Maps are essential in German genealogy to help understand the many historical changes in political boundaries. This map shows the North German Federation and the German Empire, 1866-1871. From the Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection, University of Texas Libraries.

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Researching German Ancestors

by Jane Gramlich, Librarian

For genealogists with European ancestry, Germany is one of the most commonly researched nations of origin. Two significant waves of Germanic migrations affected American history and genealogy. The first wave in the early to mid-1700s brought thousands to our shores. Commonly arriving in Philadelphia, many settled in the middle colonies and became a distinct ethnic group in the colonial era. Others in this wave ended up in the southern coastal colonies of Virginia and the Carolinas.

The second and much larger wave of migration occurred in the mid-1800s. This time, immigrants fanned out into Midwestern farms and cities with pockets of settlement farther west and south, most notably Texas. These mass migrations were a result of war, political upheaval, economic hardship, and religious persecution. Like most immigrants, German people fled to “Amerika” with high hopes for a better life than the one they knew in the homeland.

Despite Germany’s significant impact on U.S. genealogy, it is a difficult nation to research, demanding a great deal of time and patience from a family historian. Before getting deeply involved, it’s necessary to understand the most basic challenges in German genealogy. Geography is one such challenge. During both waves of migration, immigrants weren’t leaving a place officially known as Germany. Until its unification in 1871, it was a collection of minor kingdoms, city-states, and other principalities. Both world wars further altered boundaries. For example, if your ancestors came from the province of Pomerania, you’ll find that it’s now mostly in Poland and village names have changed. A genealogist’s geographic knowledge is usually a two-pronged approach: understanding historical changes affecting ancestors’ lives and
records created about them, as well as current political and administrative boundaries that can affect record access today. In Germany, both approaches take careful and deliberate work.

Among the repercussions of Germany’s fragmented history is that there is no central archives for genealogical records. An excellent place to begin learning about the many repositories in Germany is FamilySearch’s wiki page Germany Archives and Libraries. In addition, overseas research involves records and recordkeeping practices that are very specific to that country, and often specific to much smaller localities. A uniquely German resource is a set of books known variously as ortsippenbuch (town lineage book), ortsfamilienbuch (town family book), or simply familienbuch. These excellent sources can be a goldmine for some researchers, but they are best understood in a detailed context. To learn more, check out FamilySearch’s German Town Genealogies and Parish Register Inventories on the Internet.

Probably the most difficult challenge in German research is the language barrier. With website text, online translation tools can be helpful. Some foreign-language websites have their own translation links. When using Google Chrome as a browser, a translation option sometimes appears automatically in the upper right hand corner of a website in a foreign language. If it doesn’t, right click anywhere on the page and select “translate to English.” Translation will not be completely accurate, but it can provide the basic meaning of the text. On the other hand, when dealing with handwritten or typeset documents and offline research in general, a researcher must either learn the language or hire a translator. Some sources, such as the Meyers Gazetteer of the German Empire on Ancestry, use tightly packed gothic typescript that requires its own kind of translation. Online and print dictionaries and tutorials can help with basic genealogical terminology, but more advanced knowledge may be needed for complex documents. German language translators may be found through the Association of Professional Genealogists and Cyndi’s List.

There are many transcribed or indexed German records on Ancestry Library Edition and FamilySearch. The Family History Library also offers many resources on microfilm, including church records and public records, that may be ordered online and shipped to Special Collections for viewing on our microfilm readers. Ultimately, U.S. genealogists researching German ancestors will run out of options on our side of the Atlantic and encounter records that are only available in Germany. To access them, the only options may be to hire a professional genealogist or travel there personally.

The roadblocks of research in a foreign country shouldn’t stop us from learning as much as we can, step by step. Explore German genealogy manuals such as The Family Tree German Genealogy Guide and German Genealogy Research. Take advantage of FamilySearch’s free online courses on German research. An excellent list of German genealogy resources can be found through the Federation of Eastern European Family History Societies (FEEFHS). And be sure to attend our annual all-day program, “Discovering Your German Ancestors,” on August 22.

