



## Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society

### Your Local Resource for Family History

By Cheryl Wooten



NWIGS board members L-R: Cheryl Wooten, Valerie Schlink, Carrie Newton, Jean Gassoway, KayLynn Matthews, Michael Longan and Bobbi Dobrzeniecki.

**G**enealogy is one of the fastest growing hobbies in the western world. With the rise of DNA testing and thousands of records being digitized every day, learning about your ancestors has never been easier. But where do you begin? The Northwest Indiana Genealogical Society (NWIGS) is the first place to start.

Since 1970, this local, nonprofit organization has provided education, research assistance, and a place to socialize with fellow genealogists and family historians. NWIGS also preserves and shares the history and genealogy of Lake County and Porter Counties in Indiana. Their many volunteers have created excellent resources to help with your research and to learn more about genealogy and family history. These books are available for purchase on their website ([www.nwigs.org](http://www.nwigs.org)).

On the third Saturday of each month, NWIGS hosts a free, one hour meeting, either in person or online via Zoom where guest speakers, local historians, archivists, and genealogists present timely information that helps further one's research. The meeting details are always posted on their website and on their Facebook page.

Although attendance to the monthly meetings is open to anyone, those who become NWIGS members (\$25/year) have access to a variety of resources including indexes, databases, and the monthly newsletter, "TWIGS". Members can also volunteer on the many ongoing genealogical projects within the group.

In speaking to several board members, each shared why they enjoy membership in NWIGS. Current President, KayLynn Mathews says, "When I joined as a member, I felt like I had more say in what happens. I'm able to volunteer, contribute, and give back to the genealogical community." There are a variety of projects the group would like to tackle, but more member volunteers are needed.

Second Vice-President Carrie Newton values the ability to problem solve and share tips with other genealogists. "And it's nice to be with people who have a mutual appreciation for family history." First Vice-President Valerie Schlink agrees. "You're with people who won't roll their eyes when you start talking about a unique document you found." Webmaster Michael Longan likes the ability "to financially support local genealogical and historical preservation activities while getting together and meeting new people."

Historian Bobbi Dobrzeniecki share that she got hooked into NWIGS during the pandemic. "I had some genealogical questions and after talking with a member of the group, I decided to join. They've helped me solve several genealogical problems. I also found out about the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) and after proving two of my patriot ancestors, was pledged into the DAR. It's been amazing!"

And Jean Gassoway, the group's treasurer says, "I really value the speakers we have. There's always someone sharing an interesting topic."

So, what are you waiting for? There's no better time than now to plug into this fun group of genealogists. Their next two meetings are on Saturday, April 20, 2024 at 10:00am at the Merrillville Library and on Saturday, May 18, 2024 at 10:00am at the Valparaiso Public Library.

**Do you have a non-profit organization you'd like to share with readers? Contact [cwooten@bestversionmedia.com](mailto:cwooten@bestversionmedia.com).**



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