

# WOOD COUNTY



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## CHAIRMAN'S CORNER

### *Hello Fellow Genealogists!*

Welcome back, fellow genealogists, to another fun-filled year of learning about and sharing our genealogical knowledge. I hope you all had a great summer and were able to gather sufficient information on all of your respective families.

Personally, due to ongoing family issues, I was unable to travel as much as I was planning this summer. I missed the German seminar in Whitewater due to being needed in town. However, I was able to get a bit of organization done on my piles of existing paperwork.

I was sorry to note that the Joint Meeting in Stevens Point has been cancelled due to lack of response and program duplication with the upcoming Wisconsin State Genealogical Society Leader Workshop. See the

Calendar of Events for further info.

I am hoping that we have a great year and can get some good programs for our meetings. I hope also that we can continue to break down those brick walls that keep popping up. What with the new sites popping up on the web and the continued growth of sites like Ancestry, it's getting easier to break down those walls.

I hope to see all of you at our meeting on September 11th. Please note the change in our October meeting as noted on the Calendar of Events.

*Happy Hunting!*

*Eugene Meier*

## UPCOMING MEETINGS

Following tradition, our September program will be "What Did You Do Last Summer?" Please be prepared to give everyone a condensed version of any of your successes, stories, etc., from your summer research.

The Society's program committee is working hard on scheduling interesting programs for the upcoming year. Please think about your genealogical research. Are there areas about which you would like more information? Perhaps you've become something of an expert on a certain

aspect of research. Would you be willing to share your knowledge by conducting a program on the subject?

The whole idea of our genealogical society is to share knowledge with each other. So please consider sharing some of your knowledge with others. E-mail Tina Krummel with your ideas or to volunteer to conduct a program.

Thanks for volunteering!

*The Editor*

## OFFICERS 2012—2013

In May we elected new officers for the upcoming year. They are as follows:

Chairman:

Eugene Meier

Vice Chairman:

Tina Krummel

Secretary:

Doreen Dimick

Treasurer:

Bev Polansky

Trustee:

Flores Gumz

Most of the above officers will seem familiar to you since most of them are staying with their current positions. Bev Polansky will be the “new kid on the block,” taking over as Treasurer from Arlene Keehn who has held that position for the last 8 years.

Let’s all give Arlene a “round of applause” for a job well done. Then let’s welcome Bev and all the returning officers. This will be Eugene’s 3rd year as Chairman; Tina’s 3rd year as Vice Chairman; and Doreen’s 7th year as Secretary. Be sure to thank them for being willing to serve as your Society’s officers for another year.

Think about volunteering your time and talents next year!

## ANNUAL DUES

Dues are due! The date noted on the address label of this newsletter is when your membership expires. Please let me know if you don’t agree.

Our bylaws state that our membership year ends 31 July. You are given two months’ grace period before your name is removed from the membership list. The grace period will expire 30 September.

If your dues are not paid by that time, you will no longer receive the newsletter. You can be reinstated at any time after dues are received but, if you wait too long, your name might not appear on the membership list which accompanies the December newsletter.

*Bev Polansky*  
*Treasurer*

*It’s time to harvest  
those pumpkins  
and get ready for  
winter!*



## HELP!

I am in desperate need of your help to make this newsletter informative and enjoyable to all. Articles of interest are needed. Do you have an old letter that may contain interesting historical facts? I’d be delighted to include that in the newsletter.

If you still want to submit your bio, that also would be welcome. I am also looking for those brick wall stories. If someone would start, I think others would join in. Don’t tell me you don’t have a brick wall? Come and borrow some of mine then. I’d be glad to get rid of them!

If you see an article in another genealogy society newsletter or publication that you think would be interesting for everyone to see, please send me the article and I will get permission to use it here.

Thanks in advance for your help.

*The Editor*

## RESEARCH REPORT

Diantha reported the following inquiries over the last few months:

- ◆ Someone looking for Josephine Stone—sent them to Clark County.
- ◆ Surname search for the name “Horn.”
- ◆ Searched for the death of Katherine Merry of Seneca.
- ◆ Made copies of obits for the Elmer family.
- ◆ Architect drawings of Billmeyer—sent them to the South Wood County Historical Society.
- ◆ A request for court papers from a lawsuit of 1877.
- ◆ Request from SWCHS for an obit for Stanley L. Larson—sent them to the Marshfield Library.
- ◆ Request for divorce papers for a Belle White and William Edwards in 1866.
- ◆ Death certificate for Thomas Nash and wife Ella (Hussey) Nash—sent her to the Register of Deeds’ office.

