

November 2014

*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,

Special thanks to everyone who renewed their membership to the WMGS by our October 15th deadline. We collected dues at our September and October meetings, as well as via mail. So far, we have had an excellent response. We truly appreciate your continued support.

Calling all members: Do you have something you'd like to share with our group? On December 3rd, we will host our annual holiday meeting. After our pot-luck dinner, we will have time for individuals to share tips, ideas, and projects. See page 5 for more details.

In this edition of our electronic newsletter, you will find:

- WMGS 2014-15 Calendar of Events (Pages 2-3)
- Additional Genealogy Meetings, Events and Conferences (Pages 3-5)
  
- Slides for WMGS October meeting on-line (Page 6)
- Last Call for Membership Dues (Page 6)
- How to Visit Your Ancestor's Homeland, Without Traveling (Page 7-8)

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on **Wednesday, November 5, 2014** at the Agawam Senior Center.

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## WMGS Calendar of Events

**November 5, 2014** – “The Winter of Our Discontent: 3 months to Better Organization” will be a uniquely presented program featuring “Dear Myrtle” a/k/a Pat Richley Erickson. Dear Myrtle bills herself as “Your friend in genealogy.” She is a nationally renowned genealogist who has been researching, writing, teaching, lecturing and blogging genealogy since the 1980’s. She conducts several series on genealogical subjects via Google+ Hangouts, the medium with which we’ll see her program. Her regular broadcasts include “Mondays with Myrt,” “Wacky Wednesdays,” and “Genealogy Game Night” among others. We’ll see and interact with her live from Salt Lake City, Utah. You can read about her here <http://tinyurl.com/lclqtfe> and follow her work from the links in the left hand column.

### Save the Dates

Mark your calendars. Below you will find the 2014-2015 events for the WMGS:

**December 3, 2014** – Holiday Dinner: Join us for a pot luck dinner. Socialize with fellow genealogists while dining to holiday music. Participate in “Open mic” session to share your genealogy research tips, websites, and suggestions.

**January 7, 2015** – Field Trip: The Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History

**February 4, 2015** – Judy G. Russell “The Legal Genealogist”

**March 4, 2015** – To be determined

**April 1, 2015** – Lauren Forastiere will present, “The Funeral Home Industry as a Family History Resource.”

**May 6, 2015** – Election of officers; Connie Reik, Archivist at Tufts University will present “Finding Your Civil War Ancestors.”

**June 3, 2015** – Last monthly meeting and dinner.

For a printable version of our 2014-15 calendar and events, click here:

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mawmgs/updates.html>

## Genealogy Research Clinics

Join Fran Malone, President of WMGS, and Dave Robison, Vice President of WMGS and owner of [www.oldbones.co](http://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. Learn time saving research strategies using Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, Google and SteveMorse.org among other sites.

Sessions are held on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month in the computer room of the Agawam Senior Center. Clinics are free for WMGS members. There is a \$10 fee per session for non-members.

2014

November 20  
December 18

2015

January 15  
January 22  
February 19  
February 26  
March 19  
March 26  
April 16  
April 23  
May 21  
May 28  
June 18

## Genealogy with Dave Robison

Upcoming events by Dave Robison of Old Bones Genealogy of New England. More information is available at [http://oldbones.co/?page\\_id=3679](http://oldbones.co/?page_id=3679)

November 10, 2014 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm: “*The ABC’s of Family Research*” at the East Longmeadow Public Library, 60 Center Square, East Longmeadow, MA. Learn the basics of family history research from Pedigree Charts to some interesting “secrets” of searching on genealogy web sites. Also, since “it’s all not on the internet,” you’ll learn where you might go when the search sites just don’t have the answers! Contact Lyndsay at [lyjohnson@cwmars.org](mailto:lyjohnson@cwmars.org) or call (413) 525-5400 ext 1508.

November 17, 2014 from 6:00 to 7:30 pm: “***Pulling the People Out of the Paperwork***” at Wistariahurst Museum 238 Cabot Street, Holyoke, MA is an evening where attendees will discover the challenges of family history research and how to make it all much less mysterious through simple strategies on the internet and where to go when what you need just isn’t on-line! General admission is \$7 / member admission is \$5 payable at the door. For more information, please contact the museum at [info@wistariahurst.org](mailto:info@wistariahurst.org).

December 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2014 from 6:00 to 8:00 pm: “***Advanced Genealogy Research***” is for those who have a few years of research under their belts and would like to be challenged to a higher level. Location is currently planned in Westfield. Sample of subjects covered include:

- Determining the value of sources, information and evidence
- Resolving conflicts
- “Crafting” a search
- If it’s not all on the internet (which is definitely is not!) then where do I go now?
- The 5 point of the Genealogical Proof Standard

And more! The course fee is \$95 per individual and \$180 per couple. Class size is limited to 10. Early registration discount of 10% for signing up by Wednesday, November 26, 2014. For more details, contact Dave directly at [dave@oldbones.info](mailto:dave@oldbones.info).

January 21, 2015 at 3:00 pm: A one hour presentation of the popular “***The ABC’s of Family Research.***” Attendees at Armbrook Village, 551 North Road, Westfield, MA will be introduced to the basics of genealogy research, how to find your “long lost cousins”, building a family tree from scratch, interesting and productive search strategies when using genealogy web sites. Also, since “it’s all not on the internet,” you’ll learn where you might go when the search sites just don’t have the answers!

