

# SANDUST CITY ROOTS

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

Volume 33

Summer Special Issue

Number 06

An affiliate of the Wisconsin State Genealogical Society [www.wsgs.org](http://www.wsgs.org)

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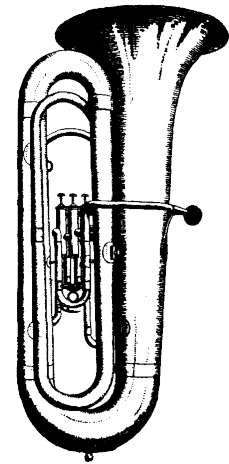
## A Message from the Chair

Hello everyone. This is your new President (sort of). When I last held the position from 2001-2004, I didn't have to do this. Well, here goes:

Summer is here and we've all got plans of some sort that we want to do. I've been quite busy with one family reunion (the Marten family) just finished, another (the Zielsdorf family) to prepare for, along with rehearsals and concerts with the Eau Claire Municipal Band. Research time has been very limited for me so far, but I would like to get some research done when I actually find some free time.

Hopefully, your summer is a lot less busy than mine. Enjoy it and see you at the picnic.

*Ken Kiesow*



# Time for a Picnic!

## July 19, 5 pm to 8 pm

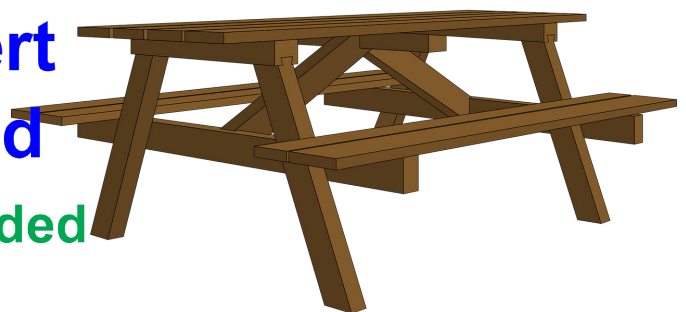
## Pine Pavilion, Carson Park

**A-H please bring a hot dish**

**I-Q please bring dessert**

**R-Z please bring a salad**

**Music and games; drinks provided**



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This newsletter is published in September, November, January, March, May, and mid July. Deadline for entries is the last day of the month prior to publication. So entries for November's issue would be October 31.

The GRSEC meets the second Saturday of each month, September through May, at 10:00 AM. Come early at 9:30 AM with your questions or just to visit. We meet at the Chippewa Valley Museum, located at Carson Park, in beautiful Eau Claire, Wisconsin.

The GRSEC does not meet during the summer months (June through August). The membership year runs May 1st through April 30th. Membership fee is \$10.00 per year, beginning May 1st. Check your mailing label on the newsletter for your expiration date. It is on the right hand corner. Get your newsletter via email? Then check with Tom Davey, the Treasurer/Membership chair.

**Our email address and website address appear at the top of every page in the header area.**

## Items of Interest

### Meetings, Events and a Webinar or two!

**June 28-July 31**—Wisconsin Historical Museum, Madison, WI. **“Magna Carta: Enduring Legacy 1215-2015.”** “An American Bar Association traveling exhibition curated by the Law Library of Congress, at the Wisconsin Historical Museum.” This informative exhibition illustrates Magna Carta’s influence throughout the centuries and explains the document’s long history through detailed images of objects from Library of Congress collections. “Magna Carta” features 16 free-standing banners and a video element and will be located on the first floor of the Museum.

**July 12**—**Tech Tuesday at the LE Phillips Library**, 2-4 PM by the Information and reference area tables. Stop by to get free personal training on your e-reader or tablet.

**July 12**—**Adventures in History Book Club at the Chippewa Valley Museum**, 6:30 PM; *Stalag, Wisconsin: Inside WWII Prisoner of War Camp* by Betty Cowley. BONUS: The author will give a brief presentation and then join the conversation!

**July 16**—Villa Louis, Prairie du Chien, 10 AM to 4 PM. **“War of 1812 Reenactment,”** Visit a historic encampment and battle re-enactment on Wisconsin’s only War of 1812 battlefield, now the west lawn of the Villa Louis estate.” \$12.50 for adults, \$10.50 for seniors and \$5 children for ages 5-17. Contact Villa Louise for registration information, 608-326-2721.