If you would like further information on any of these searches, please talk to me.

*Diantha Neinfeldt, Research Committee Chair*

## ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARIES

**Book Purchases:** Flores Gumz is the chair of this committee, always asking for input from members and library staff as to suggestions for book purchases. The primary responsibility of this committee is to order books or other genealogical material for placement at McMillan Memorial Library. The following books were purchased last year:

- ◆ A War of 1812 Death Register “Whispers in the Dark” by Jack Bilow, 2011, \$55.00.
- ◆ Exploring Civil War Wisconsin, A Survival Guide for Researchers by Brett Barker, 2003, \$20.00.

**Indexing:** The Indexing Committee is co-chaired by Mary Peters and Bev Peaslee. A few years ago, our Society received bound local newspaper books from McMillan Library. These are stored at a member’s house and are being indexed, mostly by Jim Diesburg. Char Diesburg has been indexing the daily newspapers. Some of these have been indexed and are being proofread.

More volunteers are needed to index, type these into Excel, and proofread. It would be ideal if we could, say, set aside the 3rd Wednesday at a certain time and place so everyone would know when it was. Reminders would be published on the Society’s web page. Sign-up sheets will be circulated at upcoming meetings to try to set up some dates, times, and places that will allow volunteers to get together to do this.

The Vesper newspaper indexing project is awaiting some information being retrieved from someone’s home. We will keep pursuing this matter. Perhaps the information we have could be gone over at one of the above meetings.

**Research:** This committee has been very ably chaired by Diantha Neinfeldt for many years. She states that most queries have been able to be completed quickly and without travel time involved. The numbers of queries are down from previous years, mainly due to the number of web sites with

information on them. She did meet with two different parties at McMillan to help them get started with their family research. They were surprised at the amount of information the Society has collected over the years.

**Trustees:** Flores Gumz, Anna Greeno, and Ben Chitek are the trustees. Their primary responsibility is to care for and protect the Society’s collection of historic information. Trustees serve three-year terms. These are staggered so there is one new trustee coming on every year. Main points:

- ◆ Di Neinfeldt donated a cabinet for additional storage.
- ◆ McMillan Library will be posting the newspaper indexes, prior to 1906, on their web site. They will retain the original newspaper index cards in their storage.
- ◆ The newspaper index, done by the library in 1991, and the “ripped” copy of the newspaper index will be kept. It was suggested that these be put on a spreadsheet.
- ◆ The newspaper index on a floppy disc has been also put on a hard drive.
- ◆ One floppy disc that had been in the cabinet contains the Restlawn Cemetery index. This has been placed with the other cemetery indexes. Other floppy discs were found to be blank.
- ◆ Di Neinfeldt has turned over possession of the totes for the brat fry to Bev Polansky.
- ◆ The trustees are still looking for marriage indexes from 1867 through 1907, policy and procedure manual, historian records, treasurer records, and various annual reports.
- ◆ The South Wood County Historical Corporation accepted the extra copies of the township records, consisting of Marshfield marriage book; Cary school census and organization of township; Dexter burial permits and cards; Town of Grand Rapids school census and tuition; Lincoln clerk’s book; Town of Marshfield

*(cont’d on page 1116)*

*(cont’d from page 1115)*

- ◆ school district info, census, and tuition; Village of Milladore original cemetery maps; Nekoosa list of officers; Pittsville government records, petition for cemetery, and school census; Village of Port Edwards letterhead for John Ed-

## MEETING SUMMARIES

March 2012—Diantha Neinfeldt explained the development of the Society's website. She handed out information sheets on the cemetery, church, and school sites that need to be updated. Input will be gathered from members at the April meeting. There were 15 members present for the meeting. A meeting date will be arranged when Vicki Schnitzler can return to assist members in applying for the Civil War Ancestor certificates from WSGS. Members were reminded that the WSGS Gene-A-Rama is coming up the end of April. There is also another free seminar at the Family History Center in Wausau in May. Tentative dates for the two brat fries are May 16 and May 18. Present officers were polled to see if they would be willing to keep their positions. The standing committees were reviewed; it was decided that the Days at McMillan committee could be eliminated. Myra Sweet volunteered to see if she could do the Pedigree Charts.

