



MAKING CONNECTIONS IN SCOTLAND

By Nancy Bruce Crilly

Most of us can come up with the first two or three generations of our family tree thanks to our own memory or those of our parents.

Going back farther is where we bog down. In my own case, I have always known my previous four generations, thanks to my father. W.W. Steven's history and the stones in the Lockport Cemetery. Recent discoveries have given me two more generations back, but they didn't come easily. The hunt began in the Register House (national archives) in Edinburgh, Scotland, in 2001. This wonderful depository has collected records from all over the country; once one knows the county and the town or parish where the ancestors lived, the search begins. I found my people's records in their parish of



Aberdour (baptisms, marriages, deaths) and in the national censuses. To follow up these discoveries in their own locality I went next to the library of the

The descendants of our Bruce line (superscript numbers indicate the generation): William Bruce⁹, James Bruce⁸, James Bruce⁷, James Bruce⁶, William Bruce⁵, James Bruce⁴, George Bruce³, William Bruce², William Bruce¹.

Northeast Scotland Family History Society in Aberdeen. Here I found cemetery readings and other local records for this parish. At this point I had a notebook full of lists of people named Bruce; it was like looking for Smiths in Chicago! How to make the right connections?

It was not until I was back home and sorted through the notes that I connected the right parents with their children. The key to the connections was the wives and mothers; Scottish ladies keep their maiden names forever. Baptism records give both parents' names; marriage records give both parties' names and often the name of the bride's father. Playing one record off the other I could weed out several William Bruces by finding the ones that married Barbara Lumsden and Isabel Ogston. And a death certificate yielded not only the name, age, birthplace, occupation, and place of death but also names of spouse, parents and children. One thing was a challenge: the Scots have no imagination when they name their children. As the list above shows, we have all those Williams and Jameses— and just one George. With all this information giving a

portrait of two more generations, I was eager to go on. I wanted to visit the places where these people lived, to see the town, the street, the graveyard. So a second trip was in order in 2003, and this time three generations made the pilgrimage. The youngest member, age 11, is the ninth generation (pictured below). We knew which town, and



William and James Bruce at the grave of ancestor William Bruce, deceased 1795.

we found the house from the address on the 1851 census. We found the graves of father and son and their wives from the cemetery reading. We took flowers to the graves, and we walked on the streets of the town and on the beach beside the North Sea. And we took lots of pictures. We reached out across the generations, we walked in their footsteps, and we felt we really made the connection.

Nancy Bruce Crilly is a LAGHS' member and president of the Will-Grundy-Counties Genealogical Society.

M

essage from the President

Once again, Independence Day has been observed, 21st Century style nowadays. Time was when family picnics converged at Dellwood Park. The community choir sang. Fireworks were everywhere. The stores were closed, and Uncle Sam reigned supreme. Nostalgia about those days remains with us and is part of our Society's passion for the past.

LAGHS has approached the Des Plaines Valley Public Library in Lockport about how we can further our partnership. Currently, our Society has a couple of drawers in the history room. The library is an ideal location for making our collections accessible to the public, and we look forward to establishing a lasting relationship with the staff and volunteers.

LAGHS held its Annual Meeting on June 28. Reports were given (read the reports in issue), new officers were elected, and every member pledged to participate in the work as well as in the fun of the Society. I am happy to continue my service with this fledgling organization and look forward to another year of learning, preserving, and sharing the heritage of the Lockport area.

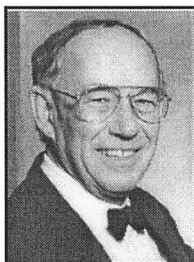
Be sure to mark you calendar for the next general membership meeting at the Crest Hill City Hall. Mayor Don Randich will speak about the city's history.

See you in Crest Hill!
—*Dr. Reno G. Caneva*



Society members Loretta and Silvia Ziesemer, Judy Richardson, Char Giardina, Carol Giardina, Anna Mae Lukancic were involved in hosting a Ziesemer-Gentz-Birkholtz-Rausch reunion for over fifty relatives at Al's Steak House in Joliet on May 24. Family members came from Illinois, Arizona, Ohio and Tennessee, many meeting for the first time. Each family received a family genealogy booklet. All agreed they should plan for 2004.

