



# Walworth County Genealogical Society Newsletter

Volume 25 Issue 5

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September - October 2016

Please consider making a donation to the local food bank, or to the Lakeland Animal Shelter. If you bring your donation to the meeting, one of our members will make sure the donation gets delivered.

***2016 Dues are due! If you haven't paid your dues and are not a Lifetime Member, please send in your payment as soon as possible.***

*In the event a meeting is cancelled due to inclement weather, we will post a message on the website [www.walworthcgs.com](http://www.walworthcgs.com) or call 414-217-4900.*

## 2016 Meetings, Events

**November 1<sup>st</sup> 6:30 pm** - Meeting at the Mary Bray Room at Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn. The nominating committee will let members know what the slate will be for the election in December.

The program will be the library committee showing us what they have done, what we have to offer researchers, and their plans for the future of our library room.

**December 6<sup>th</sup> 5:30 pm** - Christmas Pot Luck, elections for President and Treasurer, Take away Bingo. *Bring a dish to pass.*

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## Notice!

### New Library Hours

In an effort to be available to folks with full time jobs, our Genealogy Library will have extended hours the **third** Tuesday of each month . The new hours for the **third** Tuesday will be 10:00 am until 7:00 pm.

## WCGS Library Page



Diana Bird

Marilyn Traver

Judy Rockwell

\*\*\*\*\* Library Committee \*\*\*\*\*

Our November meeting is being held in the Mary Bray Room at the Matheson Memorial Library. We recently installed a booster for the Wi-Fi signal to reach the entire area, so bring your laptops and/or tablets.

Come to the meeting and discover the large collection our library has... local Walworth county information and history, the cemetery books we have published, information for every county in Wisconsin, Family Histories, surname books, plat maps for several years, data from every state in the United States, and information from several countries as well.

You will be able to make suggestions of what library information might be helpful to your research and we are sure the library committee will let us know what they need to make it even better.

**See you all at 6:30 on November 1st in Elkhorn!**

To contact any of the members:

Diana Bird - 815-943-3690 - leave a message if no answer

Judy Rockwell - [jjrockwell@gmail.com](mailto:jjrockwell@gmail.com)

Marilyn Traver - [msearchin@hotmail.com](mailto:msearchin@hotmail.com)

They will be delighted to hear from you!



## From the President's Desk



Mike Hay & Chris Brookes- WCGS Co-Presidents

### Mike's Message:

Looks like Fall!

We've begun to notice that the leaves are beginning to turn already; looks like 'Fall Colorama' is not too far off. With low temperatures dipping into the 30's at night, maybe it's a result of the election heat which seems to be rampant. I can remember the "Ike" and "Stevenson" cigarettes on sale and who can forget shaking hands with Bill Proxmire, who seemed to be drawn to any gathering of two or more people! It was, however, nice not to be bothered by incessant phone calls asking leading questions about candidates who think they should take charge of your life for the next term.

The fall election time also affects our group so, if you have any candidates you would like to recommend to operate WCGS, please contact Karen Weston or her Nominating Committee members. This year the President and Treasurer positions are up for election. Normally, Board members would also be on the docket, but as a result of last year's election, the board has decided to postpone selection of the two positions until next year. It has been my honor to serve the group for the last four years, and I am looking forward to working with my successor in the future.

Our meeting on October 4, (birth date of *Both* of my parents!) featured Matt Rutherford from the Newberry in Chicago. This library has been in existence since 1887, and has a renowned genealogy collection. I know that I wish my ancestors had saved memorabilia for that length of time, it would have made research a whole lot easier!

Our November 1st meeting will be held in the Mary Bray Room at the Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn. This will be a great chance for our members that don't get into Elkhorn often to see what we have available.

### Chris's Co-Comments:

Congratulations to the Kenosha County Genealogy Society for successfully hosting the Tri-County Family History Fair! Madrigano Hall was a great location for the variety of exhibitors, speakers, and display of raffle prizes. Several of our members came home with heavier bags than they started with. Lots of planning and hard work went into making this day informative and fun.

Fun and information was available at the WCGS meeting on October 4 with our special guest speaker Matt Rutherford from the Newberry Library in Chicago. Thanks, Mary Quinn, for arranging his visit. Thanks also to everyone who distributed posters around Walworth County; we had a large turnout for this program. It was great to see so many people at the meeting!



