



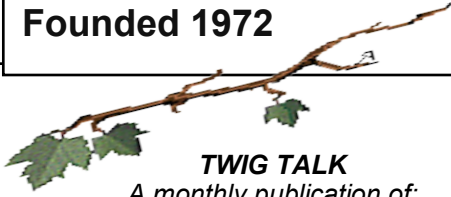
TWIG TALK

Newsletter

Founded 1972

Vol. 20 No. 12

December 2020



TWIG TALK

A monthly publication of:
Muskegon County Genealogical Society
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Celebrating 50 years in 2022

President's Message

By Dawn Westcomb Kelley -
This has been a very difficult year for all of us and our society. In 2022 MCGS will be 50 years old and we need your help to survive for the future. This will take the strength of our membership. Here are a few genealogy reasons why you might join and continue to support the society:

1. Location where your family has roots
2. You would not be alone
3. Learn new research skills
4. Learn from other members.

Check out this link for more reasons
[Ten Reasons to Join a Local Genealogy Society - Genealogy.com](#)

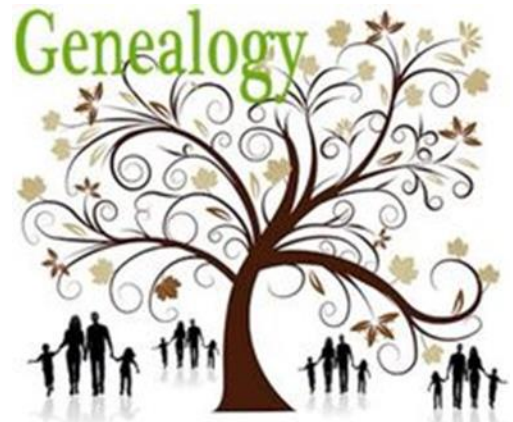
As stated last month, officers for 2020 will continue to serve in 2021

Monthly Meeting

No Meeting In December 2020

What Does Genealogy Mean?

From Wikipedia
Genealogy (from Greek: γενεαλογία genealogia "the making of a pedigree") is the study of families, family history, and the tracing of their lineages. Genealogists use oral interviews, historical records, genetic analysis, and other records to obtain information about a family and to demonstrate kinship and pedigrees of its members. The results often displayed in charts or written as narratives. The field of family history is broader than genealogy, and covers not just lineage, but also family and community history and biography.



until their successors are elected. All meetings for first part of 2021 have been canceled until further notice. If there are any changes that happen between now and January 2021 we will let you know right away. Wishing all of you a safe and healthy holiday.

DECEMBER - MEMBERSHIP

It is the time to renew your membership with an application (for record keeping purposes). See page 7 in this issue of Twig Talk. You can send your dues by mail to the address on the application or pay using PayPal. To do so go to the "Become a member" link at the bottom of the page on our website, genealogymuskegon.org/.

GENEALOGY TIP

Cross-reference city directories with the census. Be sure to check directories for the year before, the year of and the year after the census to see if your ancestors moved during this time. Keep in mind that information you find in a 1910 directory was compiled the previous year, 1909—before the 1910 census was published.

KEEPING JOURNALS AND RECORDS

by Spencer W. Kimball, LDS Church President 1973—
1985

I promise you that if you will keep your journals and records, they will indeed be a source of great inspiration to your families, to your children, your grandchildren, and others, on through the generations. Each of us is important to those who are near and dear to us. As our posterity will read of our life's experiences, they too will come to know and love us. In that glorious day when our families are together in the eternities, we will already be acquainted.

Brick Wall Strategies for Dead-End Family Trees

By [Kimberly Powell](#), [About.com Guide](#)

When it comes to family trees, things are rarely straightforward. Families often disappear between one census and the next; records are lost or destroyed through mishandling, fire, war, and flood; and sometimes the facts you do find just do not make sense. When your family history research hits a dead-end, organize your facts and try one of these popular brick wall busting tactics.

Review What You Already Have

I know. It seems basic. However, I cannot stress enough how many brick walls are breached with information that the researcher already had tucked away in files, boxes or computer disks. Information that you found a few years ago may include names, dates or other details that now provide clues given new facts that you have since uncovered. Organizing your files and reviewing your facts may uncover just the clue you are looking for.

