



# WMGS Newsletter SPRING 2024



## 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, March 2, 1:30 p.m.**

**Presenter: Kris Rzepczynski**

**Topic: Navigating the 1890 Gap:  
Research with State Census Records**



Given the near-total loss of the 1890 U.S. Census, state census records frequently serve as an effective substitute. This program will explore these underutilized resources, focusing primarily on the available schedules from across the United

States from that time period.

A Senior Archivist at the Archives of Michigan, Kris has worked in the genealogical community for more than 20 years. He is a former Vice President of Membership for the Federation of Genealogical Societies and a Past-President of the Mid-Michigan Genealogical Society.



2024 VIRTUAL FAMILY HISTORY CONFERENCE

**EXPANDING POSSIBILITIES**

16-18 MAY



Whether you are pulling together papers about your grandparents, have a basic working knowledge of family history research, or are trying to break through a brick wall to expand your family tree beyond the first hundred years, the **NGS 2024 Virtual Family History Conference** takes your research to the next level and expands your possibilities.

From May 16—18, NGS offers exceptional learning opportunities for

- **Individuals who are just beginning** to explore their families' histories
- **Veteran researchers** who are looking for new approaches and skills to help them discover the next generation of ancestors
- **Professional genealogists** who want to learn the latest in resources and artificial intelligence (AI)

Every registrant can access every lecture through 15 August 2024. Every lecture will be recorded and available for viewing whenever and wherever you wish.

Learn more about the full conference program, individual topics, and expert presenters at

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

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Saturday, October 19, 2024**

**Got Ancestors?! Annual Conference**

**Details to follow**

**Saturday, April 6, 1:30 p.m.**

**Presenter: Bruce Butgereit**

**Topic: Post Traumatic Stress Disorder  
in the Civil War**

Bruce is recognized for his research ability in a wide variety of subjects that include the Civil War, post-Civil War patriotic and fraternal organizations, Kent County war memorials, Abraham Lincoln, and the Lincoln Highway. This research has been shared over the past 40 years through living history presentations, written articles (magazines, newspapers, newsletters, and historical journals), and other programming. Bruce is the recipient of numerous awards and recognition for his work.

Since 2000, he has led the efforts to restore over fifteen Civil War memorials in Michigan and elsewhere and helped dedicate a number of new memorials. He serves as Executive Director of History Remembered, Inc., an organization that advocates for historic preservation and restoration through educational outreach and consultation. His most recent projects include identifying veterans (known and unknown) on a memorial cross in Crystal Springs Cemetery in Benton Harbor and serving as the historian of the (1900) Grand Army of the Republic Building in Detroit.

His program titled, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder in the Civil War, will look at the earliest diagnosis of PTSD and the various names applied to the condition. Included will be several real-life cases involving veterans of the war living at the Michigan Soldiers' Home.



Remember to "like" and  
follow WMGS  
on Facebook

Find us at:

**facebook**

**<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**

**Saturday, May 4, 1:30 p.m.**

**Presenter: Rozlyn Kelly**

**Topic: Michigan Roots: African American  
Migration in Michigan**

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 Past President.



Michigan Roots: African American Migration in Michigan. The presentation discusses the migration of Blacks to Michigan in the mid-1880s, before the Great Migration from the south, with specific examples in Marquette, Midland, and Detroit.

**VOLUNTEER**



**March 7, Volunteer Day**

**1:00 p.m.—5:00 p.m.**

Have you wanted to VOLUNTEER? WMGS is in need of many volunteers. We have ongoing projects that you could help with! Some you can do from home, some are done at the library whenever you have time, and some are done on certain days. Come see what the opportunities are!

On March 7, at the Main Branch of the Grand Rapids Public Library on the 4th floor in the Vander Veen room, we are having a Volunteer Day. Bring your laptop. We will explain and you can help out.

Sue Irvine and John Pierce will be leading this fun and satisfying day.

## Education Classes

### MARCH

March 2, mini class: Noon – 1:00 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **What's New in Family Tree Maker**

No need to bring your laptops. This will be displayed on the TV in the meeting room.

Zoom Link: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/82546545442>

**Instructor: Mark Olsen, Ambassador for FTM  
(Facilitated by Bill Grinstead)**

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2 hour class: Monday, March 11, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **Beginning your Genealogy Journey**

Do you want to learn more about your roots? We'll spend some time explaining some forms and then get right to it. Bring some of your documents for hands-on reviews. You'll be amazed at the information you'll uncover. We'll concentrate on what's next in our genealogical journey.

