

Larimer County Genealogical Society
General Meeting Minutes
August 20, 2009
Harmony Library
Harmony and Shields Street
Fort Collins
Community Room

President Bob Larson called the meeting to order at 6:30 pm. He announced that a break for refreshments and conversation would be taken until approximately 7:00 pm.

After the break, Bob welcomed everyone and presented the attached agenda. He mentioned that a new seating arrangement is being tried, which will, hopefully, give everyone a bit more room.

Jan Hygh, Membership Chair, introduced the 24 visitors present this evening. These included: Yvonne Fox, Nancy Judkins, Pam Welden, Mary Novotny, Kay Gillen, Robert Singiser, Debbie Kropp, Nicole Blechyden, Peggy Donovan, Fran Jeffords, Joanne Torpy, Betty and Rusty Siefken, Ann Schrader, Barb McGillivray, Linda Dute, Vicki Gray, Helen Weber, Ronda Carstensen, Sharon Johnson, Susan Howard, Kay Saelens, Debbie Hamilton, Lois Riess and Bob VanGilder. Bob thanked them for coming and encouraged them to consider joining the Society.

Bob also took a brief survey of the visitors to see how they learned of the Society, through a friend, the LCGS website, newsletter or *50 Plus Marketplace*.

Business Meeting

50 Plus Marketplace

Bob reminded everyone that various members of the Society have begun writing a monthly genealogy column for this newspaper. The newspaper is free and is specifically geared to those over 50 years old.

2009 Workshop Schedule

Ceil Damschroder will be teaching a series of classes on genealogy at both the Fort Collins and Loveland Senior Centers starting in October. Bob encouraged everyone to consider signing up for these worthwhile classes which cover the basics of genealogy.

Several workshops are coming up this fall including one on "Document and Photo Preservation" taught by Kate Legg, who presented an interesting program on photo preservation to the Society a year or so ago. This will be a more in-depth look at the subject. In October Gwen Kelly will be presenting a workshop on "Scrap booking Your Family History." See the attached schedule for more details.

Poudre River Library District

Ginny Feagler, Society Library Liaison, reported that the library will now allow circulation of several popular genealogy periodicals including *Internet Genealogy*.

Hospitality

Bob thanked Liz Willson, Marilyn Rudd and Janet Nelson for providing this evening's refreshments.

He reported that volunteers are needed for the remaining three meetings of the year and circulated a clipboard for people to sign.

Publicity

Publicity Chair Hap Hazard reported that he still has a few Society lapel pins available. He urged everyone to "get them before they're gone."

Meeting Space

As everyone is aware, the Society is outgrowing the Community Room. While the rearrangement of chairs may help short term, the Society may need to look at another space for 2010 and beyond.

Education Chair

Bob reported that Sherri Schloss has agreed to be Newsletter Publisher. George and Hildy Morgan will become Education Chairs starting in October.

Recycle Table

Cathi Smith is resigning as Recycle Table Chair at the end of this year. Unless someone else agrees to take over the Table, November will be the last month for this worthwhile program. Bob urged a couple to consider taking on this responsibility; it isn't difficult, but it does require bringing the various items to be sold to the general meetings.

Recording Secretary

The Society still requires someone to take minutes for the Board meetings. It has been agreed that the person will not need to take minutes at the General meetings, so it's really only a once-a-month commitment.

Loveland and Fort Collins Study Groups

Boyd Johnson reported that he will be resuming the Loveland Study Group meetings, which are held in his and Gwen's home, on September 8. Interested members should contact him for details.

The Fort Collins Study Group is held at the Harmony Library and will also be beginning in September. Further details will be forthcoming.

Mentors are also available to help members with individual questions and problems. Members can contact Sharon Koleber (see the directory for contact information), who will arrange an appropriate mentor.

Website

Pat Walker, Webmaster, reported that the new Society website is up and running. After the speaker, she spent a few minutes showing members some of the new features that are available on the site. She encouraged everyone to visit the site and see what they think of it.

Dating Photographs by Clothing, 1850-1910

Carol Stetser introduced the evening's speaker, Sherry Birch. Sherry is a longtime historic enactor, who has spent the past fifteen years researching women's clothing from the Victorian era.

Sherry reported that it is much easier to date women's clothing than men's since men often wore (and probably still do wear) clothing much longer without worrying about style changes. In addition, women's clothing styles tend to change much more quickly than men's. Therefore, Sherry recommends focusing on the women's clothing in old photos to help date them; in particular, she suggests looking at the clothing of the younger women, since young women and girls were more style-conscious and tried to keep up with the latest fashions.

The earliest photos from the U.S. are from 1839, but Sherry reported that the majority of photos that genealogists will likely have are from later in the period, from the late 1870s on, as photography became more common. This fact can help genealogists date and identify their photos because it's obvious that there cannot be a photograph of someone who died in 1830, for example.

Sherry then gave a decade-by-decade overview of the various fashion changes to look for in the period from 1850 through about 1910. It was interesting to see how a seemingly minor change in sleeve and skirt shape can definitively date an outfit. In some time periods, Sherry stated that fashions can date an outfit within a one or two-year period. One of the assumptions often made, according to Sherry, is that people in rural areas, especially in the West, wore clothing that was several years out-of-date. Sherry has done extensive research in the Cheyenne, Wyoming newspapers from the time of the founding of the town in the 1860s, and she debunks that theory. She stated that the newspaper had

ads touting the latest fashions from New York and Europe and reporting that the local dress making shops had patterns and materials with which to make those fashions.

One of the more interesting parts of Sherry's presentation was her dating of photographs of ancestors previously submitted by Society members. Sherry was able to intersperse the members' photos among her own and place them in the context of their eras. For those who submitted the photos, it was an interesting and informative feature.

Sherry's presentation was a fascinating look at how photos can be dated simply by looking at the clothing worn by the people in them, with no reference to the type of photographic processes used to take them. It was amazing to see how much historic perspective can be gained from photographs just by looking at the clothing the people in the photos wore.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.