

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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JAN 2025

UPCOMING DATES

- GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Thursday, Jan 9th, 7-8:30pm
- SIG MEETINGS - throughout Jan
- DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER STORIES: Jan 20th
- OGS Board Meeting Jan 21st, 6:30-7:45pm

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Newsletter team: Peggy Cooley, Carolyn Gibbons, and Mandy Stahre
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WEBSITE LINK:

olygensoc.org

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This newsletter is free to the community.

Get Up to Speed with AI with OGS on February 1 (register today!)

Get ready for an exciting opportunity to dive into the world of artificial intelligence (AI) and discover how it can revolutionize your genealogical research! On February 1, we'll be treated to a special event that will expand our understanding of the powerful AI tools available to enhance our family history work— and recordings will be available for a

whole month afterward, so you won't miss a thing. The incredible Blaine Bettinger, a master at simplifying even the most complex topics, will guide us through four fascinating AI topics designed specifically for beginners. These presentations are perfect for genealogists of all levels — so yes, that includes *you!*

One AI tool you can use *right now* is the *FamilySearch* full-text search. This game-changing tool allows you to search the text of records, whether they have been indexed or not. I've personally used it to uncover valuable information about my ancestors— information that would otherwise have taken hours (or even days!) to - **Continued to Page 2...**

January Presentation Finding a Professional Genealogist

Those of us searching our own family history love the hunt. But we have all come to points in our research when we are stuck. We can't seem to find what we are looking for. We get stuck for a variety of reasons: We are unfamiliar with the time period or place our ancestors lived. The records are not available online and we need records from a place that we personally visit (for whatever

reason-too expensive or are no longer physically able to travel). We don't have the expertise to do particular sorts of research (like DNA analysis). It is time to hire a professional! But how do you find a reputable professional genealogist? Nancy will help you figure out when hiring a professional is in your best interest and how to find a reputable professional genealogist.

This will be a hybrid meeting: in person at Westminster Presbyterian Church or on Zoom.



Photo: Nancy Cordell

Get up to speed with AI continued.....

find by manually scanning pages. It's like finding not just a needle in a haystack but the *entire haystack* itself! Don't take my word for it—try it out yourself by visiting [FamilySearch Labs](#).

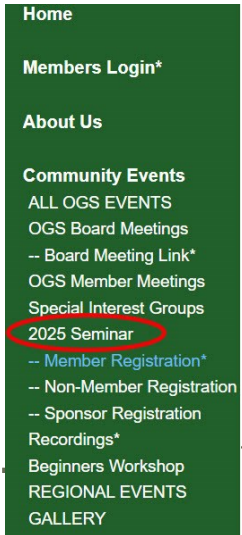
Learn more about how AI can be our genealogical assistant at our February 1 Seminar (see page 7

of this newsletter). See you there!

- Carol Jenner

Go to olygensoc.org and register. If you are an OGS member, log into your account and click “Community Events” and click on “2025 Seminar”. Enter your

name and email address and select “Pay Now”.



January presentation continued...

Nancy Neville Cordell, Ph.D. is a professional genealogist and anthropologist who earned a Certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University. She earned a Ph.D. in Anthropology, specializing in biological anthropology, in 1991 at the

University of Washington, Seattle. She taught Biological Anthropology to undergraduates for 30 years. Always interested in digging up her own family history, Dr. Cordell has researched her own ancestry and that of others for over 15 years. Nancy

is the owner of *Diggin' Our Past*. She specializes in DNA analysis and African American research. She is currently the president of the Puget Sound Chapter of Professional Genealogists.

Attention state employees and retirees (and OGS!)

Olympia Genealogical Society is now a member charity of the Washington State Combined Fund Drive (CFD), a workplace giving program that allows Washington State employees and retirees to donate to charities of their choice. Current state employees can specify **Charity Code 2006621** to give to OGS. Retirees needing to

establish an account should contact cfid@sos.wa.gov. For more information about CFD and to search for active charities, see the CFD website at <https://give.wa.gov/>.

