



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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Upcoming Meetings

October 2018 Meeting

Our speaker on October 3rd, will be Susan Sit. She presented for us back in March on the topic of Welsh and other ethnic research challenges. This time she will be speaking on **Wales, Scotland & England – Similar but Different Research**.

Susan Davies Sit was born in North Wales and has been researching her own family tree and others' trees for almost 40 years. She also enjoys helping others in their genealogy research including her husband's Chinese American tree, which is as difficult as it sounds! Her specialty is researching in Wales, Scotland and England. She is a Professional genealogist (APG); President of the Welsh Society of Western New England (WSWNE); a member of the Gwynedd Family History Society (Wales); and the Welsh-American Genealogy Society (WAGS).



November 2018 Meeting

The November 7th meeting will be a presentation on using FamilySearch.org for your research.

September 2018 Recap



any level.

On September 5th, Marian B Wood presented on the topic **Using Facebook and Twitter for Genealogy** – She demonstrated the fun, benefits, and mechanics of Facebook and Twitter to connect with family-history researchers in areas where ancestors lived, request assistance, obtain translations, and learn more about genealogy sources, technology, and methodology. We learned that the many forms of Social media are easy to use and offer the opportunity for more immediate response compared with traditional surname message boards--to jumpstart genealogy efforts at

Marian B. Wood is a popular genealogy speaker and hosts a blog entitled [Climbing My Family Tree](#). She has also written a book “Planning a Future for Your Family’s Past” which many people bought after the meeting and had her sign. If you missed the opportunity, you can pick it up at smile.amazon.com.

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Message from the President

Dave Robison

Why Should You Attend Genealogy Society Meetings, Conferences and Seminars?

Why should you attend genealogy society meetings, seminars and conferences? I just happen to have a few reasons for you to ponder! So, let’s get started.

- **YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU DON’T KNOW** - It would appear to some that there must be an end to genealogical education. You’ve learned good search habits to use on Ancestry.com or FamilySearch.org or perhaps FindMyPast.com. You may use any AncestryLibrary.com edition available to you or perhaps you have your own subscription. You know the difference between various types of records. And you’ve had some success at piecing together you family’s story. But there’s that inevitable “brick-wall.” Frustration ensues, and you’ve come to the end of the line. Should you pack it in or should you look for answers somewhere else? Just reading the titles of the presentations and the speakers at various conferences could be a tremendous help. Are you researching Irish ancestors? Polish? Caribbean? Chinese? You are sure to find these subjects covered somewhere. Of course, the conference you want may be out of reach for many people. Many conferences, such as RootsTech, leave videos of their some of their presentations on line to view for a limited time. You won’t be able to access everything as the “premier” programs would be restricted either by conference management or the nature of the contract with the speaker. All, and I mean all, subjects can be found at most of these gatherings. From pedigree charts to DNA triangulation; whatever is your need.
- **NETWORKING** - There are hundreds or even thousands of like-minded people who attend these conferences. And 99.9% are required to wear name badges. Glance over and see someone who is from Minnesota or Canada and just strike up a conversation. I’d say that genealogists relish the opportunity to speak to a living person after spending so much time seeking out the dead! Who can you find? Well, if it’s a RootsTech affair, there are usually over 30,000 people from all over the world in attendance!

You should be able to find a new friend in a group that size. But 30,000, at least to me, is a mind-boggling number of people to deal with. Local or regional meetings and conferences are usually much smaller, easy to navigate, and your next best friend might be attending as well. You just haven't met them yet.

