

October 2014

*A monthly publication
on behalf of the*



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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

Web Site: www.WestMassGen.com

E-Mail: WestMassGen@gmail.com

News

Greetings,

It's hard to believe fall is here. Our children and grandchildren have started school and we are anxious to expand our genealogy skills. The 2014-15 programs will provide some exciting speakers with many years of genealogy experience they are willing to share with us. We will continue the genealogy research clinics to expand our technology capabilities. In this edition of our electronic newsletter, you will find:

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We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on **Wednesday, October 1, 2014** at the Agawam Senior Center.

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WMGS Calendar of Events

Wednesday, October 1, 2014

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will meet from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, Massachusetts. October is Family History Month, so members are encouraged to bring a friend to our meeting.

Dick Eastman will present a powerful alternative genealogy search site called MyHeritage.com. He'll present "Using MyHeritage.com Effectively," and will speak to us via SKYPE. The site is a worthy addition to your research arsenal. MyHeritage has been extremely successful building their data bases through collaboration and acquisition of a number of other genealogy search sites. They have emerged as one of the "Big Guns!" In addition to a unique approach to the search process, they provide passive searches, a family tree builder and 3 levels of membership beginning with a no cost version.

Dick, a native of Massachusetts, is an innovative, forward thinker and the publisher of "Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter" available at www.eogn.com. The newsletter contains hundreds of articles in the field of genealogy and family history but frequently contains Dick's reviews of the latest in genealogical software and hardware. He is a popular speaker who has made appearances at all of the major genealogical conferences, seminars and events here in the United States as well as abroad. His style is an "easy-to-understand" presentation and should provide an enlightening evening for all of us.

According to his website www.eogn.com, Dick has been involved in genealogy for more than 30 years. He has worked in the computer industry for more than 40 years in hardware, software, and managerial positions. By the early 1970s, Dick was already using a mainframe computer to enter his family data on punch cards. He built his first home computer in 1980.

Save the Dates

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

November 5, 2014 - "Dear Myrtle" a/k/a Pat Richley Erickson. Dear Myrtle bills herself as "Your friend in genealogy." You can read about her here <http://tinyurl.com/lclqtfe> and follow her work from the links in the left hand column of that page.

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 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

October 16
October 23
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

Fall schedule for events by Dave Robison of Old Bones Genealogy of New England. More information is available at http://oldbones.co/?page_id=3679

- Descendants of the Founders of Ancient Windsor
96 Palisado Ave, Windsor, CT
“A Researcher’s Dream: The Archives at the Museum of Springfield History”
September 27, 2014 at 10:30 AM.
- Yellow House Community Center for Learning
1479 North Main Street, Palmer, MA 01069
“Genealogy and Family Research - Pulling the People out of the Paperwork”
Thursdays October 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30, 2014 at 6:30-8:00 PM

- Hitchcock Free Academy
2 Brookfield Road, Brimfield MA
“The ABC’s of Family Research” on 4 consecutive Wednesdays beginning October 7th. Call (413) 245-9977 for registration details

Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts

Thursday, October 16, 2014, 6:30 PM

Chicopee Public Library

<http://www.pgsma.org/>

Mr. Joseph Manning, a former social worker and historian, will speak on **The Lewis Hine Project: Tracking down the lives of child laborers**. Manning will show some of these historic photographs, tell the stories of the immigrant child laborers in them, and talk about the exciting process of searching for descendants. Several of the stories at this presentation will be about Polish children. **FREE**. Bring a friend.

NERGC Conference

Save the Date: The next New England Regional Genealogical Consortium date has been scheduled for **April 15-19, 2015**. It will take place in Providence, Rhode Island. Dave Robison will be one of the featured speakers. His topic is titled “Search Strategies You Never Thought Of---Search Sites You Never Heard Of!” For more details, please see their website: <http://www.nergc.org/Conference-Home-Page.html>

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

October Spotlight: Longmeadow Historical Society By Katy Krause

The Longmeadow Historical Society which was formed in 1899 is responsible for the collection, preservation and education activities related to preserving Longmeadow's past for future generations. The Society's archives contain many original maps, diaries, account books, old photographs, documents and family histories of Longmeadow's earliest families. The Society also operates The Storrs House at 697 Longmeadow St. To learn more please visit <http://www.longmeadowhistoricalsociety.org>

A representative from the Longmeadow Historical Society will attend our October meeting. At the start of the meeting, we will introduce the representative. After the meeting, attendees can network and speak to the representative.

