are \$12 for an individual, \$15.00 for a family, \$25 contributing, \$7 student.

MEMBERS: Want email meeting minutes or not?? Contact Kay - sargent@idcnet.com

Visit the Walworth County website and uncover your roots! <http://www.walworthcgs.com>

E-Mail us at societynews@walworthcgs.com

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