



WMGS Newsletter SUMMER 2021



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 (NO IN-PERSON MEETINGS YET)

Saturday, June 12, 1:30 p.m.

Virtual presentation via Zoom Webinar

Zoom link: Access via WMGS website,
click on the link for the meeting

Presenter: Thomas MacEntee

Topic: The 1950 US Federal Census – Are You Ready?

Many genealogists remember the amount of excitement in April 2012 around the release of the 1940 US Census. Following the "72 Year Rule" for records at the National Archives, the results of the 1950 US Census will be made public on Friday, April 1, 2022. It's never too early to prepare for this valuable data related to US genealogy research!

Participants will get up to speed on the history of the 1950 US Census, why the 1950 US Census form is radically different than previous forms, and how the data will be accessed. In addition we'll cover what you can do NOW to prepare for the release of the 1950 US Census as well as volunteer projects related to indexing and finding aids. Finally, we'll cover how you can always get the latest information related to the release of the 1950 US Census data!



What happens when a "tech guy" with a love for history gets laid off during The Great Recession of 2008? You get me, Thomas MacEntee, a genealogy professional who's also a blogger, educator, author, social media connector, marketer, network builder and more. Thomas was laid off after a 25-year career in the information technology field, so he started his own genealogy-related business called High Definition Genealogy. Currently Thomas shares many of his articles and videos for free at GenealogyBargains.com

Saturday, June 5, 2:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Virtual class via Zoom

Zoom link: [https://zoom.us/j/97799230722?](https://zoom.us/j/97799230722?pwd=MWJVT05EcjZCZ3NQNO12NEttdXhKQT09)
[pwd=MWJVT05EcjZCZ3NQNO12NEttdXhKQT09](https://zoom.us/j/97799230722?pwd=MWJVT05EcjZCZ3NQNO12NEttdXhKQT09)

(or access via WMGS website,
click on the link for the meeting)

Instructor: Linda Guth

Researching Burial/Cemetery Records

Did you know that you can learn more about your ancestors from a visit to their memorial? Cemeteries and the records associated with the death and burial of the deceased are full of information that will help you with your genealogical research. In this class, you will learn how to get the most out of your trip to the cemetery by learning about the types of burial records available to you & where to find them prior to your trip. Then, we'll go over how to plan a cemetery visit and what to do during the visit.

**Remember to "like" and follow
WMGS on Facebook
Find us at:**

**<https://www.facebook.com/wmgs.org/>
or search for "Western Michigan**

**Genealogical
Society" at**

facebook

**Facebook and you
will be directed to
our new FB
closed group**

Dating Ancestor Photos Through Clothing and Hairstyles

Civil War Era

Women's Fashions

Typical features of Civil War era women's fashions were:

- contrasting collar (easily removed for laundering or replacement)
- wide sleeves and folds on the bodice give a sense of width at the shoulders and bustline
- wide hoop skirt showing width at the bottom gathers from the bodice and skirt into a narrow waist, which is emphasized by the contrasting width of the sleeves

Hairstyles for Women

There was a universal hairstyle popular during the war. Hair was arranged very low on the crown of the head, and wider to the sides. Hair was always parted down the middle and slicked down on the crown, then pulled to the back and secured with pins into a bun or roll. Sausage curls and ringlets were popular in the evening, but some women did their hair this way for a photograph.

Hairnets, or nets, were sometimes worn during the Civil War era. Most often they matched the color of the woman's hair. Most were quite plain but some were elaborate constructions of ribbon, velvet strips, or braid with beading.



Fashion 1863



Late 1860's, hair with net

Fashions for Men

There were four types of coats worn in this time period:

- Men generally wore a frock coat, their equivalent of today's casual suit jacket. It was cut straight across at the bottom.
- The tail coat (where the back of the jacket was longer than the front) was only worn for formal occasions.
- The cutaway coat was similar to the frock coat except the front was cut so that it flared back instead of being cut straight across.

The loose fitting sack coat was popular during this period. Most shirt collars were of the "turn down" variety rather than the earlier stand-up type.