## Great Chicago Fire Survivors: The Rumseys

By Christine Brookes

From Sunday, October 8 to Tuesday, October 10, 1871 the Great Chicago Fire raged. Surprisingly, out of the population of 334,270, only about 300 people perished. Many fled to Lake Michigan on the east or to the prairie on the west, but some fortunate families were able to get to the North Western Station at the corner of Canal and Kinzie Streets, and take a train north to safety in the Village of Geneva in Wisconsin.

One of those families was the Rumseys. Julian Sidney Rumsey and Martha Turner Rumsey had 11 children, 10 surviving into adulthood. Two of the girls, Ada and Eliza, published memoirs of their experiences at the time of the Fire. Ada was almost 14 at the time, and Eliza was six. Ada's memoir was prepared in 1924, and Eliza's *Recollections of a Pioneer's Daughter* was published in 1936.

The summer of 1871 had been extremely hot. A hot, dry wind continuously blew from the southwest, and barely an inch of rain had fallen. Chicago was a wooden city – wooden sidewalks, wooden houses, wood stoves for cooking and heating – always susceptible to fire. On Saturday night, a factory boiler had blown up and burned down the entire building.

Ada reported: "On October 9th, 1871, the family was distributed as follows: George was at Williams College in Massachusetts; Juliette was at Vassar College in Poughkeepsie, New York; and Julian and Turner were at Racine College or School in Wisconsin. The rest were at home... The four younger children were in bed, Lida and I in one room, and Dora and Emily in another. The rest of the family was in the library with neighbors who were watching the fire with them from the windows."

Sunday night Julian Rumsey went to check his office. Suddenly the Court House bell began to toll. Mrs. Rumsey instructed the children to dress in several layers of clothing over their night clothes. She packed the family silver and the insurance policies in clothes baskets and hampers. As the fire swept closer, a crash like a cannon shot was heard. The Court House bell had fallen to the ground. Later children salvaged pieces of the bell, renamed them "cinders," and sold them for good luck charms. Much of the bell was recovered and many tiny bells were made and sold as souvenirs.

By this time houses were burning around them, and their own front porch was on fire. Mr. Rumsey arrived home from his office with a tin box of papers. Just then things went out of control. The family was separated. The three little ones went with neighbors, but along the way they left Dora at her uncle's house. More relatives arrived, and someone took Dora along with them to the street car barn to try to escape the fire. Mr. Rumsey went all along a line of street cars, peering in the windows, until he found Dora. Finally they were all together again. They hired an express wagon to take them to the train station.

The depot had burned so the family walked along the tracks to find a train going to Geneva. There they said good-bye to Mr. Rumsey who had decided to stay in the city. On arriving at Geneva, the Rumseys went to Mrs. Tamlin's house, the present public library, where they had spent the previous summer with the Sturgeses. Over the next three years they rented houses in Geneva, IL and Chicago, and built Shadow Hill on Geneva Lake.

Finally in 1874, the Rumsey's Chicago house was rebuilt at 313 Huron at Cass (now known as Wabash). According to Ada, "Among other things found in the ruins of our house was Father's watch. While preparing for bed before he knew of the fire, he had put the watch under his pillow and had then forgotten it. When found, the hands were melted into the face at the hour when the heat became too intense for the works to run any longer. This was at 1:15 A. M."

Ada Rumsey married Treat Campbell. Eliza (called Lida) Rumsey became the first woman to win a prize racing a catboat (one of the small, one-masted sailboats). Oldest daughter Amelia (Meme) married Sam Wheeler (of the Wheeler & Wilson Sewing machine family), but unfortunately died soon after giving birth to her first child. After a period of mourning, Sam married Dora, a common practice in those days. Mr. Julian Rumsey died in 1886. Martha came home to Lake Geneva after the death of her husband Nathan Skinner.

After Mr. Rumsey death in 1886, Sam Wheeler and Dora bought Shadow Hill. Mrs. Rumsey and daughters Martha, Emily, and Eliza lived at Willow Landing, a house at the edge of the village on Campbell Street. Mrs. Martha Rumsey died in 1904.

# Annual Dinner

Our annual dinner at Covenant Harbor was enjoyed by 24 members and guests. After the dinner Chris Brookes put on “WCGS - The Year in Review”. Some members that haven’t attended many meetings were heard to say, “Gee, I should come to more meetings. I missed a lot.” Great job, Chris!



