
PLAIN HISTORY GENEALOGY GROUP

Covering Plain, Sauk Co, Wisconsin and Beyond

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| http://tinyurl.com/4rrlv http://tinyurl.com/66w3v |Newsletter Table of Contents |
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| http://tinyurl.com/at9w8 |Online Searchable Index |
| http://tinyurl.com/22e2ua |Loreto, Sauk Co, Wis |

Vol 47 February 2009

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Meeting & Events Schedule
Internet and Goodies

Sauk County Mapping Department
Preservation of Music Cylinder Records
Catholic Latin Mass vs current version
Stars and Stripes – Baseball in the Military
Bettinger House Bed & Breakfast
Family Search – Maryland Barn Raising

Talk to Your Computer
Translating Languages
What did our Ancestors do for fun?

Meeting & Events Schedule

Saturday, March 14, 2009

9:30 am, Plain, WI

Kraemer Library and Community Center

This meeting will deal with questions from the group. We will focus on how to use Internet sites to research your family and recent advances in technology. This will be a good opportunity to ask questions about things that might have you puzzled. Everybody is welcome.

(I will have some “amazing” stuff to demonstrate.)

Saturday, April 11, 2009

9:30 am to 12:00 noon, Spring Green, WI

Spring Green Community Library

The objective is to meet people interested in researching family and local history. There will be discussions on:

- How to Get Started?
- Where Can You Research?
- What Tools Can You Use?

You can come for the entire meeting or just stop in for a visit. You are invited to bring your favorite research finds and photos to share.

Regular, and irregular, attendees of the meeting in Plain are encouraged to attend. People from the Spring Green area should have good stuff to share.

Internet and Goodies

Sauk County Mapping Department

<http://www.co.sauk.wi.us/dept/mapping/index.html>

This site gives you access to parcel maps for the villages, cities and townships of Sauk County Wisconsin.

Preservation of Music Cylinder Records

<http://cylinders.library.ucsb.edu/browse.php>

Before LPs and CDs music was recorded on cylinders. This site is dedicated to the preservation of the cylinders. This site allows you to download digitized versions of old songs.

Catholic Latin Mass vs current version

http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/1732/The_Mass.htm

Prior to the 1960s, our Catholic ancestors worshiped at Masses in Latin. The site compares Latin and the current version of Catholic Masses.

Stars and Stripes – Baseball in the Military

<http://www.stripes.com/baseball/>

Stars & Stripes is a daily newspaper written for members of the military. This site is an interesting view of how the sport of baseball and the realities of war interacted.

Bettinger House Bed & Breakfast

<http://www.bettingerbnb.com/>

This site has interesting facts on one of the historical buildings in Plain, Wisconsin. I was amused that even in this historical building, there is wireless Internet Access.

Family Search – Maryland Barn Raising

https://wiki.familysearch.org/en/Maryland_Barn_Raising_Tasks

The FamilySearch WIKI of the LDS Church is an example of how technology is used to do family and local history research. Mormons are always experimenting with ways to improve research. In this experiment, they are trying to build a community on the Internet using the concept of barn raisings. A group of volunteers from throughout the world can participate in the construction of a website dedicated to Maryland Researchers.

Plain History Genealogy Group

Talk to Your Computer

What Can It Do? Voice-recognition is straight out of science fiction. You talk to your computer and it does something.

I use voice-recognition to write articles. I talk and the computer types the words in a word processing program. One benefit is that I talk faster than I type. The main benefit is that my train of thought isn't derailed by having to type. I use voice-recognition to prepare this newsletter and presentations.

If I had a more powerful computer and more patience, I could get total control over my computer. It is possible to address, compose, and send an e-mail to somebody without ever having to touch the keyboard

What Do I Need?

Windows XP or Better Voice-recognition is not usable on old operating systems such as Windows 98 or Windows ME.

Processing Speed Voice-recognition programs require a lot of computer processing power. My laptop has a 2.0 GHz processor.

Memory The more memory you have in your computer the better. The voice-recognition program will work faster and make fewer mistakes. With windows XP, you need at least 512 meg of RAM. I have 768 meg of RAM on my laptop. If you are buying a new machine with Vista, I recommend getting at least 4 gigs of RAM.

