

# Making Connections Among Personal, Family & Local History : A new (old) role for public libraries?

**eChicago 2013**

**Noah Lenstra, PhD student, University of Illinois  
Graduate School of Library & Information Science**

**nlenstr2@illinois.edu**

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# Preface : eBlackCU.net



## Timeline Photos

BLUE ISLAND TAVERN: The E and James Baker owned and

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By: Cynthia Utley

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**Noah Lenstra** for a higher resolution image visit <http://eblackcu.net/portal/items/show/401> and [BIAL\\_1980013.pdf](#)

**eBlack Champaign-Urbana | In All My older blacks in Champaign-Urbana**  
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**Alisia Joy Goines** Before that it was the Poole Hotel owned by Robert Poole (my great great granddaddy

20 minutes ago · Edited · Unlike · 1



**Cynthia Utley** Alisia Joy Goines My Dad was best friends with a man he called Penuckle, used to shoot pool at his establishment frequently, was he by any chance your great great granddaddy? I know I probably spelled his name wrong. The day Mom was having labor pai... [See More](#)

8 minutes ago · Like



## Alisia Joy Goines

Here is the Census from 1930 Showing Robert Poole listed as Landlord at Poole Hotel,  
There may be some other names recognizable.



You are cordially invited to join the City of Champaign honoring Rev. W. B. Keaton with an honorary street dedication ceremony for Honorary Rev. W. B. Keaton Way Friday, April 26, 2013 at 11:00am. The ceremony will be held at northwest corner of 6th St. and Crispus Drive, Champaign. The Keaton Klan hope to see you there!



## Timeline Photos

Your are cordially invited to join the City of Champaign honoring Rev. W. B. Kea...

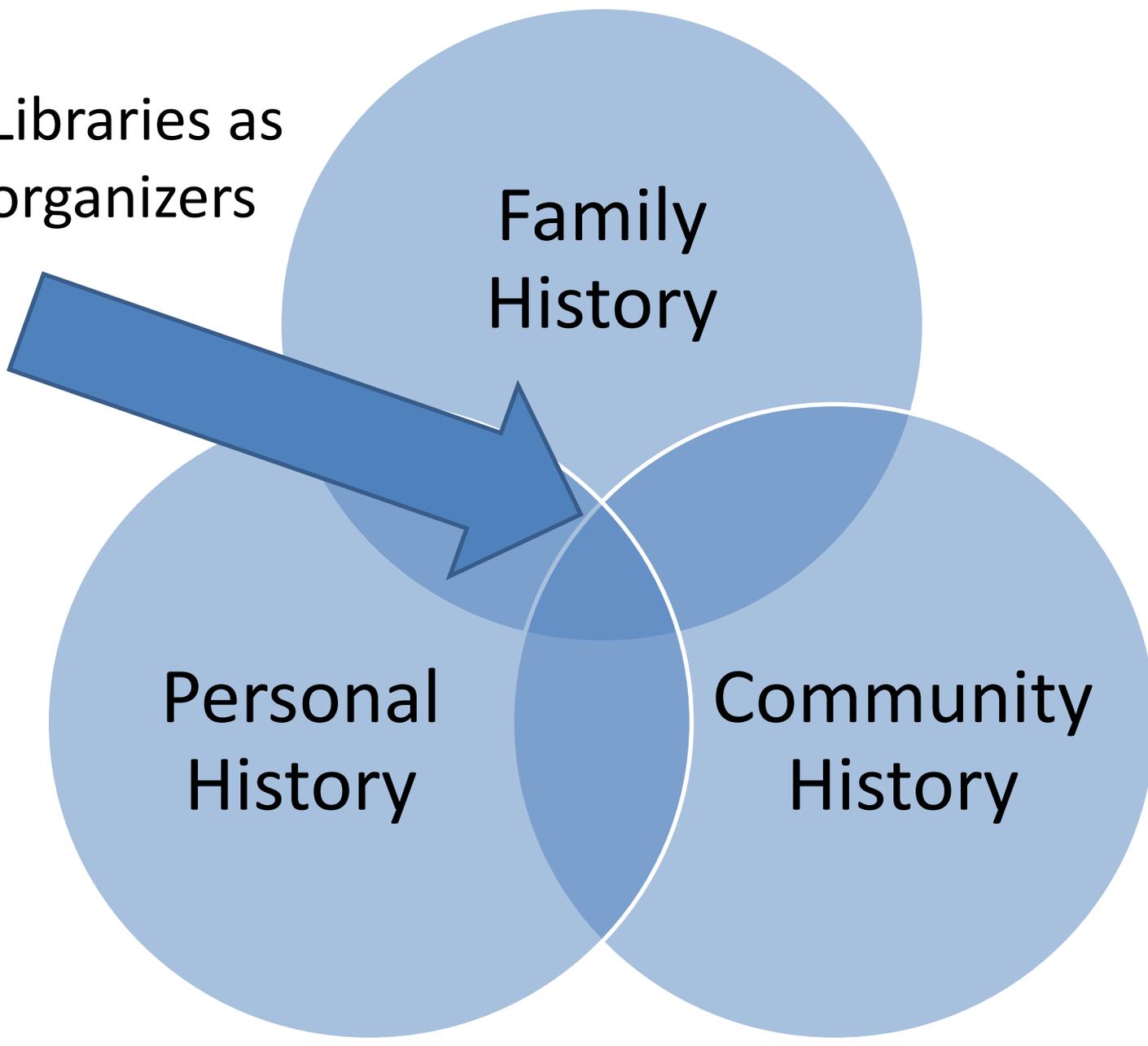
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By: Cynthia Keaton-Williams

