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Established 1966

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Library Hours:  
Tuesday & Saturday  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Email:

info@mhgswichita.org

Online Alert:

go to website>publications  
>Alert

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# Alert

## Midwest Historical & Genealogical Society

MHGS is Open Tuesday and Saturday, 9am-4pm. Wi-fi is available with knowledgeable volunteers to help you with your research and answer questions. We have yearly memberships and non-members can do research for a fee. (316) 264-3611 MHGS Website: [mhgswichita.org](http://mhgswichita.org)

### Items of Interest from Librarian Julia

#### **Book Sale**

September 13 (Saturday), September 16 (Tuesday), September 20 (Saturday)  
Sale will be from 9am to 4pm each of these days—the hours the library is usually open. Genealogy and history books and magazines, plus general fiction and non-fiction. Great prices!

#### **Volunteers Welcome!**

The library always has dozens of tasks that we could use help with, including sorting, organizing, indexing, sometimes just folding and labeling. We'd love it if you'd drop by and spend an hour or two helping us out—no commitment necessary! We also have more intensive tasks for those of you who'd like something more challenging. Some of these jobs can even be done from home!

This month, we're working on a donation of records from the Family and Community Education chapter in Sedgwick County, which disbanded in 2012. FCE was organized in 1914 to help Kansas rural women achieve the standard of living of their city counterparts. They were first known as Farm Bureau Units, then Home Demonstration Units, Extension Homemaker Units, and finally, Family and Consumer Education in the eighties.

For the most part, volunteering at the library is an informal, social activity; things are liveliest here in the afternoons. Please come spend an air-conditioned hour or two with us, and help keep the library awesome!

#### **Donations Needed**

We could use a label maker, for file folders and light switches, etc. Also, we use a lot of pressboard report covers; not the ones with the slide-on spines, but the ones with metal prongs (side prongs, not top ones) that can hold a year's worth of magazines. If anyone has any just gathering dust, we'd put them to good use!

#### **The Periodical Source Index (PERSI)**

The Periodical Source Index, which is compiled by the Allen County Library (ACPL), is a master index of genealogical publications in the U.S. PERSI used to be available on the HeritageQuest online service, but ACPL has recently signed a contract moving it to findmypast.com, an online genealogy service based in the United Kingdom. The good thing about this move is that findmypast.com has announced plans to start digitizing all those genealogical publications, making the articles available at a click of a button and sending a little money to the publishing societies. The bad news is that findmypast.com is a subscription service, and many of us don't have subscriptions. (cont. page 2)

## Upcoming Programs

**Board Meeting. Saturday, August 9 at 10:30.**

**Genealogy DNA Special Interest Group. Saturday, August 9 at 1pm to 2pm. Led by Paul Renner Smith.** Discover the latest news in the field of Genealogical DNA study. This informal discussion group uses the newest information available to learn what DNA can tell us about our ancestors. Learn what different tests are available and where.

**Exploring Ancestry.com. Saturday, August 16 at 10am to 11am.** Led by Jim Scharnhorst. What are you really paying for? What is available for free? How do you make corrections to transcribing errors?

**Afro-American Special Interest Group. Saturday, August 23 at 1pm.** Led by Jozel Smith Eckels. Interest Group encourages historical and genealogical study of families with special emphasis on Afro-Americans. This informal group will seek to learn more of the history and factors within the family stories that we have been given. We will demonstrate how to research your family tree with the goal of discovering and understanding your family history. The discussions will include a variety of methods, including exploring public records, interviewing older relatives and preserving information.

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**Salem Witchcraft Presentation. Saturday, September 27 at 10am.** Led by Sandi Bush and Lucille Williams. Have you ever wondered if any of your ancestors were involved in the witchcraft hysteria of 1692? If so, come to our "Salem" program and find out. Were they accusers? Or were they accused? Were they among those unfortunates who were hanged? We will attempt to help you solve your puzzle.

**Afro-American Special Interest Group. Saturday, September 27 at 1pm to 2pm.** Led by Jozel Smith Eckels

**Reservations requested for all classes. Call 316-264-3611 to make reservations.**

**Check our website at [mhgswichita.org](http://mhgswichita.org) periodically for program information.**

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Plus, it will take a while for [findmypast.com](http://findmypast.com) to make arrangements for digitizing all those publications.

Fortunately, anyone can search the basic index online for free today:

- ◆ Go to [findmypast.com](http://findmypast.com)
- ◆ Go to the blue Search menu
- ◆ Select A-Z of record sets
- ◆ Type "periodical" into the search box.
- ◆ Select Periodical Source Index
- ◆ Fill in your search parameters and start searching.

The free search will get you the periodical name and year. This should give you enough information to locate the article—you can find the publication in a library (try MHGS first, then [WorldCat.org](http://WorldCat.org)), get a copy from the society that published it, or order a copy from the ACPL at [genealogycenter.org](http://genealogycenter.org) (look in the menu under Services for the Article Fulfillment Form.)

**Recommended Reading****MHGS President Elaine Sunde**

Jeanette Keith. *Fever Season: The Story of a Terrifying Epidemic and the People Who Saved a City*, published by Bloomsbury Press, 2012. Available at Wichita Public Library.

Once in a while, a book turns out to be much more than the title suggests. This book chronicles the yellow fever epidemic that, over the summer of 1878, almost destroyed Memphis, Tennessee. In that one dreadful summer, thousands of people deserted the city; of the 20,000 who remained, 17,000 contracted the fever and more than 5,000 died. Under complete quarantine, Memphis saw its economy collapse and its food supplies disappear. There was no cure for yellow fever in 1878; there is no cure today.

The bonus that this book provides is to record a moment in history when racial tension, class distinction, and the lingering bitterness of the Civil War were all put aside. The handful of healthy survivors were nearly overwhelmed in tending the sick, the dying, and the dead. To meet this crisis, former Confederate officers and former African-American slaves joined together with Catholic, Protestant, and Jewish agencies — all working in complete accord to care for the suffering, the bereaved, and the orphaned. Volunteer nurses and doctors flooded in from northern states, knowing the danger they faced; and many of them did sicken and die, sometimes within days of reaching Memphis.

Historian Jeanette Keith traces the heroism of ordinary people and the lives of numerous individuals who helped meet this public emergency. She also traces the aftermath of the epidemic when, sadly, this moment of brotherhood passed.

**WWI Genealogy Records Free on MyHeritage Through July**

Important information for those of you who have WWI ancestors. The 100th anniversary of the start of the war is July 28. That was when the Austro-Hungarian Empire invaded Serbia. All of Europe and countries beyond were drawn into the conflict—including the U.S. in 1918. More than 70 million military personnel worldwide were mobilized and nine million were killed over the course of the war. Up to eight million civilians died as a result of the war. To commemorate the centennial, My Heritage is making these records free to search through the month of July.

Their collection includes eleven WWI records databases, mostly for European soldiers. If you had WWI ancestors, check this out at the MyHeritage blog: <http://blog.myheritage.com/>

**Reminder of fundraiser for MHGS!**

MHGS has started receiving funds from Amazon Smile, our new fundraising program. If you haven't participated yet and want to learn how, go to our website at: <http://mhgswichita.org> and click on Amazon Smile. It will take you there.

**2014-2015 Board of Directors**

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**Midwest Historical & Genealogical Society, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 1121**  
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Change Service Requested



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