

Bond County Genealogical Society News

Volume 41, Issue 1

Winter January 2026

Official Newsletter of the Bond County Genealogical Society of Greenville, Illinois,
published jointly since 2014 with the Bond County Historical Society

DAR Brings Historic Holiday Spirit to Bond Co Museum



A special, warm thank you to the ladies (and some other relatives!) of Daughters of the American Revolution Benjamin Mills Chapter. These dedicated volunteers decorate Bond County Museum for the holidays each and every year, filling it with history and heart. This year's decorations include a festive Christmas tree adorned with Revolutionary-era –inspired ornaments—delicately crafted figures in period dress, silhouette-style portraits, and

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Special points of interest:

- Archion and Matricula Online Essential Websites for Exploring German Parish Records.
- Happy 200th, Greenville First Presbyterian Church.
- Amy Johnson Crow Reflects on 2025 in Genealogy.
- Creating an Ancestor Sketch; Steps to a Book!
- Watson Family Home Movies Digitized!
- Insights from Two Years of Email Inquiries.
- Search for a Great Grandfather leads to a Great Uncle's Name Change Mystery.
- Do You Have It All with Full-Text Searching?
- *Finding Roxie Belle*: Biography of Greenville Woman published by Fern Oaks Press.

Bond County Genealogical Society

Officers

President - Cindy Tischhauser
Vice President - Kevin J. Kaegy
Treasurer - John S. Coleman
Recording Secretary - Jane Hopkins
Corresponding Secretary - Cindy Tischhauser
Historian - Kevin J. Kaegy
Editor - open
Director(s) - Mike Evans

Appointees

Library - Jane Hopkins
Program - Kevin J. Kaegy
Membership - Jane Hopkins
Publicity - open
Hospitality - Cindy Tischhauser
Cemetery - open
Research - Cindy Tischhauser & Rebecca Clausen
Newsletter Editor - Rebecca Clausen
Webmaster - Rebecca Clausen

Bond County Genealogical Society membership dues are \$10 per 2-person household for the current year. A lifetime membership for a 2-person household may be purchased for a one-time payment of \$175. Members are eligible to vote and to serve as BCGS officers and appointees.

If you would like to become a member please send your name, address, phone number, email address, and the surnames you are most interested in researching with appropriate check or money order to:

Bond County Genealogical Society,
P.O. Box 172, Greenville, IL
62246-0172

Membership forms also are available on our website. www.bondcogen.org

*"Let us, before
we die, gather
up our heritage,
and offer it to
our children."*

*— Will Durant,
The Story of
Civilization*

Bond County Historical Society

2025-2026 Officers

President - Cary Holman
Vice President - Blake Knox
Treasurer - John S. Coleman
Secretary - Jane Hopkins
Historian - Kevin J. Kaegy (non-voting)

Directors

Burgess Twp - Michelle Haller
Central Twp - Kevin J. Kaegy
Tamalco Twp - Cindy Tischhauser
Mills Twp - Gary Tischhauser
Pleasant Mound Twp - James Schutte
Old Ripley Twp - Kathy Brewer
Shoal Creek Twp - Tom Varner
LaGrange Twp - Eric Reelitz
Mulberry Grove Twp - Kim Myers

Bond County Historical Society membership dues are \$15 per family for the current year. Members are eligible to vote and to serve as BCHS officers, directors & appointees.

If you would like to become a member please send your name, address, phone number, email address, and a check or money order for \$15 to:

Bond County Historical Society,
P.O. Box 376, Greenville, IL 62246

Membership forms and a **secure online payment option** are also available on our website.

www.bondcountyhistorical.org



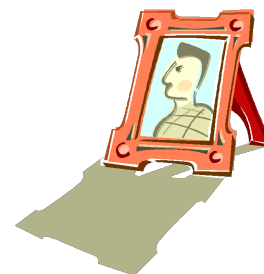


Monthly Society Meetings

It was decided in 2013 that the two societies would meet jointly for Program Meetings and this practice continues. Meetings are generally the fourth Tuesday of each month at 7:00 pm. Please check Bond County Museum's Facebook Page, the *Greenville Advocate* newspaper, www.bondcogen.org or WGEL Radio (101.7 FM) for times and locations. Announcements will be made ahead of time whenever there is to be a business meeting for one or both of the two societies. Also, there will be no December meeting.

The Bond County Historical Society specializes in questions about the history of the county and communities. If you have questions about family history, burial sites, census records, birth records, or death records from Bond County, please contact the Bond County Genealogical Society instead.

All genealogy requests submitted via email to info@bondcogen.org will be researched and answered in order received as time permits. There is no flat fee for requests as we attempt to reply with electronic documents, but if your request requires printing, postage, or original document access and retrieval you may be responsible for those charges.



Invite a friend to an interesting and educational program meeting or special event!

2026 Special Events Calendar

Feb. 3 Soup & Chili Supper Program, Speaker: Kevin Kaegy on "Lincoln's Rebel In-Laws" @ St. Lawrence Church hall.

TBD Lunch Cookout fundraiser by Wes Pourchot & Friends.

Jun. 13 America 250 Garden Party @ Bond County Museum.

Jul. Cemetery Walk @ TBD.

Aug. Potluck & Rural Church Program @ TBD.

Oct. Annual Dinner Meeting, Elections, Speaker: TBD.

Share your ancestor's tale in the Bond County Genealogical Society News!

Uncharted Territory: What's Your Story?

"Uncharted Territory" are the stories found deep in your family tree. What's Your Story? Was your ancestor a Bond County native or did he pass through, stay briefly and then move on? Where did she live? What kind of work did he do? What clues did your ancestors leave to mark their path in, around or across this county?

Have you considered sharing your ancestor's tale in the B.C.G.S. News? If you have a story you'd like to share, please contact the editor. Please find submission details and guidelines on Page 27.





Bond County Museum is located at 409 S. Fourth Street in Greenville, Illinois.

*January-December:
Open Saturday
10 a.m. to noon*

*June, July, August:
Open Saturday 10 a.m. to
noon and
Sunday 1 to 3 p.m.*

*Tours also available by
special appointment or
during announced events.
Call 618-690-0469.*

Bond County Museum News

*Support the
New Museum!
Donations are being
MATCHED!*



Financial Gifts Still Sought to Support Bond County Museum

Bond County Historical Society needs your help to raise funds to complete Phase 2 necessary renovations and ADA improvements to the historic U.S. DeMoulin Mansion. Bond County Museum opened to the public with regular weekend hours in May 2021. Please consider a donation to help us reach our goal! As BCHS is recognized as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, your contribution may be tax deductible. Donations of any size are encouraged; all contributions above \$50 will have their name on a special donor's plaque inside the museum unless marked anonymous. Download the donation form at www.bondcountyhistorical.org, the society's Facebook Page, or mail check to: Bond County Historical Society, attn. ADA Renovations, PO Box 376, Greenville, IL 62246.

Genealogical Society Library Shelf

The Genealogical Society Library collection is housed on the lower floor of the Greenville Public Library. There is a booklet in the room which lists all the holdings and a microfilm reader/printer for doing research in the *Greenville Advocate*, *Sun*, and other Bond County newspapers. The building has wireless internet access so you can do supplementary research while you are there. The room is kept locked, so the key must be requested at the Circulation Desk. The Greenville Public Library's hours are posted on their website: www.greenvillepubliclibrary.org ~ 414 W. Main Ave. Greenville, Illinois (IL) ~ Phone 618-664-3115 ~ Fax 618-664-9442

If you experience technical difficulties with our microfilm reader, please contact Jane Hopkins (jhopkins4616@sbcglobal.net 618-664-4616) or Kevin Kaegy (kevink@markuscabinet.com 618-971-9140).



Agricultural History Display at Bond County Fair

Once again Cindy **Tischhauser** and Tamie **Heichelbeck** curated an Agricultural History Display at the Bond County Fair. The display was open each day of the fair, Tuesday, July 28 through Tuesday, August 5, except Sunday. Bond County Historical Society and local media encouraged fair guests to explore multi-generations of farmers and farm technology of years gone by.

The Ag History Display began in 2017 as part of Bond County's bicentennial celebration. It was created to showcase and preserve the county's deep farming roots and remains a popular attraction. Special exhibits in 2025 included the Greenville Livestock Auction Co., Blacksmithing and Horseshoeing.

Tischhauser and Heichelbeck enjoy visiting with guests and hearing their stories of local farming heritage. They continue to seek out new memorabilia and photos to add to the collection. If you have an item to loan—or know of a barn not yet featured—you can contact them through BCHS or TNT RV & Generator Services.