Big thanks to Treasurer Karin Copernoll for registering our organization with the Secretary of

State's office and serving as CFD contact.

- Carol Jenner



OGS Program Year at-a-glance

If the speaker is in-person (designated with a P) at our meeting place on Zoom (Z) which can be viewed at the church or from your home.

January 9th (P) - "Finding a Professional Genealogist" with Nancy Cordell.

February 13th (Z) - "Digging into Finding Aids: The

Roadmap to Any Manuscript Collection" with Melissa Barker.

March 13th (Z) - "Was my William Smith in the Civil War?" with Brian Rhinehart.

April 10th (Z) - "Researching Your War of 1812 Ancestor" with Craig R. Scott.

May 8th (Z) - "From Research to Draft: Rapidly Writing Your Ancestor's Story" with Devon Lee.

June 12th (TBD) - Family Search.org – Working with the Family Search Center and What it has to Offer" - John Anderson.

OGS News

A big **thank you** to all who helped with the recent OGS Holiday Party. I think everyone at some time popped their head into the kitchen there to ask if they could help. A special thanks to those who came early to set up tables, chairs and food - Terry Church, Andy Carter, Greg Bargmann, Peggy Cooley - and to Kerry Upton and Sue McDonald - with a special thank you to Laurie Ducatt. Peggy Cooley created all the lovely and clever centerpieces on our tables. Thanks to everyone who helped with cleanup as well. To all, I hope you had happy holidays and will continue to experience good health and happiness in the New Year!

- Your OGS Programs Team



Family Tree Maker SIG Changes

FTM SIG is moving to the First Tuesday of each month starting in February 2025. It will be meeting from 6:00 pm to 8:00pm. This change should make the meeting available to more of those that are working.

The format will be the same, what you the attendees want to hear about.

I always try to have a couple of subjects to fill in the time. I try to have the meeting open 15 minutes before the starting time.

It will continue to be a ZOOM meeting and NOT a Google Meet. See the link on the OGS SIG listing on the OGS web page.

- David Abernathy

2025 OGS Virtual Seminar

We are thrilled to announce our annual seminar on **February 1, 2025**, featuring the renowned genealogist and speaker, [Blaine Bettinger](#). This year, our topic is “*AI Made Easy: Boosting Your Genealogy Research with Technology*”, a timely and fascinating subject that is reshaping how we research our family histories.

As AI technologies continue to advance, they offer incredible new tools for genealogists of all skill levels. Blaine will guide us through the ways AI can enhance

our research processes, from analyzing historical records to breaking through brick walls in our family trees.

What You Can Expect:

- Insights from an Expert: Blaine, known for his expertise in genetic genealogy, will share practical strategies for incorporating AI into your genealogy research.

- Interactive Q&A: Engage with Blaine as he addresses your questions and shares real-world applications of AI in uncovering your family history.

Registration is OPEN!

Don't miss this chance to explore the intersection of technology and genealogy. Registration opens on November 14 at olygenesoc.org. Payment will be accepted via PayPal, ensuring a quick and easy registration process. The seminar is virtual once again and it will be recorded. Recordings will be available to registered participants through Sunday, March 2, 2025. We look forward to seeing you there!

