

# MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Founded 1972

Vol. 22 No. 4

April 2022

## T W I G T A L K

Newsletter



[Celebrating 50 years in 2022](#)

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### President's Message

By Dawn Westcomb Kelley -

#### **HAPPY 50th ANNIVERSARY MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY 2022!**

Spring has arrived, the birds out singing oh boy! The flowers will start coming up soon. It is the best time of the year.

Last month, I wrote about lowering large piles of papers, documents, pictures and putting them in their proper places. It really can be over whelming. The decluttering does get easier. Do not be a procrastinator.

We still have a few members who use the old fashion way of saving their family history and their pictures in binders, because they do not have a computer to enter their information. They have many binders. Something could happen to the binders and all work they did on researching and printing could be lost. If this you, to minimize the loss, you can share some of your work with other family members.

**VERY IMPORTANT TO UPDATE YOUR INFORMATION** – If you have any changes with your address, home phone, cell number and email please provide that information to the society.

We need **YOUR 4 GENERATION CHARTS**. If you have more than 1 Gen. Chart that is fine. Send them to our address ATTN: GEN. CHARTS or to our EMAIL put in the subject area GEN. CHARTS.

**YouTube** - There are so many genealogy videos to watch free. Naming a few on “How to Do Genealogy”, “Organize Your Genealogy”, “Pictures”, etc. You can also type into browser “YouTube Allen County Public Library Genealogy” and “Ancestry”.

#### **April Fools' Day**

On **April 1, 1700**, English pranksters begin popularizing the annual tradition of April Fools' Day by playing practical jokes on each other. It was also called All Fools' Day, has been celebrated for several centuries by different cultures, its exact origins remain a mystery. April Fools' Day could

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have started as early as 1582.

### **April 15 is Good Friday**

While Good Friday is not a federal holiday, it is considered a state holiday in some states. Good Friday is a public holiday in 11 states in the US. On that day, most businesses are closed and all schools have a holiday. While Good Friday is considered a Holy Day in the US, it is not a bank holiday.

### **April 22 is Earth Day**

**Earth Day was first celebrated** on April 22, 1970. It began when the Senator from Wisconsin, Gaylord Nelson, suggested that April 22 was to be used for an environment education day. It was estimated that around 20 million people in the United States participated that Earth Day

### **1950 Federal Census**

The National Archives will release the 1950 U.S. Federal Census. Ancestry® will begin indexing the information, state by state, to make it searchable for you .

### **TIP - From Family Tree Magazine**

If you cannot find your ancestor's Social Security record? Until 1951, the system did not cover the self-employed, temporary government workers, farm laborers, domestic workers such as maids, workers in US territories, or overseas employees of American companies. Railroad workers were covered separately under the Railroad Retirement Board (the first three digits of their Social Security numbers range from 707 to 728).


### **HPL-Torrent House Our Local History & Genealogy Dept.**

We are excited to help you get started on your one on one research. Contact the society at [1972mcgs@gmail.com](mailto:1972mcgs@gmail.com) or call the Local History & Genealogy Dept. at 231-722-8016. Tuesday thru Saturday 10:00a.m. - 12:00 and 1:00p.m – 4:00p.m. **BY APPOINTMENT ONLY!**

Index of Vital Statistics from the Muskegon Chronicle 1941 thru 2021 (Given by Matt Burns)

World War II & The Great Lakes: Submarines, Bombers & Ore Boats, by Wes Oleszewski

The Settlers of the Beekman Patent Dutchess County, New York v. 14, by Frank J. Doherty (Colonial Dames Capt. Thomas Taber Chapter, Donated in Memory and Honor of Marilyn Joan Dietz)



**MUSKEGON COUNTY CLERK'S OFFICE  
GENEALOGY RESEARCH  
WILL BE CLOSED TO THE  
PUBLIC UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE!**

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## MARKING TIME

Cristine Bouwkamp

Superior Monument/Patten Monument Co.

### Top 5 reasons to do research in the cemetery

Why doing family research in a cemetery is a must:

1. **It is a vibe!** You are a taphophile and you know it! It is not just about the people you are looking for. Deep down we all love the feeling of walking through a cemetery and breathing in the rich history and mystery of it all!
2. **I spy!** The moment you stumble upon a familiar name, stop in your tracks and know you have seen it somewhere. Where?... oh yeah! Family history page 3118 - "That's my father's great aunts mother in law! Had no idea where she was buried here" BINGO!
3. **Get your steps in!** Strap on that Fit Bit and get going. Who wants to walk in a boring circle around a track? Get out in nature and walk. But don't trip - keep an eye out for those pesky roots, dips and flat stones. Nobody wants to die in a cemetery!
4. **The gangs' all here!** In a row, on a lot, the entire family in one plot! ( Sorry Dr. Seuss) But really, thank you to the great grandpa's that bought a couple of plots for \$25.00 and we can find everyone in one shot! (Was that another rhyme?)
5. **Dates or date night?** Heck, get 'em both. Go on a date night, um, maybe in the daylight, and get the dates that are missing in your files. You never know when you will find a date that for some reason was not somewhere else. Or what if you wanted some confirmation? Was grandma's wedding date EXACTLY nine months from dad's birthday? OOPS!