Fourth of July, The Maine, and a Patriotic County

"Remember the Maine." This slogan refers to the U.S.S. Maine, a battleship that played a significant role in American history. In January 1898, the U.S.S. Maine departed from Florida for Cuba to protect American interests during the Cuban War of Independence. At 9:40 PM on February 15, an explosion occurred aboard the battleship while it was in Havana Harbor, causing it to sink to the bottom. Of the 355 crew members, 266 lost their lives in the incident—260 died immediately, while six succumbed to their injuries later. The official cause of the explosion remains unknown, and public opinion about it varied widely at the time. However, it did lead to the United States declaring war on Spain.

Although we still do not know what caused the explosion on the U.S.S. Maine, we must remember the 266 individuals who died while serving their country.

RIGHT: Two thick paper fans with patriotic images; the reverse of each advertises "F. P. Joy & Co., Dealers in General Merchandise in Greenville, Illinois. Advocate Print" Handwritten on the wooden handles is "July 4, 1898 as a souvenir." The illustrated portrait of a mustachioed Navy officer with eyeglasses is labeled: Capt. of the Maine, With the battle cry: "Remember the Maine." *From the archives of Bond County Museum.*



Tales from Annual Cemetery Walk at Mt. Gilead

Bond County Genealogical Society thanks everyone who came out to the Mt. Gilead Cemetery Walk on Tuesday, July 29, 2025! It was another big crowd! We heard some moving and outlandish tales about six people who, in their time, set out from the Old World or migrated from the eastern US to raise timber and masonry homes with their own hands.

We learned of men who fought for their newly formed country in 1812. We heard about a man integral in founding the denomination and establishing a deep Cumberland Presbyterian foundation in Bond County, and families who kept the tiny Methodist church across the road vibrant as long as they could. We marveled at women who supported their family with their cottage crafts, and a man who fought The Man and City Council. And we recognized that most raised up large close knit families whose descendants still return to this small white country church for hymn sings, messages of Good News, and service to their Savior. They're still making our community and even the world just a bit better place.

After the program, many attendees also took time to visit the specially marked graves of the featured burials... thank you!! Donations to Mt. Gilead Cemetery Association are still welcome (PO Box 494, Greenville, IL 62246).

BCGS hopes to hold similar walks here and at other cemeteries around Bond County in the future, choosing additional persons and stories to feature. Do you have a suggestion? Would you like to present for 5-10 minutes on that person? Let us know!

📺 Enjoy an encore presentation of the Mt. Gilead Cemetery Walk on Bond County Museum's YouTube Channel. Thank you again to all who attended in person, helped plan the evening, those who spoke, and Archival Productions for filming/editing this piece. <https://youtu.be/T33uUa3qe-M?si=VJicG-jKhAZWEGP3>



Can you believe this delicious spread Bond County Museum put out when they hosted "Business After Hours" on Thursday, October 2, 2025? Each month, Greenville Chamber of Commerce holds a networking happy hour, and this one was spent learning about our community's local history. New seasonal exhibits at BCM included Masonic items and Carson **Donnell** paintings. Business leaders have a long history of freemasonry membership; Donnell sold his smaller paintings through Walt **Finley's** Hillsboro drug store. BCM gave away door prizes of illustrated books and limited edition tee shirts. Thank you to Lori **Williams** for catering and to Mia Emken of the **Chamber**.

Can't Miss Us Anymore!

A new sign has been erected marking the location and parking for the Bond County One-Room Schoolhouse. Find this time capsule of rural education prior to the late 1950s in Greenville at the corner of Beaumont Avenue and Wyatt Street. Thank you to Johnson Signs & Designs!



**Bond County's
One-Room School Museum**
601 E. Beaumont Ave.
Greenville, IL.



*Retired teachers provide tours
and in-costume presentations
only by appointment and
during special events.*

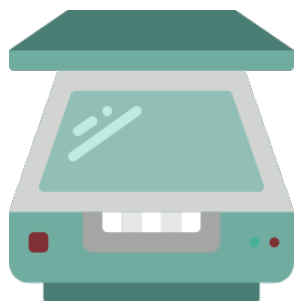
Groups welcome. Admission is free.

Donations encouraged.

*Please contact Bond County
Historical Society with details to
arrange special openings.*

618-690-0469

Back Issues of Quarterlies/Newsletters Available



The entire back catalog of Bond County Genealogical Society News Quarterlies, published 1982-2011 & B.C.G.S. e-Newsletters published 2014-2025 are currently available at no charge and with no password to members and the general public. Access the issues at <https://www.bondcogen.org/newsletter.html>. Volumes of the printed quarterly through 2010 are also available to research in bound book form in the BCGS Library located on the lower level of the Greenville Public Library.



Free Rev War Pension Applications for Southern Colonies

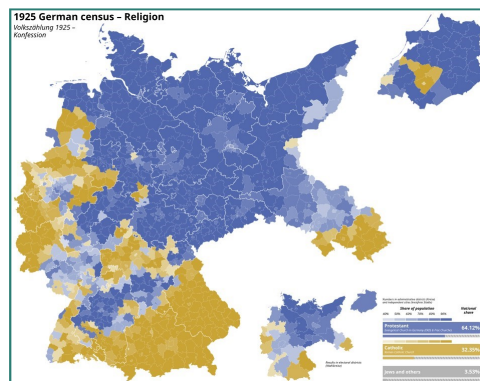
The website revwarapps.org is an amazing free resource for people working on Patriot ancestors in the Southern colonies. Over 30,000 pension applications have been uploaded. Hats off to Will Graves and Leon Harris for their years of work on this treasure trove of info.

Online Genealogical Resources

Archion.de for German Protestant and some Jewish and Mennonite Records

If you have German Protestant ancestors (Lutheran, Reformed, or Evangelical), there's a website you've probably heard of but maybe haven't tackled yet: ARCHION.de. It's Germany's largest portal for digitized Protestant church records—baptisms, marriages, burials, and confirmations—stretching back to the 1500s. Millions of pages, more than 175,000 church books from over 25 different archives in Germany, all viewable from your home computer. It's a subscription site, but very reasonably priced. However, before purchasing a subscription, you must ensure the church records you need are on the website. Fortunately, catalog searches on Archion are free.

The problem? It's a German website with a German interface. Even with the English toggle, it's easy to get lost, but if you're looking for digitized Protestant church records in Germany, it's a gold mine! Several great guides have been written and webinars have been produced by highly regarded German-English/American genealogy professionals. Check out germangenealogycollective.com and germanologyunlocked.com.



“Religion in Germany by administrative district (Kreis) according to the 1925 census, indicating the strength of each denomination.” By [ErintheCute](#) under [CC-BY-SA-4.0](#) license. Blue is Protestant, Yellow is Catholic, Darker shades indicate a higher share of population.

Matricula Online for German Catholic Parish and some Greek Orthodox Records

The website Matricula Online (<https://data.matricula-online.eu/en/>) is a free portal for online images of European church records. It is interdenominational and reaches across geographic borders. Currently, the site provides access to records from several German Catholic dioceses, many parts of Austria and Luxembourg, and a few records from Poland, Serbia, and Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Using Matricula Online is free and does not require creating an account. To search for specific parishes, click on the magnifying glass on the main page; this will bring you to Matricula Online's catalog.

Type in the name of the parish your ancestors attended, and click Search. Each parish's listing on Matricula Online contains historical information about the parish—

(Continued on page 9)

Online Genealogical Resources, continued...

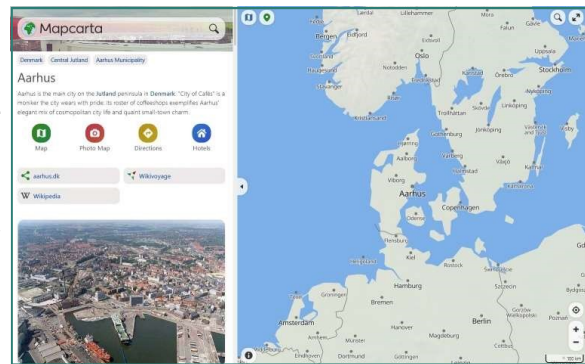
(Continued from page 8)

written in German—before listing the historical records. These records are organized by type, baptisms, marriages, and deaths/funerals (Taufen, Heiraten, and Sterbefälle) and then by year. To access the digitized images, click on the camera icon. Unfortunately, Matricula Online does not have a download icon. You must use either the print screen key on your keyboard or the snipping tool (exclusive to Windows computers) to capture images. Images are available under a CC BY-NC-ND 2.0 license.

