

Join us for a
journey
through
history and
time.
An Odyssey
for those
beginning or
experienced
in genealogy.

Inside this issue:

Summarized Secretary's Report	2
Coins Left on Tombstones	3
Frank, George and Susan SWISHER	4
Alamo Cem GP Radar Workshop	8
Making Connections	9
In Memory	10
Upcoming Events	11

Roots and Branches

Volume 16—Issue 4

August 2019

Saving our Cemeteries
One Township at a time and expanding
our Local History Resources



The Genealogy Club of Montgomery Co, IN had a great After Hours event on Friday, July 26, 2019. We had 19 in attendance. Everyone made discoveries while having a great time. We also met the Library's New Director, Theresa TRYNER.

This is a photo of Steve SIMMS talking with Eva LEGG and her daughter,

Sherry LEGG YOUNG about their common BLACKFORD family in Montgomery County, IN. If you missed out this time around, the next AFTER HOURS event is the 4th Friday in October (October 25, 2019) at the Crawfordsville District Public Library. Join us for pizza and research time with library staff on the second floor using Local History databases. This event is free, just sign up at CDPL on 2nd floor, or call CDPL 362-2242 ext 117 and leave your name stating that you are attending. You must be at the library before 5pm the day of the After Hours event.

REMINDER: The Annual Dinner is September 10th. Cost is \$15 per person. See John Hooper to sign up or email Dellie Craig. Reservations are due Aug 30th!

Feel free to find us and Like us on FACEBOOK!

<https://www.facebook.com/Genealogy-Club-of-Montgomery-County-Indiana-Corp-1814527675437018/>

The Family Bible Project is available on the Crawfordsville District Public Library web site at: <http://history.cdpl.lib.in.us/bibles.html> The Bibles have been transcribed and scanned and are searchable by family name. As of May 2017, there were 135 Bibles online with more being added every month thanks to an IGS grant and club volunteers.



Steve Simms

Summarized Secretary's Report By Steve Simms, Secretary

The Genealogy Club of Montgomery County, Indiana, continues to meet the second Tuesday of every month at Crawfordsville District Public Library at 7pm.

Visitors and new members are welcome to all meetings.



In May, Chandler LIGHTY spoke about his path from Montgomery County to becoming the head of the State Archives. Pictured right is member Dian MOORE with Chandler.



Pictured left are Vicki HUDSON-SWISHER and Shannon HUDSON who gave a program about "The People Buried at the Colored Cemetery in Thorntown" in June.

In July we had the pleasure of hearing from Wes WILSON, speaking about the DePauw University Archives. We learned about their history, their collection, their hours and their online resources.

DePauw University Archives



7:00 pm -- Tuesday 09 July 2019

Speaker: Wes Wilson, Archivist

Coins Left on Tombstones By David Anderson

While visiting some cemeteries you may notice that headstones marking certain graves have coins on them, left by previous visitors to the grave. These coins have distinct meanings when left on headstones of those who gave their life while serving in America's military, and these meanings vary depending on the denomination of coin.

A coin left on a headstone or at the grave site is meant as a message to the deceased soldier's family that someone else has visited the grave to pay respect.

Leaving a penny at the grave means simply that you visited.

A nickel indicates that you and the deceased trained at boot camp together.

A dime means you served with him in some capacity.

Leaving a quarter tells the family that you were with the soldier when he was killed.

According to tradition, the money left at graves in national cemeteries and state veterans cemeteries is eventually collected and the funds are put toward maintaining the cemetery or paying burial costs for indigent veterans.

In the United States, this practice became common during the Vietnam war, due to the political divide in the country over the war. Leaving a coin was seen as a more practical way to communicate that you had visited the grave than contacting the soldier's family, which could involve an uncomfortable argument over politics relating to the war. Some Vietnam veterans would leave coins as a "down payment" to buy their fallen comrades a beer or play a hand of cards when they would finally be reunited.