April 2012—The program this month was, of course, the 1940 census given by Bev Peaslee. We browsed the Town of Sigel census and examined

the information to be found. It will be easier once the census is indexed and that is being done already by various organizations including Family Search and Ancestry. Four guests and 22 members were present. The editor of Wood County Roots is asking members to write up their "brick wall" stories for inclusion in our newsletter. It was agreed that, pending approval by the Pittsville Historical Society, we would combine the cemetery walk with a tour of their museum and school. We will meet at 6 p.m. in Pittsville at the Historical Society's museum for a tour of that and a tour of the Founders Cemetery. Details of the May program were provided to the members. Phil Brown will conduct a tour of Historical Wisconsin Rapids. A grant request has been written up and will be submitted to In courage for additional web site expenses.

May 2012—The program was the historical bus tour given by Phil Brown, president of the South

*(Cont'd on Page 1117)*

*(Cont'd. from Page 1116)*

Wood County Historical Corporation. The tour left from the small parking lot at McMillan Memorial

## ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARIES, CONT'D.

wards Manufacturing Co. and proceedings of Village Board; Richfield cemetery map and list of people buried in the cemetery; Town of Rock school census; Saratoga directory of government officials; Sherry school census; Sigel poll list and miscellaneous items; Town of Wood government information, school census, and an affidavit of homestead.

**Web Site:** Diantha Neinfeldt has headed this committee since its beginnings. She writes:

- ◆ During the past year more clients are using the databases that are on our site.
- ◆ We need to update the text pages on some of our categories and add more databases to complement the ones already on the site. We have applied for a grant from the South Wood County Foundation to achieve this goal. Copies of the grant application have been filed with the secretary for future use in applying for more

grants.

- ◆ The cemeteries are still being indexed, with Rudolph, Nekoosa, and Restlawn to finish yet. Church records, burial permits, and stone readings are being used to accomplish this job. As a cemetery is finished, it is entered in the database and a hard copy is given to the trustees, along with the data saved to a flash drive.
- ◆ More biographies will be added in the future, using Rudolph, Vesper, and Pittsville centennial books.

## DID YOU KNOW?—CIVIL WAR TRIVIA

- ◆ Missouri sent 39 regiments to fight in the siege of Vicksburg—17 to the Confederacy and 22 to the Union.
- ◆ At the start of the war, the value of all manufactured goods produced in all of the Confederate states added up to less than one-fourth of those produced in New York state alone.
- ◆ In March, 1862, European powers watched in worried fascination as the Monitor and the Merrimack battled off Hampton Roads, Virginia. From then on, after these ironclads opened fire, every other navy on earth was obsolete.
- ◆ On July 4, 1863, after 48 days of siege, Confederate General John C. Pemberton surrendered the city of Vicksburg to the Union's General Ulysses S. Grant. The Fourth of July was not celebrated in Vicksburg for another 81 years.
- ◆ By the end of the war, Unionists from every state except South Carolina had sent regiments to fight for the North.
- ◆ On March 4, 1865, Lincoln was inaugurated for a second term. Yards away in the crowd was John Wilkes Booth with a pistol in his pocket. His vantage point on the balcony, he said later, offered him "an excellent chance to kill the President, if I had wished."
- ◆ On May 13, 1865, a month after Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Private John J. Williams of the 34th Indiana became the last man killed in the Civil War, in a battle at Palmito Ranch, Texas. The final skirmish was a Confederate victory.
- ◆ At Fredericksburg in 1862, the Confederate trenches stretched for a distance of seven miles. The troop density was 11,000 per mile, or six men to the yard.
- ◆ An Iowa regiment had a rule that any man who uttered an oath should read a chapter in the Bible. Several of them almost got through the Old Testament.
- ◆ Hiram Revels of Mississippi became the first black man ever elected to the United States Senate. He filled the seat last held by none other than Jefferson Davis.