**July 19**—**GRSEC Picnic**, Pine Pavilion, upper level of Carson Park. 5 to 8 PM.

**July 22-July 24**—Baraboo, Circus Celebration with the Baraboo Big Top Parade. On Saturday, July 23, **Baraboo’s Big Top Parade** will hit the streets of downtown Baraboo at 2:00 PM and will feature several wagons from Circus World’s collection of priceless circus wagons. The magnificent free street pageant will feature a host of bands and other local parade features. Following the parade, there will be a special Big Top Circus Performance at Circus World beginning at 4:00 PM with a \$5 admission for all who visit.

**July 29 and Saturday July 30**—**LE Phillips Library, Friends of the Library Book Sale** from 10 AM to 4 PM.

## Items of Interest cont.

**August 3—Webinar, “The Third Coast: How the Great Lakes Shaped America,” 7-8 PM.** This session will examine the rich history of the Great Lakes region, particularly its role in U.S. expansion through transportation, economic growth and defense. Presented by Cari Taplin, sponsored by MN Genealogical Society. FREE!

**To register:**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/6239578226097590017>

Or copy and paste into your browser window

**August 9—Tech Tuesday at the LE Phillips Library, 2-4 pm** by the Information and reference area tables. Stop by to get free personal training on your e-reader or tablet.

**August 9—Adventures in History Book Club at the Chippewa Valley Museum, 6:30 pm;** *When the Mississippi Ran Backwards: Empire, Intrigue, Murder, and the New Madrid Earthquakes of 1811-1812* by Jay Feldman.

**August 9—Webinar, “Misbegotten Children; Tracing the Family Lines of the Illegitimate.”** Treated with care and sensitivity, we can use many available resources to help us in our research. Nearly all families have children with seemingly missing fathers. Yet, there may be clues and resources to help us determine their ancestry. Presented by Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG; sponsored by the IL Genealogical Society

**To register:**

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1406973931847993857>

Or copy and paste into your browser window

**August 13—LE Phillips Library, Eau Claire Room, 10:30 am;** “Spiritual Songs: a Musical Legacy of the History of the Negro Spiritual,” a multimedia musical adventure presented by Dr. Naima Johnston-Bush.

## Ancestry Academy

If you have an Ancestry.com membership you have access to many short course online videos and quick tips. New this summer for all membership levels is “Hidden Treasurers on Ancestry.” This presentation highlights some of the best and most unusual collections on Ancestry, how to find them, and how to extract the wonderful clues in them that will lead to other records.

With a premium membership the following two courses are new.

“The City Directory: Your Guide to the Past,” and “Finding Your Revolutionary War Ancestor: Warrior or Patriot.”

## Worldwide Indexing Event, July 15-17

Sponsored by [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org). The goal for this year’s event is to have at least 72,000 volunteers index as many records as possible in a 72-hour period, July 15 to 17. Anyone with a computer and Internet connection can index records to perform meaningful service related to family history.

Before July 15 you will need to download the indexing software to your desktop computer, then starting July 15 you have 72 hours to index as few or as many batches as you want! So far 34,022 people have signed up to index. Will you be one of them?

**For more information:**

<https://familysearch.org/worldsrecords>



Kudos to John Vanek who was our May speaker. He took a complex subject on Ancestry DNA matches, and made it real and understandable to his audience. John spoke of the surprising news even doing a DNA test can bring as well as what to do

with the results once you receive them. His case study was a mystery of the highest order and one that you did not know the ending of until the last moment.

We wish John the best of luck in his new adventures this fall. Perhaps an article for this newsletter in the future, John?

Would you like to receive the Sawdust City Roots newsletter via email? Become a member and make sure [Tom Davey](#) has your email address!

## Time Travel: Centuries of Memories

Registration is now open to attend the Federation of Genealogical Societies 2016 National Convention in Springfield, Illinois, August 31—September 3. Local host is the Illinois State Genealogical Society.

“With over 160 sessions, 72 expert speakers from around the world, 10 luncheons with speakers, 7 workshops, 2 interactive seminars, and exhibit hall, learning opportunities abound in the FGS 2016 program! With strong daily tracks covering the U.S. Midwest (regional track), the United Kingdom (British Isles and Commonwealth track), and continental European research (ethnic track), you’ll learn a multitude of ways to uncover more about your family’s history.”

**For more information and to register:**

<https://www.fgsconference.org/registration/>

## Writing a Memory

I am always looking for “ideas” to help me add history and context to my ancestor’s lives. Photographs are a wonderful addition, if you have them. But my family did not seem to have a camera until the mid-1960s.

One thing we all have though are memories. Even though these memories may be influenced by our desire to paint a rosy picture, they help provide the context of the times we grew up in or perhaps the times of our parents and grandparents.

