



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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News

4 May 2016 WMGS Meeting

PANEL OF PROS

By Dave Robison



Dave Robison and Bruce Cortis at the July 2015 panel discussion meeting ~ [Fran Malone in Ireland]

Have you ever had to deal with a professional consultant? Have you ever had to pay a professional consultant? I can tell you first hand that it's usually not an inexpensive proposition!

Here's another benefit of membership at Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society: You have free access to a number of pros and experienced researchers to help you break down your brick walls, answer your research questions, point you in the right direction and, in general, lend a hand with your family histories. From pedigree charts to on-line research to DNA, WMGS can help you re-energize your research.

In May, the regular monthly meeting of WMGS will be not one, and not two but three panelists who are willing to take your questions. I'll be joined by Fran Malone and Bruce Cortis for this event. Put us on the spot! Responses won't be limited to what the panelists can offer as members of the audience are welcome to join in the discussion. That's what WMGS is all about, helping each other identify the goals and how to get there! So bring your questions concerning problems you have or just a general question that you've been wondering what's the answer.

Please come early and get a good seat. Our last panel discussion was very well attended and very productive! This will also be a virtual meeting available only to the membership.

See you on **4 May 2016 at 6:00 pm** at the Agawam Senior Center!

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Please Note: Carolea Hayden our WMGS Refreshment Coordinator will be away for our May meeting; so please bring something to share with the other WMGS members, maybe something to drink, some little tidbits to ‘nosh’ on, or some paper goods (cups, plates, silverware, napkins). If you bring coffee, don’t forget the sweeteners, creamers, and stirrers. [Return to Contents page](#)

1 June 2016 WMGS Meeting

Be sure to sign up for the “Pot Luck Dinner” at our May meeting because for our June meeting, we will host not only a **Pot Luck Dinner** but an **"Open Mic" Session** too. So bring your favorite casserole or main dish, a side dish, or some sort of dessert, and socialize with fellow genealogists searching for their family tree. Who knows, you might even find a 5th - 9th cousin ‘X’ number of times removed; sort of like Dave Robison and Bruce Cortis (through Deacon Chapin of Springfield). After dinner, members will have an opportunity to speak and share during our Open Mic session. Members are welcome to share genealogy information including ideas, tips, suggestions, research experience, and genealogy projects. If you have a new website to share, a place to visit, or a research success story, please be sure to share it during our Open Mic session that’s how we all learn. Members are encouraged to bring a friend. [Return to Contents page](#)

April Meeting Recap

At our monthly meeting in April, Maureen Taylor, **The Photo Detective**, joined us virtually to present **‘Buns, Beards, Bodices and Bustles: Understanding Ancestors Through Clothing’**.

Ancestral fashions and the industry that produced them left behind a fascinating legacy of images and information.

- Paris fashion in America: North, South, East and West interpretations
- Fashion icons from Charles Dickens to stage star Lillie Langtry
- Fashion Foibles and practical pastimes: how our ancestors designed and handcrafted accessories
- What’s old is new and what’s new is old? Repeating fashion trends and how to read the clues
- Labor records relating to hat, hair and accessory factories and home-work

Maureen’s presentation was only a live broadcast due to copyright issues on some of the photos she used.

For more information, please visit Maureen’s website: www.maurentaylor.com [Return to Contents page](#)

Proposed Changes to the By-laws

The current Officers of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (President, Francis Malone; Vice President, David Robison; Recording Secretary, Ann McDougal; and Treasurer, Kathryn Krause) would like to notify the membership of a proposed change to our Constitution and By-laws. These changes will be voted upon in our May elections.

Our current Constitution:

Article IV – Officers

The officers of this society shall be President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer.

Proposed amendment change to the Constitution: Adding 3 Directors positions to the board of Officers.

Under the amendment to the Constitution, Article IV would read: The officers of the Society shall be President, Vice President, Recording Secretary, Treasurer and three (3) Directors. They shall constitute the Executive Board.

And an addition to the By-laws under Article I:

Section 5 – The Directors shall assume such responsibilities as are delegated by the President.

