



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.

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Upcoming Meetings

June 2019 Meeting – Skills Night

Our 2nd annual **Skills Night** will be held at our June 5th meeting this year. This is an opportunity to explore a variety of topics, tools, and resources that will assist you in your genealogy research. It is an informal event with attendees being able to freely move around stations, with facilitators at each station to chat and answer questions. We'll be set up in the Dining Room this year, allowing us to spread out more.

We're bringing back some of the topics from last year, but we'll also have a few new ones. There will be something for everyone, whether you're a beginner or a seasoned pro. Need help with general research? We'll have tips, techniques and search methods. Are you having difficulty finding ancestors in early census records? Or, perhaps you're having difficulty finding military records for those who served our country. We've got these covered!

Would you like to know more about capturing family memories and recording methods? We'll cover that with displays of photo & document scanning tools. Want to learn about an easy-to-use online tool to help you make sense of your DNA results?

Do you focus your genealogical research on Ireland, Quebec and other provinces in Canada, Western Massachusetts, upstate New York, or Palatine research? Do you need general resources? Or, would you like to chat about a specific research problem? If so, bring a description of the problem and you'll be able to talk with researchers who might be able to help.

Perhaps you want to plan a research trip, but it seems overwhelming. We'll provide information on what you should do in advance, so that you'll make the most of your time and maximize your chances of finding what you need.

And, we'll be offering our own version of Genealogy Roadshow again, with 20-minute consultations on research problems and brick walls with two of our professional genealogists, Dave Robison and Ed Strickland. If you would like to sign up for a personal consult, remember to bring your research problem and whatever relevant documentation that you have for our experts to review. We'll have a sign-up sheet, so everyone will have an opportunity for a consult.

July 2019 Meeting (July 10 at 6:30 not July 3!)

Our July 10th presenter will be Kathleen Reilly, local History and Melville Collections Supervisor at the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield, MA. Kathy's presentation will focus on the extensive and rich collection of genealogical resources at the Athenaeum.



The Berkshire Athenaeum has long been a popular place to conduct research, because of its extensive New England state resources, and French-Canadian parish repertoires and other resources.

When the Sylvio Conte Branch of the National Archives in Pittsfield closed in 2011, the Berkshire Athenaeum acquired the books, finding aids, and microfilm collection of that branch. The microfilm collection includes US & State census records, naturalization indexes, compiled service records for Revolutionary war soldiers, Revolutionary war pension and bounty-land warrant applications, index to New England naturalization petitions from 1796 to 1906, ship manifests, and more.

The Athenaeum is also a FamilySearch affiliate library providing access to many FamilySearch databases that are only accessible at a center. Kathy's presentation will pique your interest and help you to maximize a research trip there.

Please note that due to the Independence Day holiday, our July meeting will be held on July 10th at 6:30pm in the Veterans' Room at the Agawam Senior Center.

May 2019 Recap



Our May 1st meeting was our annual meeting but after all the administrative tasks, we had a presentation on the Sons of the American Revolution (SAR) by Dave Robison and the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) by Hillary Schau.



Dave Robison is the Registrar in the Pomeroy Chapter of SAR. Hillary Schau has been the Registrar at the Mercy Warren Chapter of DAR for the past three years.

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Message from the President

Jeanne Leblond

I'm writing this message for the first time as the newly elected President of WMGS. In taking over the mantle, I'm grateful to all of the individuals who have held this position, served on the Board, or volunteered their time and energy since 1972. Because of their efforts, WMGS is now in its 47th year and continues to grow! And, I'm grateful to our members for being given this chance to serve.

WMGS was founded by a dedicated group of people back when genealogy research was done without the advantages of the internet, microfilm, digitized records, or even email! Newsletters were produced on typewriters, printed, collated, addressed by hand, and mailed out. Meetings had live speakers, but the ability to watch a presentation from home if you missed a meeting, didn't exist. How far we've come!