Go Back to the Original Source

Many of us are guilty when transcribing information or recording notes of only including the facts we deem important at the time. You may have kept the names and dates from that old census record, but did you also keep track of other information such as years of marriage and country of parent's origin? On the other hand, perhaps, you misread a name or misinterpreted a relationship? If you haven't already, be sure to go back to the original records, making complete copies and transcriptions and re-

ording all clues - however unimportant they may seem right now.

Broaden Your Search

When you are stuck on a particular ancestor, a good strategy is to extend your search to family members and neighbors. When you cannot find a birth record for your ancestor that lists his/her parents, maybe you can locate one for a sibling. On the other hand, when you have lost a family between census years, try looking for their neighbors. You may be able to identify a migration pattern, or a missed indexed census entry that way. Often referred to as "cluster genealogy," this research process can often get you past tough brick walls.

Question and Verify

Many brick walls are built from incorrect data. In other words, your sources may be leading you in the wrong direction through their inaccuracy. Published sources often contain transcription errors, while even original documents may contain misinformation, whether purposefully or accidentally given. Try to find at least three records to verify any facts that you already know and judge the quality of your data based on the weight of the evidence.

Check Name Variations

Your brick wall may just be something as simple as looking for the wrong name. Variations of last names can make research complicated, but be sure to check all spelling options. Soundex is a first step, but you cannot count on it entirely. Some name variations can actually result in different Soundex codes. Not only can the surnames be different, but the given name may be different as well. I have found records recorded under initials, middle names, nicknames, etc. Get creative with name spellings and variations and cover all the possibilities.

Learn Your Boundaries

Even though you know that your ancestor lived on the same farm, you may still be looking in the wrong jurisdiction for your ancestor. Town, county, state and even country boundaries have changed over time as populations grew or political authority changed hands. Also, records were also not always registered in the locality where your ancestors lived. In Pennsylvania, for example, births and deaths can be registered in any

(Continued on page 3)

county, and many of my Cambria county ancestor's records were actually located in neighboring Clearfield County because they lived closer to that county seat and found it a more convenient trip. So, bone up on your historical geography and you just may find a new route around your brick wall.

MARKING TIME

By Cristine Bouwkamp
Superior Monument/Patten Monument Co.

Research Tools

Research. I like to think of research like a treasure hunt and I'm looking for clues that point to the treasure. I know that you yourselves have spent hours, probably hundreds of hours, in research. It's the basis of genealogy. Using the best resources means everything, otherwise your fun treasure hunt becomes a mind boggling trip down a rabbit hole. Three days pass and you realize you haven't even gotten out of your pajamas. Speaking from experience here!

New technologies are being used in the record keeping world and we are benefiting. Each time a new resource becomes available to us, we have the ability to search faster and have access to more accurate information. The GIS systems that have been implemented in all types of land development has been a huge leap in record keeping and mapping fields.

I have created, along with help from many wonderful people, large public veteran memorials all over Michigan. Muskegon's own Causeway Veterans Memorial Park has many monuments that I have poured time and love into. Building monuments is my job, but creating veterans memorial is an honor above all of them. Recently, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission sent me a link to the GIS map that it is working on for all of the Veterans markers and banners in the park. I was looking for a map of the big monuments but when I saw how easy it was to search for an individual, I was excited. It is wonderful for families, but for us this is one more amazing tool to use in research.

Another link I recently found was through the government VA website to search for veterans. 20 years into this business and I never knew

about this search tool!

I also regularly use the Michigan Township Association website. It helps me find small townships that can help me locate people in charge of obscure cemetery records.

Today, I'm sharing these links with you along with my other favorites that I use regularly in my business. You are probably familiar with most but it can be an exciting find for any aspiring genealogists.

Happy treasure hunting!

<https://wmsrdc.org/project/veteransmemorialpark/>

<https://www.cem.va.gov/gravelocator/>

https://www.michigantownships.org/find_a_township.asp

<https://gis.miottawa.org/ottawa/wab/cemeteryviewer/>

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial>

Research at the Muskegon County Clerk— Services Suspended Until Further Notice

Unfortunately we are not allowing researchers in the office at this time until further notice.



5 Golden Rules of Genealogy

1. Leave no stoned unturned, unless it is a headstone.
2. Handwriting legibility is inversely proportional to the document's importance.
3. The farther away a cemetery or library is, the more awkward the opening hours will be.
4. The relative you most need to talk with is the one whose funeral you are currently attending.
5. Whenever you find two or more siblings, there also will you find two or more surname spellings.

