

# GENERATIONS

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SERVING CALHOUN COUNTY, MICHIGAN FAMILY HISTORY

# PRESIDENT'S NOTE

uring my family's spring break trip this year to Williamsburg, Virginia I took advantage of the opportunity to conduct some genealogical research on my wife's side of the family. The line in particular had resided in Spotsylvania County, Virginia and was well-documented, so much of what I was trying to do was fill in gaps and see some sights of the ancestral stomping-grounds for myself. Unfortunately, the rest of my family thought that it would be more interesting to go to Busch Gardens than the Virginia Office of Vital Records!

However, there is another, easier way to interest non-genealogists in our hobby. NBC has started running a new series *Who Do You Think You Are?* which chronicles the family history of 7 different celebrities. My daughter and I spent a rainy weekend day watching a couple of the episodes and while I was wishing that I had the resources available that Matthew Broderick was provided (a personal tour of the Connecticut State Archives would substantially im-

prove my research too!) my daughter found the storylines interesting. The series is well produced and outside of the occasional Ancestry.com pitch the whole topic of family history research is presented in a reasonably well balanced manner for the beginner or non-genealogist. The slate of celebrities is interesting from a research perspective as a wide range of nationalities of origin are represented and much of the American experience is also presented.

Who Do You Think You Are? has been airing on Friday evenings on NBC at 8:00 p.m. At the time of this writing, the show is well-underway. However, if you have an internet connection, the back episodes are available on the free video service Hulu.com.

The CCGS will be doing its part to keep the genealogists of the Calhoun County area entertained as well through our remaining Spring meeting schedule. We hope that you will be able to come out and attend soon.

-Chris Rau, President CCGS



# Inside this issue:

CCGS News	2
ABOUT CCGS	2
MEMBER PROFILE— DARLENE (PALMITER) STANGE	3
NEXT NEWSLETTER FOCUS-CONVIS TOWNSHIP	3
THAMOS WEZOO	4-5
MEMBERSHIP STATUS	5
AN ATHENS FAMILY	6
In Search of Family	7

## NEWSLETTER FOCUS—ATHENS

Thank-you Diane Brush,
James Jackson, Darlene
Stange and Patricia Teachout
for sending articles and images
of Athens. I asked for help and
you responded.

Athens Township is located in the southwest corner of Calhoun County. The town of Ath-

ens is in the center of the township along the southern border with Branch County.

In the heart of Athens township is the Pine Creek Indian Reservation. This reservation is owned and inhabited by the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi Indians. I didn't realize this reservation existed here. In researching it a little bit, I was more surprised that we (CCGS) didn't have anything about it. I didn't receive any articles about this group.

So, here is a challenge for our membership. Can you educate us on the Pine Creek Indians? This is a subject for the CCGS in the future.

# CCGS News and Happenings

#### **IN PROCESS:**

**CEMETERY TRANSCRIPTIONS:** Marengo Township Cemeteries publication is being completed and published. It should be available within the next month. Announcement of pricing and availability will be on our website and/or at one of our upcoming general meetings.

Also, expected soon is Fredonia Township Cemetery.

WEB SITE UPDATES: Pages are being updated for outdated text and links. Broken links are being corrected.

We have received for Calhoun County the following and will be adding or replacing pages for these items soon:

- Updated version of Dibean Marriage Collection
- County Poor House Ledger transcribed
- Korean War Casualties

- Vietnam War Casualties
- Generations Newsletter Index
- Pioneer Certificate Detail

Plans are also being made to update the web pages for the Generations newsletter index and "back" issues.

#### PROCEDURES DOCUMENTATION PROJECT:

Your CCGS Board is in the process of documenting the procedures for their positions. This is to improve the transition between those relinquishing their position and the newly elected/ appointed officers/committee members.

#### 501 c (3) NON-PROFIT STATUS:

Non-profit status was approved earlier this fiscal year. Your board is learning more about how this can help the membership.

#### CALHOUN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

The purposes of the Calhoun County Genealogical Society (CCGS) are:

- To gather and preserve information of genealogical value,
- To encourage the deposit of such information in suitable depositories,
- To aid genealogists in the study of family history through the exchange of knowledge,
- To publish and promote Calhoun County and other genealogical materials.

CCGS is incorporated under the Michigan Nonprofit Corporation Act. Individuals, libraries or societies may join.