- **Nancy Neville Cordell, Seminar Coordinator**

Special Interest Groups and Facilitators:

- ANCESTRY - Greg Nordlund; meets 4th Saturday 11:00 am – 1:00 pm
- DNA - Nancy Cordell; meets 2nd Tuesday 6:30 pm
- FAMILY HISTORY WRITING - Laura Carroll meets 1st Monday 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- FAMILY TREE MAKER - David Abernathy; meets 1st Tuesday 6:00-8:00 pm Via Zoom
- FAMILY SEARCH.org – Carolyn Gibbons; meets 4th Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- GENEALOGY CHAT - Peggy Cooley; meets 3rd Wednesday 1:00 - 2:30 pm, in person at Peggy's home!
- LEGACY FAMILY TREE - Jerri McCoy; meets 3rd Saturday 1:00 pm

Genealogy 101

[AI \(Artificial Intelligence\) IS THE NEW "IN" THING IN GENEALOGY!!](#)

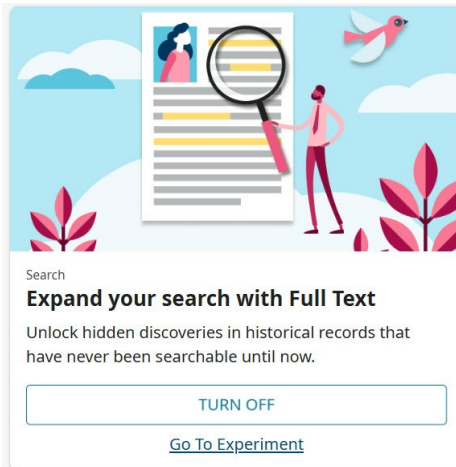
I have to say, as an 82-year old genealogist, I am not as familiar with it as I want to be, but as a lover of Sci-Fi I know more than I might and look forward to learning more and using it more.

[Family Search](#) has a Beta tool using AI to read handwriting, including 1800s handwriting. I find it incredible, exotic and startling. I have spent 30 or more years learning to read documents from the late 1700s through the late 1900s; I am amazed at what can be done.

It is still in the testing stage, so there are blips when what you see is definitely NOT what was meant, but all in all, it is incredible. There is a learning curve – I am still trying to climb the mountain – but even so, there is a vast amount of information which can be found.

To try it for yourself, sign into www.familysearch.org – if you don't have an account, it is free to get one. Then scroll down the

home page and look on the right hand side near the bottom. You will see a box labeled Family Search Labs with a cute little picture and below the picture, a small box which says, "View Experiments." Click on that and a new page will open with six different "experiments." I cannot tell you about some because I have not yet explored them, but the center one on the top line is "Expand your search with Full Text." Click on Go To Experiment. (There is a place to turn it off; I cannot imagine anyone wanting to do that!) Again, a new page



opens with a Search Box and a list of helps. Once you do a search, there are more helps, such as searching in a specific county or date. Experiment (as it says) and see what you can find!

Take me and my family for instance. I put in only "Dryden" for the name and "South Dakota, USA" for the place and got 1,527 hits. The first item was the School Census for my grandmother's brothers and sisters, taken in May 1908. Clicking on the link, I

opened up the page (with the film below it so you can scroll through the film if you need to) and on the right hand side is "Full Transcript" which I have to say is sometimes awful. Still, it is a lot better than you might think and maybe better than you could do.

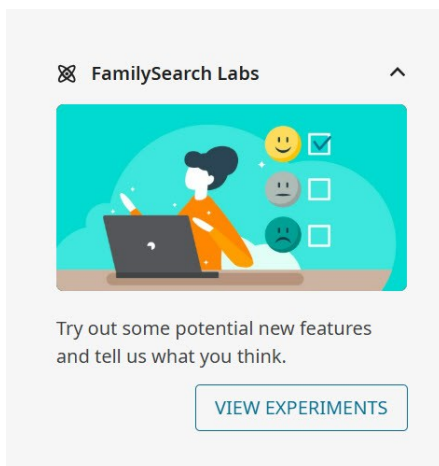
I do not know what all they have included now. Originally, it was only US deeds and wills. They have added more since then and are continually adding more and more. Many if not all of the documents are not yet indexed or even in the catalogue. Scrolling through my South Dakota results on the first page I saw, in addition to the School Records, Naturalization papers, Obituaries and Teacher Lists; this was just Page 1!! (Note: Ship manifests, immigration records, and court documents are also available depending on location)

I cannot emphasize enough how important and amazing this is. Try it, you'll like it.