Marra Andreas, Pat Blackmer, and Dan Richardson



Chris Brookes (goofing around), Chad Robinson (Adult services director at the Matheson Memorial Library), and Jennifer Coon.



Kay Drexler, Karen Memory, and a guest.



Diana Bird and Karen Helwig



Marjorie Friestad, Nancy Lehman, and Kay Sargent



Al Gruling, Loretta Nussbaum, and Jim Friestad

# *Annual Dinner (continued)*



Judy Rockwell, Delores Schutt, and Nancy Osmolak



Mike Hay and Peggy Schutt



Sue Morgan



Chris Brookes starts the program



We had a group picture taken by one of the servers.

Note: Even Martha is in this picture.



# AROUND THE COUNTY TIDBITS

by Shirley Sisk

**Darien** – D. Tiffany, of Darien, N. Y., is visiting at Orange Carter’s.-----Born, Aug. 22d, to Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Matteson, a girl.--  
-----Mr. and Mrs. J. M. Vanderhoof, accompanied by Mrs. Clara Luther and son Perley, returned from California Monday.----  
-----Miss Nellie Williams, of Springfield, returned home Saturday after a week’s visit with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. David Williams.-----Married, at Clinton, Aug. 13th, Miss Beula Waite, of Darien, to Fred Siperly, of North Walworth. The best wishes of a host of friends attend them on life’s journey. (Wednesday, Aug. 27, 1890, Delavan Republican)

**Millard** – Mr. and Mrs. John Garbutt, of Whitewater, took dinner at Dr. Gray’s last Friday.-----Fred Harrison has lately disposed of two fine horses.-----Mr. and Mrs. E. J. Thomas spent Sunday at Mr. Wm. Jackson’s on Heart Prairie.-----  
The ladies of the Baptist Church will give an oyster supper at Millard on Friday evening, Jan. 22, for the benefit of the new church. Let us all turn out and give a quarter towards this noble cause. The price, 50 cents a couple, ought to make the poorest of us happy, when we consider the well known quality and quantity of the suppers served by our ladies. (Wed., Jan. 13, 1892, The Delavan Republican)

**Sugar Creek** – C.C. Polworth, of Milwaukee, is a guest at the Glen View farm where he

will spend a few days with his friend, J. R. Brabazon, Jr.-----J. R. Brabazon, Jr., broke the Sugar Creek turf record the other day by driving his renowned trotting colt, “Bonny”, a mile in 2:30. -----I. Y. Fitzer, Jr., of Sonon will live for a limited time with his father-in-law, Wm. Hall, of this place.-----Charles Brabazon suffers a severe attack of rheumatism—the physician says he will probably recover in a few weeks, when matrimonial propositions will be considered. (The Delavan Republican, Wednesday, January 20, 1892)

**North Walworth** – Andrew Slack’s brother-in-law arrived from Germany last week.-----  
-----Mrs. Til Sheldon is visiting her sister in Williams Bay.-----J. P. Hatch has rented his house to Frank and Charles Buckles who took possession Sunday.-----  
-Miss Jessie Flitcroft has been engaged to teach the school in the Parker district the coming year.-----We understand that Mr. Crewe has been engaged to teach the school of this place for another year. (The Delavan Republican, Thursday, August 2, 1900)

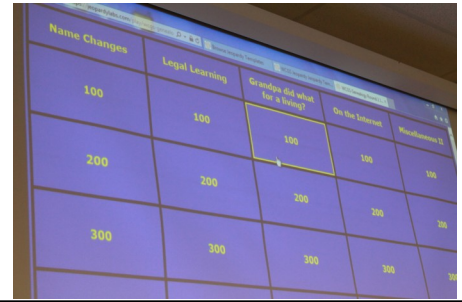
**North Sharon** – Mrs. R. L. Rumsey is enjoying a visit with a sister from Milwaukee.-----  
-----Mr. and Mrs. Jack Tuck and children, of Beloit, have been visiting her sister, Mrs. Sherman Mereness, the past week.

