

IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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NEWSLETTER

Volume 3 - Number 1

January - March 1998

MISSION STATEMENT

The Ionia County Genealogical Society is a non-profit volunteer group whose mission is to create awareness and preserve family histories within the Ionia County area. The focus of this group will be to develop genealogical resources and to assist all those seeking local history.

Our first year has come to a close. It has been a very successful year. We have had interesting speakers, learned more about genealogy; the Ionia County GenWeb page on the Internet saw a tremendous increase of information, thanks to Beth Wills and her volunteers. **Oops.** The last newsletter incorrectly stated that Patricia Bravender would speak on Berlin Twp. at our January meeting. Sorry Patricia - that's BOSTON Twp. .

We also inducted our Charter Members of the First Families of Ionia County. Seventeen individuals have been admitted as Charter Members. We are now accepting applications for First Families of Ionia County for 1998. You must be a member of the ICGS and your ancestor(s) must have resided in Ionia County prior to December 31, 1880. **Please send your applications in as soon as possible.**

1998 Membership dues are now due! Annual dues of \$15.00 mature on January 1, 1998. Please be sure to send in yours to continue receiving newsletters.

- **Family History Center Computer is Up and Running Again.** The computer at the Family History Center of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is up and running again. Personal Ancestral File has been updated to version 3.0 with new capabilities. The microfiche card catalog has been updated as well. Member and non-member staff have put in many hours of service to the public. Patrons are invited to return and newcomers are welcome to come and search for their ancestors. *From the Hastings Reminder, Tuesday, November 4, 1997.*
- Randy Riley of the State of Michigan Library announced that the Abram's Foundation will be funding a position as the genealogy specialist. This specialist will spend 100% of their time on the genealogy collection and helping people use the collection. The person who fills the job will be a librarian.
- **Lakeside Cemetery** is now on the Ionia Co. Michigan GenWeb site. **Many thanks to Beth Wills, Coordinator of the Ionia Co., MI GenWeb Project,** for placing all 5,145 individuals on the internet. The total number of individuals in the archives now numbers 21,000!

Shirley DeBoer, CG, is looking for someone who is willing to find out more information on Reuben Brown from Ionia County. Shirley has written an article which appeared in the Michiganian about Mr. Brown. Shirley states that she would like to write a sequel and will give credit to anyone who provides her with additional information on "Restless Reuben". The article is available at the depot for review if anyone is interested.

Just getting started?? The Library of Michigan has a free publication available to you at the library entitled BEGINNING YOUR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH. It contains everything you will need to get you started and also to be able to find your way around the library. This publication includes basic forms, such as, the soundex coding guide, the family group chart, and a pedigree chart. You may make copies as you need them. You may pick up one of these pamphlets at the circulation desk on the 2nd floor. You may also connect to the Library of Michigan ANSWER online catalog from your computer via the internet at the following address: <<http://www.libofmich.lib.mi.us>>

**Ionia County Genealogical Society Charter Members
June 30, 1997**

Janet Badder	Jackie Badersnider	Edna Baldwin
Loisann Ballema	Bill & JoAnn Beachnau	Deborah Benedict
Patricia Bogue	Les Bowerman	Cindy Bryant
Larry & Marilyn Cahoon	Lois Curtiss	Debra J. Eddy
Bruce & Rosie Fahrni	Lori Fox	Gerald & Delores Gardner
Elaine & Gordon Garlock	Marjorie Gibson	Thomas & Jacquelyn Gilliland
Droucella Halsey	Richard Heaven	Sandy Heintzelman
Lois Henry	Shirley Hodges	Bonnie Jackson
Bob & Salle Johnson	Cindy Kalczynski	Robert & Norma Kilpatrick
Theron & Roberta King	Lisa Klutman	Katherine Knall
Eric D. Lund	Sylvester Mabie	Evelyn Marron
Regina Mason (died August 27, 1997)	George Miller	Joan McConnon
Carol A. McKellar	Cheryl O'Connor	James R. Moses
Connie Munger	Jean J. Pixley	Jody Paulson
Kathryn Perry	Diana Rogers	Marilyn Rector
Karen Remington	Janice Sedore	Helen Salzman
LeAnn L. Schuck	Leora Slosser	Mary Shellenbarger
Fredric Slikkers	Duane Strinden	Lon & Jan Smith
Marilyn Steward	Diane Terito	Teresa J. Sweet
Pamela Swiler	John R. Waite	John Tromp
Cheryl VanWormer	Richard & Ellen Willemrin	Alicia Walker (died Sept. 11, 1997) & Irving
Julia Ward		Beth Wills
Ford Wright		

AA
LETTERS TO JAMES DODDS, AN 1850 RESIDENT OF AVON TWP., IONIA CO., MI
by Debra Stadel Eddy

The letter below is a continuation of an interesting series of letters written to James Dodds, an 1850 resident of Avon Twp., Ionia Co., MI. from the farflung members of his family. The transcribed letters are verbatim, poor spelling and all. Some words have been inserted in brackets for clarification.

