



# NEWSLETTER

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## To-America Research on Family Search

*Summarized by Bruce Butterfield*

Bob Heck led off the evening with another look at the "To America" series of books. This series represents a massive amount of work on the part of many people to index lists of passengers emigrating to the United States from Germany, Italy and Russia, roughly between the years of 1850 and 1900. Bob also told us about Irish emigrants passenger lists during the "Famine Years" of 1846-1851, border crossing records from Canada that are stored in St. Albans, VT, and an enlightening look at a much-overlooked resource - U.S. Passport Applications from 1795 (yes, 1795)-1925. Just think-people as early as 1795 (the earliest years of our country) were traveling back to the "Old Countries", for a variety of reasons. Did Benjamin Franklin need a passport when he negotiated dealings with France?

The years accounted for in the To America books are: G2A (Twitterspeak), 1850-1897; I2A, 1855- 1900; R2A, 1834-1897 (what fun to write in an illiterate, unintelligible and ungrammatical way; it makes one feel exhilarated, "empowered", and...stupid). We'll point out here that Bob's handout is crammed with internet addresses for looking at the subjects of tonight's talk. Be sure to get it from the members-only portion of our website: mpafug.org. We will not include here Bob's well-known method of getting the most from the familysearch.org website "SEARCH" function; if you aren't already familiar with it, it is all in the handout.

Bob's Germans-to-America portion of the talk centered on a search he has mentioned before: the arrival of his g-g-Grandfather's Johann Heck's family in this country. He knew from other records that the family left Germany in 1853. He knew the names and ages of the children. Searches of the G-to-A records produced 3839 Heck names and 276 Johanns in the bunch, but ZERO hits relevant to his family. What followed is not really "Bob Heck Luck". Years of experience told Bob he needed a different approach, so he reasoned that, of all the names of Johann and his family, the one that would be least likely to be altered in the processing of documentation was that of son, Peter. Bob searched for all males named Peter, aged 18 in 1853, who arrived in New York from Germany. Here is an important lesson from Bob: there were "only" 1,877 Peters. Considering the years of misses, what's so formidable about reading all of the

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MAY 10, 2017

## IN CASE YOU WANTED TO KNOW

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*Preparation for a Research Trip*

*By*

*Winnie Mading*

*Naturalization Records in WI and the Midwest*

*By*

*Bob Tatalovich*

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*Next Meeting is June 14, 2017*

*Klemmer's Banquet Center*

*10401 West Oklahoma Avenue*

*Milwaukee, WI 53227*

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entries? After just a few hundred, Bob came upon "Peter Hauk". Checking the passengers for the "Hauk" name, he found the entire family. Then, belatedly, he recognized another important lesson: had he use the well-known "wild card option" in searching (H??k), instead of Heck) he would have found the family a lot faster!

How did Bob find the applicable passenger lists? He used one of several sources: Ancestry and My Heritage (both accessible from the FHC in Hales Corners), Ellis Island and Castle Garden Records, available online at home, and Steve P Morse "One-Step" searches, available on-line at home (and free!). Bob's handout has all of these sites' addresses.

The Italians and Russians "To America" sources were presented in an identical manner to the first one, so we will let you see it all in Bob's handout, instead of here.

Next were the surprises. The "Famine Irish Passenger Index" is available free on the familysearch.org site. Enter a search in Bob's "usual" way and scroll to an entry labeled "United States Famine Irish Passenger Index, 1846-1851" to see a list of 604,596 names. That info had your correspondent slapping himself on the side of his head.

In the same way, you can access "St. Albans, Vermont, Canadian Border Crossings 1895-1954". Bob pointed out that many immigrants came to North America through Canada, partly because it was cheaper to enter Canada than at many U.S. ports. Wherever the immigrant entered from Canada, the record was sent to St. Albans for archiving. Why St. Albans? Eh! Maybe they had more empty file cabinets. Lots of folks left Sault Ste. Marie, Canada and entered at Sault Ste. Marie, Michigan, but the records are in St. Albans, VT. Don't quibble; just look there!

You may also find records of entries of passengers of BOAC (British Overseas Airways corporation, which operated from 1946 –1971, when, through mergers, it became British Airways). And the records are in...St. Albans (does this begin to sound like an old Abbot and Costello routine?).

Last on Bob's agenda was a look at "U. S. Passport Applications 1795-9125". Bob pointed out that "for the most part, passports were not required of U.S. citizens...until WWI, although they were mandatory during the Civil War"

Why would an ancestor go back "home"? Well, they may have gone back to arrange for other family members - or even urge other relatives or friends - to come here. Bob mentioned - and this was an aside, and NOT in the handout, that he discovered a person who came here and went back twenty years later to get his family,

arriving here the second time with two extra children (ahem!).

Passport applications may contain a lot of information of genealogical interest such as names, reasons for returning to the old country, contact persons, dates of immigration, ports of arrival and more.

