

Serving Calhoun County, Michigan, family history researchers

President's Message

Where did the past year go?

It is history now. That is what we are about – History- I think, as a genealogy society, we have made great strides this past year to make our mark on History. I won't list all the things we have accomplished. I won't list names of members who have contributed, for fear of forgetting to mention something or someone. I think if you go over the past issues of Generations, you will be able to read about them. We can feel very proud of our accomplishments. We have many wonderful, talented and knowledgeable members. I feel much honored to be a part of this wonderful organization, as I know you are too. And, I thank you all for your contributions and support to our Society. It is to cold and snowy to make our trips to cemeteries, and such a great time of year to spend in libraries and court-houses, and yes, on the Internet. There is a wealth of new information being added everyday to the Internet to help us in our search for our story of our ancestors. Genealogy is more than just names and dates. It is how and where they lived. For instance, here is a little story that I just found on the Internet on one of my ancestors.

"On one occasion, during Mr. Steinhoff's early pioneer life, a big lubber of a bear seized one of his porkers and walked off with it. The porker weighed about 200 lbs., and it aroused Steinhoff's combativeness to see his meat carried off in this manner right before his eyes, so he rallied the forces at his command and started in pursuit. Bruin hugged his squealing captive to death as he waddled off with him, and when he reached a good place in the woods he buried his prey by the side of a log. Before he had finished the job, however, his pursuers were upon him, and he went up a tree. The guns were turned upon him, and a fusillade kept up until the ammunition gave out, but Mr. Bear never even changed his position. Thinking that the riddled and lifeless body of the pig-thief was lodged in the tree in such a way as to prevent it from falling, they proceeded to cut the tree down. After a good deal of hard work the tree fell; and the supposedly dead bear jumped up, and, after putting his human and canine assailants to an ignominious flight, leisurely made his way off into the forest."

Taken from 'Pioneer Sketches of Long Point Settlement, Norfolk County', from the Internet.

Now, to me, this gives life to all these names and dates. So, spend your cold snowy winter inside. But, spend it on your history, whether recording it or making it!

We have another great year planned and some programs you won't want to miss.

Bring some of your stories and hints to our January meeting. See you then.

Judy Groat, President

State Archives Workshops Genealogy Series 2005

Thursday, January 13

Corrections Records and Mental Health Institution Records

3:00-4:00pm Education Room (1st Floor of Museum)

This sessions provides information on how to research state prison records and will discuss the current laws restricting mental health patient files and the process for requesting access to them

Thursday, March 10

Doing Research at the State Archives of Michigan

3:00-4:00pm Education Room (1st Floor of Museum)

A session to provide individuals with an overview of the State Archives of Michigan and information on genealogical sources that are available.

Thursday, May 13

Military Records at the State Archives

3:00pm-4:00pm Education Room (1st Floor of Museum)

This session provides an overview of military related records that are preserved in the State Archives. This will include records on pre Civil War units, Civil War units, Spanish-American War units, national guard/state troops, the Mexican Border War and World War I. Information will be also be provided for locating post World War I records.

Thursday, July 14

Land Ownership/Historical Homes

3:00pm-4:00pm Education Room (1st Floor of Museum)

The State Archives holds all of the original land patents issued by the State of Michigan. This session will explore the various records researchers can use to investigate who owned land, the natural landscape of each property, and how to perform genealogical research as it relates to residences and other structures.

New genealogy titles at the Helen Warner Branch of Willard Library.

Lamarre, Jean. The French Canadians of Michigan: their contribution to the development of the Saginaw Valley and the Keweenaw Peninsula, 1840-1914.

Wakefield, Larry. Ghost Towns of Michigan, volume 3.

Hargrove, Hondon B. Black Union Soldiers in the Civil War.

Cayton, Andrew R. L. Frontier Indiana. "A readable and rewarding history of Indiana from 1700 to 1850."

Flannery, Tim. The Eternal Frontier: an ecological history of North America and its Peoples.

