

T W I G T A L K

Newsletter



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President's Message

By Dawn Westcomb Kelley



I want to thank everyone who came to the November Annual meeting. It was a challenge with the nasty winter weather, but in spite of the weather, we made the quorum to approve the new officers.

I have been President for very long time and now it is time to move on to another position. The new elected officers for 2023 are: President, Karen Frazier, Vice President, Dawn Kelley, Secretary, Tom Shepherd, and for Treasurer is Jennifer Lamikin. Thank you for stepping up to volunteer for these positions. The new positions will start the first of January 2023.

I want to express my appreciation to two special members. Ingrid Porritt who volunteered for the Vice President and Program chair positions for the last 5 years and Nancy Spoon, who has been our Treasurer for so many years.

Have a wonderful Christmas and nice New Year!

Thanks to all of you for your continued support. Stay safe and healthy!

2023 DATES TO REMEMBER Meeting place, time **new dates.**

Place: Hackley Public Library meeting room in the lower level of the library in room #2. It is handicapped accessible with ramp & elevator. **Use the front door only. The stairs to the front door are kept FREE of snow and ice.**

Dates: The 3rd Saturday! Put these days on your calendar - January 21, February 18, March 18, April 15, May 20, and June 17.

Time: Doors open for the MCGS meetings at 10:00am with a meeting start time at 10:30am.

Genealogy Quotation - The Genealogy Guide, by Owain Couch

"We are the chosen. In each family, there is one who seems called to find the ancestors. To put

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flesh on their bones and make them alive again, to tell the family story and feel that somehow they know and approve. Doing genealogy is not a cold gathering of facts, but instead, breathing life into all who have gone before. We are the storytellers of the tribe”.

Genealogy TIP – From Family Tree

Can't find your ancestor's [Social Security record](#)? Until 1951, the system didn't cover the self-employed, temporary government workers, farm laborers, domestic workers such as maids, workers in US territories, or overseas employees of American companies. Railroad workers were covered separately under the [Railroad Retirement Board](#) (the first three digits of their Social Security numbers range from 707 to 728).

Marking Time

Rituals and Traditions

By Cristine Bouwkamp
Superior Monument /Patten Monument Co.

A couple years ago I read a book by mortician and death care advocate, Caitlyn Doughty, with a title of “From Here to Eternity”. The book tells of her global journey and shares compelling and powerful death rituals almost entirely unknown in America. Some of the places she traveled included Indonesia, Belize, Mexico, and, Barcelona. Each of these places and people have their own intriguing and profound ways of dealing with death, bodies, burial and memorialization. All very unlike the majority of the USA where the funeral industry and state law set out how death is handled. How we came to our traditions is another story, but right now, I'm thinking of Barcelona.

My daughter is currently studying in Barcelona and sent pictures of the columbariums built into the hillside that are the rental spaces. Of course, there are areas and mausoleums that stay in the family but the idea of a temporary grave is not out of the ordinary In Barcelona, Spain when a person dies, the process for the family and deceased is very quick. The body is taken to a modern funeral home that has large glass walls overlooking the sea, you can go to the coffee bar and use the free wifi while you wait for the viewing to begin. A family is seated in a room for the whole day but the body is behind glass. There are different ways that can be done, in a glass casket or behind a glass wall but once the time is up the body is taken away for immediate burial or cremation. Bodies are mostly buried in the “green” tradition, to decompose. Then the bones are moved to a mass grave and first grave is recycled for another body.



In our culture, reusing a grave would be unheard of. Our traditions give us space for a final resting-place. A permanent and sacred spot. Family lots are a very common sight. Even with cremation, many family members are still buried in the same or adjoining graves. We place a marker on the grave and it is supposed to stay there forever.

Cremation trends are certainly challenging this idea at the moment. As cemeteries begin to change for new ideas, new types of disposition, and land conservation issues, I wonder what the cemeteries of the future in the US will look like. In planning new cemeteries we are leaving behind the Romanticism Era of lawnsapes and park settings, but will we find ways to keep the reverence and

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purpose?