Are You Connected?

As WMGS expands its social media presence, you'll want to make sure you don't miss out. Connect with us in the following ways:

Facebook: "Like" us on Facebook, where you'll find meeting information, newsletter announcements, and genealogy. We have 123 fans and counting. Will you be number 124? Click on the link below and "like" us.

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Western-Massachusetts-Genealogical-Society/308787969219252>

Google+: There is now a Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society Community on Google+. We currently have over 100 members from all over the world, collaborating and sharing information. Come join us on Google+ by clicking on the following link:

<https://plus.google.com/u/0/communities/109742774980945180341?hl=en>.

“Speeling duzn’t cownt” !!!

by Dave Robison, Old Bones Genealogy of New England

As the weather gets cooler and we’re spending more time indoors, it’s only natural to expect that we’re all sitting at our computers, trying to solve the mysteries of all those ancestors we have yet to track down. Here are a few things to keep in mind that I’d like to share with everyone:

* Remember! **“Speeling duzn’t cownt”!!!** Be creative and forgiving of all the people who had to figure out how to spell “Donahue” or is it “Donohue” or is it “Donahoe.” Maybe the name is “MacGillicuddy” or “Przybilski” or “Batchelor” or whatever. I’m talking, for example, of the census enumerators who may have been interviewing people with strong foreign accents or, perhaps, weren’t sure themselves how to spell their names. Or others who were responsible to take the names of couples getting married and they were charged with helping the happy couple fill out their marriage intentions. And countless other examples of how “Smith” can become “Jones.” I’m exaggerating, of course, but I think you understand my point.

* Have you found your ancestor in a particular census? Don’t just look at that one page. **Check 2 or 3 or even 10 pages before and after.** Many extended families lived close to each other in clusters. You can be pleasantly surprised by how easy it can be to find someone’s brother and his family or cousins. Of course, it’ll take a little more research to determine if your speculation is accurate, but it’s worth the time.

* Can’t find the death record at the town clerk’s office? Would you like to know where someone was buried? No obituaries, nothing on Ancestry or FamilySearch? **Try funeral homes.** (We’ll be hearing from Loren Forastiere from Forastiere Funeral Home in the spring.) A friend of mine uses them regularly as a resource and has had tremendous success. You may have to “shop around” to find the right funeral service as many have gone out of business, but it’ll be well worth it!

* Don’t assume that **“Junior”** was the son of **“Senior.”** Quite frequently in times past, “Junior” merely distinguished a younger man who lived in the same community as an older gentleman with the same name.

* **Ancestry.com** is a paid site. **MyHeritage.com** is a paid site (although there’s a free, entry level membership). **Fold3.com** is a paid site (with a discount if you’re already paying for an Ancestry.com subscription). And the list goes on and on.

Have you thought of using **Google**? It can bring you to places that you'd never find with conventional family history search engines. There are some tricks and tips to be sure, but many of them are built in when you use Google Advanced Search. Try www.google.com/advanced_search and follow the instructions on using "Operators." I have a module in my "**ABC's of Family Research**" that teaches many of the "secrets" of using Google for genealogical research. You can check the schedule of classes and workshops at http://oldbones.co/?page_id=3679

* Most of the local libraries are subscribed to **Ancestry Library Edition**. Those with a library card/membership can access most of what's available with a private subscription for free. The Chicopee Library, for example, has Ancestry Library as well as Heritage Quest and Fold3 all of which is free to library patrons.

* With Google alerts, you can set up a way to have Google notify you when a certain search term appears on the internet. I use it for a number of family names in my efforts to trace current members of my family scattered across the country. Granted, you have to sift through a great deal of information at times, but it's handed to you in a simple e-mail. A brief scan of the e-mail can tell you if it's worthwhile.

* Many books are available in the public domain that you can find at books.google.com. If you find a title you're interested in reading, you can read it right on your computer and often download it to read at your leisure.

* Get familiar with your local probate courts, registries of deeds and any historical archive near you. For example, the **Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum of Springfield History and Archive** is not only a treasure trove of local history but a "warehouse" of antique cars, trucks and Indian Motorcycles. But the real secret is in the basement. **Cliff McCarthy** and **Maggie Humberston** are the archivists who hold the "keys to the kingdom." There are untold numbers of unpublished family, business and military records dating back to the founding of Springfield in 1636. There are tens of thousands of historical photos, school records, voting cards of naturalized citizens, historical maps and on and on and on! If you're lucky enough to live in Springfield, Mass, you have free admission to the archives and all the buildings on the Quadrangle campus. Others can purchase an annual membership or purchase daily passes.

