

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY

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UPCOMING DATES

- **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Thursday, Nov 14th, 7-8:30pm
- **SIG MEETINGS** - throughout Nov
- **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER STORIES:** Nov 15th
- **OGS Board Meeting** Nov 19th, 6:30-8:30pm

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Newsletter team: Peggy Cooley, Carolyn Gibbons, and Mandy Stahre
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This newsletter is free to the community.

Hybrid General Membership Meetings

It has been great to start off this year with hybrid style general membership meetings, meaning we have members attending via Zoom as well as members meeting in person at the Westminster Presbyterian Church on Boulevard Road. For those of us that have been able to attend in person, I must say, it is refreshing to be around familiar faces, seeing old friends and "new to be" friends. We have had a couple of new members attend which is great to share time with them. Since hybrid

meetings are new to us all we are having to learn how to balance the real world and the virtual world, both with members and speakers. I'd like to share a few tips to make the meetings flow better for all attendees.

First is in respect to the speaker. If the speaker is presiding in person at the meeting room, the speaker will present their program **following** the business portion of our general membership meeting. If the speaker is driving a distance to speak to us, i.e. Seattle or

Vancouver area, they will present their program first with the business meeting following their presentation. We'd like to let the speaker get back on the road soon after their presentation. If the speaker is presenting via Zoom and lives in our time zone or one hour off, then they will present **following** our business portion of the meeting. If the speaker is presenting via Zoom and lives on the East coast, they will present their program first with the business portion of the meeting **Continued on page 2...**

November Meeting

"The Witches of Salem" There are no witches – are there? Of course not! But in 1692, in Salem, the witch hunt would swell and burn. How were witches identified? What happened to the accused? And who were those who were executed that terrible year in Salem? Come learn a little bit about them and their accusing neighbors.

Speaker Jerri McCoy was born and raised in San Diego, California. She received her Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics from San Diego State University, and worked in the computer industry for 30 years before retiring. She and her husband have been married

for over 55 years, and they have two grown sons. Jerri has been active in genealogy for almost 50 years. She is a member of OGS, the Washington State Genealogical Society, and several lineage societies, including the DAR, the Mayflower Society, and the Associated Daughters of Early American Witches. She is a past president of two genealogical societies, and has held numerous lineage society offices.

Jerri has published three books on her family. She broke down a major brick wall using land records, and wrote an article documenting this

elusive Mayflower line ancestor, which was published in the Mayflower Descendants. She is currently the membership genealogist for the Washington State Mayflower Society.

During her family research, Jerri discovered that her 8th great grandmother was killed during the Salem Witch Trials. As you can tell, her hobby interests revolve mainly around computers and genealogy.



Photo: Jerri McCoy

Hybrid General Meeting continued.....

following their presentation. **Second is in respect to the members attending the meeting.** We will ask that all questions are held until the end of the presentation. Members will need to raise their hand if in the room to be called upon. The remote speaker/mic will be moved

into the center of the room so that members attending via Zoom will be able to hear the question. Members attending via Zoom will need to raise their Zoom hand, the Zoom host will call on the member to ask their question. Questions can also be put in "Chat". The in-

room moderator will call on the person with their hand raised. We'll need to coach the speaker as well. Hopefully if we all keep these tips in mind, the meeting experience will be good for all attendees.

- Kerry Upton

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.

November 14th (P) - "The Witches of Salem" with Jerri McCoy.

December (TBD) (P) - Holiday Party.

January 9th (TBD) - "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.

Check out Page 7 with a preview of the 2025 OGS virtual Seminar. Registration opens November 14th!

Good news for 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 cfd@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 Coppernoll for registering our organization with the Secretary of

State's office and serving as CFD contact.

- Carol Jenner



WASHINGTON STATE
COMBINED
FUND DRIVE

Missing an Ancestor? Look East or South

Many times, while researching our ancestors, they just “disappear” from where they “should be” located. Is this true with your ancestor? Perhaps the young man or woman in your lineage decided to heed Horace Greeley’s quote, “Go West, young man, go West and grow up with the country.”¹ Opportunities abounded with cheap land, the lure of gold / silver / precious gems, religious freedom, or just the opportunity to start a new life. Perhaps your ancestor came to Arizona for one of these reasons? The Arizona Genealogical Advisory Board (AzGAB) is honoring those people and their descendants who lived in the geographical area of what is now Arizona prior to statehood on 14 February 1912 with an Arizona Pioneer Descendant certificate. Certificates will be awarded to a de-

scendant who submits evidence acceptable to AzGAB (vital records, territory or federal census, church records, brand books [livestock markings], city directory listings, etc.). Records showing relationship from the pioneer to the applicant is required for the [certificate](#).