We may not move towards the idea of space rental, or in the case of Indonesia, keeping our loved ones in a house next door to us, but things are changing. Just as record keeping has drastically changed in the last 30 years, so will our notion of death, burial and memorialization.

Muskegon Streetcar Riots of 1919

By Melene Meade

In early Muskegon, the average family did not own their own transportation so streetcars were commonplace. Streetcars in the city of Muskegon were owned and operated by The Muskegon Transit and Lighting Company. It was a monopoly and they had a history of haphazardly raising their rates. By 1919, the rate for a one-way trip on the streetcar was 6 cents.

But on August 5, 1919, Muskegon Transit raised the rate from 6 cents to 7 CENTS-YES!!!-ONE PENNY and the working class people of Muskegon were NOT having it. A mere penny may not seem like a lot to you and me but if you consider that the average wage for a white male worker was \$750 annually, you may begin to empathize. A 6 cent streetcar ride to and from work daily over the course of a year added up to approximately \$32. This represented about 4% of a worker's salary and the 1 cent increase represented another 1/2 percent. So they were understandably upset. How did they let the transit company know?

Well... it started with an argument between a handful of workers and a streetcar conductor. A crowd began to form and windows on the streetcars started getting smashed. Within hours, it had grown to a proper mob of thousands and a full blown riot. Police and firemen were called to squash the protesting. Warning shots were fired into the air which just angered the rioters even more. The first responders had to flee for their lives. By evening, the crowd was looking to do more damage than just a few fires and some broken windows, so they started taking streetcars off the tracks and lining them up on Pine Street. One by one, they would push the cars until they started rolling down Pine Street towards Western. There they would crash into each other at the bottom of the hill creating a huge mangled mess.

By morning, the crowd had wrecked 13 streetcars. Across town, (near Michigan and Franklin Streets, across the street from present day Cole's Bakery) the barns and property where the streetcars were housed were also destroyed. Damage to the streetcars alone was estimated to be around \$100-125,000 worth of damage. That translates into about \$1.5 million today. The streetcar service had to shut down for 2 weeks. In a scathing review of the incident, the governor of Michigan wanted the mayor and all the aldermen in Muskegon fired for their lack of response. He also said the police and firemen handled the situation miserably. He basically called them cowards for not getting into the middle of things and breaking it up. But people who were there said there was NO WAY they could have stopped the crowd. It was too big and too angry.

There are differing reports on deaths and arrests. One article claimed that there were 30 subsequent arrests and one death. But other articles did not mention any deaths and said that no arrests were ever made.

I will leave you with these statistics to think about. At the time of the riot, the average worker spent 4% of their wages on transportation. Today, we spend more like 20%. Traveling by public transportation is **10 times safer per mile** than traveling by automobile. A person can reduce his or her chance of being in an accident by more than 90% simply by taking public transit as opposed to commuting by car.

**FROM THE VAULT OF THE MCGS *FAMILY TREE TALK*:
A BRIEF GLIMPSE OF THE HISTORY OF MUSKEGON COUNTY**

by Gerald B. Tripp

(Originally published December 1972, and updated in 2022 by Karen Frazier)

The first country to lay claim to Michigan was France. They called their possession New France, which encompassed all the great lakes and much of what is now Ontario. At the "Treaty of Paris" in 1763 England took possession of most of France's holding including Michigan and what would become Muskegon County.

In 1781 a Spanish Expedition of 65 Spanish and 65 Indians under **Don Hugentio Puree** seized the fort at St. Joseph. For a few days the flag of Spain flew over the fort, thus Michigan had the distinction of having belonged to three nations: France, England, and Spain. Soon a fourth would claim that distinction permanently. On 3 Sept 1783 the final treaty was signed, and Michigan became part of the United States.

Muskegon County:

- In 1790 was part of Knox County of Northwest Territory
- In 1803 was part of Wayne County, Indiana Territory
- In 1809 was part of Michigan Territory
- In 1818 was part of Michilimackinac County, Michigan Territory
- In 1836 was part of Kent County, Michigan
- In 1840 was part of Ottawa County, Michigan
- In 1859 was set off and organized such as it is today

The area of Muskegon County was first visited by **Jean Nicollet** in 1634. In 1675 **Father Jacques Marquette** spent a night near the present city of Muskegon several days before he died.