## Demystifying DNA

*Summarized by Bruce Butterfield*

After the break, member Pat Mundstock gave a talk titled Demystifying DNA-How DO they Determine Those Ethnicity Estimates? Now the mere mention of DNA tests usually sends many people into dizzy spells. Fear not- Pat spent little time on the mysteries of actual DNA tests and analyses. Pat works with computers and statistical analysis projects, so she understands just how intimidating the mere mention of some of this stuff can be to the uninitiated. She began by mentioning that everything a computer does is based in instructions that are fed to it in a particular form of a code (think secret messages or fraternal handshakes). Well our DNA is really a stupendously complex "message" spelled out in combinations and locations of very basic code words. Those words (nucleotides) are molecules named Guanine, Cytosine, Thymine and Adenine, which are particular organic combinations of the atoms of Carbon, Oxygen, Nitrogen and some other elements. And that is the end of your correspondent's knowledge of organic chemistry. In another world, we might be made up of table salt and cyanide, or maybe snips and snails and puppydog tails, but here we get the classier stuff.

DNA testing looks at several chromosomes (don't ask) and some other combinations of those four code words. The Y-chromosome(boys' germs"), which is a part of a guy's DNA structure, passes from father to son forever, sort-of. Over millennia, some changes (called single Nucleotide Polymorphisms –SNP) occasionally happen in completely random ways, leading to different sets of fathers and sons. This also happens to the X-chromosome (girls' germs), and a whole lot of other places on the entire genome. That makes life interesting. After all, how much fun would it be if every guy or every gal looked exactly like their ancestors through perpetuity and they all had warty noses, wiry hair and bad tempers? The x-chromosome, incidentally, is also usually tested, but the results don't seem to be as interesting- at least for now, so it is rarely mentioned in your reports. Instead, female testing is done using mitochondrial DNA. MtDNA, different from the "double helix" structure, is a closed ring with a "starting position" from which SNP's may be designated that was more-or-less arbitrarily picked by consensus of a scientific group.

mtDNA is built into the nuclei of our body cells. Similarly to the Y-thing, it is passed from mother to daughter-and

to her sons, although the sons cannot pass it further down the line.

The big thing these days is testing of autosomal DNA (atDNA), which looks at a huge portion of the structure, is not sex-related, and is the one that offers lists of dozens or thousands of people who in some remote way have DNA similar to yours, but may actually have been a fourth cousin to your G-G-G-G-Grandmother's brother-in-law. That may seem a bit cynical. But that is your correspondent's take on it; you are welcome to have your own opinion. Autosomal DNA tests, though, do produce results that are analyzed to give you an estimate of the particular parts of the world that you ancestors hailed from. And that was the main purpose for Pat's talk.

The various companies that do DNA testing determine which parts of DNA to analyze, develop a baseline panel with documented ancestry, study the baseline data to create ethnic groups or geographical area, and process your DNA sample to match up with the baseline panel. The companies may not come up the exact same results because they have different client groups, but their results would generally tend to be similar. As time goes by and more clients are tested, the baselines can become more finely tuned and make the predictions more accurate. The numbers of clients selected so far tend to be in the low thousands. Even so, the estimates can be pretty impressive. And if your prediction from one tester says you are likely 24 per cent British Isles and 18 per cent Eastern European-related, and another says 22 per cent British and 19 per cent Eastern European, so what? Like all statistical studies, there are the so-called margins of error. Remember, they call these results predictions, not graven-in-stone guarantees.

Pat mentioned Ancestry, My Heritage, Family Tree DNA and 23 and Me as the major DNA analysis companies. There are others. She pointed out the test results belong to the individual whose DNA is tested, no matter who paid for the test or who owns the online account used to arrange for testing. If your cousin was tested and you would like to compare results, the cousin can say "no", and that's that. She also notes that one should be prepared for surprises. We reported earlier the story of a member who discovered that he was not who he thought he was. Fortunately, he was glad to learn at last why his research had led to so many false turns. Other folks might not be so happy.

Pat's report mentioned that DNA analysis seems to be part science and part "art". There is often overlap in reports from different companies because- as mentioned before- the baseline panels will be different due to variations in the client population. If they are all doing their jobs, the companies' reports will become more accurate as more clients get on board.

In the meantime, get tested and get ready to discover a couple of thousand new "cousins".

Be sure to get Pat's handout from our website. There is more in it than we can cover here.

