

May 2012

*A monthly publication
on behalf of the*



Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

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

Web Site: <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mawmgs/index.html>

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News

Greetings,

Our April field trip to the LDS Family History Center in Ludlow was a huge success. Special thanks to Pat and Ralph Welliver, who walked us through the familysearch.org website, and gave us helpful tips along the way.

The 1940 Census has arrived, and hopefully you've had a chance to locate at least one ancestor on the census. If you're interested in helping to index the records, you can check out the Family Search Website:

https://www.familysearch.org/1940census/?cid=fsHomeT1940Text_v2

At our upcoming meeting on **May 2, 2012** Denise Martinez from the Chicopee City Clerk's Office will speak and then answer your questions on the Massachusetts Vital Records. At this meeting, we will also elect our 2012-2013 officers. We are still accepting nominations for officers of our society, in particular for the role of Secretary. (See page 6 for more information.)

Mark your calendar for our last meeting of the 2011-12 year: **June 6, 2012**
Be sure to sign up for the "Pot Luck Dinner" at our May meeting. After the dinner, we will host an "open mic" for members to share their genealogy tips and suggestions.

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Calendar of Events

Wednesday, May 2, 2012

The monthly meeting for the Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will be held from 6:00 to 8:00 PM at the Agawam Senior Center, 954 Main Street, Agawam, Massachusetts. The meeting is free and open to the public. Members are encouraged to bring a friend.

We will hold our election of officers. Denise Martinez from the Chicopee City Clerk's Office will speak and then answer your questions on the Massachusetts Vital Records.

Thursday, May 17, 2012

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a genealogy computer workshop. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Workshops 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. Classes are free for members. There is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Thursday, May 24, 2012

The Western Massachusetts Genealogy Society will host a genealogy computer workshop. Individuals are encouraged to bring their research and questions. Workshops 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. Classes are free for members. There is a \$10 fee for non-members.

Wednesday, June 6, 2012:

Last monthly meeting: "Pot Luck Dinner" and "Open Mic." Come and enjoy our annual Pot Luck Dinner. Afterwards, members will have a chance to speak during our Open Mic session. Members are welcome to share genealogy information including ideas, tips, research experience and genealogy projects. Have a good summer and see you in September.

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

National Archives

Free Genealogy and History Lectures

Tues. May 1, 2012	2 P.M.	Genealogy Research: What's Online; What's Not Online
Thurs. May 17, 2012	6 P.M.	Navigating the US Census, 1790-1940
Tues. Jun 5, 2012	2 P.M.	Searching for Seamen: 19 th c. crew lists, shipping articles, citizenship, & more
Thurs. June 21, 2012	2 P.M.	They Came From . . . TBA: Ethnic History & Genealogy
Tues. Jul 10, 2012	2 P.M.	Introduction to Genealogy
Thurs. July 19, 2012	6 P.M.	They Came From . . . TBA: Ethnic History and Genealogy
Tues. Aug 7, 2012	2 P.M.	Census, Passenger Lists, and Naturalization Records
Thurs. Aug 16, 2012	6 P.M.	Documenting Our Mothers: Women's History

The workshops take place at the National Archives in Waltham, MA. Reservations Required. Call (866) 406-2379 or e-mail boston.archives@nara.gov to register.

For more information, please see their website:

<http://www.archives.gov/northeast/boston/public/workshops.html>

Thursday, June 28, 2012, 6:30 PM

Summer Meeting of the Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts

Polish Center of Discovery & Learning, 33 South Street, Chicopee, MA

Bread & Roses Centennial Conversation

In January 1912, Lawrence mill workers launched a strike over a pay cut that began in the Everett Mill and soon involved over 20,000 mostly women workers. First to walk out were 400 Polish women textile workers. Lawrence was soon placed under martial law when the city's mayor requested that the state militia be sent there. The strike precipitated an investigation by the US Congress into intolerable working and living conditions in Lawrence. National and international publicity helped to lead to a settlement in March which provided for increased pay and better working conditions in Lawrence and sparked similar advances in other mill cities across New England. The conversation will answer the questions: What happened in Lawrence on January 12 and why? How did the strike proceed? And, why does the strike still remain so important in labor history? For more information about this event and for directions, please see: <http://www.pgsma.org>

Genealogy Websites

By Fran Malone

Vital Records

Our speaker for the May meeting is Denise Martinez from the Chicopee City Clerk's Office. Her topic is Vital Records and what they mean to us as well as what they can tell us. This month I'm focusing on two websites that can assist you in your search regardless of where you are living.