Springtime is always a busy time of the year at WMGS. We've just had our Annual Meeting with a new slate of officers being elected. At our May 1st meeting, we've re-elected Deb Woodford as Treasurer, and Hillary Schau as a Director. We're welcoming Dave Lapierre in his new role as Vice-President and are welcoming Jeanne Lockhart as Asst. Treasurer and Terry Pearsons as a Director. Carol Lynne Bagley has also been appointed as a Director. There's an article in this newsletter describing their terms of office, along with another article asking someone to step forward to serve as Secretary. We hope you'll consider joining an active Board of dedicated members.

I'd like to extend a special thank you to Dave Robison for his leadership and work on behalf of WMGS for many years. And, thank you to Katy Krause who stepped down as Asst. Treasurer earlier in the year, Ginny Atwood, Estelle Stasz, and Edie Bowen-Wilcox who served during the past year. WMGS is strictly run by volunteers, and we were fortunate that they volunteered their time and talents to us.

Also, at our Annual Meeting, WMGS was honored to present our 3rd Annual Founders Award to Wayne Weatherwax. We know that he'll continue to serve WMGS and the genealogical community as he's passionate about his work.

Yes, we've come very far. And, there's more to come. In June, we'll repeat our well-received Skills Night! Members gave it rave reviews last year.

Our July meeting will feature a presentation by Kathleen Reilly who will provide information on an easy day trip to a fabulous resource, not too far away at the Berkshire Athenaeum in Pittsfield. If you've never been there, you've got to put it on your agenda.

Our annual field trip in August to the Museum of Springfield History (MOSH) will feature 2 sessions, a morning or afternoon session and our usual evening session, giving more members an opportunity to visit an incredible local resource.

And, the Program Committee is hard at work planning a fabulous list of presenters for our 2019-2020 season. The Committee is trying to schedule live presentations for good weather and webinars for winter, when weather might cause the Senior Center to close. When presenters allow us to do so, we'll archive webinars and handouts, so that those members who no longer drive when it's dark, or when travel might be difficult, or who miss a meeting, can still take advantage of them.

Thank you to everyone who participated in our Annual Survey. We're beginning to tabulate and analyze the results. We'll report on them next month. Your responses help to guide us and to motivate us to improve our efforts.

And, I'd be remiss if I didn't thank the many volunteers who have worked and continue to work behind the scenes to keep WMGS growing and to offer such wonderful programming and resources. From members of the Program Committee who work to bring interesting speakers to our meetings, to members who host our research clinics, to members who will present at Skills Night, to members who offer their services for our Facebook page and website, and to members who serve on other committees and in other roles, I offer a big "Thank You."

And to members who don't have the time to volunteer but continue to participate and renew their membership each year, "Thank You," as well.

We wouldn't have WMGS without your efforts!

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Articles

Genealogy and the Chicopee Public Library

By Carol Lynne Bagley

What does the Chicopee Library offer for the genealogist?

The library provides access to several databases for free through the library. Ancestry (library edition) can only be used on the library computers, but if you live in Chicopee, you can access HeritageQuest and Fold3 from any computer with your library card.



The Chicopee Public Library is a FamilySearch Affiliate Library. That means the public can use the library computers (in the lab or Reference area) and have access to extra content from FamilySearch. Many of the records that were available only through Microfilm loans are now available digitally through FamilySearch. We do not have the full access that the LDS church buildings have, but the library computers allow more access than you would have from home.

Genealogy resources are available any time that the library is open. However, if you would like to use the Computer Lab (with volunteers that can help you) please come on Tuesdays from 10am – 2pm and 6pm – 8pm or on Thursdays from 10am – 3pm and 6pm – 8pm. We also offer a variety of genealogy classes throughout the year.

Other materials useful for genealogy are located in our Chicopee Room. We have a selection of yearbooks from Chicopee High and Chicopee Comp, Chicopee maps and a variety of local history books (including histories of the Chapin family and the Taylor family). We have Chicopee Street Directories (1863 is the earliest), vital records for Chicopee (including birth, death and marriage records) on microfilm.

