



NEWSLETTER

McLean County Genealogical Society

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GENEALOGY MEETUP "SHARING & LEARNING"

IN PERSON or ZOOM

Tuesday, September 2, 2025

2:00 PM

Preregistration is required at the Normal Public Library website:

<https://www.normalpl.org/event/genealogy-meetup-38562>

and

Tuesday, October 7, 2025

2:00 PM

<https://www.normalpl.org/event/genealogy-meetup-38563>

Participants will share their recent genealogy finds and get help using Ancestry Library Edition and other library resources.

Attend in person at the library's Community Room

206 W. College Ave., Normal, IL

Or join us on Zoom

Visit [our website](#) for details.

President's Message

CAUTION AND BEWARE



Have you ever been to the doctor's office and they ask for your insurance card and ID? The check in person scans your two documents and they get put into your file for billing purposes and for reference.

Those scanned images also get uploaded to a data warehouse that handles medical billing for the doctor's office hospital or clinic. Last year one of the biggest medical billing data warehouses was hacked meaning that cyber thieves illegally obtained copies of those records for millions of patients.

You likely received a letter informing you of this data breach but could only throw it away as there is nothing you could do at this point. Many of us have received this type of letter from different companies as their data is stolen – some of them offer credit monitoring for one year as a consolation prize for their stupidity/incompetence in guarding your information. So, imagine our surprise to find out that thieves had used that stolen data to create a duplicate driver's license (REAL ID star and bar code included) with their own photo, height and weight on it – and then used it to purchase a \$91,000 construction implement. They had to break our frozen credit to do this. They got the equipment, and we get the loan payment book in the mail the following week. Theft on a grand scale!! What can we do to protect ourselves?

On our webpage – tmcgs.org – I created a special page with tips on protecting yourself that we learned from this experience. I hope you find it productive to read and take the actions recommended.

McLean County Deed Records

The MCGS website now offers McLean County Grantor and Grantee Deed indexes from 1831 to 1970. You can research your ancestor's property records from your home. The images were a gift from the McLean County Recorder's Office and I enhanced, resized, and created PDF files that you can download for your research. Enjoy.

Have a great fall. - Rand Veerman

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

We often go to cemeteries as my maternal grandmother and my mother did. In the summer, my Dad's sister would join us as well. When we visit a cemetery, we may have our lunch under the shade of an old tree (though they are getting fewer and fewer!). We may "cruise" the cemetery looking for someone whose descendant has sent in a query to TMC GS. Sometimes we just take in the history, the decades of families who are interred.

Recently, we were in a cemetery in Macon County, Illinois where the graves of family members and hundreds of others have gone uncared for. The most recent family burial we looked at was August of 2023. In another part of the cemetery, the earliest family grave was 1959. We are not talking about a rural cemetery in the corner of a corn or soybean field. This cemetery is in town. In order to get the graves of our family as well as those of family friends in presentable order, we came back to that cemetery with our weed eater, a rake and a broom. In fact, because the thatch was so deep, we went back a third time to complete the work.

In McLean County, we are so very, very fortunate to have so many well cared for cemeteries: Evergreen, St. Mary's, Holy Cross, Park Hill, Scogin Hill, East Lawn, et al. in the Bloomington Normal area. Cemeteries in the smaller communities like Colfax, Danvers, Hudson, Ellsworth, LeRoy, Saybrook, et al. are also well tended. Yesterday, we went to Randolph Township Cemetery, also known as Passwater in search of two graves from the early 1900s. We had the privilege of meeting the caretaker who thoroughly enjoys and appreciates his work – and it shows! The cemetery is beautifully kept. Thank all of the administration, volunteers, city and township employees for the work they do to keep the memories of our ancestors well cared for.

Interestingly, we also made a trip to LaSalle County, Ill. and found the same lack of caretaking. Overgrown, thatched grass covering stones, stones askew. Again, this isn't a rural burial spot, but one of the larger cemeteries in town. In this case, we called a cousin who knows someone on the cemetery board. When we go back north in a few weeks, we'll see if she had any luck in having the graves of her father, her uncle, grandparents, great-grandparents mowed and weed eaten. I think we'll take the lawn tools with us – just in case.