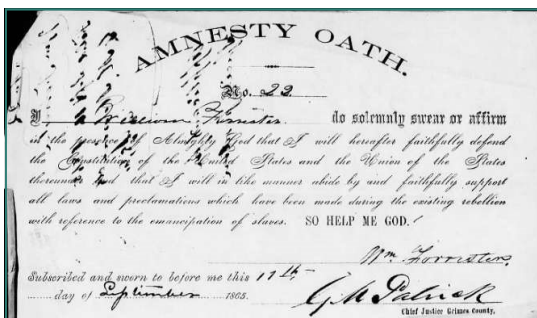
Gina Palmer has compiled a quick-guide introduction to both Archion and Matricula. Access it here: https://www.kolpingcincinnati.com/Genealogy/European%20Sources/3-Finding-German-Church-Records-Online-at-Archion-and-Matricula_GFO2022_Gina%20Palmer.pdf

A Favorite Free Map Tool for Genealogy

Not all mapping programs are created equal. One free tool that has proven tremendously helpful in genealogy research is Mapcarta.com. While it's a free site, it offers far more detailed information than Google Maps—especially for European locations. Mapcarta is particularly valuable for Scandinavian research because it labels individual farms, a feature that has helped solve numerous challenging client cases. In one instance, a researcher noted, the site even shows the name of a bus stop that matches a long-forgotten village in Germany—a name that doesn't appear on any other known online map. The site is also extremely useful for identifying churches, making it easier to determine which parish was closest to a family's farm and, therefore, where records are most likely to be found. Explore this powerful and underrated resource—it may uncover details you won't find anywhere else.



Confederate Amnesty Papers collection



If you have Confederate ancestors, you might want to check out the Confederate Amnesty Papers collection at Fold3. Following the Civil War, most Confederates received amnesty with some exceptions. Rules were covered in the May 29, 1865 *Proclamation Pardoning Persons who Participated in the Rebellion*. Those not covered were required to apply for amnesty, and their letters and petitions are included in this collection.

Most case files are 3-6 handwritten pages, some are longer. This will be a godsend to folks who struggle with southern ancestors!

Search Now: <https://f3.social/6y3p>



Voices of Service: WWII WAC Story Shared at Annual Dinner

We enjoyed gathering with our members and friends Tuesday, October 28, 2025 for Bond County Historical Society's annual dinner featuring guest speaker Cyndee **Shaffer**! Part of Illinois Humanities' Road Speakers Bureau, Cyndee presented on her mother Mollie **Weinstein**'s fantastic honorable two years of service in the Women's Army Corps. Cygan Delaney Catering provided the meal and BCHS also elected officers for 2026.

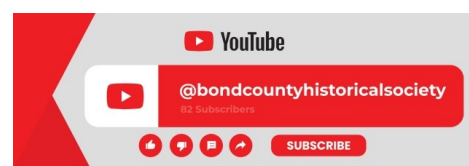
"This is my mother's story and the story of women in the military in World War II," Cyndee Shaffer stated in her introduction. "These women helped informing the military policies that understood Women's Army Corps as female soldiers who could meet the challenges of serving overseas. It is the tale of an ordinary woman in extraordinary times who became part of the greatest generation and part of the extraordinary wartime effort. It shows a woman who answered the call to serve her country and how her generation changed the course of the country and the military for future generations."

Enjoy an encore presentation of that program, based on the real-life adventure of an Army WAC in WWII in Europe, available on Bond County Historical Society's website and YouTube Channel. Many thanks to Cyndee Schaffer, whose mother's letters and personal memories provided ample material for her book and ever-evolving multimedia lecture. Then let us know, what was the most fantastic piece of new info you learned about the WACs in World War II?

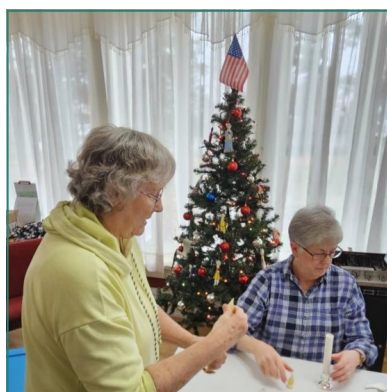
www.bondcountyhistorical.org/videolegacies.html



Illinois Humanities' Road Speaker Cyndee Weinstein Shaffer shared the powerful story of her mother's WAC service in a moving multimedia presentation.



DAR Decorates BCM, continued...



classic red, white and blue glass bulbs that echo the spirit of early America. And this year, their holiday tribute is ringing in the 250th birthday of America itself! Thank you to Jan, Janet, Cindy, Karen, Eric, Alex, Kay, Mary Beth, Marsha, and Diane!



Photos and story by Michelle Haller.

Happy 200, Greenville First Presbyterian!

Thank you to Greenville First Presbyterian Church for including Bond County Historical Society in your 200th Birthday Celebration on September 14, 2025! Following the Sunday morning worship service, the church hosted a luncheon. They'd scattered photos, scrapbook articles, and keepsakes about the dining area; they distributed a timeline handout detailing the congregation and church buildings.

Back in the sanctuary, Susan **Bryant** and other members spoke about their earliest and fondest memories before Kevin **Kaegy** presented a historical talk. Kaegy, who'd attended the church in his youth, explained how Cumberland Presbyterians came to Illinois and planted churches around Bond County, including the Bethel Presbyterian Church near present day Reno whose members were a part of the Underground Railroad movement! Here's to the First Presbyterian Church's next 200 years!



Commemorative Plate of the church that stood on Main Street.

Our Congregation and Its Houses of Worship

*This paper was presented by Mrs. Violet W. **File**, August 18, 1968, at the service of Ground Breaking for the now church and educational building for First Presbyterian Church, on six acres on Idler Lane at the east edge of Greenville, Illinois.*

One of the first religious organizations in Illinois was Presbyterian. When this state was a territory, itinerant preachers were organizing congregations in groves or dwelling houses and finally in log churches.

The original church of the Presbyterians in Bond County was organized by Rev. Salmon **Giddings** on March 10, 1819, with 33 members. It was known as Shoal Creek Presbyterian Church and was located about 4 miles northwest of Greenville. Rev. Giddings was stated supply and only preached now and then. Whether they had a minister or not, large congregations met to worship.

In November 1827 the American Home Missionary Society sent out a Rev. Solomon **Hardy**, a



young man who established churches and preached. Two years before, on September 15, 1825, this Presbyterian Church was organized with 29 members, of which 16 had the name of **White**. They continued to meet in dwellings and had no church building for seven years,--until 1832. The church belonged to the Kaskaskia Presbytery and on April 7, 1832, at the April meeting, a petition was made to the presbytery which asked that the Shoal Creek Church be dissolved and one church be named, that is, the Greenville Presbyterian Church.

They now had 65 members. Heretofore they had no building so a log church was built near where Hazel Dell Cemetery is located. The log church was in use for 10 years, until 1842, when another church was built. The new

(Continued on page 12)

First Pres, continued...

(Continued from page 11)

church was erected in Greenville, [on the southwest corner of the intersection of Main and Third Street] on the lot where the Post Office now stands, in the same block where the Piggly Wiggly store was located. The church building was dedicated April 24, 1842. The work was done by members, most of it by George **Donnell** and Samuel G. **White**, their sons and neighbors. All timbers were sawed by hand.

This church was used until 1872, for 30 years, and included the Hopewell Church, which joined them in 1848. It was then remodeled and used until 1895 when extensive repairs were made, only to be burned to the ground on Saturday evening, October 23, 1897.

When the committee was appointed to secure a place to hold worship, the officers of the Congregational church asked the Presbyterians to worship with them, with the result that on March 31, 1898 the two churches united as the Presbyterian Church of Greenville. They now had 64 new members.

As each united congregation owned a city lot, the lots were sold and a new lot – 124 East Main Street – was purchased from W. A. **McLain**, on which to erect the fourth building for the congregation. On June 19, 1904, the building now in use was dedicated to the service of God, as all others were. For 64 years, without too much visible change, the church has been in use working for peace and unity and all to the glory of God.

This generation has a privilege that every generation cannot have. A privilege to build a church, which may cause many sacrifices, but still a privilege!