One of the most common experiences of genealogists researching immigrant forebears is that we may not find answers to specific questions right away, or at all. But we’ll learn a great deal in the process of seeking those answers. This knowledge almost always helps us understand the elusive ancestors who chose to settle here, and those they left behind, to create the new lives and families that led to us.

“To America!” Published in 1855, this fictional series for German readers spun adventurous tales of a group of immigrants to the United States.
Join Us for “Discovering Your German Ancestors” on August 22
by Judy James, Division Manager

Author, lecturer, and genealogist James M. Beidler will present “Discovering Your German Ancestors” Saturday, August 22, 9:30 am – 4:30 pm in the Main Library Auditorium. Co-sponsored by the Library and the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society, the program will focus on strategies and resources for finding your German ancestors.

James M. Beidler writes Roots & Branches, an award-winning weekly newspaper column on genealogy. He is a columnist for German Life magazine, editor of Der Kurier, the quarterly journal of the Mid-Atlantic Germanic Society, and an instructor for the online Family Tree University. He was President of the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors from 2010 to 2012, and is the former Executive Director for the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania. He is a frequent contributor to periodicals ranging from scholarly journals such as The Pennsylvania Genealogical Magazine to popular-interest magazines such as Ancestry and Family Tree Magazine. He also wrote the chapter on genealogy for Pennsylvania: A History of the Commonwealth, published jointly by the Penn State Press and the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

As a lecturer, he participated in the Pennsylvania Humanities Council’s acclaimed Commonwealth Speakers program from 2002 to 2009 and has been a presenter at numerous conferences. He sits on the selection committee for the Pennsylvania Newspaper Project and, until recently, Pennsylvania’s State Historic Records Advisory Board. He is an Enrolled Agent and Senior Tax Advisor for an H&R Block franchise and previously was a copy editor for fifteen years for The Patriot-News in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. He was born in Reading, Pennsylvania and raised in nearby Berks County, where he currently resides. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa from Hofstra University on Long Island, New York in 1982 with a BA in political science.

Program Schedule
9:30 – 9:45  Introductions
9:45 – 10:45  Contrasting German Migrations: 18th Century vs. 19th Century Waves
10:45 – 11:00  Break
11:00 – 12:00  Zigzagging Through German Church Records
12:00 – 1:00  Lunch on your own
1:00 – 2:00  German Research Online
2:00 – 2:15  Break
2:15 – 3:15  German for Genealogists
3:15 – 3:30  Break
3:30 – 4:30  Success Story: Finding a European Village of Origin

The program is free and open to the public, and free parking is available in the High-Market parking deck. To register, contact Special Collections at 330-643-9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org. For lecture descriptions, see http://sc.akronlibrary.org/classes-events.
Getting to Know… Pat Pace

by Mary Plazo, Librarian

Akron first became smitten with a boy with perfect pitch in 1937, when the Akron Beacon Journal published a photograph of a short, smiling, dark-haired musician proudly straddling his shiny accordion above his little legs. At seven years old, this young virtuoso played on the national radio broadcast of Major Bowes Amateur Hour in New York City. Host Edward Bowes would showcase young talent he picked from all over the country, and during the show people would call in to vote for their favorite performer. As he prepared to play, little Patsy Pace spoke into the microphone, “I said my prayers all day so now I guess I’ll play good.” Play well he did indeed. He won the contest by a landslide, with 9,843 voters calling just from Akron alone.

Pat Pace was born Pasquale Pace in Akron’s North Hill neighborhood on February 19, 1930 to Sicilian immigrants Vincenzo and Josephine Pace. From the age of seven until his death at age 75, he was destined to be in the spotlight, for better and for worse. In addition to radio, one of his earliest introductions to music was from an Uncle Tony who played the accordion. At age four, he began to play notes on the accordion himself. He became a child prodigy by the age of six, playing better than his uncle and learning hundreds of songs. As Pat described it, “I just knew when the notes were wrong. I was just born with it. It was this talent, and I feel that it would be a betrayal of this talent not to let it happen.”