## Upcoming Programs

### June 14, 2017

What's in the Attic (Louise Stack)  
Photo Magic (Bob Heck)

### June 20, 2017

**Bus Trip to Madison**

### July 12, 2017

External Storage, DVD Storage, Cloud Storage,  
Scanners (Sam Colon)  
Moving Data and Software (Bob Heck)

### August 9, 2017 – Terminology & Stuff

Roots Magic (Bob Tatalovich)  
Legacy (Bruce Butterfield)

### September 13, 2017

Victorian Mourning & Funeral Practices (Steve Person)  
Funeral Home Research (TBA)

### October 11, 2017 – Terminology & Stuff

Who and What You'll Find in the US Census &  
City Directories (Cathy Dailey)  
Plain History Group Land Records (Gary Haas)

### October 21, 2017

**FREE** Genealogy Workshop at the Family  
History Center, 9600 West Grange Avenue.  
8:00 AM – 4:00 PM

### November 8, 2017

Courthouse Research (Guy Porth)  
Researching Will & Probate Records On-Line  
(Bob Heck)

### December, 2017 – No Meeting

Do NOT forget, there is **NO** meeting in  
December

## Bus Trip Note

The upcoming bus trip to Madison will be \$20.00 per person. Registration is available so make sure to reserve your spot – they usually go pretty fast. The Trip is **20 June 2017**

## About This Newsletter

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Members interested in submitting articles may e-mail them to [bheck@voyager.net](mailto:bheck@voyager.net). The MPAFUG Publisher will determine if an article will be used in this newsletter. Articles will be used as space permits.

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## Meeting Bits and Bytes

Our April meeting began at 7PM at Klemmer's Banquet Center in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Coming out of a peculiar Winter and beginning a peculiar Spring, we at least had fairly pleasant weather for this meeting. Bob Heck, presiding, welcomed an audience of 161 that included three new members and/or guests, featuring a member's 12 year old granddaughter who has expressed an interest in family history research. The young lady received a welcoming round of applause. Bob announced that reservations for our June trip to Madison will be available very soon. By the time you are reading this, the bus seats will probably already be scarce.

After a few references to the pre-meeting on-screen displays of information regarding meetings and opportunity table offerings, Bob launched his monthly quiz. One notable question elicited the address of Klemmer's Banquet Center; apparently, some folks have been a bit foggy about getting there. Another, regarding the make of the refurbished computer at tonight's Opportunity Table led Bob to ask his now famous question "Are you a golfer?" The lady who had named the computer answered "No, ... (several second pause) ... but my husband is". That brought hilarity from the audience because it meant that, at last, our stock of golf-related "prizes" was exhausted, and a long-standing "inside joke" was retired.

## Opportunity Table

- Scanner Mouse
- 8.5 X 11 Portfolio
- Kodak Portable Photo Scanner
- 8.9" Tablet PC Windows 10
- Kensington Notebook Lock
- Norton Security

## Help with PAF

Call us if you need assistance in using PAF, or if you have question about MPAFUG  
We're here to help!

NAME	PHONE	E-MAIL Address
Bruce Butterfield	414-462-6097	Babtrfld-mke@wi.rr.com
Sam Colon	414-327-2133	genrschr@gmail.com
Bob Heck	414-421-7143	bheck@voyager.net
Bob Tatalovich	414-897-8280	bobt3725@gmail.com
Jane Orne	262-938-9371	orne@Rworld.net
Guy Porth	414-510-0563	guyporth9@yahoo.com
Earl Capps	414-327-4327	elcapps@yahoo.com

## MPAFUG Key Information

### The Steering Committee

Steering committee meetings are held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of every month except December. The meetings start at 7:00 pm at Bob Heck's house (4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale, WI). The Steering Committee is an informal group of members who get together to plan the general agendas for future meetings. All MPAFUG members are welcome to attend and participate in the meetings.

### Our Web Page: <http://mpafug.org>

We invite you to visit our web page and even print a copy of this and the previous month's newsletter. We also have a surname section where you can see who is working on your family line. Members of MPAFUG have access to a members-only web page which contains past newsletters and handouts from our meetings.

### Resources Available:

In addition to our monthly meetings and website, we offer 3 CD's that are available to members for purchase. CD's are \$5 each if picked up at a meeting, or an additional \$2.50 for shipping/handling. Contact Lynn Thrasher - MPAFUG Treasurer, PO Box 14222, West Allis, WI 53214-0222.

- ◆ MPAFUG Newsletters – December 1991 thru December 2013
- ◆ MPAFUG Handouts – 1999 thru 2013
- ◆ MPAFUG Utilities CD – contains 16 useful programs including PAF, Picasa, GenViewer, Open Office, Adobe Reader, PDA to Palm OS, FastStone, IRFAN Viewer/Plugins, FamilySearcher and more

### Membership Information

Membership in MPAFUG is open to anyone interested in learning more about computer genealogy. Membership is \$12 per calendar year for an individual or family. Dues are \$6 for the balance of a year if you join after June 30<sup>th</sup>. To join, send a check made payable to "MPAFUG" to: Lynn Thrasher – MPAFUG Treasurer, PO Box 14222, West Allis, WI 53214-0222.

#### *Questions about MPAFUG?*

MPAFUG c/o Bob Heck  
4910 Steeple Drive, Greendale WI 53129  
Phone: 414-421-7143  
E-mail: bheck@voyager.net