



HURON SHORES GENOGRAM

Oscoda, Michigan

YOUR FAMILY PHOTOS!



Left to right: Jerry Hewitt (chairman of the Plainfield Township Historical Commission), Emily Kukulis (assistant curator of the Bay County Historical Society Museum), Diane Gagel (nationally known speaker, genealogist, free lance writer) and Judy Sheldon (president of the Huron Shores Genealogical Society)

HSGS Genealogical Meetings and Events

- June
 - 16 Women's Expo; Parks Library, Oscoda, MI; 10:00-2:30. Our genealogy library will be manned and available.
- July
 - 14 Mikado Days, Mikado, MI HSGS will have a booth
 - 19 HSGS Business Meeting Different Blend Coffee House, East Tawas
- Oct
 - 13 **French-Canadian Research;** Robert Parks Library, Oscoda, MI: 10:00-3:00
 - 18 HSGS Business Meeting

Your Family Photos was the topic of an all day program on Saturday, May 19, 2012.

The program was hosted by Huron Shores Genealogical Society, the Plainfield Township Historical Commission and the Plainfield Township Library through a grant from the Iosco/Arenac District Library. There were 49 in attendance, from as far away as Wyandotte, Gaylord, Posen, Bay City and Houghton Lake.

The program featured speakers Diane Gagel of Ohio and Emily Kukulis of Bay City.

Diane Gagel is retired college instructor, a nationally known speaker, genealogist and free lance writer with expertise in the dating of photos. Prior to her retirement she also served as a Local Records Specialist for the Ohio Historical Society and a Photograph Archivist at the Toledo/Lucas County Public Library.

Emily Kukulis is the Assistant Curator for the Bay County Historical Society and Museum. In this capacity, she is responsible for the cataloging and preservation of the Museum's extensive collection.

After providing information on identification of the types of 19th century photographs based on materials, appearance and frame and case



Continued on page 2

YOUR FAMILY PHOTOS! Continued from page 1

characteristics, Diane presented an introduction on dating photographs based on hair style, clothing fashions, props and background. Finally, she introduced us to the topic of storage and preservation of photographs and negatives.

Emily continued the topic by sharing with her expertise in the area of how to preserve them. Both speakers emphasized the need to store your photos in acid-free, lignin free containers and how much damage the magnetic photo albums cause. Emily reviewed the factors contributing to the deterioration of photos including high and low temperature, high and low humidity, light and chemical fumes. She also advised listeners to look for products that have passed the "photo activity testing" or PAT. These items have been tested and found to be as harmless to photos as possible. In addition to the importance of using the right materials that come in direct contact with the photos,

it is important to carefully select the right location in the home for proper storage.

Emily advised that there is no one right way to preserve photographs indefinitely, just ways to improve the storage conditions within our budgetary constraints. Deterioration cannot be stopped, just slowed. As a part of the process, it is important to select those photographs worthy of protecting and then to tailor the level of preservation protection to the importance of the individual photographs to us.

The comment that was repeated over and over in the program evaluations was how knowledgeable and articulate these ladies were.

We would like to thank the Iosco/Arenac District Library, Kocher's Market, the Bear's Den Restaurant and the Roscommon County Genealogical Society for their support and their donations to our program.

FROM THE TAWAS HERALD IN 1940

April

Tawas River smelt in a display in the Bell Isle Zoo, Detroit, MI

Burleigh Township unifies the four school districts into one.

May

Buildings moved as Lake St, Tawas City, is widened near First St.:

- Steinhurst Building, built in 1885 by Adolph Steinhurst
- J. M. Waterbury Building, built in 1884 by M. Waterbury

Mayor Coyle resigns due to health issues.

17 graduate from Tawas City Schools

June

37 graduate from Whittemore Schools

Circuit Court:

- Jesse Mothersell of Plainfield Township guilty of stealing a two year old steer from Nelson DeLand of Hale
- Mrs. Winnifred Moshier, 33, charged in the murder of 10 year old Robert Kenyon of Detroit on June 22, 1936. She had stated in her confession that he had been throwing rocks at the cows and when confronted he called her bad names. She hit him and slashed his throat.

Sight Seeing Bus starts daily schedule. Due to trouble in Europe, many are vacationing in the local area.

