



WMGS Newsletter

FALL 2022



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 10, 1:30 p.m.

Presenter: Shirley Gage Hodges

Topic: Ethnic Migration to Michigan

The lecture will cover the migration of various ethnic groups to Michigan. The great majority of immigrant groups to Michigan were from a variety of European countries - both eastern and western. Immigrants came to Michigan for a variety of reasons - to seek adventure, to avoid military service, to seek opportunity, to escape oppression, to provide a better life for their families. People came in groups - some representing family groups, some representing communities and some representing specific religious groups. People immigrated to areas that provided opportunities that were familiar to them and offered them the opportunity to provide for the families. Immigrants to Michigan were brave, hardworking groups of people seeking a better life for themselves and their families.



Shirley Gage Hodges has been actively doing genealogical research since 1967. She has taught genealogy classes in Community Education Programs at various high schools and has also been a guest lecturer for several Michigan State University, The Union Institute and Davenport

College programs.

Shirley has presented lectures, seminars and workshops locally and regionally both in the United States and Canada since 1994. Although Shirley specializes in tracing your female ancestors, she covers a wide variety of topics for both the novice and advanced genealogist. Her interest in sharing her love of genealogical research and her sense of humor have delighted audiences. In 2006 Shirley was elected to the office of President of the Genealogical Speakers Guild where she served until 2010. She was the recipient of the 2012 Lucy Mary Kellogg Award.

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

Presenter: Katherine Willson

Topic: Exploring the Features of FamilySearch.org

FamilySearch.org is the largest free genealogical website in the world. This presentation demonstrates how to effectively search for your ancestor in digitized records, books, and online family trees, as well as how use the catalog, the Learning Center, and wikis to better understand what's available in your ancestral area.

Katherine R. Willson of Dexter, Michigan is an engaging & dynamic genealogy lecturer at local, regional, and national events; a full-time genealogical researcher for private clients; and an educator for in-person and virtual genealogy classes of all levels. She is the founder and Past President of the Virtual Genealogical Association, the past President of the Michigan Genealogical Council, and past board member for the Association of Professional Genealogists. She is the author of *The Genealogist's Guide to Grand Rapids, Michigan* and the creator of the Genealogy on Facebook list, cataloging 17,000+ genealogy/history pages and groups on Facebook:



(<https://socialmediagenealogy.com/genealogy-on-facebook-list>).

Saturday, November 5, 1:30 p.m.

Presenter: Karen Kruger

Topic: Researching There When You are Here

GENEALOGY CLASSES

MINI-CLASSES

Saturday, September 10, 2022, Noon—1:15 p.m.

Tour of the History / Genealogy floor of the GRPL

If you haven't been to the downtown Grand Rapids Public Library, you may have lots of questions. How do I request research assistance? How do I access archival collections? How can I donate genealogical records? How do I order copies of photographs? Do they have yearbooks? Do they have city directories? How do I use the Microfilm machine? How do I find records of my ancestors? One of WMGS members will conduct a tour and answer all these questions and more for you!

Instructor: Sue Rabick

Location: VanderVeen Room, 4th Floor GRPL

Saturday, October 1, 2022, Noon—1:15 p.m.

Most Common Mistakes In Genealogy Research

We've all been new to family history at some stage, and we'd be lying if we said we hadn't made (and continue to make) a few mistakes here and there. Luckily, genealogy is a marathon, not a sprint, and so there's time to learn from our errors and become better researchers along the way.

Instructor: Linda Wells (nee Guth)

Location: VanderVeen Room, 4th Floor GRPL

Saturday, November 5, 2022, Noon—1:15 p.m.

Location, Location, Location!

Knowing, and documenting, the areas that your ancestors lived in will help streamline your search for your ancestors and help you sort out the reasons why they migrated and how they lived.

Instructor: Michele Hoogewind

Location: VanderVeen Room, 4th Floor GRPL

TWO-HOUR CLASSES

Tuesday, September 20, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Researching Vital Records - Births

Births account for the largest number of records, followed by death records and then marriage and divorce records. What can you find in birth records? In addition to the basic information of names of the child and parents, date, and place of the birth, birth records can give important details about the parents' residence, birth places, occupations, the mother's maiden name, and in some cases grandparents' names. Other relatives may show up as witnesses. Birth records are a primary source used in family history research.

