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## Upcoming Programs:

### February 15:

#### “Muskegon County Industry through the Ages”

Presented by Kirk Bunke from the Lakeshore Museum

The Muskegon area has had a unique ability to make and remake itself over the years. The main economic drivers began with the international fur trade and changed with technology to include lumber production, furniture making, foundries, high tech and aerospace industries. The presentation explores some of the key turning points and major players that made Muskegon County.



## Next Member Meeting

February 15

Doors open 10:00

Meeting starts at 10:30

Hackley Public Library Lower Level

### March 15

#### “Making the Genealogy Center in Fort Wayne, IN Your Research Assistant”

Presented by Curt Witcher

Curt Witcher is the Director of Special Collections at the Allen County Public Library, managing the widely acclaimed Genealogy Center as well as the Rolland Center for Lincoln Research. He is a former president of both the Federation of Genealogical Societies and the National Genealogical Society, and the founding president of the Indiana Genealogical Society. Curt currently serves on the Indiana State Historical Records Advisory Board, the Indiana Historical Society's publications committee, and the executive committee of the Friends of the Lincoln Collection of Indiana's Board of Directors. He also serves on the Northeast Indiana Jewish Genealogy Society board of directors as well as an advisor for the African American Genealogical Society of Fort Wayne



## President Corner

Hello,

Winter has definitely found Michigan! I hope, if you are staying home and off the roads, you are working on that genealogy paper stack that has been sitting in the corner (or under the bed) for quite some time. And moving the pile from one spot to another does not count (as my husband gently reminded me)!

Your Board of Directors is excited about 2025 and continuing to develop our resources for members and the public. NEW for 2025 are workshops such as a Writer's Group, and Genealogy Step by Step, and continuing our Genetic Genies/DNA journey. These are all developed and facilitated by volunteers. Many thanks to everyone willing to teach and help individuals with like interests connect and learn from each other. See our website for more information and to enroll if you are interested.

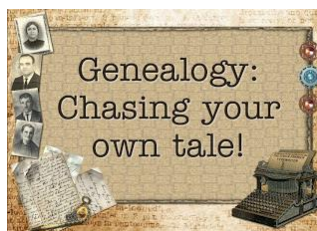
Thank you for your support of the Society. Hope to hear from you soon!

*Karen (Page) Frazier*

# Welcome new member:

## Richard Fritzpatrick - Newaygo, MI

Surnames: Bodenber, Fritzpatrick, Jacobs



### Last Meeting Highlights

Our January meeting was met with cold winds and wintery weather. The 23 members in attendance and four members via ZOOM enjoyed a repeat of the 2023 program by Jennifer Lamkin "Organizing Your Paper Genealogy". This was a last-minute change due to illness with our speaker, but there was plenty of inquisitive conversation around the topic.

The take-away from the meeting was basically find a method that works for your brain type and one that is easily maintained. Jennifer shared what works best for her and many leaned into her ideas. The greatest new information given was that she labels her children as person ONE in her family tree – not herself. This then makes it easier to transition the research to the next generation.

Gary Versalle was the winner of the book draw.

### Next Meeting Reminders

Member only book draw:



Yet to be determined  
Come to the meeting to find out what book has been chosen!!

### Travel Opportunities with MCGS

If you are unable to join us "on the road" to RootsTech; you can still enjoy most of the benefits of the conference FOR FREE! Simply click the link [HERE](#)

March 6-8  
ROOTSTECH 2025



### Library of Michigan/Archives

April 5  
August 2

ACPL

October 1-4

More details on these as the date approaches.

# Board Updates

The Board started its regularly scheduled meetings again in January. The focus was the implementation of a Website Improvement Committee to start meeting and planning a better future for our website. The goal is to have it fully functional and attractive to a younger audience without losing the ease of usefulness for our more mature members.

## In Progress:

- Talks about having workshops be publicly available.
- Many Special Projects underway including DD214 indexing, scanning Historical Pioneer Certificates, Harry Cleveland Military Collection, Scanning History Book 1 (to make available on Amazon), and Justice of the Peace indexing.

See side panel to help-→

We look forward to seeing you at our regular monthly meetings. If you ever have a concern, comment, question or just something you wish us to know, please do not hesitate to bring it to our attention at one of these meetings! We always look forward to hearing from you – as this is YOUR society.

[1972mcgs@gmail.com](mailto:1972mcgs@gmail.com)



MCGS is always looking for VOLUNTEERS!!

Are you good at keeping track of inventory? Our Sales Chair would be perfect for you. Are you good at typing? We are ALWAYS looking for people to help index.

