PastPorts

VOL. 1, No. 10—DECEMBER 2008

OF NOTE

News from the Special Collections Department

DEPARTMENT TO ADD ADDITIONAL MICROFILM SCANNING STATIONS

Currently the Special Collections Department has one microfilm reader with the capability to scan images to a CD or flash drive. The Department is pleased to announce that it will add this feature to four other readers. Setup and preparation will take several months, but the staff hopes to have the four additional stations operational by this spring.

NORTHERN ILLINOIS SOCIETY DONATES COLLECTION OF PUBLISHED FAMILY HISTORIES

The Zion (Ill.) Genealogical Society has notified the St. Louis County Library that it will donate 54 published family histories to the Special Collections Department. The histories will be included in the circulating collection, making them available also for interlibrary loan. Zion is located north of Chicago near the Wisconsin border. After considering several other libraries for the donation, the Society determined that the Special Collections Department would be the most accessible location for the materials. The Department already holds more than 20,000 circulating items in the National Genealogical Society Book Loan Collection. Delivery of these books will be made at the end of November. A list of titles will be published in *PastPorts* once they are processed and cataloged.

Locale-specific German resources

BOOK CHAT

Genealogical societies and publishers in Germany produce a number of locale-specific resources that are valuable for genealogical research. Of these, the *Ortssippenbücher* are perhaps the best known, but others include *Bürgerbücher*, *Häusergeschichten*, and *Hofgeschichten*. The Department has begun making direct contact with German publishers with the goal of acquiring as many of these high-quality materials as possible. With a few exceptions, many of these resources are so far unavailable in other U.S. libraries.

Locale-specific books for German genealogy can be a boon for the family history researcher. Not only do they offer an abundance of genealogical information, they also provide the geographical, cultural and historical context of ancestral origins. The books are in German, but genealogical information is usually presented in a standard format that requires little knowledge of the language. Historical and other information in the book is more of a challenge. Several staff members in the Department read German and can help patrons navigate the books.

PastPorts is a monthly publication of the Special Collections Department located on Tier 5 at the St. Louis County Library Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh in St. Louis County, across the street from Plaza Frontenac.

CONTACT US
To subscribe, unsubscribe, change email addresses, make a comment or ask a question, contact the Department as follows:

BY MAIL
1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63131

BY PHONE
314-994-3300, ext. 208

BY EMAIL
scollections@slcl.org

Regularly scheduled tours of the Special Collections Department are conducted on the first Wednesday and third Saturday of the month at 10:30 am. No advance registration is required. Group tours are gladly arranged with advance notice. Please call the Special Collections Department at 314-994-3300, ext. 208 for scheduling information.

A brief description *Orstippenbücher, Bürgerbücher, Häusergeschichten,* and *Hofgeschichten* follows. A list of these held in the collection is available from the Special Collections Department. The Department is glad to receive suggestions for acquisitions. If you are looking for information in a specific town or village in Germany, email the information to scollections@slcl.org, and the Department will see if an *Ortssippenbuch* or other similar resource for that community can be purchased and placed in the collection.

ORTSSIPPENBÜCHER

Ortssippenbuch translates literally as "local kinship book," from *Ort* meaning "place" or "locality," and *Sippe* meaning "kin" or "clan." They are also often referred to as *Ortsfamilienbücher* (local family books), *Einwohnerbücher* ("resident books"), or *Familienbücher* ("family books"). As the title indicates, *Ortssippenbücher* offer genealogical information about persons living in a specific locale. An *Ortssippenbuch* usually begins with general historical information about the locality followed by genealogical information about individual families. Lineages are often traced as far back as the 16th century using church books and civil registers as sources. Individuals are cross-referenced within the text, and books include name indexes. The Department has been collecting *Ortssippenbücher* from *Ostfriesland* (East Frisia) in the modern state of Lower Saxony for several years and is now extending its scope to include other areas of Germany.

BÜRGERBÜCHER

A *Bürgerbuch* lists the names of citizens *(Bürger)* in a specific town. Until the end of the 19th century, citizenship was dependent on owning property inside the town walls and was granted upon the payment of a fee. Early lists are usually just that—lists of names and nothing more. Later lists give a few more details, such as occupation and place of residence (citizens often actually lived elsewhere). These characteristics make *Bürgerbücher* a somewhat limited, but still valuable genealogical resource. They include name and place indexes.

