

SAWDUST CITY ROOTS

The official newsletter of the
Genealogical Research Society of Eau Claire, Wisconsin

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We are an affiliate of the Wisconsin State
Genealogical Society

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From the Chair

Summer is over and a “new year” begins. Hope you all had a terrific summer. If it was anything like mine, it was busy, but fun.

Just like the beginning of a new school year – when we were kids, which was yesterday – I’m looking forward to a new year with my genealogy projects and all of you at GRSEC. Todd has a great line-up of speakers and Kathy has the fall open labs set. Check out updates on our website too, grsec.org.

To whet our appetites, TLC has started a new season of “Who Do You Think You Are” and PBS is starting a new season of Henry Gate’s genealogy show. Also, there is an advanced genealogy class being offered at the Senior Center, fee charged, beginning Sept. 4.

Welcome Back!! Or, perhaps this is a welcome to those who are new members. We love sharing our passion for genealogy and family history! Hope to see you all at our first meeting of the season, Sept. 13 at 10 a.m. The library will be open at 9, or join us for hospitality before the meeting begins.

Pat Lindholm

**THIS NEWSLETTER IS AVAILABLE TO MEMBERS BY E-MAIL. TO RECEIVE IT IN
THAT FORM CONTACT THE EDITOR AT JALF4840@CHARTER.NET**

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Which brings up this announcement: **The next board meeting** is Monday, October 27 at Coffee Grounds - new location at 6 p.m. (4212 Southtown Dr. off Damon, next door to the Chippewa Valley Eye Clinic.)

Future board meetings: 6:00 pm Tuesday December 30, 2014 at the Chippewa Valley Museum – 6:00 pm Tuesday, February 24, 2015 at the Chippewa Valley Museum – 6:00 pm Tuesday, April 28, 2015 at the Chippewa Valley Museum.

There will be a meeting Saturday, November 15 with Greg Hocking to decide what to keep of members' collections that are donated to our association. He will help establish guidelines. The meeting will be in Special Collections

We had a picnic: The weather cooperated beautifully as the GRSEC picnicked beside beautiful Half Moon Lake in Carson Park the evening of August 5th. We were entertained before the pot luck dinner by



Todd Johnson on the beat.

Todd Johnson and his band with some good old time oompah pah pah music that had toes tapping. Following the meal several members gave interesting presentations.

Melody Glenn read a news item from the July 07, 1890 Eau Claire Leader about the first picnic on Horse Shoe Island, later Carson Park. Sponsored by the Daniel Shaw Lumber Company it drew 800 people.

Deb Jarvar gave a quiz on local history and held a drawing. Norma Steinke won the prize.

Celeste Tumm told about the trip she and her husband Don took to Germany and Austria where she met relatives for the first time.

Todd Johnson who is researching the history of the Eau Claire police department gave an update of his latest findings including interesting facts about the Cliff Omtvedt flag, the first to fly over occupied Japan.

The finale of the evening was an instructive session of the game Kubb.



Todd Johnson (c.) gives Kathy Herfel and Chuck Lorentz the lowdown on Kubb.

Senior Americans Day

First of all, we are looking for a few new members for the planning committee. This would mean about one meeting a month. Committees are - program, hospitality (plan the meal), scholarship/finance and others. It involves a time commitment, but you get in free, and receive a free lunch! The event has been moved to June, 2015.

Second, since I'm on the planning committee, I'd like to suggest a session on genealogy. SAD hasn't had one specifically on genealogy in a few years. The GRS board can decide if we would do this, who would be involved, and if we should pay \$50 for a table in the Service area again. We could commit to doing one or 2 sessions.
Kathy Herfel

A big thank you to those who helped with cemetery indexing this past summer. If you are still interested in doing any indexing this fall please let me know.

