



WMGS

Newsletter

Spring 2020



Upcoming Membership Meetings

We meet at **1:30 p.m. in the Ryerson Auditorium of the Grand Rapids Public Library** on the first Saturday of the month, September through June. Should the first Saturday fall on a holiday weekend, another day will be scheduled. Unless a special program, each meeting has a one-hour lecture on a genealogy related subject by a knowledgeable speaker. Books and charts are sold at our meetings and a "Hospitality Hour" follows.

All meetings are free and open to the public

Saturday, February 8, 2020

Membership Meeting

1:30 p.m.

Finding Your Immigrant Ancestors

Presenter: Jessica Trotter

America is a nation of immigrants but it's not always easy to track our ancestors back to a boat, let alone their town of origin. This presentation offers tips and resources for your search with ideas for: what types



of records might include origins, strategies for working with whole families, and important factors to keep in mind depending on the time period you are researching.

Jessica Trotter holds a Master of Science in Information, Archives and Records Management Specialization from the University of

Michigan—but works in public libraries by day. Her genealogy research areas include Midwest, African American, British Isles, Canadian, and Early American research. She also maintains a genealogy research related blog called Genie Road Trip at <http://genieroadtrip.wordpress.com>.

Genealogy Lock-In

Friday, March 13, 2020

6:00 p.m.—10:00 p.m.

Come to the Grand Rapids History and Special Collections Department for a free after-hours program just for genealogists. Learn how to use the library databases, newspaper microfilm and other resources, and take advantage of free copying and printing during the event.

Bring your family history questions or problems—volunteers from the Western Michigan Genealogical Society will be on hand to assist. Network with other genealogists—you never know what you might find. Registration required: www.grpl.org/register or call 616-988-5400.

**Remember to “like” and follow
WMGS on Facebook**

Find us at:

<https://www.facebook.com/wmgs.org/>

**and search for “Western Michigan
Genealogical Society” at Facebook and you
will be directed to our new FB closed group**



Saturday, March 7, 2020

Membership Meeting

1:30 p.m.

Native American Genealogy – Hidden Files Tell Amazing Stories!

Presenter: Chris Czopek, “Lansing’s History Detective”



A genuine History Detective will be driving to Grand Rapids. His destination will be the March 7 meeting of the Western Michigan Genealogy Society. His name is Chris Czopek. His place will be among Grand Rapids area genealogists. His purpose will be to reveal a recently discovered new source of information on Native

American families in Michigan – Civil War pension files!

In time of war, Native American men have always volunteered to fight for their land. The Civil War was no different. When a soldier fell on the field of a battle, his widow could apply for a pension. Same thing for a son who was the sole source of support for his mother. And the surviving soldiers still alive in the 1890s could receive a pension. But there was always one catch – documents! The government insisted on marriage records from the widows, birth records from the mothers, and for the old soldiers receiving a pension, the government asked they list the wife and children and give their birthdates. All those rare documents sent in for a pension still exist, buried in an archives in Washington D.C. For the Native American community, those Pension Files are a gold-mine of information!

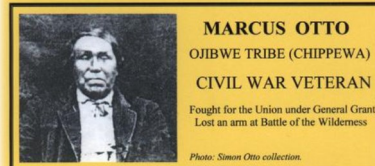
On March 7, an expert on these Pension Files will make a rare public appearance. He will bring with him a list of over 100 available pension files. And he will talk about what kind of documents they contain. Expect to hear some interesting stories about the Chippewa, Ottawa, and Potawatomie families of Michigan!

Chris grew up in Michigan during the Civil War Centennial. As a boy, he would watch a Civil War movie on TV – then go to the library and find out how much of the story was true. This was the beginning of his career as a “history detective”. After college he worked for a newspaper, joined the army and served six years in Military Intelligence, volunteered for an archaeological dig in Israel, worked as a tour guide at the State Capitol Building in Lansing, a photographer for the State Senate, and in the offices of the Michigan State Police. He lives in Lansing with his wife, Bonnie. In recent years Chris has become well known to Michigan historians for his expert research of Civil War soldiers. Called “Lansing’s History Detective” by the Lansing State Journal, he has published several books on Civil War history and has been a consultant for The History Channel. His most recent project, a documentary titled ROAD TO ANDERSONVILLE, is the first film to tell the story of Company K.

Chris is best known as the author of **Who Was Who In Company K**, the first book to give solid facts about the Native American men who served in the 1st Michigan Sharpshooters. He has copies of his book to sign and sell after every program!

