

Larimer County Genealogical Society
General Meeting Minutes
August 17, 2006
Harmony Library
Harmony and Shields Street
Fort Collins
Community Room

Since President Goldsberry was absent, Vice President Len Ray called the meeting to order at 6:38 pm.

Len began the meeting with several items of Society business. He announced that handouts from previous meetings are available for anyone who wants one.

He next reviewed the "Recycle Table", which is a new Society program whereby members can donate unwanted genealogical books, periodicals, software, etc. Those items will be available at general meetings for other members to purchase. Proceeds will go to the Society's general fund. Len thanked Cathi Smith for agreeing to handle the program.

Finally, Len informed members of a proposed increase in dues. The Society is undertaking more ambitious programs which require more money to operate. The new dues will be \$18 per year for a single member and \$27 per year per family. Len asked for a show of hands approving the increase. A large majority showed approval.

Introduction of New Members and Visitors

Several new members were present including: Grady Kane, Esther Graebel and a returning member, Ken Snyder. Visitors included Linda Stevens and Kelly Hamma. Len welcomed them all and encouraged their continued attendance at Society functions.

A short break for treats and conversation was taken at this point.

Program

Len introduced Ceil Damschroder, who is a former president of the Society. She is an accomplished genealogist and teaches beginning genealogy classes in both Loveland and Fort Collins (For those who are interested, classes will be starting in October in both locations.). Her topic was "Surnames" (see attached).

Ceil explained the history of surnames in various countries. Historically, surnames weren't used until a population grew large enough that using one name only resulted in confusion. Various countries devised various methods of assigning surnames. Some, such as the Scandinavian countries, used a patronymic system incorporating the father's first name as part of the last name. Others used last names derived from place names, occupations and even physical characteristics.

The second portion of Ceil's presentation dealt with spelling of names. Genealogists often assume that the way a name is spelled now is how it has always been spelled. According to Ceil, this is completely wrong. Spelling has always been fluid and changed often. Earlier generations were often illiterate and didn't even know the "correct" way to spell their names. In other cases, public officials spelled names as they saw fit, with no reference to how an individual thought his name should be spelled. All in all, Ceil stated that

spelling is the bane of genealogists. They should always be open to all possibilities when it comes to spelling.

Committee Reports

Hospitality

Hospitality Chairperson Marge Abrames thanked those who provided the evening's snacks. Marge explained that she sometimes has to buy coffee, filters, napkins, etc., and that's why there is a donation jar on the snack table.

Programs for 2007

As Vice President, Len Ray is responsible for booking programs. He is presently lining up speakers and programs for 2007. He asked members to let him know if they have any suggestions.

Treasurer

Treasurer Mary Joy Hauk indicated that the month end balance of the Society's account was \$1712.20. She stated that the Society is working on a new financial report form which will outline the Society's finances in a more detailed manner.

Webmaster

Webmaster Dolores Ray suggested that members take advantage of the website's affiliate programs. These entities, which include Amazon.com, Ancestry.com, etc., have links on the Society's website. Anyone who clicks onto those sites and makes purchases will earn a commission for the Society.

Dolores further explained that she has set up restricted access to many of the Society's databases. This means a password is necessary to access these databases. All Society members automatically receive a password. Non-members who wish access will be able to pay \$10 per calendar year to access these databases, as well as the Society's newsletters.

Finally, Dolores reported that the project to scan Fort Collins obituaries and place them on the website is coming along well. In the future more and more obituaries will be appearing in the database for researchers to use.

Education and Outreach

Education and Outreach Chairperson Dolores Ray reported that planning is proceeding for two Girl Scout Heritage Badge workshops to be held in Loveland and Estes Park. Email notices will be sent out requesting volunteers to help with these programs.

Recording Secretary

Recording Secretary Carol Stetser takes minutes at all meetings. Those minutes are available to members on the website. In addition, a copy is available at all meetings for members to look over, if they wish.

Publicity

Chairperson Kathy Patrick mentioned that she will be posting copies of the Society's updated brochure at

various locations throughout the county.

Newsletter

Newsletter Editor Bob Larson indicated that the next newsletter will be published in September. He mentioned that the next newsletter will have a column about the *DaVinci Code* which he feels will be of interest to genealogists. He congratulated member Jim Willard on his “Story of a Lifetime” from the last issue of the newsletter and indicated that the next “Story of a Lifetime” by Tom Phelan will be equally interesting.

Bob recognized the other members of the newsletter committee who are so instrumental in publishing it. They include Karen Whatley, Julia Hillen and Nadine Gates. The members gave them a round of applause for all their hard work.

Bob stated that, starting in September, the newsletter will be available electronically on the Society website. The goal was to have 50 members sign up for the electronic version. At present, 43 have signed up. Four more members agreed to the electronic version during the meeting. Bob encouraged anyone else who would like the electronic version to let him know.

Family Tree Maker Group

Bob Larson informed the members that the FTM Group will be starting again the first week of September. Members of the group will be informed by email. In addition, the information will be available on the Society website.

Membership

Bob Larson has been acting as temporary chair, but the Society very much needs a permanent chairperson. He encouraged any interested members to volunteer. Bob further announced that the Society now has 150 members!

Budget and Finance

Budget and Finance Committee Chairman Bob Larson reported that the Society has received 501 (c) (3) status from the IRS. He congratulated Len Ray for his major role in procuring this non-profit status for the Society. Bob further reported that the Society is now in the process of obtaining tax-exempt status from the State of Colorado. Once the Society has received tax-exempt and non-profit status, it will be able to apply for grants to further some long term goals, such as starting a library.

Historical

Cathi Smith announced that she has added several pages to the Society scrapbook. In addition, Paul Smith has been digitizing some Society records.

Genealogy Gems

Cathi Smith shared a genealogy gem concerning the spelling of one of her family names. Two brothers were named “Shachs”. One refused to pay his bill at the local grocers, so the other changed his name to “Shacks”. That way the grocer would always know who didn’t pay his bill!

Len Ray shared a gem concerning a friend who wanted to know if he had any ancestors who fought in the Civil War. Len is going to tell him, "I didn't find one Civil War ancestor . . . I found five!" Len also reported finding an interesting website: www.worldcat.org. This website has previously been available only through libraries but is now available to anyone. Through the site, researchers can check for books, manuscripts, papers and etc. held in over 55,000 libraries worldwide.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.