After showing so much promise with the accordion, Patsy was guided toward taking piano lessons. While attending North High School, he continued to practice piano and organized several bands, even though his family did not encourage his interest in jazz and improvisation. After the family moved to West Akron, he attended Buchtel High School and graduated in 1947. He auditioned for the Julliard School of Music in New York and was awarded a scholarship. There, he would study composition with Vincent Persichetti, an American composer, pianist, writer, and important musical educator.

Attending school in New York, Pat was able to absorb and experiment with all of the different kinds of music that he loved, including jazz, though he was being trained as a classical performer. While studying piano at school, he would play in jazz clubs on the side. Before his final year at Julliard, while playing at a summer resort in the Catskills, he was introduced to heroin. For Pace, this was the beginning of a battle with drugs that would last more than twenty years.

He graduated from Julliard in 1950 and came back to Northeast Ohio, but by then his life was driven by supporting his habit. He rarely missed a show, but his life spun out of control. His future became one of multiple arrests, probation and prison terms, all related to drug charges. Newspapers followed him throughout his life, publishing all of the details. Pat began educating himself about treatments during a time when there wasn’t much help available for addicts. He read articles and began talking with physicians. In the mid-1960s, he learned about methadone and became one of its earliest advocates.

Many regarded Pace’s years of narcotic use as “robbing” him of his talent, but the music inside him never stopped. His dedication to his work was intense and he was determined to share this talent with his friends and his community. He continued to compose, writing complex musical pieces performed by the Akron Symphony Orchestra, the Cleveland Philharmonic, and in venues throughout the U.S. Describing his music to an Akron...
Beacon Journal reporter, he said, “there is American jazz influence in everything I do, and I think my music is full of European styles too. I can almost hear myself when I play as an amalgamation of everything I’ve ever studied or heard. I use it all.”

Returning to Akron permanently in 1970, he was ready to settle into his own quiet environment. Pace treasured this time to himself with his music. He went on to compose, make recordings and play in quiet clubs and hotel lounges. He remained active, teaching piano in Cleveland and at the University of Akron. In his last years, he also taught piano from his private studio at home. He died on January 6, 2006.

Patsy Pace rose to stardom as a young man, and despite the struggles his art may have caused, he will always be remembered for his musical authenticity. Like a few of his other contemporary Akron-raised celebrities, he chose to come back, saving the best part of his talent for us. As he expressed in one interview, “I’ve been asked so many times, ‘Why don’t you go to New York or Las Vegas?’ Why? Why should I go to Las Vegas? That doesn’t represent anything to me. I would think that people would come out and appreciate my talent right here in Akron.”

Remembering the Doodlebug Disaster, 75 Years Later
by Iris Bolar, Librarian

July 31, 1940 was an average summer day that ended as one of the deadliest in Summit County history. That Wednesday evening, 43 of 46 passengers onboard the Pennsylvania Railroad’s gas-operated shuttle train, the “Doodlebug,” lost their lives.

The self-propelled shuttle car was making its evening route south from Hudson to Akron. Its engineer and conductor had been given orders to sidetrack at Silver Lake to allow a northbound freight train to pass on a single track section. For some reason, the Doodlebug stayed on the track.

 Witnesses heard the screeching of brakes, but it was too late to avert disaster. At 6 pm, the Doodlebug collided head-on with a 73-car freight train at Front Street in Cuyahoga Falls. The Doodlebug, with its 350 gallons of gasoline, exploded and was engulfed in flames as it was pushed backwards 500 feet by the force of the freight train. As the Akron Beacon Journal reported, the Doodlebug became “a virtual furnace as flames roared through the interior.” Those who didn’t die upon impact were crushed by the wreckage or burned to death. Some bodies were dangling from the shuttle’s windows as emergency Workers and crowds gathered at the horrific scene. The three
survivors included the engineer and conductor. Most victims were from Akron and Cuyahoga Falls. The crew members were not criminally charged, and the deaths were ruled accidental by the Summit County coroner.

