

PastPorts

News and tips from the St. Louis County Library
Special Collections Department

Vol. 1, No. 8 — October 2008

PastPorts is a monthly publication of the Special Collections Department located on Tier 5 at the St. Louis County Library Headquarters, 1640 S. Lindbergh in St. Louis County, across the street from Plaza Frontenac.

Contact us

To subscribe, unsubscribe, change email addresses, make a comment or ask a question, contact the Department as follows:

By mail

1640 S. Lindbergh Blvd., St. Louis, MO 63131

By phone

314-994-3300, ext. 208

By email

scollections@slcl.org

Regularly scheduled tours of the Special Collections Department are conducted on the **first Wednesday** and **third Saturday** of the month at 10:30 am. No advance registration is required. Group tours are gladly arranged with advance notice. Please call the Special Collections Department at 314-994-3300, ext. 208 for scheduling information.

OF NOTE

The Special Collections Department celebrates anniversary with cake, punch and a bit of ragtime

Two fancy cake, punch, balloons, a live band—it looked and sounded like a party, and it was! The Special Collections Department marked its tenth anniversary on Saturday, Sept. 13, with a reception and open house. Approximately 100 patrons, friends and former employees were in attendance. The festivities included refreshments, tours of the collection, and informal conversation with the staff. Representatives from the St. Louis Genealogical Society were also on hand to greet patrons and hand out information. The St. Louis Ragtimers, a well-known musical ensemble, provided live vintage music. The Special Collections Department thanks all of its patrons, donors and other supporters for making the last ten years so successful.

Changes coming to *PastPorts*

PastPorts will receive a fresh look, a new format, and be delivered in a slightly different way beginning with the November issue. The change will make the newsletter look more professional and visually similar to other library publications, although content will remain largely unchanged. The newsletter will be published as a PDF file. Subscribers will receive an email at the beginning of the month

announcing the new issue and including a link for downloading it from the library's website.

New copier with enhanced capabilities coming soon

The Special Collections Department will be receiving a new photocopier as part of the library's regular equipment replacement program. Besides black-and-white copies, the new machine will also copy in color. Prices will be 15 cents for 8-1/2" x 11" and 30 cents for 11" x 17" prints. Color copies will be 30 cents for 8-1/2" x 11" and 60 cents for 11" x 17". The new copier will be coin-operated and should arrive sometime during the month of October. In addition, the copier will have the capability to scan documents and save them to a USB flash drive as a PDF. Scanning will be free of charge. One-gigabyte flash drives will be available for purchase in the department for \$8 each.

Centenary Methodist Church record project will make valuable records accessible.

With the help of Julius K. Hunter and Maryville University, the Special Collections Department has embarked on a project to organize, inventory, microfilm / digitize, and index the records of [Centenary Methodist Church](#). Three history majors from Maryville University are examining and inventorying the records as an internship project under the supervision of the Special Collections staff.

Now located at 55 Plaza Square (16th St. between Olive and Pine), the church was founded in the centennial year of the founding of Methodism in 1839; hence its name. It was originally located at 5th and Pine Streets before relocating to its present building in 1869. In pre-Civil War St. Louis, slaves were members as well as their masters, making the church an important landmark in St. Louis's African American history.

Beside church records, the congregation holds the records for Wesleyan Cemetery, founded in 1847 and originally located at Laclede and Grand, where St. Louis University is now. The cemetery was the original burial place for many African Americans, including Dred Scott, whose grave was moved to its present location in Calvary Cemetery in 1867. The cemetery property was sold and the cemetery moved to Olive and Hanley in 1878. The second location closed in 1952 and graves transferred to Memorial Park and other burial grounds.

The goal of the project is to help the congregation preserve its valuable documents while making its records accessible to the public. The Department is planning a special event to unveil the results of the project next spring.

Hola! St. Louis County Library web pages now available in Spanish

[St. Louis County Library website](#) now offers select information in Spanish. The "Español" link on the upper right-hand corner of the home page directs users to Spanish language pages with information about the library and its services.

