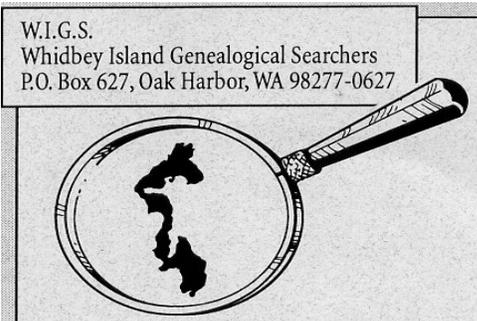


W.I.G.S.
Whidbey Island Genealogical Searchers
P.O. Box 627, Oak Harbor, WA 98277-0627



THE SEARCHER

WIGS NEWSLETTER – SPRING 2015 - Vol. XXI No. 1

WHIDBEY ISLAND GENEALOGICAL SEARCHERS (WIGS)

Bringing together the generations to strengthen and support the family bond!

WIGS meets the second Tuesday of each month, September thru June at 1:00 PM in the fire station at 2720 Heller Road, Oak Harbor, Washington.

OFFICERS and COMMITTEES

- President: Marjorie Kott
- Vice-Pres.: Barbara Green
- Secretary: Joyce Boster
- Treasurer: Patricia Papendorf
- Auditor: Carolyn Bakker
- Historian: Jackie Vannice
- Library Custodian: Yseldah Applegate
- Membership: Laurie Livingston
- Programs: Ruth Hancock
- Publications: John Richter
- Refreshments: Margaret Peterson
- Sound: David Flomerfelt
- Ways & Means: Grace LaFountain
- Webmaster: Sam Wheeler

VISIT OUR WEBSITE

For a quick check on what is happening with WIGS, visit <http://www.WIGS.webplus.net>.

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MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Have you ever been stumped by a birthdate in your research?

HOW TO FIGURE A BIRTHDATE

Source: Platte Co. MO Historical Genealogy Society

Remember this number: 8870

This is the number to remember when you want to find the birthdate of someone when you have the date of death and their age in years, months and days!

How do you figure the birthdate?

Suppose the person died May 6, 1889 (written 18890506), at the age of 71 years, 7 months, 9 days (written 710709).

#1 Write the date of their death as shown above 18890506

#2 Subtract their age, written as shown above 710709

#3 This gives: 18179797

#4 Now subtract the number 8870

#5 The result: 18170927

The person's birthdate is: Year 1817
9th month 27th day = 27 Sep 1817

Doesn't this sound like fun?

Good motto for genealogists!
*To work on our genealogy only on days
that end in "Y".*

Margie Kott

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WIGS COMING ATTRACTIONS

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March 10, 2015. We will have Laura Sparr as our speaker; the subject will be **preparing and using research logs**. She is one of the most knowledgeable and enjoyable of our speakers.

"A BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO YOUR FAMILY HISTORY" will be presented on Wednesdays March 11th, 18th, and 25th at 6:30 PM at the Oak Harbor Senior Center. The classes will be hosted and presented by Whidbey Island Genealogical Searchers (WIGS) and members of the Genealogical Society of South Whidbey Island. Basic genealogy research principles and strategies needed to find the pieces of your family history puzzle will be introduced with a focus on sources for basic family history documents, how and where to find them, including the use of digital resources. There's no fee for these classes, but pre-registration is required by Friday, March 6th. Call the Oak Harbor Senior Center at 360-279-4580 or sign-up in person at 51 SE Jerome St. Classes will be limited to 15 people

April 14, 2015. Bobby Sandberg will be here to bring us up to date on **using the many new electronic gadgets for genealogy**. As always she will be entertaining.

May 12, 2015. Winonae Laird will present. Topic to be announced at a later time.

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WHAT'S HAPPENING ELSEWHERE

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March 28, 2015 Olympia Genealogical Society Spring Seminar 2015, , 8 AM to 4 PM.

Speaker is Thomas MacEntee. Topics: Genealogy - The Future is Now, Google for Genealogists, Social Networking: New Horizons for Genealogists and After You're Gone: Future Proofing Your Genealogical Research. Registration received by 9 March 2015. \$45 (non-members), \$5 additional late fee. Location: Double Tree by Hilton Hotel, 415 Capitol Way N., Olympia, WA. Send check to Ann Olson, registrar, OGS Spring Seminar, 1925 Arietta Pl SE, Olympiac, WA 98501. Questions: email sandaolson@comcast.net.

