



# Walworth County Genealogical Society Newsletter

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March-April 2017

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.

***If you haven't paid your 2017 dues, please do so as soon as possible. Don't forget to like us on Facebook! Search for Walworth County Genealogical Society Inc.***

*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 414-378-9879.*

## 2017 Meetings, Events

**Please note the April & May meetings will be held in Elkhorn, and the June meeting at the ARC at UW-Whitewater**

**April 4<sup>th</sup> - 6:30 pm - Treasures of the WCGS Library - WCGS Library Committee:** Diana Bird, Marilyn Traver, and Judy Rockwell. We will meet in the Mary Bray room at Matheson Memorial Library in Elkhorn.

**May 2nd - 6:30 pm - DNA Basics & Understanding your DNA results- Community Room.** Mary Eberle, owner of DNA hunters, will emphasize interpreting your results from Ancestry DNA. Community Room-Matheson Library

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## Notice!

### Library Telephone!

Our library room now has a telephone! The number is (262) 723-9150. Anyone can leave a message for the library staff!



## From the President's Desk



Chris Brookes & Martha Hay- WCGS Co-Presidents

### Chris's Message:

Dear Friends –

Co-President's Comments

Gone Fishing.... For my Irish roots. See you in May!

### Martha's Comments:

With Chris out of the country on vacation (enjoying herself I hope), it is up to me to give the bulk of the message this newsletter.

Well, winter is giving hints that it's going away, but spring is still hiding. I hope we have a spring this year and not just a jump from winter to summer. I always feel better and happier when the sun is out and these cloudy days are getting on my nerves.

Our April 4<sup>th</sup> meeting will give our members and the public a chance to do some evening research with our library committee on hand to help and guide us in the knowledge of the resources in our very own library room.

The May 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting, DNA Basics & Understanding Your DNA Results, we are holding in conjunction with Matheson Memorial Library will be in the Community Room in Elkhorn at the library will help those of us who still are trying to understand how DNA works.

Our June 6<sup>th</sup> meeting will be in Whitewater at the ARC. Get your questions ready for Karen Weston.

We need to let others know what we do and invite them to join. At our last meeting, we obtained one new member. We need to get the message out that genealogy is interesting and fun. If you have roadblocks in your own genealogy, helping others often gives you ideas on what you might do next. Mike and I talk to everyone we meet and often give them brochures and other information in the hopes that they will join. Anyone who would like to carry some brochures to pass along should contact Mike Hay or me.

We are still searching for a refreshment chairperson to be in charge of coordinating refreshments for our meetings. That way we will ensure that we have enough treats.

Membership cards for 2017 will be available soon.

## WCGS Library Page



From the library committee:

Our book inventory is almost complete. Marilyn is updating the computer index and we'll double check the few items that we may have missed. We will then make the index available. Our next project is to decide how we can change how the library is organized to make it more useful.

In the next month we will be adding the newest Walworth County Plat Book and a new revised edition of *Wisconsin-Its Counties, Townships and Villages, Second Edition* (better known as the COW book) This new edition is 225 pages, instead of 90, with additional information about, county courthouses and Area Resource Centers The information about villages, cities, and townships is more comprehensive.

The society has purchased a handheld scanner to be used in the library by members and visitors to scan and save ancestor information. Ask for a demonstration next time you visit the library.

Matheson Memorial Library staff have moved their local history collection to an area around the corner from our library. This will be so convenient for members and visitors. Other changes are in the works.

We encourage you to volunteer at the library on Tuesdays from 10-3 or the 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday of each month 10-2. Even if you can only work a part of a day we'd love to have you. It's a great way to learn what's in the library, and such fun helping visitors find ancestor information. There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board.

Submitted by Judy Rockwell

To contact any of the members:

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

birddiana1@gmail.com

Judy Rockwell - jjrockwell@gmail.com

Marilyn Traver - msearchin@gmail.com

They will be delighted to hear from you!



## The Harknesses of LaFayette

By Christine Brookes

The family of James Harkness settled in the Town of LaFayette in 1837, two years prior to the establishment of Walworth County. This year is the 180<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their arrival. James was born in Pelham, Hampshire County, Massachusetts in 1776, one of the seven children of James and Nancy Gray Harkness. He married Mary (Polly) Rhodes, and they had two children. Along with several other family members, the Harknesses headed west before 1830. Polly died in Guilford township, Medina County, Ohio. James married again within five months. He married a total of four times, fathering ten children. He died in LaFayette in 1861.