BOOK CHAT

Exploring America's true Italian heritage: Investigating the broader story of Italian immigration

"The Heritage of the Past is the Seed that Brings Forth the Harvest of the Future."

Inscription is carved on the pedestal of the statue known as "Heritage" at the National Archives & Records Administration Building in Washington, D.C.

October, a traditional time for harvest, gives Americans an opportunity to celebrate the seeds that our ancestors have sown. Although more commonly recognized as a time for *Oktoberfest* and German American heritage celebrations, October is officially National Italian American Heritage month. This year marks the 19th anniversary of President George H.W. Bush's proclamation making the celebration official. This relatively new commemoration coincides with the national observance of Columbus Day. Cristoforo Colombo's discovery of America is considered one of the greatest exploration feats in recorded history. Italians and Sicilians in America have made sizeable contributions as Nobel Peace Prize winners, inventors, and entertainers. It is fitting, therefore, to take the opportunity to recognize achievements and contributions of Italian Americans, and also to appreciate their unique immigrant experiences.

In his book, *Finding Italian Roots: The Complete Guide for Americans*, 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Genealogical Publishing, 2003, call no. 929.1 C694F), John Colletta reminds us that the first Italian immigrant to the New World was Peter Caesar Alberti. "He tagged along with the Dutch in 1635, and raised his family on Long Island." In 1647, Alberti acquired land from the Dutch West India Company equivalent to a 100-acre farm in what is today Brooklyn. Filippo Mazzei, a Tuscan physician and another early Italian immigrant, fought alongside Thomas Jefferson and Patrick Henry during the American Revolution. His quote, "All men are, by nature, equally free and independent" was the inspiration for Jefferson's phrase, "All Men are Created Equal." However, Italians did not begin to immigrate in significant numbers until the 1870s and 1880s. The impetus was desperate poverty with little hope for a future for themselves and their families in their homeland. Although we tend to think about Italian communities as urban, many immigrants were drawn to the Deep South, Texas, and California, where the climate resembled their homeland.

After the American South was shattered by the Civil War, sugar and cotton plantations were left with enormous labor shortages. This void left by the freed slaves led to the exploitation of immigrant labor. The Sunnyside Plantation, in southeastern Arkansas, is an infamous example. Father Paul Canonici describes his family's story and oral history in, *The Delta Italians: Their Pursuit of the "Better Life" and Their Struggle Against Mosquitoes, Floods, and Prejudice* (Madison, Miss.: P. V. Canonici, 2003, call no. R 976.24 C227D). In addition to the hardships of existence in their new home, they experienced the same abusive treatment the former slaves of the American South experienced. Lynchings of Italian immigrant laborers for perceived crimes were not uncommon. Malaria, tuberculosis, and homesickness for family left behind were counted as part of the Italian immigrants' experience in the South.

In spite of the obstacles, Italians persevered, fortified by the strength of family and their Roman Catholic faith. Approximately three million Italian immigrants, including Sicilians, arrived in America between 1881 and 1910, and another million in the next

decade. That many new arrivals created tightly-knit "Little Italys" in cities is well known. Rosemary DePasquale, however, describes one little-known settlement of Sicilians in her book, *The Italians of Steele's Store, Texas* (Nacogdoches, Texas: Ericson Books, 1993, call no. Q 976.4242 B791I). Many immigrants from the Italian Trapani and Palermo provinces were encouraged to settle the area with enticements of cheap land from the U.S. government. Many took the offer, arriving first in New Orleans where they worked in Louisiana's sugar and cotton plantations before moving on. Even those who could not afford land arrived in Texas to work for the railroads or open businesses. Many worked as day laborers while their families ran farms.

Along with all immigrants of all nationalities, we pay tribute to the extraordinary, "ordinary" Italian men and women of immeasurable courage and fortitude who gave us all opportunity to grow and flourish from the seeds they planted.