April 25, 2015 Genealogy Society of South Whidbey sponsoring a special seminar featuring Bill Dollarhide on from 8 AM to 3:30 PM, at Dancing Fish Farmhouse, 1953 Newman Road, Freeland, WA 98249. Registration fee \$50 till 20 Mar, late registration fee \$55. Lunch \$12. Topics: Using Deeds to Trace the Trails of Your Ancestors, New York Census & Substitutes, Dollarhide's Five rules, and You Know About Census Records, But What About Census Substitutes? Questions: email patj1717@gmail.com.

May 9, 2015 Seattle Genealogical Society Spring Seminar

“Who’s Your Daddy? Researching your Family History in the Mid-South States,” Learn strategies to tear down your brick wall, wherever they are researching and the record sets which may help! For those of you with ancestors from Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia and West Virginia, records sets which aid your work will be covered extensively. Speaker is C. Lynn Anderson, AG.

Location Greenwood Senior Center, 525 N. 85th St., Seattle, WA

13-16 May 2015 National Genealogical Society 2015 Family History Conference. at St. Charles, Missouri. Topic is Crosswoods of America. Much more information at nsgenealogy.org. Save registration fees by early registration.

MEET OUR MEMBERS

NAME Jackie Vannice

Where were you born? Sea Plane Base Hospital, Oak Harbor

Where were you raised? Lake McMurray, WA until 2nd grade, Oak Harbor until senior year of high school, Japan until 20.

How long have you been doing family history research? Approx 20 years

How long have you been a member of WIGS? About 1 year

What event caused you to become interested in your family

history? I’ve always been interested since I was a child. My grandparents immigrated from England/Scotland in 1919 so I grew up hearing stories of the “old country” which fascinated me.

If you could travel back in time and interview one ancestor, who would it be, why, and what questions would you like to ask him/her? My g grandmother Emily Jane (born 1856) was raised in Kenilworth, Warwickshire, England (near Coventry), married and moved to Purton, Wiltshire, England to raise her family. Having visited both villages, it would be wonderful to hear stories of her times there.

For you, what is the most satisfying part of doing your family history research? (i.e. the hunt, the legacy you are providing, the historical aspect, what?

All of the above! How exciting to connect the ever-growing puzzle and to be able to leave all of the family history for everyone to see.

Name: Sam Wheeler

Born: Morgan Twp., Scioto Co., Ohio

Raised: Same as above

How long doing family research: 40 plus years

Member of WIGS about 7 years

What caused you to become interested in your family history? When I realized that I knew nothing about my ancestors beyond my grandparents thought it would be nice to know where they were and where they came from.

If you could travel back in time and interview one ancestor, who would it be, why, and what questions would you like to ask him/her? Either Nathan Wheeler or Samuel Altman who were veterans of the Revolutionary and Civil Wars respectively. Both were reputed to have a vast repertoire of war stories and I would like to ask about those experiences.

What is the most satisfying part of doing your family history research? The search and discovery of new information is most satisfying and keeps me interested in continuing the hunt.

Name: Sonia Cardinal

Born: London, England

Raised: London, England

How long doing family research: 9 years

Member of WIGS 9 years

What caused you to become interested in your family history? Moving to Oak Harbor and a friend.

If you could travel back in time and interview one ancestor, who would it be, why, and what questions would you like to ask him/her? My mother; death of her brother at age 15 (1908) and life in London during WW I.

NAME Millicent Stanton

Where were you born? Cleveland, Ohio

Where were you raised? Long Beach, California

How long have you been doing family history research? 10 years or more.

How long have you been a member of WIGS? 5 years or more

What event caused you to become interested in your family

history? I have always been interested in my immigrant cultural origins, but started researching in earnest after 1990 when I moved nearer to some LDS libraries.

If you could travel back in time and interview one ancestor, who would it be, why, and what questions would you like to ask him/her? I would like to interview my grandmother, Anna Trnavsky Benadik, on my father's side who died before I was born. She was a dear woman who served her small village in Slovakia (Rimavska Pila) as a midwife and healer. I would like to know what herbs she used, her hopes for my father and her hobbies and favorite things and about her parents.