- **SPECIALTIES** – What are you looking for? DNA? I can vouch for the fact that DNA is probably the single most sought out subject. From the basics to genome matching, it's out there. Or how about 17th century Scottish records? Finding the women in your family? For the most part, women change their names with every generation. Sometimes, as in early 20th century and earlier, when the husband died, the obituary simply reads "...survived by his wife, Mrs. J. T. Smith..." The obit then goes on to name the children. But what was her name? There are ways to flesh them out of the paperwork. How about land records, deeds, property transfers, marriage intentions and marriage certificates (there's a BIG difference), adoption, guardianship petitions, immigration, naturalization, court records, genealogy and the law, writing up your research, applying for certification or a lineage society. It's one thing to find the records and quite another thing to learn how to glean every scrap of data out and make sense of it all. Just about any subject you can think of can probably be found at one meeting/conference or another.
- **SYLLABUS** – Every conference you attend will provide syllabi of every presentation. They will contain a synopsis of the material from every speaker and their presentation. Printed copies or electronic copies are generally available for a fee. More often than not, a syllabus can be downloaded from the internet either a few days before the event or certainly when you get home. I strongly advise springing for a printed copy. I like to carry them around for note-taking. It's hard to take notes on a thumb drive that can't be edited. The thumb-drive or CD syllabus has its uses. For example, there will probably be hundreds of websites listed and it's easier to click on a link in an electronic version rather than having to copy the URL out of the printed book.
- **WORKSHOPS** – Workshops are a more intense version of a presentation and allow for easier interaction with the speaker. Again, there is a wide variety of subject matter available depending on the conference. And seating will be limited. If there's a workshop you're interested in attending, register early! True, they may be a little more intense than sitting, listening and taking notes, but what you take away from a workshop will be vastly more detailed and will "stick" with you longer.
- **GET YOU OUT OF THAT RUT** – Here's what happens to every genealogist at every level: They get bored because they're always doing the same type of research day in and day out. Conferences can shake you out of your habits, get you to look at things in a new and different way. Talking with like-minded people, you'll be exchanging your stories and glories. Much of that will help you broaden your thinking so that when you get home, you can take another look at all you've done and, perhaps, get you off on a more productive path.
- **CONFERENCE EXHIBIT HALLS** – At first you might say, "That's something I don't want to bother with." But I'm here to advise you that you should spend some time with the vendors of a wide variety of products or be introduced to genealogical societies that may spark your interest. Let's say you have family who migrated to New York State (or should I say the "Black Hole" of research) in the mid-19th century. You might already know that you must be some kind of magician to turn up anything useful. There's a pretty good chance, especially on the east coast, that there will be either a New York specialist or a genealogical society from New York who can empathize with your predicament and

advise you in what direction you should go. There are also books and various gazetteers of many states including New York that can provide you with very useful information. I'd like to share one experience (of many) at the Exhibit Hall at RootsTech this past February. For months, I've been working on an application to the SAR for a client. His Patriot was from a burned county in Virginia. I spent weeks including 2 full days at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. Results? Zero! As I walked past the DAR exhibit, I struck up a conversation with the 4 women and the 1 man who were sitting there and remarkably were not engaged with anyone else. So I voiced my concern: "I can't believe that I can't resolve an issue with a client's Patriot ancestor. I've been hunting the Chapman line in Virginia for weeks!" Not really expecting anything but sympathetic reactions, the man spoke up said, "Which Chapman, Reuben?" I was stunned. I looked at his badge and he was from Maryland, the Patriot was from Virginia, I'm from Massachusetts and we were in the Salt Palace in Salt Lake City, Utah. "Yes, Reuben! I can't prove one of his daughters." His reply stunned me even further. "Which daughter? Mary or Margaret?" The rest is history. The application is complete, and my client and his 2 adult sons are now Compatriots in the Massachusetts Society of the Sons of the American Revolution. My next project for him is to get his 4 grandchildren into the C.A.R. or Children of the American Revolution. I'll certainly be heading back to RootsTech next year!

Also, I recently attended the New York State Family History Conference in Tarrytown, NY. It's the 3rd NYSFHC I've attended. I always learn something and at least 5 members of WMGS were in attendance. Lots of topics and, as usual, a difficult decision as to where to spend your time!

The New England Regional Genealogical Conference (NERGC) was very educational last year in Springfield, MA. You should consider attending the next NERGC being held in Manchester, NH from 3 to 6 April 2019. Do you have any conference experiences that you'd like to share? Did a conference or workshop help you in any way? Was there a speaker with whom you were particularly impressed? We'd love to hear from you! Feel free to share at the next meeting or write it up so that all our members will be able to benefit from your experience.