Osborn, Chase S. The Iron Hunter. Originally published in 1919, this is the autobiography of Michigan's flamboyant, groundbreaking 27th governor. It reflects the energy and enthusiasm of a reformer inspired by the Progressive Movement.

Dobson, David. Scottish Whalers.

Nelson, Hasker, Jr. A Lay Guide to African American Oral History Interviewing.

Seglem, Elling. Diaries of an Isle Royale Fisherman.

Brockmann, R. John. Exploding Steamboats, Senate Debates, and Technical Reports: the convergence of technology, politics and rhetoric in the Steamboat Bill of 1838. Long before Three Mile Island and the Challenger Disaster and even the infamous Sultana, America was plagued by exploding steamboats. Read about our ancestors' inadequate response to controlling rampant technology in the days of steam.

Hodgson, Barbara. In the Arms of Morpheus: the tragic history of laudanum, morphine and patent medicines.

Bathurst, Bella. The Lighthouse Stevensons: the extraordinary story of the building of the Scottish lighthouses by the ancestors of Robert Louis Stevenson. Lighthouses are the stuff of romance to every Michigander. This is the story of lighthouse construction under almost impossible odds in the forbidding North Atlantic.

Madison, James H. The Indiana Way: a state history. A model state history of Michigan's southern neighbor.

Meyer, Duane. The Highland Scots of North Carolina, 1732-1776. "An impressively complete reconstruction of the settlement of the Highlanders in North Carolina. He examines their motives for emigration, their life in America, and their curious political allegiance to George III.

February 22, 2005

Introduction to Native American Heritage

Cindy Wilson of Battle Creek will give us an introduction us to the Basics of Native American Heritage at the February 22, 2005 meeting of the Calhoun County Genealogical Society.

Civil War G.A.R. Records aid Family Research

March 22nd 2005, we will have James T. Lyons, PDC, Senior Vice Commander and G.A.R. Records Officer for the Department of Michigan will speak to the Calhoun County Genealogical Society about the use of the G.A.R. records in genealogical research. The Grand Army of the Republic was the largest of the Civil War veteran's organizations. We will learn what can be found as well as what can not be found in these records. We will also find out how to secure copies of service and pension records of veterans.

April 25, 2005

Joann Werner will speak to us about **DNA testing** at the April 25, 2005 meeting of the Calhoun County Genealogical Society. Joann traced her ancestry to a town in Poland, she found residents there with the same name, was unable to prove a link until they did DNA testing. Joann will give us a guide to the DNA testing procedure.

Kalamazoo Valley Genealogical Society

Spring Conference with Curt Witcher will be held Saturday, April 30, at Holiday Inn West, Kalamazoo. Curt will present four topics. Registration information is posted on our website <http://www.com/~mikvgs/news.htm>

We'll welcome people from the Calhoun County Genealogical Society on April 30!!
From: Judith
H. Halseth, Ed. D
President, Kalamazoo
Valley Genealogical Society

Curt Witcher is manager of the Genealogy Dept. of Allen Co. library in Fort Wayne. He was/or is President of the NGS. He has spoken at Willard library sponsored by Willard and CCGS a few years ago.

Ontario Genealogical Society Cross Border Heritage Seminar 2005 May 27-29, 2005 Windsor, Canada

For more information, contact Ontario Genealogical Society by email: info@ogsseminar.org, or phone (519) 542-3554, or Fax (519) 542-0905, or write them @ OGS Seminar 2005, Box 443, Sarnia, Ontario, N7T 7J2.

National Institute on Genealogical Research July 10-16, 2005 Washington, D.C. For information or to obtain an application brochure, see the institute's Web site at

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~natngenin/> or e-mail NatInsGen@juno.com or write to NIGR, P.O. Box 724, Lanham, MD 20703-0724.

Midwestern Roots 2005 Family History & Genealogy Conference, August 19 & 20, 2005 Indianapolis, IN
To request a brochure call (317)232-1882 or (800)447-1830 or email welome@indianahistory.org.

