



THE SEARCHER

=====

WIGS NEWSLETTER –Fall 2016 - Vol. XXII No. 3

=====

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 through June at 1:00 PM in the fire station at 2720 Heller Road, Oak Harbor, WA.

=====

OFFICERS and COMMITTEES

=====

- President: Jackie Vannice
- Vice-Pres.: Barbara Green
- Secretary: Joyce Boster
- Treasurer: Janis Keough
- Auditor: Carolyn Bakker
- Historian: Jeanan Richter
- Library Custodian: Bob Keough
- Membership: Laurie Livingston
- Parliamentarian: Betty Leitch
- Programs: Ruth Hancock
- Education & trips: Margie Kott
- The Searcher: 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>.

=====

IN THIS ISSUE

=====

- Message from the President 1
- WIGS Coming Attractions.....2
- What’s Happening Elsewhere.....2
- Letters from the Past.....3
- Pioneer Burial Park.....4
- Genetic Ancestry is Basically A Horoscope.....5
- A Good Read.....6

=====

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

=====

A warm "welcome back" to our members from our yearly summer break. I hope this finds you having spent your last couple of months enjoying trips and finding new links to your family research. I personally look forward to the change in seasons and the cooler months so that I can spend more time at the computer compiling notes and expanding family trees.

I know we're all looking forward to another visit from speaker Bobbi Sandberg, consultant, instructor and CPA, and has been a trainer and teacher of all things computer. Bobbi will share her vast knowledge of digital photographs at our September 13th meeting. Following in October, we welcome Joan Peters, archivist, author, genealogist and

historian who will present on WWI. Returning again this year in November is Rob Branigan, reference librarian for Sno-Isle Library in Snohomish and genealogy expert. In keeping with the past history of WIGS, we will once again hold our December "show and tell" meeting and potluck.

Again, welcome back and please consider bringing along a friend or two at our upcoming meetings!

See you all soon,

Jackie

=====

WIGS COMING ATTACTIONS

=====

Please see President's Message

=====

**WHAT'S HAPPENING
ELSESWHERE**

=====

Genealogy Society of South Whidbey Island meets at Trinity Lutheran Church in Freeland at 1:30 P.M.

Sep 12, 2016 The Genealogical Society of South Whidbey Island welcomes back old friends and looks forward to new ones as we anticipate the start of a new year. As you may remember, September has always been a month of sharing successes, mourning failures and looking for new ways to advance our ancestral research. To that end, we ask our society members to arrive with a

research milestone to share. It can be a long sought after break through, a successful research trip, freshly discovered photographs, books or diaries, or a website to share.

Oct 10, 2016 Maureen MacDonald

is one of their most active members and a graduate of Sarah Thorson-Little's highly recommended University of Washington Genealogy class. Some of our ancestors arrived in the United States via Canada. They came for various reasons and some stayed in Canada for extended time periods before entering the United States. This presentation will deal with those arriving from the British Isles

Nov 14, 2016 Eric Stroschein

will speak on Naturalization. Most genealogists do not realize that, for our ancestors, citizenship was paramount to many other rights . Transferring land and wealth to your heirs as well as voting, were privileges requiring naturalization or citizenship. Naturalization records can be divided into three basic era; Colonial times; 1790-1906; and 1906 to present. We will examine each of era having its own distinct methodology for discovering the records.

=====

LETTERS FROM THE PAST

=====

January 2ist

1865

Dear Sir

I let you know that I have received you letter and also that money and poststamps in it I was glad for it we have no pay yet and dont expect any pay now till we have sirve(serve) six month You ask me about

my clothing I have good clothing. As good as they can be and plent of it so we have chance to draw every month and so much as we want but last month we have drawd our dress coats the whole redgment have drwd them Father you asked me about a box wether I went one or not I take a box if it taint too much trouble to sent me one all the boys in my tent each of them get a box two had them already last week and John Shoop expect hisen (*his*) next week weight one hundred and twenty five pounds and Jacob Hafer (*Haffner*) got one last week weight printy pounds and he is sick and cant eat any things he was sick before he got the box and so he told ous to eat his things before it spoils he is better again he walk around think a fellow I would like to commodade with my box if get one about the articles my put in whatever you want but though I will mension some I would like to have writing paper envelopes black thread and a nedle to patch my old pance (pants) the rest you may put in what ever

you want but dont put any things in that will spoil in two weeks for a box to come out here you have wrote me that you have so many snow up there the most snow we had et was out on picket and got it there aftere the rabbids(rabbits) and it wasent enough snow to chase rabbids but rain plenty its raining again today you have wrote me that there are many children sick and died in our valley its about the same with soldiers out here there are a great many sick in the army I will close for this time by saying that am well at present time hoping this will find you all in the same

