

Minutes
Larimer County Genealogical Society
August 25, 2005
Fort Collins Public Library
Ben Delatour Room

President Goldsberry cowbelled the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He began the meeting with a query concerning the picnic held on Saturday. A number of members indicated they would attend and did not; Ken mentioned that this made ordering and preparing food difficult. Ken stated that those who attended had a good time, and those who didn't missed a great outing.

Visitors and New Members

Quite a number of visitors attended the meeting. They included: Ellen Montague, Judy and Dave Maitland, Maureen Mueller, Donna McDaniels, Mary Lou Peckham, Ed Secor, Henry Atwater and Maryann Poole. President Goldsberry introduced them and asked what family lines they were researching. Following, he introduced two new members: Betty Peterson and Bob Grundborg. Both had attended as visitors previously.

Introduction of Current Members

President Goldsberry introduced Sonny and Jan Hygh, who are longtime members of the Society. He asked Sonny to stand and report briefly on his family research. Other than the case of the disappearing grandfather, Sonny said his research is going well. Ken indicated that Sonny and Jan were instrumental in the completion of the Society's recently published marriage index.

Committee Reports

Webmaster

Dolores Ray, Society Webmaster, reported that she is keeping the website up-to-date with new information. She repeated, for those who may not have it, the web address: www.jymis.com~lcgs/.

Treasurer's Report

Mary Joy Hauk, Treasurer, made copies of the most recent Treasurer's Report available for anyone who wanted one. A copy is attached.

Society Name Change

Ken Goldsberry reported on the Society's change of name. Several years ago, the Society name, which is registered with the State, was inadvertently changed to "Larimer County Genealogy Society" instead of the correct "Larimer County Genealogical Society". The Board has been working on getting the correct name reinstated.

Originally, the Board feared that the change of name might prove difficult. Ken told the members that just this morning he had heard from our attorney, and the change was complete, for a charge of only \$100 instead of the original \$150 estimated.

Newsletter

Bob Larson, Newsletter Editor, reported that back issues of the Society newsletter are now available on the website. Current issues will be held from the website for a month or so to allow Society members to read them first. The next newsletter will be published in one or two weeks. It will include pictures of the Society picnic held on August 20.

Bob also announced that Ceil Damschroder will be teaching two sessions of the her genealogy class this fall, one in Ft. Collins and one in Loveland. The schedule is posted on the website and also appears in the *Ft. Collins Recreator*. Bob stated that Ceil is an excellent teacher, and he highly recommends her classes.

Membership

Jean Anderson, Membership Committee Chair, announced that the Society now has 136 members – the most ever! She also reported on the Society surname list which is now posted on the website. This is a list of surnames that Society members are researching. It includes the surnames, the member searching and the member's email address. Jean mentioned that she had “googled” one of her names, and the Society listing came up.

Cemetery Crawl and Storytelling

Dora Hildebrant reported on two community projects with which she is involved. The Cemetery Crawl at Grandview Cemetery will be on September 17. Two performances will be given, one at 10:00 am and one at 1:30 pm. For an additional fee, a pioneer lunch, featuring old time dishes, will be served between the performances. For the 10th anniversary of the Crawl, early pioneers of Larimer County will be featured. The local Pioneer Association is celebrating their 100th anniversary next year, and this year's Crawl will highlight ancestors of people who belong to the Association. Several society members will be portraying pioneers. These include: Jean Anderson, Betty Frye, Lynn Rubenthaler and Carolyn Goodwin.

Dora next reported on another community project: Spellbinders. This is a storytelling group who volunteer in the public elementary schools. Society member Marilyn Rudd is a new volunteer this year. There will be an introductory meeting on August 31 for anyone who is interested in volunteering.

Dora made brochures for both projects available to members. Copies are attached.

Scrapbook

Cathy Smith brought our Society history album. She has pictures of the picnic from last weekend, but she needs some help identifying people in the pictures.

Historical Committee

Len Ray stated that in the process of organizing Society artifacts, some old genealogy forms were found. These include family tree sheets, family group sheets and census extraction forms. Originally, the Society sold these forms, but they are now free for anyone wishing to take them.

At this point, Ken auctioned off several sets of genealogy cartoon notecards which were also among the Society artifacts. Several people paid \$2.00 for sets. A few got an even better bargain and only paid \$1.25 per set!

Education and Outreach

Dolores Ray, Chairman of the Education and Outreach Committee, discussed the Education and Outreach handouts which members received at the beginning of the meeting. The first handouts concern upcoming genealogy workshops. On October 8, "Genealogy on the Internet" will be presented at the Harmony Library. Then on October 15, Lady Teviot, an English researcher, will present a workshop on genealogy research in England. On October 29 a workshop on "Preservation of Documents and Photos" will be given. Following this, there will be a workshop on a similar subject: "Restoration of Photos." Time and date for this workshop will be announced.