Civil War Era Frock Coat



1872 Hairstyle

Hairstyles for Men

There was a wide range of acceptable hair styles and facial hair styles in the 1860s. Men's hair during the ante-bellum and Civil War periods tended to be longer, about collar length on the sides.

Hair oils, Macassars, or pomatums were used by almost all men during the mid 19th century and gives the appearance of a wet look to the hair. This is how men achieved the various wings, swirls and rolls often seen in their

hair in images of this period.

Barbara J. Brown Family History Seminar

Friday, July 9—Saturday, July 10, 2021

Each summer, the Archives of Michigan and the Michigan Genealogical Council host a seminar to promote family history awareness and teach genealogical research skills. This event is generously supported by the Abrams Foundation in loving memory of Barbara J. Brown.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, we are pleased to offer this flagship annual event remotely via Zoom. We appreciate our speakers' flexibility as we transition to a virtual format this year and look forward to hosting Judy G. Russell, JD, CG, CGL, "The Legal Genealogist," for this year's event.

FEATURED SPEAKER

"The Legal Genealogist" Judy G. Russell is a genealogist with a law degree. She writes, teaches and lectures on a wide variety of genealogical topics, ranging from using court records in family history to understanding DNA testing.



A Colorado native with roots deep in the American south on her mother's side and entirely in Germany on her father's side, she holds a bachelor's degree in journalism with a political science minor from George Washington University in Washington, D.C. and a law degree from Rutgers School of Law-Newark.

Before she retired, she worked as a newspaper reporter, trade association writer, legal investigator, defense attorney, federal prosecutor, law editor and, for more than 20 years, was an adjunct member of the faculty at Rutgers Law School.

REGISTRATION DETAILS

Registration (June 1 - July 9): \$45

Registration includes:

- virtual access to all sessions for the two-day seminar.
- the syllabus as a downloadable file.

All registrants will receive conference log in information by email a few days before the event.

https://www.michigan.gov/mhc/0,9075,7-361-85148_98951-523785--,00.html

(Or go to www.michigan.gov/mhc/ and select "events")

Do you have a "new" Library of
Michigan Library Card?

It's FREE!!

<http://michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan>
"for the public" (then arrow down)

Get a library card (do it!)

Then go to <http://michigan.gov/librarycard>

Access from the following:

- ♦ African American Biographical Database (Chadwyck-Healy)
- ♦ Ancestry Library Edition
- ♦ Black Thought and Culture (Alexander Street)
- ♦ Fold3 by Ancestry
- ♦ Michigan History Magazine—*A popular history magazine with content useful to historians and genealogy researchers. Provided through the Michigan eLibrary*
- ♦ MyHeritage Library Edition—*Family history/genealogy resource including more than 6 billion historical records from the United States, Europe, Latin America, and other regions. Provided through the Michigan eLibrary*
- ♦ NewspaperArchive
- ♦ ProQuest Ethnic NewsWatch
- ♦ ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Detroit Free Press, 1831-1999
- ♦ ProQuest Historical Newspapers: Michigan Chronicle, 1936 - 2010



Thank you to Sue Irvine for this
valuable information

WMGS Pioneer Certificate Program

Eligibility: To qualify for a Pioneer Certificate, an applicant must be directly descended from an ancestor who settled in Kent County as follows:

Pioneers (Prior to 1841) Gold Seal
Settlers (Prior to 1881) Silver Seal
Early Family (Prior to 1921) Blue Seal

Each ancestor in the direct line must be proved. Anyone may apply. Applicants need not have ever been residents of Kent County. After proof of direct descent has been submitted and eligibility has been determined, we will mail the appropriate certificate. Separate certificates will be issued for each ancestor properly submitted. The fee for each application is \$10. Download the packet at <http://wmgs.org/pioneer.htm>



Do you know of something that our members need to know and/or would be interested in knowing?

Send your information to:

talkingtree@wmgs.org

The editors of the WMGS newsletter and the WMGS quarterly, the publicity chairperson, the website and database managers, the WMGS president — and more — will receive the information. So you don't have to wonder who to contact, just send it to: **talkingtree@wmgs.org**



Michigan Pre-Statehood and First Families Certificates

The Michigan Pre-Statehood and First Families certificates are offered by Michigan Genealogical Council as a way to honor our ancestors who settled the Great Lakes State. Recipients will receive either the Pre-Statehood or the First Families certificate, depending on the arrival date of their earliest Michigan (or Michigan territory) ancestor.

