



The Genealogy Society of Southern Illinois

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www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ilgssi

NEWSLETTER

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August Family History Conference

A capacity audience of 150 people benefitted from four excellent presentations at the 2015 GSSI Annual Family History Conference by D. Joshua Taylor, President of the Federation of Genealogical Societies



D. Joshua Taylor

Josh, tutored as a youth in history and genealogy by his grandmother, spoke with an authority gained from experience and academic training. The breadth of his knowledge can only be hinted at by the ease in which he moved from discussing colonial American ancestry to how the latest technology changes the way genealogists do their work. He developed an excellent rapport with the audience, was open to questions throughout, and sprinkled his remarks with occasional humor.

Our thanks to Josh, conference coordinator Diane Anderson for pre-planning and publicity, and to the other GSSI members and volunteers who helped her in numerous ways throughout the day. It was truly a successful and memorable conference.

Bridging the Gap: Tracing Families in the United States between 1780 and 1830

Submitted by Dorothy Rudoni

I volunteered to review Joshua Taylor's initial Family History Conference topic, "Bridging the Gap: Tracing Families in the United States between 1780 and 1830" as my current research focus is on that period.

Joshua Taylor opened with two reasons for the gap in 1780 to 1830 records. While the U.S. was developing local and national record keeping systems, the country was rapidly expanding and, simultaneously, the role of religion changed with only an estimated one in four Americans belonging to a religious group. He then discussed strategies and records for bridging the gap. Strategies included analysis of existing records and research, recognition of limitations, and expanding the search. Helpful sources for the latter included JSTOR, ArchiveFinder and ArchiveGrid. Records to be used in bridging

the gap included the “usual suspects”: church records, early American imprints, tax records, land records, compiled genealogies, newspapers, local histories, probate files, Revolutionary War Pension Files, Daughters of the American Revolution records, and political affiliations.

While I did not gain a much insight from this generalized account, Taylor’s presentation commanded my attention. And I did find his last topic, “Online Resources for Colonial American Research” most informative.

The Modern Genealogist: Timesaving Tips for Every Genealogist

Submitted by Leann Johnson

How do you balance your world of paper and world of wireless technology? How do you balance your on-line life and your off-line life? Joshua Taylor gave us some practical and professional advice to make us all more effective and efficient researchers.

Among the many tips he gave were:

- Make good use of eBooks. You may download books and materials that are already in the public domain. You then have the books available when you need them.
- Public & University Libraries will give you access to their databases for the cost of a library card.
- Add citations to your electronic documents when you find them. The notes will always be there for you.
- Use your “on-line” time as if you were in a library. Avoid distractions and keep a log of your progress.
- Use a 1:2 ratio: For every hour you spend researching, follow up with two hours of analyzing your data and summarizing your results.
- It is better to prioritize your work and limit yourself to 1 to 3 projects or goals at any one time.
- Don’t be afraid to buy the technology you need to be effective. A second digital camera or a larger monitor may make you more productive and give you the backup equipment you need.

Essential Technology for the Genealogist

Submitted by Ed O’Day

Josh Taylor gave numerous instances of how technology has dramatically changed the environment of genealogical research. Adapting to that technological change is both necessary and daunting, but it need not be expensive.

Taylor gave his audience much practical advice and shared information about programs or devices that he has found useful. Among his recommendations:

- Establish an on-line presence, such as a website or blog, for research and collaboration
- Always buy lots of storage space for a computer or an external hard drive
- Use social media like Facebook, Instagram and Pinterest. They are low-cost and effective in reaching a wide audience
- Have or obtain a library card for a major library that subscribes to databases you don’t have access to at home
- Sharing files on the Cloud is more efficient than sending attachments by email

- Flash drives are portable and durable, but consider using a portable external hard drive with more capacity.
- Software programs like Evernote and Trello are useful for organizing anything, from research notes to tracking a large number of siblings
- High quality image enhancement software is needed to bring out the best in document images. Save them as .png (portable graphics network) files for editing; they can always be downsized later.
- Keep copies of document images in several places, or use an on-line backup service like Carbonite or Mozy
- No one commercial genealogical database program does it all. You may wish to use several that have features which you like.

It's a good bet that most of Josh's listeners went away ready to try one of his ideas or to start saving up for some new equipment. I know I did.