## MEETING SUMMARIES, CONT'D.

Library and made a large circle going along the Wisconsin River past the Arpin houses, to the railroad buildings that house the old turntable, and then up Third Street (formerly known as "Quality Row") to hear of the house histories along there. The tour was enjoyed by all and all of us hated to see it end. We could have gone on for a few more hours! As it was, we were slightly late for the meeting! Phil Brown came in and shared with us his vision of getting the Historical Corporation's information on line and accessible. Brick wall articles are needed for the newsletter! The June meeting and cemetery walk will be in Pittsville at the Old Settler's Cemetery and the Pittsville Historical Society's museum and school buildings. The historian is collecting old photos of our society. If anyone has any, please see that she gets them. The grant has been sent in and preliminary feedback received indicated we

will not be getting the full amount requested but we will get something. Fundraising brat fries are scheduled for May 16 and May 18. Please volunteer to help. Elections were held. The new officer list can be seen on Page 1114. A motion was made and passed that the society would pay for officers and committee chair to attend the Stevens Point Joint Meeting. The meeting is titled "Dead or Alive—Keeping Your Society Viable." More details will follow. *(Please check the Calendar of Events for updated information on this meeting.—The Editor)*

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

**11 Sep 2012** Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the **McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids.** "What Did You Do Last Summer?" is our normal program for the September meeting. After the two-month hiatus, most members have some successes (or not) to tell. The meeting will follow the program.

**10 Oct 2012** Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the **Charles and JoAnn Lester Library, 100 Park Street, Nekoosa, WI.** Please note the change in our meeting. This is a **Wednesday** and the meeting will be held at the **Nekoosa** library. Please be early for this program. We would like to start the library tour at exactly 6:30 p.m. as the library closes at 7 p.m. After the tour (and after the library closes), we can adjourn to the meeting room to conduct our business meeting.

**27 Oct 2012** **WSGS Society Leaders Workshop, at 8:30 a.m. in the BeeBee Forum Room at the Marshfield Public Library, 211 East Second Street, Marshfield, WI.** The Wisconsin State Genealogical Society is again reviving their Society Leaders Workshop. In the past this has been a very helpful program for all officers and committee chair of any genealogical society. Topics of discussion are the new WSGS website, webinars, programs and education, newsletter, fundraising, publications, membership, social media, and volunteers. Go to the WSGS web site at [www.wsgs.org](http://www.wsgs.org) to get more information.

**13 Nov 2012** Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the **McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids.** "Homestead Case Files and Land Records Available Through the General Land Office" presented by Don Schnitzler of Marshfield.

**11 Dec 2012** Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society meeting at 6:30 p.m. at the **McMillan Memorial Library in Wisconsin Rapids.** Coffee, hot chocolate, and desserts along with family memories of Christmas past, followed by a business meeting.

## QR (QUICK RESPONSE) CODES

They're everywhere! They're everywhere! You've seen them! Those funny black squiggly squares that look like UPC codes that were caught in a tornado. Well, get used to them. You may even see them on tombstones! Yes, they may be coming to a cemetery near you. They can be embedded right into a new headstone and they can be attached to a headstone already in place.

They can be read with a free app by a Smartphone. Photos, obituaries, family his-

tories, etc. can be saved to a website that is then accessed by this QR code.

This is all well and good but can it still be accessed in 25 years or even 10 years with our ever-changing technology? Is there an added upkeep cost to keep the site available? These are questions that should be answered before you decide to go this route. I would be interested in hearing of any local stones with QR codes. *The Editor*



*This QR code is displayed on the reverse side of the tombstone. Some companies are offering QR codes as part of the package.*

**IN MEMORIAM  
DAVID G. BILLMEYER**

We lost another stellar member this year with the passing of Dave Billmeyer on Friday, August 24, following a valiant fight with cancer. Dave had been a member of our Society since 2002. Dave had not held an office but he was an active member, attending meetings and helping with programs when asked or frying brats!

Dave could count among his ancestors some of the early pioneers of this area. His grandparents, Anton and Ludwena Lambach Billmeyer, came to this area in 1868. Anton, designed and built many of the early buildings. His grandmother, Ludwena, was the subject of "Who's Who in Wisconsin Rapids" in the December 2008 issue of Wood County Roots.

Dave was born on July 5, 1934, to Carl and Marjorie Billmeyer. He graduated from Lincoln High School in 1952. He received a de-

gree in architectural engineering from Notre Dame University and, in 1958, he joined his father in the business of Billmeyer & Son Architects. In 1985 he became the building inspector for Wisconsin Rapids, retiring in 1996.