James's father also was named James, and he was a twin. James (twin) was born in Newton, Middlesex County, Massachusetts in 1722. By 1755 he was living in Pelham, Massachusetts. He married Nancy Agnes Gray in 1757 and had seven children. His twin William married Ann Gray, Nancy's cousin. They also had seven children. They were among the first families of Pelham.

Pelham, MA was also the home of Capt. Daniel Shays, the Revolutionary War hero who led the Shays' Rebellion in 1786 against state officials in Boston. Even though the Rebellion was unsuccessful, it led to the first Constitutional Convention that drafted the Constitution of the United States and led to the adoption of the Bill of Rights. Pelham was primarily an agricultural community, but some industry included grist and wooden turning mills along the water. Pelham also has the oldest town hall in continuous service in the United States.

The town hall was probably the scene of the Pelham Committee of Correspondence. The first of these Committees was formed by Samuel Adams and other Patriots in November of 1772 in Boston. Almost immediately the majority of towns in Massachusetts followed the example set by Boston and established a network

of Committees of Correspondence throughout the colony. The Committees of Correspondence were essentially intercolonial standing provincial governments. Members of the Committees were elected by the traditional New England town meeting process. In 1776 the population of Pelham was 729.

According to Parmenter's *History of Pelham, Massachusetts*, James Harkness is recognized for patriotic service as a member of the Committee of Correspondence.

James Harkness's father was John, born in Ireland about 1690, son of Scottish parents. John emigrated to Newton, a Presbyterian community in Massachusetts in 1710. There he married twice, and with his second wife Margaret, had seven children, including the twins James and William. John died in Newton in 1746/47.

John's father John Harkness of Locherben, Scotland, fled to northern Ireland (Ulster) in the late 1600s after his brother Thomas (the Martyr) was executed in Edinburgh in 1684 for his part in the Enterkin Affair. Brother James (Long Gun), who also participated in the Enterkin Pass ambush of the British troops transporting Covenanters to trial in Edinburgh, escaped and spent the rest of his life living alternately in Scotland and Ireland. Older brother William also relocated to an area called Lissmoney in County Londonderry, Ireland, where he died in 1715. Long Gun died in Scotland in 1723. John married Ann; death is unknown.

It's a long way from Locherben to LaFayette, but once there the family left a 180 year legacy. Do you know any Harknesses in Walworth County? They are still around.



## AROUND THE COUNTY TIDBITS

by Shirley Sisk

**Delavan Lake** – Gene B. Hollister is building a large addition to the “Log Cabin Grocery” at Willow Point.-----K. N. Hollister and family moved out to their cottage at Brighton last Saturday.-----W. L. Dilley and wife and Geo. Lyman and wife, of Chicago, are rustivating at Staley’s cabin.-----Chas. von Helmolt has his new cottage on South Shore just finished and is now settled there with his family.-----Ed Williams’ fine sail boat, the Crescent, having been newly painted and put in perfect trim, is now ready to be launched.-----A moonlight excursion, on the steamer Peerless, was enjoyed by fifteen couples from town and about the lake, Monday night. (Wednesday, July 22, 1891, The Delavan Republican)

**East Troy** – Mr. O. B. Rogers was a visitor to the World’s Fair city Monday and Tuesday of last week. O. B. was greatly impressed with its length and breadth and the height of some of the buildings therein. (July 22, 1891, The Delavan Republican)

**Whitewater** – Harvey Cutler, a well known old resident of Whitewater, died at the home of D. Jarvis, in the First Ward, on Monday, at the advanced age of 78 years. He had been for over thirty years a dweller here. The funeral services were held on Tuesday afternoon, Rev. Jas. Hall, officiating. -----Wm. Steng, a young man of about thirty-five years, and well known

about the city, until recently employed at Fryer’s livery, was found dead this morning at about eleven o’clock in one of the stalls in the old barn back of the Leffingwell & Morse livery. (July 22, 1891, The Delavan Republican)

**Darien** – Alice Waite is spending the week with her sister, Beula Siperly, at North Walworth.-----Mr. John Waite, of Marseilles, Illinois, has been a guest of his brother, I. N. Waite, for the past week.-----Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Truax and daughter, of Harvard, were guests of her mother, Mrs. Laura Long, over Sunday.-----Messrs. John Waite and I. N. Waite left for Milwaukee, Wednesday morning, to visit a brother, and from there go to Chicago to visit a sister.-----Mrs. Dockstater is a guest of her sister, Mrs. Mary Johnson.-----Died, at the home of his parents, in Oakland, Cal., July 6th, 1891, Mr. Frank Howard. It will be remembered they went from this village about seven years ago.-----Miss Jennie Hillman received news from her sister, Mrs. Katie Starring, of Baton Rouge, Louisiana, that their home was entirely swept away by the recent cyclone.-----Mr. Pratt opened his meat market on Wisconsin Street last week.-----Mrs. Barrett and Mrs. Comstock, who have been visiting their niece, Mrs. Griswold, returned home Thursday.-----Mr. Alex Reed, of Chicago, Sundayed with his mother. (July 22, 1891, The Delavan Republican)



