



TWIG TALK

March 2023
Vol 23 No 3

A newsletter of the Muskegon County Genealogical Society

INSIDE

-
- Meeting programs p 1
-
- President's Message For Your Information p 2
-
- H. D. Barker By Frances Harrington p 3
-
- What Do You Do When the DNA Results Seem to be Lying By Richard Eastman Newsletter p 5
-
- Membership Application p 7
-
- Need to Know Routine Information p 8

MARCH 18 MEETING PROGRAM "THE REVIEW OF PROBATE COURT RECORDS"

Guest Speaker: Judge Kathy Hoogstra



Judge Kathy Hoogstra currently presides over Muskegon County Family Division court cases. She served as the probate court administrator for Muskegon County from 2007 until her appointment to the 14th Circuit Court in 2013. She has also served as a judicial law clerk for the 14th Circuit Court, as a public defender and as a family court referee for Muskegon County. She received her undergraduate degree from Calvin College

and her J.D. degree from the Illinois Institute of Technology in Chicago-Kent College of Law.

APRIL 15 MEETING PROGRAM "ORGANIZING YOUR PAPER GENEALOGY FILES"

Jennifer Lamkin, MCGS Treasurer
Karen Frazier, MCGS President



Genealogy is fun when you can find things, but it can be frustrating when you cannot. Therefore, you need a simple system for organizing genealogical data so you can quickly find them again.

The goal should be to have every fact you have ever found on your ancestors in one place. The type of filing systems that will be reviewed: File Cabinets and File Folders, Binders, Family Line Color Coding Filing System and Organizing photos.



MAY 20 MEETING PROGRAM "ORGANIZING YOUR DIGITAL GENEALOGY FILES"

Karen Frazier, MCGS President
Jennifer Lamkin, MCGS Treasurer



Maybe you dream of "going digital" with your genealogy files. But what do you do with all of the paper you've accumulated? If you do much family history research, you've probably accumulated hundreds—maybe even thousands—of digital

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

files: historical records, excerpts from books you have found online, scanned family photographs and pictures of gravestones made with a digital camera. The following topics will be covered:

- Transitioning from Paper to Digital
- Gathering Paper Files to Digitize
- Reorganize Digital Files into one system
- File Naming Templates
- Organizing Digital Folders
- Using Genealogical Software



President's Message

Hello!

What a roller coaster this winter has been. Little sun, lots of snow, no snow, lots of snow, no snow, repeat. I have family living in South Carolina, my father's ancestral home, and it is Spring down there... Just saying!

The MCGS Board met twice last month, our regular board meeting and a strategic planning meeting. We are still working through the COVID years and what our future entails. I hope you will be as excited as I am about the possibilities for MCGS's future.

First big jump – Zoom Presentations. We have booked our first Zoom presenter for the June 2023 General Membership Meeting. Accomplishing this for the first time, hopefully without a hitch, is making us nervous, but Hackley Public Library has the resources and technology to help us do this. Zoom meetings will be open to onsite participants, but also remote. So, members that do not live close by (about 50% of our members) will also be able to attend AND participate. More news on this as we get closer to June.

NEW email for the President – In order to best

facilitate communication between Board members and Society members we have added an email for the President to use. If you wish to communicate directly with me use Presidentmcs72@gmail.com. Feel free to communicate with any board member or email us at 1972mcgs@gmail.com. Both of these emails are monitored daily.

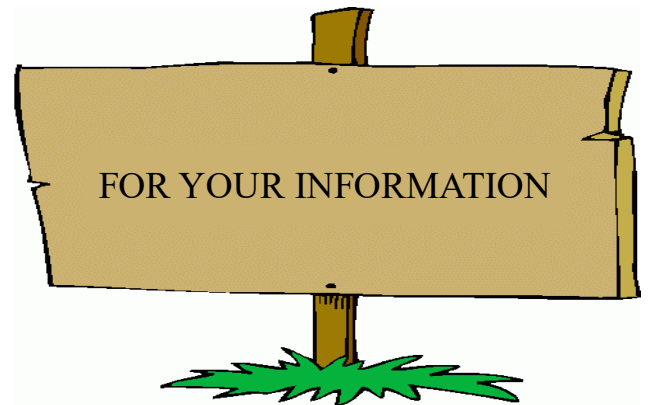
Remember to sign up for the upcoming Member Carpool Trips:

April 1 – Lansing Archives: cost = split gas and parking fee (if any) with car's passengers. Bring your own bag lunch.

August 5 – Lansing Archives: cost = split gas and parking fee (if any) with car's passengers. Bring your own bag lunch.

