Introduction to INSPIRE 1-13-2021 – Genealogy question pn

I asked the head of the Genealogy Department at the Indiana State Library (Jamie Dunn) what they use INSPIRE for in regards to genealogy. This is what she said:

INSPIRE is good for

- We've found that INSPIRE has some useful articles for broader topics like how to do genealogy
- Where INSPIRE is useful in genealogy is the social history background research. For example, if I search for one of my early Indiana ancestors, I don't find anything about him specifically in INSPIRE. But I can find articles about early settlers in the Midwest and their experiences, and that can help me know more about how my ancestor might have lived. There's also various trade and religious periodicals in there, so if a person's ancestor worked in a specific field or was part of a certain religious group, there may be some useful articles.
- There's also some interesting articles in there on DNA and genealogy from a scientific perspective that people may find useful, since DNA testing is becoming a bigger and bigger part of genealogy.
- The newspapers in *Newspapers.com* through INSPIRE is great, although we don't use it that much, only because ISL has an in-library-only subscription to *Newspapers.com* that includes papers from outside Indiana.

Non-INSPIRE resources

- A really good free resource is *Family Search*. There's no library edition, so patrons would each have to create their own account, but it's free and can be accessed at home or the library. They do offer an affiliate library program that is also free and allows access to even more records in the library only. ISL has participated in the Affiliate program for years, and it's been great.
- *Google Books* and *Internet Archive* are both really useful free resources as well. They've digitized millions of out of copyright books, including county histories, court records, city directories, and other materials that are useful for family history.
- As far as number of records offered, *Ancestry Library Edition* is probably the market leader. However, it's also one of the most expensive subscriptions, so it's not always a feasible choice for libraries.

Genealogy Department at the Indiana State Library

- For resources from ISL, we've also published a series of research guides for Indiana, covering various topics and each of Indiana's 92 counties. The guides include links to free resources wherever we can find them.
- We will also interlibrary loan select genealogy books to Indiana libraries if certain criteria are met. We must have at least two copies of the book in good condition, it must be published after 1950, the borrowing library must use InfoExpress, and the book must be restricted to in-library use only at the borrowing library. So that's an option if a patron is looking for a certain book and we have it in our collection.
- If librarians are looking for training opportunities, we have several genealogy-related webinars on the Archived Webinars page. If you think people would be interested, I could totally do a webinar at some point on Genealogy for Genealogy Librarians or a similar topic. We here in

Genealogy also attend a lot of webinars through [Legacy Family Tree Webinars](#). They are free when they are live and for seven days after, and they are on the blanket LEU approval list (provided they are at least 35 minutes).

Genealogy resources outside of Indiana

- If people are interested in genealogy resources outside of Indiana, I typically just go to Google and search for whatever I need. For example, I was working on a Nebraska-related question for a patron earlier today. I haven't done a great deal of Nebraska research, so I just searched for things like "death certificates Nebraska genealogy" and "digitized newspapers Nebraska" and found what I needed to answer the question. Genealogy is handled very differently by different states, some have genealogy collections at their state libraries, some put genealogy at their state archives or historical societies, and some don't offer state-level genealogy resources at all. So just searching Google is a really quick way to figure out what a specific state offers and where to find it.

If anybody has a detailed genealogy librarianship question, feel free to give them my email; I'm totally willing to answer any questions people might have. There's also a listserv for genealogy librarians, genealib (genealib@listserv.usf.edu). It's hosted by the University of South Florida and includes genealogy librarians from around the world.

Let me know if you have any further questions!

Jamie Dunn - JaDunn@library.IN.gov
Supervisor, Genealogy Division
Indiana State Library