

May 2013

*A monthly publication
on behalf of the*



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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

Web Site: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mawmgs/index.html>

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News

Greetings,

May is an exciting month for the WMGS. We will elect our officers at the meeting on May 1st. It is also a time to start planning for next year. If you have any suggestions for speakers next year, please let us know.

Be sure to check out some additional articles in our newsletter this month:

- Upcoming Events (pages 2-3)
- Successful Open House held on April 6th (Page 4)
- Election of Officers on May 1st (page 4)
- Fran Malone's Genealogy Hint: "Never Give Up" (page 5)
- Website: LDS Family Search (page 6)
- Request for WMGS members: Personal Bogs and Websites (Page 6)
- Suggestions for 2013-14 Speakers (Page 6)

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2013.

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Calendar of Events

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will hold their next meeting on **Wednesday, May 1, 2013** from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, Massachusetts. The meeting is free and open to the public. Members are encouraged to bring a friend.

Election of officers; Speaker Alan Doyle Horbal, an adjunct professor at Williams College and a 12 year volunteer at the former NARA Center in Pittsfield will speak with us about what's available on line and at the Pittsfield Athenaeum.

Thursday, May 16, 2013

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a genealogy computer workshop. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Workshops 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. Classes are free for members. There is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Thursday, May 23, 2013

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a genealogy computer workshop. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Workshops 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. Classes are free for members. There is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Wednesday, June 5, 2013

Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society - Last monthly meeting and dinner

Computer Workshops

Stumped with a research question? Bring your question to our hands-on computer workshop, by Bruce Cortis. During the workshop, you will have an opportunity to ask your question, and use the computer to look for a solution. 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. Mark your calendar:

May 16

May 23

June 20

Upcoming Events Hosted by WMGS Member, Dave Robison

May 2013

“The Basic ABC’s of Family Research”, 4 free sessions on each Tuesday in May at the Chicopee Public Library, Front Street, Chicopee MA, 6:30 – 7:30 PM with a ½ hour Q&A. Call 413-594-1800 ext. 108 to register. Sponsored by the Chicopee Public Library.

June –July 2013 and July-August 2013

“Introduction to Genealogy and Family Research” billed as “More than just the Basics”, 5 sessions over a 5 week period of classroom study at the Yellow House Center for Community Learning. One session in June/July and the other at the end of July into August. Fees are discounted to members of the Yellow House Community.

July-August 2013 “Strategies for Basic to Intermediate Family Research” 4 sessions with classes forming for the July/August time frame at the Hitchcock Free Academy. Call (413) 233-4866 for details.

Visit Dave Robison’s website: www.oldbones.co
and blog: www.oldbonesearch.wordpress.com

Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts

Thursday, June 20, 2013, 6:30 PM

"DNA for Genealogy"

<http://www.pgsma.org/events-talks--festivals.html>

Jay Sage will discuss the evolving field of genetic testing as a tool for doing genealogical research. DNA mapping can potentially establish or disprove a biological connection between individuals, and can estimate for the number of generations back to a common ancestor.

Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, 33 South Street, Chicopee, MA 01013
Phone: 413-592-0001 Website: www.polishcenter.net

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

Open House Successful

On Saturday, April 6, 2013 the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society held an Open House and 40th Anniversary Celebration. Members of the community visited the Agawam Senior Center to view displays from our members. WMGS members Dave Robison of www.oldbones.com and Bruce Cortis gave formal presentations. Six new members joined our society that day, and many more took Membership Applications to join in the future.

Special thanks to the following individuals for making the Open House a success:

- Bruce Cortis, Chair of Open House
- Carolyn Cortis
- Becky Cross
- Susan Levenson
- Joan Linnehan
- Dave Robison
- Fred Stratton
- Bill Thompson
- Daphne Thompson

We would also like to thank Jennifer Wroblewski, editor of the Agawam Advertiser, for helping to publicize our event.

Election of Officers: Help Needed

At our upcoming meeting on May 1, 2013 we will elect the 2013-2014 officers of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS).

Any member of the WMGS is welcome to run for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer.