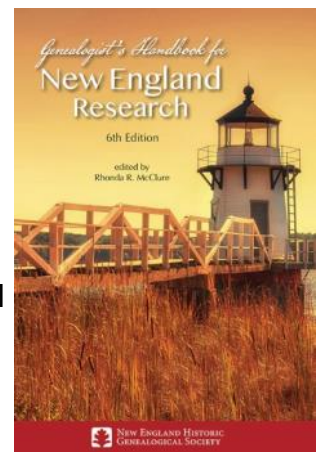
October 4 through 7 – Ft Wayne Allen County Library – Cost = split Gas and Hotel (unless you want your own room), and pay for your own meals.

Email to sign up 1972mcgs@gmail.com



MEMBERSHIP

Our society has always donated a book to Hackley Public Library-Local History and Genealogy Department for a member who had passed away. The most recent book is "Genealogist's Handbook for New England Research, 6th Edition" In the inside cover will read - Muskegon County Genealogical Society, In Memory of Joseph D. Ruch.



(Continued from page 2)

GENEALOGY QUOTATION – Family History

“We inherit from our ancestors gifts so often taken for granted. Each of us contains within this inheritance of soul. We are links between the ages, containing past and present expectations, sacred memories and future promise”. – Edward Sellner

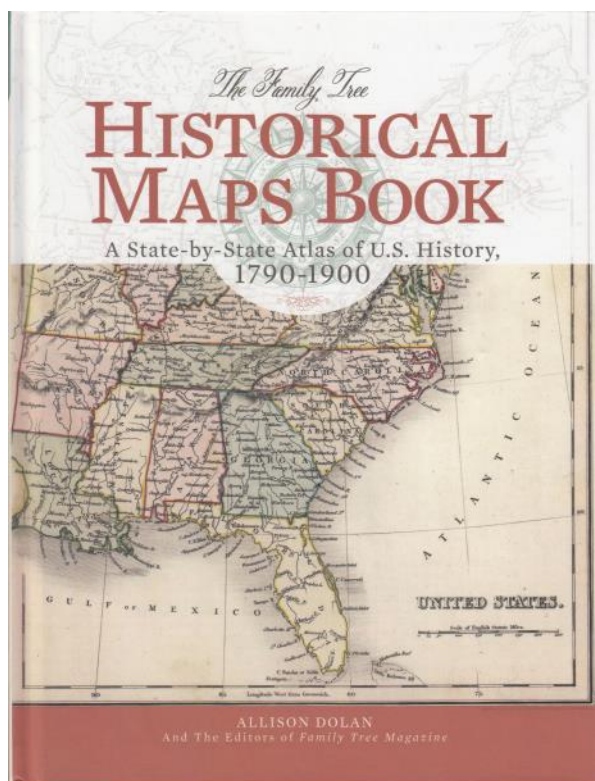
GENEALOGY TIPS – Family Search

Probate records are court records created after an individual's death that relate to a court's decisions regarding the distribution of the estate to the heirs or creditors and the care of any dependents.

Learn more about Probate Records at [United States Probate Records • FamilySearch](#)

TICKET BOOK

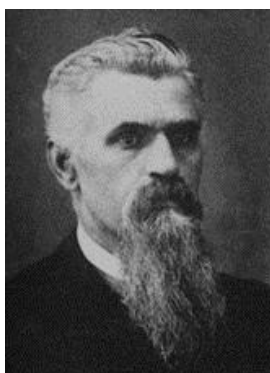
The Family Tree – Historical Maps Book. A State-by-State Atlas of U.S. History, 1790-1900 by Allison Dolan and Editors of The Family Tree Magazine. What is a ticket book you say—well it is an opportunity for members to purchase tickets to be entered in a drawing for a genealogy related book. You can buy your ticket at the membership table.



H D BAKER

By Frances Harrington

Maarten De Bakker and his wife, Sarra (Van Oeveren) De Bakker were living in Ouwerkerk, Zeeland, Netherlands in the early 1800s. Sarra gave birth to twelve children, only four made it to adulthood. Their seventh child named Hendrik, was born on March 24, 1832. They were not a wealthy family so Hendrik received only a basic education. He did, however, learn the value of honesty and hard work. As a young man,



he learned the trade of milling (the craft of operating a wind mill or water mill). In 1853, at the age of 21, the thought of freedom of speech and economic opportunities that he didn't have in his homeland, made Hendrix decide to make the 36-day journey by boat from Liverpool, England to New York, U.S.A.