The tradition of leaving coins on the headstones of military men and women can be traced to as far back as the Roman Empire. There are quite a few superstitions that compel people to leave money on a loved ones grave. By far the most popular reason is based in Greek Mythology. According to legend, Charon, the ferryman of Hades, requires payment of one coin to ferry your loved ones soul across the River Styx that separates the living from the dead. Historically, the coins were placed in the mouths of the deceased, or according to some sources, over their eyes. People who can't pay the fee are said to be doomed to wander the shores of the river for 100 years. This sounds like reason enough to throw down a penny, just in case.

Another popular reason for leaving coins on graves relates to the notorious DONNELLY family, known as the Black Donnelly's. A longstanding feud with another family resulted in the brutal massacre of five DONNELLY family members. Some believe that the DONNELLY's will grant a wish for anyone that leaves a penny on a DONNELLY family grave.

No matter what the original intention of the coin-leaver may be, it seems clear that a coin left on a headstone is a symbol of remembrance and respect. A way of telling all who pass by that the person buried there was loved and visited often.



Frank, George and Susan SWISHER –Montgomery County, Indiana

By Joseph A. KISSANE

Through the Genealogy Club of Montgomery County FaceBook page, we received a notice from Joseph A. KISSANE. He wrote, "I am trying to find information on the circumstances of the death of Andrew Jackson SWISHER and Mary PICKERILL SWISHER who lived and may have died in Crawfordsville or Montgomery Co, IN in October of 1855.

The earliest SWISHER to wind up in Idaho was Francis Marion SWISHER. Frank M. SWISHER was born in 1854, the youngest son of Andrew Jackson SWISHER and Mary PICKERILL SWISHER. The family had roots in parts of Virginia that later became West Virginia. Members of the extended family wound up in Montgomery County, Indiana and the Pleasant Township, Iowa area of Monroe County. Many of these extended family members moved from the area of western Virginia in the late 1830s – the SPOHR family and the FULWIDER family appear in close proximity to the Henry and Susan TROUT SWISHER's listing in the 1830 U.S. Census in Virginia before they moved to Montgomery County, Indiana. They were all farmers of one sort or another.

Mary PICKERELL and Andrew Jackson SWISHER were married in Montgomery Co, Indiana in 1849 and their first child Susan was born in 1850. George Washington SWISHER followed, born in 1852, and Francis Marion SWISHER was born in 1854. George and Susan are identified in many records as having been born in Indiana, and Frank (Francis) is listed in many places as having been born in Iowa, with no specific location given, but he was probably also born in Montgomery County Indiana. According to the story told by Frank SWISHER, Jr. to Idaho historian Mike HANLEY, Andrew Jackson SWISHER and his wife, Mary died in 1855 as a consequence of a runaway wagon accident in Indiana. Mary's death is recorded in Montgomery Co, Indiana, but the location of her burial is unknown.

Mary PICKERILL SWISHER had a sister Emma PICKERILL PITTENGER in Iowa at the time, and she and her husband David PITTENGER took the baby, Frank in. George and Susan wound up with two separate aunts (married sisters of Andrew Jackson SWISHER) in Montgomery Co, Indiana. Frank is listed as living with the family of his aunt, Emma PITTENGER in Pleasant Township, Iowa in 1856. George SWISHER is listed as living with his aunt, Nancy SWISHER SPOHR in 1860 in Montgomery County, Indiana. George, apparently, remained with the SPOHR family until he married in 1876 to Eva BOWMAN, the daughter of a prominent farmer in the area. Susan is listed as living with Moses and Sarah SWISHER FULWIDER in Franklin Township, Montgomery County, Indiana in 1860. In her teenage years, Susan worked as a domestic servant in the home of the James JESSE family and is listed as part of their household in 1870. In 1870, Susan applied for a license to marry, but the marriage to William GREY was either annulled or never came off, as she retained her maiden name. William GREY does not appear as her husband in subsequent references to her. She later is identified as a resident of the county poor farm and suffered from epilepsy.

Dianne Arbus, a photographer, once wrote that,
"A photo is a secret in a secret, the more it tells you, the less you know."