April 5, 1835 [date on envelope]

Mr. James Dodds
York Crop Road
Sandusky County, Ohio

Pendleton, Montgomery Co., Mo., March 31, 1835

Dear and Esteemed Brother-

I suppose you have heard that I took a notion last fall and deserted bed and board in Ohio and started for the far west. I arrived in Mo. on the 11th day of September. We were 14 days on the way, the distance we supposed to be about 600 miles, nothing strange happened [to] us on the way, but as I passed through Illinois I was looking all the way for the fine country I have heard talk of, but alas I have never found it. We were told afterwards that we passed too far to the south, perhaps this was the case, for we found some as poor land as the barren mountains of Marietta. The soil of this state is about like Ohio. Timber is poor and scarce, and a large portion (perhaps half) is prairie, through some of which we have to travel from 12 to 20 miles without seeing more than one or two houses. Water is poor, their wells are almost all overshot. Very few springs. Water mills are scarce. They grind almost all on horse.

My health has been good except about one week last fall was the most distressing time I ever saw, with bilious fever and chills and fever. The winter has been healthy, and no wonder if cold weather preserves health, for on the 6th of February the thermometer stood a 22 1/2 degrees below zero.

I received a letter from Brother Isaac a few days ago from which I was sorry to learn that you had not done one days work from Nov. to June and that your family had all been sick. I can sympathise with you but I cannot relieve you, in any degree, without you will take my advice and if you will do this I will promise you happiness in the midst of affliction. If you want it, it is easy to obtain do as the publicans did. When he went up into the Temple to pray, or, as blind Bartemius did, when Jesus was haping by cry, God! be merciful! to me a sinner and keep on interceeding until you shall that faith will bring Jesus from the skyes, and place him in thy heart the hope of glory, with him comes, as St. Paul tells the Roman first--justification, second, peace, third, glorying in tribulation; fourth, Hope, immortal Hope! of which we are not ashamed because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

Isaac tells me that Margaret has written to you to come here and live on the farm. I would be willing and glad if you would do this. If you think it [would] better your situation, but of this I want you to be the judge. I cannot advise you very strong for fear you would not do as well as I think you would to go back, but I do think I would not stay where I expected to be comforted by chills and fever all of my life. I prise my health above gold or silver, and all of the rich lands of Sandusky could not buy it.

Give my best and warmest love to Sister Elizabeth. Tell her I have not forgotten her, and although the wide Mississippi runs between us, yet my good wishes for you both are not lessened.

Tell Hugh to be a good boy and if Uncle lives to see him he will take [him] a present. Give my best wishes to your father in law and family. Tell them I hope they are still on the way to Rest, and if I never meet them in life I shall look for them there. Write soon and let me know how you are doing. Direct your letters to Pendleton Post Office, Warren County, Mo.

Yours in love,

Hugh L. Dodds
To James Dodds

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DID YOU KNOW???? The ICGS welcomes the donations of genealogical materials; i.e. books, quarterlies, family histories, etc., as well as memorial contributions.

✓ The Family Registry File of Northeast Michigan is an 81 page soft bound publication containing over 1350 family groups submitted by 61 individuals. This publication is available at a cost of \$10.60 including tax. To order contact: Jeanette Nowakowski, 203 Long Rapids Road, Alpena, MI 49707-7936. Make checks payable to Northeast Michigan Genealogical Society and Historical Society (NEMG&HS). Allow 6 weeks for delivery.

✓ Genealogy T-shirts with cute sayings like "Mirror, Mirror on the Wall, I'm like my mother after all," can be purchased from Dee's Genealogy Service. Send for the free flyer showing shirts designs at P.O. Box 586, Horlowton, MT 49036-0586 or by calling (800) 577-3022. The shirts run about \$15.00 each and are in sizes M-XXL.

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OCCUPAYSHUN --- CENSUS TAKER

"I am a cencus taker for the City of Bufflow. Our city has groan very fast in resent years and now, in 1865, It has becum a hard and time consuming job to count all the peephill. There are not many that can do this werk, as it is nesesarie to have an ejucashun, wich a lot of pursons still do not have. Another atribeart needed for this job is good spelling, for meny of the pephill to be counted can hardle speak Inglish, let along spel there names!"