Headset A good headset will dramatically improve how well the program works. I personally like the headset that wraps around the back of your head and slides over your ears. For some reason I personally do not like headset that fits over the top of your head.

Digital Audio Recorder This is a really neat feature of voice-recognition. I can dictate into a small portable digital audio recorder. Later I can load these recordings into my computer and a voice-recognition program will act as my personal secretary and transcribe these recordings into a word processing program.

Computer Program Vista Microsoft's Vista comes with a voice-recognition program.. However I wouldn't suggest buying Vista to my worst enemy.

Dragon NaturallySpeaking Preferred 10 I've been using this company's software since version 4. The new version 10 blows my socks off. It is quicker and astoundingly more accurate than its previous versions. The previous versions also required a more costly, higher-quality digital audio recorder if you wanted to dictate without using a computer. I have seen this program on the Internet for between \$99 and \$199.

Computer Geek You can never go wrong having a computer geek get you started. There is always some trick to installing a program. it takes weeks and months to become proficient with any program. With the right geek, you can be up and running in a half a day.

Patience This still is a computer program, and any computer program is designed to cause aggravation.

How Does It Work?

Talk Normally You don't have to speak like a robot. The program actually works better if you talk at a normal speed.

Learn Commands Every program has hundreds of commands that can do nifty things. I have found that it usually is only necessary to learn a handful of these to work the program.

Willingness to Adapt The voice-recognition program will get better as you use it. It remembers the mistakes it made and how you corrected them. After working with your voice-recognition program for a while, you will get a feel for the words you have to say slower and clearer.

Summary

There is no such thing as a free lunch. But if you do a lot of writing, dictating to your computer has tremendous benefits.

Translating Languages

The really good stuff about our ancestors is written in a foreign language. There many different ways to do this. Here are the free versions that I use.

Webpages Google has many tools to help you translate. They have a new tool which you can install on your web browser's toolbar. You open up a website in a foreign language, click the button you add it to your toolbar and you get it translated page.

The following is quick guide on how to install this button on your browser's toolbar

- http://translate.google.com/translate_tools?hl=en
- 2. Look for Get 1-click translations from your browser's toolbar
- 3. Drag-and-drop the English button to your browser's toolbar

Documents

WorldLingo This is a built-in feature in new versions of Microsoft Word. On the menubar, just go to: TOOLS, LANGUAGE. You are now ready to translate.

http://www.worldlingo.com/en/solutions/office_translations.html
http://www.worldlingo.com/en/products_services/document_translator.html

Translating a Printed Foreign Document

I got my hands on a 300+ page doctoral dissertation by Otto Horz written in the 1930s. This was a detailed transcription of immigration records from the Germantown my ancestors came from.

There is a difference between transcription and translation. This dissertation transcribed the information from documents in the hard-to-read German script to normal typed German.

Unfortunately this document does not have an index to the names. Here are the steps I used to translate the document and build an index.

- a. Scan into PDF format
- b. Use Omni Page OCR
- c. Use a program to translate into English
- d. Use Microsoft VBA/Macros to create an index by underlining names

Google Searches The key to successfully finding something using an Internet search engine is to use the right words. Again the good stuff is going to be in a foreign language.

Google lets you type in the search words in English. It converts into the foreign language and does the search. Google goes the extra step and shows the search results in English and in the foreign language. This is amazing. All I can say is Google is good.

http://translate.google.com/translate_s?hl=en

(I found out about this during a presentation by Pat M. at the Milwaukee PAF Users' Group March 2009 meeting.)

Fun Stuff If nothing else the gang at Google has a sense of humor. You can change the default language that it displays results in.

- www.google.com
- Preferences
- Interface Language
Elmer Fudd
Bork, bork, bork!

Summary

There are amazing pieces of treasure hidden in webpages and documents written in foreign languages. Using these tools, you have no excuse for not using them.

What did our Ancestors do for fun?

In the early 1900s, what entertainment options did our ancestors have?

Most of our ancestors did not have electricity. Radios and televisions wouldn't be invented for decades. Most of our ancestors days were spent working. Imagine farmers milking cows in an unheated barn without milking machines.

After a hard days work, without the benefit of taking a bath, how would our ancestors get to some place? Cars were a newfangled invention. You had to hook up a horse and carriage travel a distance.

Most of our ancestors' outside-of-the-home activities involved religious, educational and social organizations.

