



**Madison County
Genealogical Society,
Box 631, Edwardsville, IL
62025-0631**

NEWSLETTER

Volume 43 Number 2 Summer 2023

DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES! DUES!

Dues for 2024 are now being accepted. We would very much appreciate receiving your renewal checks ASAP. Send your renewal checks to:

***Ferne Ridenour, MCGS Treasurer
4814 Loop Road
Dorsey, IL 62021-1014***

Change of Meeting Schedule and Format

At our last meeting, which was attended by only five people – all members of the board, we reviewed the results of the recent member poll and decided to change to quarterly meetings on the third Sunday of the months January, April, July, and October. The first of which will be on October 15, 2023, at 1:30 pm. We are going to try putting our meetings on Facebook Live so members can view them whenever they want and could leave comments or ask questions that would be responded to later.

The Board then discussed the Society’s By-Laws which will need to be amended to allow voting by email, and change our meeting dates.

After discussion, Mary Westerhold, proposed that we make the following amendments to our By-Laws: “Beginning October 15, 2023 our meetings shall be held quarterly on the third Sunday of January, April, July, and October. The meetings will be in person and on Facebook Live. Mary also proposed an amendment to allow members to vote in person or by email.”

After discussion, the executive board approved this proposal and decided it should put in our next Newsletter. The members can respond by email to these amendments and a failure to respond will be considered a “YES” vote, and the votes need to be returned by January 2024.

Voting by email to allow voting by email seems a bit strange but we cannot get enough people at a meeting to constitute a quorum.

DUES 2024:
Indiv/Fam.....\$25.00
Institutional\$25.00
Patron.....\$35.00
Life.....\$300.00
Checks (USA only) payable to MCGS. Membership cards sent if SASE is enclosed with check.
Dues are due Dec. 31, delinquent Jan. 31 each year.

MCGS WEBSITE:
**sites.rootsweb.com/
~ilmadcg**

LIBRARY WEBSITE:
www.edwardsvillelibrary.org

LIBRARY E-MAIL:
ede@edwardsvillelibrary.org

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Death of a Long-Time Member

LaVerne Bloemker Hamel, Friday, September 1, 2023



LaVerne B. Bloemker, age 81 of Hamel, Illinois, died Friday, September 1, 2023, at her home in Hamel, Illinois.

She was born on Friday, September 26, 1941, in Alhambra, Illinois, the daughter of Melvin A. Buddy and Clara Helene Sophie (nee Suhre) Greear.

On Saturday, December 17, 1960, she married Lawrence Clarence Bloemker.

She was a member of Salem United Church of Christ and the Hitz Memorial Home Auxiliary.

LaVerne was born at Highland; grew up in rural Alhambra (near the Worden Y); and graduated from Staunton High School in 1959. She had worked for the Alhambra Telephone Company & the Granite City Army Depot prior to marriage. After her marriage, they lived in Alhambra, moved to Utah for a year and then to Hamel for the rest of her life. She and her husband operated Chuck's Convenience Store and Conoco Gas Station in Hamel for 28 years — closing in 1999. LaVerne worked at SIU-E for some 10 years in the Admissions office and as Administration Clerk for the SIU-E Police Department. She had a great love for ancestry — especially local history and genealogy. She was a long-time member and Treasurer of the Madison County

Genealogical Society. She even wrote a column on Hamel history for the Madison County Chronicle. She volunteered and was an employee at the Madison County Archival Library. Travelling was a fun thing for her — trips to the Holy Lands, Ireland, and Yosemite National Park were favorites. LaVerne was known for her baking — especially her cookies. She was a big Dallas Cowboys fan. Her collection of glassware — vases & bowls was extensive. In the 1970's-'80's she served as Village Clerk for Hamel. (Her son, Larry, is the former Mayor of Hamel and her son, Gary, is Assistant Fire Chief). She also volunteered at her church and the Hitz Home.

Survivors include:

Son - Larry Lee Bloemker, Hamel, Illinois

Son - Gary Lee (Fiancee- Amy Rogier) Bloemker, Hamel, Illinois

Sister - Betty Ann Greear

Brother - Robert (Judy) Greear, Godfrey, Illinois.