Nolins map published in 1688 clearly shows that the Muskegon River had been explored only a short distance from its mouth, while the Grand River to the south had been explored considerably at that time. This area was inhabited at this time by the tribe of Indians called the Ottawa's, which is the Indian word for trader. They came from Canada between 1642 and 1650 and chased off the tribes of the Sacs and Foxes.

During historic times, the Muskegon area was inhabited by various bands of the Ottawa and Pottawatomie Indian tribes. Perhaps the best remembered of the Indian inhabitants of the area **was** Ottawa Indian **Chief Pentalouan**. A leading participant in the French-inspired annihilation of the Fox Indians of Illinois in the 1730s, he and his people lived in the Muskegon vicinity during the 1730s and 1740s until induced by the French to move the settlement to the Traverse Bay area in 1742.

The earliest known resident of the county was **Edward Fitzgerald**, a fur trader and trapper who visited the Muskegon area in 1748 and who died here, reportedly buried in the vicinity of White Lake. Sometime between 1790 and 1800, a French-Canadian trader named **Joseph La Framboise** established a trading post at the mouth of Duck Lake. Between 1810 and 1820 several French Canadian

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fur traders, including **Lamar Andie**, **Jean Baptiste Recollect**, and **Pierre Constant**, established posts around Muskegon Lake.

About 1810 *Pierre Constant*, a trader doing business with the British Fur Company established a trading post on Muskegon Lake (near Bluffton). He married a Fox Indian woman of remarkable beauty and intelligence, by whom six children were born. **Jean Baptiste Recollet** established a fur post in 1812. **Joseph Daily** established a trading post in 1830 on Muskegon Lake, which he sold in 1834 to **Lewis B. Badeau**.

The 2nd settler on Muskegon Lake was **Joseph Troutier**. He was known for saying “Me and my wife the first white man in Muskegon”. In 1837 the first sawmill/steam mill was built on Muskegon Lake, by **Benj. H. Wheelock** (agent of the Muskegon Steam Mill Co). After one year he sold to **John Lloyd** (of Grand Rapids). Also in 1837, the **Hon. Charles Mears** arrived with his 17 year old brother, **Albert Mears**. Charles built the first mill on the lake, opening in 1838.

In 1837 **Jonathan H. Ford** (agent of the Buffalo and Black Rock Co) built a water mill at mouth of Bear Lake. Also, in 1837 the Township was organized, called *Maskego*, a subdivision of Ottawa County. In 1838 Township re-organized and was called *Muskegon*. The city of Muskegon was plotted in 1849.

In 1838 **Minerva Dill** (daughter of **Thomas Dill** and **Susan Bohne**) was born. She was the first white child born within the Muskegon County limits. (Update: they are all buried in Oakwood - KF)

Jean Baptiste Parrisien was the first mail carrier between Grand Haven and Grand Rapids. He came to Grand Haven in 1835 and was appointed the following year. He blazed the trail to Granville on the south side of the Grand River which became known as the River Road.

He always traveled by foot carrying his own pack and supplies. His return with the mail was always eagerly awaited and broke the monopoly of Pioneer life. **Jean Baptiste Parrisien** has many descendants still living in Muskegon County now spelling their name **Parysian**.

Of course, following the fur trading era came the great lumbering days. By 1850 there were six mills. Soon Muskegon became known as the “Lumber Queen of the World”. At one time nearly 800,000,000 board feet of lumber were cut in Muskegon annually. After the lumbering era passed Muskegon adapted herself to industrial development.

The history of Muskegon County is important to us whether many generations of our ancestors lived here or only one, as it reflects the growth and spirit of all of our young country.