# Genealogy Word Search

N	H	L	U	M	C	S	V	C	M	K	E	D
M	T	R	Q	H	E	N	M	O	T	H	E	R
L	O	E	U	A	N	C	E	S	T	O	R	S
K	O	C	O	Y	S	D	G	N	C	C	L	I
J	G	O	D	R	U	F	E	T	N	H	P	Y
I	E	R	S	E	S	B	A	E	G	I	A	Z
H	N	D	O	R	S	L	T	T	D	I	Y	T
G	E	S	N	E	H	C	W	B	H	Z	H	A
F	A	U	D	S	F	I	E	K	G	E	U	L
E	L	R	W	E	B	A	S	N	Y	U	R	A
D	O	N	I	A	M	L	M	T	D	L	Z	G
C	G	A	L	R	L	V	Y	I	O	A	I	P
B	Y	M	L	C	I	W	P	Y	L	R	N	D
A	F	E	S	H	B	I	R	T	H	Y	Y	T
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12



GENEALOGY	DESCENDANT	MOTHER	WILLS
BIRTH	DEED	RECORDS	HISTORY
CENSUS	FATHER	RESEARCH	FAMILY
CHAT	SON	SURNAME	ANCESTORS

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## *Program Recap*

Our February program meeting was “Show and Share”, attendance was small, but we were then able to learn more about each other’s stories. Our March 7 meeting “Researching Irish Ancestors” was very well attended, and our Guest Speaker was Jon R Domencich, President of the Irish Genealogical Society of Wisconsin. For those of you who missed the program, please go to [irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/irish-roots](http://irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/irish-roots) for a short introduction to Irish genealogy. Please also go to [IGSWonline.com](http://IGSWonline.com) for more information.



## *News from Neighboring Societies*

**McHenry County Illinois Genealogical Society** - Saturday, July 8 -The 2017 Summer Conference will be held Saturday, July 8, at McHenry County College in Crystal Lake IL. The Conference will include the following nationally known speakers, Mary M. Tedesco, Thomas MacEntee, Paul Milner, Michael Lapopo. You can register online at [www.mcigs.org/conference](http://www.mcigs.org/conference), or send questions to [registration@mcigs.org](mailto:registration@mcigs.org). The literature sent to us will be available for viewing at our next meeting on April 4.

**BIGWILL—Saturday, May 20, Richmond IL— 2 Presentations on same day**

**Scotland’s Resources: There’s More to Scottish Research than Scotland’s People”** Scottish immigrants fled their ancestral lands for different reasons. Tina will talk about three distinct settlements; Tamarack, Argyle, and Lost Prairie, and discuss the reasons behind leaving Scotland and arriving in Illinois.

and  
**“Scottish Chain Migration to Illinois: Three Case Studies”**

There are dozens of sites available to help you in your Scottish research.

[www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk](http://www.scotlandspeople.gov.uk) is just the tip of the iceberg of Scottish research that is availa-

ble to you from “across the pond.”

**Kenosha Genealogy Society** - Monday, April 10, 6:30 to 8:30pm --“10 Brick Wall Tips” . Marian Pierre-Louis, a genealogy writer, will present tips on overcoming brick walls. The presentation will take place at Gateway Technical College, 3520 30th Ave, Kenosha, in the Madrigano Auditorium. Open to the public.

Annual dinner of the **Historical Society of Walworth & Big Foot Prairie**, Thursday, April 27, 5 p.m. at Starline Factory, 306 West Front Street, Harvard, Illinois. The program will be about the History and People involved in Hunt, Helm, Ferris & Co., later to become Starline, Inc. Cost \$35 per person. Reservations due by Monday, April 10. Send a check made out to the society to: Historical Society of Walworth & Big Foot Prairie, P.O. Box 336, Walworth, WI 53184-0336. For information, call the Society President at 262-275-2426.



### **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.





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	\$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: \$6.50 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.

## WALWORTH COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OFFICERS

CO-PRESIDENTS	Martha 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
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OTHERS:	Newsletter Editor: Peggy Schutt <a href="mailto:wcsnewsletter@gmail.com">wcsnewsletter@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, phone 262-723-9150  
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  
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