Karin

Genealogical Research Society of Eau Claire

2014 Fall Seminar

November 08, 2014

START	END	TOPIC	PRESENTER	NOTES
10:00 a.m.	10:30 a.m.	Registration and Hospitality	GRSEC	<u>Chippewa Room</u> Coffee, tea and cookies
10:30 a.m.	10:45 a.m.	Business Meeting	Pat Lindholm GRSEC President	<u>Eau Claire Room</u>
10:45 a.m.	11:00 a.m.	The Ins and Outs of the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society	Vickie Schnitzler WSGS President	<u>Eau Claire Room</u>
11:00 a.m.	12:00 p.m.	Beginning Genealogy 101	Vickie Schnitzler	<u>Eau Claire Room</u>
12:00 p.m.	01:00 p.m.	Lunch	"on your own"	<u>Chippewa Room</u> Tables available
01:00 p.m.	02:30 p.m.	Land Entry Records: Providing Details of a Pioneers Life	Don Schnitzler WSGS	<u>Eau Claire Room</u>
02:30 p.m.	02:45 p.m.	Break	GRSEC	<u>Chippewa Room</u> Coffee, tea and cookies
02:45 p.m.	04:00 p.m.	Problem Solving Techniques and Technology	Alyson Jones	<u>Eau Claire Room</u>
10:00 a.m.	03:15 p.m.	Information Tables	Various Groups	<u>Red Cedar Room</u>

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Speakers at the GRSEC Fall seminar will include Vickie Schnitzler, Don Schnitzler, and Alyson Jones.

Program director Todd Johnson presents the lineup for the coming year. Give Todd a pat on the back for an excellent schedule of presentations.

Sep 13

Robert Fraser - Passenger ships lists

Oct 11 Eric Larsen - "Skeletons in the Closet", Mr. Larsen will present his own family's research, which includes stories of a family member that led an interesting life.

Nov 8 Seminar

Dec 13 Tanya Malaney - A budding genealogist will present on her research of Irish, Norwegian and German ancestors, including information gathered during a trip to Ireland.

Jan 10 Member show and tell

Feb 14 Lawrence Johnson - "Early Railroading in Western Wisconsin." Mr. Johnson will present on his book research involving the railroads in Western Wisconsin.

Mar 14 Joe Niese - Mr. Niese, a librarian from Chippewa Falls and Eau Claire native, will present on his book research about two area baseball players, Burleigh Grimes and Andy Pafko.

Apr 11 and May 9 (tentative)

(1) Military records: "How to Obtain and What Can I Get?" Presenter from the Eau Claire Veteran's Services Office.

(2) Judy Olsen and Myke Rachu speakers. Did you make a New Year's resolution to scan all your images and documents as backup or for easy retrieval? Once you decide to scan your papers and photographs it's important to have a system for naming those digital files. This allows for easier access of your scanned content without having to open the files. Join us to learn the components of two naming systems and decide which will work best for you. Q & A and discussion will follow.

Meet a member. . . Bert Chatterson

Bert Chatterson is asked, "What do you think is important about genealogy?" The answer is immediate, clear and unequivocal. "I think it ties you to something. It gives you structure. It tells you who you are. And helps you make more of your life." And what a life it has been for this studious, personable lady who knows who she is, where she's been and is bonded tightly to her family roots.



Bert Chatterson

Bertha Marie Miller, named for her grandmother, was born in Bagley, Wisconsin in 1917, the daughter of Clyde and Minnie Miller, a family imbued with a love of education. Her father was a school principal which necessitated moving to various locations so she grew up and went to school in the village of Fairchild. Her further education followed

the pattern of many rural students when she went to Eau Claire and worked for her room and board to attend the Normal School. "And I got to be a teacher," she says. Her first teaching job was at North Valley near Osseo, her introduction to one room country schools. She introduced herself as teacher to those eight grades of students a few days before her 18th birthday. She would go on to teach at seven similar schools and remembers covering up with the children in a bear rug to go to school on forty below mornings.