Shortly after his arrival, Hendrix De Bakker became known as Henry D. Baker. From New York, he made his way to Grand Haven for a brief time, and then to Grand Rapids, Michigan, where he was employed by lumberman C. C. Comstock.

In 1854, Henry married Gertrude Harriet Lewis. Gertrude was also a native of the Netherlands and had come to America with her family in 1846, at the age of 9. The Lewis family was the first Dutch family to settle in Grand Rapids, Michigan. During the early days of their marriage, Henry continued to work for Mr. Comstock but also, because he was so well thought of in the community, was appointed the first patrolman in Grand Rapids in 1856. The city directory listed him as a night watchman but history remembers him as the 1st policeman in Grand Rapids even though the official police department didn't start until 1871. He patrolled what is now the downtown area. In 1858, Henry decided to start his own grocery business. In 1860, Henry and Gertrude started their family with the birth of their first child, a girl, named Elizabeth.

(Continued on page 4)

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The Civil War broke out in 1861. Henry loved his new country and felt it was his duty to defend it. He enlisted in 1862. Before leaving, he entrusted his grocery business to a man named Mr. Hinds. He received a promissory note for the value of the business and upon his return, would either get his business back or be paid for its value. Henry was part of Company K 1st Michigan Regiment of Engineers and Mechanics. At the battle of Stone River, Henry was wounded and almost bled to death. He was transferred to the hospital in Detroit, Michigan, where he remained for 7 months receiving medical care. At the end of the seven months, he was discharged from the Army because of his disability. After returning to Grand Rapids and finding out that Mr. Hinds had sold his business and absconded with his money, Henry decided to leave Grand Rapids.

Henry moved his family to Muskegon, Michigan, in January of 1864. He started a small book and stationery store on Western Avenue near Pine St, what was then considered the very end of the business district. He shared half the space in Mr. Snyder's tobacco shop because there were no empty stores for him to rent at that time. For a counter, he used boards laid across sawhorses. He soon outgrew that place and built a store on Western between Pine and Terrace.

In 1866, Gertrude gave birth to another daughter, Josie. Henry was doing so well that by 1867, he again had to move. Henry built the first 3-story brick building at 3 Western Avenue, on the southwest corner of Western Avenue and Terrace Street, on what would be known as the Baker Block.

A large wooden 2-story building was located next to the book store. In April 1870, that building caught fire. The heat was so intense it caused the brick wall in Henry store to collapse resulting in so much damage that Henry's book store and all his inventory was lost.

He had such a good reputation for being an honest man that everyone he'd done business with, offered to loan him the money to rebuild. The new building was the first to have a large plate glass window in which he would arrange attractive displays to entice shoppers and the

first to have a store with gas lighting.

Over the years, the H. D. Baker Book & Stationery Store carried popular books of the time, autograph books, text books, blank ledger books, and other office supplies. He sold magazines, periodicals, writing supplies, novelty gifts, tickets to the latest entertainment, tickets for the railroad, musical instruments, music rolls and sheet music. He carried curtains and the largest selections of wall papers in the city, selling tons of it every year.

In 1869, Henry is the first man initiated into the Muskegon Commandery No. 22, of the Knights Templar (a branch of the Freemasons to promote a concept of chivalry and Christianity within the Masonic framework). In 1871, his five-year-old daughter, Josie, died of water on the brain. In 1872, he was elected Treasurer of Muskegon's Knights Templar, a position he held with honor for over 25 years. Sadly, Henry and Gertrude also had a son who was stillborn in 1878. In 1879, their last child, another daughter, Gertrude was born. The Baker's made their home at 122 S. Terrace Street (the area located near the northeast corner where Peck Street and Terrace Street intersect).

The "Great Pine Street Fire of Muskegon" occurred in 1891. The fire wiped out 17 city blocks and destroyed 250 homes and businesses. A group of prominent businessmen including: C. H. Hackley, G. L. Erwin, F. H. Holbrook, and H. D. Baker, immediately got together to form the "Relief Committee of Fire Sufferers" to solicit donations, to assess the needs of the victims, and distribute funds to those in need. Henry became the Treasurer for the group and was on the investigating committee to make sure that no fraud was committed by those seeking assistance.

In 1892, Henry was appointed County Agent for the State Board of Charities & Corrections. As the County Agent, he worked with the courts in dealing with neglected children and those who had gotten arrested for misdemeanor crimes. He saw to it that they were placed in good foster homes, or were adopted. He also transported young offenders to either the Industrial School for Boys in Lansing, or the State Industrial Home for Girls in Adrian. Henry was re-

(Continued on page 5)

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sponsible for investigating and reporting on the conditions of the facilities or homes and the progress of each child he placed. It was the equivalence of today's probation officers. He also had to make sure that the money that was being privately donated or allocated by the State for these children was being properly spent.