See the Board Updates with all the indexing projects underway.

## Monthly Board meeting in Review

We revisited the Board of Directors responsibilities, the By-Laws, and the Policy and Procedures manuals. Five new policies were implemented last year and the History of MCGS was organized to completion. The Membership Brochure, which is distributed by other societies, was revised to include new and up to date information.

## An Invitation to FACEBOOK

### [Our Facebook Page](#)

While we take Facebook for granted, we also have a wellspring of information available at our fingertips. What many people see on Facebook is only the surface and sometimes, if we are extremely lucky, we can go down a rabbit hole, while scrolling, and some wonderful and unusual places can be discovered.

The Muskegon County Genealogical Society maintains a Facebook page and what members and friends may not be aware of is that the page is also for anyone to share information, photographs or interesting bits of genealogical lore. The MCGS Facebook page welcomes contributions from any of its members. People do spend a lot of time simply liking posts and comments, but we would “like” you to participate too.

The simplest way to submit something for post is via the message button. Click the button and a new window opens in Messenger, automatically addressed to the Society. At this point, you may attach a photograph or an image or simply type a message. Always be sure to include any information you have regarding a submission and please keep in mind, you should never include personal information, like your physical address, phone number or email address.



## Western Michigan Genealogical Society

Plan ahead...  
October 18, 2025  
[Got Ancestors Seminar](#)

**Library of Michigan**  
have published the entire year of programs  
[click HERE to see the entire listing](#)  
Simply click the program to register  
1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at 6:30 PM

## Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center

ACPL is offering 7 [virtual programs](#) for February.  
Register within each class.

### Legacy Family tree Webinars

Enrich your genealogy knowledge anytime, anywhere - the world's most popular webinar website for genealogy and DNA testing, where you can enjoy a robust offering of live and recorded webinars presented by top speakers. Free! [Must register.](#)

**February 21, 2025**  
Soldiers, Squatters and Settlers

French/Canadian  
Heritage Society of  
Michigan

**February 15, 11am**  
<https://www.habitantheritage.org/>



John William Nelson (author of: Muddy Ground: Native Peoples, Chicago's Portage, and the Transformation of a Continent (UNC Press, 2023), "Muddy Ground: Why Chicago's Portage Matters to Early American History".  
Zoom Meeting