So much from your brother

/Jonas Swab/

Excuse bat writing and all mistakes

Jonas Swab was a PVT, CO H 210 PA VOL. After the war he started a wagon and implements company (Swab Wagon Company), which is still in operation today. His company made wheels and gear boxes for the Conestoga wagons used in the expansion of the west. One of their products today is animal control trucks. One of 6 letters that exist today.

WIGS Members are invited to share letters from the past. Send to editor at popnpup1@gmail.com

ECLIPS

What an English barber does for a living

=====

PIONEER BURIAL PARK

=====

A Garry oak dominates the trees. It was there on a Sunday, February 18, 1864 when Grace McCrohan went for a walk with her daughter Christine. Stopping to rest she pointed to the young tree and said she wanted to be buried beneath its branches when the time came.

One week later Mrs. McCrohan, her son-in-law, Maurice O'Leary, her son David McCrohan and three Indians set out in a huge Indian canoe for an auction of furniture being held in San de Fuca, just around Blowers Bluff.

There were no roads to speak of in those early days, only footpaths through the forests. Ulrich Freund, one of Oak Harbor's first settlers, was at the auction and the McCrohan party invited him to ride home with them. But he saw that the canoe was heavily over-loaded and refused. He walked home, carrying a mirror he had purchased at the auction.

The wind came up just as the canoe left San de Fuca (Coveland at the time and the largest settlement on North Whidbey) and just short of the bluff the canoe capsized and all aboard were drowned. Mrs. McCrohan, her son-in-law and her son were buried in Pioneer Park where a week before they had picnicked.

The first stone to be erected by the families has the wording "Pioneers of 1858". Commemorated are the Davis, Nunan, Morse, O'Leary and McCrohan families. Captain George W. Morse, one of Oak Harbor's foremost pioneers and statesman, lies buried there with most of his family. Morse married Mary O'Leary, widow of the man that was drowned, raising her family and theirs.

Captain Morse is buried next to a rock pylon handmade by his daughter, Sadie Morse Davis, who gathered the rock from Deception pass promontories. The Captain had predicted many years before his death that one day a bridge would span the pass, and as a legislator (1819-1909) had worked toward that end.

Sadie Davis for years cared for the little cemetery. The Association which is made up of a large group of descendants was formed in 1945. We continue to meet twice a year. The Sunday before Memorial Day weekend and the Sunday following Labor Day are the standard meeting dates.

Just below the cemetery plot the families have erected a picnic shelter. The current shelter was built in 1984. In 1955 the group erected a 54 foot wooden flagpole. The flagpole was replaced in August 1955 with the one that is currently standing.

Transcription from the bulletin board at the cemetery.

ARBITRAITOR

A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonald's

=====

Genetic Ancestry Is Basically a Horoscope

An Alternative View

=====

Posted by Ross Pomeroy

In 2014 and 2015, DNA testing companies 23andMe, Ancestry, and Family Tree DNA all reported having more than one million customers. Chief among the companies' offerings are tests to reveal your genetic history, dating back hundreds or even thousands of years. A hundred bucks and a simple cheek swab can show you your true ethnicity and uncover past relations you never knew you had!

Ancestry summarizes the offer's intuitive appeal prominently on their website: "Who knew a kid from Queens was descended from royalty?"

But while testing one's DNA to uncover ancient family links may be popular, that doesn't make it accurate. Many scientists say the tests are about as meaningful as a horoscope.

Think about it. As you travel back in time through your family history, the

number of ancestors you have roughly doubles with every generation. Using the most conservative estimate of generation time -- 32 years -- in the year 1152, you had as many as 134,217,728 potential ancestors. And since genes are scrambled with every generation, it's very likely you share little to no genetic relation to most of them. They might as well be strangers!

