



Lockport Area Genealogical & Historical Society

Issue No. 26

NEWSLETTER

September 2003

Snapshots in Time

with Georgene Bankroff

WWI discharge records bring reminders of relatives in war

It might be of interest to members that the discharge records of U.S. servicemen from World War I to the present time are available at the Will County Recorder's office at 58 E. Clinton Street, Joliet, IL.

Knowing that two of my uncles were with the A.E.F. (American Expeditionary Forces) in France in 1918, I decided to check out their records. While perusing the records, I also found my brother and cousins' WW II and Korean War records.

A most interesting record was that of Val Righoni who was an immigrant from Asiago, Italy. His record shows that he was in many battles and skirmishes. Fortunately, my two uncles, Andrew Rodeghero and John Rodeghero, never saw action and were never injured, but Asiago was completely demolished by Austrian bombing in May 1916. The citizens hid in caves but lost their homes, and all that was left of the town was a statue in the town square that lost only an arm. Most records were lost and few remained.

America didn't declare war with Germany until 1917, but the Great War (as it was called before WW II) actually began in 1914 when Austrian Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated at Sarajevo. Germany declared war on Russia in August 1914, but President Wilson proclaimed U.S. neutrality. The First Battle of the Marne began September 5, 1914, and trench warfare began soon afterwards. The German air force bombed Britain in December.

In February, 1915, France began naval action. By April the Allied Nations consisted of Britain, Italy, Russia, and France. The battle of Ypres in Belgium

began, and the Lusitania was sunk by a German U-boat off Ireland.

By February, 1916, the ten-month Battle of Verdun began. In the Battle of the Somme tanks were introduced on the battlefield by the British. A munitions plant in New Jersey was destroyed on July 30, 1916; German sabotage was suspected. In November air raids on London began again. Baron van Richthofen, the Red Baron of the German Air Force, won 80 air victories before he was shot down in April, 1918. On December 12, 1916, the Central Powers suggested a compromise peace plan which didn't materialize.

On February 3, 1917, the U.S. severed relations with Germany. President Wilson called for a draft. The U.S. declared war on Germany on April 6, 1917, and in May, 1917, the Selective Service Act was signed by Wilson.

The Selective Service draft of young American men began in 1917. Only three draft lotteries were held: June 5, 1917; June 5, 1918; and September 12, 1918. On designated registration days, businesses and schools were closed, and saloons were closed in most states. Church bells rang across the country, announcing the start of draft registration; patriotic parades were held in many U.S. cities. Registered men were given bluish-green certificates with an eagle at the top. The names of the men registered were printed in local newspapers. (Joliet Herald News, August 5, 1917)

About 10 million men who were born between 1886-96 registered in the first draft. A total of 24 million men (25% of the population) was registered during the three different draft periods. Only a small percentage of those registering were

called for duty. Aliens were required to register, also. Approximately 98% of adult men under the age of 46 registered.

The men had to answer various pertinent questions: full name, age, date of birth, birthplace, their fathers' names, and citizenship; therefore, these records are a great source of information for the genealogist.

The first U.S. drafted troops (1st Division) arrived in France in June, 1917. The U.S. and Austria-Hungary were at war by December 7, 1917.

By May, 1918, German U-boats first appeared in U.S. waters. The Second Battle of the Marne was in July of 1918. On October 3-4, the Germans and Austrians requested an armistice which was denied them. In November the Battle of Argonne Woods was fought. In November the Central Powers capitulated. On November 11, 1918, the Armistice went into effect at 11 A.M. on the eleventh day of the eleventh month. The Treaty of Versailles was signed in the Hall of Mirrors in the Palace of Versailles. By January 1919, there was talk of a League of Nations, but the "Great War to End All Wars" unfortunately didn't rid the world of warfare as we all well know.

For more, see www.google.com and search for W.W. I, Red Baron, Flanders Field and its poppies.

Contact me with your questions and comments at KG1990@aol.com, or (815) 838-1862.



Georgene Bankroff

Message from the President

On Saturday, September 27, our program will focus on the historic homes of Lockport. Everyone is invited to bring documentation about the age and history of homes they know about.

A representative of the firm that conducted a survey commissioned by the city, will bring photos and descriptions of the homes which were determined to have historical significance. A description of the survey is printed on another page of this newsletter.

This program is one we have been looking forward to for a long time and should be popular with the general public, so make your reservations early.

See you at the Gladys Fox Museum!

—Dr. Reno G. Caneva, president



Dr. Reno G. Caneva

50th High School Reunion—Celebrating Life in Lockport

In mid-August I joined over 60 of my former classmates for a joyous three-day gathering. The class of '54 celebrated, but also struck a somber note for all those who had passed away or could not attend.

