



# WMGS Newsletter

Winter 2013-14



## WMGS Program Schedule

The following programs will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library in the Ryerson Auditorium. Meetings begin at 1:30 pm, starting with WMGS business and followed by the speaker. Admission is free and everyone is welcome! Parking is free at the Library on Saturdays. Remember to have your parking ticket validated in the Library's main lobby. Refreshments are served after the speaker's presentation. Books and supplies may be purchased from the Sales Table before and after the programs.

**December, 7 2013, 1:30pm**

### *Finding Family with DNA Testing*

**Presenter: Dick Hill**

Our speaker will explain several forms of DNA testing as he shares the fascinating story of his personal odyssey. Richard Hill's groundbreaking use of genetic genealogy tests in adoption search was featured in *The Wall Street Journal*. In order to share his success secrets and tips with other adoptees and genealogists, he created an educational web site, DNA-Testing-Adviser.com, which makes genetic genealogy understandable to all. Richard runs a DNA Surname Project for his paternal surname, is a member of the International Society of Genetic Genealogy, and is Co-Director of the Global Adoptee Genealogy Project.

**January 4, 2014, 1:30pm**

### *Exploring French Canadian Sources*

**Presenter: Jeanne Beauvais dit St. Gemme**

Come and explore the various published sources for finding your French Canadian Ancestors. Both printed and online sources will be discussed. At the end of the program the attendee will:

- Know the sources available for identifying French Canadian Ancestors.
- Know what's different about French Canadian Research.
- Be familiar with some commonly used French vocabulary.
- Know the availability of these records

Check [wmgs.org](http://wmgs.org) for the topics and speakers for the February & March meetings.

## Mini Classes

Mini Classes are held in the Grand Rapids Public Library from 12:15 to 1:15 in the Adult Computer Center. They are free to the general public.

**December 7, 2013**

### **Introduction to FindAGrave.com**

**Presenter: Kathy Cook**

Findagrave.com is an emerging reference that contains over 84 million cemetery, grave and burial records. Learn more about this resource and how to use it to aid in genealogical research.

12:15 PM - 1:15 PM December 7, 2013

Held in the Adult Computer Lab, Lower Level.

Check the website calendar  
for next year's dates & topics

## **The Charles C. and Lynn L. Zhang Legacy**

### **Collections Center**

(formerly the WMU Archives  
& Regional History Collections)

30,000 cubic feet of documents, letters and diaries, photographs, government records, as well as 100,000 volumes worth of books, serials and bound volumes have been moved! In addition to being an educational asset, the new center is designed to be a community resource that will be an easily accessible hub to learn about genealogical and regional history, while providing a place to discuss, hypothesize and learn collectively. These materials are now available at the new building:

Western Michigan University, 1650 Oakland Drive,  
Kalamazoo, MI 49008-3805.

Phone: (269) 387-8490.

### **December Sales Table Discount**

The WMGS Sales Table will offer a 20% discount off your entire purchase if you are a member of WMGS -OR- a 10% discount off your entire purchase if you are NOT a member of WMGS.

**Only available at December 7, 2013 meeting.**

## WMGS Family History Writers' Workshops

### Third Tuesday of the month

December 17, January 21,

February 18, March 18

at 1:30 to 4:45 p.m.

**Dominican Center, 2025 Fulton St East**

Writers' Workshops are designed to help and support each other's desire to write about our families with a kind eye and lots of humor. Everyone is welcome.

**December:** Our traditional celebratory pot luck - Bring a dessert or salad you've always wanted to make

**For 2014 topics, check [wmgs.org](http://wmgs.org)**

Workshops are held at the Dominican Center on the corner of East Fulton and Lakeside Drive. If you are attending for the first time, please call Sister Michael Ellen Carling at:

616-514-3231 (home) or

616-514-3340 (office)

You may park in the Dominican Center parking lot on Lakeside Drive. Use the lower entrance on the east side of the large portico. Go down the steps or down the cement ramp to enter the building. The receptionist will direct you to the room.

### Research Guides

#### "At a Glance" and "QuickSheet"

8 1/2" x 11", laminated, 4-page bulletins

Light and portable!

Check out these handy reference guides at the WMGS book table at monthly meetings.

#### *At A Glance* series

Gives basic elements of genealogy research in a certain subject, such as finding female ancestors, citing online historical resources, country research (France, Germany, etc.), immigration research.

#### *QuickSheet* series

Designed to give basic guidelines for genealogy research and provide an overview.