"A rattlesnake was killed on Silver Creek Thursday by Ward French, one of a party on a fishing trip. The reptile had eight rattles."

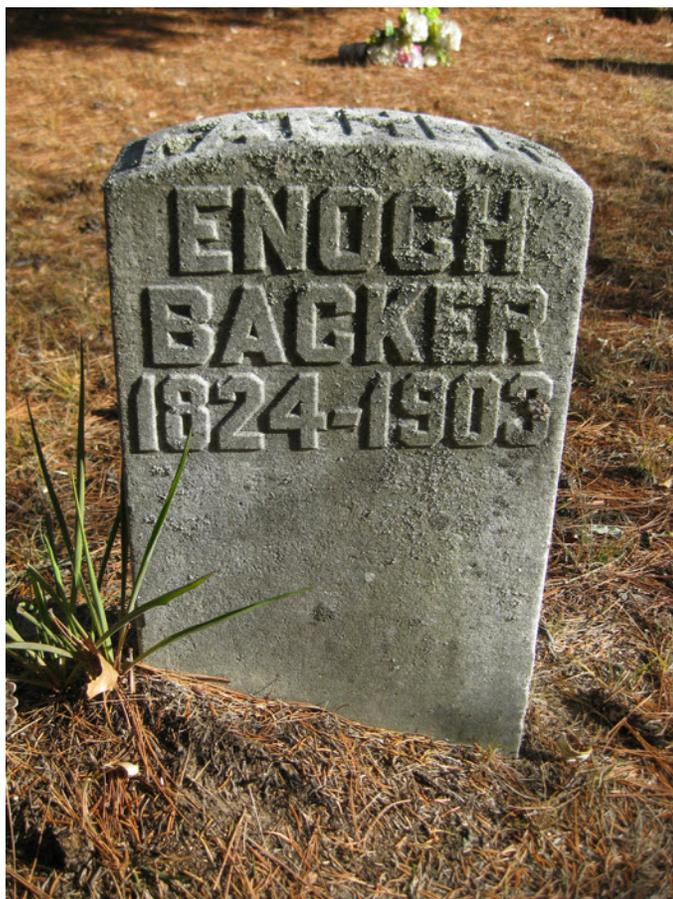
Iosco Gazette, 11 July, 1908 p1 c2

ENOCH BACKER: 24 August 1824 – 27 November 1903

By Lugene Daniels, HSGS Secretary

Not much is known about Enoch BACKER. Discovering records about him and his family revolve around the issue of the many variations of his last name. Among those surname spellings one can find the same family as BACKER, BAKER, BOCKER, and BOCHER.

One thing for certain, Enoch BACKER was the father of Almira BELKNAP, who married Howard M. BELKNAP. After the BELKNAP family moved to the Reno and Burleigh Township areas, chances are that Enoch BACKER followed close behind.



According to his death record, Enoch BACKER was born on August 24, 1824 in New York. His parents are listed as James BACKER and Mary DAMILES, which was grossly misspelled and should have been DANIELS. Enoch was a widower, a farmer, and 79 years 3 months and 3 days of age. He died on November 27, 1903 as a result of dropsy. Almira BELKNAP was the informant on the certificate.

Tawas Herald, March 6, 1903: "Mr Bocker, father of Mrs Howard Belknap, who has been seriously ill, is improving. His daughter, Miss Elsie Bocker of Huntsville, N Y is here visiting him and other relatives."

Tawas Herald, December 3, 1903: "Mr Baker, father of Mrs H M Belknap, was buried Sunday. Mr Baker was an old and respected resident of this place."

Enoch BACKER had many ties to the Reno Township and Whittemore areas. Records reveal that he was related to Abner P. DANIELS, also buried at Reno, and the WASHBURN family, another family of the area. Lewis County, New York seemed to have been a popular area from which many Reno and Burleigh Township early settling families originated.

The mother of Enoch BACKER was Mary DANIELS, who was the daughter of William DANIELS. About 1797 the family moved to West Turin, Lewis County, New York from Connecticut, according to chronological and genealogical notes compiled by the afore-mentioned families by family historian William L. DECOURSEY. It was there that Mary DANIELS married James BACKER. Mary DANIELS was a sister to Abner P. DANIELS, who is also highlighted in this research.