Any reason is a good reason to walk the cemetery! So, here is something to think about spring walks in the office of choice: the beautiful, wonderful, mysterious cemetery.

## LOUIS P HAIGHT

By Frances Harrington



In 1896, Louis P. Haight came to work as the superintendent of the underwear department of the new Amazon Hosiery Company. He had previous experience working in the knitting mills out east. His father, who was a merchant, helped him gain employment in the mills after his dream of going to Yale University was derailed, at the age of 20, by some kind of an illness that impeded his ability to read and write. Even though he was gainfully employed, his education was still very important to him. He found a tutor and after working 11 hours a day, he would study text books to improve his education. His hard work and intelligence didn't go unnoticed and at the age of 29, he was recruited by the Amazon Company in Muskegon, Michigan.

He was born in 1867, in New York to Abner S. and Harriet (Everest) Haight. He was educated there and had trained to enter Yale when he became ill. He married Grace Carpenter in 1893. They had a total of 6 children: Louis Jr., born in 1894, died at 4 months; Rolf, born in 1896; Constance, who was stillborn in 1897; Frederick born in 1899 and died at age 10; Eric, born in 1901; and Gordon born in 1905.

After working for Amazon for 2 years, Louis started his own business in a small red barn in Mus

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kegon Heights in 1898, employing one woman. He started making one of his patented inventions –

“Haight’s Infant Wrapper”. These he advertised by going door to door to new mothers. He found the new mothers by scanning the birth announcements in the local newspapers and then making personal visits to show his products. These items became so popular that he needed a larger building and more employees. While seeking funding for this new building, he met and became lifelong friends with Charles H. Hackley who advanced him the money he needed and also, became the President of Haight’s mill called the “Muskegon Knitting Mill” (see photo).

He also started “making made to measure” vegetable silk underwear and hosiery. Louis also started producing one of



**Haight's**  
Trade **VEGETABLE SILK** Mark  
**Hosiery and Underwear**

wear longer, fit better and look nicer than any other kind made.

Vegetable Silk retains its lustre until worn out. It takes and holds color better than other fabrics and always feels soft against the skin, making it an ideal fabric for underwear and hosiery.

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Write for illustrated catalog and fabric samples.

**Muskegon Knitting Mills**  
Muskegon, Michigan.

of his earlier patented ideas – left and right socks! That’s right, a patent for making socks form fitted for the left foot and the right foot, just like shoes are made specifically for the left or right foot. He



not only thought they would be more comfortable but also more attractive. He was right and they became a huge seller, especially among the women of that day. He later issued replacement insurance on his socks guaranteeing them not to wear out and promising to supply any adult with perfect hose for a year...no need for darning socks ever again. Soon, his hosiery and under-

wear were being sold all over the country and Louis became a very wealthy man. With his wealth he was able to send his boys to college, the college he had once dreamed of attending...Yale University. In fact, his son Gordon became an English professor at Yale. He also tried to give back to the community that helped him gain that wealth; something he learned from his old friend Charles.

After the lumber era, much of the land in Michigan was waste. The soil was sandy, full of stumps and thought to only be good for growing more trees. Anyone trying to farm this land either gave up or barely made a living. The state of Michigan even discouraged settlers from purchasing this unproductive land for farming. Louis saw this “waste of land” and his curious mind started going. He thought there must be a way to make this sandy, abandoned land, good for something other than trees. He always liked a challenge and loved being a problem solver and this was a problem he very much wanted to solve. He knew nothing about farming so he spent many hours at Hackley Library reading books on agriculture, soil, plant life and farming.