*The Historical Biographer's Guide to Cluster Research (The FAN Principle)*

Introduces the researcher to the concept of cluster research

*Quicksheet: Citing Ancestry.com Databases and Images*

Provides updated citation models for rapidly changing online resources

## WMGS 2014 Writing Contest

### "My Brick Wall"

Family Historians often deal with several kinds of Brick Walls. At some point, many researchers discover ancestors or collateral relatives who simply refuse to tell us about themselves or their parentage. Finding sources (sometimes even one) to prove who is or is not an ancestor, is an educational journey. Some Brick Walls involve family traditions or stories: proving or disproving them requires diligent research.

WMGS has worked for 60 years to educate researchers in evaluating and citing sources. Your story may inspire someone else to use new research techniques or discover a unique resource.

The 2014 Writing Contest will recognize unpublished excellent genealogical writing by awarding substantial prizes. Prize winning entries and those receiving an "Honorable Mention" will be published in *Michigana*. Like all submissions, entries will be thoroughly edited before publication.

#### 1st prize

\$100 and 1 annual WMGS membership (total value - \$120)

#### 2nd prize

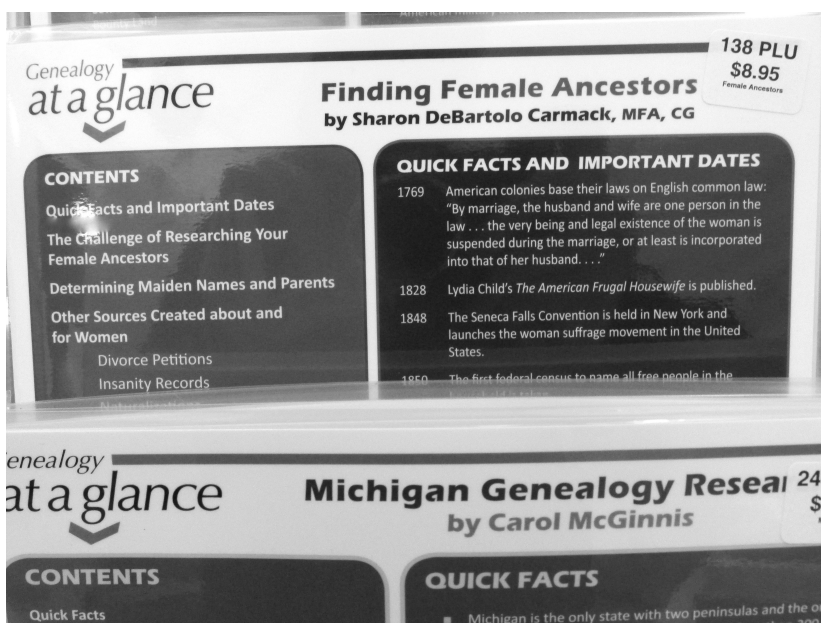
\$75 and 1 annual WMGS membership (total value - \$95)

#### 3rd prize: \$50

#### 4th prize: \$25

Additional information about the Writing Contest can be found at [wmgs.org](http://wmgs.org) or in the next issue of *Michigana*.

**Make this the year YOU submit an entry!**



Just a reminder that the WMGS purchased several books on Ohio genealogy for the Grand Rapids Public Library downtown. Check the WMGS blog for a listing of the titles of these books or, better yet, visit the library - 4th floor.

**History Detectives**  
**Saturday, January 18, 2014**  
**9:30am - 4:00 pm**

History Detectives: Sleuthing for Local History won the 2013 State History Award for Special Programs at the annual fall conference of the Historical Society of Michigan and *WMGS is one of the 8 sponsors!*

**Be sure to sign up for the upcoming 2014 meeting**

Boxed lunches are \$8.00 and must be ordered in advance. Please email: [rsvp@grpl.org](mailto:rsvp@grpl.org) or call call 616.988.5492 by 5:00pm on January 10 to reserve your lunch and indicate your sandwich choice (turkey, ham, roast beef, or vegetarian). Included are a fruit cup, pasta salad, individual condiments, and bottled water. Lunches must be reserved in advance and paid for in cash when the lunch is picked up on January 18 at the event. Attendees may choose to bring their own lunch as well. Pop will be available for an additional \$1.00. Please note, the Library no longer has a café, but does have vending machines.

History Detectives: Sleuthing for Local History is loosely based on the PBS program "History Detectives," and features local historians who present their research projects and resources.