In the 1860 US census, Enoch BOCKER is found living with his wife, Elisabeth F., in Greig, Lewis County, New York. Enoch is 35 years of age and she is 38. With them are two children, Flora E., age 3, and Almira, age 1. Both girls were born in New York. Elisabeth claims her birthplace as Canada.

Probably due to the various spellings of the surname, research on Enoch BACKER has been fruitless. Not until 1900 can his name be easily found on a federal census.

In 1900, he is found living with Howard M. and Almira BELKNAP, his daughter, in Burleigh Township of Iosco County, Michigan. Enoch, age 75, is a widower. The BELKNAP family consisted of Almira, age 40, her husband Howard M., 39 and their three sons, Leslie, age 14, Leon, age 12, and Lyle, age 9.

Our Research Room

By Judy Sheldon, HSGS President

When we are asked about our research library, the first thing we think about are numbers – how many books we have, how many indices we have done, how many records we have copied, etc., but we are so much more.

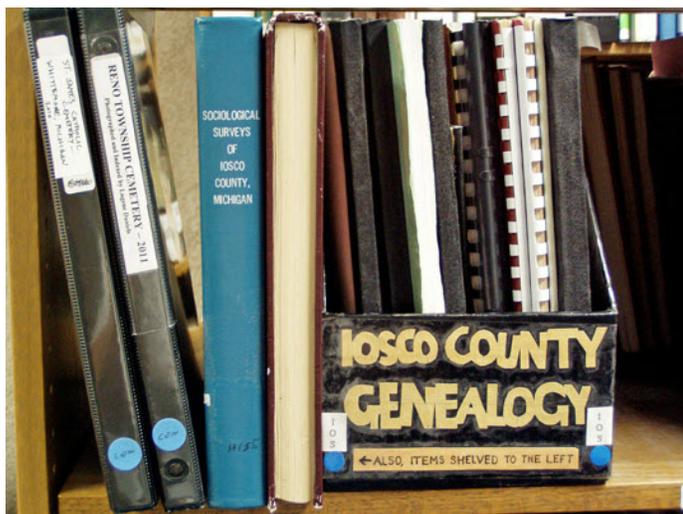
In 1982, 12 family historians gathered to form the Huron Shores Genealogical Society. The group decided early on to focus on indexing records and producing printed indices. These are now online – free. They pooled resources and stored them in a member's home. It wasn't long and it was evident that this arrangement wasn't going

location. We had a corner, with space for two microfilm readers. We grew and we grew and we grew!! And we had a lot of visitors! Several years ago the librarian of the Parks Library suggested that she could put a doorway in the wall and give us part of the office/storage room as our own room. There was no hesitation on our part!

Our library is now equipped with computers, a digital microfilm reader/printer, scanner, multifunction printer and shelves and cabinets filled with resource materials. Donations have poured in and forced us to create a collection policy. We concentrate on Iosco County and the counties that touch Iosco County, from there we look at the migration routes of the families of the area and determine if the material will be helpful in filling requests. To care for the over flow, and we have a lot of it, we rent several rooms in another building. This has newspapers yet to be indexed, scrapbooks, journals from other societies, and so much more I couldn't begin to list it all.

Our library is open the same hours as the public library and just about every day one of our members is available to answer questions. It's a rare day that the lights are off in our room although visitors are always free to turn them on and starting to work using our research guide. We are the place that the newspaper reporter comes to for historical background for her columns. We are where people looking for lost relatives – the live ones and the dead ones – come for help. We are the contact used by people from over seas to contact war veteran's families in the States.

Our library is a lot of numbers and statistics and lists, but it is also where people gather to share stories and hopefully get answers.



to work and the society approached the Iosco-Arenac Regional Library for space in the regional library for our resources and microfilm. The Oscoda Township Branch also was asked to keep a few records and resources in their library. We keep the "box" as a reminder of how much we have grown from those humble beginnings. When the Robert Parks Public Library was opened on the former Wurtsmith Air Force Base, our collection moved to its present location in 1993. Well, almost its present

Dit names

Have you hunted and hunted for your French ancestor with no luck? Maybe you found them, but their names seem to change.