From "History of Rural Bond County Churches" by Kevin Kaegy, 1980

The Bethel Presbyterian Church came into existence September 15, 1825, when the Shoal Creek Church was divided into Shoal Creek (located near Union Grove / Hazel Dell) and Bethel (located north of Reno). The first building is marked by a stone in the middle of the Bethel Cemetery. The present church is the fourth to serve the congregation and was built in 1899. It is probably the most ornate rural church in the county, showing some Victorian era Gothic design. Since 1946, Bethel has belonged to the Parish of the Open Door – a group of small Presbyterian churches. In 1980, the average attendance was about 16, compared to 124 in 1910 – an all-time high. Its future is questionable. *[Editor's Note: Two other Parish of the Open Door churches have disbanded in the 2020s: Witt and Donnellson.]*



August 1968 Ground Breaking for First Presbyterian Church and educational building on Idler Lane.



Simple Room Tours BCM and One-Room School

Bond County Museum had a wonderful group visit on Wednesday, November 19, 2025 from The Simple Room, and they had the best questions! The Simple Room is a local non-profit youth development center. Bond County Historical Society President Cary **Holman** and Director Michelle **Haller** led the group on a tour throughout the house enlightening them with tales of Bond County people and places, past and present.

The Simple Room is on a mission to visit local museums and also visited BCHS's One Room School-house Museum Wednesday, December 18, 2025. Mary M. **Young** led the tour educating these visitors about the rural one room schools in Bond County as well as how education has changed over the years. She shared stories from her time as a child in a one room school and as an educator.

If you've never been on one of Mary's tours, or in her class, you are surely missing out! You need to come and see for yourself. It's by appointment only and a tour can be scheduled most anytime! Give BCHS a call at: 618-690-0469. Tours are free - though donations are always accepted and appreciated! Don't forget to pair your visit with the Bond County Museum, the DeMoulin Museum, American Farm Heritage Museum, and even the Richard W. Bock Sculpture Museum on Greenville University's campus. You won't be disappointed!



Photos and stories by Michelle Haller.

Social Content, Hashtags Encourage Conversation

As part of an initiative started by Bond County Historical Society's reconvened Brochure & Outreach Committee, our Facebook Page Admins have been publishing themed posts with hashtags on social media. On #MuseumMonday, we feature an #ArtifactOfTheWeek. We might choose a book, an invention, a souvenir, a tool, a work of art, a piece of furniture, a toy, or any other artifact in our society's current collection. Then on #WayBackWednesday look for a photograph or image to trigger your nostalgia or present a mystery to solve. So what are you waiting for? "Follow" Bond County Museum on Facebook! Leave a kind comment or share!

Genealogy 2025 Year in Review

Expert genealogy educator Amy **Johnson Crow** reflects on the past year in genealogy. Watch Amy's full livestream from December 30, 2025 here, <https://www.youtube.com/live/qUKeZdmLtBM>

Amy is encouraged by those matters printed in **GREEN**, but not as impressed by those in *PURPLE italics*.

23andMe

- ◆ March: Bankruptcy
- ◆ June: Judge allowed CEO's non-profit to buy it.
- ◆ Late 2025: Various board and officer appointments; updates to 250+ "High Resolution African Ancestry Groups"
- ◆ Our DNA samples and data appear safe for now, and the company is moving forward with services.

Advancements in AI: The pros and cons for genealogy work and accuracy pitfalls

- ◆ People are realizing AI apps are NOT a search engine.
- ◆ Useful to manipulate/formulate a large group of data.
- ◆ Useful to create infographic, outline, or find through-threads.
- ◆ Useful to edit a draft, summarize, change tone, etc.
- ◆ *Photo restoration? AI cleans up damage, but still often changes a person's face! Use a program dedicated to photos, not a general purpose AI like ChatGPT, CoPilot, or Gemini.*
- ◆ *Handwriting recognition? AI has improved at transcribing foreign language, but remains too risky to depend on for translation of a foreign language that you don't speak.*

Jen **Shaffer**, "The Formidable Genealogist" says: "Use ChatGPT or others to create research plans, analyze data, brainstorm new record leads, learn about historical context, date photos, write ancestor stories, create images, transcribe document images, translate documents, compile data into tables, etc. etc. The key is to use ChatGPT like an intern, not an expert."

Ancestry.com

- ◆ Launched DNA "Matches by Cluster" (part of ProTools)
- ◆ *"Full-Text Search" had a slow-rollout for searching through books, stories, and newspapers; but nothing handwritten, and items had already been run through OCR.*
- ◆ *Released "Networks" (part of ProTools): allows a user to build a group of unrelated people, i.e. Friends, Associates, and Neighbors; but cannot make them public.*
- ◆ *"Club 1890" launched at \$5,000 annual membership: exclusive education and coaching opportunities.*

MyHeritage

- ◆ Released "Whole Genome Sequencing"
- ◆ DNA "Traits"

FamilySearch

- ◆ "Full-Text Search" is out of FS Labs and a part of the main menu.
- ◆ Start in the Catalog and look for the Full-Text Searchable icon – narrows the search to focus on just that reel of microfilm.

(Continued on page 15)

Reclaim the Records: a nonprofit who fights to get public records available to the public

- ◆ New York State Death Index, 1880-2017 released; visit NewYorkDeathIndex.com

Looking forward in 2026

- ◆ RootsTech is coming to Salt Lake City, Utah March 5-7, 2026 (cheaper early bird registration is open now, virtual registration is free).
- ◆ National Genealogical Society Conference coming to Fort Wayne, Indiana May 27-30, 2026 (home to The Genealogy Center at the Allen County Public Library; combine research time with conference experience!).
- ◆ 52 Ancestors in 52 Weeks, a set of free writing prompts from AJC to help us DO something with our genealogy research (sign up at www.amyjohnsoncrow.com/52ancestors).

When to Use the FamilySearch Catalog vs Record Search

From Jen Shaffer, "The Formidable Genealogist" on [socials](https://socials.theformidablegenealogist.com) & theformidablegenealogist.com

Here's a lesson designed to shape your thought process on how you determine if you should be searching in indexed records or in the catalog. **Commit this to memory.** The Catalog is *never* for entering an ancestor's name to search records. It's about **Record Collections**. A general name search does not belong here. *If you need a collection, use the Catalog. If you need a specific name in a large indexed set, start with Record Search.* Level up your genealogy skills in 2026 with the Formidable Genealogist's PDF research guides. Bundle and SAVE at www.theformidablegenealogist.com/category/all-products

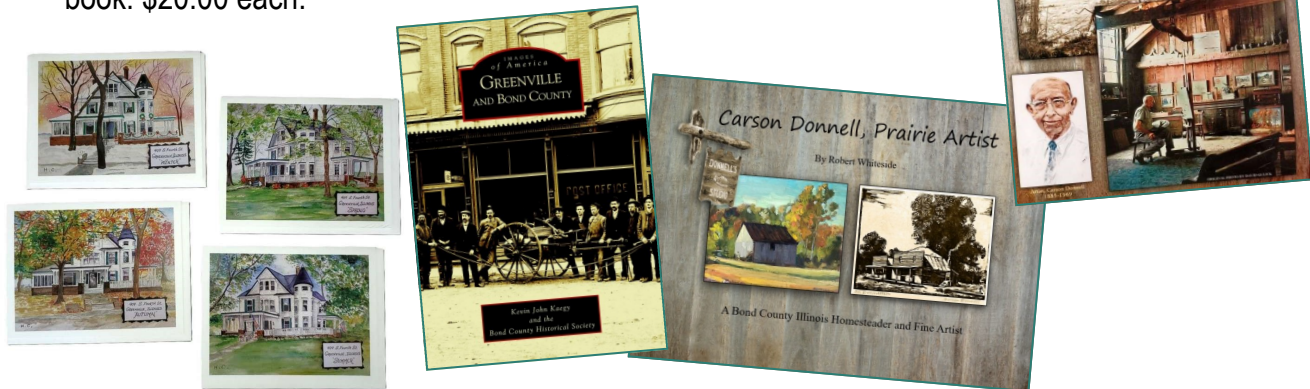
Scenario	Use Indexed Records Search When...	Use the Catalog When...
Looking for a specific person	You want a record that is commonly indexed like a census or a civil birth	The person lived in a place with limited indexing or you suspect the record was never indexed.
Finding a marriage	You believe the marriage is in a large indexed collections like statewide civil registrations.	The marriage likely appears in church books, local bonds or banns that are browse-only.
Searching a new location	You want a quick overview of indexed collections to get a feel for what is available.	You need the full list of all records for that place including unindexed material, manuscript books, and microfilm.
Looking for hard-to-find ancestors	You want a fast scan for possible matches across broad areas.	You need to dig through probate packets, deed indexes, or local court material that may never be indexed.
Checking for multiple spellings	You want to test spelling variations or wildcard searches.	You want to browse the original images because spellings vary so widely that indexing is unreliable.
Working in the United States after 1880	Most vital records and censuses are indexed so a basic search works well.	You need land records, guardianships, or county court files that are only in browse-image form.
Working in Europe before civil registration	You hope to find indexed church records for your village.	You need parish registers that were digitized from film but never indexed or were indexed incompletely.
Verifying a hint or a lead	You want to confirm an indexed match quickly.	You want to inspect the full collection these hints came from or browse the surrounding records.
Finding collateral relatives	You want quick hits for siblings and cousins in large indexed databases.	You want to trace the entire family in a parish or township using line-by-line image browsing.
Looking for context	You want a single record.	You want to understand the larger body of records for a place: taxes, maps, local histories, cemetery surveys, or court minutes.