Sources:

- 1: Muskegon County Website: <https://co.muskegon.mi.us/770/History-of-Muskegon>
- 2: Portrait & biographical Record of Muskegon & Ottawa Co., 1893, Google Books: <https://books.google.com/>
- 3: History of Muskegon County with Illustrations and Biographical Sketches, 1882 Google Books: <https://books.google.com/>
- 4: History of the Settlement of Muskegon, by Henry Holt, 1887, Google Books: <https://books.google.com/>
- 5: Wikipedia.com
- 6: Encyclopedia Britannica: <https://www.britannica.com/>
- 7: Lakeshore Museum Center: <https://lakeshoremuseum.org/>
8. Historical County Maps: <https://mycounties.com/michigan/>



Save the Dates: 31 May - 3 June NGS 2023 Family History Conference Richmond, Virginia

Thanks to the more than 885 NGS members who answered our conference survey, the NGS Family History Conference promises to deliver the programming you're looking for in 2023.

Pre-Conference Events and Official Opening: Wednesday, 31 May

- Local Tours
- Delegate Council Meeting
- New Focus Program for Societies, Libraries, and Archives, including a luncheon and "Shout Out"
- SLAM! Idea Showcase Reception
- Official Start of Conference with Expo Hall Opening

Conference Program: 1 June – 3 June (Thursday through Saturday)

The program will include

- BCG Skill Building
- Virginia Track
- Methodology
- Latest DNA Tools
- African American Research
- Native Peoples Research
- Jewish records, and more.

Special Bonus

The [Library of Virginia](#) has confirmed that it will extend its research hours from 9:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. on Thursday, 1 June, and from 10:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on Saturday for its Archives Research Room. You may also want to visit Richmond's other outstanding genealogical research facilities. Take advantage of NGS's discounted hotel rates three days before and three days after the conference to research your Virginia ancestors.

Program/Registration/Hotels

The 2023 Family History Conference program will be available online approximately two weeks before we open conference registration. Check the [NGS Conference website](#) for announcements about the program and registration. We will open hotel registrations at three downtown hotels—Richmond Marriott, Hilton, and Omni—after conference registration opens.

See You in Richmond!



MUSKEGON COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

*** Our membership year is January 1 through December 31***

*NAME _____

*ADDRESS _____

*CITY _____ *STATE _____ COUNTRY _____ *ZIP _____

*E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

*PHONE/CELL (____) _____

MEMBERSHIP:

New Membership

Renewal Membership

\$25.00/yr. .Single in USA

\$30.00/yr. Single USD\$ outside USA

NEW FOR 2023! \$12.00/yr. Youth Member (under 21)

MCGS is a non-profit organization, 501(c)(3). If you wish to make a donation.
please fill in the amount: \$ _____

Payment Method: Cash Check Money Order PayPal [via MCGS website](#)

*Please make **check or money order** payable to MCGS*

IF PAYING WITH CASH YOU MUST PAY IN PERSON & SUBMIT COMPLETED APPLICATION.

IF USING PAYPAL, EMAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION TO:
1972mcgs@gmail.com **OR:**

MAIL COMPLETED APPLICATION, AND CHECK/MONEY ORDER TO:
MCGS
Attn: MEMBERSHIP
C/O HPL - Torrent House
315 W. Webster Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49440-1208

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IMPORTANT MESSAGE

**MCGS MEETINGS
NEW PLACE**

Hackley Public Library
316 W. Webster Ave.
Muskegon, MI 49440



**Saturdays at 10:30am
NO DECEMBER MEETING!**

2023 Meetings

- Jan. 22
- Feb. 18
- Mar. 18
- Apr. 15
- May 20
- Jun. 17



RESEARCH HELP

Torrent House Local History
& Genealogy Department

315 W. Webster Ave.

Contact MCGS for your
Individual appointment with
one of our members.

At 231-722-8016

or email us at

1972mcgs@gmail.com

LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY

DEPARTMENT

Call 231-722-8016

Sunday & Monday — Closed

Tuesday thru Saturday

10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

More on their website

<https://www.hackleylibrary.org/local-history-genealogy/research-sources-at-the-torrent-house/>



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UPDATE for HISTORY BOOK VOLUME 2

History Book Volume 2 name is “Footprints in History”

Last date for submissions: February 15, 2023

Do not wait to put your family history in Volume 2

If you have any questions or need help, contact us at
our 1972mcgs@gmail.com or send your information

to Kathy DeCormier at middlaker@frontier.com —

In the subject area put “History Book Volume 2”.

TWIG TALK

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