The following is used with the permission of Gary Culbert, a former Eau Claire native now living in Seattle, Washington. Gary is a member of a Facebook group I belong to called “You Know You are From Eau Claire When...” Gary has posted many short stories regarding his life growing up on the north side of Eau Claire. Gary’s neighborhood happens to be the same area where my parents grew up, probably twenty-five years even before he came along. While my parents both spoke of the corner stores, Gary’s store memories seem to spring from the page.

This original post first appeared in April of 2016.

### Corner grocery stores: Signs and Omens

When I was a child in Eau Claire, there were corner grocery stores every two blocks. Grandpa John and Little Grandma’s was on the corner of Centre and Omaha. Two blocks up Omaha was Ruhe’s. Two more blocks up was Klaes’, which was one house from the Scandinavian Cemetery where they all sleep today. In a slightly different direction were more corner groceries. If you went one block up Omaha to Balcom, then up Balcom one block to Birch Street, you could see two more. On the left was Blumlein’s. On the right was the last of the matched set of stores to close but the first one whose name I forget. It doesn’t matter. Mostly Catholics shopped there, anyway.

Blumlein’s (where they spoke with a raspy German accent) presented its long side to the view. About 1954 I stood on the corner and studied it. It had to be about 1954, as Mom wasn’t dead yet, and I was nine or ten. In my hand was a sweaty dime, which I was to use to buy a loaf of bread. The date had to be after 1952, because Grandpa John WAS dead and Culbert’s Grocery was closed, or I would never be going to Blumlein’s. I stared at Blumlein’s store and cars rushed away from me on Birch Street heading downtown.

Half of Blumlein’s was a faded, faded sign, a painting of a clock face with only two – no three – numbers on it. Two, four, ten, and above it the words “Time for Dr. Pepper!” This was mysterious. I had no idea who Dr. Pepper was. What did it mean? Why only three numbers? It made Blumlein’s a mysterious store. I knew there was nobody named Dr. Pepper there, but it seemed he ought to be there.

Inside was only old Mrs. Blumlein, chuckling and smug that her store hadn’t closed. I put my dime on the long counter and said, “My mom would like a loaf of bread, please.” Mrs. Blumlein patted her white butcher’s apron and took a step away from me. “Sorry, bread costs eleven cents today. The price went up this morning.”

I was stunned. I knew the Dr. Pepper warning was bad luck. I grabbed my dime and left with what dignity I could find. Out on the street I ran home as fast as I could.

Mom was on her knees in the living room, pushing the vacuum attachment under the library table. She took the dime back while sitting back on haunches and let me go to the kitchen for a cold Royal Crown Cola.

**But there are more signs...**

Driving around the huge abandoned Uniroyal Tire Company complex last summer I saw Building Eighteen. High on its brick facade was a sign so faded that only my 1954 sub-brain enabled me to know what it said: "Gillette Tires – A Bear For Wear." Dad worked there thirty-five years, many of them as a widower. So did my father-in-law (nicknamed Beaver). We buried Beaver and his Jeanette up at the Scandinavian Cemetery within a month of each other. They are just a stone's throw from Mom and Dad.

The only bits left now are the street signs – Omaha, Balcom, Cochrane, McDonough, Spring, Fall, Holm,

[The store whose name I forget when I wrote this was Timbers. Knew it well.]

Written by *Gary Culbert*

One more thing, Gary shared some random memories of Eau Claire and his youth.

**Things I remember for no particular reason:**

The smell of Drummonds.

The smell of cold rubber in my dad's jacket after work on a freezing day.

The rosary Saturday at 6:30 on WBIZ.

The first sight of the Chetek water tower when driving north out of New Auburn.

The sound of Maggie and Scotty singing "Out on Highway 53 there is a store that you should see..."

The smell of the Northern Wisconsin District Fair. Lew Kasera's voice.

The circus parade going down Birch St. to turn at Putnam St., down the hill.

The smell of the pot belly stove in the heat of the warming house at McDonough rink.

The next time you work on your genealogy, think back to the stories of your youth or your parents youth. Write them down or place them in your genealogy program. Rather than just names and dates on a page, you will have a detailed life lived. One we all can relate to and appreciate.

Gary's memory of the McDonough rink warming house really struck a chord with me. While I never skated there, my warming house was either Boyd Park or over at Shawtown. The smell of wet mittens warming near the stove is drifting across my memories.

The following is another article that stresses the importance of keeping family stories alive. Thank you to Roger Davis and Sharon Schmidt Rook for sharing! Sharon is the author of *Book I: The Johann and Dora (Holst) Schmidt Family 1763-1990*. This book is in our library, call no. FH.S003.