Family lore in Frank SWISHER's line tells several versions of the circumstances surrounding his young life. He is believed to have left the Iowa situation where he had been sometime between the ages of 8 and 10. My grandfather and others reported that he had traveled West with a wagon train led by Jim BRIDGER to Virginia City. Frank SWISHER, Jr. indicated that Frank, Sr. left Iowa in the company of a Mr. TRACY, when he was 8 years old. He was likely one of several "camp boys" who helped set up and tear down the camps along the route West as TRACY joined a wagon train. There was a brief span of less than 2 years when Jim BRIDGER was leading wagons to Virginia City, Montana while on leave from an appointment as a guide to the U.S. Army – between 1863 and 1865. BRIDGER did not lead any wagons to Virginia City, Nevada, as that would have taken him through Mormon Utah country, and he had difficulties with the Mormons, and had sold them Fort Bridger. (Their relationship was so strained that BRIDGER had to have a representative collect the payments because the Mormon's had put a price on his head.)

Frank SWISHER apparently headed West with TRACY on the wagon train and made his way to Virginia City, then Nevada City, and Bannack and Ruby, Montana in 1864 – when he would have been only 10 or 11 years old. He recounted the journey to his children, remarking at how BRIDGER was a kind of frontier diplomat when it came to dealing with the natives. The location of Nevada City, Montana near Virginia City, Montana may be responsible for the confusion between which Virginia City Frank SWISHER was bound for.

There has been some confusion about Frank SWISHER's circuitous route from Iowa to Idaho, but subsequent research has helped clarify some of the likely events. Part of that history in the timeframe from 1863-1864 was during a period of territorial boundary shifts - the town of Virginia City, Montana went from being in the Dakota Territory, to the Idaho Territory to Montana Territory as the area was reapportioned among these jurisdictions. It is conceivable that someone could leave Iowa headed for Virginia City, in the Dakota Territory, cross the Missouri River in Nebraska in-route to Virginia City, Idaho Territory, and arrive some weeks later in Virginia City, Montana Territory without ever having changed plans or route – the town never moved, the Dakota Territory was subdivided first having its western area designated as Idaho Territory, then having Idaho Territory subdivided into Idaho and Montana Territories. Among the reasons for this was that it was done to provide territorial governorships as rewards for officers who served in the Civil War.

When I was in college in Bozeman, Montana, I came across a diary in the library collection of a then teenaged girl who came West in a wagon train led by BRIDGER. She made a single reference to a skinny camp boy who was an orphan runaway named "Frankie" who may have been Frank SWISHER. Regrettably, I have not been able to locate a copy of that reference since.

A group of families from the South English, Iowa area collected their belongings and decided to head west – among them a man named Thomas SEERLY and his family. SEERLY kept some records of the trip from South English Iowa to Virginia City, Montana and it is very likely TRACY and Frank SWISHER were among this group, as they originated in the same part of Iowa, left the same year, and actually participated in the wagon train passage from Ft. Laramie to Virginia City described by Frank SWISHER to his family. They departed May 5, 1864, from South English to Council Bluffs by ox cart arriving there May 19 of that year (coincidentally, Frank SWISHER drove an ox cart as a teamster in Oregon and Idaho before settling down to start a family.) Their wagons reached Ft. Laramie, Wyoming on the Platte River on June 28, where they restored provisions and awaited a wagon train that would lead them through the mountains to their final destination.

Frank, George and Susan SWISHER continued...



William Henry Jackson created this drawing of Platte Bridge Station in 1866. This station is now interpreted at Fort Caspar, located in Casper, Wyoming.

By July 7, 1864, the wagons from Iowa reached the Overland Trail toll bridge over the Platte known as “the Lower Bridge.” At this stage, travelers made a choice to head across the Overland Trail to Lander and on to the Oregon Trail, or whether they would go northwest to Virginia City, by either the Bridger or Bozeman Trail. SEERLY and the group he was traveling with opted to take the Bridger Trail, based upon stories of hostile Indian troubles along the Bozeman trail. A total of 71 teams, as there was safety in numbers, headed north on the final leg of their journey on July 17. They finally arrived at Virginia City the last week of August, 1864. SEERLY’s estimate of the distance travelled from South English to Virginia City was 1,450-miles in 117 days of travel. Using distances on existing modern highways located closest to their route is approximately 1,410 miles, and at modern speeds traveling during daylight hours, it can be driven in 2 days.