This article was inspired by Bob Dewel, who wrote historical articles about Sauk County and Baraboo. He wrote about two organizations whose members were unmarried. The Sauk County Historical Museum in Baraboo has a great deal of original source documents about these two groups.

Skillet Creek Bachelors' Club was formed around 1910. It was disbanded in 1917 with 80 active members. Annual membership dues were \$.25.

In October 1910, a bright red postcard was mailed to select unmarried women inviting them to a meeting at the Baptist Church on a Sunday evening. The purpose of this meeting was to answer the question, "To Marry or Not to Marry, That Is the Question." Why the Skillet Creek Bachelors Should Marry was a subject for discussion. The women were invited to bring a bachelor along with them. Was this the first meeting of the Bachelors Club? A number of resolutions were proposed at this meeting.

resolved: that we urge all such to taken definite place in the line of progress, to the end that they may attain the Roosevelt standard of good citizenship

resolved: that no member of this club, who is not in earnest show continues his attentions attaches to a lady by enough to acquire her prospects elsewhere

resolved: that no member of this club shall cut out of a brother member, was he wants the girl himself

The ethics of courtship were also discussed and this philosophical observation was made.

It may be true that there are as good fish in the sea as ever were caught, but I never admired the skill of the fishermen who never had any luck. Neither do we like to see the fish nibble all the bait and refuse to be caught.

Charter members of the Bachelors' Club were:

W A Toole, Wilbur Cahoon, Herman Jastrow,
Fred Kunzelmen, Ed Von Wald, Henry Marquardt,
Wilbur Cowles, Albert Wichern, Warren Bellows,
Robert Douglass, Fred Marquardt,
Robert R Rodwell, E H Toole

The 2 Wilburs held the official office of
PROMOTERS OF OPPORTUNITIES

Membership requirements were; one must be a male, white 25 years are over, good character, self-supporting and over in more or less susceptible to marriage.

This group was supported by the Baptist Church in Baraboo to promote marriage. In one of the church's publications, unmarried men were given detailed and interesting guidance. My favorite:

Beware of a girl who is always busy keeping a stick of gum from freezing.

An August 31, 1910 newspaper article described the fate of a member who violated club rules. A trial is held at Pansy Heights, about 2 miles southwest of Baraboo. The charge: William Toole did not live up to the most solemn oath, to escort a lady friend to a surprise party. A jury was born in.

It was found that the defendant did bring a young lady but that she was escorted by another young gentleman at the same time so he must needs plead to the charge of the first degree.

Sentence: The prisoner was then sentenced by Sir Judge Hill Esquire to a term of two years hard labor on Pansy Heights and at the same time he must not for an instant turn his attention in any shape, manner or form towards any young lady.

In 1911, The Skillet Creek Bachelors Club held their second annual oyster supper at Pansy Heights. 40 bachelors and their lady friends were present. This was an improvement over the first oyster supper to which women were not invited. Mrs. W. Cowles gave a recipe for courtship which she has found to be effective.

In February 1914, the club held a banquet at the Wellington with more than 60 in attendance.

In April 1916, a party was held at the Ringling's theater with 30 to 40 in attendance

There were nine levels of membership in the club.

Members who got married were referred to as Benedict's. A Benedict was a man who was previously considered a confirmed bachelor.

There's a picture of the Skillet Creek Bachelors Club having a parade. The men were dressed in suits and ties, carrying placards and chairs. They were led by a small carriage drawn by a distinguished looking goat.

The **Arachne Club** was organizing the fall of 1911. The name Arachne comes from a mythological girl turned into a spider by Athena for challenging the goddess to weaving contest.

The objective of this club was to be literary, musical, domestic, physical and social betterment and to do good to our fellow man. Meetings held every two weeks until the fall of 1917 when the club was disbanded due to World War I.

A newspaper article described the February 21, **1914** meeting. 11 members work on a club quilt that Saturday afternoon. At the March 7, 1914 meeting, there was a contest to see you can make the best buttonhole.

In July **1912**, there was a picnic held at Devils Lake for a number of social groups from Sauk County, Wisconsin. There was a beanbag contest between the Fairfield Bachelors Club and the Arachnes. A picture of this event showed that both groups had uniforms.

A joint reunion of these groups was held on July 7, 1936, a quiet end to the history of these two interesting groups.

