

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 35, NO 10

JUN 2025

UPCOMING DATES

- **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Thursday, June 12th, 7-8:30pm
- **SIG MEETINGS** - throughout June
- **Newsletter is taking a break this summer**
- **OGS Board Meeting** June 17th, 6:30-7:45pm

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Newsletter team: Peggy Cooley, Carolyn Gibbons, and Mandy Stahre
Contact us: newsletter@olygensoc.org

WEBSITE LINK:

olygensoc.org

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This newsletter is free to the community.

June Musings

A Tale of Two Genealogical Societies celebrating their 50th year. Many of us are members of more than one genealogical society. Most often the other societies that we belong to are where our grandparents were born or other direct ancestors. I have been a member of our local society since the late '80's. I do not have any ancestors that have ever lived in Thurston County, but I wanted to learn more about genealogy research and hang with some great people! The other genealogical society that I have been a member of since

the early '90's is Quincy IL where my maternal grandparents were born and raised. My grandfather's family was a large extended family who lived and were buried in the local area. My grandmother's family was there a short time; some were buried there but most others moved on by the mid 1920's. As a member of both societies, I have benefited a lot. Here in Olympia, I learned how to do research by attending my local society meetings. I was a passive member, in The Great River Genealogical Society (Quincy, IL being quite a dis-

tance away so as not to attend their meetings. I benefitted from my membership with them on their great quarterly publications as well as their published books on census records, BMD records, divorce records, church records, and local township records. I think I have purchased almost all of their published books! My membership here locally has hopefully helped members and others who do not live here benefit from what we have to offer. Over the years I have held various leadership positions and participated in various
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Working With a local Family Search Center

We will review the mission, history, people and resources of the Family Search program including its website, Wiki and the Olympia Family Search Center.

Kyle Kisebach, former Director of Operations at Olympia FamilySearch Center. He enjoys studying his ancestry, currently going back past the 15th century in Europe and in the United States since before the American revolutionary war. He and his family moved to Olympia from Hong Kong in 2016. He

works as the chief mechanical engineer for NV5 and in his time off is an avid learner of anything from art and geopolitics to 3D printing and blacksmithing.

The speaker will be presenting in person at the Westminster Methodist Church for the June meeting, with several of his staff members and demonstrating research methods. The meeting will also be via Zoom. Handouts will be available shortly on our website at olygensoc.org

The speaker will be presenting **IN PERSON** at the Westminster Presbyterian Church for the June meeting. The meeting will also be via Zoom.



Photo: Kyle Kisebach

Musings continued from Page 1.

leadership positions and participated in various committees. Currently I helped with setting up our new website and continue to add to its content so that members near and far benefit from what we provide. I administer one of our Facebook pages that anyone can join throughout the world. It's a place where everyone can learn what is going on in the genealogy world, ask questions to help overcome a brick wall, and get to know each other better, building a stronger community. The Great River Genealogical Society had a website where one could see what publications they created and ordered from. The schedule of meetings was listed. They also had a Facebook page but no one really participated in it. After our new website was up and running smoothly, I contacted the president of The Great River Genealogical Society to offer my services to get their website revamped. The response that I received was that the webmaster is a longtime member and is maintaining the website well. As our board has discussed many times, we need to stay fresh and relevant to attract and maintain mem-

bers. The website and social media cannot be stagnate as was happening with The Great River Genealogical Society. The Great River Genealogical Society ran for a couple of years without a president or without a vice president. They asked for volunteers but one needed to live locally for the positions that they were trying to fill. Sadly, as they were getting ready to celebrate their 50th year they voted to dissolve The Great River Genealogical Society as there were not enough members to volunteer. For those of us members throughout the country, this was a great loss. Unfortunately, The Great River Genealogical Society was not able to stay relevant to attract members locally, as well as to get them to volunteer for the open positions. They kept running the organization like they always have, remaining stagnant with members dying off while not attracting new members. I feel fortunate to be part of an organization that has many members who are willing to step up and participate. We continue to seek new members and ask our general membership to help out. Some positions still remain

vacant but hopefully this coming year, someone will say "yes"! We have two people who are interested in publicity and would love to have anyone who has ideas join this team. As we have learned with the VP position, having a programs team under the VP has made that position an easier slot to fill, plus the VP isn't doing all of the work. The team is there to help recruit speakers. Another position that has dropped off completely is the Quarterly, a compilation of genealogical article submissions from the membership. If we had a few people pulling together articles that could be published in a Quarterly format, either in paper or online, that would help the general public or members outside of the area benefit from the articles about Thurston County. The board has many great ideas to stay relevant but without members stepping up to say "Yes", those ideas will remain just ideas. Congrats to OGS for 50 great years and all of the members that have made it what it is today!
- **Kerry McHugh Upton**

In Memorium

Norman Dodge passed peacefully on Sunday, June 1. He was a long time member of OGS and a past President, who was very active in our Society. Our condolences to Eileen.