Births: 1848-1909

Marriages 1848-1909

Deaths 1848-1912

Other useful materials can be accessed through the archives link on our homepage. Currently the archives link gives access to street directories, the Civil War Soldier's Record, various exhibits, historic newspapers and photographs. New materials are being added as they are digitized. There are also links to Digital Commonwealth which is a MA repository of historic photos and ephemera and Historic Homes and Buildings in Chicopee.

Other useful sources for Chicopee research includes Chicopee Municipal Reports from 1848-1977, historical photographs relating to Chicopee history, a variety of scrapbooks, newspaper clippings and yearbooks. If you're looking for something specific, please contact Charles Abel, cabel@cwmars.org, our Local History Reference Librarian.

Annual Meeting Recap

At our annual meeting on May 1st, the Auditing Committee presented their report to the membership. The annual financial audit was conducted by Dave Lapierre and Edie Bowen-Wilcox. The report indicated that all financial accounts are in order.

The Nominating Committee presented a slate of officers and directors for consideration for this year's election. No nominations were offered from the floor. Elected for two-year terms were: Jeanne Leblond – President, Deb Woodford -Treasurer, Hillary Schau – Director, and Terry Pearsons – Director. Elected to fulfill remainder of terms (one year) were Dave Lapierre – Vice-President and Jeanne Lockhart – Asst. Treasurer.

Dave Robison, outgoing President, congratulated those elected and welcomed our new members to the Board. He also extended the Board's thanks for their service to members leaving the Board: Estelle Stasz – Secretary, Ginny Atwood – Asst. Treasurer, and Edie Bowen-Wilcox – Director.

Jeanne Leblond, incoming President, speaking on behalf of the Board and entire membership, thanked Dave Robison for his many years of service to WMGS. We hope that he will continue to be involved and contribute his talents to our society.

2019 Founders Award Recipient – Wayne Weatherwax



At our Annual Meeting on Wednesday, May 1st, WMGS proudly presented our 3rd annual Founders Award and honorary lifetime membership to Wayne Weatherwax. This award is given to an individual who has provided significant and lasting service, not only to Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc. members, but to the entire genealogical community.

Wayne is a long-time member of WMGS who has willingly contributed to the genealogical field through his time, research, and dedication to sharing his knowledge with others. In 2010, Wayne published "The Weatherwax Genealogy 1710-1930", a ten-generation genealogy, covering all lines of descent from the family of Henrich C. Wiederwachs, a German Palatine, who immigrated to New York in 1710. This book can be found in many noted genealogical libraries across the United States and is also found at the Library of Congress.

Wayne has been noted for his willingness to share his expertise and knowledge with those who are searching for their ancestors. He has taught classes in genealogy at the Westfield Athenaeum and has recently begun teaching an eight-week class at the Westfield Senior Center. A number of our members credit Wayne with giving them the knowledge, skills, and especially, encouragement to begin researching their families.

WMGS and its members were proud to honor Wayne Weatherwax for his many years of family history work and contributions to the genealogical community.



Secretary Position Opening

WMGS is looking for a member willing to serve as Secretary for the remainder of a two-year term, with the term expiring in May, 2020.

Board meetings are held at 6 PM on the 2nd Monday of each month, except during the months of July, August, and December. When holidays fall on that day, the meeting is generally held the following Monday.

If you are interested in the position or would like more information on the duties, please send a note to us at to westmassgen@gmail.com or speak to any of the Board members at our monthly meeting. We hope you consider joining us on the Board.

Are you Tech-Savvy? We Could Use Your Help

If you are good with computers or technology and are looking for a way to get more involved in WMGS, we have opportunities available and would welcome the opportunity to have your help. We have two areas where we need some assistance.