Strangers In The Box

By Pam Harazim, contributed by AnnMarie Freeman

Come, look with me inside this drawer,
In this box I've often seen,
At the pictures, black and white,
Faces proud, still, and serene.
I wish I knew the people,
These strangers in the box,
Their names and all their memories,
Are lost among my socks.
I wonder what their lives were like,
How did they spend their days?
What about their special times?
I'll never know their ways.
If only someone had taken time,
To tell, who, what, where, and when,
These faces of my heritage,
Would come to life again.
Could this become the fate,
Of the pictures we take today?
The faces and the memories,
Someday to be passed away?
Take time to save your stories,
Seize the opportunity when it knocks,
Or someday you and yours,
Could be strangers in the box.

Looking For An Ancestor

I went looking for an ancestor I cannot find
him still.
He moved around from place to place and
did not leave a will.
He married where a courthouse burned.
He mended all his fences.
He avoided any man who came to take
the US census.

He always kept his luggage packed, this
man who had no fame.
And every 20 years, this rascal changed
his name.
His parents came from Europe, they could

be on some list.
Of passengers to the USA, but somehow
he got missed.

And no one else anywhere is searching
for this man.

So I play geneasolitaire to find him if I
can.

I'm told he's buried in a plot, with tomb-
stone he was blessed.

But the weather took the engraving and
some vandal took the rest.

He died before the county clerks decided
to keep records.

No family Bible has emerged in spite of
all my efforts.

To top it off this ancestor, who has
caused me many groans,
Just to give me one more pain, betrothed
a girl named JONES!

ALL I WANT FOR CHRISTMAS

Dear Santa:

**Don't bring me new dishes;
I don't need a new kind of game.
Genealogists have peculiar wishes;
For Christmas I just want a surname!
A new washing machine would be great,
But it isn't the desire of my life.
I've just found an ancestor's birth date,
Now I need the name of his wife.
My heart doesn't yearn for a ring
that would put a real diamond to shame.
What I want is a much cheaper thing:
Please give me Martha's last name!
To see my heart singing with joy,
Don't bring me a red leather suitcase.
Bring me a genealogist's toy:
A surname, with dates, and a place!**

Southern California Genealogical Society Webinar Series - Join our twice-monthly webcasts with knowledgeable genealogists to help grow what you know. The **LIVE** broadcast is **FREE** and open to the public.

Register at www.scgsgenealogy.com

- **You MUST Register to participate.**
 - Click on the Webinar Title you want to attend listed below.
 - Register with our partner website, *GoToWebinar.com*.
 - Enter your name and email address and answer a few questions. You will receive confirmation of your registration by email. You will also receive reminders before the webinar. **The reminder email will have information on accessing the handout material.**
- On the day of the session, click the link that you received in your invitation to *GoToWebinar.com* to join the online session.

Saturday, December 5

1:00 PM - Eastern

Faith of Our Fathers; United States Church Records, Part 2

by Peggy Lauritzen, AG®, FOGS



Our country is one of religious diversity. Except for the very early days in the colonies, there has never been a “state religion”. Part 2 covers arrival in America. A number of different religions and their beginnings will be discussed. Part 1 covered the beginnings and causes in Europe that may have led to their emigration (presented on October 16, 2019). SCGS Members may wish to log into the Member Only section for a refresher on Part 1.

Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG®, FOGS, has become a favorite speaker at conferences and webinars. She serves as a Family History Center director and is an instructor and author at Legacy Family Tree Webinars, Ancestry Academy, Family Tree University, and a columnist for Reminisce Magazine. She received the 2018 Laura G. Prescott Award for Exemplary Service to Professional Genealogy.

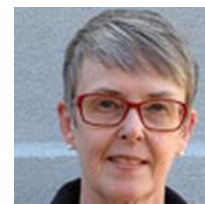
Wednesday, December 16

9:00 PM - Eastern

Bounty Land: It's Complicated

by Annette Burke Lyttle

Bounty land was offered as compensation for soldiers who fought in the Revolution, War of 1812, and Mexican War, but veterans of these wars didn't simply take up residence on their land grants. Some did, but many people who weren't veterans ended up with these lands. Learn about the laws, all the people who got involved, and where to find the records.



Annette Burke Lyttle is a professional genealogist specializing in online and repository research, and genealogical education and writing. She loves helping people find and tell their family stories.