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Public Libraries as  
Cyber-organizers



Family  
History

Personal  
History

Community  
History

# A Core Goal of Public Libraries

**1896** - "The public expect[s] public librarians to be ... best informed on matters of local genealogy"

**1936** - "Going Ancestor Hunting This Summer?" Go to a PL ...

**1968** – "Many public libraries ... throughout the country are ... swamped with inquiries from family tree climbers"

**1976** – "Genealogy ... is extremely popular with masses of untrained people"

**1987** – "Most city libraries in the country now offer courses and help in tracing genealogies"

**2008** – "Discover Your Roots: Genealogy & Local History"  
declared one of 18 core Public Library services



# Aging Societies & Public Libraries

3. Start an Oral History Project on Community Life in the 1950's, 1960's and 1970's
4. Celebrate Veterans Day with Oral History Events from the Korean & Vietnam Wars
5. Develop Inter-generational Genealogy Projects
7. Host a Program during Older Americans Month for the 5 Oldest Community Residents
21. Encourage the Local Historical Society to Partner with the Library on Programming



Text Source: 25 Ideas to Serve Active Older Adults and the Baby Boomers , Compiled by Allan M. Kleiman, Chair, ALA RUSA RSS Library Service to an Aging Population Committee



Teaching Material @  
[manual.eblackcu.net](http://manual.eblackcu.net)

# Not all public libraries alike...

	City 1	City 2	City 3	City 4
<b>Population</b>	40000	28000	33000	25000
<b>Services</b>	10% of budget for archives department	Genealogy Collection	Archives department w/ min. \$\$	Subscriptions to Ancestry & HeritageQuest
<b>Staffing</b>	2 full-time professional archivists	Reference librarians' responsibility	1 half-time archivist	None
<b>Technical</b>	Scanners & Historical Database	Local History Wiki	None	None
<b>Collaborations</b>	Cty. Gen. Soc.	Cty. Gen. Soc.	None	None
<b>Exhibit Space</b>	Yes	None	Yes	None

# Not all family historians alike...

B: "I'm here just for me!"

R: "That's how you start, though, you think you're going to do it just for you."

[loud laughs]

Workshop Transcription	Processes
<p><b>S:</b> [Facebook] was great because I was able to post pictures from our public library collection,</p>	<p><b>Sharing digital content</b></p>
<p>and immediately people start responding and I was able to identify people in the pictures and locations, and it's amazing what people are willing to research for you free of charge from their recliner in the living room.</p>	<p><b>Crowdsourcing content</b></p>
<p>And it also has created, from this, a small group of people [in the local community] who are willing to help create a big display [at the library] ...</p>	<p><b>Creating exhibits</b></p>
<p>I made a Facebook group in honor of my mother, on her birthday,</p>	<p><b>Celebrating family history</b></p>
<p>and there's nothing that will grab [young people's] attention than pictures of their parents at a child's age ....</p>	<p><b>Building Inter-generational ties</b></p>
<p><b>J:</b> I am kind of anti-Facebook but I'll think about it.</p>	<p><b>Not participating</b></p>
<p><b>S:</b> I was too, but now I'm one of their biggest cheerleaders just because I have seen the power of Facebook ....</p>	<p><b>Advocating Facebook</b></p>
<p>I started a pledge drive [on Facebook], and people on that page donated \$5</p>	<p><b>Crowdsourcing funding</b></p>
<p>and then within eleven hours I had the money [needed to purchase a local historical object for the library] that I found on eBay</p>	<p><b>Building collections</b></p>

# Conclusions & Future Work

Building on the public library's established community reputation to lead things forward

Public librarians interested in topic, but need support – and it needs to be ongoing

More research needed to contextualize these practices within broader cultural trends