**Topics for January 18, 2014:**

*Women and WW II: New Roles and Old Stereotypes,*  
 Richard Harms  
*When the Automobile Came to the Furniture City,*  
 Chuck Snow  
*Mr. Rover Visits Grand Rapids,* Melissa Fox  
*The Mystery of West Michigan's Sunken Canoes,* Kevin Finney  
*Remembering Grandville Avenue,* Mary Angelo  
*Still Standing: 40 Years of Historic Preservation,*  
 Rebecca Smith-Hoffman

**Friday, July 18 &  
 Saturday, July 19, 2014**  
**Abrams Foundation**  
**Family History Seminar**  
**Michael Leclerc, Chief Genealogist,**  
**Mocavo.com**

Topics: "Finding Your Family in Canada"  
 "Reading and Understanding Old Documents"



**Next Year's "Got Ancestors" Seminar — in  
 celebration of our 60th Anniversary**  
**Mark these dates:**

**Friday Night 10 October 2014**

**Saturday 11 October 2014**

**Speaker: Dick Eastman**

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society was founded in 1954 with the purpose of preserving and making available for genealogical research the records of our ancestors; encouraging and assisting members in genealogical research; promoting the exchange of knowledge and encouraging the deposit of genealogical records in established libraries and archives.

For up-to-date information on the seminar , check  
<http://gotancestors.com>



**Next "Lock-In" January 17, 6-10pm**  
**A Grand Rapids Public Library free after-hours program just for genealogists!**

➡ **Registration is required**

As soon as registration opens, reserve your spot for an opportunity to network with other genealogists, take a class or two, and work with volunteers from WMGS as they help break through brick walls. Learn how to use the microfilm reader/scanner/printer, save images, take advantage of free copying and printing during the event, or use the time to search databases. Check the library website for more information.

## **Library of Michigan genealogical materials now at SeekingMichigan site**

With the transfer of much of the Library's purely genealogical materials to the Archives of Michigan, the web content formerly found at the family history web pages of michigan.gov will now be found at the Seeking Michigan website. Michigan-related materials (including some vital records, cemetery transcriptions, county and local histories, and plat maps) remain at the Library of Michigan and can be accessed during the Library's business hours, Monday - Friday, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm.

Seeking Michigan, a freely available website founded by the Library of Michigan and the Archives of Michigan in 2009, includes:

- Digital collections, including nearly 1 million Michigan death certificates (1897-1920) from the Library of Michigan's collection, state census records (1827- 1894), Civil War service records, and more.
- Genealogy research guides, including Getting Started, Immigration & Naturalization, Military Records, Vital Records, and Michigan county guides.
- Indexes to naturalizations for more than 30 Michigan counties.
- A Michigan County Clerks directory, complete with contact information and holdings overview

## **Digital Copies - early GR newspapers**

The Grand Rapids Press donated its print and photo archive collection to the public museum last year. Digital copies of several early newspapers are now available at the Grand Rapids Public Library (111 Library St. NE) and also at the Community Archives and Research Center (223 Washington St. SE), thanks to funding from the Grand Rapids Historical Commission. The five volumes currently available include:

- ★The Semi-Weekly Press: Sept. 1858 to May 1859
- ★The Morning Press: Sept. 9, 1890 to March 10, 1891
- ★The Morning Press: March 11, 1891 to Sept. 8, 1891
- ★The Morning Press: Sept. 10, 1891 to March 8, 1892
- ★The Morning Press: March 11, 1892 to Dec. 25, 1892

## **Family Search Free Lookup Service!**

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City offers a free lookup service. Read more in the November 4th issue of *Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter*.

## **The "Tuesday Group"**

Every Tuesday evening, barring holidays and snowstorms, anywhere from 2 to 8 people show up at the Grand Rapids Public Library downtown to work on WMGS projects, and answer out-of-town genealogy requests. They also help people get started on genealogy research or find new sources of information. Most of the volunteers feel it is "paying it forward" as well as helping our genealogy society.

One of the current projects is finding the marriages, anniversaries, death notices, and funerals in the old Grand Rapids Herald for the West Michigan Newspaper database on the WMGS website. Occasionally an article grabs our attention like the following:

October 27, 1907

### **Austrian Couple Celebrate 100th Wedding Anniversary**

*Vienna, Oct. 26 — ...The husband is 120 years old and the wife 116. They have hundreds of descendants in and around the village....It is a strange fact that in all their years they have never left the village and know nothing of the great world outside of Isonbolgi.*

October 1, 1896

### **Eggs for Protection**

*Ionia, Mich., Sept. 30 — A cultured looking dude, wearing a plug hat, tried to introduce himself to a young lady he had never met. She did not scream or run, but produced an egg from a basket she carried, not quite so fresh as the dude, and hurled it full into his face. Ionia ladies have taken to carrying eggs for self-protection.*

August 9, 1896

From a question & answer column  
about the new craze of bicycling

*A.H. — According to the measure you send, your wife has legs nine feet long, and you had better coax her not to ride at all. She'd show off to better advantage sitting on a high fence.*

*Ethel. — The only known remedy for the "bicycle face" is to soak it in kerosene every night before going to bed, and then holding your mouth puckered up during the day. It will sometimes take a month. The "bicycle face" comes from a combination of sentiments — fear, anxiety, exultation, remorse. In most cases there is also something wrong with the saddle.*

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## **Did you know?**

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society includes Kent County and the counties immediately surrounding: Ottawa, Muskegon, Newaygo, Montcalm, Ionia, Barry and Allegan Counties.