Some of the land he owned was an old abandoned farm that had been cleared and fertilized with manure by a dairy farmer who had tried but failed to grow corn for his cows. Louis used this land as his “experimental farm”. Most of the people of Muskegon thought he was nuts and nick-named him the “sand farmer”. He tried growing three different crops and each time failed. He then contacted the Secretary of Agriculture who sent a couple assistants to aid Louis in his experiments. Aside from this, and some material assistance from the Federal government, Louis worked on this without encouragement or outside help. After 11 years experimenting and studying and working the land, he finally made a break through. By his efforts and persistence, he was able to grow rye, wheat, alfalfa, clover, corn and potatoes and anything else that will grow in the Michigan climate and in abundance! After that, he became quite famous for his techniques and was a much sought-after speaker all over the country.

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In 1916, Louis owned a large amount of unproductive land east of what became Quarterline Road, between Cedar Springs Road (now Apple Avenue) and Laketon Avenue. He had this land platted as a subdivision called City of Farms (later renamed Home Gardens). His plan was to build small homes for people who wanted to live close to the city, and possibly even work in the city, and still

have a small farm or garden. He would sell the property on a rent to own basis. He would help them get started by planting a 50 ft. x 50 ft. garden and teaching them how to fertilize and care for the land. (While writing this article, I realized I actually live in this subdivision.)

He also had a plan to help students get money for college by raising sheep on their parent's farms. He wanted each student to keep 10 sheep. He would then buy the wool from these sheep to use in his knitting mill. The parents must agree that the money received from the wool was to be deposited to the student's credit in a bank of their choosing and could not be withdrawn under any circumstance, except for tuition and even then, it was to be paid to the treasurer of the college they would attend.

In 1926, Louis no longer owned the knitting mill and actually had to file personal bankruptcy due to some legal battles and poor decisions. He moved back to New York. His wife Grace died the same year.

Louis was a vegetarian and opposed the use of animal products as food. He advised against the use of white processed flour and recommended whole wheat instead, for its nutritional value. He was also one of the first to suggest soy beans to make products such as, soybean bread, candy, butter, and milk. Throughout his adult life, along with running a company and being the sand land farmer, Louis studied medicine. He started to practice kinesiatrics (the treatment of disease by appropriate muscle movement). He started the School of Kinesio-therapeutics in Boston. He also used the food products grown on his land in Muskegon at the school. At one point he became known as a "foot expert" and give lectures on good foot health.

In 1928, he married Alna Bagley and returned to Muskegon after oil was discovered adjacent to property he owned in North Muskegon on the river. Expecting to be a very rich man once again, he leased the land to the oil company. He started making plans for a large history themed park, a bird sanctuary, a museum dedicated to Hackley, and other things that would help children gain interest in education. Sadly, the oil was never found on the land he owned.

Throughout his life, Louis P. Haight had many plans. Some came to realization, some didn't. Not all of his plans and accomplishments are listed here, otherwise I would have to write a book instead of just an article. One of his plans was to write the biography of his friend and mentor, Charles H. Hackley. In her will, Julia Hackley left him money to be used toward this book. The book, "The Life of Charles Henry Hackley", was 50 years in the making and published in 1949.

Louis was a student, a laborer, an inventor, a businessman, a husband, a father, a friend, a planner, an experimenter, a giver, a lecturer, an author, and almost an oil man. He was a deacon and trustee at his church. He was one of the directors of the Muskegon Rescue Mission. He was elected Chairman of the Agricultural Department of the Chamber of Commerce and other organizations in an effort to serve his community. Louis P. Haight died at the age of 84 at his home at 618 Adams Avenue in Muskegon, Michigan on March 4, 1952.

Sources: Genealogy & Local History Dept. of Hackley Library, Lakeshore Museum Center, Ancestry.com, Genealogybank.com (Muskegon Chronicle, Boston Evening Transcript, Detroit Free Press)

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**Southern California Genealogical Society Webinar Series** is there for you no matter where you live. Join our twice-monthly webcasts with knowledgeable genealogists to help grow what you know. We offer a low-cost broadcast that is open to the public Price: \$5.50.

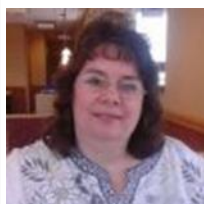
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On the day of the session, click the link that you received in your invitation to *GoToWebinar.com* to join the online session.

### Next Up:

Wednesday, April 20      9:00 PM - Eastern  
Digging into Finding Aids: California Manuscript Collections  
by Melissa Barker



Genealogists use many tools to help them with their genealogy research. One of the best tools to understand and use when working with Manuscript Collections is the Finding Aid. Archivists develop Finding Aids to help genealogists navigate through Manuscript Collections to find their ancestors. This presentation will help genealogists read, follow and use a Finding Aid for California collections.