Annual dues for the year beginning September 1 are \$18.00 receiving postal newsletters and \$15.00 receiving electronic newsletters. Memberships are accepted year-round; dues received after May 1 will pay membership for the following year. Members receive the newsletter Generations six times per year. General meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Gifford Schultz Educational Service Center—CISD building, 17111 G Drive North, Marshall, unless otherwise specified. No meetings are held in July, August or December. Programs are free and open to the public.

President	Corresponding Secretary	
Christopher Rau	Sandi Hartnell	
(269) 962-6761	(269) 986-3070	
csrau@comcast.net	hartnellsl@comcast.net	
Vice President /	Recording Secretary	
Program & Publicity	Patricia Teachout	
James N. Jackson	(269) 965-6598	
jjacks01@yahoo.com	patteachouts@yahoo.com	
Dant Dani Jame	T	

Past President	Treasurer
Judy Groat	Art Adams
(269) 781-4568	(269) 781-8019
jnggroat@sbcglobal.net	Acadams1938@aol.com

Membership Promotion Chair Publications & Pioneer Certificates Chair Ilene Woodman Verla Potts (269) 962-1667 (269) 781-8594 V.Potts@att.net iwoodman@comcast.net Records Preservation Chair Michigan Genealogical Maureen Vire Council Delegates

Webmasters Sandy Redmond (269) 979-8050 slredmond@earthlink.net

(269) 962-0964 MVire53@aol.com

Ann Heisler (989) 835-9139 annheisler@aol.com James N. Jackson jjacks01@yahoo.com

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Newsletter Editor **Ann Heisler** (989) 835-9139 annheisler@aol.com

**OPEN** 

All are invited to submit articles to the *Generations* newsletter editor. Permission is granted to reprint articles unless otherwise noted. Please give appropriate credit to the source. Copies of the individual pages from back issues of Generations at \$1.00 for the first page, \$0.50 for each additional page.

Calhoun County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 879, Marshall MI 49068-0879

MichiganCalhounGene@yahoo.com http://www.rootsweb.com/~micalhou/ccgs.htm Organizational Member of National Genealogical Society—Michigan Genealogical Council—Federation of Genealogical Societies

# MEMBER PROFILE—DARLENE (PALMITER) STANGE

I have always been interested in my family history. My Grandma Palmiter, I believe, sparked my interest as a child. She was an only child and liked to talk about her family: Richardson, Doty, and Walkinshaw. I remember sitting at her kitchen table at about 12 years old and asking her for family names. I don't know what happened to that information. I guess it was a passing interest. I noted early on that most family pictures were not identified and proceeded to write on all of our family pictures.

I began again in earnest when putting together a photo album for my father. I had gotten a box of pictures at Ila Palmiter's estate sale in 1985. Her husband, W. Louis Palmiter, was my Grandpa Palmiter's cousin and they did not have any children. Someone at the sale bought a box filled with family pictures. She was a postcard collector and told me I could have the box of pictures after she had sorted out the postcards. There were senior pictures of my brothers and me and our cousins, as well as pictures from earlier generations of the Palmiter family. I felt like it was my duty to identify and care for these pictures and the memories of the people in them.

Also of interest was the Palmiter and Son Dairy that Grandpa Harrie operated with his father, Charles Palmiter, in Battle Creek from 1921-1939 and to which he supplied milk from his dairy farm after he moved his family to Athens in 1939.

I began my search at Willard Library, with the help of George Livingston. My daughter, Kristin, worked at Willard as a student while going to high school, KCC and Western Michigan. While at Western, she was able to access online resources that opened up the world of genealogy for us. We found someone's posting of the Palmiter family back to John Palmiter, born 1645, who moved to Stonington, CT in the 1660's from Nova Scotia. My task now is to source as much of that information as I can. We have also searched the local cemeteries where so many family members are buried.

I joined the CCGS in 2009 at the Willard Library February lock-in meeting. I was excited that night to find the Convis Twp. farm deed from Enos and Mary Palmiter to his son, Alonzo, in 1853. Enos is my great-great grandfather. I am presently working on the application for a Calhoun County Pioneer Certificate. I would also like to join the DAR. Enos' father, Joshua Palmiter, was a Revolutionary War veteran and I have his family tree back to the mid-1600's, when his family settled in Westerly, RI and Stonington, CT, coming originally from England. My Grandma (Richardson) Palmiter was a member of the DAR, and Aunt Marie has that information. She is going to share that with me. Perhaps I will be able to add a second

family to my membership.

From Ancestry.com I have found a great deal of information on other family names: Walkinshaw, Doty, Richardson, Shook, Kline, Harrison and also my husband's family, Stange, Noble, Brown and Pyle.