Your French ancestor may have used a Dit name. This is an alias or AKA for one person, or an entire family. The word dit in French means called. There were various reasons to take this new name, usually to distinguish their family from others of the same name or to designate where they were living.

The site for American-French Genealogical Societies has a list of names and their dit names.

<http://www.afgs.org/ditnames/index1.html>

BRUSH WITH FAME

Pictured are Grace Hopcroft, owner of the Hilltop Tavern and Robert Stack, a star in the movie "FIGHTER SQUADRON" that was filmed mostly at Wurtsmith Air Force Base near my home town of Oscoda, Michigan sometime around 1948. Oscoda is located on the beautiful shore of Lake Huron. This brought Robert Stack, Edmund O'Brien and other actors with supporting crews to our small town. Almost every evening they would frequent the tavern. Their presence created quite a sensation with the local and tourist customers. The cast and crew arrived and departed by the Detroit & Mackinaw Railroad. The local town people were sorry to see them leave and gave them a final farewell at the train depot (now torn down). Grace is my Grandmother.

Jane Elizabeth Hopcroft Whitford
Oscoda, Michigan



Do You Remember? . 'Fighter Squadron'

Based on an article by Neil Thornton in the March 14, 1990 Oscoda Press

It was 64 years ago when a grim-looking squad of Nazi infantrymen was strafed by a P-47 in a wooded area west of Oscoda. Back then Warner Brothers Studio used Oscoda Air Base (Wurtsmith) as the locale for filming sequences in a memorable Technicolor motion picture film, "Fighter Squadron."

In 1948, the U.S. Army Air Corps (as it was then known), was still basking in the glory of demolishing the German Luftwaffe and Oscoda Air Base was picked for "Fighter Squadron" because it bore resemblance to World War II fighter bases in England, and Lake Huron served as the double for the English Channel.

In 1948, a special railroad passenger train hired by Warner Brothers rumbled over Detroit and Mackinac Railway tracks into Oscoda. Oscoda residents practically became unglued when such big name Hollywood stars as Edmund O'Brien and Robert Stack stepped onto the depot

platform in 1948 just down the road from the Hill Top Tavern. The old Oscoda/AuSable depot disappeared more than 42 years ago and only a concrete slab with an historic marker remains on the site.

The company spent two weeks at Oscoda filming the exciting action sequences in 1948 and it was a memorable time for many, who were permitted on the set to watch the actors and camera crews in action.

Some Oscoda residents even wore grease paint as "special" extras to serve as the "Nazi infantrymen"

Some Oscoda residents even wore grease paint as "special" extras to serve as the "Nazi infantrymen" in the scene described earlier. The actual flying was handled by army pilots assigned to Oscoda Air Base, most of

whom had World War II combat experience.

"Fighter Squadron" provided a thrilling box office hit when it premiered in late 1948, and it was a star attraction Jan. 2-3, 1949, when shown at the Iosco Theatre at Oscoda and the Family Theatre in East Tawas.

Continued on page 7

ESMOND-EVERGREEN CEMETERY WALK

By Lugene Daniels



Beneath low clouds, but surrounded by mild temperatures, a crowd of over 50 people gathered on Sunday, May 6, at the Esmond-Evergreen Cemetery East of Hale for a HSGS-sponsored cemetery walk. The walk was planned and presented by HSGS members Lauri Finerty and Lugene Daniels.

Twenty-four stations were featured in the walk, but when sprinkles began to fall, the group hastened through a few of the stations later in the afternoon. Featured were the Esmond Brothers, Edward and Clark, Isaac B Nunn, T/Sgt Charles Follette, the Hunton

Brothers (both were Spanish-American War veterans), Aaron and Augusta Shellenbarger, and many, many more.

Plainfield Historical Commission member Mary Hewitt presented a story about Chief Sodney, while others contributed stories about this famous Hale native American. The granddaughter and great-grandson of Chief Sodney, Ruth and Joseph Breiter from Mt Pleasant and Bay City, also participated in the walk.

Carl Sherman told the story of his relative, Laurel V Sherman, who drowned while working on the Bamfield Dam in Alcona County.

At the conclusion of the program, light refreshments were served and positive evaluations were received. Most certainly, HSGS plans to continue hosting these cemetery programs. Stay tuned to learn when and where the next cemetery walk will be.