DNA companies use two DNA tests, a Y-chromosome DNA which provides information about your male line ancestry, and a mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) test which provides information about your female line ancestry. These tests supposedly yield more accurate information, but they still suffer from major pitfalls. For example, if two males have similar DNA on their Y-chromosome, they likely share a more recent common ancestor than individuals with dissimilar DNA, but any estimate of when or that common ancestor lived and who they are is almost entirely speculative. Mitochondrial DNA tests are similarly limited. The rate of mutation in the whole mtDNA genome is one to three percent per generation, so the time gap between mutations could be as many as 100 generations. This means that a lot of people share the same mtDNA, and their common ancestor could be as close as one generation or as far as fifty or more.

DNA testing companies often take this ambiguity and fill in the blanks with impressive stories that you can show your friends and relatives. Though fascinating, these tales share more in common with astrological horoscopes than historical accounts.

Mark Thomas, a Professor of Evolutionary Genetics at University College London is one of the most vocal advocates of this criticism. On a recent episode of the BBC radio show *The Infinite Monkey Cage*, he said that that appeal of both horoscopes and genetic ancestry tests arises from the Forer effect.

"If you tell somebody something that seems like it's highly personalized but in fact is very generic -- you can apply it to anybody -- then people are much, much more likely to believe it.

The effect was revealed almost sixty-eight years ago. In 1948, psychologist Bertram R. Forer gave subjects a psychology test then presented them with a number of personality traits that the test supposedly revealed. Unbeknownst to the subjects, they all received the same set of personality traits, containing vague observations like "You have found it unwise to be too frank in revealing yourself to others" and "While you have some personality weaknesses, you are generally able to compensate for them." Yet when asked to rate the accuracy of the "personalized"

evaluation, the subjects on average scored it 4.26 on a five-point scale.

Thomas is not a fan of genetic testing because for a variety of reasons, most of all because it makes science look like a buzzkill.

"It costs unwitting customers of the genetic ancestry industry a substantial amount of hard-earned cash, and it disillusiones them about science and scientists when they learn the truth, which is almost always disappointing relative to the story they were told," he wrote in *The Guardian*.

"Exaggerated claims from the consumer ancestry industry can also undermine the results of serious research about human genetic history, which is cautiously and slowly building up a clearer picture of the human past for all of us."

In 2007, veteran science writer Richard Conniff wrote an excellent piece for *Smithsonian* explaining why genealogy is bunk. In it, he seemed to relish in puncturing the inflated ego of humanity.

"Almost everyone... has Julius Caesar as a common ancestor. Half of you can probably claim Charlemagne, too. That's because they lived a long time ago and went about the business of forefathering *con gusto*. You are probably also descended from every sniveling

peasant who ever managed to replicate in ancient times."

Stick that in your cheek and swab it.

COUNTERFEITER

Workers who put together kitchen cabinets.

=====
A GOOD READ
=====

I recently read a book that I think can be a great guide of how to do genealogical research, at the same time reading a remarkable story. The book is Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family's Hidden Past by Christy Leskovar. One Night in a Bad Inn is a companion book on the same basic topic. The back of the book provides the following description.

I imagine while at a quiet family gathering, your aunt happens to mention a fire and a dead body and that your great-grandmother was arrested for murdering your great-grandfather. After you pick your jaw up off the floor, what do you do? Of course, you abandon your successful engineering career and go traipsing across the globe to find out what happened and write a book about it. That is what Christy Leskovar did. Her first book, One Night in a Bad Inn, a High Plains Book Award finalist, tells the true story of what she found out. Finding the Bad Inn: Discovering My Family's Hidden Past is the detective hunt behind how she discovered who started the fire,

how the body ended up in the house, why her grand-mother was sent to an orphanage when she wasn't an orphan, what really happened when her grandfather saved that man in the war. Armed with many questions and only a handful of clues, she set off on a quest to solve the mysteries, a quest that took her to her family's ancestral homes in Wales and Ireland, to the coal mine of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, to a desolate Montana homestead near Forsyth, to the historic copper mines of Butte, Montana, to first World war battlefields in France and Belgium. And after amassing a treasure trove of intriguing stories, we learn how she managed to knit them into a compelling book.

Finding the Bad Inn and One Night in a Bad Inn are two pieces of a remarkable true story. Begin with either one.

I had to get an inter-library loan to read the book, not available in the Sno-Isle system. If you Google her you will find much more information and background.

John Richter

SELFISH

What the owner of a seafood store does.

PHARMACIST

A helper on a farm.

RUBBERNECK

What you do to relax your wife.

BERMADETTE

The act of torching a mortgage.

W.I.G.S.
Whidbey Genealogy Society
PO Box 627, Oak Harbor, WA 98277-0627



The SEARCHER