Another sheet was a request for volunteers to serve on subcommittees to implement some upcoming programs. Volunteers are needed for the following proposed projects: oral history, girl scout merit badge and introductory elementary school genealogy programs.

The final sheet of the handout is a flyer detailing September and October's general meeting programs. Copies of these handouts are attached.

Finally, Dolores explained the mentor program which the Society is undertaking. In this program, members who have genealogy questions concerning genealogy technology or research can contact Gwen and Boyd Johnson. Gwen and Boyd will assign a mentor who can help the member solve his problem.

A fifteen minute break for cookies and soda and conversation followed. Marge Abrames, Hospitality Chairman, invited members to take home bottles of water and cans of soda. These are leftovers from the picnic.

Corresponding Secretary

After the break Ken announced that Carol Stetser has volunteered to become Recording Secretary. This means the Society needs a Corresponding Secretary. Ken requested volunteers.

Dating and Identifying Heritage Photos

Vice President Len Ray introduced the featured speaker, Pat Roberts. Pat is the president of the Boulder Genealogical Society and has done extensive research on dating and identifying old photos. Pat brought along transparencies of her photos to illustrate her talk and also provided Len with a handout which details specifics of her talk. A copy is attached.

Pat began by stating that old photos are a little piece of immortality. She suggested that everyone re-examine those old photos and make efforts to date and identify them.

Prior to 1839, the only way to have a likeness of someone was through paintings, silhouettes and sketches. In 1839 the Daguerreotype process was invented. Soon after, other processes such as ambrotypes, tintypes and paper prints were developed. Figuring out what process was used can help date photos. For example, tintypes are a fairly common type of photo. If they have black backs, they're usually from before 1870. Brown backs date from after 1870 until about 1900.

"Cartes de Visite" are a very common type of paper print. They're usually about the size of a playing card. These photos are usually mounted on cardboard and often have a photographer's imprint on the back. These imprints varied by era and can be useful in dating photos. Even the photographer's name can be useful since it is possible to find out when a photographer was active. Sometimes the dating can be quite accurate using stamps found on the back of photos. For example, a certain stamp on the back of photos means that a tax was paid on the photos. This tax was only levied in the North during the Civil War between 1864 and

1866.

Another, often larger, type of paper print is the Cabinet card. These often have a sepia tone and were popular between 1870 and 1900. Less frequently seen are glass plated negatives, cyanotypes and overpainting. The Kodak camera first appeared in the 1890s and really made photography affordable and available to everyone. Each of these types of photos date to specific eras and can help identify family photos.

Pat gave the members several tips to help determine exactly what type of photo a given picture might be. One interesting example involved determining how old a “carte de visite” (CDV) might be. The thickness of the photo can be measured with calipers, and age determined by the thickness. Unfortunately, most people do not have calipers, but a tricky method can be employed. Sheets of regular copy paper can be stacked next to the CDV. If the thickness of the CDV is 6 sheets or less, it dates from 1858 to 1869. Photos 7 to 8 sheets thick are from 1869 to 1887. Nine or more sheets thick are from 1888 until about 1900. The color of the card is another clue to age. Early cards are white followed by gray, yellow and chocolate brown or black. Card edges were squared off at first then later rounded and edged with gilt.

As mentioned earlier, photographer’s imprints are important clues to dating photographs. A website, www.eastmanhouse.com, gives details about which photographers were active in what periods.

Once the photograph is dated, it can more easily be identified. One method of identifying photos mentioned by Pat is to spread out a lot of photos and try to determine which ones go together. Some people have distinctive characteristics which don’t change with age. Clothing and hairstyles are important clues to identifying photos. There are many books available at libraries to help determine what fashions were popular at what times. One interesting facet of old photos is the seriousness of the faces. Pat explained that this was, in part, because having a photo taken was serious business. The person being photographed could not move for 15-30 minutes. All kinds of braces were used to help people maintain poses. In addition, photographers encouraged serious faces since photos were to show character. They were not a frivolous medium.

Pat concluded by encouraging members to search out photos of their ancestors. She suggested family historians try to get extended family members to make copies to share. She also emphasized that everyone should make copies of his or her own pictures to share with other family members.

A short question and answer period followed. Members asked questions concerning books on identifying photos. Pat suggested that Maureen Taylor has written several books on the topic which are helpful. Several members requested copies of Pat’s talk. Len will make copies and make them available to members.

The meeting as adjourned at 8:40 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Stetser
Recording Secretary