

## **Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness**

Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness or RAOGK, is a global volunteer organization developed to help people around the world further their genealogical research. Many researchers have the need to obtain physical evidence and/or information regarding their ancestors. At times that information is not easily accessible except through traveling, whether it is 50 miles to another county or halfway around the world. With RAOGK, information that would be termed inaccessible for any reason is now available with the help of RAOGK volunteers. With over 4000 volunteers in all U. S. States and many international locations, RAOGK volunteers have helped thousands of researchers.

One of the reasons for having the RAOGK website ([www.raogk.org](http://www.raogk.org)) is to make a connection between the local and long distance researcher/volunteer an obtainable goal. With RAOGK you don't have to make long distance phone calls, you don't have to mail a nonrefundable research fee for a document you weren't sure existed in the first place, and you don't have to wait to contact the proper offices during working hours. RAOGK is an active 24/7 site that you can use any time day or night. You will usually receive a response from your volunteer within 48 hours.

Volunteers have agreed to do free genealogy research tasks at least once a month, or more at their own discretion. These tasks include anything from traveling old country trails seeking forgotten cemeteries for photos, to researching public records held in county offices. All they ask in return is reimbursement for their expenses, never their time. Reimbursements to the volunteer for his or her expenses may include copies, printing fees, postage, picture costs and gas mileage. Due to the hikes in gas prices RAOGK now allows volunteers to seek reimbursement up to \$0.50 a mile round trip, although some volunteers may not charge as much reimbursement as is allowed. One thing to remember is that a heartfelt thank you goes a long way when showing gratitude towards a volunteer.

To make a RAOGK request go to the website and search for a volunteer who is in the area from which you are seeking information. Send an e-mail to that person stating what you are seeking. The volunteer will usually respond promptly telling you whether he or she is able to meet your request. In making requests please remember to make them as specific as possible and to supply as much information as you have about the request you are making.