Genealogy is an interesting and rewarding hobby and family members are coming to me when they have questions. It's an honor to help keep the memory of my ancestors.

"Dear ancestor, the place you filled some hundred years ago

spreads out among the ones you left who would have loved you so.

I wonder how you lived and loved. I wonder if you knew

that someday I would find this place and come to visit you."

- Author Unknown

Submitted by Darlene Stange

MEMBER PROFILE. Prepare your profile. You may be next. I'll be looking for someone for our next newsletters soon!

## NEXT NEWSLETTER FOCUS—CONVIS TOWNSHIP



IN SEARCH OF.... Information about People, Places and Things from Convis Township. Located in the north central section of Calhoun County is Convis Township. What do you know about it?

Have you ever been to Turkeyville, Loomisville or Convis? Have you been to Mud, Big Marsh, Ackley or Pardy Lakes? Do you know any of the history of the area?

Send me your pictures, ancestral charts, stories and anything else you can think of to tell us about people, places and things of Convis Township.

## THOMAS WEZOO



The first six companies [A – F] of the First Michigan Sharpshooters were recruited and mustered into the United States service in July, 1863. In 1864, an additional four companies [G, H, I and K] were completed. Company K was known as the "Indian company" entirely comprised of enlisted men, and one officer from the Chippewa (Ojibwe), Ottawa and Potawatomi tribes.

All sharpshooters had to qualify by shooting five shots within a total of twenty-five inches from center at 200 yards, *i.e.* 5 shots off by 5 inches each, 3 shots 4 inches from center, plus 2 shots placed 6 inches from center, etc.

In addition to the Battle of the Wilderness, Spottsylvania, Cold Harbor, Battle of the Crater and Weldon Railroad, the First Michigan Sharpshooters were engaged in the siege of Petersburg, VA from June 16, 1864 to April 3, 1865 — a seige line over 36 miles long. The regiment was constantly under fire during this siege and took part in many of the assaults upon the confederate entrenchments.

There is an entry in *The Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 1861-1865* (AKA the Brown books) volume 44, page 96:

**Wesaw, Thomas**. Enlisted in company K, First Sharpshooters, Sept. 24, 1864, at Van Buren, for 1 year, age 22. Mustered Sept. 24, 1864. Discharged.

Researching his pension records at the National Archives in Washington, DC tells more about his active duty and the years that this veteran resided in Athens, MI.

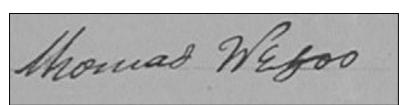
His personal description at enlistment was: height, 5 feet 7 ½ inches; complexion, dark; color of eyes, Black; color of hair, Black; occupation, Mechanic.

On March 29, 1865 he received a wound under his left eye from a piece of bursting shell while in action. The wound being very painful and affecting his eyesight, made him unfit for the performance of manual labor. He was treated at the Depot Field Hospital at City Point, VA from about April 1, 1865, treated April 9-10, on Police duty April 11 until June 1865 when he was discharged from said hospital. He was mustered out June 3, 1865 at Delaney House, [Washington] D.C.

On August 20, 1907 he signed a General Affidavit that there was no public record of his birth, nor baptismal record. Neither was there any family record of his birth. His only knowledge of his exact age was by heresay and the fact that he had kept track of his age since boyhood, and having given his age as twenty-two years when he enlisted in the army September 24, 1862, which he then knew or believed to be his correct age at that time. Later, he stated that he was born September 24, 1842 at White Pigeon, MI.

Thomas Wezoo initially received \$4 per month by reason of disability from gunshot wound of face and resulting disease of left eye. He believed that he was entitled to an increase of pension on account of "left eye becoming worse and almost blind and getting worse."

On February 14, 1891, he stated that "he is now greatly troubled with disease of eyes and partial loss of sight of



right eye as a result as he believes of the disabilities for which he is pensioned. He therefore asks increase of pension on the

(Continued on page 5)

disease and partial loss of sight of right eye." His pension rate increased over the years as follows:

Rate and pay \$4.00 from Sep 30, 1881.

Rate and pay \$8.00 from Dec 29, 1886.

Rate and pay \$10.00 from Oct 23, 1889.

Rate and pay \$12.00 from Mar 11, 1907.

Rate and pay \$15.50 from Jun 5, 1912.

Rate and pay \$19.00 from Sep 24, 1912.

Rate and pay \$22.50 from Sep 22, 1917.