Melissa Barker is a Certified Archives Manager at the Houston County, Tennessee Archives. She is a professional genealogist and lectures, teaches and writes about genealogy research, researching in archives and records preservation. She has a website, [genealogservices.webs.com](http://genealogservices.webs.com), and a blog at [agenealogistinthearchives.blogspot.com/](http://agenealogistinthearchives.blogspot.com/)

Saturday, May 7      1:00 PM - Eastern  
Where There's a Will There's a Way... to Research your Family  
by Daniel Horowitz



Daniel was asked to review the will of a distant relative to find the person's living relatives. As he examined each page & began building the family tree, new details began to emerge — and the MyHeritage algorithm began to work its magic. Smart Matches™ and Record Matches revealed additional records to prove Daniel's theories, and he was able to uncover new information and locate the descendants.

Dedicated to Genealogy since 1986, Daniel Horowitz has been working at MyHeritage since 2006 liaising with genealogy societies, bloggers, and media, as well as lecturing, and attending conferences around the world. He was the teacher and the study guide editor of the family history project "Searching for My Roots" in Venezuela for 15 years, and volunteers at the Israel Genealogy Research Association (IGRA)

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## What is Google Alerts?

What if you could get notified when something new related to your genealogy was added to the Google index? Let's say someone started a new blog about an ancestral land, or added a website about a specific surname? Wouldn't it be nice if Google worked for you and sent you an email when new items appeared? That in essence is what Google Alerts can do: it is a notification service for any keyword search in Google.

## Setting Up Your Alerts

The process of creating alerts in Google Alerts is fairly simple:

Log in to your Google Account (or Gmail).

Visit <http://www.google.com/alerts>.

In the search field, enter your search term for which you want to be alerted. Example: **Illinois genealogy**.

Click the **Show Options** down arrow: Set your options as follows (these are my personal recommendations):

**How often** – At most once a day: Be careful of using “As it happens” since your mailbox might get overloaded!

**Sources** – Automatic: This setting will look at all Google resources including News, Books, Blogs etc.

**Language** – English: To get alerted in another language make sure you are using the translated term for that language. Example: use **genealogie** instead of **genealogy** for German sites.

**Region** – Any Region:

**How Many** – All results: Using **All results** will result in more material, but I'd rather sort through it than have Google sort and decide for me. I've missed important information by using **Only the best results**.

**Deliver to** – your email address: You can also select RSS Feed if you prefer to receive your alerts in an RSS Feed reader such as Feedly.

## Tips and Tricks

Here are some neat tricks and tips to help you get started with Google Alerts.

Set up a Google Account to get access to more alerts (max 1000) and more options.

Use “quotes” to pinpoint phrases. Example: **“Federation of Genealogical Societies”** not Federation of Genealogical Societies.

To guard against blog scrapers and content theft, take a snippet of your text (32 words max) and set it up as a Google Alert. Also if you embed intentional typographic errors, unique names or unique arrangements of words, use them (remember to use quotation marks).

You can set up an alert for websites that are related to your website or a specific website. Use **related:websitename.com** as in **related:ilgensoc.org**.

Want to know when someone links to your blog or website? Use **link:websitename.com** as in **link:ilgensoc.org**.

Alerts from specific sources? Enter the **term source:nameofsource** as in **genealogy source:newsweek**.

Specify a location using state codes. Example **“land records” location:ok**.

Alerts can be set up in different languages. Set language preferences.

**IMPORTANT MESSAGE**

**MCGS MEETINGS**

2nd Thursday at 6:30 p.m.  
**VFW Post 3195**  
**5209 Grand Haven Rd.**  
**Norton Shores, MI**



**2022 Meetings**  
**Hoping to meet soon**

**RESEARCH HELP**  
**With**



Torrent House Local History & Genealogy Department  
315 W. Webster Ave.

**Please** call 231 722-8016  
or email us at

[1972mcgs@gmail.com](mailto:1972mcgs@gmail.com)

for your one-on-one  
appointment!

**LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT**

Call 231-722-8016  
Sunday and Monday — Closed  
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**More on their website**  
[hackleylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy/research-sources-at-the-torrent-house](http://hackleylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy/research-sources-at-the-torrent-house)



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**HISTORY BOOK VOL. 2**

We care what happens to our members, their families, and everyone around us. Our History Book, Volume 2 will be extend until further notice. It is very important to start working on your stories now.

**Do not wait to put your family history in Vol. 2**

If you have any questions or need help, contact us at our [1972mcgs@gmail.com](mailto:1972mcgs@gmail.com) or send your information to Kathy DeCormier at [middlaker@frontier.com](mailto:middlaker@frontier.com) — In the subject area put "History Book Volume 2".

**TWIG TALK**

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