For those ancestors / relatives who lived in Arizona from statehood until 01 April 1950, a Second Wave Certificate is [available](#). The same chain of descendency is required.

Not sure if your ancestor “was” in Arizona on their way to California, Nevada or other points West? Please use the Arizona Pioneers Database on the AzGAB website, https://azgab.org/cstm_pioneer.php, to see if their names appear. Female names as well as male names are men-

tioned.

This is a meaningful way to honor your ancestors and have a preserved record of it. The approved application forms, photos and accompanying documentation are housed in the Arizona State Archives. A modest fee for the certificate is expected at the time of submission. If two certificates are requested for the **same** ancestor from different descendants, there is a reduced fee for the second certificate. Questions? Contact the Arizona Pioneer Descendant Administrator, Peggy Morphew at certificates@azgab.org.

- Linda McCleary

1. *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*. Oxford University Press, TME. 1999. p. 351. ISBN 9780198601739. Retrieved 12 October 2023.

Member Offerings

For those OGS members who have ancestors in the Boston Harbor and Gull Harbor areas, my husband Greg came home with a book from the Tumwater Timberland library that might prove interesting. A History of the Boston Harbor and Gull Harbor Area by John T. Marshall, 2013 (2nd edition 2017). It includes several family histories with photos, also photos of the buildings, homes and businesses, and a number of newspaper articles documenting the history of the area. It looks to be catalogued under Local NF Marshall 2017 - it's not a hardcover book but pages bound with a wire spine. - Diana Bargmann

OGS Beginning Genealogy Class Recap

On Saturday, October 19, 2024, OGS presented “Beginner Genealogy Class” at Tumwater Timberland Library. There were 9 interested students for the 3 hour class. The comments were positive and also full of ideas for

more classes. The committee plans to meet to discuss revisions and decide on a schedule for future classes. Interested in helping? Contact Peggy Cooley, Joe Brookshier or Jerri McCoy.



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 opens November 14!

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 3rd Tuesday 1:00 - 3:00 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

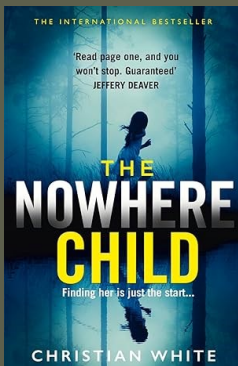
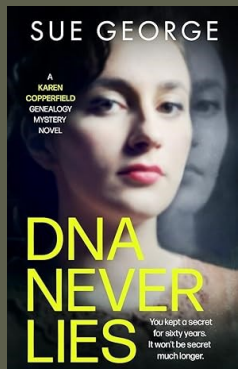
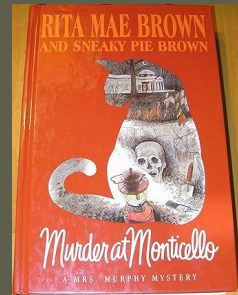
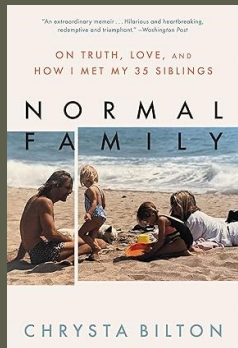
Ancestry vs. Family Search

Let us compare and contrast [Ancestry](#) and [Family Search](#). I normally use them both, depending on what I am looking for, and sometimes in conjunction with each other. The first glaring difference is the cost – Ancestry was on sale through 21 Oct 2024 (periodically will go on special) for \$12/month or \$59 for 6 months for US records; \$19/month or \$84 for 6 months for World records. Normally the cost is \$24.99 a month or \$119 for 6 months for the US records or \$39.99 a month or \$169 for 6 months for the World records.