## FROM OUR MAILBOX

Looking for information on the family of Sabrina DAVIS who married Mark Gray in Sebewa Twp., Ionia Co. Sabrina was the daughter of Philip and Margaret (Mallory) Davis. There were six children: John, Sabrina, Daniel, Victor Emiline, and George. Anyone with information contact Bryce and Margaret Trowbridge at P.O. Box 314, Lecanto, FL 34460.

Researching Mary WOOD(S) LEAK b. 15 Sep 1795, d. 24 May 1884, the widow of Christopher LEAK came to US from Donington, Lincolnshire, England with her adult children abt. 1850-1870 to reside in Sebewa Twp. Their children were: 1) John LEAK b. 20 Nov. 1825; 2) Elijah LEAK b. 17 Sep 1829; 3) David LEAK b. 17 Jun 1831; 4) Thomas LEAK (my gggrandfather) b. 17 Apr 1833, d. 15 Dec 1914; 5) James LEAK b. 1836; 6) Rebecca LEAK; 7) Isaac LEAK; 8) Mary LEAK. Thomas LEAK m. 1) Elizabeth MAKIN in IN and settled in Sebewa Twp.; 2) Nancy Katherine BOWLES; 3) Sally BROWN. Thomas and Elizabeth's children were: 1) Christopher LEAK m. Ida Mae GRAY, daughter of Mark and Sabrina DAVIS GRAY and 2) Margaret LEAK m. Fred Yager; 3) William H. LEAK. Children of Christopher and Ida LEAK were Leon LEAK b. 3 Jul 1905, d. 20 May 1973 m. 11 Oct 1926 (Alta) Leona CURTIS b. 19 Mar 1908, d. 9 Oct 1934, daughter of Ira W. and Verina LIPSCOMB CURTIS. Leon and Leona's children were: 1) Mary Jane LEAK m. William WHITE b. 1932 and 2) Donald Leon LEAK b. 26 Mar 1934 m. 1) Ardell Marie MEYERS b. 12 June 1934, daughter of Harold A. Mattie BAILIFF MEYERS. Their children are Teresa J. LEAK b. 12 Sep 1954 m. Kenneth R. SWEET, Jr. 25 Jun 1988. Donald m. 2) Shirley Mae JUSTMAN-BIANG. Their children were Dannelle Ann LEAK b. 5 Oct 1966. Looking for any information of all surnames listed. Contact: Teresa (Leak) Sweet by e-mail at sweets @pathway.net or the ICGS. Researching BAILIFF, CURTIS, GRAY, LEAK, MEYERS, SWEET.

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## Calendar of Events

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- January 1, 1998 - MEMBERSHIP DUES ARE DUE!
  - January 10, 1998 - Reg. meeting 1:00 p.m. at the Depot - "**Boston Twp. - History & Resources**" - Patricia Bravender
  - January 22, 1998 - Board of Directors meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Depot
  - January 31, 1998 - Lake Odessa Depot Museum open to the public for researchers 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
  - February 14, 1998 - Happy Valentine's Day! Reg. Meeting 1:00 p.m. at the Depot - "**Sebewa Twp. History**" - Grayden Slowins
  - February 26, 1998 - Board of Directors meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Depot
  - February 28, 1998 - Lake Odessa Depot Museum open to the public for researchers 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
  - March 14, 1998 - Reg. meeting 1:00 p.m. at the Depot - **Newspapers - What Good Are They?** - Bill Atkinson
  - March 26, 1998 - Board of Directors meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Depot
  - March 28, 1998 - Lake Odessa Depot Museum open to the public for researchers 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
  - April 11, 1998 - Reg. meeting at 1:00 p.m. at the Depot - ~~Speaker to be announced~~
  - April 23, 1998 - Board of Directors meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Depot.
  - April 25, 1998 - Lake Odessa Depot Museum open to the public for researchers 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
  - May 9, 1998 - Reg. meeting 1:00 p.m. at the Depot - **Allen County Public Library** - Carol Callard.
  - May 28, 1998 - Board of Directors meeting 7:00 p.m. at the Depot.
  - May 30, 1998 - Lake Odessa Depot Museum open to the public for researchers 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
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- The Descendants of George Howorth by Brenda K. Goerge. Many of the people in this book lived in Montcalm and Ionia Counties. A little background. George and Mariah Howorth came to America in 1838 with 10 children and settled in New York. George died in 1849 leaving Mariah to raise his 12 children; they had 15 in all, but 3 died young. Mariah and her family moved to Ionia County in 1856 where they lived until purchasing a farm in Section 38, Bushnell Twp., Montcalm Co. Many of her children married in Ionia Co. including my gggrandfather, John Howorth, who had a farm in Ionia Co. John's son, Vernon married Alice Hull, daughter of Henry Franklin Hull and Sophronia Comstock. Vernon had 3 children, one being my grandfather John Jerome Howorth. John married Beatrice Stoddard, daughter of Charles Stoddard and Nellie Belkap. Charles had a farm on M-66 north of Ionia. My grandfather, John Howorth, took over the farm when Charles died. My mother and her siblings were born on this farm. The farm was originally owned by Adriel Pierce,