<https://miigsm.org/>

**Saturday February 15**  
**1:30pm**

Emigration, Immigration and  
Naturalization  
by Tom Koselka

~~~~~  
Southern California  
Genealogical Society

**Wednesday, February 18,**  
**6 to 7 p.m. PST**

Dede Huang

["Chinese Exclusion's Hidden Impact on Non-Chinese Family Histories"](#)

NGS is offering its annual conference in Louisville KY this May.

Click the image for more details:



**The Library of Michigan  
and  
The Michigan  
Genealogical Council  
are teaming up once  
again for the  
Barbara J. Brown  
Family History Seminar  
Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup> 1 PM to  
Saturday May 9<sup>th</sup> 4 PM**

**Location:  
Michigan Library &  
Historical Center  
702 West Kalamazoo St.,  
Lansing MI.**

**No other information yet.  
Check the website  
(<https://mimgc.org>) in  
early 2025 for more  
details. There  
is usually a cost for  
attending the seminar  
and in the past, they have  
offered a "lock-in" at the  
Archives and Library with  
extended hours and  
supper!!**





# Technology Merges with Genealogy

## AI (Artificial Intelligence) series continued...

Now it's the CONS turn. This is actually going to take a couple of months to get through as there are MANY... Not to say that these override the PROS but, as Thomas MacEntee says, these have a Pandora's box set of problems that needs to be addressed.

- Lack of Transparency: there is no information as to the data that is being used as the reference material.
- Recognizing AI generated content: It's hard to tell what is real versus AI generated. No

watermarking, no source citation on content

- Bias: since a lot of the content used as reference material is supplied by humans this is hard to avoid.
- Copyright: US courts rule that content created by AI tools cannot be copyrighted.
- False Information: Who or What determines what is true??

Next month: Continuing the CONS with...

PRIVACY VIOLATIONS!!

## EXPLORING THE WORLD OF PODCASTS:

### [Genealogy Happy Hour](#)

What is Genealogy Happy Hour, you ask? Well, it is a genealogy podcast that helps family historians get started on the right track and that means DOCUMENTATION. Sure, it's fun to follow the shaky leaves and the smart matches but how do you know it's really your ancestor? By following along with the Two Blondes you will be able to locate records and documents to prove your ancestral line.

Produced monthly  
By: The Two Blondes

Enjoying our publication?

Why not [click here](#) to fill out the survey and have your voice be heard.

This is an anonymous survey so please feel free to be candid.

I would like your honest opinion of our publication.

## THIS DAY IN HISTORY



## FEBRUARY 6, 1844

What city received its final name on this date??

Find out by following [this link](#).

## Monthly Quote

**MEMBERS....** Do you have an ancestor you would like to share with others? Do you have some advice to help others in their research? Here is your opportunity. Simply submit your article to [twigtalk1972@gmail.com](mailto:twigtalk1972@gmail.com) by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month and you can become a published author!!!!

# Dive Into Muskegon

## "Genealogy



It's not the  
size of the  
tree that  
matters

We received an email from member Dennis Allen asking us to share some exciting "news"...

"Hi. Just to let you know [newspapers.com](http://newspapers.com), which can be accessed from [ancestry.com](http://ancestry.com), now has the Muskegon Chronicle online, as well as the Grand Rapids Press and Grand Haven Tribune...Dennis"

Whoop! Whoop! Now THAT does let you Dive into Muskegon!

I have another, albeit brief, history of another contributor to the Auxiliary Favorites II 1969 recipe book. This month I am highlighting Donna Hofmann. She was born Donna May Strait on February 17, 1921 in Muskegon MI, to Leo and Daisy F. (Gray) Strait. She married Walter Otto Hofmann from Fremont, Mich. on July 31, 1939. In 1940, she lived with her husband and his parents in Bridgeton, Newaygo Co. MI (unfortunately, they lost an infant son earlier that same year). By 1950, Walter and Donna lived in Muskegon Heights with their two sons, Edwin and Deloss.

Donna was widowed on November 16, 1977 and lived another 42 years without her husband, passing away on Sept. 29, 2019. Both are buried in Holton Cemetery in Muskegon County MI.

She submitted a recipe under the Breads category titled Sweet Rolls. I absolutely love how simple she wrote the instructions. It is left completely up to the interpretation of whomever is using it.

### SWEET ROLLS

4 eggs, beaten  