New Books, Poster, Prints, and Note Cards in Shop

Pick up one or all of these latest additions to our Gift Shop at Bond County Museum in Greenville, Saturdays 10a-noon year round, plus Sundays 1p-3p June, July & August. You can also contact us via our website to order (prices do not include shipping & handling).

www.bondcounthistorical.org/store.html

- ◆ 18 Reprints from Carson Donnell's hand-carved Walnut Block Prints. Collected and restored by Robert Whiteside, and printed at 8.5" x 11" on parchment-style paper. \$25.00 per set.
- ◆ Carson Donnell Studio Poster, 11" x 17". \$5.00 each.
- ◆ Watercolor Paintings by Helen Smith Carlson showing the U.S. DeMoulin Mansion in four seasons. Sold in packets of 4 blank notecards with one of each design, including envelopes. \$10.00 per set.
- ◆ Images of America: Greenville and Bond County, by Kevin Kaegy and the Bond County Historical Society, 2003. \$22.00 each.
- ◆ Robert Whiteside's 2022 "Carson Donnell, Prairie Artist" softcover book. \$20.00 each.



Don't Forget the BCGS Publication List & Book Shop

Remember, Bond County Genealogical Society has put together many publications to assist you in your research. A complete list and an order form can be obtained at the society website www.bondcogen.org/for_sale.html. We've also updated shipping prices to reflect the current postal rates. \$5.00 for the first book, \$1.00 each additional. Contact us first for large orders! For more information or to make a purchase, email info@bondcogen.org or write us a snail mail letter. Shelves upon shelves of more books that are no longer offered as "Print On Demand" are still available for browsing and photocopying in our Research Library! See page 4 for details.



Writing a Family Sketch Register-Style

by Helen Schatvet Ullmann, CG, FASG

adapted from the author's article in *New England Ancestors* 8:3 (Summer 2007):41–42, 45

Do you have a thick file or notebook filled with family information you'd like to compile? Whether it's boxes of data or just a few notes, creating a family sketch is a great way to organize that information. This sketch should treat a couple and their children in a structured and engaging manner.

Word processing tools have transformed genealogical research, eliminating the need for cutting and pasting. I recall attending an *American Ancestors* seminar about twenty years ago where one of the speakers emphasized the importance of using the *Register* style as soon as you gather information. *The New England Historical and Genealogical Register* is the flagship journal of American genealogy and the oldest in the field, focusing on authoritative compiled genealogies. Inspired, I began transcribing old family group sheets on my Apple IIe.

A family sketch is essentially a story with a beginning, middle, and end. The beginning includes vital details about the parents, making it easy for readers to find important information, such as marriage dates.

The middle typically consists of a chronological biography, allowing for the inclusion of anecdotes or analyses that distinguish between individuals with similar names.

The end features a straightforward list of children and their vital statistics, which can be supplemented by individual sketches for children with abundant information.

You can begin with just a few scraps; I started my first sketch with my mother's memories and details about her grandparents, like a cherished memory of sitting on her grandfather's lap. Alternatively, you might have folders filled with notes from decades ago; organizing them can help you identify gaps that need further research.

Before writing, consider reviewing *Genealogical Writing in the 21st Century*.^[1] While I won't cover specific formatting details, it's worth noting that fewer abbreviations and complete sentences enhance readability.

Once you begin writing, it's vital to cite your sources. While footnotes are useful, endnotes can feel less overwhelming. Refer to the *Register* for citation formats, and keep guides like *Evidence!*,^[2] and *The Chicago Manual of Style* handy.^[3] For writing style, read your work aloud to catch any awkward phrases or passive voice constructions. Proofreading is crucial to refine your sketch.

Finally, to add the finishing touch, include illustrations! Photos, maps, and documents can enhance your narrative, making it more appealing for your descendants. Your final product should not only honor your research but also be an elegant gift for future generations. And guess what, once you get a few of these ancestor sketches done, you can compile them together for one big book!

¹Michael J. Leclerc and Henry B. Hoff, ed., *Genealogical Writing in the 21st Century*, 2nd ed. (Boston: American Ancestors, 2006).

²Elizabeth Shown Mills, *Evidence! Citation & Analysis for the Family Historian* (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing Co., 1997). The introductory sections of this book are especially valuable.

³*The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15th ed. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2003).

BCGS Correspondence Queries Report

Since implementing our email address, info@bondcogen.org, eleven years ago, our correspondence volunteers have been busy answering all sorts of Bond County genealogical and historical questions. More than 730 of them! This report deals with the approximately 189 emails received between January 2024 and December 2025.

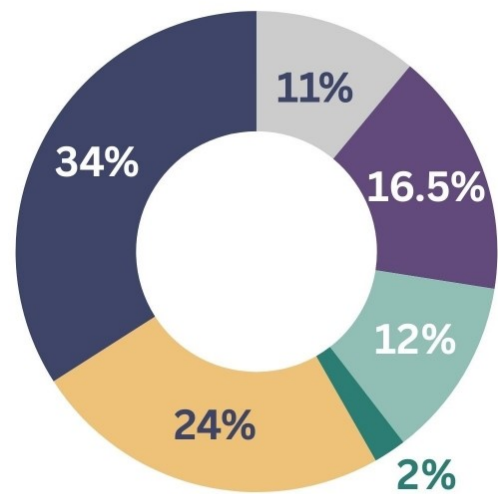
The percentage of email inquiries concerning the details and services of our society continues to increase and has finally reached one half. These emails ask about memberships; newsletter subscriptions; publications for sale; donating items to the society; passing along an announcement from another society; contacting a cemetery or editor; and arranging for research assistance in our family history resource library located on the lower level of Greenville Public Library.

Eleven percent of the research requests have been for copies of obituaries and death notices originally published in Greenville's two longest running newspapers, *The Advocate* and *The Sun*. The papers are available in microfilm archives but have not been indexed, digitized, or put online. This steady number of obituary requests is still quite a marked reduction from 2015-2016's amount which was close to one half.

Appeals for articles, vital records, and family history book excerpts experienced a downward trend this year in number, but performed about the same in percentage. Twenty-eight still requested newspaper, census, map, photograph, or other publication look-ups of marriages; burial and cemetery locations; family charts; links between parents, children, and siblings; and even locations of farms and blueprints of houses. We searched for information in newspaper columns, cemetery books, history books, in FamilySearch collections, on Ancestry.com indices, as well as consulting local historians. Twice we estimated a death date for a person with no obituary or tombstone based upon the publishing of a notice of administrator of their estate; leading the inquirer to follow up with the Bond County Circuit Clerk's office for probate files. We were able to steer a researcher towards potentially living descendants of a German immigrant by compiling obituaries of their children that mentioned surviving grandchildren.

One query concerned a search for possible children born to a Smithboro couple between 1914 and 1919; the emailer wondered why there was a ten year gap between known children. We searched county Birth Indexes for the surname "**Davis**" from 1914 to 1915 and ruled out every one of those eight as having the wrong parents. No Davis children were born to the parents of interest in the 1916 *Greenville Advocate* Newspaper "Story of the Years" in the B.C.G.S. Quarterly. Due to a combination of state privacy laws and the mas-

- Death Notice Query
- Article, Photo, History Book Query
- Vital Record, Family Tree Query
- Census Query
- Announcement From Another Society
- Other Society Services



2024-2025 info@bondcogen.org

(Continued on page 19)

(Continued from page 18)

sive undertaking required in digitizing microfilm and/or physical archives the Bond County Clerk & Recorder's Birth Registers from 1916 onward have not yet been made available to the public and one would need to contact that office directly for each request. We checked the Death Register Index for this timeframe but the one Davis child who died in 1915 had been born in 1913 and had the wrong parents.