She was preceded in death by:

Father - Melvin A. Buddy Greear DOD:10/13/04

Mother - Clara Helene Sophie Greear (nee Greear) DOD:10/02/91

Husband - Lawrence Clarence "Chuck" Bloemker DOD:9/13/04

Brother - Melvin Rudolph Buddy Greear DOD: 9/28/13.

Arrangements were handled by Dauderman Mortuary in Alhambra, Illinois.

Visitation was held Wednesday, September 6, 2023, at Dauderman Mortuary in Hamel, Illinois and Thursday, September 7, 2023, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra, Illinois.

Funeral service was on Thursday, September 7, 2023, at Salem United Church of Christ in Alhambra, Illinois, with Rev. Jeremy R. Wood, Pastor, officiating.

Interment was at Salem Cemetery in Alhambra, Illinois.

Memorial contributions may be made to Hitz Memorial Home or Salem United Church of Christ.

Obit Provided By: Dauderman Mortuary - Hamel

“Consult Your Elders”
by
Franklin Carter Smith & Emily Anne Croom
[Reprinted from Genealogical.com email ad]

[Editor’s Note: This article is adapted from a chapter in the guidebook, “A Genealogist’s Guide to Discovering Your AFRICAN-AMERICAN ANCESTORS,” by Franklin Carter Smith and Emily Anne Croom. This excerpt discusses strategies for gathering information from living family members and friends, highlighting the most productive lines of questioning, and anticipating some of the difficulties you may encounter with some of your interview subjects or correspondents.]

“It is important to identify as many older living family members as possible. These can include parents, aunts and uncles, grandparents and their siblings, cousins, surviving spouses of deceased relatives, and even long-time family friends and neighbors. Seek out the “griot” — the person who is most knowledgeable about each family’s history.

As soon as possible, contact these people via mail, e-mail, telephone, or personal visit. Each one can provide information, if you ask the right questions. As you learn more, you may need to talk with an interviewee several times.

Interviews on tape can help preserve several aspects of family history. Remember that an audiotape is a memory of the person’s voice as well as a source of information. Thus, the audiotapes you make could help family members of the future feel a special kind of connection with ancestors they never met. In addition, speech patterns and voice inflections often carry over from one generation to the next in the same area. Thus, hearing your grandmother speak may tell you something of how your great-grandmother or other ancestors spoke.

General Interview Techniques:

1. If potential interviewees do not know you, introduce yourself and explain your reason for the contact — to ask for information about family history. Ask for a convenient time to call or visit.
2. If they know you, briefly explain your interest in family history and ask for a time when they could share with you some of their memories of family history.
3. Prepare specific questions in advance and tailor them to fit each person’s place in the family of your interest. Someone in your mother’s family, for example, may or may not know details about people on your father’s side of the family. Also, most people know more about relatives they knew personally than relatives who lived elsewhere or who died before the interviewee was born.
4. If you contact the interviewee by mail, try one of these ideas. (a) Number your questions so your correspondent can respond easily, and keep a copy of the questions you send. (b) Type your questions and leave room for answers; ask your correspondent to answer on the page and return it to you.
5. Ask for names, vital statistics, and relationships, but also ask about family stories, oral tradition, and how the ancestors lived their daily lives.
6. Ask about specific events and people the interviewees knew well. Word your questions to trigger memories, and try to get explanations in addition to yes and no answers. If you ask “Do you remember anything about Grandpa Brown?” you may get “No” for an answer. On the other hand, you could begin with “Mama always said Grandpa Brown had four sisters. What were their names? Who was Cassie?”
7. Try to find out about your ancestors as people — their character, their personality traits, and stories that illustrate these traits.
8. If your interviewee has family artifacts, especially family Bibles or photographs, use these as triggers to conversation. Who were these people? How were they related to you (the interviewee)? What can you tell me about them? What was the occasion in the photograph?
9. Realize that failing memory may result in inaccurate information or mixed-up identities. However, record what you are told and later double-check what you can.
10. During an interview, record the conversation and/or take thorough notes. Label the tape or notes with your name, the interviewee’s

name, and the date and location of the visit. This information is your documentation of the information and the event: "Interview with Aunt Susan Wilson, 9 October 2000, at her home in Pleasant Valley, Arkansas, by Jane Clark, on audiotape." Transcribe your notes soon after the interview while the conversation and details of family stories are fresh in your mind.

