



WMGS Newsletter FALL 2023



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, September 9, 1:30 p.m.

Presenter: Tobin Buhk

Topic: Poisoning the Pecks of Grand Rapids

In 1916, Arthur Warren Waite hatched a get-rich-quick scheme to acquire his father-in-law's fortune by systematically poisoning John and Hannah Peck. The grandiose plan went awry when a telegram by the mysterious "Kay Adams," warning of murder, arrived in Grand Rapids. Follow the trail of detectives as they unravel the strange but true case of Poisoning the Pecks of Grand Rapids.

Tobin T. Buhk is a freelance author specializing in historical true crime. To research his first book, *Cause of Death*, he volunteered in a county morgue. His subsequent true-crime publications include *Skeletons in the Closet*, *True Crime in the Civil War*, and *Poisoning the Pecks of Grand Rapids*. Mr. Buhk lectures frequently on historic crime and provides several presentation options.



Saturday, October 7, 1:30 p.m.

Presenter: Karen Krugman

Topic: Researching There When You Are Here

Researching can be difficult enough as it is but even more so if you don't live anywhere near where your ancestors lived. My talk, *Researching There When You Are Here*, will offer suggestions & solutions to help you as you attempt to navigate the challenges of long-distance genealogy research.



Karen has been researching the family history of her families for over 25 years. She has written five books on the different lineages in her family tree and that of her husband, Mark. She has been speaking on genealogy with a unique style for over 10 years.

45 years ago she married her college sweetie, Mark. They have two married children and 5 grandsons. When Karen isn't researching her family history she sews for her Etsy shop, *Karmelle-Home*, which she started in 2017. Currently Karen & Mark reside in Bloomfield Hills.

Saturday, November 4, 1:30 p.m.

Presenter: Cynthia Bailey

Topic: Secrets of St. Andrew's Cemetery

Cemeteries have a lot of secrets waiting to be discovered. I live next to St. Andrews Catholic Cemetery which is Grand Rapids first Catholic cemetery. I became interested in the cemetery after I went on a tour of St. Andrews Cemetery with Fr. Dennis Morrow and on other cemetery tours with Mr. Dilley and joining West Michigan Genealogical Society.

There are a lot of "secrets" buried in cemeteries because the dead don't lie. Headstones have information carved into them, where the body is buried, who is buried nearby. There are many clues in the cemetery that might be answered when visiting a cemetery with watchful eyes, some might be obvious others not so much. The cemetery might point you in the right direction to uncovering a genealogical answer to a question. I discovered many things in preparing for my presentation for the Grand Rapids Historical Society on my topic: St. Andrews Cemetery "Nice Quiet Neighbors."

Cynthia Bailey is a member of the West Michigan Genealogical Society and has written a couple of articles for the Societies Magazine, Michigana.

Cynthia is active in many things; she volunteers at



the Grand Rapids Public Museum as a Discovery Cart volunteer and Educator for the Newcomers Exhibit. She is a member of West Michigan Advanced Toastmasters, a member of the Grand Rapids Climate Coalition, member of Grand Rapids Dominican focus study Laudato Si; Response to the cry of the earth. Currently a C4 Am-

bassador (Community Collaborator on Climate Change)

Cynthia has presented at Gilda's Club, The Early Risers Breakfast Club, Grand Rapids Serra International, Grand Rapids Round Table International, the Grand Rapids Public Library, and recently for Grand Rapids Historical Society.

Education Classes

Tuesday, September 19

6:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.

Different Census Types

Did you know there's more than just the US Federal Census? Let's learn about US Federal census, other countries censuses, State censuses, Agricultural census, etc.

Instructor: Linda Wells

Location: VanderVeen Room, 4th floor, GRPL

***Please check our Facebook page and website
for updates on more upcoming
Education Classes***

DNA Interest Group

The DNA Interest Group (known as "DIG") meets on the third Thursday of the month at the Main Branch of the Grand Rapids Public Library in the Vander Veen room on the 4th floor. We meet at 6:30 p.m. with the first half an hour being a presentation, video, speaker, etc. From 7:00 p.m.—8:00 p.m. we help each other with DNA questions and projects. Check our Facebook group for updates.

