

Cass County Genealogical Society

Newsletter August 2020

Hello members,

Mary continues to move groups of items to make the Genealogy Room more useable. You can use it by stopping in or by emailing or calling.

A volunteer came in recently to put up various wall hangings. They have special meaning to Cass County and genealogy.

We are planning to have a regular Society meeting on September 24th, regular time, 1 pm, but not at the Library. It will be at the American Legion Memorial Building (the Armory) where there is plenty of space for distancing,

Appointing a nominating committee will be on the agenda. Nominees are to be announced in October and election held in November.

LaVon, President

What a Difference a Day Makes

You may remember that I told you in the first newsletter that I am a genealogy newcomer. I learned the importance of paying attention to details with a recent discovery.

My mother was born in March 1920. My parents were married in March 1937. She was 17, right?

Just recently I saw their marriage license. One of the numbers requested was age at next birthday and filled in as 19. Wait a minute, how can that be? It should be 18 in one year.

Most of you already know the answer. Mom's birthday was March 28. They were married on March 29..She was 18 the day she was married. So 19 was the correct answer.

If you have done much research you have likely found differences which are much more difficult to solve.

Sound Familiar: 1918 or 2020

In the United States, no disease in history led to such intrusive restrictions as the great influenza. These included closures of schools, churches, soda fountains, theaters, movie houses, department stores, and barber shops, and regulations on how much space should be allocated to people in indoor public places.

There were fines against coughing, sneezing, spitting, kissing, and even talking outdoors—those the *Boston Globe* called “big talkers.” Special influenza police were hired to round up children playing on street corners and occasionally even in their own backyards.

Face masks came closest to being the measure that people most objected to, even though masks were often popular at first. *The Ogden Standard* reported that “masks are the vogue,” while the *Washington Times* told of how they were becoming “general” in Detroit.

Various authorities began making masks compulsory. San Francisco was the first major U.S. city to do so in October 1918, continuing on and off. The only American state to make masks mandatory was (briefly) California. According to a November 1918 front page report from Utah's *Garland City Globe*: The average man wore the mask slung to the back of his neck until he came in sight of a policeman, and most people had holes cut into them to stick their cigars and cigarettes through.

San Francisco saw the creation of the anti-mask league, as well as protests and civil disobedience. People refused to wear masks in public or flaunted wearing them improperly. Some went to prison for not wearing them or refusing to pay fines.

Arguments against masks were steadily being bolstered by statistics. The head of California's state board of health had presented late 1918 findings from San Francisco's best run hospital showing that 78% of nurses became infected despite their careful wearing of masks. Masks were ineffective as they were made from gauze.

Perhaps there's something about masks and human impulses that has yet to be studied properly.

Note from Mary

CCGS recently received email from Teri Forsyth asking if we would be interested in the Peter Janss/Lucy Lindeman Family Story. Teri sent it by email and it was printed off.

Information on Peter Janss

Born and raised in Germany, a member of the German Imperial Army. He and most of his siblings immigrated to America in 1900. He and his wife were very patriotic to America and loved their community. A Butcher by trade, Peter was hard working and known for his honest work. A good and kindly man. He and Lucy had two sons and four grandchildren. Gardening was his hobby.

(provided by Teri Forsyth, findagrave member #48068602, on March 26, 2013)
Peter D. Janss was born in Holstein Germany on March 15, 1878 the son of John and Anna Janss. Peter died 18 Nov. 1962

Information on Lucy Lindeman Janss:

German heritage, Lucy was very dedicated to house and home. Perfection was her goal in most everything. Gardening and talking politics was her hobby. Many in the community came around to see one of the best Christmas displays in their yard each year. She had a sharp mind and recalled many facts. That was invaluable when she wrote the family history full of stories from those long-gone days. Those stories are passed around and treasured within the family today.

(provided by Teri Forsyth, findagrave member #48068602, on March 26, 2013)
Lucy was the daughter of William and Catherine Gerlach Lindeman. She was born in Noble township May 11, 1879 and died 14 April 1960.

Also enclosed with the Janss/Lindeman story was a picture of five young men who were members of the **Melody Boys Orchestra**. Robert Janss, son of Peter and Lucy was named as one of the boys and he is holding a violin (or

fiddle) on his lap in the picture. Teri did not know the names of the other boys in the orchestra. It was helpful to determine a time frame for the group. Robert graduated from Atlantic Highschool in 1928. Looking through the years of 1926-1928 in the Atlantic Newspaper archives lead to an article in the Telegraph dated Mach 15, 1927 where the Elks Club was having a Dad-Lad Banquet and "Rapp's Melody Boys" served as entertainment.



The article goes on to say "The five-piece orchestra, known as "Rapp's Melody Boys," furnished some snappy numbers during the dinner. This aggregation is composed of Ronald Rapp, Robert Steffens, Robert Janss, Howard Neff and Melvin Myers. The group was known as Margie and Her Melody Boys in an ad for a Free Dance on Saturday, Sept. 1, 1928 at John Anderson's. Doing a little research on the "guys" I found Robert (Bob) Janss died Dec 27, 1982 in Boise, Idaho. Howard Neff, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lou Neff died July 17, 1931 at college in Ames, IA. from spinal meningitis. He was laid to rest in the Atlantic Cemetery. Ronald Lavern Rapp son of Mr. and Mrs. William Rapp died Oct 6, 2003 in Long Beach California. He is buried in Graceland Cemetery in Avoca. At this time, CCGS has not been able to uncover any updated information on Melvin Myers. An interesting side note on the orchestra is Howard Neff and Robert Janss were cousins as their mothers were sisters.

Do you have a family story you would like to share with the other members of CCGS?