* Finally, there is a surprising collection at the Building Department of the **Department of Public Works at 70 Tapley Street, Springfield, Mass.** In 1938, the WPA photographed every building, residential and commercial, in the City of Springfield! If you have a property in mind, give them a call (413-787-6031) before

going in there and they can have the photo pulled for you. A copy will cost you \$1.00! The photo also includes a plot plan with dimensions. Although the collection was 100% complete at one time, over the years some of the photos have been lost, but I can tell you that most of the photos are still on file.

There is so much more! I'd take up this entire newsletter and then some if I tried to put even half of the "tips and tricks" to family research. But I have a better idea: On the 3rd and 4th Thursdays of the month during our September to June season, we hold a "Genealogy Research Clinic" at the Agawam Senior Center at 954 Main Street, Agawam, Mass. The clinics are free to current members (\$20 annually) and non-members are asked for a \$10 fee to attend.

Dave Robison of Old Bones Genealogy of New England and Vice President - New England Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists

E-mail: dave@oldbones.info

Website: www.oldbones.co (NOT .com) Blog: www.oldbonessearch.com

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Video for WMGS September meeting

Did you miss our September meeting? Mark A Wilmot, USMC Master Sargent (Ret) presented a program titled "How Do I Frame My Life Story."

A video of our September meeting will be available soon on YouTube for WMGS members. Once the video is posted, WMGS members will receive an e-mail with the link and password to access the video.

Special thanks to:

- Mark and Katy Krause for videotaping the event
- Mark Wilmot for his presentation, and permission to share the video with our members
- Dave Robison for his continuous efforts in utilizing technology to benefit WMGS members

Membership Dues: Show Your Support

Our annual membership drive is now underway. Dues for the year are just \$20, and can be paid at our October meeting. New members: Please complete our Application for Membership at www.WestMassGen.com and return with your dues. Can't make it to our next meeting? Use the coupon below to send us your payment.

Reasons to Join our Society

1. Meet people with similar interests of family history and genealogy
2. Attend monthly meetings featuring local and national presenters
3. Receive assistance from our members on your family research
4. Attend our free genealogy research clinics held twice per month (\$10 per session for non-members)
5. Share our library of resources including books and cds
6. Opportunity to serve as a volunteer, coach or member of Board of Directors

Did someone from WMGS help you with your research in the past? Even if you can't attend our meetings, please consider renewing your membership so that our society is available to assist with future research questions.

Thank you for your continued support. We rely on our membership funds to provide quality speakers throughout the year.

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

Special Database for Munro Surname

Do you have Scottish family members in your genealogy tree? If so, you'll want to check out a website from Clan Munro-USA. It is a genealogical database consisting of the genealogical material covering the various spellings of: **Monro, Monroe, Munro & Munroe**. And the septs' associated with clan Munro: **Dingwall, Fowlis, MacCullich, MacCullich, McCullish, Vass & Wass**.

The data base is composed of the genealogical collections generated by our American Genealogist Allen Alger and the late Scottish genealogist R.W. Munro. The database consists of over 80,000 entries dating back to the 12th century.

The database is a free download available to anyone of interest. Click on the website: <http://www.clanmunrousa.org>

Website instructions:

Scroll down to mid page and click on **Genealogy online**

Then insert the information required under **Search** in the upper left hand corner.

“Looking for LeBarons”

Karen Basli recently published a book called “Looking for Lebarons.” According to Karen, the book is the story of her journey while researching the family history of the LeBaron family. It begins in Plymouth colony in 1694 and continues right up to today. This branch of the family migrated to the Berkshires before going to Canada when the British Crown was giving free land. It continues with a group that eventually went west to Sonoma County.

Since this is a family history, it has been published in full color as well as black and white, so readers have a choice depending on their level of interest. According to Karen, many say the book is a road map for any beginning genealogist. Both versions of the book are available on amazon.com. where you have the ability to "look inside".

http://www.amazon.com/Looking-LeBarons-Massachusetts-wilderness-California/dp/1497327784/ref=sr_1_1?s=books&ie=UTF8&qid=1411580417&sr=1-1&keywords=looking+for+lebarons

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 November 2014. Please forward your information by October 20, 2014 to Susan Leverson at: WestMassGen@gmail.com

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