

**ANNUAL REPORT TO THE RAPID CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD OF DIRECTOR'S  
FROM THE RAPID CITY SOCIETY FOR GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH  
June 14, 2021**

The following report is submitted in accordance with an agreement signed between the Rapid City Society for Genealogical Research (RCSGR) and the Rapid City Public Library (RCPL) dated July 13, 2020. The agreement contained the primary document in addition to two counterpart Addendums, all of which have been mutually met to-date.

Progress report since renewal of 2021 agreement:

While negotiating the new agreement, an inventory of the RCSGR-owned collection held at the RCPL was started in February 2020. In March 2020, the RCPL closed to the general public. Given the inaccessibility to the Public Library by the public due to Covid through much of 2020, the RCSGR, in agreement with the RCPL, removed the entire RCSGR owned collection from the RCPL on June 3, 2020. The RCSGR began the tedious review and inventory of the full genealogical research collection. The RCSGR began working with the RCPL in 1966 to grow the comprehensive genealogical collection available to the general public. The inventory review has been a large undertaking. While observing CDC guidelines, over 1100 hours of volunteer work was performed by proud members of the RCSGR in the past year on this special project. A much smaller number of research titles were returned to the RCPL.

The following table provides an overview of the reduction in research titles, review process, and current status of the RCSGR research collection housed at the RCPL.

Date	Total RCSGR titles on shelves in the RCPL (includes LHR)	Lineal feet for the total collection and Local History Room	Biographies of Western SD Families (titles) on the shelves at the RCPL	Microfilm housed at the RCPL (rolls)
March 2020	1680	126/10	275	385
October 2020	965	100/10	0	0
Current 2021	937	66/10	0	0

As can be seen in the above table, a large number of research titles are no longer available to be utilized by the general public at the RCPL. These resources are currently stored in a rented climate controlled storage unit, at a very small off-site research location, or have been donated or sold to welcoming Libraries or research organizations throughout the United States. These Libraries and research organizations are expanding their current collections. Additionally, it was found that some titles have not been accounted for and were deemed missing from the collection.

Numerous meetings were held with Sean Minkel and Samantha Slocum over the past year. The RCSGR is grateful for the guidance and working relationship provided by Sean and Sam. One important result of these meetings includes a more thorough process and a tracking form for maintaining the inventory at the RCPL. A regular detailed quarterly utilization report has been scheduled. On-going review of the RCSGR owned collection housed in the RCPL will continue, with changes and rotations being made regularly.

Public access and resources for genealogical research at the RCPL are currently extremely limited, with only 66 lineal feet of shelving available. This was at the request of the Library Director. The total number of titles has been reduced from 1678 to 971 titles, eliminating 707 titles from the shelves in the RCPL. While the number of titles has been reduced, the utilization rate has been increasing since the reopening of the RCPL due to Covid closure. The utilization rate according to Sam and Sean from May 2020 to May 2021 is at 7.90%. Of the current 937 titles on the floor, 74 titles were used 114 times.

The obvious empty appearance of the RCPL makes the RCSGR, as well as many of the general public, wonder about the reason for the limitation to our collection. We feel, as most academics do, that Libraries are intended to facilitate research. By limiting the number of titles in our collection available to the general public, the RCPL is limiting public access to genealogical research. An increase in space and visibility will assist in increased utilization rates.

#### Goals proposed for the RCSGR in conjunction with the RCPL for 2021/2022:

Because of the space limitations and lineal feet available for the RCSGR-owned collection, the RCSGR's Long Range Planning Committee is diligently taking action by making goals to advance the Society's unique research collection into the next phase of genealogical research. The RCSGR is progressively working with other organizations to provide the RCSGR resources to assist the community in Western South Dakota and beyond. The following are the goals that may be considered for the coming year with the RCPL:

- 1) The RCSGR Library Sub-Committee continues to improve our internal Library procedures and policies. A regular schedule to review the collection, shelf by shelf is being established. The review will include removal of outdated resources as well as the addition of new research resources, recommended by some of the accredited genealogical educators.
- 2) With all RCSGR-owned microfilm no longer housed at the RCPL, the RCSGR entered into an agreement with an entity to have all vital microfilm digitized at no cost to the RCSGR, preserving nearly 275 rolls of these records and making them more accessible to the public. Review and further digitizing of additional microfilm previously held in the RCPL will continue in the remainder of 2021.
- 3) The RCSGR has entered into an agreement with an entity to assist with the digitization project related to our private publications. The organization has been extremely helpful by providing free use of state-of-the-art digitizing equipment for

the RCSGR project and has provided two and one half days of training to our volunteers in digitizing important documents.

- 4) The RCSGR collection of Western South Dakota biographies is no longer housed at the RCPL and the RCSGR is currently working towards finding the ideal location to make this valuable component of the collection available to the public. The RCSGR would like to request an increase by a minimum of 42 lineal feet of shelving at the RCPL to provide these Western South Dakota biographies to the public.
- 5) With the public's increased interest and demand to know more about DNA genealogical research (i.e.: Ancestry, 23andME, FamilyTree), RCSGR will be celebrating Family History month in October 2021 with a series of educational classes. These classes should include a trip and tour of the RCPL. Additionally, a more prominent and more easily accessible link to the RCSGR website would be helpful to the public during the months of September and October.
- 6) April 1, 2022 is an important date for individuals doing genealogical research, as the 1950 Federal Census will be released to the general public. The RCSGR is preparing for this event by providing classes regarding census research. Additionally, these classes could include a trip and tour of the RCPL. A more prominent and more easily accessible link to the RCSGR website may be helpful to the public in preparation for and during the months of March and April 2022.

The RCSGR appreciates the relationship with the RCPL and looks forward to building on the relationship while working together to provide all of the community valuable genealogical resources. There are numerous other activities and events that could reflect positively for *both* organizations if on-going improvements for and in the collection and relationship between the RCSGR and RCPL occur.

Submitted on behalf of RCSGR

Cathy Druckrey, President  
Cell – 605-484-2468