He was married to Rose Johnson in Athens, MI, on December 4, 1873 by Justice of the Peace, Wyman [Lyman in another document] B. Smith. He further states that neither he nor his wife were previously married. His children, [as of March 20, 1915], were as follows:

Eunice Wezoo	b. Oct 15, 1874	d. June 1891
Mary Wezoo	b. Apr 17, 1877	d. July 1903
Charles Wezoo	b. Jan 1, 1892	d. July 1891
Nancy Wezoo	b. Jul 15, 1890	d. Mar 1897
Agnes Wezoo	b. Sep 2, 1881	d. living
Elizabeth Wezoo	b. Oct 10, 1891	d. living
Lucy Wezoo	b. Feb 18, 1898	d. living

Variant spelling of his name, often listed differently on the same document was Wassar, Weasan, Weisel, Wesau, Wesaw, Wesaw, Weseaux and Wezoo. Thomas Wezoo died December 17, 1918 and is buried at the Athens Indian Mission Cemetery on the Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi reservation, South of S Drive S and 1 ½ Mile Road.

The Record of Service of Michigan Volunteers in the Civil War, 1861-1865 volume 44 is available online at <a href="http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071160850">http://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015071160850</a>.

Submitted by James Jackson

## MEMBERSHIP STATUS



Membership renewals are overdue. Make sure you have paid your 2009-10 membership dues. If you receive your newsletters by mail, check your label. Your label includes your paid-thru date for your membership. If you receive your newsletter

electronically, your notification will be in your Email containing this newsletter issue.

Newsletter issues will no longer be sent to unpaid issue. members beyond this issue. So check your status to keep the issues coming your way. Your Email with your 2010-longer be sent to unpaid issue. Members beyond this issue. Members sharing us con you!

newsletter attachment will let you know if you are past due.

Renewal forms for 2010-11 will be in next issue.

Membership is about sharing. Renew to let us continue sharing with you!

## AN ATHENS FAMILY

The Palmiter family farmed in Convis Township, beginning in 1850 when Enos Palmiter moved here from Cuyahoga County, Ohio with his bride and children from his first marriage. In about 1921 his youngest grandson, Charles started a Battle Creek business, "Palmiter and Son Dairy." Charles moved his family to 553 Maple Street in 1923 and set up his dairy in the basement. The business began with two horse-drawn delivery wagons that were eventually replaced with trucks.

Charles' oldest son, Harrie, was partner in the business until 1939, when he decided to move his family to Athens. Harrie and Genevieve bought a farm 1 ½ miles east of Athens, renovated the house and moved in with their six children, Phyllis, Norman, Elaine, Marilyn, Marie, and Martha. Norman, the only son and 13 years old at the time, began to learn the farming business with his dad. They had a dairy herd and hauled their milk to the Palmiter Dairy – now run by Charles and his youngest son, Wayne – for many years. The Battle Creek dairy was sold to Ashley Dairy in 1946.

Norman Palmiter had three children, Dennis, Darlene and Lonn. Dennis, Lonn, and Lonn's son Jason continue to work the dairy farm today. It has grown from 120 acres to about 1000 acres, mostly east of Athens, but also on the southwest border of the village.

Norman and Dennis were both school bus drivers for the Athens Area Schools. Norman drove for 17 years, and Dennis retired in 2007 after 39 years of service.

Norman was a member of the Athens Rotary Club and grilled chickens with other members for the Athens Homecoming each July and for the Starr Commonwealth Founder's Day picnic in Albion. For many years chickens were provided by Pontoni's Nottawa Gardens processing plant on West Burr Oak Street.

Phyllis Palmiter married Philip Crowell in 1942 while he was serving in the Army. Shortly after he returned from the military in 1945, Phil and his brother, Jim went into the petroleum distributor business, Crowell Brothers, with a Sinclair Station on the north end of the Athens village. It later became a Leonard Station. They provided gasoline to area farms and also serviced home oil furnaces and supplied heating oil. They were in business for 20 years.

Phyllis had a gift shop in Athens for a time that she started while Phil was away in the war. They had been married in Georgia and she worked at a gift shop in Louisiana before returning to Athens.

Phyllis started college when she was 40, got her Bachelor's Degree when she was 49 and later earned her Master's Degree. She taught in Sherwood and East Leroy Elementary schools, retiring in 1986 after 19 years of teaching.