2020 Dates to REMEMBER



MCGS Meetings

2nd Thursday at 6:30 p.m.
VFW Post 3195
5209 Grand Haven Road



January 9
 February 13
 March 12
 April 9 (cancelled)
 May 14 (cancelled)
 June 11 (cancelled)
 August 13 (cancelled)
 September 10 (cancelled)
 October 8 (cancelled)
 November 12 (cancelled)
NO meetings in July & December

Genealogy Family History Workshops

Hackley Library-Torrent House
 Local History & Genealogy Dept., 315 W. Webster Ave
 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Space is limited, so please pre-register, by calling the Torrent House, Local History & Genealogy Dept. at 231-722-8016 Tues thru Sat, between 10:00 a.m. and 4:45 p.m.

January 11
 February 8
 March 14
 April 11 (cancelled)
 May 9 (cancelled)
 September 12 (cancelled)
 October 10 (cancelled)
 November 14 (cancelled)
NO workshops in
 June, July, August & December

LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY DEPT.

Changes to the Local History & Genealogy Department. **PLEASE** call ahead of time at 231-722-8016 Tuesday thru Friday from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm. To make sure they are open or check out the Hackley Public Library website for new updates on opening and closing at <https://hackleylibrary.org/>
 Click the Local History & Genealogy button on top of the page and check out the **Research Resources**



Muskegon Genealogical Society

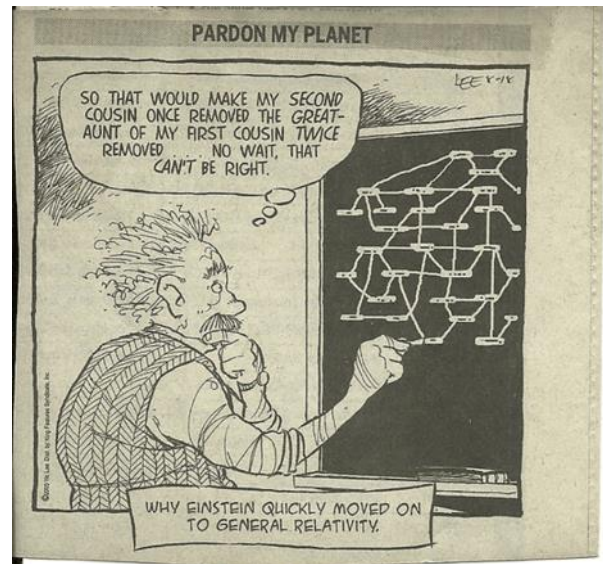
2020 Officers

President: Dawn Westcomb Kelley
Past President: Jane Appleton Schapka
Vice President: Ingrid Porritt
Secretary: Tom Shepherd
Treasurer: Nancy Clark Spoon

Committees

Facebook Norman Dagen
 Historian Board Members
 History Book Project..... Kathy DeCormier
 Hospitality.....Jane Weber
Maria Chemelarova
John & Phyllis Slater
 Library Barb Martin
 Membership Paula Halloran
 Chris Nowak
 Newsletter Editor..... Tom Porritt
 Pioneer Program..... Barb Martin
 Programs & Publicity Ingrid Porritt
 Tom Shepherd
 Bill Hansen
 Gale Taggart
 Special Projects Dawn Kelley
 Website Board Members
 County Clerk Office ... Members
 Michigan Genealogical Council.
Gail Taggart, Delegate

AND ONE MORE FOR MEASURE



HISTORY BOOK UPDATE

We care what happens to our members, their families, and everyone around us. History Book, Volume 2 will be extend until further notice. We will let you know of the new date in the next few months. This is very difficult time for everyone. If you have any questions, you can email us at 1972mcgs@gmail.com or send your information to Kathy DeCormier at middlaker@frontier.com — In the subject area put "History Book Volume 2".

MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION for 2021

** Our membership begins January 1 through December 31 **

- New Membership Renewal Membership
- \$25.00 Single in the USA \$30.00 Single USD\$ outside the USA
- *Membership cards are available on request. Send a small SASE with your membership payment.*
- We are a non-profit organization 501 (c) (3)
If you wish to make a donation, please fill in the amount \$ _____

*PHONE (____) _____

*E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

*NAME _____

*ADDRESS _____

*CITY _____ *STATE _____ *ZIP _____

Please make check or money orders payable to MCGS

**MAIL TO:
MCGS**

Attn: MEMBERSHIP
C/O HPL - Torrent House
315 W. Webster Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

MCGS USE ONLY

Date Received _____
Check # _____ Amount Paid _____
Paid Cash _____
Money Order _____
PayPal _____