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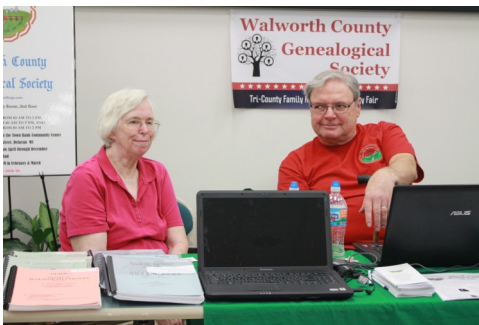
-----The North Sharon creamery company is getting plenty of milk now-a-days as the Walworth creamery is not running at present on account of a bursted boiler. (The Delavan Republican, Thursday, August 9, 1900)

August's Ice Cream Social culminated in "Genealogy Jeopardy!"



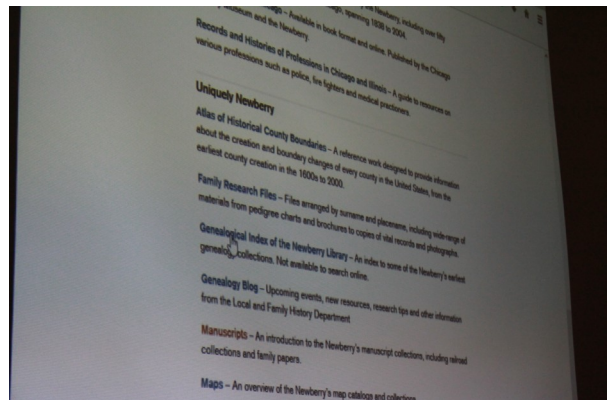
### Tri-County History Fair

Several of our members travelled to Kenosha to stop in to the Fair hosted by Kenosha County Genealogy.



### October 4, 2016 Meeting

Matt Rutherford of the Newberry Library in Chicago gave us information on the library's collections. We also learned that actually a very small percentage of information has been digitalized and is available on line.





## News from Neighboring Societies

**Burlington Genealogical Society** - Wed. November 16th, 2016 7:00 - 9:00 pm @ Burlington Gateway, (496 McKanna Parkway, Burlington, WI) "Military Genealogy"

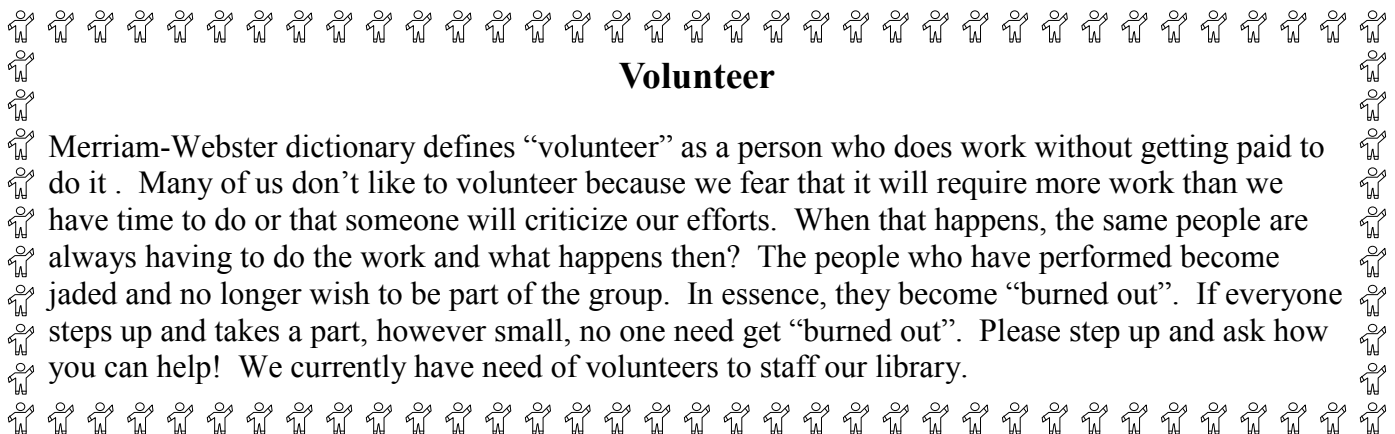
**McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society** - Thursday, November 10, 2016 - 7pm @ The Pointe, located at 5650 NW Hwy in Crystal Lake. (Next to Target)  
Liven up Your Family History with Images