WHO was WHO in COMPANY K

Reliable facts about the Native American soldiers in
Company K, 1st Michigan Sharpshooters, during the
Civil War 1861-1865



This book will tell you:

- THE NAME OF EACH SOLDIER
- WHERE HE CAME FROM (Indicating his tribe)
- WHAT HAPPENED TO HIM DURING THE WAR
- And WHERE HE WENT AFTER THE WAR WAS OVER

Researched & Published by Chris Czopek
- Lansing, Michigan -

Second Edition (P1) © 2015

Saturday, April 4, 2020

Membership Meeting

1:30 p.m.

Genealogy—It's Not Greek to Me

Presenter: Rozlyn Kelly

Rozlyn Kelly will discuss how to conduct genealogical research starting with oral history and locating documentation to support, explain or further the oral history. She will present a case study of an interracial couple, a Canadian born free black who serves in the US Civil War and marries a German immigrant, and their pioneering travels in the late 1800s.

Rozlyn Kelly is an attorney with over 20 years of genealogical research experience focused on African American ancestry in Michigan, Canada, Southern Illinois, Kentucky, and Washington, D.C. She is currently President of the Farmington Genealogical Society and serves on the executive board of the Michigan Genealogical Council as recording secretary.



MINI CLASSES

12:00 noon—1:00 p.m.

Location: Lower Level Adult Computer Lab, GRPL

Saturday, February 8, 2020

Topic: TBA

Instructor: Linda Guth

Saturday, March 7, 2020

Topic: TBA

Instructor: Linda Guth

Saturday, April 4, 2020

Topic: TBA

Instructor: Linda Guth

Six Week Classes

7:00 p.m.— 8:30 p.m. (Mondays)

Ground Floor Computer Lab - GR Public Library

Getting started (or restarted) in genealogy

Presenters: Sue Rabick and Sue Irvine

Program description:

Whether you have been working on your family's genealogy for decades or are just getting started, this class is for you. In this six-week series, co-teachers Susan Rabick and Sue Irvine will provide instruction around basic and advanced research strategies, including four generation charts, family group sheets, and organizing your research. Come and learn new skills and brush up on old techniques around using databases and primary sources to research family histories.

This program is co-sponsored by WMGS

March 2: Introduction and four generation charts
March 9: Family group sheets and WMGS databases
March 16: Census records and Ancestry
March 23: FamilySearch and programs
March 30: Resources at GRPL
April 6: GenWeb, organizing & preserving research

Speaker Information – Susan Rabick

Susan Rabick has been working on her family genealogy for more than forty years. She is a member of and volunteer for the Western Michigan Genealogical Society and belongs to half a dozen genealogical societies. Susan is well-versed in strategies of organization, basic research, on-line research, and critical thinking. She is passionate about helping people researching their family histories.

WMGS Contacts:

Sue Rabick
rabickgns@aol.com

Sue Irvine
sjirv@yahoo.com

ECHOES OF OUR ANCESTORS



20-23 MAY
2020
SALT LAKE CITY
UTAH
NATIONAL
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY
FAMILY HISTORY
CONFERENCE

Learn new strategies, resources, and techniques to sharpen your family history skills at the National Genealogical Society 2020 Family History Conference.

The upcoming NGS 2020 Family History Conference will be held in Salt Lake City, Utah, and will offer the best and most expansive series of lectures to advance your research. Salt Lake City is easily accessible and has some of the best genealogical research resources in the US.

The NGS Family History Conference, 20–23 May 2020 is your opportunity to choose from more than 150 lectures presented by many nationally recognized speakers, explore an exhibit hall filled with more than 80 exhibitors, and network with more than 2,000 genealogists. Every NGS conference has a different theme with a new program top to bottom—so there is always more to learn and discover.

Registration is now open and can be found at:

<https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/register/>

Questions? Contact NGS Registrar Courtney Holmes at registration@ngsgenealogy.org

Black Family History Series

Saturdays, February 8, 15, 22

10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Vander Veen Center for the Book—Main Library

What parent or grandparent hasn't been asked where they came from, what their job was, or how they met their spouse? While these family history questions are universal, answers can be challenging to find. This is especially true for African Americans interested in their family history.

Join us for a series of workshops that will help you learn about and document your family's genealogical history. Hosted by local genealogist Joyce Daniels, the series will help you investigate your roots and connect with others around family history.

Registration is not required, however a lunch will be provided if you RSVP to rsvp@grpl.org.