HÄUSERGESCHICHTEN

A *Häusergeschichte* (from *Haus*, "house" or "dwelling" and *Geschichte,* "history") is more than a history of houses. It lists the inhabitants who lived at specific addresses in a specific town or village from as far back as the 16th century. A *Häusergeschichte* is usually introduced by a historical overview of the locality and often includes maps and photographs. Buildings are listed by address. Descriptions and historical data may be given for public buildings. Private dwellings may also be briefly described if such information exists. A chronological listing of the inhabitants follows, offering details of how and when the person obtained occupancy through purchase, lease, or inheritance.

HOFGESCHICHTEN

Hof can be translated as "farm" or "estate." The occupants of a *Hof* were tenants who lived on the property and farmed the land. In exchange, the tenant owed the landlord a percentage of crops and an amount of personal labor each year. Leases were usually inheritable. As population grew, tenants often built cottages on their *Höfe* and leased them to families unable to obtain a *Hof* of their own. These *Kötter* (cottagers) and their families were allowed to live in the cottages and raise gardens for their own use in exchange for work on the farm. These practices, which began with medieval feudalism, persisted in most of Germany until the early-to-mid-19th century, when farmers were finally allowed to purchase their farms outright.

Like *Häusergeschichten*, *Hofgeschichten* usually begin with an historical overview of the farm village. They include information about the land owners—the nobles, or religious orders —who actually owned the various *Höfe*. Maps are included to show which landlord owned which parcels. Farmers usually lived in houses grouped together in small villages surrounded by the working fields. *Hofgeschichten* generally progress through the village house by house, listing the inhabitants of each *Hof*, and when each tenant gained tenancy through inheritance or marriage.

TIPS

■ How do you find a date when the exact date is not given in a document such as an old obituary. For example, in an obit printed in the April 1, 1883 *Westliche Post*, the only information offered is, "died suddenly on Friday at 2:30 a.m." The *Time and Date.com* website lets users create a calendar for any year in the past or future. Using the site to create an 1883 calendar reveals that the death date in the

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example above was March 30, 1883. [URL: http://www.timeanddate.com]

■ *Life* magazine's photo archives includes millions of mostly unpublished photographs. Thanks to a joint project with Google, the magazine is digitizing the photos and publishing them in a searchable online database. Searching can be accomplished two ways: 1) through a dedicated search page, and 2) using the regular Google Image Search. In Image Search, add "source: life" (without quotes). The results will return a list of available *Life* magazine images. [URLs: http://images.google.com/hosted/life; http://images.google.com/]

WEB NEWS

WEB FINDS

■ **GNIS: USGS Geographic Names Information System:** This website from the U. S. Geological Survey allows users to locate not only populated places, but other features such as cemeteries, churches, mountains and rivers. All the specified features in one county or state can be displayed and include information about historic features no longer in existence. The site provides researchers with several mapping options, such as road maps and topographical maps, and give the latitude and longitude coordinates. [URL: http://geonames.usgs.gov/pls/gnispublic/]

■ **U.S. Home Town Locator:** Based on the same data as the GNIS website described above, this electronic gazetteer enables you to identify the county where a town or village is located. The database can be searched by town and state or zip code, and the results include a Google map showing the location. States and counties can be browsed. The "Physical, Cultural and Historic Features" link for each county includes information about the location of historical or extinct towns. [URL: http://www.hometownlocator.com]

■ **Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers:** This free website from the Library of Congress (LOC) offers searchable digitized newspapers, 1880-1910. Although the offerings are limited and cover only a few states, the LOC plans to expand the site into a significant source for digitized historical newspapers. URL: http://www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica]

■ **St. Peter's Cemetery:** The website for this 150-year-old St. Louis cemetery allows researchers to do an online burial search. The site also includes historical information and a description of the records available from the cemetery office. [URL: http://www.stpeterschurch.org/cemetery/index.htm]

NEW ON ANCESTRY

Ancestry Library Edition is available at all St. Louis County Library locations.

Ancestry Library Edition adds new databases daily. To find out what databases have been added recently, go to the Ancestry Library Edition home page and scroll to the bottom of the page. Under "More Collections," click on the "Recent" link.

■ **Jewish Family History Collection:** The result of a partnership between *Ancestry*, JewishGen and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), this free database collection includes nearly 26 million records. Databases include vital records, directories and census records from Hungary, Latvia, Poland and many other Eastern European countries.