Election of Officers

Before the election of officers and the three (3) new director's positions, the membership will need to vote on the proposed changes to the Constitution and By-laws of Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society. With the approval of the changes the membership can then proceed to the nomination of and voting for the candidates.

Volunteers Wanted:

At our upcoming meeting on 4 May 2016 we will elect the 2016-2017 slate of officers for the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS). Any member of the WMGS is welcome to run for any of the officer or director positions of President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer, or any of the three (3) new Director's positions. These Society officers and directors shall constitute the Executive Board of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society. If you are interested in becoming an officer, please see one of the current officers before the meeting. Please consider running for one of these new director positions or one of the established officer positions at our May 4, 2016 meeting, or contact us via e-mail before the day of the meeting at WestMassGen@gmail.com. [Return to Contents page](#)

WMGS Library News

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society would like to thank two recent donations to our genealogical library. Evelyn Lee's donated a big set of 8 books '*The Doolittle Family of America*'. If you have any Doolittle's in your family tree, you should take a look at these books. We would also like to thank Daniel Lawson for donating '*Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers, and Librarians*'. This book isn't light reading, but if you want to move out of "beginner" genealogist, this is a great book to help. The library is open on meeting nights and during our research clinics so be sure to check it out. The catalogue can be viewed [here](#) as well as on our website, westmassgen.com. [Return to Contents page](#)

Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
Wednesday, 4 May 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	WMGS Meeting & Election of Officers With Panel Discussion presentation by Fran Malone, Dave Robison, & Bruce Cortis, at the Agawam Senior Center
Thursday, 19 May 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Thursday, 26 May 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Wednesday, 1 June 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	WMGS Meeting – Our annual Potluck Dinner & open-mic session , at the Agawam Senior Center
Thursday, 16 June 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Thursday, 23 June 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Wednesday, 6 July 2016 from 6 - 8 PM	WMGS Meeting – Margaret Rose Fortier ~ <i>Andiamo! Finding Your Italian Family</i> , Live and in person at the Agawam Senior Center
Wednesday, 3 August 2016 from 6 – 8 PM	Field trip to the Lyman and Merrie Wood Museum (Springfield Archives) at the Springfield Museums, Springfield, MA
26 - 29 April 2017	NERGC 2017: Using the Tools of Today & Tomorrow to Understand the Past , at the Mass Mutual Center, Springfield, MA

Genealogy Research Clinics are free to WMGS members. There is a \$10 fee per session for non-members. Annual WMGS membership is just \$25. [Return to Contents page](#)

Member Events

Dave Robison has scheduled a number of classes, workshops and presentations so far this year and there are more to come! They include single presentations, four and five session programs and at least two (2) intermediate to advanced courses in genealogy research. Please click here for the current [“Scheduled Events”](#) that he will be presenting throughout Massachusetts from Springfield and Northampton to as far away as Falmouth at Cape Cod. [Return to Contents page](#)

NERGC UPDATE

Special thanks to the WMGS members who volunteered at April’s meeting to assist with the numerous activities that WMGS as sponsoring society has for planning NERGC 2017 in Springfield. [Dave Robison](#) or [Hillary Schau](#) will be contacting you in the coming days and weeks ahead and they will shortly be posting a list of the duties that will be needed to be done. [Return to Contents page](#)

Member Focus

Ann Royal

By Ann Royal

I was twelve years old when I was bitten by the genealogy bug. My sister had received a homework assignment to research the first four generations of her family, starting with her. Well, that was all it took. I was seven years and seven days younger than my sister, Tammy, and I had never lived anywhere but Granby, Massachusetts. My sister had lived in North Adams until she was five, before our parents moved down to Granby, and she had met and known most of the family. Unfortunately for me, most of the relatives had died by the time I truly became aware enough of family members beyond, Mom, Dad, and Tammy. So when this assignment came, wow, this was my chance to finally meet these people.