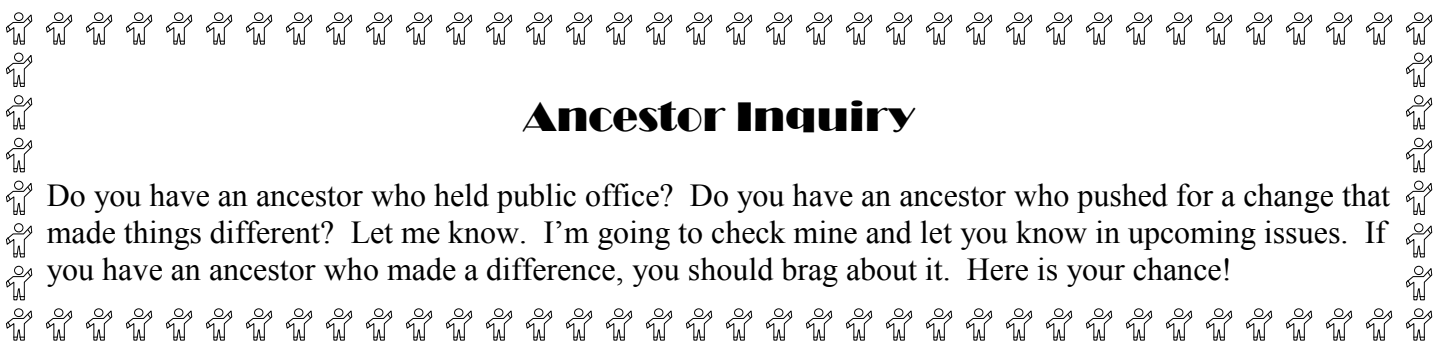
**British Interest Group of Wisconsin and Illinois (BIGWILL)** - Saturday, November 19th, 10:00 am @ The Community Church, 5714 Broadway St. (two blocks west of U.S. Route 12), Richmond, Illinois. "Scottish Records Sources" will be presented by Maureen Brady.

**Kenosha Genealogy Society** - Monday, November 14th, 6:30 pm until 9:00 pm @ Madrigrano Auditorium of Gateway Technical College, 3320 30th Avenue, Kenosha, WI. "Writing Family History: Using Narrative in Genealogy" will be presented by Daniel Hubbard, PHD.

**German Interest Group** - Monday, November 7th – Historian/Author Paul Rempe - Book presentation – Title: "From German Cavalry Officer to Reconnaissance Pilot: The World War I History, Memories, and Photographs of Leonhard Rempe, 1914-1921"  
Synopsis – Twenty-one-year-old Leonhard Rempe volunteered to serve Germany in 1914. By the time World War One ended, he had seen action on both major fronts, witnessed the war from the back of a horse and the cockpit of plane, and amassed one of the more unique records of anyone in the Kaiser's army. From German Cavalry Officer to Reconnaissance Pilot is his remarkable story.  
Book's webpage: <http://tinyurl.com/glye47m>

*Editor's note: If you have an announcement from any group you are a member of and would like to see it in our newsletter, please send me the information at [wcsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wcsnewsletter@gmail.com)*

 Volunteer  
Merriam-Webster dictionary defines "volunteer" as a person who does work without getting paid to do it. Many of us don't like to volunteer because we fear that it will require more work than we have time to do or that someone will criticize our efforts. When that happens, the same people are always having to do the work and what happens then? The people who have performed become jaded and no longer wish to be part of the group. In essence, they become "burned out". If everyone steps up and takes a part, however small, no one need get "burned out". Please step up and ask how you can help! We currently have need of volunteers to staff our library.

 Ancestor Inquiry  
Do you have an ancestor who held public office? Do you have an ancestor who pushed for a change that made things different? Let me know. I'm going to check mine and let you know in upcoming issues. If you have an ancestor who made a difference, you should brag about it. Here is your chance!

Below is a survey to help the society be more responsive to our members and to assist us in gaining new members. Please fill it out and bring it to the next meeting or send it to WCGS, P.O. Box 159, Delavan, WI, 53115-0159, and make it attention to: WCGS Newsletter Editor or email it to [wgsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wgsnewsletter@gmail.com). You, the members of WCGS, know what programs you would like to see. Without your input, we can only guess what you are interested in. Please help us make good decisions.

### Survey

1. Are there any past programs we have presented that you would like to have us repeat? If the answer is “yes” which programs and why?

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2. Would you be interested in a group research trip to the Newberry Library in Chicago or the Historical Society in Madison?

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3. What topics would you like to see as a program?