[Send LAGHS your reunion story].



Dr. Reno G. Caneva

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*Preserving the Past
is our Present
to the Future.*

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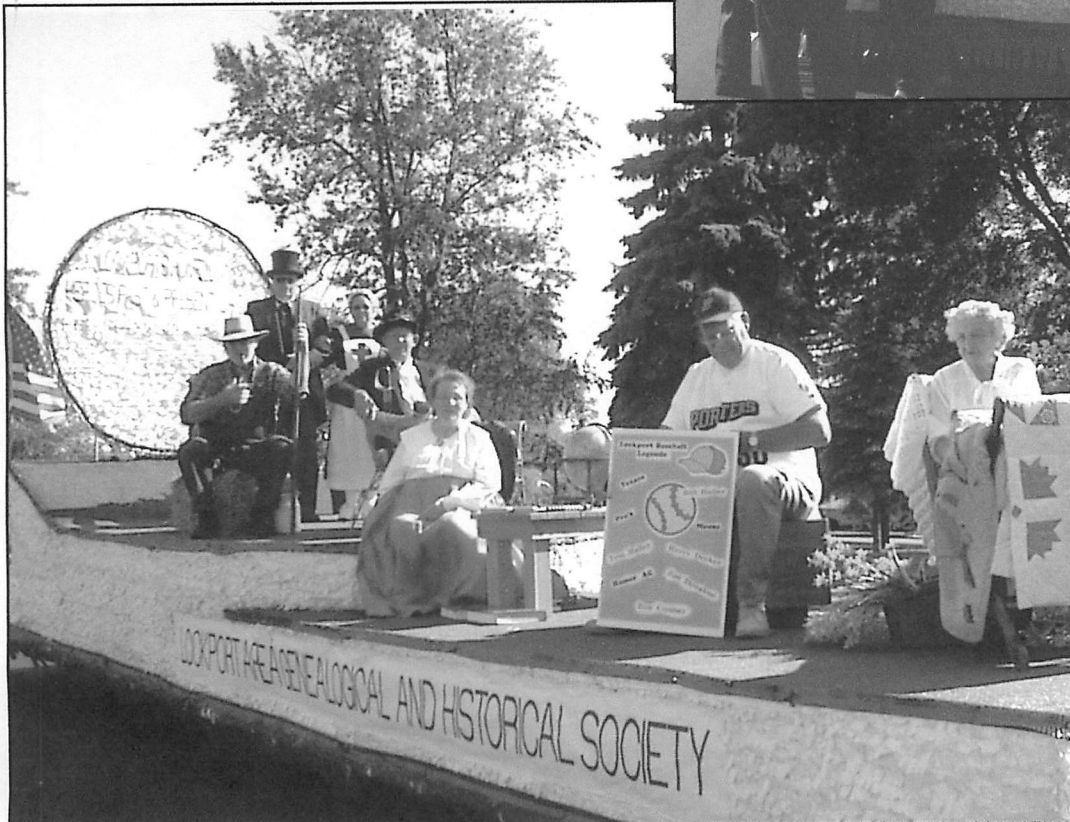
Old Canal Days Parade—"Lockport's Hometown Heroes"



Left: LAGHS float passes by the LCTV cameras.



Left to right: Gary Ward, Jack Brassal and Reno Caneva pause to chat after affixing the LAGHS banner to the float.



LAGHS members met in the parking lot at Shepard of the Hill Lutheran Church on Friday, July 20, 2003, to get ready for the parade.

Left to right: LAGHS members: Jack Brassal-farmer; Gary Ward-dignitary; Bonnie Packley-nurse; Reno Caneva-military; Nancy Wilda-teacher; Rich Ramos-sports; Mabel Hrpcha-women in community service.