■ **U.S. Army Indian Campaign Service Records Index, 1815-1858:** This database includes records of soldiers who served during the Cherokee disturbances and removal, 1836-1839, often referred to in the records as the Cherokee War. Records include those who belonged to units from Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and volunteer field and staff of the Army of the Cherokee Nation. The database also includes those who served in various Indian wars or participated in quelling Indian disturbances, 1815-1858. The database includes images of the original documents. It is not searchable by name, but can be browsed.

■ **U.S. Marine Corps Muster Rolls, 1798-1940:** This database contains an index and images of the U.S. Marine Corps muster rolls from 1798-1940. Information included in this database includes: name, rank, enlistment date, muster date, and station.

■ **U.S. Navy Pensions Index, 1861-1910:** An index to Navy pensions. This database is searchable but does not include document images.

NEW IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

The following is a selection of items recently added to the collection. Additional items may have been received which are not listed here. The Department is grateful to the St. Louis Genealogical Society, the National Genealogical Society, Julius K. Hunter and Friends, and our patrons for their donations.

NEW ACQUISITION SPOTLIGHT

Grundset, Eric. G. *Forgotten Patriots: African American and American Indian Patriots* in t*he Revolutionary War : A Guide To Service, Sources and Studies.* Washington, D.C.: National Society Daughters of the American Revolution. 2008. R 973.344 F721

The Special Collections Department would like to thank the O'Fallon chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution for their generous donation of *Forgotten Patriots.* This 872-page book contains details of the documented service of the listed Patriots, historical commentary on happenings of the time, an assortment of illustrations, and an extensive bibliography of research sources related to the topic.

PRINT RESOURCES

Call numbers follow each title. Complete bibliographic information for each item is available in the St. Louis County Library's online catalog. Titles are abbreviated unless italicized.

■ FAMILY MAPS BY GREGORY A. BOYD

Fayette County, Iowa. R 977.735 B789F

A surname index for Arphax Family Maps is available online. [URL: http://www.arphax.com]

■ GERMANY

Die Familien der Kirchengemeinde Marienwehr (1728 - 1900) [The Families of the Church in Marienwehr]. 2008. R 943.5917 N378F

Die Familien der Kirchengemeinde Suurhusen (1705-1900) [The Families of the Church in Suurhusen]. 2008. R 943.595 N378F

Familien in Brandau, Odenwald, 1635-1910 [Families in Brandau, Odenwald]. 1995. R 943.416 K61F

Familienbuch Buchenau / Lahn, mit Filial Elmshausen [Family Book of Buchenau / Lahn, with the Daughter Parish of Elmshausen].1997. R 943.414 W531F

Familienbuch Langd Kr. Gießen [Family Book of Langd, Giessen District]. 2000. R 943.414 Z66F

Familienbuch Langen / Hessen [Family Book of Langen in Hesse]. 1996. R 943.416 W493F

Familienbuch Messel [Family Book of Messel]. *1998.* R 943.416 W468F

Familienbuch Wölfersheim: Familienbuch der Evangelisch-Reformierten Kirchengemeinde ab 1637 [Family Book of Woelfersheim: The Evangelical Reformed Congregation from 1637]. 2001. R 943.416 M612F

Gundernhausener Familien 1695-1875 [Families in Gundernhausen]. 1990. R 943.41 H834G

Oberhörgern, Krs. Gießssen: Familienbuch der Evangelisch-Reformiertenen Kirchengemeinde 1671-1995 [Family Book of the Evangelical Reformed Congregation in Oberhögern, Giessen District]. 1996. R 943.416 J95O

■ GREAT BRITAIN

Births, Marriages and Deaths on the Web (Great Britain). 2002. [NGS] 941 R272B

Discovering Your Family Tree (Great Britain) [NGS] 929.1 I65D

Finding out about Your Family History. 2006 [NGS] 929.1 C492F

Family History on the Web: A Directory of England and Wales. 2005. [NGS] 942 R272F

An Historical Atlas of Kent. 2004. 942.23 H673

Introducing Family History. 2006. [NGS] 941 R272I

Names and History: People, Places, and Things. 2004 [NGS] 929.97 R318N

War Memorials on the Web. 2003. 941 R272W

NEW IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

■ **FAMILY HISTORIES**

Bremer and Brune Family History: From Germany To Missouri And Beyond. R 929.2 B836M