First, we need some help with setting up our online meetings using Zoom. This is the tool we use to broadcast our online meetings when we have Presenters who are remote. This would involve helping to setup the online meetings, getting everything working the night of the meetings, and recording the presentations if/when the speaker has agreed to have the presentation recorded. For anyone interested in helping, we'll setup some practice sessions and ensure that you are trained.

The other area where we could use some technical help is in maintaining the WMGS website. We have both routine monthly website maintenance that needs to be done, as well as a longer-term goal to re-design the website. We use WordPress to maintain the website. Dave Lapierre has been maintaining the website over the past 10-12 months and would welcome some assistance. Training would be provided.

If you would like further details, or are interested in helping, please send an email to westmassgen@gmail.com letting us know.

Brick Wall Queries

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.

News and Upcoming Conferences



Pioneer Valley History Network

proudly announces the 4th annual



Your Homespun History Un-Conference

Saturday, July 27, 2019 at the

Kittredge Center at Holyoke Community College.

History Camp is the un-conference dedicated to all things history. Everyone is welcome to attend, but registration is required, and anyone can present, assuming we have a time slot open. More information on History Camp, including photos, quotes, and the profile of attendees from earlier History Camps, is [here](#).

The goal of History Camp Pioneer Valley is to break even – there are no paid staff, no paid speakers, and no one will profit. We will charge the lowest possible fee to cover the costs of the venue and lunch, but to allow the greatest number of people to attend. This year the fee is \$26.

There will also be plenty of opportunities for networking and an exhibit area for selling books and other history-related products.

Registration began on Patriots Day (April 15). To Register to Attend or Present, go to:

<http://historycamp.org/pioneer-valley> For more Information, contact us at: pioneervalleyhistory@gmail.com

Free Local Events

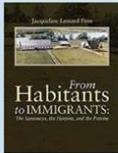
Several local libraries are hosting presentations on genealogy topics. If you know of an event happening at a local library, let us know so that we can include it here. These presentations are funded by the libraries and free to the attendees. All you have to do is register.

- June 6, 13 and 20 (Thursdays) **The Basics and Beyond**; Come away with enough information to start well-planned research projects or re-ignite your existing ones. Hints, tips, tricks, strategies, websites and much more! Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front St, 6-8 PM (Dave Robison)
- June 15 and 22 (Saturday) **Organizing your Genealogy**, Springfield Central Library, 1-3 PM (Hillary Schau)

Saturday, June 1, 2019 - 1:00 pm

This presentation traces the history of the French-Canadian people through the lives of two families that evolved into three branches, from their settlement by soldiers in the Richelieu Valley of Quebec in 1665, to their immigration to the mill towns of Massachusetts at the turn of the twentieth century.

This program is free and open to the public. Held at the Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front Street in the Community Room.



Saturday, June 1 @ 1pm

**From Habitants to Immigrants:
The Sansoucy, the Harpin, and the Potvin**

with author Jacqueline Lessard Finn
and Dr. Leslie Choquette, Director of the French Institute
at Assumption College.

Saturday, June 8, 2019 - 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm

The Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts invites you to The Partitions of Poland: or, How a Major European State Was Wiped Off the Map of Europe, featuring speaker and historian Dr. Patrice M. Dabrowski.

This program is free and open to the public. Held at the Chicopee Public Library, 449 Front Street in the Community Room.



Patrice M. Dabrowski

Poland

THE FIRST THOUSAND YEARS

JUN 8 The Partitions of Poland or How a Country Was Wiped of the Map

Holyoke Tours of Cemeteries

- 8 June 2019 – Smith’s Ferry Cemetery (Originally part of Northampton, purchased by Holyoke 1909)
 - 10:30-11:50, Park in Delaney House lot off Rte 5

Sponsored by Holyoke Historical Commission, Friends of Historic Cemeteries and Monuments, and Holyoke History Room. All tours are free to the public. Please register at Eventbrite.com

Need Help with Your Research?