Her life was to be one of many moves, 14 in all. She married Cliff Chatterson whose career was in management of Uniroyal tire manufacturing plants including Detroit and New York City. "Everywhere we went we got to see the family records. . . .I always visited the libraries and took notes," she says. Her first interest was in her mother's lineage, the Boldt family.

"That was the most immediate one. My mother was interested in her family that came from Germany. Little did I realize how much interest she was taking in that genealogy, because she said, after I left home, she had a lot of records of all her family. And I have one big box in my closet that were her things."

A large accomplishment for Chatterson was being part of the formation of the Genealogical Research Society of Eau Claire. Her interest in the museum and family research gave her a vision for an expansion of what she saw there. "When we moved back here I was working at the museum. That was a big interest to me. They did not have resources to begin with but that could be developed. I would work there where the library is in the museum. I continued and there was someone else that always came in to the library and I said do you suppose there is anybody else that would be working on another family? So we connived to do a city meeting. We asked Lois Barland to be the speaker. And 30 people came. And that was the first event of the Eau Claire genealogy club. We had organization meetings every month."

One regret Chatterson alludes to is that she failed to recognize her mother's interest in family history early on. She also wishes more attention had been given to recording ordinary events. "I didn't think about a genealogist. She (Mother) was interested.....she had how many brothers and sisters.....ten or twelve.....they would be doing something and you would hear about them and it didn't get it written, you knew about them. They were very much family and even though one of the girls ended up in Milwaukee she always came home and when they retired they all came back, too. They were like a clan. We would go....and I would, too.....and help and go to somebody's house and stay there for a couple or three weeks. It was the centennial that really gathered them more because everybody in the whole community took part in that. And that's something that we really overlooked a lot. Everybody, we didn't talk about looking at those county things. To see what they did.

"One thing I want to say, everyone doing genealogy should look up centennial. The centennial records in their county that they were born in. Those people in that town. That was a big community affair. The historical records of their count. They got interested because it was big, a natural thing. We have a book of Eau Claire County centennial."

Now, nearing a century of living she still is not done with research. Throughout her apartment are papers, notebooks, albums and boxes of genealogical material, waiting to be organized into a system. Her plan is to pass her accumulation of data on to a niece who will inherit the mantle of family genealogist. Plus there is that task of proving that Ferry Street in Shawtown is named after someone in her family and with her determination, she just might do it.

Speaking of future things, watch for a new GRSEC Facebook page. Even if we are already liked there is no such thing as too much.

From the editor:

In the last few days I have repeatedly come across the ancient yet timeless philosophic maxim, “Know Thyself,” attributed to Socrates and about a dozen other sages. As I interviewed Bert Chatterson she beautifully expressed that great truth when asked what is important about genealogy. “It tells you who you are,” she said. Then, a couple of days later Virginia Everson, a member of a writers group I attend, read from the preface to a memoir she is preparing for her descendants. She wrote to them, “In my opinion, the greatest pursuit of any individual is one that very few ever succeed in achieving, and that goal is getting to know yourself - to be able to answer quite satisfactorily and completely the question, “Who am I?” She went on to emphasize the need for her contribution to their history, “But if you and I never look beyond ourselves, if we don’t even know the names of our grandparents on both sides to say nothing of great grandparents, then we are doomed to start over. We are like a blank sheet of paper and there behind us is the rich “head start” that our ancestors have given us. Should that head start be something negative we will be forewarned and should be wise enough to avoid the pitfalls. Should the head start be positive we have a foundation to build something new.”

Then in his most recent sermon my pastor quoted from John A. Stroman’s book, *Thunder From The Mountain* referring to the 1939 impending Nazi invasion of the Netherlands. A group of Christians, seeing their Jewish neighbors disappearing asked theologian Henry Kramer what they should do. He answered, “I cannot tell you what to do. I can tell you who you are. If you know who you are you will know what to do.” Those people became part of the Dutch resistance.

Recording family histories is more than filling charts with names and dates. The information passed on to following generations tells them who they are, giving wings to their spirits and foundations to their souls.