

October 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>

E-Mail: WestMassGen@gmail.com

News

Greetings,

As you may know, October is Family History Month. There are several exciting genealogy events scheduled for the month. We encourage you to attend our October meeting or computer workshop, and bring a friend. If you took a break from your research for the summer, now is a great time to get back. Check out our Calendar of Events on pages 2 and 3 to find an event you can attend.

Membership Update: Your membership is very important to us. Please consider submitting your dues, even if you can't make it to our meetings. Your support allows us to provide quality speakers throughout the year, monthly newsletters and genealogy assistance. Have we helped you with your research in the past? If so, then you know how valuable this assistance can be. Please send in your dues to make sure that we're here in the future if you need us again. Please see page 4 for more details.

We're looking forward to seeing everyone at our next meeting on Wednesday, October 5, 2011 at the Agawam Senior Center.

Calendar of Events

Wednesday, October 5, 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.

Ted Furey the President of the Keeley Society will speak to us on Patrick Charles Keeley's life, art, and architecture. Mr. Keeley was the most prolific church architect in America. The Society's aim is one of education, history, and preservation for the future.

October is Family History Month, so members are encouraged to bring a friend to our meeting.

Friday and Saturday, October 14-15, 2011:

The Polish Genealogical Society of Connecticut and the Northeast, Inc. will host a Polish Genealogy Conference at Central Connecticut State University, New Britain, CT. For more details, please visit their web site:

<http://www.pgsctne.org/Conference%202011/Documents%20list.html>

Thursday, October 20, 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.

Thursday, October 27, 2011

Fall Meeting of the Polish Genealogical Society of Massachusetts

Ludlow LDS – 6:30 p.m.

Join us for a tour of the facility and a description of the research materials available both on-site and on-line from the LDS. New resources are being released every day as records from around the world are being transcribed and indexed.

Pat & Ralph Welliver will give a presentation on the new Family History Center in Ludlow. Question and answer period to follow with hands-on time to use the facility. The public is welcome to attend at no charge. Bring a friend too!

For more information and directions, visit their new website at www.pgsma.org

Thursday, October 27, 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.

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.

Rhonda McClure from the **New England Historic Genealogical Society** (NEHGS) will speak to us this month.

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:

November 2, 2011 - Rhonda McClure from the NEHGS

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; Speaker from Chicopee City Clerk's Office

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

Membership

Just a reminder: WMGS annual membership dues should be paid by October 15th. Dues can be submitted at our next meeting on October 5th. Can't make it to our next meeting? Use the coupon below to send us your payment.

We appreciate your continued support. We rely on our membership funds to provide quality speakers throughout the year.

Reasons to Join our Society

1. Meet people with similar interests of family history and genealogy
2. Attend monthly meetings to hear professional speakers
3. Receive assistance from our members on your family research
4. Attend our genealogy computer workshops held twice per month
5. Share our library of resources including books and cds

Did someone from WMGS help you with your research in the past? Even if you can't attend our meetings, please consider renewing your membership so that our society is available to assist with future research questions.

Thank you for your continued support.

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

Marketing

A special thank you to members who volunteered to distribute posters and flyers to the following locations:

Agawam Public Library
Chicopee Public Library – Main Branch
Springfield Public Library
Springfield History Library and Archives
LDS – Family History Library
Westfield Court House

We hope to increase our membership by distributing flyers to local libraries, city clerk's offices and genealogy research facilities. If you would like to help, please pick up a poster or a package of flyers at our next meeting.

Family History Websites

In our September Newsletter, we encouraged members to let us know if they have a website for their family history. WMGS member Fran Malone, our President has offered to share his Family website with us for October. Click the links to view the old website: <http://malonedirectory.com/> and <http://malonedirectory.com/wp> which is the updated site still being worked on.

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

1940 Census Update

The subscription genealogy based website Ancestry.com has stated that 1940 census images and index will be free to search and view through 2013. That'll be more than 3.8 million images with 130 million records. They'll be indexed by 45 fields, meaning you'll be able to search on the name, street address, county, state, parents' birthplaces and more. The census will be released on April 2, 2012 but will not be on ancestry right away. Ancestry's press release states they'll commence "streaming onto the website in mid-April 2012. If you can't wait till mid-April then check out the National Archives website on April 2nd but the images will not be searchable right away by name.