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4. What project or projects would you like to see the Society focus on?

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5. What suggestions do you have to help increase our membership?

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6. Would you be willing to take part in workshops presented by the Society?

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I'm desperately looking for more members to fill out the “Are You Related to Me?” form. If you need a form, email me at [wgsnewsletter@gmail.com](mailto:wgsnewsletter@gmail.com) and I will be glad to send it to you.

**PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE BY WCGS**

Walworth Co. Probate Record Index - 1848-1939	\$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
<b>BLOOMFIELD</b> - Hillside Cemetery- Genoa City	\$23.00
<b>DARIEN</b> - Darien Cemetery	\$22.00
<b>DELAVAN</b> - Delavan Area Cemeteries (Spring Grove, Old Settlers, St. Andrews, Arboretum and some church burials reprint)	\$14.00
East Delavan Union Cemetery	\$25.00
History of Delavan School 1982 - index only	\$18.00
<b>EAST TROY</b> - Oak Ridge Cemetery	\$18.00
St. Peter's Catholic Cemetery	\$25.00
<b>GENEVA</b> - Lake Geneva Area Obituaries (updated through June 30, 2010)	\$25.00
Pioneer Cemetery	\$15.00
Union Cemetery— plus some Geneva/Lyons Townships	\$20.00
<b>LAFAYETTE</b> - White Oak Cemetery	\$ 7.50
Hartwell-Westville-Sugar Creek Lutheran Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
<b>LAGRANGE</b> -LaGrange Pioneers (reprint of 3600 names, full index)	\$27.00
LaGrange Township Cemeteries	\$10.00
<b>LYONS</b> - 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
<b>RICHMOND</b> - Richmond & East Richmond Cemeteries	\$10.00
<b>SHARON</b> - Oakwood	\$15.00
<b>SPRING PRAIRIE</b> - Hickory Grove	\$25.00
German Settlement / Mount Hope / Diener Cemeteries (DVD tombstone pics included)	\$12.00
<b>SUGAR CREEK</b> - 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
<b>TROY</b> - Little Prairie	\$15.00
<b>WALWORTH</b> - Walworth Center (Walworth Village listings)	\$20.00
Brick Church Revised 2007	\$20.00
Cobblestone, WI/Bigfoot, IL (two different cemeteries in one book)	\$20.00
<b>WHITewater</b> - St. Patrick's Calvary	\$15.00
Hillside Cemetery	\$25.00
Unknown Burials	\$18.00
Index to the Annals of Whitewater	\$12.00

Shipping and handling as follows: \$5.50 per book

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 \$15 individual (\$100 lifetime), \$18.00 family (\$200 lifetime), \$7.50 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.

DSTK 1/14

## WALWORTH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

CO-PRESIDENTS	Michael Hay Chris Brookes	455 Fellows Road 721 S. Curtis St. #139	Genoa City, WI Lake Geneva, WI	wcgspres@gmail.com cbrookes@wi.rr.com
VICE-PRESIDENT	Karen Weston	9601 N. Kyle Dr..	Whitewater, WI	wcgsvpres@gmail.com
SECRETARY	Marilyn Traver	473 E. Geneva St Lot 10	Elkhorn, WI	msearchin@hotmail.com
CO-TREASURERS	Martha Hay	455 Fellows Road	Genoa City, WI	m.k.hay.mh@gmail.com
DIRECTOR(S)	Diana Bird Karen Helwig Judy Rockwell Dolores Schutt		Harvard, IL Whitewater, WI Elkhorn, WI Clinton, WI	
OTHERS:	Newsletter Editor: Martha Hay <a href="mailto:wcgsgnewsletter@gmail.com">wcgsgnewsletter@gmail.com</a> Library Committee: Diana Bird, Judy Rockwell, and Marilyn Traver 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 262-279-6541

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

\*\*\*\*Dues are \$15 (\$100 Lifetime) for an individual, \$18.00 (\$200 Lifetime) for a family, \$25 contributing, \$7.50 student.  
\$5.00 additional per year to receive the newsletter through the mail.

MEMBERS: Want email meeting minutes or not?? Contact Marilyn Traver, [msearchin@hotmail.com](mailto:msearchin@hotmail.com)

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

Email us at: [societynews@walworthcgs.com](mailto:societynews@walworthcgs.com)

WALWORTH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. BOX 159  
DELAVAN, WI 53115-0159