TIPS

- Researchers can now order copies of Social Security Records online with a credit card on the [Social Security Online website](#). For those who want to pay by check or money order, the website also provides a form that can be downloaded as a PDF.
- Be sure to check the formation date for all of the counties in which you are doing research. This information is included in the *Handybook for Genealogists* (Logan, Utah: Everton, 2006, call no. R 929.1 H236) available at the Special Collections Department reference desk. The records for an ancestor who lived in Arlington County, Virginia before 1847, for instance, would not be found in Arlington County. That is because Arlington County wasn't created until 13 March 1847. Before that it was part of Fairfax County, so the researcher would need to look for records there.

NEW IN THE SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT

The following is a selection of new items added to the collection. Additional items may have been received which are not listed here.

The Department is grateful to the St. Louis Genealogical Society, the National Genealogical Society, Julius K. Hunter and Friends, and our patrons for their donations.

NEW ON THE [SPECIAL COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT WEBSITE](#):

Indexes to the following histories have been added to "[Histories of Religious Congregations in St. Louis](#)":

A Brief History of the [Kingshighway United Methodist Church](#), 900 Bellerive Boulevard, St Louis, Missouri, 1877-1977

A Century of Blessings: [St. Trinity Lutheran Church](#), Vermont at Koeln Avenues, St Louis, Missouri

A Century of Faith: [St. John's Evangelical Church](#) [St. John's Evangelical and Reformed Church, St. Louis, Mo.]

History of [Saint John the Apostle and Evangelist Church](#): St. Louis, Missouri, 1847-1997

[Tower Grove Baptist Church](#), 4527 Magnolia Avenue, St. Louis, Missouri: Year Book, 1962

[Salem Lutheran Church](#), 125, 1849-1974 [Black Jack, Mo.]

PRINT RESOURCES

Call numbers follow each title. Complete bibliographic information for each item is available in the St. Louis County Library's [online catalog](#).

■ **Family Maps by Gregory A. Boyd** (abbreviated title)

Massac County Illinois, R 977.3997 B789F

A surname index for Arphax Family Maps is available online at <http://www.arphax.com>.

■ **States and Counties** (abbreviated titles unless italicized)

KENTUCKY

Ballard County, R 976.996

Confederate Pension Applications; Cemeteries, 6 Volumes
Confederate Soldiers; Marriages, 1852-1878, 1881-1884, 1885-1910
Birth Records of Dr. William Allen Asbrook, 1911-1940
Family Bible Records, Ballard-Carlisle counties

Carlisle County, R 976.997

History and Memories

Magoffin County, R 976.9215

Index to the Cemetery Books
Reproduction of Magoffin's First Century, 1860-1960
Marriages, 1860-1950

Southwest Laurel County Cemeteries. 2002. R 976.9143 S728

OHIO

Carroll County, R 977.167

1830 Original Tax Records
Early Marriages

Defiance County, R 977.114

Tombstone Inscriptions in Adams Township

Fairfield County, R977.158
Cemeteries of Liberty Township
Cemeteries of Pleasant Township
Cemeteries of Walnut Township

Huron County, R 977.125
Birth Index 1867-1908
Deaths Copied from Funeral Home Records Norwalk, Ohio, 1910-1913
Probate Court Naturalization Records Index, 1859-1903
New London Record Newspaper Index to Vital Records, 1879-1920

Richland County, R 977.128 B858P
A Pioneer History
Newspapers Abstracts, 1830-1849
Original Land Purchasers
Marriages 1872-1900
Mansfield Cemeteries Mansfield, Ohio