The third cemetery we recently visited was just last week was in western Indiana. This cemetery, too, was well taken care of. On the maintenance building there was a sign: "Donations for cemetery perpetual care and maintenance may be made to.... (with the

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address of the mailbox for the cemetery)." The sign also listed phone numbers for two individuals. I thought this was a pretty good approach to addressing the needs for ongoing funds for upkeep.

Thank you to all who work to keep the memorials of our ancestors intact. In some ways, it's akin to keeping a city or county park well-tended. If you know of a cemetery that's well cared for and want to share, please let me know at mcgs.research@gmail.com

NEWS FROM THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



LISTING OF SURNAMES BEING RESEARCHED

Coming in the November/December Newsletter will be a listing of surnames being researched by TMC GS members. If you don't think we have your surnames send them to us at mcgs.directors@gmail.com. Private information will not be disclosed. The list will consist of a membership number along with the surname. If you (or someone else) recognizes a surname they are interested in, they can contact MCGS at the same email address. Our research committee will then get in touch with the member researching that surname to see if they are interested in exchanging information. Initially we were only allowing up to 8 surnames being researched in McLean County, Illinois, but we have decided to expand that to 16 surnames per member. Later the list will be posted on our website.

FROM THE STEVENSON-IVES LIBRARY SHELF



In the "Good Old Days" before genealogy was directed by computer searches and DNA, searchers relied heavily on society publications. TMC GS has a wide variety of these for most Illinois societies outside the Chicago area. Many date from the early 1970's through 2010's while some are still published today.

Issues of *Saga of Southern Illinois*, *Illinois Mennonite Heritage*, and *Illiana Genealogist* cover several counties. All the publications have been added to the McLean Co. Museum of History's RSA Library Catalog and can be accessed through the "Research" section on the Museum's website. Publications are listed by name, location, and general dates of issue

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For McLean County there are complete runs of *Gleanings from the Heart of the Corn Belt* and *Ancestors Yours and Mine* (Lexington). The collection also includes most recent issues of *The Next Generation* from the Lexington Genealogical and Historical Society, aka “The Fort”, a newsletter that covers McLean, Livingston, and Woodford Counties. There is also the Tazewell County Historical and Genealogical Society’s *Monthly*, another possible source for McLean County’s early days.

Other counties’ quarterlies include those from Adams, Brown, Champaign, Christian, Coles, Dekalb, Dewitt, Douglas, DuPage, Effingham, Fayette, Fulton, Grundy, Henry, Iroquois, Kankakee, Knox, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Marion, McDonough, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Peoria, Piatt, Richland, Rock Island, Saline, St. Clair, Sangamon, Schuyler, Shelby, Stephenson, Warren, Whiteside, Will-Grundy.

Happy Hunting!

Reminder: the Stevenson-Ives Library catalog (RSAcat) can be accessed online at https://alsi.sdp.sirsi.net/client/en_US/McLeanCountyMuseumOfHistory/search/results/?Search=Search+RSAcat&lm=MS_MC-HIST&q= This address also covers most libraries in McLean County and north central Illinois.

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**New on TMC GS website:** Please check out our latest digital book offered thru our bookstore. Military Records from The McLean County Recorder’s Office. Three volumes in one Civil War Era Records including Soldier’s Register A – McLean Regiment, Soldier’s Discharges B and Soldier’s Discharges 1. <https://payhip.com/b/hVv8R>

All this information is available free on the website [tmcgs.org](http://tmcgs.org), but we are offering it in a single book as well at a cost of \$5.

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QUERIES ACCEPTED Do you have a brick wall? If so, why not send us a query at mccgs.research@gmail.com. If our research committee cannot find the answer, a query will be published in a newsletter or the Journal in hopes that someone will respond.



McLean County Museum of History

Photos by
William P. LaBounty



On the Courthouse Square, Bloomington, Illinois

Contact: P.O. Box 488, Normal, IL 61761-0488
Library: 309-827-0428, ext. 28
<mailto:mcgs.directors@gmail.com>

Visit: McLean County Museum of History
Stevenson-Ives Library
200 North Main Street, 2nd Floor
Downtown Bloomington

Online: <https://www.tmcgs.org>

Library/Archives: Appointments recommended.

Museum: Open to the public.
Handicapped accessible. For details visit:
<https://www.mchistory.org/visit/>
FREE admission for MCGS members.

During their shifts, volunteers in the Stevenson-Ives Library are available to help visitors with their research