Genealogy Hint

By Fran Malone

How many of you have or had ancestors that you just can't find in a census, newspaper, or other online database when you know they must be there? Before you give up on them figuring they were just missed, take a look at the following article: http://genealogy.about.com/od/search_tips/tp/database_search.htm

The article is called "Tips for Finding Your Ancestors in Genealogy Databases" and was written by Kimberly Powell. You can try these tips and reminders for locating your stubborn ancestors in a variety of online databases. I've used these 8 options many times during my searches to find my own ancestors as well as ancestors for ones that I've assisted. There are 8 very simple rules/hints/tips that help get past the brick walls and you don't find them listed all together that often to help advise you. Those of you that have attended our computer workshop classes have heard these hints or reminders at various times.

In tip number five, Ms. Powell suggests switching the first and last names during your search. This one I can verify from my own experience. In the 1930 Census for Springfield I was searching for my Grandfather's brother who was named Ambrose Malone born 1890, married, and father of one daughter. The city directory gave me the street but the census would not give me an Ambrose Malone. I'll never know how they arrived by the name but they took Malone and made it the first name Malvine and the surname Ambrose so everyone in the household was listed by the surname Ambrose.

In tip number seven, the author suggests combining the search fields. This is another tip that I've used when needed. If the database you are searching allows it, then try searching with no name or just the first name plus state and town. It will allow you to get into the town that you are searching and will show all the residents by that first name or all the residents if you used no names. Names should be alphabetical so if there are a lot of names you can cheat and jump ahead to where you have to be and start searching the surnames then. It may surprise you that your ancestors surname "is not" what you expected it to be.

We want to hear from you so contact us at WestMassGen@gmail.com with your hints or suggestions and we will post them in this column.

Genealogy Websites

By Fran Malone

Actually this month there are several websites to highlight. Some are old ones mentioned in previous newsletters and they are always worth repeating, plus it gives you an update newsletter to look at them. They are the LDS Family Search www.familysearch.org, Ellis Island www.ellislandrecords.org, the genforum message board www.genforum.com, and the two paid websites www.ancestry.com and www.americanancestors.org which is the New England Historic Genealogical Society. There is one other www.genealogie.umontreal.ca that is good for French/Canadian research. For more information on this French/Canadian search site email me at westmassgen@gmail.com

The following websites were contributed by Dave Robison after last month's meeting. The website www.stevemorse.org is a huge compilation of genealogical resources and websites by Stephen P. Morse. Pay sites are marked with "\$". Our speaker John O'Connor last month spoke briefly on the use of French "dit" names. The website www.genealogyforum.com/gfaol/resource/Canada/dit.htm gives a good description of "dit" names in case you're not clear on the use of "dit" names. The US Genweb www.usgenweb.org links to each state and thousands of sub-lines to cemeteries, census records, and family histories. This website will also connect you to World Genweb or go directly to the site at www.worldgenweb.org

I would like to finish up this month's website report with the use of libraries. Most libraries have a local history room in which you can find genealogy information on the local level and sometimes the state level. Most of your libraries have a section with Newspapers on microfilm which comes in handy to find your ancestors obituaries. City Directories are also stored in your local libraries so you can track where your ancestor lived and what he did for a living. You don't come from the area you live in so do a search for the public library in the city/town you came. A search for the Boston Public Library gives me www.bpl.org/central/index and look at their local resources and what papers they have. The most important feature is "ask a librarian" so if you know a date, a place they lived, then ask the librarian for a search. If it's an obituary the library will look for it and if they find it they will send it to you in an email. The Holyoke Library is www.holyokelibrary.org and the Springfield Library is www.Springfieldlibrary.org for the search of old newspapers. Holyoke has a large genealogy resource available and the Springfield library will refer you to the Local History and Genealogy Library. In all cases you have an "ask the librarian" feature to assist you in finding that record.

New Members

Please welcome the following individuals who joined our society:

Elizabeth Blais Patricia Disanti Robert Riopel Bruce Wright

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 November 2011. Please forward your information by October 20, 2011 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