Pre-Statehood before Jan. 26, 1837 First Families Jan. 26, 1837 to Dec. 31, 1880 Personalized certificates and a pin bearing the emblem of the certificate will be presented to recipients, and their ancestor's name will be added to a database of early Michigan pioneers.

How can you prove early settlement in Michigan? There are a number of resources available that can help you prove that your ancestors were early Michigan pioneers. Applications should provide copies of primary sources, when available. These can include: "

- ⇒ Vital records (birth, marriage, death)
- ⇒ Church, mortuary, cemetery records
- ⇒ Probate records
- ⇒ Land records
- ⇒ Tax records
- ⇒ Census records
- ⇒ Military records
- ⇒ Court records (wills, deeds)
- ⇒ Official school records

These records can be found in a variety of places, including local county clerks' offices, or through websites like Ancestry, Family Search, and Michiganology. Assistance with genealogical research can be found with your local genealogical society or sometimes at your local library.



1839 Map of Michigan

Please visit <https://mimgc.org/> for more information about accepted documentation, or email certificates@mimgc.org with any questions.

Family History Virtual Series

www.michigan.gov/familyhistory



The Library of Michigan Special Collections staff are offering a series of virtual programs through Zoom for anyone interested in enhancing their Family History research skills. All attendees are required to sign-up for the virtual presentation(s) they wish to attend through an online registration form at www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan

Introduction to Family History Research

June 3, 2021, 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

Learn the basics of researching your family's history through the collections of the Library of Michigan. Join us as we review through vital records, the census and other useful documents. Discover online resources for accessing family history material as well as search strategies for navigating both print and digital records.

Family History Virtual Study Hall Session

July 1, 2021, 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

Join us for an informal review session to discuss material covered in the previous virtual program as well as to ask questions about other family history topics.

Ancestry.com Library Edition

August 5, 2021, 6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

Ancestry.com Library Edition is a comprehensive family history database with access to a wide range of historical documents, images, and public records. Learn the process of navigating Ancestry.com's vast collection of records and other strategies as you enhance your family history research skills.

About the Library of Michigan: The library is home to a great diversity of local history materials, including: city and county histories, newspaper clippings, vital records, cemetery transcripts, and plat maps that can be accessed during the Library's business hours. A librarian on staff would be happy to find the materials right for you.

Common Corners

www.commoncorners.com

Whether it is a passion for genealogical research of interest in preserving local history & traditions, we share Common Corners and Common Borders. This website reflects our combined resources, enables a network of communication and assists in discovery of our Common interests in our Corner of the world—West Michigan.

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society wishes to make resources available to leverage the combined energy and passion within the historical and genealogical community of West Michigan. We focus on the eight county areas including Allegan, Barry, Ionia, Kent, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo and Ottawa counties.

How to request to have your organization or township information added: send an email to webmaster@wmgs.org. Subject line should be Common Corners Inquiry. Our committee will review and advise how WMGS can help based on the specifics of your request.



Genealogy problems

I fully intended to clean the house but somehow ended up doing some research online right after I started cleaning. The house now looks like someone broke in.



Local Places of Interest for Genealogists and Local Historians



Lowell Area Historical Museum

325 West Main Street. Lowell, MI 49331
Phone: 616-897-7688

The Museum is located in the historic Graham home, built in 1873. It features permanent galleries surrounding the founding and early history of the Lowell area, its industry and retailing and the Lowell Showboat. In addition a Victorian Dining Room, Parlor, Porch with Garden and a Special Exhibits Gallery which changes annually creates a wonderful experience for all visitors. Genealogical material available. The Victorian rooms can be rented for your special event, please call for more information. **Due to the Covid-19 outbreak the Museum has reduced public open hours for now. The Museum is open Thursdays 1:00 p.m. —4:00 p.m. and by appointment.**

website: www.lowellmuseum.org
email: history@lowellmuseum.org

Cascade Historical Society

2839 Thornapple River Dr.
(Mail: 2865 Thornhills SE) Grand Rapids, MI 49546
Phone: 616-949-1500

Cascade Township was founded in 1848 and the township hall was built in 1898. A history group was formed in 1974 and a history book published in 1987. Township Hall, now the Museum building, was added to the State Historical Registry in 1998. They also have a cemetery walking tour.