½ cake large yeast or 2 pkg. dry yeast  
1 c. sugar  
1 c. lard  
2 c. milk  
1 c. water  
2 ¼ lb. flour  
1 tbsp. salt

Let rise 1 hr. before putting in refrigerator. Use when needed.



Did you miss the email to sign up for the upcoming workshops our society is offering this year??

Use the clickable links and fill out the Google Forms so you can be included!!! All Workshops are beginning soon!!! Don't wait – sign up today, space is limited!!

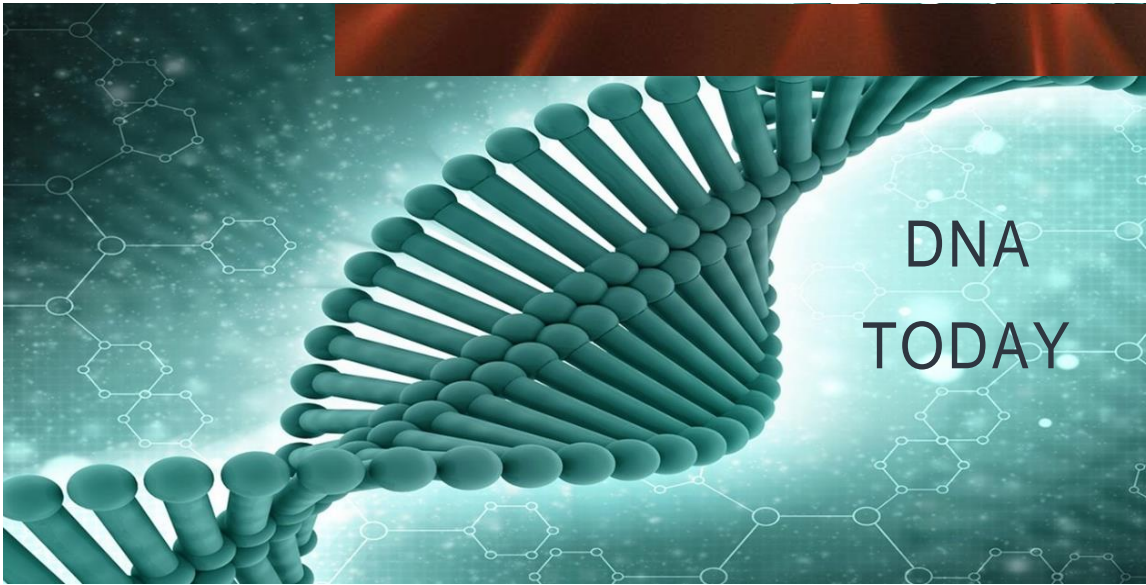
[Genetic Genies/DNA workshop](#)

[The Genealogy Process – Step by Step](#)

[Writer's Workshop 2025](#)

It's the  
quality of  
the nuts you  
find on  
there!

~ Unknown



# DNA TODAY

For those of you joining the Genies this month and especially for those of you who are just not ready yet, allow me to introduce you to Crista Cowen (The Barefoot Genealogist and The Corporate Genealogist at Ancestry.com). I have been on a journey with her (not personally) since October 2024. She holds webinars on Youtube for those seeking more information and help with their DNA. I am linking the [Ancestry.com DNA 101](#) video to help others get the basics down. For the Genies – feel free to watch this (as she works very closely with the writer of our lessons, Dihan Southard from YourDNAGuide). For all others, I am hoping this helps to push you in the right direction to get moving on those DNA matches and gives you a better understanding of DNA and how it works.

My favorite part of this whole video is how she explains the breakdown of DNA inheritance which starts at about minute 8:00 in the hour-long video. She goes over 4 aspects in this lesson, and she stresses this is a BASIC lesson. The other three parts of this webinar are Origins (including regions and journeys), Settings, and Matches.

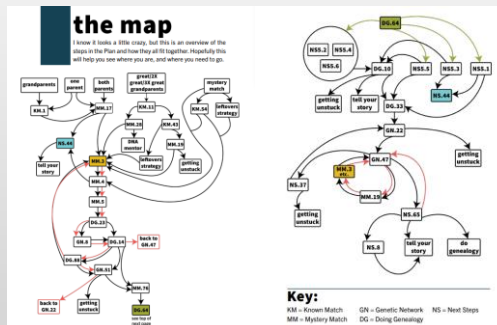
I highly recommend this video as well as the others in her series. You can just go to YouTube and do a search for Ancestry.com and all the videos will appear.

I am looking forward to starting another round of Genetic Genies this month and continuing where we left off last year!

## DIG with the Genetic Genies

### The Genetic Genies begins again on Tuesday, Feb 25<sup>th</sup>

The lessons start over on February 25, 2025, from 1:00 to 3:00 at Muskegon Area District Library – Norton Branch on Seminole. Limited number of seats available and it is filling up fast. This class is slow paced, and all participation is accepted, after all, we learn best in community!!



## MCGS's interest group ~ DIG!

Sign up with the [Google Form](#) to join us for a new session of our Genetic Genies DIG interest group.

We start in February!!

Meet on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 1-3 at the Norton Library branch of MADL.

Must register to attend as space is very limited.



**MCGS MEETING PLACE**

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



**Saturdays at 10:30am**

2025 Meeting Dates:

FEBRUARY 15

MARCH 15

APRIL 19

MAY 17

JUNE 21

JULY

NO MEETING

AUGUST 16

SEPTEMBER 20

OCTOBER 18

NOVEMBER 15

Annual Meeting

DECEMBER

No Meeting

**MCGS Meeting**

**Cancellation**

**Notice**

Notification posted on the MCGS Website and Facebook page and WZZM Channel 13 Closings & Cancellation List

**HPL – TORRENT HOUSE**  
**THE LOCAL HISTORY & GENEALOGY DEPT.**

315 W. Webster Ave.  
Muskegon, MI  
Check [website](#) for hours!



**Added to the Bookshelf:**

The Oaks, Muskegon Heights High School Yearbook, 2004  
Blue and Gold, North Muskegon High School Yearbook, 1944  
Norseman, North Muskegon High School Yearbook, 1946  
The Crusader, Muskegon Catholic Central High School Yearbook, 1979, 1980, 1981, 1996  
Imprints, Orchard View High School Yearbook, 1996, 1998, 1999



Visit the Torrent House to get started on digitizing all those family photos!!! It's quick and easy to learn!

Call ahead to schedule an appointment!!

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Website..... Shelly Nelson

**MEMBER at LARGE**

Gary Versalle

*Thank you for allowing us to serve you!*

~



The Muskegon County Clerk's Office is fully functioning in their new location at 1903 Marquette Ave. Across the street from the Muskegon Community College Baseball field. **Research is limited to ONLY Wednesdays.** TO ENSURE THERE IS STAFF AVAILABLE TO ASSIST YOU, please call ahead of your visit (231) 724-6221.

***TWIG TALK***

*A publication of:*

**Muskegon County Genealogical Society**  
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Local History & Genealogy Department  
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