Next meetings:

Wednesday, September 21

Wednesday, October 19

Wednesday, November 16

We discuss and learn more about a variety of genetic genealogy topics such as the Leeds Method, GEDmatch, Y-DNA, and more.





GotAncestors?! 2023

Western Michigan Genealogical Society's
Annual Fall Conference

21 October 2023

9:00 am - 4:00 pm

Park Congregational Church

Guest Speaker:

Katherine R. Willson (Dexter, Michigan) is an engaging & dynamic genealogy lecturer at local, regional, and national events; a full-time researcher for private clients; and a genealogy educator for 20+ years. She is the founder and Past President of the Virtual Genealogical Association, past President of the Michigan Genealogical Council, past board member for the Association of Professional Genealogists, and a course coordinator and instructor at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy. Katherine authored *The Genealogist's Guide to Grand Rapids, Michigan* as well as the Genealogy on Facebook list, a catalog of 17,000+ genealogy/history links on Facebook, found at SocialMediaGenealogy.com.

Topics:

Our European Ancestors' Voyage to America

Learn about your immigrant ancestors' voyage from Europe to the United States, and how those journeys changed from the 18th century through the 20th century. How did our ancestors prepare for the journey? What immigration restrictions & quota laws did they face? How were ports of departure and arrival chosen? What was the ticket cost? How long would the journey take, and what were the expected ship.

Resources for Genealogical Research in Foreign Countries

Once you've discovered your immigrant ancestor's home country, how will you go about finding documents generated while s/he was still there, and how will you research his/her parents? We'll discuss available resources for beginning your research in foreign countries, including how to locate foreign language genealogy terms and online maps providing contextual information on shifting country borders.

40+ Sources for Finding Maiden Names

40+ possible sources to consult when searching for a female ancestor's maiden name. Discussion will include search tips for locating these sources.

Adding a Genealogical Codicil to Your Will

When you die, what will happen to the genealogical materials you've accumulated throughout your research? Do your loved ones know what to do with your collection after your death, or are you at risk of losing it all to the trash bin when your estate is cleared out? A genealogical codicil to your will can clearly state your wishes, and this presentation will discuss the many options available to you. Sample copies of codicils will be distributed.

**Registration now open at <http://gotancestors.com/>
Seminar & Lunch from Schnitz Deli \$60 - Seminar Alone \$45**



Writing Contest Winners

Congratulations to the following individuals who placed in the Writing Contest:

First place: *Captured by Indians*: by Janine Guimont Cotugno

Second place: *Clack*: by Norma Clack

Third place: *One of My Favorite Ancestors*: by Michael J. Page

Fourth place: *Jemima*: by Sue Merrell

Honorable mentions:

Cornelis Melyn, Patroon of Staten Island: by Amy Russell

My Dad's Favorite Ancestor: by Mary Lane

Most Admired: by Gretchen Dorn Weaver

Favorite Ancestors: by Mary Lane

Treasure Hunt for a Blood Secret: by Ashley Norton

This year's results were very close, and we thank every author. They deserve our congratulations and gratitude.

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 and you will be directed to our Facebook private group

facebook

"I'm just going to review a few things on my 3rd Great-Grandmother's genealogy."

Translation:

"I'm going to review at least 10 vital records and hunt down her Mother's maiden name. Leave me alone. I'll see you when I see you."

Twisted Twigs



Van Raalte Farm Civil War Muster—Battle of Gettysburg

Saturday, September 16, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Sunday, September 17, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

Experience the sights and sounds of these tumultuous years of our nation's history: smell the powder, hear the boom of cannons, and talk to the famous generals and soldiers as they plan their assaults. Wander through the encampments of Confederate and Union soldiers, visit with civilians cooking over open fires, listen to the 1st Holland Regimental Band, or hang out at the Grey Barn, an authentic Civil War era saloon.

The Battle of Gettysburg will be the focus of this year's muster.

All events on the farm are free. Bring your camera, snap some photos, and then be sure to submit them to the Muster Photo Contest! For details and the uploader link, visit holland.org/van-raalte-farm-civil-war-muster-photo-contest.

Parking: Yang Feng (JCI) lot - free shuttle to park entrance





MGC Fall Family History Seminar with Michael Strauss Saturday, November 4, at 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

For the Fall Family History Event this year, you can attend either onsite in Lansing or online from your home.

