

HISTORY OF THE GENEALOGY CLUB OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY CORP  
by Dian Moore

Montgomery County has had genealogy clubs for far longer than 15 years. The Genealogy Section of the Montgomery County Historical Society met and worked in the 1970s and Who's Your Ancestor was active during the 1980s. They published books of indices and transcribed records. But by 2002 both were gone.

When I was hired I was charged with starting a club. Just after a year an opportunity presented its self in a Mr. Dineus who asked about the possibility of offering genealogical classes for a fee. He was expecting promotion by Everton Publishers in the magazine *The Genealogical Helper* just as *the Helper* quit publishing. There was no promotion and classes were very poorly attended. But it was a small group of Tuesday evening genealogist so we selected Tuesday night.

The first meeting was at the Crawfordsville District Public Library. The second Tuesday was 12 March so our club shares a birthday with Girl Scouts of the USA. The second meeting was at the Ladoga library. In May we had our first program meeting with not one but two simultaneous programs, Beginning Genealogy and Resource Orientation. **Raymond Snellenbarger, Sam Evans** and I wrote the chartering documents. **Joyce Bever** created our emblem. **Archie Krout** made us a gavel out of many woods. **Alberta Krout** made a velveteen bag for the gavel. **Raymond Snellenbarger** was elected the first president. The first annual meeting was at the Crawfordsville County Club. **Archie** and the Back Porch Pickers entertained and I gave a program on Kitchen Table Archives.

In March 2004 we held our first After Hours Program for 60 people. We have done this quarterly ever since. It is an opportunity for club members to help each other with individual research. The same program has recently been used by 4 H participants to work on their projects for the fairs.

We were lacking something. We were educating and entertaining ourselves but not contributing anything to the world of genealogy. And then—in 2002 **Marti Swanson** of Illinois was looking for O'Neill Cemetery. Even when she was in the right place she couldn't see it. So we agreed to clean it up. Nobody had any idea about what that would entail. We started trying to work one Saturday a month starting with a chain saw marathon. That did not make enough progress to inspire us. It took **Kim Hancock** in 2006 to have a crew every Saturday from early morning to midafternoon. We cleared enough that we could see the stones, broken, out of place, missing... Kim learned how to repair stones and many people worked. By June of 2009 we were finished and rededicate the cemetery to the many war veterans buried there.

We realized that we had members from far away and offered them nothing. A newsletter was the way to serve those members. **Jim Wills** was our editor starting 2004. **Nelson Wilson** took over in 2008 and **Judi Kleine** was appointed in 2013.

Ted Ratcliff and Judi Kleine began to search for grants to support new projects. We received grants from Indiana Genealogical Society, State Farm insurance and Tipmont REMC. We bought portable scanning equipment and a laptop computer and announced that we were looking for family Bibles to scan and transcribe. We now have 128 Bibles offered on line at the library website.

We have recently adapted our cemetery work to include on line records and are starting this project in Franklin Township.

In the last 15 years we have had close to 180 monthly programs given. Most are educational, some are entertaining, the best were both, most have been given by outside speakers, some have used our own talent. We have met every second Tuesday but the one when the library had closed for bad weather. We have met regularly in two library buildings and the DAR house. We have traveled for programs to the Midtown Museum of Native Cultures and the d'Arlier Cultural Center in Veedersburg.

What will be next???