Lugene and Lauri ready to greet attendees (Left)
Mary Hewitt with Ruth (seated with puppy and Joseph (behind her with camera) (below)



Jackson Prison, Jackson, MI Our First Big House!
Something unique to do this summer.

The first prison in Michigan was built in Jackson, MI in 1839. By 1926 it relocated to a new building and had become the largest walled prison in the world, housing nearly 6,000 inmates. This building was closed in 2007. The riot of 1912 lasted for 6 days and ended only after the National Guard was called in to help control the inmates. You can visit or live at the prison now and not have a record. It is known as the Armory Arts Village, a resident artists' community. Tours are also available of the original portion of the prison. The Archives of

Michigan, Lansing, MI have the records of those sent to Jackson, aka State Prison of Southern Michigan.

Armory Arts Village & Jackson's State Prison Tours

100 Armory Court #107
 Jackson, MI 49202
Reservations: (517)795-2112
Phone: (517)795-2112
info@judygailkrasnow.com
<http://judygailkrasnow.com>

East Tawas School in 1935 and The Beginning of Tawas Area School District

By Judy Sheldon

An article in the The Iosco County Gazette, 22 August 1935 caught my eye. It was about the first day of school on September 3, 1935. The school year would be 38 weeks, with two weeks vacation at Christmas and one week in the spring time. Teachers reported at 8:30 to consult with students and school started at 9:00 am. Bookkeeping would be taught in this year in place of advanced shorthand, open only to 11th and 12th graders.

Superintendent C. J. Creaser would be teaching algebra, geometry and chemistry, and supervise the work of the teachers, in addition to various office duties.

Can you imagine our school superintendents teaching high school classes? I was curious about Mr. Creaser, so I checked our indices and found his obit and his wife's obit as well. They both died in October of 1973 in Rolla, Missouri, nothing tragic, just one of those things. They are both buried in River Ridge Cemetery in Belding, MI.

Clyde Jacokoes Creaser was much more to the Tawas Schools than just their superintendent. He served in this position for 18 years (1935-1954) and during this time he and A. E. Giddings, superintendent of Tawas City Schools were instrumental in calling for the election to reorganize the two schools, as well as several adjacent rural schools, into the Tawas Area School District. Not an easy feat, I'm

sure! It took three years to bring it to a vote in 13 school districts and it passed 1,357 to 396. The school districts affected were: East Tawas, Tawas City, Tawas 2, 3, 4, 5 and 9, Baldwin 2, Grant 2 and 3, Alabaster, Wilber 4, all in Iosco County and Whitney 6 in Arenac County. Clyde stayed one more year after the consolidation as a member of the teaching staff before going to Belding, MI where he taught at the Stanton School. During his time in the Tawas area he was a prominent speaker at many civic, school and religious events. Education had been his career since he graduated from University of Michigan in 1915. The Creaser's moved to Tawas from Alma, MI in 1935 where Clyde had been the superintendent of the Ithaca Public Schools. He served in the Michigan "Polar Bear" regiment during World War I. Mrs. Julia Creaser, his wife was just as civic minded as her husband. Under her direction in 1936, she organized the Campfire Girls with 17 members.

Mr. Creaser may have left the area and his family moved on, but his legacy will be with the Tawas Area Schools forever!

Information taken from the Tawas Herald, The Iosco County Gazette, Memoirs-Sesquicentennial, Phyllis Creaser Carson obituary and family input from Todd Neel and Gary Carson.

Do You Remember? continued from page 5

The "evidence" that Oscoda was once the location for a famous movie was around for a good many years, through a display of 8x10-inch pictures at the old Hilltop Tavern outside of town (see accompanying article) and other local watering spas, showing some of the town's dignitaries clicking glasses and hobnobbing with "Bob" and "Edmund" (on a first name basis) at receptions.

Other still pictures showing the air base during its fighter squadron days, along with views of the famous actors, army pilots and local "extras" provided by Warner Brothers, are on exhibit at the Iosco County Historical Society Museum at East Tawas.



STARS AT OSCODA - From left, William Reed, Robert Stack, Jack Larson and Edmund O'Brien. The two pilots at far left are unidentified
Oscoda Press photo

