

December 2013

*A monthly publication
on behalf of the*



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 418 • West Springfield, MA 01090

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News

Greetings,

The holidays will be here soon. This can mean less time for genealogy research. It can also prove to be for a great time to reminisce with relatives and share stories about our ancestors. Be sure to check out the following items in our newsletter, which can help you with your family research:

- Upcoming Events (pages 2-4)
- WMGS Members Ralph and Bruce Cortis Publish Book (Page 4)
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- Fran Malone's Genealogy Hint: City Directories (pages 7-8)
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We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Wednesday, December 4, 2013 at the Agawam Senior Center.

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WMGS Calendar of Events

Wednesday, December 4, 2013:

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will meet from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, Massachusetts.

Last meeting before the holidays. Come to our "Pot Luck" dinner and enjoy holiday music while you dine. After dinner. We will host an "Open Mic" session for members to share their genealogy tips, ideas, or projects.

Thursday, December 19, 2013:

New! The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a Genealogy Research Clinic. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Clinics are offered on the third and fourth Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. Clinics are free for members. There is a \$10 fee per class for non-members. Please note: The clinic will not be held on December 26th, due to the Christmas holiday.

Wednesday, January 8, 2014:

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will hold their next meeting from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at Lyman and Merrie Woods Museum of Springfield History.

About the archives: In addition to a large collection of French Canadian records, the library has indexes to the Ellis Island passenger records, the Loiselle Index, over 20,000 genealogy books, 6,000 microforms, 25,000 photos and 1.3 million archival documents, as well as diaries, deeds, account books, land transfer documents and photographs.

Location: The Springfield History Library & Archives is located in the Wood Museum of Springfield History (lower level)

21 EDWARDS STREET, SPRINGFIELD, MA 01103

Parking: Free parking is available in the lots on Edwards Street.

For a map of the Springfield Museum Buildings:

http://www.springfieldmuseums.org/the_museums/

Save the Dates

Mark your calendars. Below you will find the 2013-2014 events for the WMGS:

January 8, 2014 – Field Trip to The Lyman and Merrie Woods Museum of Springfield History

February 5, 2014 – Kerry Hotaling book signing “What They Endured, What They Wrought”

March 5, 2014 – Denise Martinez from the Chicopee City Clerk’s office

April 2, 2014 – Gravestone Girls

May 7, 2014 – Election of officers; D Barry Sheldon “Breaking Down Brick Walls” (Tentative remote presentation)

June 4, 2014 – Last monthly meeting and dinner

Genealogy Research Clinics

Join Fran Malone, President of WMGS, and Dave Robison, Treasurer of WMGS and owner of www.oldbones.co for “Genealogy Research Clinics.” Spend some time with genealogy researchers with years of experience using the internet to help get the answers you’re looking for. Time saving research strategies using Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, Google and SteveMorse.org among other sites.

Sessions will be held on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month in the computer room of the Agawam Senior Center. Mark your calendar for the following dates:

2013

September 19

September 26

October 17

October 24

November 21

December 19

2014

January 16

January 23

February 20

February 27

March 20

March 27

April 17

April 24

May 15

May 22

June 19

Special note: If you are planning to attend a Genealogy Research Clinic, please be sure to add your name and phone number to our sign up list. If a clinic needs to be canceled, we will call you.

Do you know of an upcoming genealogy event? If so, let us know, and we'll include it in the WMGS monthly newsletter.

WMGS December Meeting

Calling all members: Do you have something you'd like to share with our group? On December 4th, we will host our annual holiday meeting. After our pot-luck dinner, we will have time for individual speakers to share tips, ideas, and projects.

Do you make a special dish for the holidays to celebrate your ethnicity? Perhaps homemade tomato sauce to go with an Italian dish? Maybe you're Polish and know how to make pierogi or golumpki? Whatever your background, feel free to bring your specialty to our Pot Luck Dinner in December.

WMGS Members Publish Book

After many years of research and planning, WMGS members Ralph and Bruce Cortis have published a book entitled "Russell, Massachusetts: Establishment of a New England Town and Early Historical Notes."

The father-son duo worked together to gather and compile historical pictures and details of the town of Russell. According to the authors, "The book gives a background on Russell's establishment and development and provides a synopsis of how the town developed between its founding in 1792 and the early 1900's."

Their book will be available to purchase at our next meeting on December 4. This cost is \$18, including sales tax.

You can also join the authors for a presentation and book signing on Thursday, December 12 from 6:00 to 7:45 at the Westfield Athenaeum.

For more information, visit: www.livingourpast.com

Genealogy Website: State Websites

by Fran Malone

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all. This month I'm going to take you through New England with a selection of websites to various genealogy resources that are available to you. As with everything they are hit or miss in finding information. Some of you might find an ancestor and some might just find a resource to write to gain more information.

If you're not from New England please email us at WestMassGen@gmail.com and ask about the state your from or residing in. I have a list of websites from all 50 states that could help. If the websites fail to work then do a search on the name to gain access.

Connecticut

www.dunhamwilcox.net/0_ct-index.htm - Is identified as "Connecticut Index" if you do a search. The website is Genealogist Jane Devlin's and gives you free access to many transcribed genealogy records from the New England and Mid-Atlantic states. Resources include extensive church and cemetery records from Connecticut, organized by county. Use the search box to find a name anywhere on the site.