Another complicated query focused on a woman named Margaret who married a previously married Bond County landowner: Andrew J. **Redding**. The emailer had DNA matches and hoped to link her by paper trail to a particular man named **Penn** as her father, or perhaps uncle; either would do to make her a descendent of the particular Penn family of Virginia. We created a timeline and placed tidbits of clues in chronological order: an Indiana marriage record, 1850 and 1860 Bond County, Illinois Census entries, three warrants for public land purchases in Old Ripley and Mulberry Grove townships, a Civil War soldier profile including his death at Memphis in 1863, a marriage record for the couple's daughter and the 1870 Census entry for that married daughter living with her widowed mother. While we could not confirm Margaret's link to the Penn family, we did pass along an obituary for the emailer's great-great grandmother that she'd never seen before!

In at least four instances we've been unable to locate the information requested. The name, year, place, or other clue as provided simply is not present in any of the books, newspapers, records, indices, or member knowledge base.

Search Without a Name

Not many people know this, but you can search on Ancestry without entering a name at all—it can be completely blank. Unlike FamilySearch, which requires a name to start your search, Ancestry allows for more flexibility.

To use this feature, choose your desired record set and fill in any information you want.

For example, we entered a location in Illinois and specified the occupation of "Teacher." By selecting "Exact," we received 1,895 results, which you can further narrow down from there.

The screenshot shows the Ancestry search interface. At the top, there are input fields for "First & Middle Name(s)" and "Last Name". Below these is a section titled "Place your ancestor might have lived" with a dropdown menu showing "Bond, Illinois, USA" and a "Birth Year" field. A checkbox labeled "Exact to this place" is checked. A "Search" button is present, along with a link to "Show fewer options" and a checkbox for "Match all terms exactly". Below this is a section for "Add event" with options: Birth, Marriage, Death, Lived In, Any Event, and More. A "Year" field and a "Location" dropdown (showing "Bond, Illinois, USA") are also present, with an "Exact to this place" checkbox. A section for "Add family member" includes links for Father, Mother, Sibling, Spouse, and Child. A "Keyword" field contains the word "teacher", with an "Exact" checkbox checked. Below this are fields for "Gender" (a dropdown menu) and "Race/Nationality". A "Collection Focus" dropdown menu is set to "All Collections". At the bottom, there are checkboxes for "Historical Records", "Stories & Publications", "Family Trees", and "Photos & Maps". A "Search" button and a "Clear search" button are at the very bottom.

When it comes to cemeteries, while we may be surrounded by those who have passed, the reason we do this is to remind ourselves, our future family, and those around us that even if someone is gone, their importance NEVER ceases. – Amy Johnson Crow

Answer A Query

Gail **Outhwaite** | momgrocks77@gmail.com

I'm trying to prove a relationship between Milton **Hawley** and his father, James Hawley (James died when Milton was abt 13 in Western NY). I'm also trying to connect Mary **Taft Hawley** with her mother or father: Patience **Perkins Taft Drake** and Stephen **Taft** (died when Mary was abt 2-3 years old in Vermont). Her brother Lewis Taft may have come through around 1859, since they were close to the National Road. Lewis Taft is documented in Vermont, but Mary and Lucy Taft, twins, are not! Lucy married an Aro **Danforth**. I suppose it is also possible that their half-sister, Diantha **Drake Barnes**, may have also visited. There are Patriots proven in DAR documents that have been proved to the parents, just no further ties to Milton and Mary Hawley! I have already proved to their kids in my line. It is just this link I'm lacking!

Doug **Black** | dwblack3489@gmail.com

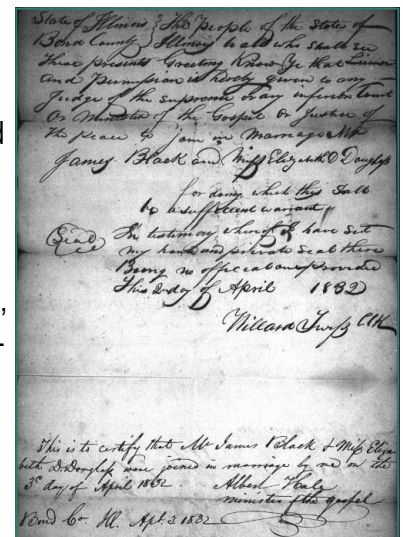
My third great-grandfather, James S. **Black**, was born in 1802 in KY and lived in Bond County, IL apparently during the 1820s to 1830s. I have the marriage record that has James S. Black marrying Elizabeth D. **Douglass**, Apr 3, 1832 [by minister of the gospel Albert Hale] at the Greenville church. Apparently Daniel Douglass, Elizabeth's father, moved his family from Maury County, TN, to Bond County to join the group of families that formed the Bethel Presbyterian church in Reno. Ruth **McCracken** was married to Daniel Douglass, and was the mother of Elizabeth (Douglass) Black.

Sometime after 1835, James S. Black and Elizabeth Douglass Black moved to Platteville, WI with other Bethel families and were involved in forming the first Normal School academy now part of the University of Wisconsin.

I am specifically looking for parents and siblings of James S. Black. According to the 1820 and 1830 Censuses, a James Black lived in Bond County, and may have been the father of James S. Black, but that is unclear. I have an 1831 land patent located just to the south of Greenville issued to James Black and John Harvey Black, but it is not clear if they are related. I also saw a 1827 Bond County record (Book A-1, p 89) where a James Black relinquished Right Of Administration for his brother Robert Black, and the estate of Robert Black was presented in 1830 (p 119).

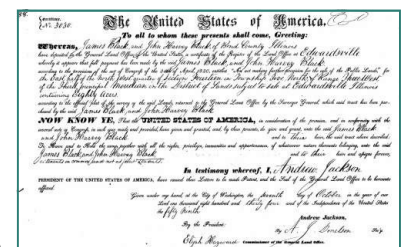
Alex **White** | alex.white.nyc@gmail.com | 917-907-1371

I am researching Thomas **White**, a captain in the Revolutionary War and who ostensibly named Greenville in 1816. White was b 1754 Oxford, PA d 1824 Greenville, IL, and supposedly buried in Sugg Cemetery. Also, I am researching his grandson, Robert Osborn White, b 1824 Greenville, IL d 1888 Old Ripley, IL, and possibly buried at Brown Cemetery.



ABOVE: Black/Douglass Marriage Record, www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:939Z-Y59H-XL

BELOW: Black/Black Land Patent, www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C3SK-87QR-K



The Marions and The Piggs

By Edward P. Campbell of Westlake, OH, epcampbell@me.com

All of this is a product of my research, and may not be either complete or fully accurate. I would welcome feedback.

Elijah **Pigg** and Louise **Gardner** had ten children, six boys and four girls. At least some of the boys seem to be named after people of fame in early American times. These include sons named after William **Nelson** (Governor of Virginia), George **Washington**, Francis **Marion** (Revolutionary War General), and John **Wesley** (founder of the Methodist religion).

In 1867, both Francis Marion Pigg and John Wesley Pigg, each from Mulberry Grove, IL, enrolled as freshmen in M'Kendree College, Lebanon, IL for the 1867-1868 academic year. There is no record of John Wesley Pigg continuing at M'Kendree College after 1868.

The M'Kendree College records for the academic years beginning in September 1868 and 1869 are lost, but the records for the academic year beginning in September 1870 show Francis Marion Pigg enrolled as a Junior. For the following 1871-1872 year, he is again shown as being a Junior, suggesting that he did not complete the course of study in the previous year. In the following 1872-1873 year's catalogue published in September 1872, Francis Marion Pigg is listed as being an incoming Senior.

However, in the catalogue published in September 1873, which includes a list of those who graduated in the preceding June, Francis Marion Pigg is not listed anywhere. However, there is listed a Francis Marquis **Marion**, from Mulberry Grove, IL, who graduated in June 1873. But a search of the years' catalogues before 1873 shows no one named Francis Marquis Marion was ever enrolled. The obvious conclusion is that Francis Marion Pigg changed his name to Francis Marquis Marion sometime between September 1872 and June 1873.

Bond County land records show that on March 14, 1873, F. M. Marion purchased land in Mulberry Grove township from M. W. Powell.

Bond County land records show that on September 15, 1880, Elijah Pigg sold land to Francis M. Marion and John W. Pigg. The deed provides a provision that the possession of the land would not occur until the death of Elijah Pigg. Such a provision is unusual in an arms-length transaction, but perhaps not so unusual in a transaction among family members. This is again evidence that Francis Marion Pigg changed his name to Francis M. Marion.

Bond County land records show that the 50% share of the land transferred above from Elijah Pigg to Francis M. Marion was transferred again a year later by Francis to John W. Pigg with no consideration being paid. This is additional evidence that Francis M. Marion is the former Francis Marion Pigg, brother of John W. Pigg.