In the fall of 1893, Henry's wife, Gertrude, died of diabetes. He retired from the book & stationery business in 1906 after 42 years, to concentrate on his responsibilities as the County Agent. In 1910, Henry was the oldest County Agent in the State at age 78, and continued doing this job until shortly before his death in 1916.

Over the years, Henry had also served as the County Supervisor, was on the Board of Public Works, was the Street Commissioner, was on the Board of the Muskegon Furniture Factory, was the County Truant Officer, was a member of the Phil Kearney Post No. 7 of the Grand Army of the Republic, was the President of the Building & Loan Association and the Building and Home Association, and prominent in programs that promoted the general welfare of Muskegon.

The old lessons Henry learned in his youth of honesty and hard work served him well throughout his life. Henry was one month shy of his 84th birthday when he died of pneumonia. He and Gertrude are buried in Evergreen Cemetery in Muskegon. Their daughter Elizabeth, married Benjamin King M.D. in 1866. She died in 1947 and she and her husband are also buried in Evergreen. Their daughter Gertrude E. married James Orr in 1921 and died in 1941. She and her husband are buried in Lake Forest Cemetery in Grand Haven.

Sources: Hackley Public Library, Local History & Genealogy Dept.; Genealogybank.com, Muskegon Chronicle; Ancestry.com; Muskegon and It's Resources (Muskegon Board of Trade); Historic Michigan Vol. 3 Muskegon County; findagrave.com; freemasonrytoday.com; Romance of Muskegon by Alice Prescott Kyes; Lakeshore Museum Center; Familysearch.org



HPL Local History & Genealogy Department Notes

A Quiet Spot for Doing Research

The roll-top desk which has served many Muskegon students as a quiet place to study over the years in the Julia Hackley Reading Room of the main HPL building, has found a new home. The desk now resides in the Local History & Genealogy Department's Machine Room. You'll find it in the window corner behind the ScanPro film scanner's table—a great place for reading a history book, or writing your family history story.

A "New" Old Map

The Local History & Genealogical Department has had a large, original 1873-1874 map of the City of Muskegon in its map case for several years. This map, drawn on linen by map maker, Thomas Smalley, is so fragile it threatens to rip any time it is unfolded, and has not been available for public use. Thanks to MCGS member, Bill Hansen donating his time, funds, and painstaking, professional photography work, we have a photograph the same large size as the original map. An anonymous donor provided the funds to cover the cost of framing the photograph.

We are happy to announce, this map's photograph is scheduled to soon be placed on the wall above the Xerox machine, where the early-days streets of the City of Muskegon will be clearly on view.

The portrait of John Torrent which has been above the Xerox machine since 2012 when the department moved into the Torrent House, will join the others in the Portrait Room.

The image shows a rectangular sign with a black border. At the top, there is a graphic of five stylized human figures in various colors (red, black, orange, yellow) holding hands. Below the graphic, the word "WELCOME" is written in large, bold, red capital letters. To the right of "WELCOME", the words "NEW MEMBER" are written in a smaller, black, sans-serif font. Below this, the name "DONNA IVERSON, MUSKEGON, MI / SURNAMEN RESEARCHING - HEDGE AND BURT IVERSON, PETERSON, KOSTER" is written in a black, sans-serif font.



Richard
Eastman's
Newsletter

Used with per-
mission

What Do You Do When the DNA Results Seem to be Lying?

20 Feb 2023 4:02 PM

Original question by Anonymous. Response by Eastman's newsletter editor.

I have a topic that has been bugging me lately. A certain DNA testing company is advertising about their "ethnicity" reports. My previous family history results show that I am over 80% British Isles and less than 5% German. However, I know that my father (he had his test done, too) is almost 50% German/Czech. Our family history research also shows that his father must have been close to 100% German

There are at least three possible reasons that the DNA results show non-German ancestry of the individual in question. The most obvious reasons are:

1. A mistake at the DNA lab where your test sample was accidentally swapped with a sample from someone else.

2. Even brothers and sisters (with the same parents) normally do not receive exactly the same DNA from each parent. It has been compared to sticking a ladle into a container of soup on the stove. One person might pull out "components" of 40% British DNA, 35% German DNA, and 15% Swedish DNA. Meanwhile, that person's brother or sister might use the same ladle and dip it into the same container of soup, but perhaps will pull out 65% British DNA, 25% German DNA, and 10% Swedish DNA. Almost no one ever receives exactly 50% of their DNA from each parent, the mix is almost always more or less than 50% from each parent. To be sure, the total is always 100% but almost never exactly 50/50.