Due to the efforts of three Sill Middle School students and the support of the community, a black granite marker was unveiled near the crash site on July 31, 2005 in the Doodlebug Memorial Garden at Front Street and Hudson Drive in Cuyahoga Falls. The memorial includes the names of the victims and survivors. The inscription begins with these words: “On an average summer day…”

To learn more about the Doodlebug tragedy and to view photos, visit the Doodlebug Disaster Collection on Summit Memory.

Celebrating the Golden Age of Akron Restaurants
by Mary Plazo, Librarian

Do you have a special restaurant that comes to mind when you think about Akron’s history? If you were born before 1970, you probably do.

In September, Special Collections will create an exhibit dedicated to Akron’s restaurant “heyday” that will focus on establishments from the 1930s through the 1970s, many of which are no longer open today.

In collaboration with local historian Sharon Myers, Special Collections will be collecting and borrowing local materials available from restaurants of the past in Akron. Sharon has been interviewing former owners and their families and gathering interesting stories in addition to menus, napkins, matchbooks, ashtrays, and other memorabilia.

Sharon’s inspiration came from “remembering the 1960s when the Akron area was overflowing with great, elegant restaurants. Today very few people realize what we had.” She was also surprised by the common theme of family in many of these restaurants. “Talking with the children of the restaurant owners from the 1960s, I did not realize that for the most part, the entire family was involved in the restaurants back then.” She hopes that with this project, people will walk away with a nostalgic feeling and maybe memories of their own personal celebrations that they had at these restaurants. “We hope to show what a great restaurant town the Akron area was during the ‘Golden Age’ and how tied the local economy was to the rubber companies. For people who were born after 1970, they have no idea what downtown Akron was like during its heyday.”

If you have any nostalgic restaurant items you would like to donate or temporarily loan, or have any memories you’d like to share about your own favorite restaurant, please contact Special Collections at 330-643-9030 and ask for Judy James, Division Manager.
Finding Genealogy Books for Purchase

by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

As attendees at our recent German genealogy program with Nancy Ottman browsed our book display, one of them asked where he could buy these types of books. Finding genealogy books available for purchase is usually more involved than finding novels, biographies, or other popular books, but it can be done. This is one of our regular duties as Special Collections librarians.

We occasionally receive catalogs or fliers about new books, but more often we have to go hunting for them. We tackle finding genealogical books about a certain state in much the same way as we would finding out about records in that state. We start by looking for state genealogical or historical society websites. Websites for such organizations often include links to a list of their publications or to a store where books and other items are sold. We also look for information about chapters of a state genealogical society. The Ohio Genealogical Society, for example, has a chapter for nearly every county, and most of the chapters have their own websites with their own publications for sale. Other genealogy societies of broader interest publish books as well. Palatines to America German Genealogy Society has its own bookstore with items of interest to researchers searching for their German-speaking ancestors. The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) maintains an online shop with books on New England and Mayflower descendents as well as more general genealogy topics.

Not all books are published by organizations. We also try to keep up with smaller publishing companies who specialize in local history and genealogy topics. Higginson Book Company reprints genealogies and local histories. Closson Press publishes family histories and genealogical works by its founders, as well as by individuals and societies. The Genealogical Publishing Company, Heritage Books, Colonial Roots, and Kinship are other examples of small genealogy publishers. Arcadia Publishing offers a number of local history series, many of them heavy on photographs, while M.T. Publishing Company, Inc. specializes in commemorative history publications. All of these companies offer catalogs or searches on their websites that allow users to see what they offer concerning a particular area. Increasingly, we are also seeing individual genealogists and authors self-publishing record transcriptions and family histories on platforms such as Lulu.com.

We do the best we can to keep up with publications among the wide variety of geographic areas and specialized topics represented in our collection. If we can help you identify books for your collection, or if you can do the same for us, don’t hesitate to let us know.

You’ll find many books by small publishers, such as Heritage Books, on our shelves.

Like many genealogy societies, the Hamilton County Genealogical Society has several publications for sale. Special Collections librarians search for organizations like this to find books to add to our collection.
OHC to Present Newspaper Programs on July 13
by Cheri Goldner, Librarian

Jenni Salamon, coordinator for the Ohio Digital Newspaper Program at the Ohio History Connection (OHC) and reference archivist in the OHC Archives/Library, will present two one-hour programs on historic newspapers at Main Library on Monday, July 13.