Johann Joachim Christian SCHMIDT and Marie Dorothea Catherine HOLST

**It will take time. Be patient and enjoy the journey.**

I started work on my family tree about four years ago. I naively thought I would take a summer to scan my photos, make a book, and call it a day. That summer has come and gone several times. I have met others who have been at their family tree for 15 years or more. But, my goal is not to find everyone related to me. My goal is to find the line that comes down to me. Book I is the back-story, the who, what, why and the where. It is the introduction. Any of my family in Book I can bring their family line down to the present if they wish to do so (and some have).

**Be curious; ask questions—of everyone and everything. Follow-up.**

Book I is what I know of my father's side of the family. I started my search online using several free sites and then expanded to trips to the Eau Claire County Courthouse and to the Diocese of LaCrosse. Both places have the original ledgers, which I used to find people and to verify I had the right people. I even managed to drag a few of my older cousins to the Courthouse to look for land documents and birth, death and marriage records! I wanted pictures, stories, and personal connections. I talked to people, I asked questions. I took pictures. I visited cemeteries, the Eau Claire Genealogy Society library, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin Library. I traveled to Baltimore and visited the Enoch Pratt Library and I stood on the land at Locust Point. I wrote letters. I searched newspapers. Whenever I had a question, I searched for an answer. Be persistent. It is a puzzle. I tried to follow the trail wherever it led me. Every time I visit family

in Eau Claire and we reminisce, I hear bits and pieces of my family's story.

**Everyone has a story worth telling.**

Briefly, here is what I know. My second great-grandparents, Johann Joachim Christian SCHMIDT and Marie Dorothea (Dora) Catherine HOLST left Waltershausen, Blankenhagen, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Germany (formerly Prussia) some time in the 1800s. Johann was born in 1805 in Germany; he died in 1880 in Fall Creek, Wisconsin, and is buried at St. John's Lutheran Church together with his Dora. Five of their children, together with their families, also came to the Fall Creek area. (There is a summary and, when available, pictures of each of these families in Book I.)

The five children and their families are:

1. Maria Dorothea Elisabeth SCHMIDT with a SCHMIDT daughter who married a GARDOW;
2. Maria Christina Johanna SCHMIDT, mar. Johann Heinrich SCHMIDT;
3. Carl SCHMIDT, mar. Henriette LAUBE;
4. Louisa Friederica Dorothea SCHMIDT, mar. Wilhelm ANKLAMM; and
5. Friedrich SCHMIDT, mar. Sophia KINOW.

Number 5 above is my line—my great-grandparents, Friedrich Johann SCHMIDT and Sophia Maria KINOW. Friedrich and Sophia and their children appear to be the last of the Schmidt's to immigrate. They came through Locust Point Baltimore in November 1884. My grandfather, August Carl Christian, was seven years old, his sister Louise was less than a year old and they came with Sophia's two sisters, Caroline and Anna. (Finding the right spelling for Kinow is a story in itself.) I have a copy of the ship's passenger list; a picture of the ship they sailed on and I know they sailed from the Port of Bremerhaven and that the journey took six weeks. My first cousin knew August was seven when he came to this country. She knew nothing of how he came to Wisconsin. We have a copy of Friedrich's birth record. My grandfather, August, had scribbled on it. Family said they didn't know where we were from in Germany, but it was right in front of them—on Friedrich's birth record.

Friedrich and Sophia had three children, who lived to

be adults: August, Louise and Albert. Albert was the only one born in Wisconsin. I am told he had a strong German accent and spoke German to his horses. He, like his father, was a farmer. A portion of the first land purchased by Friedrich and Sophia in 1899 is still in the family and we have a copy of the deed, which we found at the Eau Claire County Courthouse.

**It takes whatever time it takes. You can try to put a deadline on it, but why would you want to?**

My grandfather, August, married Anna Katherine WEINSTOCK and the next book will be their story. August and Katherine had six surviving children, one of them being my father, Edward. My father, Edward, married Irene Josephine BAIER, and I need to tell their story. That's Book III. And, then I need to tell my story. That makes at least a Book IV.

**Do NOT clean house and toss old pictures (hopefully, names and dates have been written in pencil on the back), documents, personal items, etc.**

Fortunately, many of my family kept copies of obituaries (a treasure of family information), birth records, the family bible, and recipes. Go to family reunions. Listen to grandpa when he tells the story, again and again. Ask questions. One thing leads to another. The more I traveled to Eau Claire and visited with family, the more stories came to light. I found my great-grandmother Sophia's two sisters families because a cousin commented to another "Does Sharon know the Rahn's are related?" How would I know that? I didn't grow up in the Eau Claire area. I didn't hear the stories.