Conferences can get expensive. I get it! But everyone who is researching at any level will benefit from attending at least one in their research journey!

Speaking of that one conference you should experience, the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium's conference (NERGC) will be held in Manchester, NH from 3 to 6 April 2019. Registration for the conference will be opening soon, various luncheons and banquets with keynote speakers Blaine Bettinger, Cindi Ingle, and Dr. Thomas Jones will make your attendance interesting. It's easy to sign up. Keep checking www.nergc.org which will have a "Register Now" link right on the front page.

See you there!

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DNA Boot Camp

With Thomas MacEntee, Host and Mary Eberle, DNA Specialist Dave Robison

The DNA Boot Camp has been quite an adventure. The entire program consists of 12 2-hour sessions. There's an enormous amount of information to absorb and, realizing that, the sessions have been spread out over a number of months. We've been meeting on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month and have had an average of 15 attendees per session. As of this writing, we've completed 10 sessions with the wrap up of the last two sessions to take place at the end of September and October 11th.



Along with learning just about anything you need to know about DNA, the class participated in a little experiment in the July 13th session. We extracted DNA from strawberries. Now that was an interesting night! In this image, the pink fluid is the residual of the mashed strawberries and the strands of white material is the DNA. The process was actually very simple and other than the strawberries, everything that was needed were simple household items: dishwashing liquid, rubbing alcohol, water, a small storage bag to mash the fruit, a piece of cheesecloth to strain the fluid and a cup to put it all in. A little light stirring motion and VOILA! DNA!!

We are extremely grateful to the First Church in Ludlow who allowed us the use of their Fellowship Hall to conduct the classes. And thanks go to Karen Robison, a church deacon, who made those arrangements!

All sessions are available to view from our "Members Only" tab at www.westmassgen.com. The handouts are also there to download but please don't share them! If you'd like to watch any of the videos, simply click on the Members Only tab, then "DNA Boot Camp." You'll see an image that says "Sorry, because of privacy settings..." but click on "Watch This Video" anyway as WMGS holds a license to make them accessible to our members. You should also look for the Password which is just above each image.

Please let us know if you'd be interested in participating in a repeat which could happen sometime next spring. Contact us at westmassgen@gmail.com for this member only event.