For you, what is the most satisfying part of doing your family history research? (i.e. the hunt, the legacy you are providing, the historical aspect, what?) The finding of living ancestors and the interchange of

knowledge about lives of mutual ancestors. Also finding interesting things about people from various lines.

Recent New Members:

Eleanor Christensen

Pat Johnson

Betty Wheeler

A hearty WELCOME!

Returning Members:

Sonia Cardinal

Nedra Weber

Happy

f to see you back!

HOMESTEAD ACTS

The Homestead Acts were several United States federal laws that gave an applicant ownership of land, typically called a "homestead", at little or no cost. In the United States, this originally consisted of grants totaling 160 acres (65 hectares, or one-quarter section) of unappropriated federal land within the boundaries of the public land states.

The first of the acts, the Homestead Act of 1862, was signed into law by President Abraham Lincoln on May 20, 1862. Anyone who had never taken up arms against the U.S. government (including freed slaves and women), was 21 years or older, or the head of a family, could file an application to claim a federal land grant. There was also a residency requirement.

Between 1862 and 1934, the federal government granted 1.6 million homesteads and distributed 270,000,000 acres (420,000 sq mi) of federal land for private ownership. This was a total of **10%** of all land in the United States. Homesteading was discontinued in 1976, except in Alaska, where it continued until

1986. Most of these lands were west of the Mississippi river.

Homestead case files are a very valuable resource of ancestors who settled on land grant lands. To obtain a copy of a homestead record you need to fill out form NATF 84. This form can be obtained at www.archives.gov. HOMESTEAD RECORDS ARE ARRANGED BY LAND DESCRIPTION, NOT NAME. YOU MUST PROVIDE THE LAND DESCRIPTION. If you don't have the legal land description, check the Bureau of Land Management's patent website, www.glorerecords.blm.gov which is arranged according to the name but is far from complete. If you don't find the description there, don't give up – check with the county courthouse in which the homestead was located. The Register of Deeds or equivalent office will hopefully have what you need.

Last year the cost was \$45 for the homestead case file from NARA. Additional information may be obtained from Homestead National Monument of America at 402-223-3514.

Tech Tip

Google has announced that **Google Earth Pro** is now free. You can think of Google Earth Pro as Google maps on steroids. Basically, it allows you to look at satellite images from a three dimensional perspective. For those who already use the standard Google Earth version, the Pro version has more features, such as advanced measuring tools. For example, it has the ability to measure the size of irregular properties as well as the distance between any two points.

Both of these are useful for genealogists who want to determine the actual size of an ancestral estate or to find out how far grandma really had to walk through the woods to get to school. The process is shown in the YouTube video. If you already use Google Earth, you should be able to merge your data into Google Earth Pro. [Free Signup for Google Earth Pro]
Source: GenealogyIn Time Magazine

New Collaboration between FamilySearch and the New England Historic Genealogical Society

FamilySearch and the New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) announced a new collaboration. It will see some one billion records from FamilySearch added to the NEHGS website AmericanAncestors.org. The records will consist primarily of US federal census transcripts (1790 to 1930), civil registrations for Italy, Germany, Scotland and the Netherlands and English parish records. In addition, one billion family tree records from FamilySearch will also be available on the NEHGS website.

In turn, members of the Mormon Church will have free accounts on AmericanAncestors.org to access the society's large collection of New England genealogy records

PEDIGREE CHARTS

At a time in the past members submitted family pedigree charts, 3 generations, to share with fellow WIGS members. There a quite a few of the charts available and can be viewed at our meetings. Our historian, Jackie Vannice, will have these pedigree

charts available to members at our March meeting. If anyone would like to contribute their pedigree charts for others to see please feel free to do so. Blank pedigree charts will be available at the meeting. If you would like to have them posted on the web site let us know. Remember if posted on the website the information becomes public so either do not list living persons or just have names but no personal information.