Michael L. Strauss, AG, will be our speaker. Michael is employed as a Research Manager and Senior Genealogist for *Ancestry ProGenealogists*. He is a native of Pennsylvania and a veteran of the United States Coast Guard. He is a published author and national genealogical lecturer, instructor, and faculty member at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy (SLIG), Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh (GRIP), and the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research (IGHR), where he coordinates the military history courses. Michael has been involved in Civil War and Mexican-American War reenacting for more than twenty-five years.



Michael Strauss's presentations will be

- **Introduction to Military Genealogy Research** will focus on a large number of records, strategies, and techniques to find your military ancestors from the colonial era through the Vietnam War.
- **A House Divided: Research in the Civil War** will examine records most used by genealogists and historians, including service records, draft records, pensions, and records to trace the movement of your ancestor's military unit for both sides.
- **Roosevelt's Tree Army: Researching in the Civilian Conservation Corps** will explore CCC genealogical resources between 1933-1942, including Office Personnel Files, discharge certificates, accident reports, camp and district reports, photographs, and motion pictures.
- **All in a Day's Work: Occupational Genealogical Research** will focus on the methodology to research your ancestor's work history, tapping into records of employment and discussing old occupations no longer in use.



TO REGISTER: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/2023-fall-family-history-event-with-michael-l-strauss-tickets-694036781697?aff=oddtcreator>

Michigan Library and Historical Center
702 West Kalamazoo Street Lansing, MI 48912



Fur Trade Encampment Re-Enactment

Friday, September 15, 1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.
Saturday, September 16, 9:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.
Sunday, September 17, 10:00 a.m.—4:00 p.m.

History comes alive as you experience a trading camp and explore the fur trade that took place in Ada 200 years ago. Interact with descendants of Rix Robinson who operated Ada's trading post 1821-1830s.

Special cooking demonstrations

Held at the Ada History Center.

7144 Headley St. SE, Ada



MyHeritage Database Library Edition - Zoom Session

Thursday, October 5
6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

MyHeritage Library Edition is a family history database available through the Michigan eLibrary with access to a wide range of historical documents, images, and public records. Discover the fundamentals for navigating MyHeritage and learn key strategies for finding specific records within its collections.

Click here to register: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/917obQcV#registration>

Presentation put on by the Library of Michigan.



Fold 3 Library Edition - Zoom Session

Thursday, November 2
6:30 p.m.—7:30 p.m.

Fold3 provides online access to military records, including the stories, photos, and relevant personal documents. Discover key strategies for using Fold3 as you uncover the accounts of men and women who served in the armed forces.

TO REGISTER:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/917obQcV#registration>

Presentation put on by Library of Michigan.

WMGS WRITERS GROUP

We meet on the third Tuesday of the month, in person and on Zoom. In person, the location is Trinity United Methodist Church, 1100 Lake Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, 49506, one block west of Fuller. Park in the first lot on Lake Drive and come in the door on that side of the church.

We meet in the Fireside Room, immediately left as you come in the door. Contact Jill Pearson Reider at JillReider1@gmail.com or 307-699-0812 if you have any questions.

For the Zoom link, and more information, check the WMGS website: https://www.wmgs.org/writers_group.htm

Next meeting topics:

Tuesday, September 19 — Harvesting, canning in the past — ancestors or own memories

Tuesday, October 17 — Ghosties, séances, how it affected ancestors

Tuesday, November 21— Trees/lumbering or writing your 2023 Christmas letter/message

And as always, people are welcome to write on suggested topics or bring in a project they are working on for suggestions.

Hope to see you there!

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



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

**NON-PROFIT
US POSTAGE
PAID
GRAND RAPIDS, MI
PERMIT No. 209**

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.

WMGS Contact Information

President—Mindy Koole
president@wmgs.org

VP—Marcia Shears
u08554@hotmail.com

Secretary—Lisa Christensen
lisachristensen49301@gmail.com

Treasurer—Mark Timmer
mark.timmer@centurytel.net

Michigana Editor
michigana@wmgs.org

Newsletter Editor—Jessica Riley
jessica629@hotmail.com

Publicity Chair—Jessica Riley
jessica629@hotmail.com

Past President—Don Bryant
webmaster@wmgs.org