Family Search is free. What do you get for the cost? The most obvious are the little green leaves for hints. That is if you have a database online. The other bonus is the hints offered. Just yesterday (15 Oct) I was looking for William Bryson born about 1844 in Kentucky. I had him on the 1850, 1860 and 1870 census records – nothing else. On 1870 he was living with his widowed mother, a brother John, a brother James, an unknown Jennie Bryson, several servants and an unknown John S Bryson, 6 months. I was searching primarily for a wife for William but also wanted to know about the “Jennie”. I assumed she was married to one of the boys and the baby was hers. I pulled up the 1870 census for William Bryson and rather than look at the census record, I found the record I wanted among the listings when I searched, clicked on “view record” rather than “view image” and the detailed listing of the census came up. On the right side of the census were several offerings of other records: 1850 census, 1850 slave schedule, 1860 census, 1860 slave schedule, 1920 census, California Birth, Marriage & Death Rec-

ords, a Newspaper Obituary, and several other California records. Using these (and connecting records found) I filled out the family of Elizabeth Lason Bryson, found marriages and graves for her, her sons, discovered that Jennie was Elizabeth Jane (had her as two different girls) and got a marriage record for William. SUCCESS!!! But one of the pitfalls is that sometimes the records offered have nothing to do with what you are looking for. I have looked for marriages in Ohio and gotten the same name for a marriage in Wales. Sometimes the records are misread, and you don’t find anything. Useful tools, if you remember the errors that can creep in. Family Search, on the other hand, is free. It is not quite as user-friendly as Ancestry, though the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints is working very hard to make it so. I still have not achieved good success with census records, but they shine at other original records. If you are looking for court records, newspapers, church records, marriages, deaths, births, deeds, wills – oh, do they shine! For 30 years I have found their catalog a mine of information. Now they have added ways to search within records which have not yet been catalogued (going to Records” from the “Search” on the home page, one can see the listing of records being added daily. There is a beta test for AI reading of handwriting. The results are sometimes a little spotty, but superb when you compare even a couple of years ago, slogging through the writing oneself. In addition to searching the catalog, go to “Records” mentioned above. My family is from Scioto County, Ohio, so I typed that in. Got 2,000 results! Too many. On the left hand side is “Places Within Scioto County” and I clicked on Portsmouth, which

took it down to one entry. Alternatively, there are places to enter “Date” or “Life Event.” I want to mention two other very useful parts of Family Search – the [Research Wiki](#) and the [Family Search Labs](#) (still being constructed). The Research Wiki allows one to access information on any part of the world and to access records, even in other databases. As an example, I have an ancestor who was born in Cork in 1833; the Research Wiki gives me a history of the area, connections to Family Search church records and other records at other sites. I have my work cut out for me there! I have another connection in Greece, in the town of Nafpoleon. Turns out that is in the county of Argolis. My knowledge of Greece stops about AD 100 so the Wiki can really fill it out for me. There are connections to various municipalities with the additional information that each municipality has collections of family records, connection to the Greek Archives, and more. Although many records in Europe have been destroyed by two World Wars plus many smaller ones, the Church has collected many of them. Another offering is the ability to search records using AI to read handwriting. At this time, it is strictly experimental, in fact, the name is Experiment. You can access, however, wills or deeds in any county in America or marriage records in Mexico. The Church is adding so there may be more by the time you read this. Because it is AI sometimes the results can be interesting” but you can find records in a short time which otherwise might take you hours if not days to wade through and pinpoint what you are looking for. - **Carolyn Gibbons**



"[Normal Family: On Truth, Love & How I met my 35 Siblings](#)" by Chrysta Bilton. This memoir represents an anything but "normal" family. Chrysta's mother is gay, but she desperately wanted a child, which during the 1980's meant she had few options to her that is until she was in the beauty salon getting her hair done. She caught sight of a magnificent looking man who she deemed would make a great sperm donor in the conventional way. He was good looking, athletic, smart and from a well to do family. Chrysta's memoir shares insights into the dynamics of her "family", the very real struggles of having a sometimes father who showed up for special appearances or when he needed money. Her own struggles with her eccentric mother and her coming to terms with being different. Chrysta's father realizes that he has all the right assets to be a great sperm donor, this becomes his source of income for his next fix. Eventually it is determined that there are DNA matches around the country that are linked to Chrysta's father. As Chrysta is confronted with this, she learns more about her father and her extended DNA family. This is a heartfelt journey of a young woman who comes to terms with her "normal" family through all of its twists and turns. This book is available through the Timberland Library system.