What If Some Relatives Won't Share?

Although most relatives will gladly share information and memories with those interested in family history, some relatives are reluctant to tell what they know. Genealogists cannot force people to talk, but knowing why some people decline may help you work out a strategy to help them overcome their unwillingness. Their hesitation may fall into one of several categories.

1. Some people may have had an unhappy or abusive childhood or marriage and prefer not to talk about it. One man did not want to remember anything prior to his marriage, and his family never knew the real reason. However, not long before he died, his son asked him for his parents' and siblings' names. These were the only clues the family had when they started working on family history. Research later suggested some reasons why the elderly man may not have wanted to remember his early years.

This category could also include those who grew up in a variety of family homes or children's homes, foster homes, or other institutions and perhaps feel embarrassment, shame, or guilt. Genealogists probably cannot anticipate or lessen the emotions these relatives may feel but may encourage them to talk about other aspects of family history.

2. Relatives may not understand what genealogists want to know and why they want to know it. One aunt was, at first, rather talkative and then began hedging on answering questions. Not understanding her sudden change of attitude, her nephew addressed the issue directly, saying that he sensed a reluctance on her part and wondered whether he had said anything to cause this change in their communication. She then explained an episode in her past that she had not wanted him to discover. He had to help her understand that this kind of episode was not what he, as the genealogist, was trying to uncover. In effect, she had completely misunderstood his quest as the family historian.

Genealogists need to make clear that they are looking for information on their ancestors and interesting family stories and memories. Some unhappy episodes may surface in the process, but genealogists are not seeking to open old wounds.

3. Other relatives may possess family papers but "refuse to share" with the genealogist. One young woman made this complaint about her older brother, who lived out of town and had all their parents' papers. When she approached the subject directly, she learned that the brother had no idea what was in the boxes, was very busy, and felt it was too time-consuming and expensive to take boxes of papers to a photocopier and send her all the copies. However, he was glad for her to come for a visit, go through the papers, and make copies of whatever she wanted. Sometimes relatives even give key documents to the genealogist. Of course, if family history enthusiasts do not know what is in the papers, they cannot know what copies to request. And sometimes, in their eagerness, they may ask too much or want answers too fast.

4. Family members may want to hide secrets that the family has had for generations. These "skeletons in the closet" may include many of the situations already mentioned but happened so long ago that the relatives involved are no longer living. Most families have included individuals who broke the law, had bad habits, made poor choices, or had unfortunate things happen to them. Genealogists can accept such events as facts in the family history and decide how much to include in a compilation of the family's past.

One researcher learned why her grandmother had refused to talk: A great-grandparent had been a stagecoach robber on the western frontier. The researcher became very interested in studying that family and discovered that the robber's sister had been a published playwright. While not condoning what the robber did, the genealogist wanted to know all, and it certainly enlivened the family history.

“THE CENSUS DAY”

by William Dollarhide

[Reprinted from Genealogical.com email ad]

If you are a genealogist, you are an avid user of the federal censuses, 1790 to 1950. But even experienced census users may not know about some of the obscure aspects of the censuses. Here’s one of them. It’s called the “census day.”

Beginning with the 1790 federal census—and continuing with every census thereafter—each enabling law authorized by Congress specified a “census day” for gathering the census information from every household in America. From 1790 to 1820 the census day was the first Monday in August.

The census day was NOT the day the enumerator arrived at a household; it was the day for which all the statistics of the census were collected. The instructions given to all the U.S. Marshals just prior to the 1820 census explain:

“All the questions refer to the day when the enumeration is to commence, the first Monday in August next. Your assistants will thereby understand that they are to insert in their returns all the persons belonging to the family on the first Monday in August, even those who may be deceased at the time when they take the account; and, on the other hand, that they will not include in it infants born after that day.”