Chasing Your Tale



Jacqueline Munch

CHURCH RECORDS—

A Vital Resource!

Lockport Baptist 1844-1915, a book recently added to our growing collection, was compiled by Sue Hahney and published by Will/Grundy Counties (IL) Genealogical Society. This publication is a transcription of a volume of original records, which had been preserved by the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah.

This historic record includes: minutes of church meetings, members received, dates of baptism, a few marriages and deaths, a list of ministers from 1844-1906, and a newspaper article from 1871 telling of the respect and appreciation of the citizens of Lockport for the Rev. C. J. Switzer upon the termination of his labors as minister of the Baptist Church. There is an index of all names mentioned in the book. Some familiar surnames included are: Burdick, Ernst, Fiddymont, Goodale, Hopkins, Ingersol, Johnson, Lanfear, Miller, Morrison, Norton, Reed, Runyon, Smith and Staples. In 1852, the Lockport Baptists erected a house of worship on the northwest corner of 10th and Hamilton Streets at a cost of \$1,500. After seventy-one years of religious influence in this community, the record shows that in 1915, the church members met for the purpose of disposing of the church property. At that time, the meeting house and lot were deeded to the Illinois Baptist State Convention.

Six years later in 1921, the old Baptist Church building was purchased by the First Congregational Church of Lockport to be used for their social activities and Sunday School classes. The details of the purchase and remodeling are related in a booklet (also in our collection) titled, *A Century of Service 1838-1938*. The new name for the building, "Pilgrim Hall," was suggested by the Rev. Schlaraetzki, who was pastor at the time. To help with the expense involved in the purchase and remodeling, the front part of the building was rented to the Lockport Public Library and the basement was rented to Mr. Walling for the manual training classes of the grade school. The booklet mentioned above was published to celebrate the church's centennial and includes pictures, a history of the church, a list of pastors and the names of those who were on the church roll in 1938. ~



The church "converted" to an ice cream store in the late 1940s.

History of Will County 1878—Lockport's first

Fourth of July . . .

was an old-fashioned barbecue, which was gotten up in 1839. Whole animals, such as muttons, pigs and poultry were roasted, and the primitive board groaned under the bountiful supply of eatables. Hiram Norton was President of the celebration; Gen. James Turney, a lawyer of considerable ability, was the orator of the occasion; Edward B. Talcott read the Declaration of Independence, and Dr. Daggett marshaled the grand procession.

It was a general good time—a day of rejoicing—and everybody enjoyed it to the utmost, winding up in the evening with a grand ball at the Canal office, then the most capacious building in the place, which had been put in "apple-pie order" for

the occasion. Fiddlers were rather a scarce article in the country at that time, and the only one of any note was living at St. Charles, Kane Co. Dr. Daggett was appointed a committee of one to procure his services. Of course about the "Fourth," the old fellow's musical accomplishments were in demand; Daggett found him with several propositions before him for consideration, and the only means of securing him was to outbid all others. He offered him \$60, and being the longest pole, it "knocked the persimmon." Daggett brought him over to the scene of action, but as he was extremely fond of the "wine when it is red," before midnight he was blind drunk. So went their \$60, and they were forced to find some one who could make a noise on the catguts, about as harmonious as the filing of an old saw, in order that the dance might go on as laid down in the programme (sic).



Reference: History of Will County, Illinois (Chicago: Wm. LeBaron, Jr. and Company, 1878; reproduction, Unigraphic Inc., 1973), 435.

Remember to include church records in your genealogy research! Contact me at jlmunch@earthlink.com or (815) 338-3795 with your questions and comments.

Snapshots in Time



By Georgene Bankroff

While assembling the Veterans of World War II scrapbook, collected by the Rev. Gilbert Bengtson, (compiled and indexed by Ron Pesavento and assisted by Charles Dimmick), it became obvious that Lockport had an extraordinary person besides our service men and women relatives and friends who lived amongst us during those war years: the Rev. Bengtson.

