

March 2014

*A monthly publication
on behalf of the*



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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News

Greetings,

March 20th marks the first day of spring. For those of us in New England, spring cannot come soon enough. The majority of us have shoveled enough snow this season. Before winter officially comes to an end, you may want to continue with your genealogy research. Check out the following items in our newsletter, which can help you:

- Upcoming Events (pages 2-4)
- Fran Malone's Genealogy Hint: Check All Records for Accuracy (pages 4-5)
- Dave Robison's article: Genealogy, DNA and the Military (pages 5-6)

Please note: Our February meeting was canceled due to snow. Our February speaker, Kerry Hotaling, has been rescheduled to our May 7th meeting.

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

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WMGS Calendar of Events

Wednesday, March 5, 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.

Denise Martinez from the Chicopee City Clerk's office will be our speaker.

Thursday, March 20, 2014:

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a Genealogy Research Clinic. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Clinics are offered on the third and fourth Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. Clinics are free for members. There is a \$10 fee per class for non-members.

Thursday, March 27, 2014:

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a Genealogy Research Clinic. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Clinics are offered on the third and fourth Thursday of the month from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. Clinics are free for members. There is a \$10 fee per class for non-members.

Wednesday, April 2, 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.

The Gravestone Girls will present on cemetery documentation and art.

Save the Dates

Mark your calendars. Below you will find the 2013-2014 events for the WMGS:

April 2, 2014 – Gravestone Girls

May 7, 2014 – Election of officers; Kerry Hotaling: "What They Endured-What They Wrought" (Speaker rescheduled from our February meeting)

June 4, 2014 – Last monthly meeting and dinner

Genealogy Research Clinics

Join Fran Malone, President of WMGS, and Dave Robison, Treasurer 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. Time saving research strategies using Ancestry.com, FamilySearch.org, Google and SteveMorse.org among other sites.

Sessions will be held on the third and fourth Thursdays of the month in the computer room of the Agawam Senior Center. Mark your calendar for the following dates:

2014

January 16

January 23

February 20

February 27

March 20

March 27

April 17

April 24

May 15

May 22

June 19

Special note: If you are planning to attend a Genealogy Research Clinic, please be sure to add your name and phone number to our sign up list. If a clinic needs to be canceled, we will call you.

Genealogy with Dave Robison

Open Lab and Genealogy Research Clinics

Thursdays from 9:00 – 4:00

Chicopee Public Library

For more details, check out: <http://oldbonessearch.com/>

Or the Chicopee Public Library: <http://www.chicopeepubliclibrary.org/>

Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts

Thursday, March 20, 2014, 6:30 PM

<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.

Location: Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, 33 South Street, Chicopee, MA 01013 Phone: 413-592-0001 Website: <http://www.polishcenter.net/>

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

Genealogy Hint: Check All Records for Accuracy by Fran Malone

March is finally here and this cold and snowy winter is almost behind us. It's a good time for us to start thinking about getting back out and while we're out, check into some of our family history. The hint this month is an old hint with maybe a new twist. If the new twist isn't there it's still a good thing to check what you are looking at for accuracy because mistakes were made and it's because of those mistakes the records that we request can't be found.

Recently I had the opportunity of helping one of our members at our Thursday Night Genealogy Computer Clinic. The problem: two George's born to the same parents. The first George was born in 1878 and the other was born in 1884 but no one knew of any other George other than the one born in 1878. Massachusetts Vital Records 1841-1915 show both birth records for George. I would like to take this moment to say the Grandfather of our member was named Henry. Our

member gave me all of the names of the family that he obtained from the 1900 Federal Census which included his grandfather Henry. Without any ages involved, my first thoughts were that the first George (1878) died as a child and the second George (1884) was named for the first one that passed away. Our member told me that the George they knew in the family was the George that was born 1878. It wasn't until I got home that I looked at the 1900 Census myself. As I went through the ages of the children that included George born in 1878 I saw that Henry was 16 years old in 1900. This told me that the birth in 1884 was the birth of Henry not a George. We will never know why George was recorded in error in 1884. This however does show us the importance of reading each block on a Census report or each entry on a vital record. Always remember that the information reported is only as good as the one reporting it or the one accepting it. In some cases both parties could be the cause of the reported error. The end result was that the two George's were resolved but our member reserved some room for doubt. Doubt is good, and we all have that, but at some time you'll have to turn to the results found in the paper work for your answer and discovery.

In the above case it could have been a family friend doing a favor for the family in reporting the birth. When that friend was asked the child's name, the name George was given in 1884.

Genealogy, DNA and the Military **by Dave Robison, Old Bones Genealogy of New England**

This article was inspired by a blog post “The Legal Genealogist” by Judy G. Russell. In addition to being an accomplished attorney, she is also an accomplished genealogist. I look forward to every one of her blogs which are posted daily. She is a very popular speaker at genealogical events. One of her latest posts was entitled “DNA: Bringing Them Home”, underscoring the advances in the science of DNA and how that relates to the tragedy of unidentified remains of service personnel killed in action.

Along with several of her family members, a friend, fellow genealogist and retired military officer acted as the docent on a tour of the control hub of America's military might, the Pentagon. They were able to walk through a corridor in the Pentagon which she describes as a “stunningly simple and moving tribute to all those who died in the attack on the Pentagon on September 11, 2001.”

There were displays of Army uniforms from the Revolutionary War era to today, a room set aside for Medal of Honor recipients, the life stories of heroes such as General Douglas MacArthur and General Omar Bradley.

Then she describes the corridor of those who either didn't come home or came home without the dignity of a name. Those for whom science came up short and was unable to bring closure to the families who lost loved ones in conflicts all over the world.

And now, in that corridor, comes an odd blend of the military, DNA and genealogy with combined efforts to get that long overdue process of identification done conclusively.

Mitochondrial DNA, or MtDNA, is the type of DNA passed from mothers to all her children, male or female. But it is only the females who pass it on to the next generation, providing a way to map out the identities of the remains based on the MtDNA profiles of female relatives. Samples taken from mothers, sisters, aunts, female children, and grandchildren...any female can provide a genetic roadmap to identification. This is the same process used to identify the remains of King Richard III, an English king from the 15th century who was found buried under a parking lot in England last year.

There is a lot more to the process. A difficult but worthy search to finally give some level of peace and closure to the families of our heroes.

So if anybody asks "Why genealogy?" here's a huge answer!
Please consider following Judy Russell's blog which can be found at www.legalgenealogist.com.

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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 computer workshops 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 April 2014. Please forward your information by March 20, 2014 to Susan Leverson at: WestMassGen@gmail.com

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society 2013-2014 Executive Board Members

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