Articles

How Are We Related?? Using Excel to "See" Complex Relationships By Hillary Schau

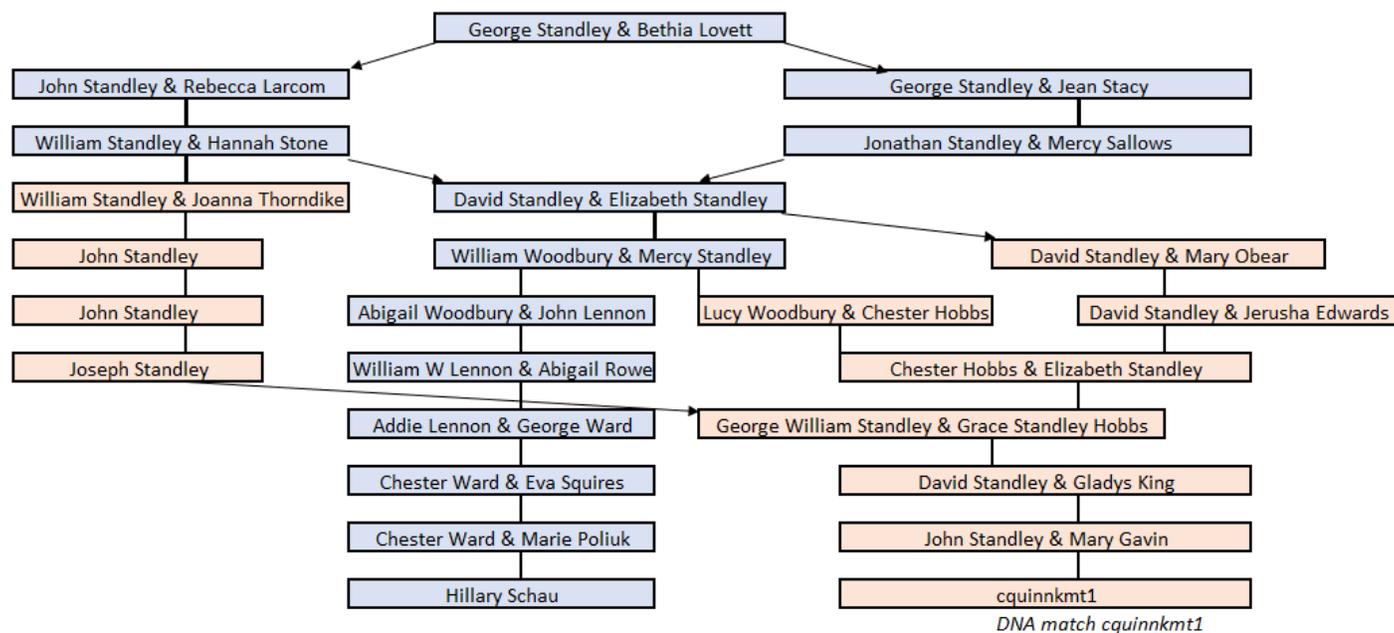
DNA is fabulous for finding cousins but sometimes trying to see exactly how they are related to us can be . . . mind blowing. Back in March, I saw that I had a match on AncestryDNA and, although the other person's tree was private, the match was marked as a shared hint. That meant someone on their tree matched someone on my tree!

I wrote to the match and asked politely who we shared, and she said it was our common 4th GG parents, William Woodbury and Mercy **Standley**. I was through their daughter Abigail and she was through their other daughter, Lucy. That sounded fine until she continued. Lucy married Chester Hobbs, their son, Chester, married Elizabeth **Standley**.

PO Box 418, West Springfield, MA 01090 www.WestMassGen.com WestMassGen@gmail.com

Chester and Elizabeth Hobbs had a daughter Grace Hobbs who married George William **Standley**. My match's grandfather was their son, David **Standley**. As you can see, the Standley name keeps popping up. I asked whether George William Standley was somehow tied into the others and she replied "They are all related!" She then went on to connect them. Soon, my head was spinning.

Finally, I realized I had to chart the people. As it was, I had two Standley's marrying (second cousins) so I was used to seeing it but look at what I have. Blue is mine, peach is hers.



George Standley and Bethia Lovett were way back in the 1600's in Beverly, MA. My DNA match was a Standley descendant from so many branches, it boggles the mind. She had "cousins" marrying each other at the great grandparents' level, her 2G level, and 5G level.

When you have tangled connections in your matches or your own tree, try using Excel to plot them all, simply the names, without dates or places, and it will be much easier to see.

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Online Sources Are Not Bad . . .

By Michael John Neill

Online sources are not all bad. Online materials take several forms:

- digital images of actual records
- digital images of published books
- online indexes and finding aids
- online compilations

Ideally one finds as many "actual records" as possible—it doesn't matter whether they are accessed digitally or not. Published books (whether accessed on paper or electronically) are also good to reference. Online indexes and finding aids should lead you to the records that were used to create them. Online compilations (including the "trees") should be used with care and validated where possible.

The reason to try and utilize offline materials is that *not everything created* is available online. Online materials are those that either someone has decided has enough market value to put online or someone has taken an interest in.

Some individuals are not able to travel to locations where undigitized records are kept. Many times it is possible to electronically communicate with those who do have physical access to those records. Offline doesn't mean that they are impossible to obtain via the internet.

There are records that are not highly marketable and that no one has taken enough of an interest in to digitize. Your ancestor could be waiting for you there—in a piece of paper.