Similar instructions have been given for every census since 1790, but with different census days. The table below shows the census day for each census, 1790 to 1930, and the time allowed to take the census:

Census Year / Census Day / Time Allowed

1790 / 2 August / 9 months
1800 / 4 August / 9 months
1810 / 6 August / 10 months
1820 / 7 August / 13 months
1830 / 1 June / 12 months
1840 / 1 June / 18 months
1850 / 1 June / 5 months
1860 / 1 June / 5 months

Census Year / Census Day / Time Allowed

1870 / 1 June / 5 months
1880 / 1 June / 1 month
1890 / 1 June / 1 month
1900 / 1 June / 1 month
1910 / 15 April / 1 month
1920 / 1 January / 1 month
1930 / 1 April / 1 month

1820 & 1830 Census Day Differences:

On the above table, note that the census day changed in 1830 from the first Monday in August to the first day of June. If one is researching families appearing in the 1820 and 1830 censuses, looking at these families again may be important. Since the census days for 1820 and 1830 are not exactly 10 years apart, the two-month difference may reveal some surprising results.

For example, if a person were born between 1 June 1820 and 7 August 1820, that child would appear in the 1820 census in the “under 10” age category. But in 1830, that same person would appear in the “of 5 and under 10” rather than the “of 10 and under 15” age category, since the person had not yet turned 10.

The age category for anyone born between 1 June and 7 August in any year would be affected by this reporting change between 1820 and 1830. Comparing the 1820 age categories for a person appearing 10 years later and not in the “correct” age category may actually give a clue to a person’s date of birth within a two-month period.

Time Allowed to Take a Census:

On the table above, note the time allowed to take each census. All of the states complied with this provision, except South Carolina in 1790. South Carolina could not complete its 1790 enumeration in nine months. The U.S. Marshal complained that he was having great difficulty finding people to take the job because of resistance to the census being taken. A Charleston jury met to decide the fate of six persons who had “refused to render an account of persons in their households as required by the census act.” A South Carolina census taker was brought on trial for neglect of duty because he did not complete the census in his district. These and other problems led to South Carolina being granted an extension, and the census returns were dated 5 February 1792, a full 18 months after the census day.

Differing Census Days:

In a couple of cases, there have been census days assigned to certain states that were different from the rest of the U.S. for that year. When Vermont entered the Union as the 14th state in 1791, the 1790 census was already underway. Vermont's 1790 census was taken with a census day of the first Monday in April 1791, with five months allowed to take the census there. Utah, which became a territory in September 1851, had its 1850 census taken with a census day of 1 April 1851. But the dates on the Utah census pages are mostly in October 1851. Thus, the 1851 census enumerators probably asked Utahans questions like, "Six months ago, back on April 1st, who was the head of this household?"

Census Day Versus Enumeration Date:

Genealogists should record two dates when copying information from the censuses: the census day and the enumeration date. No matter how many months it took for an enumerator to reach a house, he was supposed to gather the information as if time had stopped on the census day. Every person whose regular abode was in a particular household on the census day was to be enumerated, even if a person was away at the time of the enumeration.

Understanding the impact of the census day versus the enumeration date may explain why certain people appear in a census listing, even though you have other evidence to show the person died before the household was enumerated. If a person was alive on the census day, that person was to be included—even if it took some time for the enumerator to get around to that house to take the census. The person could have been dead for several months.

Or, you may wonder why that youngest child in a family was not listed in a census. If a child were born after the census day, that child was not to be included—even if the census taker had visited the house and was aware of a playful little toddler crawling around in front of him.

Now, some of you will want to go back to all of those census lists you have copied down and confirm the date of enumeration AND the census day. Any missing people? Any extra people?

Good census hunting!

Few people know as much about the U.S. census and its history as did Bill Dollarhide. You will assimilate a lot more of his wisdom in *The Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses, 1790-20*, which Bill co-authored with William Thorndale.

Visit the Library of Congress Genealogy Website

[Reprinted from Genealogical.com email ad]

The Library of Congress (LC) is the greatest repository of published works in the U.S., including genealogy and local history books and periodicals. Whether or not you are planning to visit the Library itself in the near future, it will pay you to visit its website.

To get on the LC website, go to the following link: <https://www.loc.gov>. At the LC home page, take some time to browse the site as a whole. For example, at the vast Digital Collections home page, *Digital Collections, Available Online, Local History & Folklife | Library of Congress*, you will find a gateway to rich primary source materials related to the history and culture of the U.S. Other popular sites that can be accessed from the LC home page include online exhibitions (are you interested in Bob Hope's vaudeville career?), world cultures, congressional legislation, and a discovery center.