April 15 – 19, 2015, Dave will be presenting “***Search Strategies You Haven’t Tried --- Search Sites You Never Thought Of***” at the biennial conference of the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium (NERGC) in Providence, RI. Dozens of speakers from around the United States will be presenting a broad variety of programs. “Early Bird Registration” is \$120 per person but ends 28 February 2015. Regular registration will be \$150 as of 1 March 2015.

## NERGC Conference

### NAVIGATING THE PAST: SAILING INTO THE FUTURE 15 – 19 APRIL 2015

The Rhode Island Convention Center  
Providence, RI



The most important genealogical conference in the Northeast is the biennial “New England Regional Genealogical Conference.” Virtually all genealogical subjects will be covered in a 3 day event with a wide variety of speakers, workshops, “Ancestor’s Road Show”, banquets, luncheons and other events. For a detailed description of what has been planned, click here <http://www.nergc.org/> and then click the link **Download the Program**

**Brochure.** There is an “Early Bird” registration of \$120 which ends on February 28, 2015. After that date, registration is \$150. Also, the local hotels are offering special rates to conference attendees.

Can’t make it in 2015? The conference will be held in Springfield, Mass in 2017.

*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

The Pot Luck Dinner Sign Up Sheet will be available at our November meeting. 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.

After dinner, we will hold an open-mic session. Members are welcome to share their genealogy research stories, websites, tips and ideas.

## Slides for WMGS October Meeting On-line

Did you miss our October meeting? Dick Eastman spoke to us remotely about My Heritage. To view the handouts from his presentation, just click on the following link: <http://Eogn.com/handouts/myheritage>

## Join With Us on Google+

There is a now a Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society Community on Google+. Everyone is eligible to join in along with the 100 plus members from around the world. You can post anything “genealogical” such as your own discoveries, links to genealogy related news articles, web sites....as long as it’s genealogy related. Plus, our “worldwide” membership might learn a thing or two!

Come check us out on Google+ by clicking on the following link:  
<https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/109742774980945180341?hl=en>.

## Membership

Last call for membership dues: Did you miss the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for the WMGS annual membership dues? You can turn in your dues at our next meeting on November 5<sup>th</sup>. Can’t make it to our next meeting? Use the coupon below to send us your payment. We appreciate your continued support.

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### Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society Membership Renewal 2014-2015

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP TYPE:** (Membership fees are listed below. Please select one.)

*Annual dues period is from September 1 to August 31.*

**INDIVIDUAL, \$20** or  **INSTITUTION, \$25**

Please make check payable and mail to:

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 418  
West Springfield, MA 01090

# How to Visit Your Ancestor's Homeland Without Traveling

By Susan Leverson

Did you ever wish you could travel to the village of your ancestors? I did. Some of my ancestors originated from a small village in Poland called Wierzbanowa. It is located in the administrative district of Gmina Wisniowa, within Myslenice County, which is south of Krakow.

Once I located the village, I knew I wanted to visit. For a while, this trip to Poland was even on my bucket list. I thought I could get there someday. Maybe for one of my milestone birthdays. Maybe once the kids were grown. Maybe once I actually learned to speak Polish. 😊

Then one night, I was poking around in Google Earth. It's a fantastic computer program where you can find the location of a house or business on a map. It also allows you to zoom in and see a street view. It's actually fun to look at your own house, and try to determine when they took the picture. Then, you can move further down the road and check out the rest of the neighborhood.

Anyway, that night, I decided to take my research overseas. I entered the unique name of the village of my ancestors. And guess what! It came up on the map. I was ecstatic. I started off just looking at the styles of houses. Then I drove further down the road and checked out the small businesses in town. Before I knew it, I was "driving around" Wierzbanowa as if I were in a car. It was amazing to see the town and drive through the countryside.

As a result, it felt as if I visited the village, without even leaving my living room. Not to mention, I saved my husband a few thousand dollars in travel expenses. Although visiting Wierzbanowa in person is still on my list of things to do, I no longer feel the need to travel there anytime soon.

To use google earth, check out this website: <http://www.google.com/earth/>

Here is a screen print of Wierzbanowa, as seen in Google Earth. Isn't it beautiful?



Here are a few tips for using Google Earth:

- On the left side, type in the name of the village, or nearest city; then press the search button.
- To get a street view: On the right side, click on the person, and drag to a spot on the map. I put the person right in the center of Wierzbanowa.
- Use the tools on the right hand side of the screen to move through town:
  1. Click to look around (left, right, or even behind you.)
  2. Click to move around (Works good in street view, especially to follow the yellow line)
  3. Use the + and – buttons to zoom in or out.

Enjoy! Be sure to let me know if this worked for you.

E-mail me at [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto:WestMassGen@gmail.com) and tell me which places you found.

I can't wait to hear from you! Happy travels!

## 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 research clinics 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 December 2014. Please forward your information by November 20, 2014 to Susan Levenson at: [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto:WestMassGen@gmail.com)

### **Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society 2014-15 Executive Board Members**

#### **Officers:**

President: Fran Malone  
Vice-President: Dave Robison  
Secretary: Janet Curley  
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Newsletter Assistant: Bill Thompson