Tuesday, October 18, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Research Writing Tips & Tracking Your Correspondence

Institutions such as county courthouses, libraries, and government agencies have all kinds of records and information that should be helpful in your genealogical research. They are usually quite happy to help you; however, remember that the people in these offices are probably very busy. It's best to keep your letter concise and business-like. Also, keeping track of who you write to and what you ask for is a good idea. This way you won't repeat your efforts unnecessarily. We'll go over some helpful tips.

Tuesday, November 8, 2022, 6:00 p.m.

Using Historical and Genealogical Societies for Genealogy

Historical and genealogical societies come in all shapes and sizes. You'll find them at the local, county, state, and national levels. All of them offer a variety of activities and resources. A genealogical society represents years of genealogical research experience. If you're having trouble with a specific problem, the staff or members may be able to offer hints to help you out. It's likely that someone else in the group has already been through the same problem.

Many historical and genealogical societies work to preserve records and other materials of historical or genealogical interest in their location. Some maintain libraries of their own where you may do research, and others donate their work to local universities and libraries. Societies with their own libraries often have a good collection of local history and local family histories. Contacting a society in the area where your ancestors lived may lead you to a book about your family, and can be a good way to learn where important information may be stored. This topic tells you how historical and genealogical societies may help you in your research.

Instructor for all three classes: Linda Wells (nee Guth)

Location for each class: VanderVeen Room, 4th Floor GRPL

**2022 Michigan Genealogical Council Fall Seminar Featuring
LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson**

Saturday, November 12, 2022

Virtual Presentation

This annual event is co-sponsored by the
Archives of Michigan and the Library of Michigan



LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, JD, LLM, CG®, FASG, will end her third term as President of the Board for Certification of Genealogists in October 2022. She is a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists, and also serves as the registrar general of the Sons and Daughters of the United States Middle Passage, a national lineage society that honors ancestors who were enslaved in English colonial America and the United States of America from 1619- 1865. For more information see her website at <https://www.LabGarrettGenealogy.com>.

Join us for LaBrenda's presentations on these exciting topics.

Planning Research The development of a sound research plan is the first step in the thorough research required by the Genealogy Proof Standard.

Strengthen Your Analysis: Fundamentals of Transcribing and Abstracting The ability to craft transcriptions and abstracts is an essential skill that is needed to accurately interpret handwritten records.

Meeting Standards for Narrative Genealogies, Lineages, and Pedigrees An understanding of generally accepted formatting options is helpful in presenting information about family relationships and successive generations.

An NGSQ Case Study: DNA Corroborates Oral Tradition The case study that won the NGSQ 2020 Award for Excellence illustrated the information needed to make sound decisions on when DNA tests can or should be used in genealogical research, and how to meet DNA-specific Genealogy Standards.

This one-day event is one you won't want to miss. Additional presentations will include lectures from the staff of our co-sponsors, the Archives of Michigan, and the Library of Michigan.

For more information: <https://mimgc.org/event/2022-mgc-fall-seminar/>

My friends don't understand
my obsession with genealogy...

and I don't want to
waste valuable
research time
trying to explain.



Twisted Twigs
on gnarled branches

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

David Rencher, AG®, CG®, FUGA, FIGRS



David E. Rencher, AG®, CG®, FUGA, FIGRS, is employed as the Director, Family History Library and Chief Genealogical Officer for FamilySearch. He graduated from Brigham Young University in 1980 with a B.A. in Family and Local History. A professional genealogist since 1977, he is one of the rare few who have earned both credentials: Accredited Genealogist® with ICAPGen in Ireland research (1981) and Certified Genealogist® with the Board for Certification of Genealogists (2006). He serves as the Irish course coordinator and instructor for the Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research, the Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, and the British Institute. He is a past president of the Federation of Genealogical Societies and the Utah Genealogical Association. David is a Fellow of the Utah Genealogical Association and the Irish Genealogical Research Society, London. He serves as a director on the board of the National Genealogical Society.

For registration and more information please visit:
<http://gotancestors.com/>

GotAncestors?! 2022

WMGS (Western Michigan Genealogical Society) Annual Fall Conference

15 October 2022

Topics:

Out of the Ashes - Irish Genealogical Collections

This session focuses on describing the material in various Irish genealogical "collections" which have been digitized by the Genealogical Society of Utah. These collections represent a wealth of genealogical material, much of which was gathered prior to the destruction of the Public Record Office in 1922.

Colonial Research Strategies: Overseas Records

This session focuses on the colonial period pre-1776 and looks at a variety of record sources and websites that assist with early emigration research to America.