**Instructor: Sue Irvine**

### MAY

May 4, mini class: Noon – 1:00 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **Comparing US Census Reports**

In the United States the census is taken every decade, in the year ending in zero, beginning in 1790. U.S. census records from 1790-1950 are currently available to researchers, except for the 1890 census because of a fire. We will be going over the differences with each census.

**Instructor: Linda Wells**

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2 hour class: Monday, May 13, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **Different types of Census Records**

In addition to the U.S. Federal Census records, other countries have censuses as well. Plus, there are other types of US censuses, like the Agricultural Census, Economic Census, supplemental slave census, and state censuses.

**Instructor: Linda Wells**

### APRIL

April 6, mini class: Noon – 1:00 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **The Family History Guide**

Another online (and free) resource that you can use to help you start your research, expand your research, and share your discoveries with your family. Join us as we take a deep dive into this resource and all it has to offer.

**Instructor: Michele Hoogewind**

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2 hour class: Monday, April 8, 6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m. at the GRPL VanderVeen Room, 4<sup>th</sup> floor

#### **Beginning your Genealogy Journey (Follow Up from March class)**

Did twigs you find bend or break?

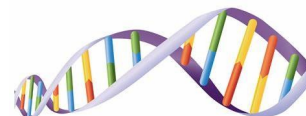
**Instructor: Sue Irvine**

### **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 VanderVeen room on the 4th floor. We have two meetings on the same day, one at 3:30 p.m. and one at 6:30 p.m. with the first half an hour being a presentation, video, speaker, etc. We spend the rest of the meeting helping each other with DNA questions and projects. Both meetings have the same content.

#### **Next meetings:**

**Thursday, March 21  
Thursday, April 18  
Thursday, May 16**



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





## NATIONAL GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY®

### Continuing Genealogical Studies (CGS)

#### Special Subjects Require Special Skills

Wish you understood more about working with deeds? Maybe you're looking for a better understanding of how to use your DNA test results. Or are you searching for an ancestor who may have served in the Union army during the Civil War but are not sure where to begin?

Now you can build your skills in specific areas of genealogical research with NGS's Continuing Genealogical Studies (CGS) courses. These courses are all self-paced e-learning.

- ◆ Understanding and Using DNA Test Results
- ◆ Transcribing, Extracting, and Abstracting Genealogical Documents
- ◆ Effective Use of Deeds
- ◆ Reading Old Handwriting
- ◆ Federal Land Records
- ◆ Guide to Documentation and Source Citation
- ◆ Researching Your Revolutionary War Ancestors
- ◆ War of 1812 Records



- ◆ Introduction to Civil War Research
- ◆ Researching Your World War I Ancestors
- ◆ African American Roots: A Historical Perspective
- ◆ Researching 17th and 18th Century German Ancestors

<https://www.ngsgenealogy.org/cgs/>

## SAVE THE DATE

### 2024 Barbara J. Brown Family History Seminar May 10—11

The 11th Annual Barbara J. Brown Family History Seminar is scheduled for **Friday, May 10** and **Saturday, May 11, 2024**. This two-day program is hosted by the Archives of Michigan in partnership with the Michigan Genealogical Council and is offered as a hybrid event. Plan to join onsite in Lansing or online from home.



Registration information will be available sometime in February 2024. Check the following page for registration and updates:

<https://mimgc.org/event/barbara-j-brown-family-history-seminar/>

### The Photo Detective Podcast

Join The Photo Detective, Maureen Taylor, each week as she discusses historical photos and how they fit into your family history. From ancestor identification to photo preservation, The Photo Detective Podcast covers it all. Featuring special experts from genealogy, fashion history, photo history, and restoration, it's a not-to-miss for photo fans, genealogists, and lovers of history.



**The Photo Detective**  
WITH MAUREEN TAYLOR

<https://maureentaylor.com/the-photo-detective/blog/>

## Genealogy Lock-In

Friday, March 15, 2024

6:00 p.m.—10:00 p.m.

4th Floor of the Main Branch of GRPL



Join the Grand Rapids History Center for an after-hours program designed for genealogists. Learn how to use library resources to explore your family history and take advantage of free copying and printing during the event. Volunteers from the Western Michigan Genealogical Society will be on hand to assist attendees.

This event is presented by the Grand Rapids History Center and the Western Michigan Genealogical Society.

**Registration Required - [www.grpl.org/register](http://www.grpl.org/register)**  
**Registration will open one month**  
**before the event date.**



**MICHIGAN  
GERMANIC  
GENEALOGICAL  
SOCIETY**



### Virtual Presentation: Germanic Resources at the Archives of Michigan

**March 11, 7:30 p.m.—8:30 p.m.**

Kris Rzepczynski will review what Germanic resources are available at the Archives of Michigan

**Note:** If you are currently a member of the Michigan Germanic Genealogical Society – you will be emailed an invitation within 7 to 10 days prior to the event from the Zoom coordinator.