<http://cslib.cdmhost.com/> - "The Connecticut State Library Digital Collections". This is a great resource if you're from the state of Connecticut. View 26 collections of digitized books, diaries, photographs, court records, witchcraft trial records, newspapers, vital records and more.

Maine

<http://www.maine-genealogy.net/> - Chris Dunham's "Maine Genealogy" has extensive resources for researching in the Pine Tree State that includes indexes to vital records, obituaries, passenger lists, military records, and court records.

<http://www.state.me.us/sos/arc/collections/index.html> - The "Maine State Archives" as all state archives have a list of vital records. The Maine State Archives has indexed to marriage records (1892-1922) and death records (1960-2009). Order copies for \$10.

Massachusetts

<http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcgen/genidx.htm> - The "Massachusetts State Archives" has indexes to birth, marriage, and death records (1841-1910), plus an in progress index to passengers arriving in Boston between 1848 to 1891. The collection database also includes church, town, Indian, and maritime records from 1629 to 1799.

New Hampshire

<http://www.nh.searchroots.com/> - "New Hampshire Genealogy & History". This website has an extensive guide to all major record groups and numerous links to online resources. It also includes detailed resources for every county and town in the state.

Rhode Island

<http://www.rhistoriccemeteries.org/> - The "Rhode Island Historical Cemetery Commission" is more than index to gravestones. This site includes dates of birth and death, names of family members and maps. Search by surname, maiden name, or war.

WMGS Donation to Senior Center

In September, members Bill and Daphne Thompson brought a suggestion to Fran Malone's attention. They pointed out that it was difficult to see presentations on the screen at the Agawam Senior Center. The Thompson's suggested that our society purchase a larger screen and donate it to the Agawam Senior Center. Dave Robison, our treasurer coordinated the effort, and Joan Linnehan and Kristina Lynch at the Senior Center worked to have the new screen hung. WMGS members can check out the new screen when our speaker uses it at our February meeting.

Genealogy Hint: City Directories

by Fran Malone

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year once again. This month I'm going back to one of my previous hints because this resource is free and can tell you a lot about your family.

City Directories have been published in the United States since the 1700's. They provided a way for people to connect with one another, find business as well as organizations in their area. Today we can use them to learn about your ancestors and their neighborhoods. They can even help you construct family relationships because as children became of age they were recorded as working or as students at the same address as their parents.

Your city directories have several sections that include schools, churches, businesses, organizations, alphabetical order of residents, street listings, and can even provide a date of death on your ancestor. Searching a chronological series of the city directories can help you estimate when a family arrived in the area and will help you follow them from job to job as well as street to street. A family will be recorded in the directory in the following manner among the other Malone's that might be living in the city. A check under the names of Dana and Shea also provide insight to two daughters living at the same address.

Chicopee Falls, MA (1925) City Directory

Malone Patrick W. (Ellen), lab, chic mfg h 74 Montgomery

Malone Thomas J. (Hannah) actor, r 74 Montgomery

Malone William F. tmster, r 74 Montgomery

Dana Mary, wid bds 74 Montgomery

Shea John (Elizabeth) lab, Dwight Mfg bds 74 Montgomery

The information above indicates that the parents Patrick and Ellen are still alive in 1925 and they are living in the house they own at 74 Montgomery Street. Patrick's occupation is a laborer with the Chicopee Manufacturing Company. It also shows that his son Thomas an actor is residing there with his wife as well as his son William who is a teamster.

Knowing that he had a daughter that married a Dana and another daughter that married a Shea, a check of those surnames was done to see where they resided. The directory shows that the daughter Mary is a widow and has moved back home and the other daughter is boarding there with her husband John Shea. A search of previous directories led us to the above information.

A check of the 1926 directory will provide one change with the above information when it states that Ellen Malone died March 19, 1925. She is listed in the 1925 directory as she is because most of the directories are printed on information obtained in January or February of the year it's printed which still holds true for today's directories.

A simple trip to your local library will produce this information for you. Just check with your library and tell them you would like to look at the City Directories. Find your ancestor in a directory that you know they were there and then work backwards until you don't find them. This will give you the timeline of when they first came to the city. You then can go ahead following the family from the point that you knew of. Daughters for the most part will appear at the addresses of their parents with their maiden names as they enter the work force or become students.

Note: Some city directories are also available on-line at ancestry.com.

Email us at WestMassGen@gmail.com if you have any questions or if you would like to offer a Genealogy Hint that helped you.

WMGS Officer Update

Special thanks to Janet Curley who volunteered at our November meeting to work as our Secretary. Members will make it official with a vote at our December meeting. Welcome aboard Janet.

We also appreciate the work of Jane Okscin, our outgoing Secretary. Jane served as an officer for the past two years, and we appreciate all of her work. Thank you Jane.

About Us

Meetings

We meet on the first Wednesday of each month, September through June from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts.

Our genealogy computer workshops are offered on the third and fourth Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center.

Membership information

Annual membership runs from September 1 to August 31 each year. Individuals may purchase a membership for \$20, while institutions may purchase a membership for \$25. Applications for Membership can be found on our website.

Newsletter Deadline

Did you enjoy reading our newsletter? Do you have suggestions for articles, or have an article you would like us to publish? Our next issue of the newsletter will be January 2014. Please forward your information by December 20, 2013 to Susan Leverson at: WestMassGen@gmail.com

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society 2013-2014 Executive Board Members

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