We are still seeking nominations for Treasurer.

Susan Levenson, our current treasurer, wears many hats. For 2013-14, she will continue her role as editor/publisher of our monthly newsletter, and webmaster of our website. If you are interested in working as an officer, in particular as treasurer, please contact Fran Malone at via e-mail at WestMassGen@gmail.com

Genealogy Hint: "Never Give Up"

by Fran Malone

That's right, "Never Give Up" on your search. Be relentless; always remember that a paper trail does exist, and keep checking websites for updates even if you checked them a hundred times before. This month's "Hint" comes from personal experience and happened within the past week of writing this article. My search experience covers 29 years and I recheck websites weekly as well as daily. I will admit that new information on a daily basis is very limited but monthly has been successful on many occasions and the information that I'm about to share came to light on Thursday April 18th.

On Thursday April 18th, I put my wife's mother's name in the search on ancestry.com which I've done before many times. I've been looking for a marriage on her parents since 2000 and have always come up empty on my searches. There was even talk that her parents weren't actually married and I was starting to believe that to be the case. Her parents were from Boston and I've searched there and around the surrounding areas. It was even mentioned that they might have married in Springfield, Mass. when they were doing one of their Vaudeville shows on the road. I checked Springfield's records and again nothing. Going back to Thursday April 18th when I put her name in, I expected nothing as the times before, but this time her name appeared to my surprise. Under the Portsmouth, Rockingham County, New Hampshire marriage I found the parents of my wife and they were married on September 20, 1935. They were married by a JP and their occupations were listed as Performers so now I'm in the process of sending for a certified copy of this marriage record.

A lot of you are probably saying yes it was ancestry that I found it on and yes ancestry is a subscription website. The record though had a notation that referred to the LDS Family Search and had a FHL film #. Because of that I went to the LDS Family Search website which is "FREE" and under the Portsmouth, New Hampshire Marriage Records I saw that the file was updated recently. I checked their site and found the image of the marriage information on my wife's parents. I believe that LDS updated their site and I remind you it's "free". I believe ancestry then updated their information from the familysearch site and this brings me to this month's Genealogy Website. Remember these words when you face that brick wall or roadblock, "Never Give Up" and never believe that your ancestor has no information on him or her. It took a short 13 years to find this marriage.

Genealogy Websites: LDS Family Search

by Fran Malone

This month's Genealogy Website is the LDS Family Search <http://www.familysearch.org/> and yes it has been highlighted several times before. As I said in the Genealogy Hint, I continue even after 29 years of searching, to go back and search websites that I've searched before. The LDS Family Search site is "FREE" and is improving constantly. They have redesigned their website and have added several tools to help with your family search. All you have to do to get access to the images available is create an ID and a password. Once you do that, it could open a whole new world for you in finding records at the very low cost of nothing.

We are always looking for your input on a monthly genealogy hint or genealogy website so email us at westmassgen@gmail.com We want to hear from you.

Calling All Members

Genealogy Blogs and Websites: Do you host a genealogy blog or website? Let us know, and we will highlight it in our June Newsletter. Since this will be our last newsletter for the 2012-13 season, we would like to provide everyone with some summer reading material, as well as websites to visit. Please contact Susan Leverson at WestMassGen@gmail.com with your blog or website information.

2013-14 Speakers: We are currently planning our speakers for the 2013-2014 season. We have a few ideas remaining from this year, and are working to schedule those individuals. Here's a sneak peak:

- David Cecchi – history/Agawam; author
- Underground Railroad in Western Mass
- Thomas Conuel – Quabbin author
- Holyoke History Room housed at HCC (field trip?)

If there's a genealogy speaker or topic you'd like to hear for next year, please let contact Fran Malone at WestMassGen@gmail.com with your suggestions.

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 June 2013. Please forward your information by May 20, 2013 to Susan Leverson and Fran Malone at: WestMassGen@gmail.com

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society 2012-2013 Executive Board Members

President: Fran Malone
Vice-President: Beckie Cross
Co-Secretary: Jane Okscin
Co-Secretary: Marilyn Powers
Treasurer: Susan Leverson