One of the first acts of those attending from great distances was to see their "old houses." This brought forth joyful memories and sobering feelings: "My house looks the same!" or "Glad we moved from there." or "Gee, the house looks even better than when we built it."

A trip to Lockport East High School generated a lot of awe and admiration for the new school building. We reminisced about school days in the old building on Jefferson Street and reestablished relationships we cherished there.

We exactly recalled our sophomore English teacher, Miss Taylor, and how she admonished us: "You are the leaders of the future. Pay attention and learn all you can." At the time, we all looked around and snickered. How could we know that Miss Taylor was exactly right?

Ahh, those houses! Sharing pre-prom photos peaked interest in the "old" homes. In the 1950s Lockport was shaking off its post-war doldrums. New, ranch-style homes began to fill subdivisions like Kelvin Grove, which would double Lockport's size and old mansions converted to apartments.

We rekindled many memories and added to them in the spirit of celebrating our lives in Lockport

**PLEASE JOIN US ON SEPTEMBER 27
AND CELEBRATE YOUR LIFE IN LOCKPORT!**



REUNION COMMITTEE: Seated: Audrey Hodgdon Fritz, Sue Ramos Grant, Marilyn Johnson Ferbend, Charlene Jensen Strahanoski, Phyllis Winkler Caneva. Standing, left to right: Gordon McCluskey, Dick Cronholm, Lloyd Munch, Jacquie Cannon Munch, Delores Jones Smith, Dale Vercelloti, Ron Murray, Rich Gliwa, Jack Ernst.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

President

Dr. Reno G. Caneva

First Vice President

Nancy Wilda

Second Vice President

Charlene Giardina

Secretary

Candy Hrpcha

Treasurer

Glenn Carlson

Archivist (acting)

Erwin Klopstein

Genealogist

Jacqueline Munch

Historian

Georgene Bankroff

Librarian

vacant

Directors:

Jack Brassal

Paul Burandt

Dick Cronholm

John Lamb

Bonnie Packley

Vacancy



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

Mailing Address

LAGHS, c/o Bonnie Packley
1016 Maitland Drive
Lockport, IL 60441

E-mail: blpackley@att.net

Phone: (815) 838.9388

Editor

Charlene Giardina
(815) 353-5662

Proofreader: Judy Richardson

Membership: Candy Hrpcha

Consultant: John M. Lamb

Distribution: Bonita Packley

Website

Des Plaines Valley
Library, Lockport
www.dvplib.org

Chasing Your Tale

with Jacqueline Munch



Jacqueline Munch

Are there Canadians in your past?

Many of our ancestors lived in Canada at one time. I recently began researching several of my Canadian ancestors and

would like to share with you some interesting and useful websites I've discovered.

archives.ca Library and Archives of Canada - This site provides a wealth of published materials and records. The National Library holds published sources such as newspapers, family and local histories, city directories, indexes to parish registers and cemeteries. The National Archives includes many records and has access to the authorized electronic version of the 1871 census. Many of the publications and records are available on interlibrary loan to us here in the U.S. through our local library.

From the above site you can access **The Canadian Genealogy Centre**. Launched in March 2003, it was recently named "one of the best" by Family Tree Magazine. It is a single window providing electronic access to the genealogical resources of Canada.

rootsweb.com links you to the World GenWeb Project where you will find **Canada GenWeb**. Each Canadian province and territory has its own site with maps, census, cemetery and church records, etc. A message board is available for searching and posting queries. These boards have yielded great results for me!

ourroots.ca Our Roots is a real gem! It contains more than 4,000 entire books that have been digitized, sorted and placed online, free of charge. One can browse the collection or search by name, date, subject or author. I was thrilled to find local history books with biographical sketches of two of my ancestors, William Thorpe and Lyman Clothier. As I was perusing the index of the History of Leeds and Grenville by Thad. Leavitt, I saw the name "Hiram Norton" and wondered — could this be the same man so prominent in Lockport's history? It was! As you will read below in an excerpt from that book, he was also a distinguished citizen in Grenville County, Ontario.

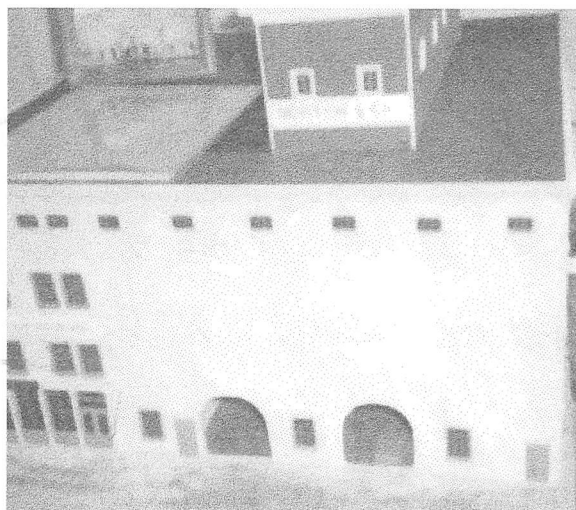
HIRAM NORTON

"This gentleman for many years occupied a prominent position in the county of Grenville. Originally from Vermont, he arrived in Prescott with an axe on his shoulder, and not a cent in his pocket. He married the daughter of Mr. Morey, of Augusta, and at once opened a carriage shop. In company with Mr. Dickinson, he started a line of stages from Montreal to Toronto. He was elected a member of the Upper Canada Parliament for the County of Grenville. During the Rebellion, he removed to Lockport,

Illinois, where he acquired a very large fortune."