Co-sponsor: WMGS

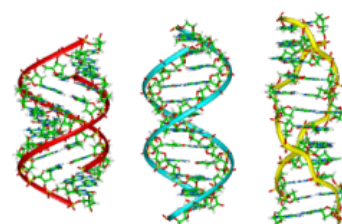
DNA Interest Group (DIG)

Formed in 2015, the Western Michigan Genealogical Society's **DNA Interest Group** (DIG) meets on the 3rd Thursday of each month in the Grand Rapids Public Library's VanderVeen Center on the 4th floor. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. The group discusses the use of Y-DNA (male) and mtDNA (mitochondrial—female) and autosomal DNA (atDNA) tests and their relationship to family history research.

Questions, comments, or program suggestions are welcome. Please contact:

Roger Moffat-

DataMaster@wmgs.org



2020 WMGS Writing Contest

~ A Memorable Trip or Journey ~

Travel is a part of many family experiences and the stories that come from the trips we and our ancestors have made shape us into who we have become. Write a story about a memorable trip or journey.

Suggestions for possible topics include:

- Immigration to another country
- Migration from one area to another
- Visiting a place that holds significant meaning for your family
- Taking a trip back to the "old country" or an original homestead
- Forced immigration or migration
- Taking a vacation to visit a loved one

Write it up and enter the 2020 WMGS Writing Contest.

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society has worked for over 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 2020 WMGS Writing Contest will recognize unpublished excellent genealogical writing by awarding substantial prizes. Prize winning entries will be published in *Michigana*. Like all submissions to *Michigana*, entries will be thoroughly edited before publication. Information about submitting any article to *Michigana* can also be found in the latest issue of *Michigana*, or at wmgs.org.

Rules for the WMGS Writing Contest

Eligibility: All family historians and genealogists, except the *Michigana* Editor and judges, are invited to submit their favorite story for the contest. There is no entry fee and membership in WMGS is not required.

Length: Stories should be between 1,500 and 3,000 words in length. Please cite your sources by using endnotes and attach copies of documentation when appropriate. Family group sheets and pedigree charts should be included if pertinent. Endnotes, documentation, photograph descriptions, nor chart information will be included in the word count.

Formats: Entry must be completed in Microsoft Word. ****IMPORTANT:** If you include your photographs, charts, or graphics within your document, please also send them **separately** as 300 dpi tif or jpeg files.**

Identification: Include the story title, your name, mailing address, phone number, and approximate word count in the body of the email. This information will only be used to identify and notify the winners. Other than the title, this information does not need to be included within your entry.

Deadline: Entries will be accepted between January 1 & March 31, 2020.

Email your submission to michigana@wmgs.org with

"WMGS Writing Contest 2020" written in the Subject Line

Notification: Contest winners will be announced at the June 2020 Membership Meeting, on the WMGS Facebook Page, and in the next available issue of *Michigana*. Each entrant will also receive an email with the results of the WMGS Writing Contest at the time of the announcement. Winners do not have to be present to win. Prize winning articles will be

published in future issues of *Michigana*. By submitting articles, authors are giving WMGS one-time print and digital rights; copyright is retained by the author. Entries may not have been previously published. All prizes may not be awarded.

Want help or feedback?

The WMGS Writers Group meets the third Tuesday of the month and we would love to help you make your story the best that it can be.

For information about location, time, and directions go to: wmgs.org

Prizes:

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

For further information or any questions about the Writing Contest, please contact Julie DeVisser, *Michigana* Editor, at michigana@wmgs.org



Western Michigan Genealogical Society's

Bus Trip to Ft. Wayne's Allen County Public Library



Monday – Tuesday --- April 27 – 28, 2020

\$141=Single, \$103=Double, \$91=Triple, \$85=Quad

Transportation by **Great Lakes Motor Coach** No smoking on coach or in motel

PICKUP AREAS

Day #1
April 27th
Monday

7:00 AM Leave **Plainfield Meijer** (between Woodworth/4Mile NE) near "K" marker
7:30 AM Leave **Meijer** (I-96 and 28th St) near the "K" marker)
8:15 AM Leave **Lake Odessa and I-96** (Exit 64) (just ¼ mile south to Outreach Christian Church lot)
8:45 AM Possible pickups near Charlotte and/or off I-69 at Marshall Park/Ride
9:30 ish Refreshment Stop (donuts & juice at highway rest stop)
10:30 AM Arrive **Allen County Public Library** (260) 421-1200
9:00 PM Bus transfer to **Baymont Lodge** (260) 489-8888 (name change)
Last spring many of us enjoyed pizza at the motel! – Fun time!
5707 Challenger Parkway, Fort Wayne, IN, 46818 (Name change - was Econo Lodge)

