

Organizational Meeting of Eaton County Genealogical Society

Held May 18, 1988 at 7:15 PM at the historical Eaton County Courthouse

There were 22 people present (see the attached list); with 3 more names of people interested in joining.

Leila Klaiss, as chairman of the Eaton County Historical Society, chaired the meeting. She offered us the use of the courthouse for meetings, the use of the address for return mailings, and the use of a room in the courthouse to establish a genealogical reference library. That room also includes a fire-proof vault.

There were a "couple of things" that the Historical Society was asking in return! The vault nearest the South door contains a variety of documents, pictures, and books that need to be sorted and catalogued. There are books and documents in the "attic" that need to be sorted and catalogued also. And the Historical Society would like the Genealogical Society to take over the running of the Genealogical Workshops held in the spring; if not in 1989, then in 1990. (And that's all!)

It was determined that meetings would be held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM. Tentatively one hour of the meeting will be a teaching/helping/speaker session; and the other hour will be spent sorting and cataloging documents at the courthouse. Since we are just getting under way, we will plan to hold meetings during the summer.

As a result of the large attendance at the Everton's workshop held on 4/23/88, Everton's is going to give the Historical Society a microfiche copy of their "Roots Cellar" information. There was a collection taken up at the workshop for a microfiche reader (for obvious reasons). And when Violet Geddie arrived at the meeting, she asked for assistance to get something out of her car. The "something" turned out to be 2 used microfiche readers which she had found for \$50 each. The collection had raised \$55, and the Historical Society will provide the other \$45 until the Genealogical Society can reimburse them. The courthouse is open every weekday from 7:00 AM - 5:00 PM, so the readers will be available during the week or at meetings.

The Preese's (speakers at the workshop from Everton's) were taken up to the "attic" of the courthouse in April. They informed Leila that if she obtained permission, Everton's would microfilm all of the data and provide us with a copy of that microfilm at no charge. She has gotten that approval, and will be writing to Salt Lake City by the end of this week to let them know. Hopefully we can organize some of the loose documents before they are ready to microfilm and make their job easier. It was also mentioned that the "jailor's" house next door to the courthouse may have papers which could be microfilmed. After the microfilming is completed, the county officials will have to decide what to do with the papers and books. Because of fire hazard, they will probably need to be stored elsewhere. We need to find out whether or not the State Archives would want them; and if they do, how accessible the documents would be to use. Getting a copy of the microfilm would then raise the need to obtain a microfilm reader. (It's a never ending circle.) Profits from a spring workshop could be one way of fund raising. It would be nice if we could get a reader/printer, so copies could be made. There could be a charge for copies that would make the reader/printer self-supporting, or even slightly profitable.

It was also determined that at first we would start out as a rather informal group. Then later, we could formalize things with a set of by-laws when we were ready. We will need to elect officers in the not too distant future, and establish some dues for membership. There will be a need for a few committees soon. An important one would be a publicity committee to increase membership and send meeting notices to area newspapers and TV stations.

Laura Ranville is chairing a committee to get the sorting started. She would like to be able to have instructions to leave so any worker could come in at their convenience and know what has been done, what needs to be done, and how to go about doing the work. There will be a meeting on Thurs. May 26th at 6:30 PM for getting started. Also on the committee are Violet Geddie, Nancy Jourden, Pat Koos, and Jean Pixley.

One of our goals will be to develop an Eaton County "Source" book. If we can find out what is available in various places in the county, we can share that information with others. Things like addresses and hours of libraries, what special collections the libraries might have; the locations of cemeteries and collected lists of people buried in them; dates and copies of newspapers and whether or not they have been microfilmed; these are just the beginning. The room at the courthouse can be used for donations of family bibles, books, and collections which people might otherwise throw away.

Another goal is to be able to provide a lookup service for people from outside the county or state. Since many of us have written to other locations asking for this type of information, it would be nice to be able to return the favors.

We need your input on things that we did not cover at this first meeting, especially about how the society could meet your own individual needs. One idea I had later was a form-sharing session. Most of us use unique forms we have invented to short-cut the time needed to document our finds.

Enclosed is a list of the charter members, plus a form to enter your family names. Also enclosed is a list of people attending the 1988 workshop. With a fairly small membership, we can include a larger number of names, plus the location information.

I recklessly volunteered for secretarial duties, and promptly realized when I got home that I will be out of town on business for the June meeting, and gone on vacation for the July meeting. (Good planning on my part.) But I am really enthusiastic about the excellent turnout for the first meeting, and hope that our membership and participation will continue to grow. Let's all work toward that goal!

Jean Pixley
5/20/88

GENEALOGY POX (provided by Jill Smith)

Symptoms: Continual complaint as to need for names, dates, and places. Patient has blank expression, sometimes deaf to spouse and children. Has no taste for work of any kind, except feverishly looking through records at libraries and courthouses. Has compulsion to write letters. Swears at mailman when he doesn't leave any mail. Frequents strange places such as cemeteries, ruins and remote, desolate country areas. Makes secret night calls. Hides phone bills from spouse. Membles to self. Has strange, faraway look in eyes.

Treatment: Medication is useless. Disease is not fatal, but gets progressively worse. Patient should attend genealogy workshops, subscribe to genealogical magazines, and be given a quiet corner of the house where s/he can be alone.

Remarks: No known cure. The usual nature of the disease is - the sicker the patient gets, the more he enjoys it!

Author unknown

06/08/88

NEWS FLASH!!!

An Eaton County Genealogical Society has been started as of May 18, 1988. If you are as enthusiastic about this fact as we are, please plan to attend the next meeting on Wednesday, June 15, 1988 at 7:00 PM at the historic courthouse at the corner of Cochran & Lawrence in Charlotte.

We are going to meet the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM in Charlotte. Because we're just getting started, we're going to meet during the summer months. One hour will be a teaching/speaker/helping session and the other hour will be working on sorting and cataloging various items at the courthouse.

We need more ideas and members. One of our goals is to develop an Eaton County "Source" book. Finding out what is available in all corners of our county will be our job. All libraries with their hours and any special collections, locations of cemeteries & lists of people buried there, dates and copies of newspapers and whether or not they have been microfilmed; these are just the beginning.

Another goal is to provide lookup services to people from outside the county or state. Since many of use have written to other locations asking for this type of information, it would be nice to be able to return the favors.

Please join us and help us grow!

Some contact people are:

Pat Koos	543-5342	Dorothy & Charles Larsen	(616)763-9388
Jean Pixley	543-0417	Gaynell Haley	749-9975
Laura Ranville	543-7534		
Jill Smith	627-9404		

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