Note: The Norton building, originally built by Hiram to house a granary and naval store is across the railroad tracks at 10th and State. It currently houses the offices of the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Commission, the Illinois State Museum Lockport Gallery, and private residences.

Contact me at jlmunch@earthlink.com or (815) 838-3795 with your questions and comments.



This is a model of the Norton Building constructed by a student from St. Dennis for the Illinois History Fair. The model is on display at the Gaylord Building.

Intermediate Genealogy Lectures

FREE! ~ OPEN TO THE PUBLIC ~ 7 PM

LIMITED ENROLLMENT

September 22: Are Your Ancestors on the Internet?

September 29: Researching Your Immigrant Ancestors

October 6: Locating Your Ancestors in the U.S. Census

PHONE REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Lewis University, Romeoville, Ill.

(815) 836-5148 www.lewisu.edu

Lockport Area Genealogical & Historical Society
c/o Bonnie Packley
1016 Maitland Drive, Lockport, IL 60441

Front Page Story

*WWI records bring reminders of
relatives in war*

INSIDE

Class Reunion

Are there Canadians in our past?

Free Genealogy Lectures

Board Meeting:

Sept. 18; 6PM, at the Library



Presenter Irwin Klopstein show
Holly Carter Dellwood
memorabilia before the slide show
and tour of the park on Aug. 23.

Do You Have the Oldest Home in Lockport?

Your home is a treasure to you — is it historically significant?

Sat., Sept. 27 at the Gladys Fox Museum, 8:30 a.m.

PROGRAM: A representative of the company which conducted a survey on Lockport's historic homes will explain the purpose and findings of the study commissioned by the city. The public is invited to bring documents that support the age and history of their homes.

The program is free, but registration is required by calling Char Giardina at (815) 353-5662.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY PROJECT: The City of Lockport hired McGuire Igleski & Associates to conduct phases 1 and 2 of an intensive building survey of a targeted residential area surrounding Lockport's historic district. The Phase 1 survey area encompassed 10 and 1/3rd acres, 10 full blocks, and 6 half blocks. The area targeted for this phase was **from Hamilton to Madison Streets between 7th and 14th Streets**. A total of 153 primary buildings were surveyed, along with 98 secondary structures (mostly garages). The Phase 2 study area focused on a section of the residential streets, adjacent to the Phase 1 survey area and overlaps a small portion of Lockport's National Register Historic District, as well as Lockport's local Historic Preservation District. The boundaries of the survey area were: **the south side of E. 7th Street, the west side of Madison Street, the north side of E. Division Street, the east side of S. Jefferson Street until E. 10th Street, the north side of E. 10th Street between S. Jefferson and S. Hamilton Streets, and the west side of S. Hamilton Street between E. 10th and E. 7th Streets**. The survey area encompassed 38 acres, 14 full blocks, and 3 half blocks. A total of 150 primary buildings were surveyed, along with 110 secondary structures (mostly garages). **ASSESSMENT OF THE DEGREE OF SUCCESS ACHIEVED BY THE PROJECT:** The City of Lockport Building/Planning Department and the Heritage & Architecture Commission were very pleased with the completed project (phases 1 and 2), and we consider it a success. The purpose of this project is to generate information regarding the historic significance of the buildings surrounding the historic district. This project is unique in that the majority of households in the area have historic and/or architectural significance with construction dating pre-1951. Since the Building Department lacks accurate records prior to 1970's, the information we obtain through this survey can help us update our records, as well as **inform and educate the homeowners of the houses found to be historically significant. We are hoping that the survey results can help encourage improving the existing housing stock in accordance to its heritage and discourage demolition.**

MEMBERSHIP MEETING AND PROGRAM

Open to the Public

Historic Dellwood Park

Saturday, August 23, 2003

8:30 a.m. - 11 a.m.

*Join us for a tour of the park and a slide show
about the historic amusement park with Erwin Klopstein*



Tower and Café: "On the Boulevard" at Dellwood Park, during the early 1900s.

Light Refreshments will be served.

Call Char on her cell phone to RSVP at (815) 353.5662; if no answer, please leave a message.