(c) Michael John Neill, "Genealogy Tip of the Day," <http://genealogytipoftheday.blogspot.com>, 4 Jul 2018

Volunteer Opportunities

As WMGS grows, so do the tasks needed to run our society. That's hardly a complaint, because it means that there are numerous opportunities for our members to be involved in our society and to contribute to its growth!

Our Board has recently created a list of committees to address the various tasks that are needed to run our society. A Board member has been assigned to chair each committee and to coordinate the committee's work. And, we've defined the tasks that need to be done, hoping to make the workload a bit less for everyone on a committee.

Do you have a few extra hours that you could help out each month? If so, please let us know. We'll let you know what opportunities are available.

Some of the volunteer options include:

- coming a bit early to our meetings to help set up our welcome table with forms, badges, handouts, etc.
- helping to welcome our members.
- sitting with new members and visitors to welcome them and answer questions
- distributing and collecting speakers' evaluations
- copying handouts and forms

We're also in need of members who can help with publicity, such as sending press releases to local media and posting news and pictures on Facebook and other social media. If you have experience in marketing or community outreach to offer, we'd love to talk to you.

And, we're always looking for members to submit short articles for our newsletter.

If you can help out in any of these areas, please let us know. We'd love for you to join our volunteer team.

Brick Wall Queries

New:

Q-14 KING, Jane - Seeking info on Jane (June) King, (b. about 1834 in PA) daughter of John (b.1806 Ireland, d.1872 Sturbridge, MA) and Bridget Fox King (b. 1816 Ireland, d. 1882 Sturbridge, MA.) Listed as living with a Bridget King, head of household, in 1850 census in Monterey, MA. John King is living elsewhere until 1870 census, when they are listed together in Sturbridge. (Submitted by Kelly Fox)

Q-15 KING, Bridget - Jane King married Michael Fox, son of James & Mary Fox on Nov. 27, 1852, in Chicopee, MA. Michael Fox was born in Clohaan, Ireland, abt. 1828. Michael Fox marries a 2nd time to Margaret Price on May 25, 1855 in Sturbridge, MA. On 1855 MA State census, Michael Fox is living with wife Margaret in Sturbridge with a **Bridget King**, head of house. Is this Bridget the mother of Jane/June King? Other documents show that Michael Fox and Bridget Fox King are brother and sister. (Submitted by Kelly Fox)

Q-16 KING, Jane - Need Jane King's birthplace in Pennsylvania and date and place of her death, presumably between 1852 and 1855. (Submitted by Kelly Fox)

How to Submit or Respond to a Query:

Submitting: Queries and responses should be sent via email to westmassgen@gmail.com or submitted through the Contact Us section on our website. Members may also bring their prepared queries or responses to our monthly meeting or to one of our research clinics. Non-members should submit their payment (\$5.00 per query) via the Donate tab on the website. Members are entitled to post three (3) queries per month.

Responding: Please send your response directly to WMGS. To aid in matching answer to question, please Identify the question you are answering by using the month of the Newsletter and the question number. (example Oct 2018Q1, Oct 2018-Q2) Answers submitted should include the source(s) of information found or specific information on a website or database. WMGS will forward the response to the person who asked the question, post it in the next newsletter, and archive it on our website.

Note: Because of space limitations, WMGS reserves the right to limit the number of queries that are listed per newsletter. When necessary, queries will be posted in the next available issue. WMGS and its members are not responsible to conduct research, to provide answers for the query, or for the accuracy of the information posted or received. Always verify any information received by checking its source.

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News and Upcoming Conferences

Family—a Link to the Past &



a Bridge to the Future

**April 3–6, 2019
Radisson Hotel
Manchester, New Hampshire**

Join us for the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium's 15th conference! NERGC 2019 will feature special tracks on Wednesday and regular conference presentations Thursday through Saturday. When you're not attending sessions, check out the Exhibit Hall, Ancestors Road Show, Society Fair, and other fun and educational events.

Manchester is a vibrant city with world-class entertainment and fine dining, all within walking distance of the conference hotel. Explore museums or visit a spa in the mill district along the riverfront, or take in live music and nightlife at Irish, Mexican, Asian, and American establishments.