OGS News-ELECTIONS

Elections will be held at the June meeting, and we have a full slate of officers that were presented to you at the May meeting. The officers have 11 Board meetings a year and spend 5-10 hours a month on

OGS business. Please be sure to attend and cast your vote to support for these hard-working volunteers.

Andy Carter: President; Terry Church: Vice-President; Kris Retlin:

Secretary and Carol Jenner: Treasurer. Carol was approved as Interim Treasurer at the May Board meeting.

OGS Outreach

After a long winter's nap, the flowers are not the only things springing forth - so are our Outreach efforts. We just conducted our first participation for 2025 at Norway Day on April 19. This is a very well attended celebration held by the Sons and Daughters of Norway organization. We've attended for the last couple of years and our table there is always very popular. We hand out brochures and other materials designed to help people with their genealogy efforts, beginning or ongoing, field questions, and in general make ourselves and our willingness to help known to the public. Many thanks to Andy Carter, Laurie Ducatt, and Dick Kern for helping me to staff our table there. We enjoyed meeting and talking

with the public as well as with each other, each of us bringing our experiences and knowledge to share. Our next outreach was on May 3 at the Delphi Schoolhouse during their annual fundraising event, a plant and rummage sale. The one-room schoolhouse was built in 1910, is on the historic register and the proceeds from the sale go toward the maintenance funds required for the school. A very small group of locals take care of the building. Thanks to Cindy Stalnaker and Marilyn Miller for donating their time that day at the OGS table.

If you are interested in being part of Outreach, please contact Diana Bargmann at barbourgenealogist@yahoo.com or

call me at **(360) 338-3017**. You do not need to be an ace genealogist to help with this and you'll be paired with another member at the table. Also, when you volunteer to help out, it does not mean you are committed to all of the hours that the event takes place; you can decide how many hours you would like to donate to it. I think you'll find it's fun and an easy way to health out in OGS.

If you hear of any events coming up where you think we might fit in, let me know. We are going to try and be part of the Tenino Oregon Trail Days which take place on July 25, 26 and 27. Looking for a number of volunteers for that event. Please contact Diana.

Membership news

Now is a great time to join OGS. Anyone who joins OGS after June 1 and pays our regular annual membership dues will receive membership benefits for the remainder of the current membership year as well as the 2025-2026 membership year which will begin Sep-

tember 1.

In other OGS membership news, the OGS membership lead role is transitioning to Helga Warner. Helga will be bringing good ideas and energy to this role, including recruitment to help grow our capacity to pursue our mission. Many

thanks to Helga for agreeing to take on this role.

We welcome your questions, comments, and suggestions which can be submitted to membership@olygensoc.org.

- Bob Monn

Washington State Genealogical Society

The nomination period for the Washington State Genealogical Society President's Award for Outstanding Achievement is open. Nominations are due by 01 Aug 2025.

The President's Award is designed to single out that rare individual, society or organization who has demonstrated exemplary service above and beyond expectations. For more information about the WSGS President's Award for

Outstanding Achievement, email Roxanne Lowe at info@wasgs.org. Please put "President's Award" in the subject line.

The nomination period for the Washington State Genealogical Society for us to honor our outstanding volunteers or teams with an Outstanding Volunteer or Team Award. Nominations are due by July 1, 2025. Submit the required form and photograph of your honoree(s)

to info@wasgs.org. The narrative (approximately 150 words) should explain the accomplishments of your nominee/team and why you are honoring him/her/them. The photo should be a good quality digital photograph (at least 300 dpi). Additional details and deadlines may be found at the WSGS website here.

Please contact Roxanne Lowe at info@wasgs.org if you have questions or suggestions.

Special Interest Groups and Facilitators:

- ANCESTRY - Greg Nordlund; meets 4th Saturday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm except July and August
- DNA - Nancy Cordell; meets 2nd Tuesday 6:30 pm
- FAMILY HISTORY WRITING - Laura Carroll meets 1st Monday 7:00 - 9:00 pm Exception: June date changed to June 9, 2025
- FAMILY TREE MAKER - David Abernathy; meets 3rd Tuesday 1:00 - 3:00 pm Via Zoom
 - Starting February 2025, the FTM SIG will meet 1st Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 pm.
- FAMILY SEARCH.org – Carolvn Gibbons: meets 4th Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- GENEALOGY CHAT - | Will not meet in June
- LEGACY FAMILY TREE - Jerri McCoy; meets 3rd Saturday 1:00 pm

Genealogy 101

What To Leave In? What To Leave Out?