At 3 pm, she will present “Why, Who, What, When, Where & How: Digitizing Your Local Newspaper.” This program is geared toward staff and volunteers at libraries and other cultural institutions and will cover how to navigate the complexities of a newspaper digitization project and how your organization can have its local newspaper digitized.

At 6:30 pm, Jenni will speak on “Unearthing Your Roots with Ohio's Newspapers on Chronicling America.” This program is geared toward researchers interested in learning how to use the Library of Congress website Chronicling America to find clues to your family history. Chronicling America contains digitized newspapers from around the country, including more than 318,000 pages from 129 historic Ohio newspapers from 58 counties published between 1836 and 1922.

Both programs will take place in Meeting Room 2AB on the High Street Level of Main Library. To register, call Special Collections at 330-643-9030 or email us at speccollections@akronlibrary.org. These programs are made possible through funding from the National Digital Newspaper Program, a collaborative grant program of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the Library of Congress.

Summit Memory Update
by Rebecca Larson-Troyer, Librarian

Our project to digitize 5,000 images from the photograph archives of the Akron Beacon Journal continues, with more than 2,000 photographs now online in the Akron Beacon Journal Photograph Collection. In partnership with the Beacon and with the aid of local digitization firm ScanWorks, Special Collections staff are hand-selecting photographs representative of Summit County history for exhibit in Summit Memory. The goal of this project is to provide digital access to photographs on a diverse array of topics from communities across the county. Check back regularly, as new images are added each week.

In order to foster community interaction with Summit Memory, we have updated our system to allow tags and comments posted by users. We encourage you to share your knowledge of the sites and people featured in our collections by using these features. Don’t forget to share images with friends on social media by clicking the “share” option when viewing an image, located just above the image title. Questions and comments about the website are always welcome at info@summitmemory.org.
Thank You to Summit County OGS

We wish to express a sincere thank you to our friends, the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society (SCOGS), for their generous donation of $700 to help underwrite our August program “Discovering Your German Ancestors” with James Beidler. Over the years, SCOGS has made many donations to fund our programs, provided a great deal of assistance for our annual Late Night at the Library event, and continues to advocate for us as a repository of genealogy and local history resources. We are grateful to SCOGS for their ongoing support and look forward to more collaboration in the future.

Summit County OGS Events

For more information, see http://summitogs.org.

The DPLA: Digitizing America
(Chapter Meeting)
Presented by Carla Cegielski
July 18, 1:30 pm
Main Library

No August meeting

Courthouses and Deeds
(Chapter Meeting)
Presented by Julie Wilson, chapter treasurer
September 19, 1:30 pm
Cuyahoga Falls Library
2015 3rd St., Cuyahoga Falls

Save the Date for Late Night

Mark your calendars for Late Night at the Library, Friday, October 23, 6:30 – 10:30 pm. Hosted by the Special Collections Division and the Summit County Chapter of the Ohio Genealogical Society, Late Night is an annual after-hours genealogy event when Main Library reopens exclusively for genealogists. Mingle with fellow researchers while uncovering your family history, take a tour of the Special Collections research area, or sit in on a short “Getting Started” session to help jumpstart your research. Print from your wireless or mobile device or try out one of our new digital microfilm readers. Light refreshments and door prizes will be provided, and parking is free for those entering the parking deck after 6 pm. For additional information, please contact us at 330-643-9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org. No registration is required for this event.