The website www.mass.gov/dph/rvrs is for the Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics. Click on the link and you'll find the address and phone number to contact. The cost of a record from here is slightly more expensive than the local level but if you're not sure where the birth, marriage, or death took place then this resource will save you time from going to numerous City or Town Halls.

The website <http://vitalrec.com> has the location and addresses in all 50 states and territories. When the page comes up you can select the state of your choice, but for this website hint I chose Massachusetts. You see that the first address it references is the Mass. Registry of Vital Records and Statistics but it also shows that you have the Massachusetts State Archives for the older records. It will also give you a breakdown for the cost of a certificate if you were to choose the Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records. With this website you can break your search down further by going to the County or the City/Town. The Records for Hampden County are held at the Hampden County Court House on State Street in Springfield.

One note of caution though for the cities/towns is the address for the Chicopee resource. It gives the address as: Clerk Magistrate Office, 30 Church Street, Chicopee, MA. 01020-1813, Phone 413-598-0099. This address is for the Chicopee District Court. I know that this office as the books for Naturalization in Chicopee but I question the vital records. If you are looking for the vital records then contact the City Clerk at the Chicopee City Hall which is located at 17 Springfield Street in Chicopee.

Genealogy Hint: Vital Records

By Fran Malone

Recording of Vital Records depended on the state. Massachusetts started recording births, marriages, and deaths in 1841 but in general, vital records weren't kept in the United States until the early 1900's. Records usually contain the full name of the individual involved in the event, the date of the event, the county, state, and town/city where the event took place. In most cases the birth records will have the parents' full names and a marriage record will have the place of birth of the bride and groom. A death certificate will often mention where the individual will be buried and the date of burial.

Be aware of who you are looking for and expect the name that you are looking for to be wrong. Remember that the information on these records is only as good as the information given as well as recorded. You would think the informant giving the information would be giving the correct information, but that is not always true. Likewise the recorder of information will record the information the way it sounded. Listed below are a few of the records in my family that I've encountered with errors.

1. My Great Grandfather Patrick Cullinan - First of all he was straight from Ireland and in the 1870's most of the Irish spoke with a very heavy brogue. On his marriage record in 1876 (the state vital record) his surname is listed as Callahan. In 1879 on the baptism record (church record) of his son (my grandfather) the surname is listed as Cullinan. Four months after his son was born Patrick died and again on the state Vital Record the name was Callihan. In 1907 a deposition by my great Grandmother was filled out to correct the spelling error of the surname on the death certificate making the surname Cullinan. It took a little while to find these records.
2. My Grandmother Anna (Lang) Cullinan - Her husband's name was John yet on her death certificate it gives her husband as James Cullinan.
3. My Grandfather Thomas John Malone - Thomas John Malone is the name on his death certificate in 1946 but the name on his birth certificate in 1883 is John Thomas Malone.

4. A couple of surname changes on vital records in Vermont. The surname Beauvais can be found as Bovat and the surname Desrosiers can be found as Derosia.
5. The last incident applies to me directly. When my youngest one was born my wife gave the hospital my name as the father to record on the record of birth. When it came time to get a birth record for her to start school it listed my middle name as James which it is not and I told the City Clerk of the error. In order to change it I had to actually prove who I was by submitting a name change to the Massachusetts Registry of Vital Records and Statistics.

Bottom line, expect challenges when you do look and when you give the information make sure the information you are giving is correct and understood.

As we have said in our previous newsletters, we want to hear from you so give us a website or hint that has worked for you.

Election of Officers

At our upcoming meeting on May 2, 2012 we will elect the 2012-2013 officers of the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society (WMGS). Any member of the WMGS is welcome to run for the positions of President, Vice President, Secretary or Treasurer. In particular, we need a volunteer for the position of Secretary. The primary duties of the Secretary are to take minutes at our meetings; coordinate the monthly newsletter for members without e-mail; and handle correspondence for the society.

If you are interested in working as an officer, in particular as Secretary, please see Fran Malone before our next meeting on May 2nd, or contact us via e-mail at WestMassGen@gmail.com

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 e-mail address to us at WestMassGen@gmail.com

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 May 2012. Please forward your information by May 20, 2012 to Susan Leverson and Fran Malone at: WestMassGen@gmail.com

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society 2011-2012 Executive Board Members

President: Fran Malone
Vice-President: Beckie Cross
Co-Secretary: Jane Okscin
Co-Secretary: Marilyn Powers
Treasurer: Susan Leverson