I have my grandfather's pocket watch and the story that goes with it. I have pictures without names and can only guess at how they might be related. I have a harmonica, which I believe is from my father's side of the family only because it is from Germany. I have from my grandmother's library "Gregg Shorthand Dictionary" published in 1916 but no story. (I learned shorthand in high school. I can guess that perhaps an aunt learned it in her day.)

**Family Reunions—ugh! What can you do?**

Back in the old days, Sundays were meant for church services, family visits and dinners and families lived nearby. There wasn't a need for a "reunion" because you saw each other on a regular basis and were part of each other's lives. They call this "community." Today,

we may not live nearby and our lives seem to keep us running from morning to night. So, if you want to see family, perhaps you need to plan a family reunion? Or move back home? Or make a telephone call on a regular basis? Or write letters? Take pictures?

Some families have reunions on a regular basis and some even enjoy going. Several years ago my first cousins on my father's side decided to have a family reunion. The first time it was pretty well attended. My mother was still alive, my sisters participated, etc. Since then all of the aunts and uncles have died. Many of the first cousins have died. Children of children are not interested and don't attend. Frankly, this generation of the family of August SCHMIDT and Katherine WEINSTOCK are reunion failures. Too little and too late. At the reunion last summer, we agreed to continue to meet until all of us first cousins pass. When I was a child, we visited grandma often. We saw each other. We ate well and played hard. I miss it all.

As part of the searching on the family tree, we had a 150-year reunion of the original five families who immigrated to this country in Osseo two years ago. Seventy people came! I wish I could do the day over again. And, I wish I could do it again. I jokingly call it a 150-year reunion—we're not a close family. Those who stayed in the Eau Claire area may not have family reunions. They may not know how they are related to each other. But, they do get together and socialize.

#### Why did I do it?

I miss my family. I think of all the people I loved and who loved me throughout my life. I have grandchildren and I think of all the things I would like to share with them. They do not ask questions. I didn't ask my family either. I was busy living. *If I can capture for my family the memories of my aunts and uncles, nieces, and nephews and our times together maybe I can keep them with us a little bit longer. It's a good story and a great adventure. And, it is far from over.* [Emphasis mine]

Submitted by: Sharon SCHMIDT Rook  
Second Great-Granddaughter of Johann Joachim Christian SCHMIDT and Marie Dorothea (Dora) HOLST  
Great-Granddaughter of Friedrich Johann SCHMIDT and Sophia KINOW  
Granddaughter of August Carl Christian SCHMIDT and Anna Katherine WEINSTOCK  
Daughter of Edward Michael SCHMIDT and Irene Josephine BAIER

## This and That...

### Megan Smolenyak<sup>2</sup> and Lin-Manuel Miranda (of *Hamilton* fame)

A blog post by Megan, inspired by a comment of Miranda's "knowing his family tree," leads to an amazing article on Texas statehood, an interracial love story, slavery and rebellion. Read it here:

<http://www.megansmolenyak.com/lin-manuel-mirandas-revolutionary-ancestors/>

Or copy and paste into your browser window

### Newspaper Research Links through The Ancestor Hunt

As of June, 2016, there were over 17,500 links to free newspapers in the lists. Arranged by state:

<http://www.theancestorhunt.com/newspaper-research-links.html>

### Genealogy Roadshow Episodes

Full episodes (and a lot of short clips) are now available for viewing at the following link:

<http://www.pbs.org/show/genealogy-roadshow/>

## Fall Articles

I would like to publish one of your articles (yes, you!) in an upcoming issue. This fall I would like to highlight a **family heirloom**. From a piece of jewelry, pocket watch, or precious toy to a furniture item, or grandma's fur stole! We want to hear about it. A picture to include would be great too. So hunt through those closets, attics and basements for your treasures. Send me an email or talk to me at one of our meetings regarding your find.

**Greatest Find**—do you have a document that really propelled your research forward? How/where did you find it? Share your stories and impart some ideas for the rest of us to try!

**Different State Resources**—not all of our ancestors are from Eau Claire, this is just where we have all come to be in this time. So, where do you research? What are some of your favorite websites to mine for information?

Just drop me an email: [voss523@gmail.com](mailto:voss523@gmail.com).

Remember, when we share our memories we all become richer!



**GRSEC Newsletter**  
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