Methodology for Source and Archives Research

Just as using the wrong tool on the right problem produces poor results; using the right tools the wrong way also produces poor results. This session identifies the sources and the associated archives to optimize your time and resources spent in your research.

Proven Research Strategies that Transcend Geo-Political Boundaries

This session helps change the researchers thinking about processes, analysis, comparisons, correlating the evidence, compiling the family, and conducting the research using U.S. and Irish record samples.



Writing Contest Winners

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

First Place, "Surviving Objects," by **Mary Lane**

Second Place, "The Memories Keep Flooding Back," by **Joyce Kilmer**

Third Place, "Surviving Illness, Unemployment, Religious Intolerance, World Wars and Old Age," by **Gretchen Weaver**

Fourth Place, "Survivors from Ireland," by **Jane Morris**



American Ancestors
by NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Free Webinar

What's New at American Ancestors
Thursday, September 22, 2022
3:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m. ET

Presented by Claire Vail

American Ancestors is a national center for family history, heritage, and culture actively engaged in the creation of new searchable databases, digitized collections, scholarship, educational programming, and more. They are always working on new projects that share the stories of families and individuals from across the country and around the world. Stay up to date with what's new at American Ancestors with this webinar series.

For more details and registration please see:

https://hubs.americanancestors.org/whatsnew_americanancestors

**The 13th Annual Van Raalte
Farm Civil War Muster
will be held on
September 17-18, 2022**



Historic VanRaalte Farm again hosts its annual reenactment extravaganza. This year's **FREE ADMISSION** event features two days worth of music, impressions of historical figures, performances, medical scenarios, period-style vendors, and (of course) battle.

Public parking for visitors is located at 858 E. 24th St, Holland, MI 49423.

From there, visitors will be taken via shuttle to the entrance of the park.

For more information please see: <https://www.facebook.com/HollandCivilWarMuster>



Using the FamilySearch Catalog

Monday, November 7, 2022 at 12:00 p.m.



As one of the most useful tools in family history research, the FamilySearch Catalog is extremely valuable. Come learn about some tips and tricks to using the FamilySearch Catalog to help in your family history research. To register go to <https://bit.ly/3TbxcEn>.

While this conference is based out of Virginia, it is virtual, and these presenters are genealogy "heavy hitters". This is a great chance to learn from national leaders in genealogy from the comfort of home.



The Virginia Beach Genealogical Society presents

IMPROVING YOUR RESEARCH SKILLS

a virtual conference

October 1, 2022 from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. on Zoom

Join us for the following **LIVE** presentations:

No Tree, No Problem by Diahan Southard

What to do when that good DNA match that might help break down a brick wall doesn't have a tree posted. Learn some best practices identifying your best DNA matches and skills to help track down the family tree.

The Double Edged Sword by Sam Williams

Discover the 5 most common difficult discoveries a genealogist might make, learn how and why to proceed with caution, and get healing tools you can use as you grapple with the other side of genealogy.

Finding That Elusive Southern Speaker by Diana Elder

Research in the United States South presents many difficulties: burned counties, poor record-keeping, frequent migration, and more. Explore ways to overcome these obstacles and discover your southern roots.

Using Indirect and Negative Evidence to Prove Unrecorded Events by Tom Jones

Hidden or absent information can help reconstruct events, identities, and relationships that no record specifies. The qualities and uses of both will be discussed as well as examples of applying those to solving genealogical problems.



DIAHAN
SOUTHARD



SAMUEL
WILLIAMS



DIANA
ELDER



TOM
JONES

Seats are limited, buy yours early!

VBGS members: \$25, non-members: \$30

Join and get the member price.

Recordings will be available for 30 days!

For more information
and to purchase tickets,
go to vbgsva.net



WMGS WRITERS GROUP

The WMGS Writers Group meeting does meet in-person on the third Tuesday of the month at 1:30 p.m. at Trinity United Methodist Church, 1100 Lake Dr. SE, Grand Rapids or you can attend using Zoom:

Join Zoom meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88221630806>

Meeting ID: 882 2163 0806

Passcode: write

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,88221630806# US (Chicago)

Topics for the next three months are:

September: Favorite teacher, class or who had the most influence on you for good or ill

October: Halloween memories

November: Thanksgiving and weather memories

As always, you may choose to write about the monthly topic or bring any other writing project you're working on.

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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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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