Barbara Trierweiler, Ionia County Clerk, was our guest speaker for September. She assured us that her office wants to serve the genealogical public well. She stated that we can help by coming to the office prepared. In other words, knowing what we want; having the information organized; and if possible check library resources for indexes before coming. The books are very heavy and we do not want to ask the clerks to keep getting Book "A" back out because we got another record we wanted to check. Other ways in which we can expedite service is to visit on Tuesdays through Thursdays, as Circuit Court has a heavier schedule on Monday and Fridays; to remember that this is a working office and therefore is not a good environment for children; and to work quietly using library manners.

The office will provide forms which can be filled out free of charge (excluding birth records), or they will provide a genealogy copy for \$1.00. A certified copy of the same record will cost \$10.00 and each addition copy is \$3.00. Death records are available from 1867; marriage records from 1837. Divorce records are rarely asked for, but are available from 1858 to the present. Birth records are from 1867, but access is limited to the public. The Public Act 54 of 1997 which became effective July 1, 1997 states that the county clerk may issue the appropriate record "if the live birth record is 110 or more years old, a certified copy of the live birth record to any applicant."

Thank you Ms. Trierweiler for your input and helpfulness.

Our speaker for October was **Richard H. Harms, Ph.D. of the Grand Rapids Public Library.** He spoke on the *Preservation of Documents.*

One of the biggest threats to our documents is light, both from the sun and from today's fluorescent light fixtures. This ultraviolet light breaks down the document and destroys it. Temperature and humidity play an important part in preserving items. Attics and basements are the worst places to keep precious documents because of the variations in heat and humidity. "Keep them where you live because the temperature is constant". Mold damage is permanent and can not be reversed. To avoid this, air your items out at least twice a year and store them in acid free enclosures. Keep handling to a minimum (use cotton gloves to keep from transferring skin oils), store items flat to avoid curling; and keep them pest free from things such as mice and silverfish. Newsprint should be kept in the dark as it deteriorates very rapidly.

Do not display original items. Make a copy and display the copy, keeping your photos and documents safe from theft or damage. We cannot control time which affects all things. To be archival "it has to be unchanged for 50 years and must be reversible". Dr. Harms stated that there is no such thing as acid FREE. There is only acid neutral with a pH level of 8.5.

Our speaker then went on to explain the different types of photography which took place in the 1800's. Daguerreotype were one of a kind copper plate negative image placed behind glass, often found in a leather case. These were generally dated pre-1865. These are direct-image, so everything was reversed. Tintypes were the cheapest form of photography. They were direct positive images copied onto a metal carrier, often tin, and were first seen in the 1870's and 1880's. These photos are often mistaken to be of value, but there is no monetary value to them. He also stated that "If you have a tin type that is rusting, there are professional labs that can stop the rust process, do not try to clean them yourself". Carte de visite and cabinet card photos were the first kind of photo that could be duplicated. They were often used as business cards. They were positive images from negatives mounted onto a pressed board carrier. They were available late 1870-1900's. The larger size and the singlewide border can identify the 1870's and they had a yellowish tint to them. The 1880's photos were white. Most 1870 photos had rounded corners, with room at the bottom for advertising or writing. They also were mainly head and shoulder shots.

This was a very important and interesting topic and we thank Dr. Harms for his presentation and for the question and answer period that followed.



# BENEFIT OF THE QUARTER

## Videotapes & Syllabus FGS/OGS Genealogical Teleconferences

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\* Title 17, US Code, Section 501 and 506. This videotape is intended only for private use; no public performance rights are granted. Orders will be honored until 31 May 1998 or until we run out of our supply.

Ionia Co. Genealogical Society  
Name of FGS Member Society

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\*\*\*\*\*

Those interested in becoming a member or renewing membership of the I.C.G.S. complete the form below and send \$15.00 annual membership fee made payable to the *Ionia County Genealogical Society* and mail to: ICGS, c/o Pam Swiler at 13051 Ainsworth Road, Route 3, Lake Odessa, MI 48849.

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**Membership Information:**

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Home telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

List five names you are researching: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: Please indicate if you do **NOT** want your information published in our newsletters or on our web-site here: \_\_\_\_\_

**IONIA COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

c/o Pamela K. Swiler  
13051 Ainsworth Road  
Route 3  
Lake Odessa, MI 48849

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**

TO:

**IT'S TIME TO RENEW  
YOUR MEMBERSHIP!**