A Genealogist diet:  
"Fiche and Ships"  
topped with tantalizing sources

### Miss the bus trip?

Due to lack of riders, the fall bus trip to the Allen County Public Library was cancelled. We are still planning to have one in the spring. As soon as you see the announcement (**keep watching our website**), sign up to go! Four cars did manage to get there during November but we missed the camaraderie and information sharing that happens on these trips.

Have you been on our WMGS website lately? It has a wealth of material available for genealogical study. Here is a sample of internet links:

- ★Grand Rapids City Cemetery Burials
- ★Kent County Naturalization Records Index
- ★Michigan Subdivision Plat Maps
- ★Michigan GenWeb sites
- ★Michigan Civil War sites
- ★Dutch Genealogy Sites

**Do you know about the WMGS blog?**

**Have you been reading it?**

**<http://wmgs.org/blog/>**

Check it out & then let us know if you would be willing to help make our blog educational, interesting & helpful to researchers. [newsletter@wmgs.org](mailto:newsletter@wmgs.org)

**Are you on Facebook?**

**If so, please "like" the WMGS page!**

### ➡ WMGS Board Members Strategic Planning Meeting February 15, 2014

Be ready to start planning at 10am sharp!

Other WMGS members - if you have any ideas for long-term planning to help sustain our society, please share them with a board member or send them to [newsletter@wmgs.org](mailto:newsletter@wmgs.org)

### New email address for newsletter **[newsletter@wmgs.org](mailto:newsletter@wmgs.org)**

Please send all announcements, articles, and information for the newsletter to:

**[newsletter@wmgs.org](mailto:newsletter@wmgs.org)**

If you, as a new or renewing member, would be willing and able to hold an office or work on a committee or project, WMGS would appreciate your help very much. You may indicate your area of expertise and/or interest on this membership form. We will be happy to contact you about your desire to help. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW \_\_\_\_\_

RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_

\$20 in the USA

US\$25 Outside the USA

Make checks payable to: Western Michigan Genealogical Society or WMGS

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your level of genealogy experience? (circle one):    Beginner    Intermediate    Advanced

Would you like someone to contact you about volunteer opportunities with WMGS?    Yes    No

Do you use computer software to manage your genealogy?    No    Yes \_\_\_\_\_

list the software you use

Send checks and completed form to:  
WMGS Membership, Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
111 Library St NE, Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268





Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
c/o Grand Rapids Public Library  
111 Library St NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268

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### About WMGS

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society is dedicated to gaining knowledge, preserving records and teaching others about genealogy and family history.

**Membership:** An annual membership to WMGS is \$20 and begins on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Membership benefits include: 10% discount on all items at the Sales Table, four issues of *Michigana* per year, free queries in *Michigana*, free online brick wall help and leadership opportunities. Your membership in the Western Michigan Genealogical Society will also include use of the private files of the Society and publication of your genealogy online at [trees.wmgs.org](http://trees.wmgs.org).

**Change of Address:** (Temporary or Permanent) If you will be permanently moving to a new address or going on an extended vacation, please notify WMGS before your address change occurs. Be sure to include the date your address will change or the dates when you will leave and plan to return. Email your address change information to the Society at [membership@wmgs.org](mailto:membership@wmgs.org)

or write to: WMGS – Membership  
Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
111 Library St NE, Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268

### 2013 WMGS Officers

President	Don Bryant email: <a href="mailto:president@wmgs.org">president@wmgs.org</a>	Recording Secretary	Janet Jensen email: <a href="mailto:JanetJ6990@aol.com">JanetJ6990@aol.com</a> Phone: (616) 874-8035
Vice President	Marcia Shears email: <a href="mailto:U08554@hotmail.com">U08554@hotmail.com</a> Phone: (616) 458-1221	Immediate Past President	Mindy Koole email: <a href="mailto:koole2@comcast.net">koole2@comcast.net</a> Phone: (616) 691-7986
Treasurer	Marlene Fabbro email: <a href="mailto:mfabbro@sbcglobal.net">mfabbro@sbcglobal.net</a> Phone: (616) 530-8232		