- Carolyn Gibbons

Carolyn is looking for topics to research and present for future Genealogy 101 articles. Is there a particular search topic or brickwall you would like some advice about? Please send your ideas to

newsletter@olygensoc.org .



Who Were the Hohnerleins? Part 2 (See Part 1 in the June 2024 Newsletter)

In the June OGS Newsletter, I described our visit to the gravesite of my great-grandmother's sister in the Bonaventure Cemetery, Savannah, Chatham County, Georgia. Anna Martha (Schimmelpfennig) and Franz Joseph Keilbach are buried in a large family plot. We were surprised to find additional grave markers in the Keilbach plot, all with the surname "Hohnerlein" — Sophie (1879–1933), Henry (1877–1909), Martin (1892–1955), and Leila (1906–1978).

Various records establish the relationship between the Hohnerlein and Keilbach families.

Anna Keilbach's Will

Anna Keilbach's will — a genealogist's dream — contains specific information about her husband's family from his earlier marriage. Included in her will are references to:

- Anna [Hohnerlein], daughter of Helena [Röser], deceased sister of Anna's husband Franz

unnamed six children of Franz's sister, Josephine Blum

These references suggest that the Savannah Hohnerleins are descendants of Anna Keilbach's husband's family, specifically descendants of his niece Anna (Röser) Hohnerlein.

Hohnerleins in Ship Manifests

The earliest Hohnerlein immigrant was Karoline, who arrived in New York on 19 October 1905, seven months after the death of Franz Keilbach. Her last permanent residence was Berlichingen, Württemberg. She listed Savannah, Georgia, as her destination and her aunt, Mrs. Anna Keilbach of Savannah, Georgia, as her nearest relative in the U.S. Karoline, known as "Carrie," married Charles Fischer in Savannah in 1907.

Heinrich (age 32), Martin (age 18), and Anna (age 16)

Hohnerlein arrived on 21 June 1909. The ship's manifest identifies them as children of Martin Hohnerlein of Berlichingen. A cousin, Kati Blum of Brooklyn, was their U.S. contact. Kati's exact placement in the family tree is unclear, but she is likely the child of Franz Keilbach's sister, Josephine (Keilbach) Blum. Birthdates calculated from the manifest entries suggest that Heinrich (Henry) and Martin are two of the Hohnerlein family members buried in the Keilbach plot.

Sophie (age 33) and Josef (age 26) arrived on 30 April 1912. Notation on the ship manifest identifies them as siblings, children of Martin Hohnerlein of Berlichingen. Their destination contact is Charles Fisher, Millen, Georgia, a baker.

Stay tuned for Part 3 in February newsletter.

- Carol Jenner



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AI Made Easy:

Boosting Your Genealogy Research with Technology

OGS Virtual Seminar 2025

Generative AI tools are being used more and more, in genealogy. Renowned genealogy expert (and familiar face)

Blaine Bettinger, PhD, JD, will spend the day helping us learn how to harness the power of Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a research tool in genealogy.

Topics will include:

- essential AI tools for genealogy
- basic AI prompts
- the ethics of AI
- using AI to help preserve family memories.



**Saturday
Feb. 1, 2025
9 am to 3 pm**

Live online

**\$35 OGS members
\$45 nonmembers**

**Details and registration
at bit.ly/OGS2025**





More OGS holiday party pictures.

OGS Elected Officers
President — Andy Carter
Vice President — Terry Church
Secretary — Carol Jenner
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Past President—Kathy Erlandson

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Newsletter — Peggy Cooley
OGS Historian — Cindy Stalnaker
Publicity — vacant
Research — Jerri McCoy
Spring Seminar — Nancy Cordell
SIGs—Kerry McHugh-Upton
Sunshine—Gayle Strom
Technology—Joe Brookshier

Community Partners
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Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