I took full advantage of that. At first, I was only “allowed” to research the French Canadian side of our family. Oh, if only my sister had known, she would have assigned the German side to me first. Well, I just took off running and have never stopped. My first mentor was John O’Connor of the Springfield Museum’s Connecticut Valley Historical Museum. I found him to be a great teacher. I went on to volunteer at the Bloomfield LDS Stake House in Connecticut (LDS - Latter Day Saints, i.e. Mormon Church), and was put in charge of French Canadian acquisitions. While there, I founded the Connecticut Valley Personal Ancestral File Users’ Group, and we had speakers from far and wide. Personal Ancestral File is an older, now defunct, genealogical software program created by the LDS Church. Just as software has grown with the needs of its users, so did I in my need to branch out from the French Canadian research.

I have grown in my studies from French Canadian to New England and upper state New York, and now I am studying Irish and German research. In 2013, I added Forensic Genealogy to my list of skills and passions and formally started my own company, Royal Genealogy Enterprise, Inc.

My other interests include reading, horses, music, singing, hiking, and traveling. I have a bachelor’s degree in Biology/Chemistry from Albertus Magnus College, and I am working on my MS degree in Management. I have lived in Granby, Massachusetts for almost 50 years, and I have a black schnoodle dog named *Teddy Bear*.

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E-Mail Update

Please let us know if you have changed your e-mail address. We want to make sure that you continue to receive all of our updates, meeting reminders and electronic newsletters. Just send your name and new email address to us at WestMassGen@gmail.com.

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Membership

Like most things in life, membership is not free - but for our reasonable annual membership fee, you get a lot for your money.

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 (3rd & 4th Thursday of month - \$10 / session non-members)
5. Share our library of resources including books and CDs
6. Opportunity to serve as a volunteer, coach or be a member of the Board of Directors

Membership

Annual membership runs from 1 September to 31 August each year. Individuals may purchase a membership for \$25, while institutions may purchase a membership for \$30.

Join by mail, email, or in person at our monthly meeting: Click [here](#) for the WMGS Application for Membership; the image is to your right to view, save, and print. Payments may be made online on our [Join Page](#), by mail at the address listed below, or brought in person to one of our meetings.

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 418

West Springfield, MA 01090

New WMGS Member

The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS) welcomes our newest member.

Lynn Kleindienst

We hope that she will avail herself of all that WMGS has to offer her and that she finds her family ancestors.

Meetings

We meet year-round on the first Wednesday of each month at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts.

Our genealogy research clinics are offered on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center. The cost of the computer class is \$10 for non-members; free for members of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society.

We look forward to you joining us at our next meeting!

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About Us



The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society was founded in Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts in 1972, and officially incorporated on 6 February 1973. We are devoted to the research and documentation of our family ancestry and history. We also assist others in the pursuit of discovering their ancestry.

We meet year-round on the first Wednesday of each month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. We welcome non-members and beginning genealogists. Please join us!

We currently have about 100 active members, approximately 80% living in the Western Massachusetts area. The other 20% are residents of other states but with ancestry from Massachusetts or New England.

We receive numerous inquiries each month via U.S. & e-mail from people looking for information on area families. Our members are happy to volunteer to research these requests

Fran Malone – President

Dave Robison – Vice President

Katy Krause – Treasurer

Ann McDougal – Secretary

Hillary Schau – NERGC Delegate

Susan Leverson, Katy Krause & Dee Pederson – Website Redesign Team.

Susan Leverson – Webmaster

Jeanne Leblond – Surname Project Coordinator

Ellen Janik – Facebook Administrator

Carolea Hayden – Refreshment Coordinator

Diane Ascioti – Founder

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Newsletter Deadlines

Please submit all information to be entered into the next newsletter by 15 May 2016.

We are looking for articles written by our members. Have you been to a repository or a federal or state archive? Have you been to where your ancestors lived? Have you tried a new gadget or software? You do not have to write the article yourself. If you would like to do an interview about a subject, that would be helpful as well. What are you interested in? Tell us, share your knowledge.

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*Western
Massachusetts
Genealogical
Society
Celebrating
44 years
in 2016*