Many of us have been writing our family history recently. I know I have been. A big question you should ask yourselves: What do I put in? What do I leave out? [Sounds like a Bob Seeger song.]

If you do much genealogy at all, you will find yourself with ancestors – or close family – that you wish you did not have. My connection that got me in the Mayflower Society is John Billington, the notorious murderer – on Jeopardy at least twice as the first English born person executed for murder in North America. He died in 1630 after being convicted of shooting his neighbor in the back. But that was just shy of 400 years ago. Do I care? Not a bit. In fact, it is an item I tell with relish. My 2nd great-grandmother was a pauper in the 1850 census in Virginia, a widow with five children under 10. By 1885 she had two more children and had earned enough money to leave a trust for her handicapped daughter. No other husband, however. I have a pretty good idea how she made her money, and I don't care. Some of my relatives might, but that was far enough back not to

bother them, really.

On the other hand, I have a close relative just recently deceased who was a mobster in Los Angeles, known for having police on his payroll. Do I want to talk about him (note I am not giving his name out)? Not one bit. Although he and his wife are both deceased, he has living nieces, nephews and other close relatives still living who might be hurt by the release of this information – even though they know it.

I also have an aunt who had three children she abandoned, one she gave to her sister, and one whom she kept, marrying his father when nine months pregnant. Although all in the family are aware of this, it is not something I intend to broadcast; she still has grandchildren around who might be embarrassed by everyone knowing about it. Note: no names here.

If you find a tax evader in 1840 or a murderer in 1860, you probably would not mind having that information printed. However, if you find your aunt had your cousin four months after she married, do you want to put that in your family history? Probably not.

Where do you make the cut?

The Association of Professional Ge-

nealogists has a [Code of Ethics](#) which all genealogists, professional or not, should abide by. Number 6 in the codes is: **Take appropriate measures to safeguard information concerning living people**, to maintain confidentiality of data, research, and client communications, **and to obtain informed consent before using or publicly sharing information**.

In addition to the above, consider also would the information, even if it concerns a deceased person, cause embarrassment or pain to living relatives. If the answer is "yes," then don't use it.

Next month I hope to talk about finding records of living or recently deceased people. Some are readily available, some are hidden for 70 years, and some are almost impossible to find.

- Carolyn Gibbons

OGS Elected Officers

President — Andy Carter

Vice President — Terry Church

Secretary — Carol Jenner

Treasurer — Karin Coppernoll

Past President—Kathy Erlandson

Team Leads

Book Management— Rebel Romero

Membership — Bob Monn

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

City of Lacey — Erin Quinn Valcho

Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

May General Membership Meeting

Devon Noel Lee presented "From Research to Draft: Rapidly Writing Your Ancestor's Story" via Zoom at our May General Meeting. Devon's presentation unlocked the power of storytelling to preserve our family histories like never before in this captivating workshop! Renowned genealogy expert Devon Noel Lee transformed one lucky RootsTech attendee's genealogical document into a compelling rough draft right before our eyes. Through the magic of the "Recipe for Writing Family History" process, Devon simplified the writing journey, ensuring no one ever faces writer's block again. Devon Noel Lee is known for her contagious energy and passion for capturing and preserving family histories. She specializes in practical research, writing, and memory keeping. She has published over 60 books, including a memoir and four family history how-to books.

Olympia Genealogical Society

Membership Meeting Minutes
8 May 2025 (Hybrid)

President Andy Carter called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Nominating Committee: Andy announced that the nominating committee has prepared a full slate of nominees. Additional candidates can be named at the June meeting before the vote. The nominees are:

President: Andy Carter

Vice President: Terry Church

Secretary: Kris Retlin

Treasurer: Carol Jenner

Secretary: The April meeting minutes were adopted as published in the OGS newsletter.

Program: Diana Bargmann introduced Devon Noel Lee, who presented "From Research to Draft: Rapidly Writing Your Ancestor's Story."

Outreach: Diana reported two successful outreach activities: Norway Day at the Thurston County Fairgrounds on 19 April and the Delphi Schoolhouse Rummage Sale on 3 May. The next possible activity is the Tenino Oregon Trail Days in late July. Please let Diana know if you are interested in volunteering at Tenino. The team welcomes suggestions for future outreach activities.

Program Team: A picnic is possible next month. Details will follow. The team is working on next year's schedule. Please send your ideas to team members Terry Church, Diana Bargmann, or Cindy Stalnaker.

Membership: Bob Monn reported that he will complete the transition to a new membership lead by the end of the upcoming membership renewal process (end of October).

Announcements

Andy reported that the Washington State Library is unlikely to remain open to the public past 27 June.

OGS seeks additional volunteers to help with set-up (and take-down) for the in-person part of our monthly meetings.

Adjournment: President Andy Carter adjourned the meeting at 8:11 pm.