After you tear yourself from the aforementioned diversions (thank goodness for the "back" button!), return to the LC home page. Type "genealogy" into the search box at the top of the page, which will take you to the following page: *Search results for Genealogy, Available Online | Library of Congress (loc.gov)*. Next, click on the first entry from the search results (Local History and Reference Services), which should bring you to the home page for the Local History and Genealogy Reading Room: <https://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy>.

While much of the Local History and Genealogy site is designed to prepare researchers to work in the Library, you can also do some of your investigating right on the site. For instance, you can search the Library catalogue for a book among its collection of 50,000 published genealogies and 100,000 local histories (<https://catalog.loc.gov/>). You will also find a page of links to genealogical collections at other libraries, as well as to a selected list of popular genealogy sites. Staff members of the Local History and Genealogy Division have prepared two dozen bibliographies or guides to a range of genealogy topics that you can access or print out for free: (https://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy/bib_guid/bibguide.html). Among other things, if you are about to finish writing a genealogy or

local history, you can learn what the procedures are for depositing a copy at the LC and for filing for copyright under “Acquiring Published Genealogies” (<https://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy>).

On the other hand, if you ARE contemplating a trip to Washington, here are some reasons to visit <https://www.loc.gov/rr/genealogy/> in advance. For example, you will learn which of the major genealogy databases are available to you at the computer workstations in the Local History and Genealogy Reading Room. The staff of the Local History and Genealogy Division conducts tours of the reading room and research seminars to orient new users to LC resources. You’ll want to book one or both of these opportunities in advance. Similarly, the site’s home page should give you a pretty good idea of what to bring, the Library’s circulation policy, and generally how to make the best use of your time at the LC. Finally, if you are accustomed to using a commercial genealogy database (e.g. www.ancestry.com), you can find out in advance which ones are available at the Local History and Genealogy Reading Room.

So, whether you’re planning to travel or want to find something online among the LC’s 29 million books and other printed materials, 2.7 million recordings, 12 million photographs, 4.8 million maps, and 57 million manuscripts, a visit to <https://www.loc.gov> promises to be rewarding.

Build Your Own “Library of Congress” Genealogy Collection

In the past two centuries, genealogists have published tens of thousands of family histories. In fact, since the middle of the 19th century, the Library of Congress (LC), as we noted above, has served as the repository for some 50,000 of them. As any genealogist should know, the place to start your research—after examining and evaluating the records in your own family’s possession—is by learning if someone else has done research on your family. Having access to a list of published family histories, therefore, can prove to be invaluable.

Recognizing the importance of such a list inspired author Marion Kaminkow to set herself the task of combing through the card catalogue of the LC for family histories. In 1972, Mrs. Kaminkow published *Genealogies in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography*. This two-volume work provides bibliographical details of all the family histories deposited at the Library from its establishment through 1972. In 1977 and again in 1986, Mrs. Kaminkow produced two *Supplements* to the base work, extending the coverage by another 14 years. Recognizing that not every genealogist had sent his/her family history to the LC, she canvassed the collections of 24 additional libraries around the U.S. (e.g. the famed Allen County Public Library in Ft. Wayne, Indiana). Her *Complement to Genealogies in the Library of Congress* identifies a staggering 20,000 genealogies not in the collection of our national library. In all, Mrs. Kaminkow produced a bibliography, in five volumes, of well over 50,000 genealogies prepared through 1986.

Imagine having at your fingertips the titles and full bibliographical details of the vast majority of genealogies ever published through 1986! In many cases, the book citations refer to collateral family names, spelling variations, and, sometimes, cross-references to other works—including foreign titles. Here is one example:

GRIM. History of the Grim family of Pennsylvania and its associated families including the following: Merkle, Greenawalt, Fertig, Zechman, Schaeffer, Smith, Felver Schreiner, Creher, Kircher and Moyer families. Published by Mabel Estella Grim Smith, Jennie Lucretia Grim Long, Harry Heber, Compiled and edited by William Gabriel Long (Huntington, W. Va., Printed by Huntington publishing company) 1934. v. 166 pp. illus (incl. ports., maps, facsim., coat of arms) 23 cm. 35-14616. CS71. G86 1934.