Dave was a member of the Knights of Columbus, Safari Club International, Wood County Rifle & Pistol Club, and our Society. He was an avid hunter, taking many trips to Alaska, Canada, and Africa. He is survived by a daughter, two sisters, and special friends Beth and Kimberly Klumb. He was preceded in death by a son and daughter, both at birth.

*Dave, we'll miss you!*

**OLD LANDMARK  
SOLD**

One of Wisconsin Rapids' residential landmarks, Le Chateau, once the home of lumber baron John Baptiste Arpin, has been purchased by Quinn H. Boyd from Mrs. Georgianna Buckley, daughter of the original owner. When built by Arpin some 70 years ago, it was regarded as the showplace of the community. Painters are now at work on the exterior, and Boyd plans redecoration and modernization of the interior of the many gabled dwelling, which he will operate as an apartment house. Mrs. Buckley has left the city to reside with a daughter in Milwaukee.

*From the front page of the Wednesday, July 1, 1953, edition of The Wisconsin Rapids Daily Tribune.*

**MEMBERSHIP FORM  
DETACH AND MAIL WITH A CHECK FOR \$15 PAYABLE TO:  
HEART O' WISCONSIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY  
P.O. Box 516  
WISCONSIN RAPIDS WI 54495-0516**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**New members only:** You may have **one** free surname search if you reside outside of Wood County, WI (a \$10 value).

Surname you would like researched: \_\_\_\_\_

The membership list is published once per year in the December newsletter. We ask that you give permission for us to publish your address, telephone number, and e-mail address by responding to the following questions. **(Please clearly circle your answer; if no response is given, we will automatically publish):** I wish to have the following published in the December newsletter: my address? **Yes No**; my phone number? **Yes No**; my e-mail address? **Yes No**

Members may submit one free query per year, which will be published in the Society's newsletter in order to contact others researching the same ancestors. It should be 50 words or less, not counting the name and address of the submitter. Members and non-members may submit additional queries at the rate of 10 cents per word.

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want a membership card mailed to you. Thanks.

## Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society

Chairman	Eugene Meier
Vice Chairman	Tina Krummel
Secretary	Doreen Dimick
Treasurer	Bev Polansky
Trustees	Flores Gumz
3 years	Annie Greeno
2 years	Ben Chitek
1 year	

**COMMITTEE CHAIRS:**

Book Purchases	Flores Gumz
By-Laws	Pat Curti
Genealogy Class	(Vacant)
Historian	Bev Peaslee
Hospitality	Joyce Keehn
Indexing	Mary Peters & Bev Peaslee
Library Files	Arlene Keehn
Newsletter	Bev Peaslee
New Members	Doris King
Pedigree Charts	(Vacant)
Publicity	Tina Krummel
Research	Di Neinfeldt
Sunshine	Char Diesburg
Website	Di Neinfeldt

Comments, feedback, bios, and articles for and about this newsletter can be forwarded to the Wood County Roots Editor:  
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E-mail: [elvistcb@tds.net](mailto:elvistcb@tds.net)

**HEART O' WISCONSIN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

**PURPOSE OF SOCIETY:** To assist members and others in genealogical research and to preserve local records.

**DUES:** \$15 per household—one newsletter per address. Please list names of all persons joining. Due at or before 31 July. Membership year runs from 01 August through 31 July.

**MEETINGS:** Held monthly—September through June—on the second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at the McMillan Memorial Library, 490 East Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI (right across the street from the Hotel Mead & Convention Center).

**NEWSLETTERS:** Published quarterly: Sept - Dec - Mar - Jun. Mailed one week prior to meeting. Articles due to newsletter editor no later than the first day of Aug - Nov - Feb - May.

**SUNSHINE COMMITTEE:** Get well cards will be sent to members and spouses only. Sympathy cards will be sent for spouses, parents and children of members. Members will be responsible for notifying Char Diesburg of any illnesses or deaths of which they are aware. Call her at 715-886-4032.

**PROGRAMS:** Anyone with ideas for programs or speakers, please e-mail Program Chair Tina Krummel at [irnotbaboon@hotmail.com](mailto:irnotbaboon@hotmail.com).

**REMEMBER this is your club and newsletter—please participate!**

**SOCIETY ADDRESS:** Heart O' Wisconsin Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 516, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54495-0516.

**Visit us on the web at [www.howgs.org](http://www.howgs.org)!**