Day #2
April 28th
Tuesday

7:00 AM Wakeup Call – Continental breakfast (and maybe cold pizza)
8:30-8:40 AM Load luggage. Transportation to library.
6:00 PM Depart from Allen County Public Library.
6:45 PM Stop for quick meal near Auburn, Indiana
9:30 PM Arrive at Lake Odessa exit (church parking lot)
10:00 PM Arrive at Meijer I-96 drop off area
10:30 PM Arrive at Plainfield Meijer

Trip includes: roundtrip motor coach transportation, lodging at Baymont (same place as last spring), 5707 Challenger Parkway, and library transfer. Light Breakfast included.

- ^ Allen County Library no longer has a café. Many eateries are close to the library.
- ^ The motel does not have an elevator. Please indicate floor requirement.
- ^ WMGS member? Membership PERK. You will receive a coupon worth \$5 towards next year's membership or towards any purchase at the WMGS sales table.
- ^ We need 36 bus riders to make this trip a reality. An email by first part of March would be most helpful.
- ^ A \$15 deposit guarantees your place on the bus. Please send your deposit by April 1st.

Balance to be paid by April 20th. Please make checks payable to **WMGS**.

Cancellations will receive a refund with replacement only.

^ Please contact Sue Irvine with any questions. 616-889-0042 or sjirv@yahoo.com

Send registration and payment to Sue Irvine, 4215 Northgate NE, Grand Rapids, MI, 49525

\$141=Single \$103=Double (each) \$91=Triple (each) 85=Quad (each)

Ft. Wayne Trip Mon – Tues April 27-28, 2020 All rooms non-smoking

Is 1st floor a requirement? Yes ___ No ___ (help is provided for carrying luggage but no elevator)

NAME: _____ Phone# (____) _____ Cell # (____) _____

ADDRESS: _____ City, State, Zip _____

Pickup Point: Circle one: **Plainfield Meijer** - **Meijer 28th/I96** - **Lake Odessa** - **Charlotte** - **Marshall**

Roommates: _____

Confirmation and other trip information will be confirmed by email.: _____

WMGS WRITERS GROUP

This group meets the **THIRD TUESDAY** every month from 1:30 to about 3:45 p.m. at the **Dominican Center**. The Writers Group holds supportive meetings for everyone who wants to learn more about organizing and writing family history. We take time to informally discuss questions relevant to each person's work, provide helpful, non-judgmental feedback on current or on-going writing projects, discover new research techniques, and have fun making new friends.

Genealogy is more than "names and dates." An ancestor's story or a personal memory are even more fascinating and enlightening. But some genealogists don't know how to begin, while others just need a deadline to kick start their creative juices. The Writers Group can fulfill both of these needs.

February: Describe a significant misconception you've had (genealogical or otherwise) & how you discovered it.

March: Movies often remind us of our family or one of its members. Write about a movie you saw and how it jogged your memory.

April: Were you the oldest, youngest, the middle child or an only child? Which would you have preferred and why? How did it affect your life.

PLANNING ON ATTENDING?

Those who attend are encouraged to bring several copies of a Work-In- Progress (WIP), but it's certainly not a requirement and everyone is invited to participate in the discussion. We have a suggested topic for each meeting to help kick-start our writing, but if you are working on a family history, a story about how you discovered an ancestor, or an article for the 2020 Writing Contest you're welcome to get feedback on that instead. This year our topics are focused on more on our personal history and what we've experienced in order to preserve it for our children, relatives and local history.

Members include those who are just starting to write and others who have been working on their genealogy for some time. Everyone is welcome - newbies with fresh ideas, and seasoned vets whose pens have been in the trenches for some time. If you plan to attend, please let Sister Michael Ellen Carling know you will be there. Call her at 616-514-3231 (home), or 616-514-3340 (office) and her email address is mecarling@grdominicans.org. This gives her an estimate of the number of chairs to set up. She's also the person to call if you have any questions or need more specific directions.

Membership Application

NEW _____ RENEWAL _____

\$20 in the US

\$25 outside the USA

Membership begins January 1 and ends December 31

DATE: _____ PHONE: _____ EMAIL: _____

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

Would you like to donate to WMGS? Yes No If yes, Amount: _____

Make checks payable to WMGS, Send checks and completed form to:

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



WMGS
c/o Grand Rapids Public Library
111 Library St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268

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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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 1st 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

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 or write to: WMGS—Membership, c/o GRPL, Western Michigan Genealogical Society, 111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268.

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