Bond County Court records that might confirm a legal name change are not searchable online. An in-person review of such records has not been done.

Watch for Part 2 in the B.C.G.S. News Vol 41, Issue 2, Summer 2026.

My Boyhood Years in Slovakia During World War II

By Ivan John Lach of Bloomington, IL, ivan1939lach@gmail.com

Born in 1939 in rural Yugoslavia, Ivan (Johnny) Lach recounts his family's immigration journey to the U.S., interrupted by war and bureaucratic hurdles. His memoir vividly captures early life in Slovak villages, wartime separation, and the challenges of starting over in America during uncertain times.

This is Part 3, the final part, of Lach's story, continued from B.C.G.S. News Vol 40, Issue 2, Summer 2025.

... A few months after the battlefield passed through Slovakia, World War II in Europe was over. Finally, the Red Cross was able to get telegraphs through so that we could communicate with my father and let him know that we were still alive... Meanwhile, by now my father's farming operation in Wilsonville, Illinois was profitable but he needed more land. In 1946, he purchased a 160 acre farm 3 miles northwest of Mulberry Grove and rented the adjacent 80 acres...

Coming to America

In April of 1947, my mother and I finally started our journey to America on a small bus to get to the nearest train station. We then got on a train and headed toward Bratislava. In Bratislava we transferred trains and headed toward Paris through Austria, Germany, and Switzerland. I remember seeing piles and piles of war trucks, tanks, artillery guns, and scrap metal all over Germany at that time. We stayed one night in a hotel in Paris then went on a boat across the English Channel to England.

Our trip was delayed almost a week in England because our ship, Cunard White Star Line's Queen Elizabeth, was stuck on a sandbar. Finally, our ship was ready for the trip across the Atlantic Ocean. The Queen Elizabeth was the newest and largest luxury ship at the time (very similar to the Titanic). In 1947, going across the ocean by ship was still the most popular form of transportation. Although we traveled third class, we had access to the great dining area, the various shops, and the spacious decks of the ship.

The first day on the ocean was great. We enjoyed the view and enjoyed exploring the different areas of the ship. After the first



Leaving Slovakia April 1947. Front: Ivan John, grandmother Kubica, Anna Kitas, Aunt Alzbeta Kitas. Back: Johanna Lach, Maria Kitas, Uncle Nikodem Kubica.

(Continued on page 23)

(Continued from page 22)

day, the ride started to get very rough. We encountered some very bad weather across the Atlantic. The waves would take the ship 30 to 40 feet up and down. The stormy sea lasted for several days. My mother became very sea sick and was unable to leave the cabin. I went to the dining hall to eat by myself. The trip across the Atlantic that was scheduled to take 4 days took 7 days instead. Finally, we pulled into the New York Harbor and sailed right past the Statue of Liberty to our dock.

A representative from Cunard White Star Line, who spoke Slovak, met us at the boat dock and took us in a taxi to the Union Station in New York. There she helped us find our train that would go from New York City to Vandalia, Illinois where we would get off.

After a long train ride we arrived at the Depot in Vandalia late in the evening of April 27, 1947. My father was there to pick us up in a Model A Ford Coupe with one seat. This was the first time that I remember seeing my father. It was also the first time in eight years that my mother and father had seen each other. We rode home to the farm northwest of Mulberry Grove that night where my two sisters, my grandmother, and my uncle were waiting to greet us. My two sisters had not seen their mother since they were 4 and 2 years old so they could barely remember her. Needless to say, it was a most happy family reunion.

I was eight years old and had just completed the second grade in Slovakia but I could not speak one word in English. Now I had to learn some English fast so I could start school at Mulberry Grove in the fall. My sisters, Anne and Margaret, and my Uncle Frank gave me a crash course in English. While I studied English every day in May, June, July, and August, my English still was not good by the start of the school year. Not only did I not know many words, I had trouble pronouncing many of the words and had a strong accent. One particular problem was the hard "r" used in the Slovak language as opposed to the much softer "r" used in English.

Nevertheless, I started school in Mulberry Grove that fall beginning in the first grade. A few weeks later I

was promoted to the second grade. While I had a tough time with English for some time, my classmates and my teachers at Mulberry Grove were very helpful and understanding. Before long I learned enough English to be able to communicate effectively with all my classmates and teachers.

Although my parents were separated for eight years rather than six months as planned, and they endured much hardship during this period of time, they were very glad that they made the decision to move to the USA so that their children would have the opportunity for a better life in a free country. They loved living on their farm northwest of Mulberry Grove. Stephan and Johanna had seven more children born



RMS Queen Elizabeth I



In the USA April 1947. Grandmother Anna, Ivan John, Stefan, Johanna, Margaret, Anne

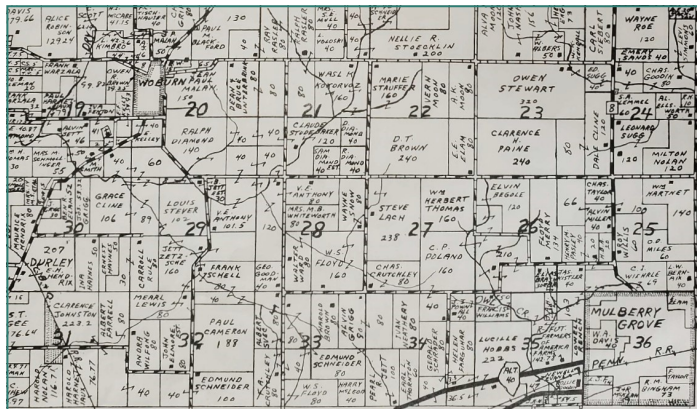
(Continued on page 24)

My Boyhood Years in Slovakia, continued...



On the farm in 1947.

(Continued from page 23)



Steve Lach Farm in Section 27, Mulberry Grove Township, Bond County Plat Book and Farmers Directory, 1960s. BCM Archives.

in the USA and raised all ten children on the farm near Mulberry Grove, where they continued to live for the rest of their lives.

About The Author: Ivan John Lach

Ivan John Lach was born in the Croatia region of the former Yugoslavia on February 7, 1939. He and his mother lived in Slovakia during World War II with his grandmother. After coming to the United States in 1947, when he was eight years old, Ivan John grew up on the family farm northwest of Mulberry Grove. He attended Mulberry and Smithboro grade schools and graduated from Mulberry Grove High School in 1958. He then attended Southern University in Carbondale where he received a Bachelor's Degree in Education with a major in mathematics in 1962. After graduation he took a position as a beginning actuary at Country Life Insurance Company in Bloomington, IL. He joined the Illinois Army National Guard and completed basic training at Fort Lenard Wood, MO in February 1963 and advanced infantry training at Fort Ord, California in May.



In the summer of 1963, he resigned from his position with Country Life, bought a 125 acres farm east of Mulberry Grove and took a position teaching mathematics at Vandalia High School. He taught mathematics at Vandalia High School and farmed his farm for four years. In 1967, he took a position at Illinois State University teaching mathematics at Metcalf School. In 1970, he took a position as Director of Admissions and Research at Lake Land College in Mattoon. In 1973, he completed the PhD in Education at the University of Illinois and took a position as Director of Research and MIS at the Illinois Community College Board in Springfield. He was employed at the Illinois Community College Board for 25 years, the last 15 years as Vice President/Deputy Director. He retired in 1998 as Vice President Emeritus.

Ivan John Lach currently lives in Bloomington, Illinois close to his daughter's family and his grandchildren.


Watson Family Home Movies

These are 20 minute compilations of general interest clips from CineKodak 8mm home movies taken 1938 - 1958 by the family of former state senator Frank **Watson**. Digitized in 2025 by Marty and Patty **Niehaus**, Video Edited Memories, Hillsboro, IL

 <https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PL1Tdmpf2UjEyuKzgpVrBI4qrSRV9KMjmm&si=JN0gCH3J0f9C49TL>



- ◆ **Compilation 1:** The majority of the shots were taken during WWII years but there's some rare footage of events like parades and Greenville College's Hogue Hall suffering a fire.
- ◆ **Compilation 2:** The first part features Parades and a Carnival atmosphere on the Greenville Square. The very end has some close ups of individuals and clips of farming!
- ◆ **Compilation 3:** A family wedding shot in black & white film showcases cars and clothing of the era.
- ◆ **Compilation 4:** Most of this film is about one very lucky little girl and her Christmas 1940 experiences. Even though this is a personal family recording, it captures the universal atmosphere of innocence in the holiday... a degree of happiness America lost when it declared War in December 1941. This reel also contains Mount Moriah fall scenes and the City Park.