The mid 1860s were very wild in the area around Virginia City, Montana, and dozens of people were lynched by a vigilante group, often without trials or evidence. This may have prompted TRACY and Frank SWISHER to move on, but for whatever reason, they continued West. TRACY and Frank SWISHER wound up in Grande Ronde, Oregon for a few years where Frank worked as a teamster driving ox carts between various trading centers along the trails in that area. There is a short reference in an 1870 newspaper article to a young driver named Frank SWISHER in Union, Oregon. In the 1870 United States Census, Frank is listed as being 16 years old and having come from Iowa. This young man is separated from the listings of another and is apparently unrelated to the SWISHER family in Union at the time who made their way from the East Coast to Oregon by ship. From there (Union, Oregon) Frank SWISHER made his way to Owyhee County, Idaho Territory shortly after 1870, likely as a consequence of his travels as a teamster.

July 14
 Sund 31st today drove about
 14 miles no water or grass on the
 way and are encamped on Grey
 Bull river a fine stream of good
 water-wood plenty-grass rather poor
 the road has been good but very
 dusty as usual- this afternoon
 met two men the first on the
 Cutoff- at encampment 2 men came
 in on return said to be with
 Bridger on return- gave bad report
 of Yellowstone- say no gold- no
 work- all seem gloomy & despond
 ing- I am bound to see this
 bauble burst or find gold
 the folks generally well.

From Am Good as Common – Journal of Thomas Seerly, 1864: “Sunday (sic). 31st today drove about 14 miles no water or grass on the way and are encamped on Grey Bull river a fine stream of good water - wood plenty - grass rather poor the road has been good but very dusty as usual - this afternoon met two men the first on the Cutoff - at encampment 2 men came in on return said to be with Bridger on return - gave bad report of Yellow stone - say no gold – no work - all seem gloomy & desponding - I am bound to see this bauble burst or find gold - the folks generally well.”

**Genealogists do it
 for the memories!**



@BestGenealogyTips

Alamo Cemetery Ground Penetrating Radar Workshop

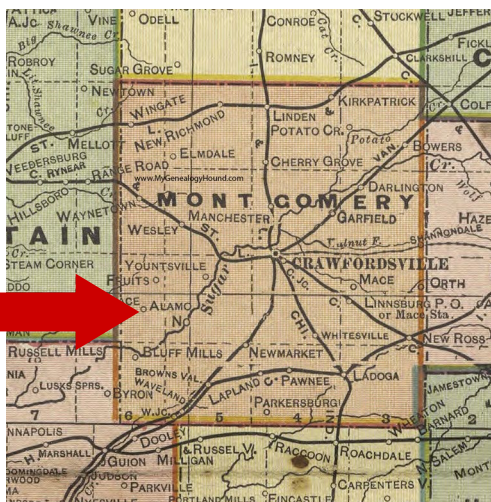


Ernest HAUSER, our own Bill HAUSER's brother, showed us how the Ground Penetrating Radar works - along with additional explanations at the Alamo Cemetery in early June. We were there about an hour before the weather put a stop to our day. However, the brothers had worked on a large section of the cemetery the day before. Between the two days in June, Ernest was able to cover quite a bit of ground. We are excited and patiently waiting for the results so we can document where currently unknown graves are located. Our goal is to find graves that have lost stones over the years and mark them for the future genealogists who come looking.

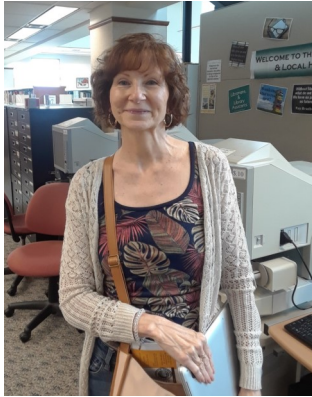
There will be future work at the cemetery in Alamo. No experience is required. If you want to help clean or learn to clean stones in a way that does no harm to the stones or the environment, you are welcome to come join us.