Civil War Week-end
Anna-Jonesboro-Union County
September 17-20

The weekend starts off with a play entitled "Ladies Who Loved Lincoln", which will be presented, at no charge, on Thursday and Saturday evenings and Sunday at 3:p.m. Friday night is the Lincoln Dinner, and on Saturday, there will be speakers and displays. Sunday, at 1:00 p.m., will be a bus tour of Anna-Jonesboro Civil War sites. For more information contact 618-697-1870 or email: hileman14@frontier.com

Saturday, October 10
1:30 p.m.

Genealogy Society of Southern Illinois
October Meeting

As you know, GSSI will meet at the Stinson Memorial Library, 416 S. Main, Anna, IL. Well known author and historian, Darrel Dexter, will speak on the Genealogy and Biography of Robert Stinson, for whom the library was named. You will enjoy Mr. Dexter's wealth of information on Stinson's life and family, which is a very fascinating story.



According to coordinator Dorothy Rudoni, the Stinson Memorial Library is an "architectural jewel of Southern Illinois." A tour of this lovely building will include the genealogical resources available for research. For further information, call Dorothy Rudoni at 618-549-0822 or 618-525-2562

KASKASKIA ISLAND Randolph County, Illinois



Did you know that a short drive from Murphysboro will take you to see our Liberty Bell that is 11 years older than the one in Philadelphia?

Kaskaskia Island is an historic site that includes our “Liberty Bell of the West” and the Immaculate Conception Parish that was established in 1675. In 1741, King Louis XV of France donated the bell which was cast in La Rochelle, France. This historic bell has been rung under the flag of France, England and the United States. It rang for liberty on July 4, 1778 when George Rogers Clark took over the area from the British.

By 1725 the village of Kaskaskia was established and the Immaculate Conception Parish had a stone church. When Illinois was established as a territory, Kaskaskia was its capital. Did you know that the Marquis de Lafayette visited the area in 1825? The bell rang in celebration of his visit. After that, a crack (similar to Philadelphia bell) was discovered and the bell remained silent on the church floor. The Liberty Bell of the West is now housed in its own building. Automated doors will allow you to view the bell during the day.

Important dates: Kaskaskia Island celebrates the **4th of July** with an annual celebration. The buildings are open to the public. On **September 6**, an annual picnic is held with guided tours of the Immaculate Conception church.

It is very inspirational to be able to view such historic landmarks and the history that they represent. The Liberty Bell of the West and the Immaculate Conception Church have stood the test of time and have survived the floods of the mighty Mississippi.

Directions: From Murphysboro, take Route 149 west to Route 3 to Chester. Cross the Chester bridge and follow signs to St. Mary's and Kaskaskia Island. Chester is an interesting town to visit; home of the creator of Popeye it is also the county seat of Randolph County. Reid's Harvest House is still a great place to have a delicious meal.

Submitted by Leann Johnson

John A. Logan College Genealogy Classes

DNA and Genealogy: Section No. 1 at JALC Wednesday 3-5 p.m. Joy Upton

Section No. 2 at Alongi DuQuoin Ext. Ctr. Monday 1-3 p.m. Joy Upton

Genealogy Basics: Section No. 1 at JALC Tuesday 6-8 p.m. Cathy Small

Genealogy for Beginners: Section 1 at JALC Wednesday 1-3 p.m. Joy Upton

Section 9N at Alongi DuQuoin Ext. Ctr. 10A-12P Joy Upton

For more information contact JALC Bursar Office at 618-985-2828, Ext. 8201 or 8440, for fees and days. Some classes begin Sept. 6.

Also, history buffs will enjoy the 11th Annual Civil War Days & a Celebration of the 154th Anniversary of the Civil War Featuring the Music of Abraham Lincoln's Life. This is at John A. Logan College on Thursday, October 22, 2015. 9am to 2 p.m. "FREE"

Web Manager's Report

As mentioned in the July Newsletter and reported to attendees at the August conference, the GSSI website is undergoing a major overhaul. By early September visitors to www.ilgssi.org will find a new look. The changes may not be evident at first, but the site has three important new features – most pages are now mobile compliant and may be viewed from any mobile phone, tablet, or similar device; GSSI books and CDs may now be ordered on-line without the need of mailing in an order form; and a new blog page will contain special news items and genealogy tips.

Watch for an announcement in next month's Newsletter about other new features still under development, including simplified membership renewal and webpages reserved for members only.

Only a Genealogist
regards a step
backwards
as
progress!