■ Germany

- Das Buch zum Deutschen Auswandererhaus / The book to the German Emigration Center.* 2006. R 943 B918
- Die Einwohner der Stadt Ketzin/Osthavelland bis zur Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts.* [Residents of the city of Ketzin, Osthavelland up to the Mid-19th Century]. 1983. R 943.154 A456E
- Die Familien der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchengemeinde Mainstockheim, 1563-1900* [Families of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mainstockheim, 1563-1900]. 1999. R 943.33 M192F
- Die Familien der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchengemeinde Niederwerrn, 1580-1900* [Families of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Niederwerrn, 1580-1900]. 1999. R 943.33 S336F
- Familienregister der Evangelisch-Lutherischen Kirchengemeinde Neuses am Berg, 1651-1900* [Family Register of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Neuses am Berg]. 1997. R 943.33 M192F
- Gesamtregister zum Deutschen Familienarchiv* [Cumulative Index to the German Family Archives]. 1975. R943 F899F
- Katholische Kirchenbücher in Ost- und Westpreussen* [Catholic Church Books in East and West Prussia]. 2000. 943 S786K
- Quellen und Schriften zur Bevölkerungsgeschichte Norddeutschlands: Bürgerbücher aus Mecklenburg* [Sources and Manuscripts for Population History in Northern German: Citizen Rolls from Mecklenburg]. The following are volumes in the series covering individual towns:
- F1: Kröpelin 1791-1918.* 2001. R 943.17 S384Q
F3: Bützow. 2000. R 943.17 S384Q
H2: Boizenburg, 1692 -1878. 1999. R 943.17 S384Q
M3: Alt-Strelitz. 1995. R 943.17 S384Q
- Uffenheim: Häusergeschichte, 1530 bis 1945* [Uffenheim: Habitation History, 1530 to 1945]. 2003. R 943.32 R297U

■ Scotland

Book of Records of Ancient Privileges of Canongate. 1955. 941.34 W877B
Burgh Court Book of Selkirk, 1503-45. 1960. 941.37 B956
Commissariat Record of Argyle: Register of Testaments, 1674-1800. 1902. 941.42 C734
Commissariat Record of Moray: Register of Testaments, 1684-1800. 1904. R 941.22 C734
Commissariat Record of Orkney and Shetland: Register of Testaments. 1904. R 941.13 C734
Court Book of Shetland, 1602-1604. 1954. 941.135 C862
Girvan Doune Cemetery, East Section: Monumental Inscriptions. 2007. R 941.464 G529.
Miscellaneous Records Taken from Poor Roll, Prison Records, Ragged School and Other Resources. 2006. R 941.37 M681M
Scottish Highlanders on the Eve of the Great Migration 1725-1775. 2007. R 941.152 D635S
Scottish Soldiers in Colonial America. 2004. R 941.1 D635S
The Scottish Surnames of Colonial America. 2007. 929.42 D635S

■ Other new titles

American Prisoners of War Held at Barbados, New Providence and Newfoundland during the War of 1812. 2007. 973.527 B167A [NGS]
Catholic Cemeteries Of Ralls And Monroe County. R 977.8355 R163
Ebenezer's German-language Record (in Translation): Gemeinde - Buch, 1860-1917 ; Protokoll - Buch, 1918-1929. 2007. R 977.839 M254E
Funeral Customs in Colonial New York. 1959. R 974.71 S427F
Genealogical Data from Further New York Administration Bonds, 1791-1798. 1971. R 974.71 S427G
A Guide to Genealogical Research at the Louisiana State Archives. 2008. R 976.3 R564G
Norfolk County, Virginia Guardian Bonds, 1801-1850. 2008. 975.552 G115N
Numbering your Genealogy. 2008. 929.1 C976N
Pennsylvania Births: Lancaster County. 1997. R 974.815 H926P
The Trans-Mississippi West, 1804-1912. 1994. R 978 K87
Union County, Illinois, Marriage Records, 1893-1900. 2008. R 977.3995 D526U

DATABASES

Access NewspaperArchives.com. Features historical newspapers, 1759 – present. Available at home via the Internet for eligible St. Louis County Library card holders. Accessible from the [St. Louis County Library website](http://St.LouisCountyLibrary.com).

WEB WATCH

WEB FINDS

■ [Alton in the Civil War – Alton Prison](http://AltonintheCivilWar.com): Alton Prison held Confederate prisoners during the Civil War. This website includes a searchable database of prisoners who died during interment. The database lists name, rank, company and state, date and

place of capture, and cause of death. The site also features a page of general information about Alton during the Civil War.