Book reviews

"[Murder at Monticello, or Old Sins](#)" by Rita Mae Brown

This is a fun story that centers around a body found during an excavation dig at Monticello. The excavation dig takes place at the site of one of the slaves' cabins. The main characters are the town folk, some of whom work at Monticello, descendants of the Jeffersons extended families, and locals who work in the town and volunteer at Monticello. This is a light-hearted genealogical mystery that involves some mischievous pets of the town people, a couple of cats and a dog who have their own adventures through the story. For a light read, you can check out this book through the Timberland Library system.

"[DNA Never Lies: You Kept a Secret Sixty Years](#)" by Sue George

The first in the series of Karen Copperfield Genealogy Mystery novels, is a good read. The primary character Barbara was an enthusiastic young artist from a small town who moved to the Bay Area where she attends art school. She ends up falling in love and marrying an art instructor and her life takes a turn after she gives birth to her son. Many decades later and in another country, Barbara and her children are given a DNA test by a younger family

member as a gift at Christmas. Barbara tosses her DNA test away, hoping that this is all forgotten, hoping to leave the past in the past. However, her children do take the tests and determine that something is amiss, the oldest daughter isn't a full sister and there are matches who they don't recognize. Karen Copperfield, a genealogist, is hired to help sort out the results. A well told story with the typical twists and turns. I look forward to the next Karen Copperfield mystery, once it is published! I have a copy of this book to loan out if you would like to borrow it, please feel free to contact me.

"[The Nowhere Child](#)" by Christian White I checked this book out of the library thinking that it sounded like an interesting story. As it turns out, I read this book earlier but forgot to make a notation of it. Sounds like my genealogy research, not keeping a research log! Reading it a second time was worth it. I enjoyed it both times. The setting takes place in Kentucky with a missing 2 year old girl and how she is discovered across the world in Australia. The mystery unfolds on who kidnapped her after the family given her up for dead. Enjoy the twists and turns as the mystery is resolved into who kidnapped her.

- Kerry McHugh Upton



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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



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

Oct presentation

Have you considered becoming a contributor to Find A Grave? More than just burial records, Find A Grave includes biographical information, obituaries, family relationships, and photographs. The integration between Ancestry.com and Find A Grave will also be discussed, including tips on how you can use Ancestry to work around limitations in Find A Grave's search engine. Karen will demonstrate the additional tools available to contributors, review the guidelines for managing and transferring memorials, and provide a short tutorial on how to use the Find A Grave mobile app. A recording of the Zoom meeting is now available for OGS members. Click on Community Events / Recordings* to view the recording. Corresponding handout is available. Click on PublicationsFiles / Downloadable Files / Program Material - OGS Only*. Recording and handout will be available to OGS Members until 27 January 2025.

Oct General Meeting Minutes

Secretary Carol Jenner called the meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

Program: Cindy Stalnaker introduced our speaker, Karen Wallace Steely, who presented "Find A Grave - A User's Guide."

Business Meeting: Minutes for the September 2024 membership meeting were approved as published in the OGS newsletter.

Program Team: Diana Bargman reported that the OGS Newsletter contains a complete listing of this year's programs.

Seminar: Nancy Cordell announced that our February

Seminar speaker will be Blaine Bettinger, who will present "AI Made Easy: Boosting Your Genealogy Research with Technology" on 1 February. Registration will begin on 14 November. Recordings of the seminar presentations will be available for 30 days to seminar registrants.

Special Interest Groups: Kerry Upton noted that all members can participate in the SIGs. Members may also form a group around a topic — such as Find a Grave — that is not represented in the OGS offerings. SIG participation is a great way to get to know other members.

Newsletter: Mandy Stahre requested newsletter items by the

15th or shortly after.

The holidays are approaching, and the team is particularly interested in recipes and family stories.

Beginning Genealogy: Joe Brookshier announced that the Beginning Genealogy class, scheduled for 19 October, has 13 sign-ups.

Technology: Joe noted that 50th Anniversary videos are now available on the OGS website.

Adjournment: Carol Jenner adjourned the meeting at 8:31 pm. Thirty-seven members and guests were in attendance (27 via Zoom and 10 in person).