Marilyn (Palmiter) Brunn was a school bus driver for the Athens Area Schools and is remembered for her role in starting the first girls' basketball program at Athens. An article in the Battle Creek Enquirer on February 2, 2010 called her "The mother of Athens hoops." Seeing the girls' desire for a team in 1968, Marilyn volunteered to coach the girls and arranged scrimmage games against other teams in the area. In 1971 she had the girls competing in regular games in the Little C Conference. "The following year saw the Athens Indians win their first conference title in program history and the first girls' sports championship in school history. The 1972 championship team only had one loss on its eightgame schedule, falling by one point to Union City 28-27."

Marie (Palmiter) Johnson, upon graduation from high school in 1951, worked for Ralph Mains in the office of the Athens Stockyards for about two years. At one time the Michigan Central Railroad tracks ran by the stockyard, but the tracks were pulled up. Phil and Jim Crowell's father commented to his boys about their removal and he died in 1936.

Marie worked in the kitchen at Athens High School in 1965 and became the elementary school secretary at East Leroy in 1966. She held this position until retirement in June of 1990.

Submitted by Darlene (Palmiter) Stange

### IN SEARCH OF FAMILY

DEATH CLAIMS HONORED CITIZEN;

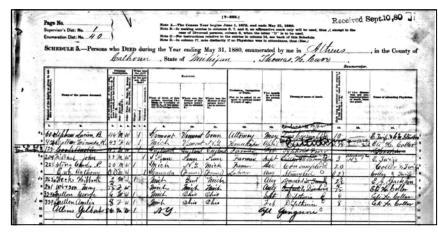
You might have found a picture in a box transferred from one ancestor to another. And if you are lucky there was writing on the back of the picture. If you are VERY lucky there was the place, date, AND name of participants. Maybe you found an old newspaper clipping such as an obituary and it told you a little more. It may be tattered and

torn but it is a genealogy treasure—a family clue. Now you are on the trail!



So you start looking

for other resources to get those elusive clues into your ancestor's past. You find census records; documents such as birth, death, and marriage certificates; wills; deeds. You walk the cemeteries and search the area for the family home. Maybe you are able to read saved letters and other saved items. All are hints to your ancestor's life. AND you are HOOKED!



Now with the Internet, we have even more avenues to search. AND to find other searching descendants. Your membership in CCGS is another resource. Wow! Does it ever end?

Maybe you can help our member that submitted the images on this page. Contact Diane Brush (2552 Reynolds Rd, Jackson, MI 49201 or <a href="mailto:bird-bertly@yahoo.com">bird-bertly@yahoo.com</a>).

GEO. BURGETT WAS A PIONEER Was 89 Years Old and Married For 67 Years. George Burgett, aged 89 years, and one of the very last of the men who came here in an early day and endered the privations of pioneering passed away at his home near the village Sunday night at 11:00 o'clock, after an illness of a week. Although he had passed man's allot ed age by nearly a score of years, Mr. Burgett was in possession of all his faculties and was unusually active up until his last sickness. He was a man held in high esteem for his integrity and sterling traits of character, and in his passing our township loses one of its valued citizens. George Burgett, son of Samuel and Barbara Burgett, one of Athens' oldest and esteemed pioneers, was born Canandaigua, Ontario county. No. York, Sept. 4, 1829, and passed away Nov. 17, 1918, at his home southeast of Athens, at the age of 89 years, 2 months and 13 days. He was united in marriage to Miss Amy Griswold Jan. 26, 1351. To this union were born eleven children, three having already passed to the great havond. The deceased had been in failin soalth for the past several months, is ing confined to his bed a greater part of the time. He leaves to mourn their loss a kind and loving wife, five sons and three daughters, also many grandchildren and a host of friends. The faveral was held at the residence

She is searching for more information about the Burgett and Eno families. George Burgett, George Samuel Burgett, Julia Eno Burgett, Anthony Eno, Mary (Unknown) Eno and Frank Eno—Do any of these names "ring a bell" for you? Help out Diane continue following her clues to her ancestors.

#### Generations

Calhoun County Genealogical Society

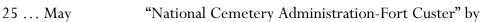
Serving Calhoun County, Michigan family history researchers since 1988

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WWW.ROOTSWEB.COM/~MICALHOU/ CCGS.HTM

### CALHOUN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY CALENDAR

CCGS monthly meetings are typically held the fourth Tuesday of each month except July, August and December and are free and open to the public. Unless noted, meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the Gifford Schultz Educational Service Center—Calhoun Intermediate School District Building, 17111 G Drive North, Marshall.



Roy Luera, Director of Fort Custer National Cemetery.

"SUV Graves Registration Project" by Rick Danes, 22 ... June

Graves Registration Chairman.

NO MEETING July

August NO MEETING



22nd Year of Calhoun County Genealogical Society!

2009-2010