A Family History for Steven. (Gwyn, Sewell, Shankle, and Wyckoff families) [NGS] 929.2 G994G

Goethals, 880-1900: The Story of the Goethals Story [NGS] 929.2 G599G

Sibley Family in America 1629-1972. 1982. R 929.2 S564S

Wright Family…. 2008. [NGS] 929.2 W947G

■ **OTHER NEW TITLES**

Delaware Genealogical Research Guide. 2002. R 975.1 D343

Freedom & Slavery Documents in the District of Columbia, Vol 2. [NGS] 975.3 R726F

Coffee County, Georgia Marriage Records Index, 1864 to 1957. 2008. [NGS] 975.8823 P328C

Columbus Georgia, Newspaper Clippings, Vol. 9, 1856-1858. [NGS] Q975.8473 K48C

St Louis Hills. 2008. R 977.866 Z27S

Wittshire Watch and Clockmakers. 2004. [NGS] 681.11 Y73W

Special Collections Department genealogical database classes for January and February

All classes are held in the Headquarters Computer Lab. Register in advance of the date by calling 314-994-3300 and asking for the Reference Department. Once connected, tell the Reference Librarian you would like to register for a class.

Participants should have basic computer and Internet skills before registering for classes.

History and Genealogy in Newspapers
Learn about events and ancestors from the 19th century in almost 18,000,000 newspaper articles using the *19th-Century U. S. Newspapers* database and millions more dating back to the 1700s using *Access Newspaper Archive.* Also learn how to find articles of genealogical and historical interest from the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* and the *Historical New York Times.*

Dates:
Thursday, January 15, 2-4 pm
Wednesday, January 28, 9:30-11:30 am
Thursday, February 12, 2-4 pm

Introduction to Genealogy Databases
Learn how to find your ancestors using *Ancestry Library Edition.com* and *HeritageQuest Online.* Emphasis will be on searching census, immigration and military records, books and periodicals.

Dates:
Tuesday, January 16, 2-4 pm
Tuesday, January 20, 6:30-8:30 pm
Wednesday, February 4, 2-4 pm

SAVE THE DATE! SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT SPECIAL EVENTS

"Italian Genealogical Research" | Speaker: Scott Biondo, Italian Club of St. Louis | March 28, 2009, 9:30 am—Noon

"Genealogical Resources at the St. Louis Police Library" | Speakers: Barbara Miksicek, Librarian, St. Louis Police Library; Joyce Loving, Manager, St. Louis County Library Special Collections Department | April 4, 2009, 9:30 am—Noon

CALENDAR

A list of events taking place at the St. Louis County Library

Note: Dates for Special Collections Department classes are indicated by ☎. Please register for classes in advance of the date by calling 314-994-3300 and asking for the Reference Department. Once connected, tell the Reference Librarian you would like to register for a class.

All events are free and open to the public.

DECEMBER

☎ **Monday, December 1, 2 – 4 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to
Genealogy Databases

☎ **Monday, December 8, 9:30 – 11:30 am**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and
Genealogy in Newspapers

JANUARY

☎ **Tuesday, January 6, 2– 4 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to
Genealogy Databases

Saturday, January 10, 10 am
Headquarters Auditorium
St. Louis Genealogical Society Meeting
Topic: "Researching in St. Louis County"
Speaker: Ann Fleming

☎ **Thursday, January 15, 2– 4 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and
Genealogy in Newspapers

WWW.SLCL.ORG

**The Special Collections Department Staff
wishes all of its patrons, supporters, and friends**

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Happy Holidays &
Best Wishes for the New Year!

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☎ **Tuesday, January 20, 6:30-8:30 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to
Genealogy Databases

Wednesday, January 21, 7 pm
Headquarters Auditorium
STLGS German Special Interest Group

Tuesday, January 27, 7 pm
Headquarters East Room
STLGS Irish Special Interest Group

☎ **Wednesday, January 28, 9:30-11:30**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy
in Newspapers

FEBRUARY

☎ **Wednesday, February 4, 2-4 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to
Genealogy Databases

☎ **Thursday, February 12, 2-4 pm**
Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy
in Newspapers

Saturday, February 14, 10 am
Headquarters Auditorium
St. Louis Genealogical Society Meeting
Topic: "Timelines: Linking Historical Events
to Our Family History
Speaker: Pat Stamm