We use D2 and water with soft brushes, which is an accepted biological cleaner by experts in the stone cleaning field. This is the cleaner that is used at

Arlington National Cemetery, at the Alamo, etc. Watch future newsletters for upcoming dates and times as we will be getting back outside when the temperatures are more acceptable. You can always contact Judi Kleine at 765-376-9832 or by email at judikleine@gmail.com if you have questions.



Making Connections



Joy WILLETT, pictured left, recently visited to do some research using our local history collection. Joy was researching the THOMAS family.



Dellie Craig

On July 20, 2019, the KIRAGES met with me at Crawfordsville District Public Library. Mr. KIRAGES' dad managed and worked at KIRAGES' Bros at 113 E. Main Street before the family business moved to its Washington Street location and renamed it the Candy Kitchen.

Christopher KIRAGES grew up in Crawfordsville on Spring Street near the Old Rotary Jail. While attending Crawfordsville High School and Wabash College, he worked in the family business the "Candy Kitchen" on Washington Street. Chris and his son are tracing the family history in Crawfordsville where the family settled after leaving Greece in the early 1900's.

If you have you have any stories or information about the Candy Kitchen or the KIRAGES, please email chris.kirages@gmail.com



Christopher KIRAGES and son

Russ and Brenda SWAN came in May 9, 2019 from Carmel, IN.

They are researching the following families:

Robert SWAN and Elizabeth COMBS
 Milto J SWAN and Frances GALEY
 John C Hand SWAN and Catherin Jane WILHITE
 All from Montgomery County, IN.



**Brenda and Russ SWAN
 from Carmel, IN**

IN MEMORY OF



Sharon Ann Champa of Crawfordsville passed away Monday morning (August 5, 2019) at home. She was 68.

Born Oct. 19, 1950, at Fort Wayne, Indiana, she was the daughter of Gerald Goodrich and Darlene Wineland Goodrich. She graduated from Columbia City Joint High School in Columbia City, Indiana, and attended Grand Valley State University in Grand Rapids, Michigan, before graduating from Waynesburg University in Waynesburg, Pennsylvania, with a degree in nursing.

She was a member of First Christian Church, where she sang in the choir, Montgomery County League of Women Voters and was a Master Gardener, along with several other organizations.

Surviving family includes: husband David Champa; four children, Adam (Gail) Walker, Joshua (Minori) Walker, Naomi Walker, Gideon (Lisbeth) Walker; father Gerald (Gwen) Goodrich; sister Donna Premer; two brothers, Alan Goodrich and Bob Goodrich; nine grandchildren, Nathan, Bryce, Gia, Noah, Leo, Robin, Tais, Tiago and Elizabeth.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Darlene Goodrich; son Isaac Walker; sister Connie Stahlhut; and brother Samuel Goodrich.

Memorial services will be held at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 9 in the First Christian Church, 211 S. Walnut St., led by Pastor Darla Goodrich. Arrangements were entrusted to Burkhart Funeral Home. Contributions in memory of Sharon Champa may be made to the League of Women Voters, P.O. Box 101, Crawfordsville, IN 47933 or First Christian Church, 211 S. Walnut St., Crawfordsville, IN 47933. Online condolences may be made at www.BurkhartFH.com.



John David Cowan passed quietly Jan. 28, 2019, leaving behind a daughter and two granddaughters who loved him and knew him for how special he was.

John was born Feb. 24, 1939, to John Hubert Cowan and Stella Cord Cowan in Culver Hospital, Crawfordsville. He attended Mt. Zion and Crawfordsville schools, graduating with the Class of 1957. He was active in band while in high school and that was a vital interest for him throughout his life. He was an active member of the Pep Band at CHS during the 50's and particularly enjoyed playing with a group of classmates at the Class of 1957 50th reunion.

After graduating high school, John enlisted in the Air Force and was sent to serve at Air Rhein-Main Base near Frankfurt/am Main, Germany. After discharge, John attended classes at Tulane University and the University of Maryland. He finished his undergraduate degree at Purdue University in 1965. He then attended Indiana University, graduating in 1969 with a master's in radio/television. He re-enlisted in the Air Force and became a public affairs officer at Malmstrom AFB, Montana.