If you are not a member and wish to attend the event email [information@miggs.org](mailto:information@miggs.org) and request an invitation within 7 days of the event.



The Family History Guide is a free website that represents a best-in-class learning environment for family history. Its scope is broad, but its focus is narrow enough to help you achieve your goals, step by step. Whether you're brand new to family history or a seasoned researcher—or somewhere in between—The Family History Guide can be your difference maker.

**Mission Statement:** "Our mission is to greatly increase the number of people actively involved in family history worldwide, and to make everyone's family history journey *easier*, more *efficient*, and more *enjoyable*."

Here are some of the unique features you'll find on the site:

- Goals for learning, supported by flexible Choices
- Step-by-step instructions to make learning easier
- Links to videos and articles from FamilySearch, Ancestry, and more
- QUIKLinks that take you to record searches from multiple sources, with a single click
- Project Tracker sheets and training materials for self-study or group instruction
- Activities for families, individuals, youth, and kids

Family history resources for faiths, including members of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Catholics, Protestants, and those of Jewish heritage

**<https://www.thefhguide.com/>**

# Enter the 2024 WMGS Writing Contest

## “A Turning Point in Your Family’s History”

Genealogists often discover there’s one incident, event or choice that changes the family’s historical trajectory. This “Turning Point” might have been a major political or military event (national, state or local), a critical meeting or a crossroad where several choices are evaluated. Perhaps disease, a birth or death, or a weather event caused a change in the family’s status or required a move to a new geographical area. Please tell us about a “Turning Point” in your family’s history in **1,500 to 3,000 words**.

**Format:** Entries must be sent as a PDF, Microsoft Word or Apple Pages Document.

**Sources:** WMGS strongly encourages writers to always source all facts and documents. Endnotes must be complete enough that readers could locate them easily in books, on websites, in a repository, or contact the owner of a photograph or physical item.

- **Photographs and Graphics:** Photographs and graphics are acceptable proofs and sources. The equivalent of a 300 dpi jpeg image is required. Please send EACH photograph, graphic or document in a SEPARATE email. Depending on the length of the article or the pertinence of the images to the story, some photos or graphics may not be included in final publication.

**Length: 1,500 to 3,000 Words.** Endnotes, documentation, photograph descriptions and chart information will NOT be included in the final word count.

**Eligibility:** All genealogists, except the *Michigana* editors and judges, are invited to submit stories to the contest. There is no entry fee and membership in WMGS is not required. Articles may not have been previously published in a newsletter, magazine or online.

**Identification:** On a separate cover page please include the title, your name, mailing address, email, phone number and approximate word count. This information will only be used to identify and notify winners. Also include a brief paragraph about yourself and your genealogical interests that is typically found in the “About the Author” comment at the end of published articles in *Michigana*. The Judges will not see this information until after judging is completed.

**Deadline:** Entries will be accepted between January 1 and March 31, 2024. Email your submission to [\*\*michigana@wmgs.org\*\*](mailto:michigana@wmgs.org) with “WMGS Writing Contest 2024” in the subject line. You may only submit ONE entry to this contest

**Notification:** Contest winners will be announced at the May 2024 WMGS membership meeting. 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 give WMGS one-time print and digital rights. Copyright is retained by the author. All submissions will be edited by *Michigana* staff prior to printing.

**Prizes:** 1st prize: \$100 and one annual WMGS membership (total value - \$120); 2nd prize: \$75 and one annual WMGS membership (total value - \$95); 3rd prize, \$50; 4th prize, \$25. All prizes may not be awarded.

For further information or questions about the Writing Contest, please contact the *Michigana* editor at [\*\*michigana@wmgs.org\*\*](mailto:michigana@wmgs.org). Also, be sure to check [\*\*WMGS.org\*\*](http://WMGS.org) for writing suggestions, tips and ideas on how to improve all of your family history articles and stories.

## 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](https://www.wmgs.org/writers_group.htm)

Next meeting topics:

**March—An ancestor's job or occupation. Did future generations continue doing it? If so, why? If not, why not?**

**April—When and why did you start doing genealogy? Why and how did you continue?**

**May—What was your favorite toy? Did you have toys that were handed down from one generation to the next? Tell us your "Toy Story."**

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



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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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 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](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, c/o GRPL, Western Michigan Genealogical Society, 111 Library St. NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268.

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