Book review *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records*

Patricia Law Hatcher's ancestors lived in the original 13 colonies and 17 states. Her quest to learn about her ancestors made her an expert in finding and using the many kinds of land records found throughout the country.

Land records are good for more than placing your ancestor in a precise place at a specific time; they can prove ancestry, reveal relationships, complete the family tree and give clues to how our ancestors lived. They give you dates of residence, help establish your ancestor's age, learn his or her occupation, learn of earlier or later residences and can establish the death date. Through land records, you can learn the father of an ancestor or the birth surname of a woman, and may identify the wife or wives of your ancestor. You can also discover who their friends, relatives, neighbors and associates were. Genealogists know that people married others who lived within walking distance (kissin' distance); land records contain an abundance of names, so they can help you reconstruct a community. Law Hatcher says land was one of the strongest motivations for American immigration. "Land was often the most important thing to our ancestors ... To get closer to our ancestors, we should get closer to their land," she says. In many states, early land records were kept before vital records or church records were maintained.

With the skill of a seasoned teacher, Law Hatcher shows readers how to find, use and interpret land records nationally and in every state. She gives a multitude of tips to make the most of your research time. Law Hatcher explains four different models of first transfer — getting land into the hands of individuals. It's not an easy task, as there were many different ways of doing things from one area to another. Law Hatcher describes systems used to divvy up colonial land, bounty land and so on.

Locating Your Roots is one of the most comprehensive and meticulously researched genealogy books this writer has seen. In great detail, Law Hatcher tells you *everything* a genealogist needs to know about making the most of land records. She manages to pack in a wealth of information while making it interesting, with a sprinkling of wit to keep the reader interested. She has developed her own alliteration to remember the wealth of information you can find in a deed: preface, parties, payment, property, provenance, postlude, process. Through numerous case studies, she shows how to use land records in conjunction with other records to solve problems. The book is clearly understandable, well written and edited — unfortunately somewhat uncommon in genealogy books.

In the tradition of Betterway Books, the book is organized well, with 17 marginal icons used to highlight terminology; CD, internet and printed sources; important information not to overlook; information repositories; research tips; step-by-step procedures; time saving hints and warnings to keep

your research on track.

The section for Michigan, a public-land state, explains that Michigan's land is surveyed from the Michigan Meridian, and that land records at the county level are at the Office of the Register of Deeds. It lists the location of Michigan's 15 land offices and the date each opened, between 1804 and 1888.

In a public-land state, most of the land was transferred directly from the federal government to individuals, rather than a colony or state. Michigan is one of 30 public-land states first surveyed on a rectangular-survey system, the township-range system. Other states are called state-land states, in which most land was granted to individuals by the colony or state. The 20 state-land states include the original 13 colonies. According to Law Hatcher, "The Bureau of Land Management has custody of most of the records relating to the transfer of property from the federal government to individuals."

Law Hatcher includes detailed instructions for such practical needs as

- transcribing and extracting a deed.
- platting land from a deed using the metes-and-bounds system.
- reading a land description in the township-range system.
- finding a piece of land on a map in the metes-and-bounds land platting versus the public-land survey system.

The appendixes include a locality reference for each state and the District of Columbia, a list of general resources (in addition to the many specialized resources introduced throughout the book) and a glossary including more than 100 terms. In a spot-check of the index, I found some entries with the page number references listed one page away from correct.

I recommend this book highly for a genealogist with some knowledge of land platting. For a beginner, it would be a difficult read.

Now I know that when Great Uncle Charley bought the family farm from his widowed mother for one dollar plus "love and affection," it was not unusual at the time; it was a "deed of gift."

Patricia Law Hatcher, *Locating Your Roots: Discover Your Ancestors Using Land Records*. Cincinnati: Betterway Books, 2003, 211 pages, indexed, \$21.99, available at <http://www.familytreemagazine.com/store/>.

— Anita C. Stuever

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