SUBSCRIPTION vs. FREE

Subscription vs. Free

We should all know that Google has a huge collection of digitized books online. The entire collection, at least those books out of copyright, is entirely, freely accessible by anyone interested. Many other huge collections of digitized documents are also free. But, for genealogists, having free access to many valuable genealogical records is the exception rather than the rule. Many genealogical records are only available after paying a fee or a subscription cost. This dichotomy between fee and free is seen as a frustration for many genealogists. In addition, there does not seem to be any consistency as to which records or types of records are available free and which are not.

A good example of this problem is the way birth and death certificates are handled by different states and even the same agency within the same state. So if I want a birth certificate from the State of Arizona for an ancestor back in the 1920s, I may be able to get a free copy of the certificate from the genealogy.az.gov website, but if I want a birth certificate, also from the 1920s, from say, Texas, I will likely have to pay to get a copy. This can happen within the same state. In Arizona, if the birth occurred after 1938, then you will have to apply and

pay for a copy. Much of the justification for these charges is laid either to revenue enhancement or privacy. But if privacy is an issue with a record about a dead person, whose privacy are they trying to protect? It also seems strange that the issue of privacy goes away if I pay the proper fee. True, some states also limit who can even apply to receive the record, limiting access to "next of kin" or some other sometimes meaningless limitation. Genealogists compound this issue by exhibiting an attitude of "entitlement." Many genealogists seem to think that all online sources and all genealogy programs should be free and they are affronted when told that there is some fee or cost attached. These same genealogists don't seem to be bothered when they have to pay to purchase a book or mail a letter. There is something about online sources and computer programs that seem to engender this feeling of entitlement.

One genealogical area where this becomes more than an academic issue is the attitude governments have towards records. For example, England has a somewhat longer copyright protection term than the copyright protection term in the United States. In addition, unlike the United States, government documents are covered by copyright protection. For this reason and also for the reasons which I refer to as "revenue enhancement," England charges for copies of many records some going back into the 1800s. The United States government, on the other hand, has no "copyright" claims at all their government documents, but still charges

for copies and has layers of bureaucracy making it difficult to obtain records. In addition, the U.S. government has given commercial enterprises, such as Ancestry.com access to digitize the records and then charge for access to those same government documents. In many cases, such as with the National Archives, a researcher can either go to the Archives and see the documents for "free" or pay a subscription service for the same information.

In some cases, it is interesting that the U.S. documents are both free and available through subscription. For example, FamilySearch.org has a complete set of the U.S. Census documents online for free, but Ancestry.com charges for access to the same documents. Admittedly, Ancestry.com has a more refined interface, but the documents themselves are the same. To make things even more interesting, FamilySearch.org offers free access to Ancestry.com and other subscription programs in its FamilySearchCenters around the world. Several other commercial online websites have complete copies of the U.S. Census records and there are other free copies online also, such as the set from 1790 to 1930 on the Archive.org site.

One factor that has affected this genealogical view of reality is that one of the first genealogical software programs, Personal Ancestral File, was distributed essentially for free. At one time, before the Internet developed to allow the program to be downloaded for free, the program cost \$6.00. Many genealogist still use Personal Ancestral File for the simple reason that they would have to "purchase" a newer program. This is strange because many of the currently available commercial programs have perfectly adequate free

versions, such as Ancestral Quest, Legacy Family Tree and RootsMagic. In addition, MyHeritage.com has a completely viable and very advanced genealogy program for free called Family Tree Builder. Again, there is no logic in what is going on.

Another aspect of this issue is the "overhead" of doing genealogical research that is not usually taken into account when this subject is discussed. I have used this example before, many times. If you were to have to travel to the National Archives in Washington D.C. (even if you lived in the surrounding area), you would have a pretty hefty expense for the trip. This cost would very likely exceed the cost of a number of online subscriptions. The fact that these commercial companies are willing to acquire and make available valuable source documents is really a tremendous benefit to the genealogists. In almost all cases, the cost of the subscription is far less than the real cost of traveling to the original repositories of the records and gaining access, if access were even possible.

Maybe the attitude of the genealogists comes with the demographics. But still, I see genealogy programs and subscription services being put into an entirely different category than most other purchases. I am sure there are those genealogists who live on a very meager budget, but many of the people I see coming to my classes and attending conferences have the resources to access the records and buy the programs, but still have this strange attitude of entitlement.

Posted on Genealogy's Star Blog 25 May 2014

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