Akron Mini Maker Faire Set for September 19 at Main Library

The Maker Faire movement is catching on, capturing the attention of curious inquirers of all ages. Last year’s Akron Mini Maker Faire at Main Library was a success with over 1500 attendees, and this year promises to be even better. Join us on Saturday, September 19, 1 – 4 pm for this unique event with exhibits focused on innovation, invention, and creativity. Special Collections will be back to demonstrate fun, educational projects that will help preserve your family treasures. For the latest updates on the event, be sure to follow the Science & Technology Division’s Akron Mini Maker Faire blog.
Special Collections Main Library Class Schedule

The Special Collections Division offers several recurring genealogy classes to help you with your family research. All classes are free of charge and open to the general public. Classes are also held at branches. Current branch class schedules are posted on the Special Collections website. Registration is required for all classes held at Main Library. Please register by calling us at 330-643-9030 or emailing us at speccollections@akronlibrary.org.

**Getting Started in Family History**
Join the Special Collections Division for an introduction to genealogy for new family historians. This class includes an overview of genealogical sources available at the Library, suggestions for getting started, and tips for organizing your research.
Saturday, July 11, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Meeting Room 2AB
Saturday, September 12, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Meeting Room 2AB

**Using Ancestry in Your Genealogy Research**
With more than 10,000 databases and billions of images, Ancestry is the premier online genealogy resource—and it’s available to you for free within any ASCPL location. This class will introduce you to the many features of Ancestry Library Edition and show you how to do efficient and effective searches. When possible, time for practice searching is also provided. Because this class will use electronic resources, basic computer skills are recommended.
Saturday, July 18, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Computer Lab 2

**Branching Out: U.S. Vital Records and Obituaries**
This class focuses on the types of genealogical information and sources researchers encounter, what to expect when working with United States vital (birth, marriage and death) records and obituaries and basic search strategies for finding these records. Because this class will use electronic resources, basic computer skills are recommended.
Saturday, August 1, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Computer Lab 2

**Finding Your Family in the U.S. Census**
United States census records are rich sources of genealogical information. Join us to learn more about using these valuable records for your family research and how to effectively search the census using library databases. Because this class will use electronic resources, basic computer skills are recommended.
Saturday, August 15, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Computer Lab 2

**Internet Genealogy**
There are an overwhelming number of websites for genealogy research. This class will provide tips for locating online resources for family history research and allow participants some class time to explore websites. The focus will be finding free online genealogy resources and brief introductions to the library’s genealogy databases. This class does not cover Ancestry Library Edition as there is a separate class for this resource. Because this class will use electronic resources, basic computer skills are recommended.
Saturday, August 29, 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, Computer Lab 2
We would like to thank the following for their generous donations:

Donald Snodgrass for eleven books on local history and the rubber industry, including *Peeps at Industries: Rubber* and *The Speech of Akron, Ohio*.

The Ohio Society Dames of the Court of Honor for *A History of Our Own: Stafford County, Virginia* and *Montgomery County Sentinel* in honor of Mr. Hugh (Catherine) Macey and Mrs. Albert (Joan) Trefs.

Cuyahoga Portage Chapter DAR for *Stafford County* in memory of mother and daughter, Catherine Elizabeth Ebbert Macey and Catherine Elizabeth Macey, and *Sweat and Blood: The Diary of a Civil War Soldier*.

Lisa Merrick for photos of Central-Hower High School and Akron Standard Mold.


Gretchen Bierbaum for *Collage in all Dimensions* by Gretchen Bierbaum.

Cathy Macko for four Barnhill’s glasses and one Brown Derby goblet.

Donna Flasco for fourteen Akron area restaurant menus and eighteen matchbooks.

Rosemarie Foord for nine volumes of *Genealogical Research Directory*.

Randy Bergdorf for several documents pertaining to Akron, including items related to J. Park Alexander and Lute C. Miles.

Mary Deal for Themley’s Restaurant ashtray and Anthe’s matchbook.

Jackie Ebner for restaurant menus from Brown Derby, Chanticleer and Yanko’s.


Russell Sibert for various historical documents, photographs and books pertaining to Summit County history.

Patricia Bair for North High School yearbooks and school publications, and historical records of the Akron Area Council International Reading Association.

Jacqueline and Al Seremak for historical records and memorabilia of Brandywine Players.

Clay Chabola for five copies of *The Wonder Book of Rubber*.

Chippewa Lake Park was a favorite summer destination for many Akron area families. Akron Beacon Journal, July 3, 1947.