The Reverend organized and oversaw the role of chairman of the U.S.A. which he originated. Louella Landon, whose family were members of the Trinity Lutheran Church, undertook the task of writing a short biography of Rev. Bengtson. The following is taken from the biography.

Contact me to see page 156 of our Veterans of World War II scrapbook for more information about the United Service Association which he founded.

(815) 838-1862, or email: KG1990@aol.com

Reverend Gilbert C. Bengtson a proud American

Rev. Gilbert C. Bengtson arrived in Lockport in 1933 from Maywood Lutheran Seminary in Maywood, Illinois. The Hordvill, Nebraska native became the first regular minister of the newly formed congregation of parishioners, the Trinity Evangelical English Lutheran Church.

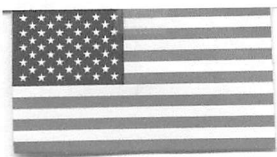
Before erecting a new building at 11th and Hamilton Streets in Lockport, the congregation originally met in the Moose Temple, meeting next at the Winkler Building [NW corner of Ninth & Hamilton], and then they moved into the new church building in 1948 [SW corner of 11th & Hamilton].

In 1965 the Trinity Church merged with the Zion Lutheran

Church, and the name of the newly merged congregation was Shepherd of the Hill Lutheran Church.

When people mentioned the word Reverend, everyone knew that they were referring to Rev. Bengtson. He was a very interesting, caring person, well liked by everyone who met him.

He was never married, never owned a car, never had a parsonage, but he resided in a



small two-room apartment in the rear of the Miller Funeral Home at 11th and Hamilton Streets.

During World War II, he became interested in the local service men and women and their families, and he started a program and organization called USA (United Service Association); it consisted of a group of people who sent packages, cards, and letters to service men and women from Lockport Township. This group grew as more and more men and women left to serve their country. They mailed packages containing soap, tooth paste, socks, combs, etc. to all the 1,293 service people on birthdays and Christmas.

The Reverend was receiving letters and cards from many of the people who were in the

He rode at the head of every Canal Days parade, a proud American, carrying the American Flag.

service so they began to print a monthly newsletter. Contact was sent to every one of the 1,293— and through this media many brothers and friends found each other in many different parts of the world.

Another of the Reverend's patriotic duties was that of placing an American flag on the grave of every veteran of any war on Decoration Day (later changed to Memorial Day). No matter what the weather was, someone would drive him around to the various cemeteries in the township and assist him in locating the graves, even a Revolutionary War Veteran's grave across a field off old Route 66; it was never too far for him to walk or too cold for him to remember American veterans. He rode at the head of every Canal Days parade, a proud American, carrying the American Flag.



Rev. Gilbert C. Bengtson

When Lockport built its new library, one room was named the Bengtson Room. It is used for special meetings, etc. Many Lockporters wanted the

library named after him, but they had to settle for naming the room only.

As his health began to fail and he could no longer get around, he had only one wish: that he would be in his church on Christmas Day, 1966. He had two nephews in Nebraska whom he wanted for pall bearers, and the only time that they could be in Lockport was on Christmas Day. He got his wish, and he was in Trinity Lutheran Church on Christmas Day after dying December 21, 1966, at Mercy Hospital, Chicago, Illinois. His body was returned to Nebraska for burial. ~

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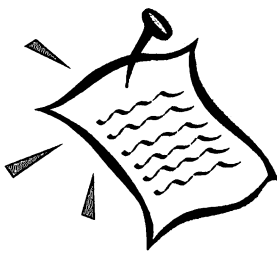
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Annual Meeting
Old Canal Days Parade Float

MARK YOUR CALENDAR



**New Time and Place for
Executive Board Meeting**
Thursday, August 21 at 6PM
**Des Plaines Valley
Public Library, Lockport**

**GENERAL
MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Saturday, July 26, 2003
9:00 a.m.- 10:30 a.m.

Crest Hill City Hall
1610 Plainfield Rd
(near corner of Larkin and Plainfield Rd)

Program
History of Crest Hill
with Mayor Don Randich