website: www.cascadetwp.com/community-historical-society

Byron Center Historical Society & Museum

2506 Prescott St. S.W., Byron Center, MI 49315
Phone: 616-878-0888

The Byron Center Historical Society was founded in 1978 with a group of ladies interested in preserving and protecting our community history. In 1986, with the opening of a new Town Hall, the old town hall was offered to the society to house their museum. The museum is now home to a look back at our early farming community: general store, doctors' offices, one-room schoolhouse, Veterans display, and typical farm house. During closed hours, to schedule a tour or come in to do genealogy research, call Theresa at 616-878-0888 **NEW HOURS: Tuesdays from 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. Closed for winter except by appointment. Open for tours with prior arrangement.**

Cedar Springs Museum & Historical Society

60 Cedar St., Cedar Spring, MI 49319
Phone: 616-696-3335

Step back in time as you visit the Cedar Springs Museum or tour the one-room Payne School that was moved to Morley Park in 1971. The school has been renovated to reflect the century long era in public education when one teacher, lodging with a school family, taught all eight grades. Established as a lumber town in 1856, Cedar Springs boasted numerous lumber and shingle mills. **Hours, Wednesdays, 10:00 a.m.—5:00 p.m., masks must be worn at all times.** Special hours and tours by appointment are available as well as rental of the one room school house for elementary classes.

The museum holds a genealogy section, which they feel is second to none for the size of their operation. On most Wednesday, you will find a genealogist on duty, willing to guide either the experienced or novice researcher in what ever direction that is felt will best suit their needs. **(Cedar Springs in 1912 below)**



WMGS WRITERS GROUP

Due to the pandemic it's been over a year since the WMGS Writers Group has been able to meet. The recent ability to get vaccinated has reduced the possibility of becoming infected or passing the virus to others, but prudent genealogists who know how other diseases have effected the lives of their ancestors don't want to rush things. So our plan is to wait several months before meeting again: **THE WMGS WRITERS GROUP PLANS TO MEET AUGUST 17th, THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THE MONTH AT 1:30 p.m. AT THE DOMINICAN CENTER.** We hope everyone who attends will be fully vaccinated by then. However, since many of those living at the Dominican Center are elderly we may meet outdoors. Check the WMGS homepage for updates in August to see if we might need to bring comfy outdoor chairs. For more information on directions to the Dominican Center and to the meeting place, please call Sister Michael Ellen Carling at 616-514-3231. The topics for the next three meetings will center around our and our nation's experiences during the pandemic. Some suggestions to kick your brain back into writing gear are listed below you may choose your own slant. It's important to preserve our reactions and experiences to this momentous period in our family's, the nation's and the world's history.

Suggestions:

- ♦ How quarantine(s) changed my family's life
- ♦ Write the history of the life of someone who died during the pandemic
- ♦ Life, death and boredom during a pandemic
- ♦ What I did during my Covid vacation
- ♦ Differences between the 1918 and 21st Century pandemics
- ♦ How the 1918 pandemic changed or effected my ancestors' lives
- ♦ How the Covid 19 pandemic changed or effected my family's lives
- ♦ Why reactions to the pandemic were different between rural and urban Americans. How were they the same?
- ♦ How our lives will be different in the future after living through Covid 19.
- ♦ Science and facts versus propaganda and myth: Covid 19 and politics and power
- ♦ The good of the many versus the good of the one.

Or use a topic that closer to your own pandemic experiences. Some of us may have used our extended time at home to write about other topics than Covid 19. As always, you're welcome to come to the group to get gentle feedback and thoughtful responses.

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

Option of receiving the WMGS newsletter by regular mail _____ or via email: _____

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



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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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