 Visit Bond County Historical Society's website to watch more

Bond County Remembered: Video Legacies <https://www.bondcountyhistorical.org/videolegacies.html>

The Van De O Mc Mac Problem

This tip appeared in Michael John Neill's blog
www.genealogytipoftheday.com on September 2, 2025

Do you know how your favorite genealogy database search site handles names "van," "de," "o," "mc," and "mac" when they appear as part of a name? Do you get different results when you search for DeMoss versus De Moss? Do you get different results when you search for O'Neill versus O'Neill? And what about Van De Walle versus Vandewalle?

Might be worth finding out.



Genealogy Tips Of The Day

These tips appeared in Michael John Neill's blog www.genealogytipoftheday.com July—December 2025.

Do You Have It All with Full-Text Searching?

Full-text searching of millions of its handwritten historical records at FamilySearch is great, but there's no guarantee the Artificial Intelligence (AI) it will catch everything and one still needs to engage with the records located and be aware that there could be more. Recent full-text searches at FamilySearch located two deeds for an ancestor in Ontario—one where he purchased land and one where he sold it. One parcel (the purchased one) is for twenty-one acres and the other (the one where he sells it) is for twenty-seven acres. I need to compare the legal descriptions of the properties as well, but a six acre difference on a piece of property this size is significant and it begs the question: is there something else? Because of the difference a manual search of grantor and grantee indexes is warranted to see if another transaction can be located. It's possible the automated indexing missed an additional reference. Don't assume AI finds everything; it won't! But, you should use the full-text searching at FamilySearch. You should also use other traditional search approaches as well. It's one more tool in the toolbox. It's not the only tool.

+ , - , * , " " , ? at FamilySearch's Full Text Search

Narrow your search results and start searching much smarter and easier. Use quotation marks (e.g. "Henry Jones"). Include a specific word or phrase (e.g. +Judith). Exclude a specific word (e.g. -John). Find different spellings (e.g. Jens?n will return Jensen and Jenson). Find different forms of a root word (e.g. Car* will match cars, carriage, carpenter, etc).

Tax Sale?

If you can't find a deed of sale for your ancestor's real property that he owned at one time but apparently did not own later, consider the fact that he didn't actually sell it. If your ancestor's taxes became sufficiently delinquent, his property would be sold to pay those taxes. In the United States these sales are usually indexed under "Sheriff" as the grantor on the deed and not the name of your ancestor.

When You Use AI or Otherwise "Enhance" a Digital Image of a Photo

If you use AI on a digital image of an ancestral photograph to "improve" it (or enhance it in other ways), the use of AI should be noted. Text at the bottom of the photograph should indicate that the image was colorized, enhanced, or otherwise altered (either by hand or by AI). An unaltered scan or photograph of a document or image generally represents a true reproduction of the original item. Altered digital copies are most decidedly derivative copies and in the case of colorization and AI may include elements (color choices, facial nuances, background details, etc.) not represented as they were in the original. A simple notation such as "colorized in July 2020 by Brenda Smith" or "enhanced via Artificial Intelligence on 7 July 2025" could be added to any provenance information or identifying details included on the photograph.

FamilySearch Full-Text Search has moved from being experimental to part of their standard search tools. You can now find it as one of the options under "Search" on the main menu, as well as through the all-collections search on the FamilySearch home page (when signed in) and in the FamilySearch Catalog. Full-Text Search accesses nearly 2 billion records, many of which are not yet formally indexed and searchable otherwise. Sure beats hunting down a film and spending hours going page by page to find things (although you'll probably spend those same amount of hours searching with Full-Text Search. It's a game-changer!

Quick and Simple Reminders from Michael John Neill's blog genealogytipoftheday.com

Really getting into these things takes time, but here are some general things to remember when you are “stuck:”

- ◆ Money and work motivate people to move and people are sometimes more mobile than we think—especially if opportunities were limited in the area where the person was living.
- ◆ Create a timeline of all events in your ancestor's life. Gaps of more than a few years are opportunities for research. Lots of things can happen in two or three years.
- ◆ Do you really know what you think you know? How do you know it? Did you assume when you should not have?
- ◆ Do you know where that source came from?
- ◆ Could you be wrong?
- ◆ Are you familiar with all sources in the area—civil (all levels of government) and private records?

Submissions and Genealogical Queries

The B.C.G.S. News is published 2 times a year—January & July. The Bond County Genealogical & Historical Societies invite members to submit articles on Bond County families or histories, research techniques, announcements & queries. Typed submissions are preferred.

Genealogical queries with connections to Bond County and its communities in Southern Illinois are published free of charge to members (and non-members!) in our Newsletter (though members have priority on query space). Anyone is invited to submit the names and brief identifying information of ancestors they are researching, so that those researching the same persons can exchange information with them.

To make your query more effective, include dates, places and full names whenever possible. The query may also be published on our Website.

All submissions are subject to editing and/or serialization over multiple issues. Your articles and photos shall remain your property. DO NOT send copyrighted material unless you hold the copyright or you supply proof of permission to print with your submission.

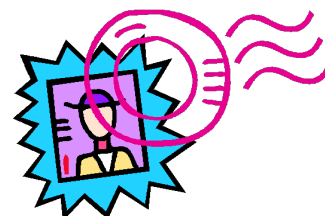
You may E-Mail your submissions and/or queries to the newsletter committee at info@bondcogen.org or send Snail Mail to: Bond County Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 172, Greenville, IL 62246.

SAMPLE QUERY: Researching Rev James Ball Woolard, b 16 Dec 1804 Buford Co NC, mov to Mulberry Grove Bond Co IL abt 1831, m Mary McCurley. dpl Greenville Bond Co IL 4 May 1887. --Submitter's name, address, and email address

General questions for Bond County Genealogical Society and requests for Research & Library help should be emailed to info@bondcogen.org

*Good queries
are:*

*Clear—
Specific—
Simple—
Concise*



Official Newsletter of the Bond County Genealogical Society of Greenville, Illinois,
published jointly since 2014 with the Bond County Historical Society

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www.bondcountyhistorical.org



Renew Your Dues for 2026!

Bond County Genealogical Society membership dues are \$10 per 2-person household for the current year. A lifetime membership for a 2-person household may be purchased for a one-time payment of \$175. Members are eligible to vote and to serve as BCGS officers and appointees.

SPECIAL OFFER! Join both societies (Genealogical and Historical) for only \$20.00 - a \$5.00 savings! Find membership information on Page 2 of this issue and on both societies' websites (see URLS at left).



New from Fern Oaks Press: Finding Roxie Belle

She set out to have it all — fame, success, wealth, respect, and influence. Her name is Roxie Belle **McCord Roberts**, and she sprang from an unlikely background for anyone imagining a life so large, let alone a woman coming of age in the last quarter of the 19th century.

Roxie Belle was born in 1878 in the small, southern Illinois corn country town of Greenville, to a discredited father and a mother who died only months later, and was fostered from infancy. Defying this disadvantaged background, she accepted no personal limits. From her youth onward, and against all odds, she doggedly pursued ambitious plans few women in her generation dared to imagine.

Roxie Belle willed herself into an extraordinary existence. Starting as a teacher in Iowa and Illinois, during her frenetic lifetime, she added cattle ranching in Colorado, gold mining in Nevada, and owning and publishing a major American newspaper in Long Beach, California, plus songwriting, renowned political speaking, advocacy for women in business and community life, and round after round of intense courtroom brawling.

She was awarded an advanced degree, one of the two college diplomas she earned. Dissatisfied with only intellectual pursuits, she took up trapshooting—appending championship-winning sportswoman to her impressive roster of accomplishments. At the zenith of her influence and celebrity, Roxie Belle hobnobbed with powerbrokers by the scores, including presidents, governors, and members of Congress. Seemingly, all of her grandest dreams had been fulfilled. The American promise was hers to hold.

But chasing aspirations as expansive as hers, and flouting convention with such reckless abandon, came with hazards—and Roxie Belle ran hard up against them. The existence she carved out for herself with such unrelenting determination exacted a huge price. Paying the ultimate penalty for her audacious pursuits, by the end of her remarkable lifetime, all memory of her had faded, even in the places of her greatest triumphs. Lost to history, the singular life of Roxie Belle McCord Roberts was forgotten — until now. *Finding Roxie Belle: The Improbable True Life Story of Belle McCord Roberts*, by Mitch **Stone**, is her story.

ISBN 978-0-9836435-2-4 • 252 pages • trade paperback • www.fernoakspress.com

