

News from the National Archives-Great Lakes Region

<http://www.archives.gov/great-lakes/archives/>

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This is the National Archives-Great Lakes Region (Chicago) monthly E-News announcement. Please feel free to share this with anyone you feel may be interested in learning more about the National Archives-Great Lakes Region. Reader feedback on what you may like to see in future issues or any other comments is encouraged. Send any comments or suggestions to chicago.archives@nara.gov with the subject line of "NARA-Great Lakes November E-News Comment."

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1. Upcoming "First Saturday of the Month" Research Hours

In addition to its regular hours of 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Monday through Friday, the Great Lakes Regional Archives in Chicago is also open to the public the first Saturday of every month from 8:00 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. Researchers interested in using original historical records or microfilm held by the Regional Archives are encouraged to contact a reference archivist ahead of time by phone (773-948-9001) or email (chicago.archives@nara.gov).

2. NARA-Great Lakes Holiday Closures

The Regional Archives will be closed Monday, November 12th in observance of Veterans Day and Thursday, November 22nd in observance of Thanksgiving. The Regional Archives will be open during its regular hours on Friday, November 23rd.

3. Records of Soldiers Homes at the National Archives-Great Lakes Region.

With Veterans Day fast approaching it is perhaps fitting to look back and see one way in which our Country cared for its veteran soldiers, sailors, and marines from past wars.

Archivist Trevor K. Plante's article, "The National Home for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers" (*Prologue*, Spring 2004), uses a case study to present an excellent overview of the Soldiers Homes, and provides research hints for genealogists and historians interested in delving further into the records. The article is available on the National Archives home page at <http://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2004/spring/soldiers-home.html>.

The National Archives-Great Lakes Region's holdings include Record Group 15, Records of the Veterans Administration (VA), Records of the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers. Researchers commonly refer to these records as Soldiers Home records. These records relate primarily to indigent Union Civil War veterans who applied for admission to federally funded homes. By the end of the 19th and into the 20th Century veterans of other conflicts began to reside in the homes, including those who served in the Indian Wars,

the Spanish American War, and World War I. African American veterans could enter and did reside in the homes as well.

The National Archives-Great Lakes Region's holdings include records for the following branches: Central Branch, Dayton, Ohio, 1867-1935; Danville Branch, Danville, Illinois, 1898-1934; Marion Branch, Marion, Indiana, 1890-1931; and the Northwestern Branch, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1867-1934. These records mainly consist of sample case files for veterans at the Soldiers Homes for the time periods indicated above. In addition to case files, our holdings include a small amount of administrative and hospital records for select Homes.

A list of sample case files for veterans living at the Danville and Marion branches is available on the Great Lakes Region home page at <http://www.archives.gov/great-lakes/finding-aids/#vets>.

Regrettably, the complete body of case files for the Soldiers Homes no longer exists. The records were sampled sometime after their transfer to the National Archives decades ago. While case files may not exist for most residents, the National Archives has microfilmed the Soldiers Home registers, which is published under the designation M1749, *Historical Registers of National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, 1866-1938*. The registers are the most complete listing of veterans living in the Soldiers Homes and provide basic personal information on the veteran including his military unit, when he was admitted, medical information, date and cause of death, and whether he was buried at the Home. Our office has obtained the rolls of M1749 for the four Soldiers Homes for which we retain original textual records.

In addition to federally funded homes for disabled soldiers, many states established state-run homes for both Union and Confederate soldiers. Records of state-funded homes for soldiers can be found with the state archives in the veteran's respective state.

For more information about Great Lakes Region's records for the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers, please feel free to contact us here at the National Archives-Great Lakes Region.

4. Upcoming Great Lakes Region Events for the General Public.

a) NARA-Great Lakes Film Series: *Anatomy of a Murder* in Film and Archives (7:00 P.M. Thursday, November 15, 2007)

Location: National Archives-Great Lakes Region

Come join Dr. Stephen C. Shafer and Archivist Glenn Longacre for a discussion on the film *Anatomy of a Murder*. Dr. Stephen Shafer, from the Cinema Studies Unit at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, will discuss the film from the perspective of a film historian while Glenn Longacre and Gabe Geer will discuss the archival records connected to the film which are held by the National Archives-Great Lakes Region. The program will conclude with a screening of the 1959 film directed by Otto Preminger and a display of archival records related to the libel case that stemmed from the movie. This is a free event open to the public. Continuing education credits are available for teachers who attend the program.

5. Ongoing Exhibit (Chicago): "Cinema in the Stacks."

In conjunction with our Cinema in the Stacks film series, Archives staff mounted a three-panel exhibit relating each film to Great Lakes Regional Archives' holdings. Each panel highlights one of the films in the series (*Tucker: The Man and His Dream*, *The Great White Hope*, and *Anatomy of a Murder*). Each panel has an 11" x 17" reproduction of the theatrical release poster of the film, as well as production stills.

Highlighted records from the Regional Archives holdings include: Records from a civil lawsuit by one of the individuals represented in the film against the studio that produced *Anatomy of a Murder* and the publishing company of the novel; the criminal case file, *U.S. v. Jack Johnson* ; and records from various civil and criminal cases involving Preston Tucker, including patent drawings of the Tucker Torpedo, as well as records from the War Assets Administration detailing the sale of Tucker's plant.

The National Archives and Records Administration-Great Lakes Region is located at 7358 South Pulaski Road, Chicago, approximately 2 1/2 miles southeast of Midway Airport. The entrance is located one block west on 75th Street, just north of Richard J. Daley City College, and parking is free. Maps and travel directions can be found at the National Archives and Records Administration's web site: <http://www.archives.gov/great-lakes/contact/directions-il.html>