After 4 ½ years he was assigned to West Berlin where he ran the American Forces Television station. He met and married Gertrud Kaiser during this tour of duty in Berlin. He was blessed with a daughter, Tanya, while in Germany. After returning to the United States, John joined the Air Force Recruiting Service, operating out of Pittsburgh. He worked as a recruiter in New York, Pennsylvania and West Virginia before being assigned to broadcasting in South Korea as deputy

commander of the network out of Seoul (AFKN). He returned to Crawfordsville when his father died, then retired from the Air Force in 1983 at Wright Patterson AFB.

After returning to the Crawfordsville area, John was an active community supporter. He was a 28-year member of the American Legion. He attended local high school events, donated to various organizations for needy children, worked the lamb tent and assisted young leaders in 4-H. John worked with the Old Jail Museum, sang in the Sunshine Chorus, played in the community band, was a part of the League of Women Voters, and participated in Kiwanis International from 1992. He was in the 1986 movie *Hoosiers*, that was filmed in New Richmond, as an extra in the barber shop scene. He worked part-time for several years at Lowe's. John considered his greatest accomplishment to be his role as commander of American Forces Television in Berlin and serving as deputy commander of the broadcasting network in Korea (AFKN).

While John did not succeed in becoming President of the United States which was listed at the top of his bucket list at his 60th class reunion, he never knew a stranger and is remembered by all for being a steadfast, true friend, an avid supporter of the many causes he undertook, a role model for many, and an outstanding husband, father and grandfather.

John was preceded in death by his wife, Gertrud; and son-in-law James Wilhoite.

He is survived by daughter, Tanya Cowan Wilhoite of Muncie; and granddaughters, Hannah and Virginia. A celebration of life will be held at 3 p.m. Feb. 24, which would have been John's 80th birthday, at Liberty Chapel Church, 3942 W. C.R. 500N, Crawfordsville.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Montgomery County Community Foundation with a memo note designating the Town of New Richmond and mailed to P.O. Box 334, Crawfordsville, IN 47933 or to the Crawfordsville Kiwanis.

Upcoming Events

Sep 10, 2019—6pm

Genealogy Club Annual Meeting & Dinner

Oct 8, 2019—7pm

Genealogy Club Organization Meeting

Oct 25, 2019—5pm

Last After Hours of 2019—All welcome

Nov 12, 2019—7pm

Genealogy Club Meeting

Dec 10, 2019—7pm

Christmas Treats and visiting

All articles and other submissions for the August newsletter must be emailed to stephief@live.com by October 25, 2019.

How can one
ancestor be so
much trouble?



We inherit from our ancestors gifts so often taken for granted. Each of us contains within this inheritance of soul. We are links between the ages, containing past and present expectations, sacred memories and future promise.

~Edward Sellner

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Find additional
interesting articles at
[http://cdpl-
history.blogspot.com](http://cdpl-history.blogspot.com)

Join us for a journey through history and time



The annual dues of the Genealogy Club of Montgomery County Indiana Inc. for the period October 1, 2019 to September 30, 2020 are due in September 2019.

They may be given to Dellie Craig at the Crawfordsville District Public Library or mailed to the Club Treasurer (John Hooper, 1576 E 400 N, Crawfordsville, IN 47933).

You can find current and past Genealogy club newsletters and a membership application on the Crawfordsville District Public Library Website www.cdpl.lib.in.us Find us under the services tab and click on Genealogy Club of Montgomery County

**GENEALOGY CLUB OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORP
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Date _____ New
 Renewal

Individual Family Institutional Business
\$10/yr \$25/yr \$15/yr \$50/yr

Amount enclosed \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City State Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Check if it is acceptable to email you a pdf copy of the newsletter

Family/Families you are researching:

Mail application and payment to: Genealogy Club of Montgomery County Indiana Corp., 205 S. Washington St., Crawfordsville, IN 47933