

November 2011

*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,

A sincere thank you to everyone who renewed their membership to the WMGS by our October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline. We collected dues at our September and October meetings, as well as via mail. So far, we have had an excellent response. We truly appreciate your continue support.

Calling all members: Do you have something you'd like to share with our group? On December 7<sup>th</sup>, we will host our annual holiday meeting. After our pot-luck dinner, we will have time for individual speakers to share tips, ideas, and projects. (See Page 5 for further details.)

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Wednesday, November 2, 2011 at the Agawam Senior Center. Please note: There has been a change in our speaker for this meeting. (See Page 2 for information.)

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## Calendar of Events

### **Wednesday, November 2, 2011:**

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.

Jim Massery from the Holyoke History Room will speak to us. Mr. Massery will give us a virtual tour of the genealogical resources available in the history room, which is located at Holyoke Community College. These resources include directories, vital statistics, biography files, and veterans' collections. He will also speak about the methods used to find information to help researchers.

The meeting is free and open to the public. Members are encouraged to bring a friend.

### **Thursday, November 17, 2011**

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.

Please note: Due to the Thanksgiving Holiday, this will be the only computer workshop scheduled for November.

### **Wednesday, December 7, 2011:**

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.

Last meeting before the holidays. Come to our "Pot Luck" dinner and enjoy holiday music while you dine. There will also be time for our members to speak. To reserve your spot, please contact us at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com) to sign up.

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

## Save the Dates

Upcoming meetings for the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society:

**December 7, 2011** - "Pot Luck" dinner and holiday music while you dine

**January 4, 2012** - Cliff McCarthy-Springfield Museums Genealogy Library

**February 1, 2012** - Leslie Huber "Getting the Most out of Familysearch.org."

**March 7, 2012** - Sarah Campbell - "Meet Your Civil War Ancestors"

**April 4, 2012** – Speaker to be determined

**May 2, 2012** – Election of officers; Denise Martinez from Chicopee City Clerk's Office will speak

**June 6, 2012** – Last monthly meeting and "Pot Luck Dinner"

## National Archives

### Free Genealogy and History Lectures

We are sad to report that the Reading Room at the National Archives in Pittsfield closed on September 16, 2011. However, the National Archives in Boston remains open, and will offer the following lectures:

- Nov 1 2 p.m. Researching Civil War Records at the National Archives
- Nov 17 6 p.m. Make of Gift of Family History: Presenting Your Genealogy
- Dec 6 2 p.m. The A-Files: Alien Registration Files

The workshops take place at the National Archives at Boston, 380 Trapelo Road, Waltham, MA. Reservations Required. Call (866) 406-2379 or e-mail [boston.archives@nara.gov](mailto:boston.archives@nara.gov) to register and for more details. All lectures are free and open to the public. For more information, please see their website: <http://www.archives.gov/northeast/boston/public/workshops.html>

## WMGS December Meeting

Calling all members: Do you have something you'd like to share with our group? On December 7<sup>th</sup>, we will host our annual holiday meeting. After our pot-luck dinner, we will have time for individual speakers to share tips, ideas, and projects.

We have enough time for 5-6 members to speak for 10-15 minutes. We just ask that members to sign up ahead of time so that we can coordinate the agenda. E-mail Susan Levenson at [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto:WestMassGen@gmail.com) to let her know your topic and how much time you will need.

Speakers are asked to provide their own handouts, if necessary. However, after the meeting, we would be happy to send handouts electronically to our members, or post the information on our website.

The Pot Luck Dinner Sign Up Sheet will be available at our November meeting. Do you make a special dish for the holidays to celebrate your ethnicity? Perhaps homemade tomato sauce to go with an Italian dish? Maybe you're Polish and know how to make pierogi or golumpki? Whatever your background, feel free to bring your specialty to our Pot Luck Dinner in December.

## Marketing

In October, we expanded our marketing campaign to include the following sites:

West Springfield Public Library  
Agawam Town Hall  
Enfield, CT Public Library

In November, we are looking for volunteers to distribute flyers and posters to the following places:

Southwick Public Library  
West Springfield Senior Center  
Chicopee City Clerk's Office  
Holyoke City Clerk's Office  
Springfield City Clerk's Office

Northampton Public Library  
Amherst Public Library  
Wilbraham Public Library  
East Longmeadow Public Library  
Local college libraries

If you can help, or know of additional locations, please pick up a poster or a package of flyers at our next meeting.