- [Poplar Bluff, \(Butler Co.\) Missouri Public Library - Genealogy](#): This page from the Poplar Bluff Public Library's website includes indexes such as marriage, cemetery records and deaths for Butler Co., as well as links to other websites and guidelines for requesting obituaries from the library.
- [WarMemorial.us Online Casualty Database](#): Lists military deaths from World War II to the present. The site provides a separate page for each individual. The information varies depending upon the time period and the individual.
- [German Historical Research Service Transcribe Group](#). This organization offers the transcription and translation of German documents through its Yahoo Group. Group members can upload documents as jpeg files. Volunteers will transcribe handwritten script and translate documents at no cost. More information about the service and instruction on how to join the Yahoo Group is available at the organization's [website](#).

WEB NEWS

[Footnote.com](#) has added a new information sharing feature to its website called [Footnote Pages](#). More than 80 million individual web pages based on the Social Security Death Index have been created. Each page includes the person's name, dates of birth and death, and last residence. A timeline and a map illustrate places of birth, last residence and other possible information. A free membership to the site allows users to view and add additional information to a page.


NEW ON ANCESTRY LIBRARY EDITION

Ancestry Library Edition may be used for free in the Special Collections Department and at all St. Louis County Library branches.

- [Canadian Passenger Lists, 1865-1935](#): Includes passenger lists for ports in Canada but also the Eastern United States, including New York and Boston. Listings from American ports are apparently those passengers who traveled to Canada following their arrival. Available date ranges vary according to port of arrival. Includes images of the lists.
- [Cook County, Illinois Records](#): Births: 1916-1935; Marriages: 1930-1960; Deaths: 1908-1988. These are the same Cook County Clerk indexes described in the August 2008 *PastPorts* "Web Watch" column, but they are now also available on Ancestry. Although records must still be purchased, this database makes it simpler to find the information. Clicking on the "Purchase from Cook County" link transfers users to the Cook County website for the actual purchase.

CALENDAR

A list of events taking place at the St. Louis County Library

Note: Dates for Special Collections Department classes are indicated by . Please register for classes in advance of the date by calling 314-994-3300 and asking for

the Reference Department. Once connected, tell the Reference Librarian you would like to register for a class.

OCTOBER

📞 Thursday, October 2, 2:00 – 3:30 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers

📞 Tuesday, October 7, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: Introduction to Genealogy Databases

Wednesday, October 8, 7 – 9 pm

Headquarters Auditorium

St. Louis Genealogical Society

Program: "Digging Deeper: Using Missouri Historical Society Archives"

Speaker: Dennis Northcott

📞 Thursday, October 16, 9:30 – 11:00 am

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers

📞 Tuesday, October 21, 2:00 – 4:00 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: Introduction to Genealogy Databases

📞 Tuesday, October 28, 6:30 – 8:00 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers

Tuesday, October 28, 7 – 9 pm

Headquarters Auditorium

Irish Special Interest Group

Program: "Irish Research"

Speaker: Gabrielle Woeltje

NOVEMBER

📞 Monday, November 3, 2 – 4 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab

Special Collections Class: Introduction to Genealogy Databases

Wednesday, November 5 pm

Headquarters East Room

Jewish Special Interest Group

Program: "Big City Maps"

Speaker: Larry Franke

Tuesday, November 11, 7 pm

Headquarters Auditorium

French Special Interest Group
Program: "The French in Colonial Illinois"
Speaker: Margaret Kimball Brown, PhD.

📞 Thursday, November 13, 2 – 4 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers

📞 Thursday, November 20, 9:30 – 11:30 am

Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to Genealogy Databases

📞 Tuesday, November 25, 7:30 – 8:30 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers

DECEMBER

📞 Monday, December 1, 2 – 4 pm

Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: Introduction to Genealogy Databases

📞 Monday, December 8, 9:30 – 11:30 am

Headquarters Computer Lab
Special Collections Class: History and Genealogy in Newspapers