As you can see, *Genealogies in the Library of Congress: A Bibliography* is more than a booklist; rather, it contains clues that may disclose the next phase of your research. Moreover, since you know where copies of these genealogies are housed, you may even be able to acquire a facsimile copy (e.g., the LC will print copies of its public domain genealogies on demand for a stated fee).

*Madison County Genealogical Society
Executive Board Meeting
August 13, 2023 Minutes*

The meeting was called to order at 1:35 pm, by Robert Ridenour. The meeting was held in the presentation room at the Edwardsville Library. Those attending the meeting were: Robert Ridenour, Ferne Ridenour, Rose Mary Oglesby, Mary Westerhold, and Lynn Engelman.

Ferne Ridenour gave the treasurer's report for the months of June and July. Ferne stated that the *GCS Credit Union* is now called *Revity Credit Union*. The report was approved and filed for audit.

Rose Mary Oglesby read the minutes from the May 21st meeting. The minutes were approved after correcting the misspellings.

Robert Ridenour passed out a new updated members list for the Society.

Lynn Engelman wrote a letter/questionnaire and sent it to our members and asked the following questions about our meetings:

- What day and time should the meetings be held?
- What format should the meeting be (In Person or Virtual)?
- How often should the meetings be held?
- Do you have any suggestions for speakers and/or subjects?

From the responses that were received, the board discovered the following:

Most responders would like the meetings to be held quarterly on the third Sunday of the month at 1:30 pm; to be held in person and on Zoom or Facebook Live.

We received many suggestions for speakers and/or presentations that would pique the interest of the members.

Changes to our By Laws will need to be made to change meeting times and format, and how members can vote.

The conclusion of the Board's discussions was to have the meetings quarterly starting in October 2023. In 2024, the meetings will be held in January, April, July, and October, on the third Sunday, at 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm. We will be having in-person meetings that will be simultaneously broadcast on Facebook Live. During the meeting, members watching the meetings on Facebook Live will be able to leave comments or ask questions which will be answered later.

From our discussions, Mary Westerhold proposed that we make the following amendments to our By-Laws:

Beginning October 15, 2023, our meetings shall be held quarterly - January, April, July, October on the third Sunday of the month from 1:30 pm. - 3:30 pm. The meetings will be in person and broadcast on Facebook Live.

Another amendment would allow members to vote in person or by email.

The Executive Board discussed Mary Westerhold's proposal and decided that the proposal would be put in the October 2023 Newsletter for the members' vote. The members could respond by voting yes or no to the proposal and emailing or mailing their votes to the Board. If we do not receive a yes or no vote back from you, you will be counted as a yes vote for this proposal.

The Board would ask that you respond before January 2024 with your votes.

Mary Westerhold and Lynn Engelman will line up some speakers or presentations for the upcoming meeting dates per the suggestions and interests that were given.

Robert Ridenour will handle the Facebook Live during our scheduled meetings and announce the meeting dates and time.

The 2024 membership dues are coming due in November 2023, through January 1, 2024. The yearly dues are \$25.00.

Robert Ridenour checked on a new website location for the Society, since the current one will become static (no longer be able to be updated) on January 1, 2024. He checked on a website with Go-Daddy. The cost will be \$9.99 for the first year and \$22.99 for the second year. He will try to reserve the website *www.ilmadcogen* for the domain. After the move, people will be referred to the new website when accessing the old one.

Discussed the issue with the second key to the Post Office box. Lynn Engelman was going to check with the Post Office if there is a charge if the key is not returned.

We will check the By-Laws to see if the treasurer's books need to be audited every year

A motion was made by Ferne Ridenour and seconded by Lynn Engelman to adjourn the meeting. The motion was approved, and the meeting adjourned at 3:20 P. M.

The next Society meeting will be October 15, 2023, at 1:30 P.M. It will be held at the Edwardsville Public Library Edwardsville, Illinois in the **presentation room** of the library.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rose Mary Oglesby/Recording Secretary