For more information, go to nergc.org. If you have not yet made your hotel arrangements do it soon, rooms are filling fast. Call (603) 625-1000 and mention the NERGC conference for the discounted rate. That rate is NOT available if you register on line; by telephone only, directly with the front desk at the hotel. We look forward to seeing you there.

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 to search the calendar for scheduled events "[Calendar](#)" that he will be presenting throughout Massachusetts.

Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
Wednesday, 3 Oct 2018 6 - 8 PM	WMGS Meeting – Susan Davis Sit will present on Wales, Scotland & England – Similar but Different Research
Thursday, 18 Oct 2018 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Wednesday, 24 Oct 2018 6 – 8 PM	WMGS Board Meeting - Open to Members
Thursday, 25 Oct 2018 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Wednesday, 7 Nov 2018	WMGS Meeting – Using FamilySearch.org for your research
Thursday, 15 Nov 2018 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center
Monday, 19 Nov 2018 6 – 8 PM	WMGS Board Meeting - Open to Members
Thursday, 22 Nov 2018 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center

Genealogy Research Clinics are free to WMGS members. There is a \$10 fee per session for non-members. Annual WMGS membership is just \$30.

New WMGS Members

The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS) welcomes our newest members

Tina Torsey
Esther Johnson
Jeanne Lockhart
Robert C. Ashley
Nathan P. Bean
Erin C. Mulvah
Catherine Chapman
Karen Robison
Janice Gildawie
Pauline Sawyer
Bernadette Collins
Mary S. Wilmes

We hope that they will avail themselves of all that WMGS has to offer and that they find success in the hunt for family ancestors.

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 165 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

Dave Robison – President

Jeanne Leblond – Vice President

Deborah Woodford – Treasurer

Katy Krause – Assistant Treasurer

Estelle Stasz – Secretary

Hillary Schau – Newsletter Editor

Dave Lapierre – Webmaster

Jeanne Leblond – Surname Project Coordinator

Ellen Janik – Facebook Administrator

Carolea Hayden – Refreshment Coordinator

Diane Ascoti – Founder

Edie Bowen-Wilcox, Hillary Schau, and Dave Lapierre – Directors

Meeting Details

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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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 Western Massachusetts Genealogical 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. Access to the DNA boot camp videos and handouts in the members only section of the website
7. Opportunity to serve as a volunteer, coach or be a member of the Board of Directors

One of our key 'member benefits' is access to the members-only page containing archived recordings of speakers from around the US: Judy G Russell, Maureen Taylor, Connie Fitzpatrick, Elissa Scalise Powell, Dr. Shelley Murphy, Nora Galvin, 'DearMYRTLE' a/k/a Pat Richley-Erickson, Russ Worthington, Melissa Barker, Jennifer Alford and our own Panel of Pros. The page also includes the handouts from most of those meetings and historical copies of 'American Elm,' the original WMGS newsletter publication.

Membership Dues

Annual membership runs from 1 September to 31 August each year. Membership rates are:

- \$30 for an individual membership
- \$45 for a couple of the same household
- \$15 for students
- \$500 for Lifetime membership

If you are new to our organization, click [here](#) for the WMGS Application for Membership; the image is near the bottom. Click to open the pdf to view, save, and print.

There are three ways to join or renew your membership:

- Pay by cash or check at the monthly meeting
- Print and mail an application, found on the Join/Renew page of our website (if a new member) along with your check, or, if renewing, just the check to
WMGS, PO Box 418, West Springfield, MA 01090-0418
- Use the secure PayPal button on our website (you **do not** need to have a PayPal account, just use your debit card or credit card). Here's the link to our Join/Renew page: [JOIN](#)

Note: All first-time members must submit an application by mail or in person at a meeting, even if using PayPal, so that we have all the necessary information for our membership list.

Newsletter Deadlines

Please submit all information to be entered into the next newsletter by 15 October 2018.

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.

E-Mail Update

Please let us know if you have changed your e-mail address, mailing address and/or phone number. 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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