Come to one of our research clinics! WMGS offers research clinics on the 3rd & 4th Thursdays of each month from 6pm-8pm at the Agawam Senior Center. This is a free benefit for WMGS members, with a \$10 fee for non-members.

Can't make a clinic or need more help? The Chicopee Public Library sponsors Open Genealogy Labs, on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10am-3pm, and again from 6pm-8pm. Check the library's website at www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org or call them at 413-594- 1800 to confirm that the clinic is being held.

See the article on page 5 about the Chicopee Library resources.

Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
Wednesday, 5 Jun 2019 6 – 8 PM	WMGS Meeting at the Agawam Senior Center – Skills Night ***
Monday, 10 Jun 2019 6 – 8 PM	WMGS Board Meeting at the Agawam Senior Center - Open to Members ***
Thursday, 20 Jun 2019 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center. ***
Thursday, 27 Jun 2019 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center. ***
Wednesday, 10 Jul 2019 6:30 – 8:30 PM	WMGS Meeting at the Agawam Senior Center – Kathleen Reilly on Resources at the Berkshire Athenaeum ***
Thursday, 18 Jul 2019 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center ***
Thursday, 24 Jul 2019 6 - 8 PM	Genealogy Research Clinic at the Agawam Senior Center ***

*** *Please be advised that there may be travel delays related to construction on the Morgan Sullivan bridge leading from West Springfield into Agawam through 2020. Currently, traffic is limited to one*

lane in each direction. It is recommended that members and visitors allow extra time to their travel or seek alternate routes.

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

Ride Sharing

Are you driving to our meetings from a distance? Would you like to form a carpool with other members? Do you need a ride, because you are no longer able to drive when it's dark?

We'll have a form at our Welcome table for members to list their names, city or town, and contact information, along with their interest in ride sharing, their need for a ride, or their willingness to pick up another member.

If you would like to participate, but can't make it to meetings without a ride, send us an email at westmassgen@gmail.com, along with your name, city or town, and contact information. With your permission, we'll add your name to the list.

And don't forget to look at the form each month for any updates.

New WMGS Members

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

Sandra Conley

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 187 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

Jeanne Leblond – President
Dave Lapierre – Vice President
Deborah Woodford – Treasurer
Jeanne Lockhart – Assistant Treasurer
Vacancy – Secretary
Dave Lapierre – Webmaster & Technology
Coordinator

Hillary Schau – Newsletter Editor
Jeanne Leblond – Surname & Queries Editor
Ellen Janik – Facebook Administrator
Bob Whitney – Fundraising Coordinator
Carolea Hayden – Refreshment Coordinator
Diane Ascioti – Founder

Carol Lynne Bagley, Hillary Schau, and Terry Pearsons – Directors

Meeting Details

We generally meet year-round on the first Wednesday of each month. On rare occasions, a holiday or other significant event may disrupt that schedule causing a meeting to be held on the second Wednesday. You would be informed of date changes well in advance. Other than our annual trips to MOSH, our meetings are held 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 (\$30), 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 recordings of many past WMGS meetings and to the recent DNA boot camp 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.

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

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 June 2019.

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.

How to Contact Us:

Have a question, comment, or suggestion for someone at WMGS?

Need information about your membership status or how to access our Members Only material?

Want to send in a query or provide an answer to one?

Have a comment or suggestion for us?

There are two options available for contacting us via email:

Our **Contact Us** page on our website has an easily completed form to use. Just enter your name, email address, topic, person to whom email is being sent, write your message, and click on Submit.

Or, you can send an email directly to us at: westmassgen@gmail.com .

Of course, you can also correspond with us by sending mail to:

WMGS, Inc.
P.O. Box 418
West Springfield, MA 01090-0418

Note: Please do not write directly to any board member's personal or business email. For legal reasons, our board members cannot conduct WMGS business using emails, other than through WMGS. Thank you for your consideration.

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.