## Our Website

Do you have a website for your family history? If so, let us know, and we'll showcase it on our website.

Surname Project: Every month we make updates to our surname list. Just let us know if you have any additions. Has anyone contacted you to discuss the family names you are researching? We'd love to hear your stories of any connections you've made. Just send them to us at [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto:WestMassGen@gmail.com)

## Membership

Last call for membership dues: Did you miss the October 15<sup>th</sup> deadline for the WMGS annual membership dues? You can turn in your dues at our next meeting on November 2nd. Can't make it to our next meeting? Use the coupon below to send us your payment. We appreciate your continued support.

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**Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society  
Membership Renewal 2011-2012**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**MEMBERSHIP TYPE:** (Membership fees are listed below. Please select one.)

*Annual dues period is from September 1 to August 31.*

**INDIVIDUAL, \$20** or  **INSTITUTION, \$25**

Please make check payable and mail to:

Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 418

West Springfield, MA 01090

# Genealogy Hint

## Our Veteran Ancestors

By Fran Malone

On November 11th we will celebrate Veteran's Day, a Federal Holiday honoring our Military Veteran's, our ancestors. I happen to be a Veteran of three wars and as a genealogist I kept all my military records from day one and now my descendants will have those records and medals to look back on. I sort of made this step for any future researchers easy. However most of our Veteran's or members of our Veteran's families didn't and now we have to look for those records ourselves. A lot of WW1 records and other Army records were destroyed in a fire at the National Archives but it doesn't mean the records of those Veterans are lost. They can be obtained through other sources such as your state veteran's services or through a Veteran's Hospital if he was ever treated there. It was through the Veteran's Hospital in Boston and the Vermont Veteran's Services that I re-established my wife's Grandfather's WW1 records and medals. Listed below are a few websites to help you with your lost veteran's. These websites will not only help you with your Veteran Ancestor but it will also help you in obtaining your own records.

<http://www.archives.gov/research/order/order-vets-records.html> This website is part of the National Archives main website and will give you some suggestions on how to access to military service and pension records

<http://www.archives.gov/veterans> This website is also part of the National Archives main website and will tell you how to go about and get your Veteran's medals replaced as well as your own.

<http://www.archives.gov/st-louis/military-personnel/> - This website will connect you with the St. Louis Archives holder of the Military and Federal Civil Service Records. If you or your ancestor were in the Military/Federal Govt. check this website out. All older Military Records such as the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and the Civil War must be obtained from the National Archives in DC.

[http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL\\_v1](http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1) - The Veteran's grave locator. This website is continuously adding new and old Veteran's burials.

<http://www.va.gov/> - The U.S. Dept. of Veteran's Affairs will help you with any questions that you have about your benefits.

<http://www.mass.gov/?pageID=veteranshomepage&L=1&L0=Home&sid=Eveterans> - The Massachusetts Veteran's Service collects a DD214 from a Veteran when he is discharged and holds it for the Veteran in case he ever needs his records. They will also help you with your benefits and guide you on your ancestor's benefits. Each state has a Veteran's Service to help with your search.

We want to hear from you. Contact us at [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto:WestMassGen@gmail.com) with your hints or suggestions and we will post them in this column.

## Genealogy Websites

By Fran Malone

<http://www.byub.org/ancestors/>

This month's website is known as "Ancestors" and I came across it by accessing the Holyoke History Room website which you can check out at the following link:  
<http://www.holyokelibrary.org/index.php/local-historyhistory-room/genealogy-resources.html>

The website is based on the PBS Family History and Genealogy Television websites. The site does have some interesting information for performing your research but the most interesting information is the State by State Resource Guide. This guide offers you a list of contacts in all 50 states.

<http://www.byub.org/ancestors/resourceguide/>

## New Members

Please welcome the following individuals who joined our society:

**Roland Moore    Marie Petrone**

## 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 December 2011. Please forward your information by November 20, 2011 to Susan Leverson and Fran Malone at: [WestMassGen@gmail.com](mailto: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