3. Did his ancestors really come from Germany and nearby regions? Sure, that's what the records show, but were those really his ancestors?

One "mystery" that turns out to be very common in DNA research is that someone was quietly adopted into a family some years ago without paperwork and other family members kept it quiet (this happened often; I have several examples in my own family tree).

Another possibility is what is humorously referred to as a "non-marital event." That is, someone in your family tree spent at least one night with someone other than his or her married and documented spouse. While we all smile when we say "non-marital event," the fact remains that such liaisons were common throughout the years, even in the 1700s or later.

So, were your grandfather's real ancestors from someplace other than Germany? Or did one of your ancestors have an extra-marital liaison that you do not know about? It is possible that the DNA results you have received may prove something about your grandfather's ancestry that perhaps even he didn't know.

Luckily, the solution is simple, although a bit expensive. Have another DNA test taken by another DNA lab. (I have had my DNA tested by five different DNA labs, and I know of other genealogists who have tested with even more labs than that.) See if all the test results agree. In my case, the test results are similar but never exactly the same.

If only one test result shows non-German ancestry, then the first assumption probably is correct: the lab made an error.

However, if all the DNA tests say that he had little to no German ancestry at all, then I would suggest that you have some new family history challenges ahead of you!

I can hear a collective gasp from everyone reading this article: "What? Not MY ancestors!"

But it was true many, many times.



MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

** Our membership year is January 1 through December 31 **

*NAME _____

*ADDRESS _____

*CITY _____ *STATE _____ *COUNTRY _____ *ZIP _____

*PHONE (____) _____ *CELL (____) _____

*E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

MEMBERSHIP:

Renewal Membership **New** Membership

\$25.00 (Single in the USA)

\$30.00 (Single USD\$ outside the USA)

NEW FOR 2023! \$12.00/yr. Youth Member (under 21)

We are a non-profit organization 501 (c) (3). If you wish to make a donation,
please fill in the amount: \$ _____

Payment Method: Cash Check Money Order PayPal via MCGS website

*Please make check or money orders payable to MCGS

IF PAYING WITH CASH, YOU MUST PAY IN PERSON & SUBMIT A COMPLETED APPLICATION.

IF USING PAYPAL, EMAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:

membershipmcs1972@gmail.com OR:

MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION WITH A CHECK or MONEY ORDER TO:

MCGS

Attn: MEMBERSHIP

C/O HPL - Torrent House

315 W. Webster Ave.

Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

MCGS USE ONLY

Date Received _____

Cash _____ Check # _____ Money Order # _____ PayPal # _____

Amount Paid: Membership \$ _____ Donation \$ _____ Other \$ _____

Revised Jan 2023

MCGS MEETING PLACE

**3rd Saturday at 10:30 a.m.
Hackley Public Library
316 W. Webster Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49440**



HPL-TORRENT HOUSE LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY DEPARTMENT

315 W Webster Ave, Muskegon MI 49440

Basic Genealogy Workshop Enrollment:

3rd Saturday of month, 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.
Please call Torrent House at 231 722-8016
Maximum of 4 participants per session

Individual research help by MCGS member:

Email us to confirm a date/time at:
1972mcgs@gmail.com

Check HPL_Torrent website for open hours:

<https://www.hackleylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy/research-sources-at-the-torrent-house/>

2023 Meetings Dates

Mar.18 May 20
Apr. 15 June 17
July—No Meeting

MCGS Meeting Cancellation Notice

Notification posted on the MCGS Website and Facebook page and WZZM Channel 13 Closings & Cancellation List

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS

President:..... Karen Frazier
Vice President:.....Dawn Westcomb Kelley
Secretary:.....Tom Shepherd
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Past President:.....Jane Appleton Schapka

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MembershipDawn Westcomb Kelley
Newsletter EditorTom Porritt
Pioneer Program.....Barb LaBatt Martin
ProgramsTom Shepherd
Research.....Fran Harrington
Facebook..... Norman Dagen

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Research at Researchmcgs72@gmail.com
Twig Talk at TwigTalk1972@gmail.com



History Book Vol 2: If you have any questions or need help, contact us at our 1972mcgs@gmail.com address or send your information to Kathy DeCormier at middlaker@frontier.com — in the subject area put “History Book Volume 2”

TWIG TALK

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Local History & Genealogy Department
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