

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY

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OCT 2024

UPCOMING DATES

- **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Thursday, Oct 10th, 7-8:30pm
- **SIG MEETINGS** - through-out Oct
- **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER STORIES:** Oct 15th
- **OGS Board Meeting** Oct 15th, 6:30-8:30pm

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Opening article	1
Oct speaker	1
OGS program	2
CFD	3
Beg Gen Class	4
SIGs	4
Genealogy 101	5
Book reviews	6
Seminar preview	7

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.

OGS for another 50 years?

As we look back over the past 50 years of OGS, we should reflect on how we have sustained ourselves as an organization through the decades. Many genealogical societies have recently closed their doors because of a lack of membership and waning interest. There are a lot of demands on people's time and researching their family's past may only go as far as sending in a DNA sample to Ancestry or MyHeritage. The problem while those companies have a treasure trove of

documents, they can't tell someone their family story. Why did your family get on a boat and come to America? Why did your relatives leave everything they knew and loved behind for a place they had never visited and would likely never return? I believe that getting people connected to other genealogists who have researched these same questions is key to sustaining this organization into the future. So where do we find the people who want to know more about their family his-

tory? I would answer by starting with your own family and the younger generations who may think that the DNA tests are all they need. Share with them what you know and have learned about your family history. Share with them OGS and how we, as an organization can open the door to many other resources that can help them answer the questions on why their family is where they are today.

- Mandy Stahre

Hybrid Meeting for October

Following up her well-received lecture in September, Karen Wallace Steely will present "**Find A Grave - A User's Guide**" at our October general meeting. 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 materials, and provide a short tutorial on how to use the Find A Grave mobile app. Karen is a professional genealogist who has specialized in dating and researching photographs for more than twenty years. She has served on the board of directors for the Association of Professional Genealogists (APG) and is a member of the Daguerreian Society. Karen is the principal researcher for The Past Matters®

(www.ThePastMatters.com) and lives in Vancouver, Washington with her husband and three cats.



Photo: Karen Wallace Steely

OGS Program Year at-a-glance

Look at all of the interesting programs we have lined up for the OGS year of 2024 –2025! Some speakers will be in person, others on Zoom but all will be entertaining and helpful in your research.

Below are the dates of the presentations as well as the names of the speakers. 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. Happy viewing, courtesy of the OGS Programs Team!

October 10th (P) - “Find A Grave User’s Guide” with Karen Steeley.

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.

- Diana Bargmann of the Program Committee

Check out Page 7 with a preview of the 2025 OGS virtual Seminar. Registration will open soon!

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 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 Coppernoll for registering our organization with the Secretary of

State's office and serving as CFD contact.

- Carol Jenner



WASHINGTON STATE
COMBINED
FUND DRIVE

Upcoming National Genealogical Society Course

As you may recall, OGS is a member of the National Genealogical Society (NGS). NGS continues to expand offerings for societies like ours. NGS has partnered with The Family History Guide Association (TFHG) to offer organization research trainings and ways to support members. The next [OrgConnects!](#) event will be held on **Thursday, 10 October 2024**, at 8 p.m. (ET). Bob Taylor from TFHG will share tips on how to navigate the site and use its resources to reach more people and create or enhance education. Register for OrgConnects! via [Zoom](#). *TFHG is a [free website](#) dedicated to helping people do genealogy.

We encourage you to watch their introductory video, which walks you through key features of the website. A few aspects of TFHG to explore include: **Learning paths** for FamilySearch, Ancestry, MyHeritage, and Findmypast to help learn these platforms step by step. **Country pages** with links to articles, videos, and databases for expert research assistance on a particular place. **United States resources** that include state and county pages for research. A **search tool**, the magnifying glass, that makes it easy to find any topic within TFHG.

*PLEASE NOTE: NGS Zoom events require attendees to have an authenticated Zoom account. Each attendee must sign up for this session using their existing Zoom account (and the email address used with Zoom) or create a free Basic Zoom account at zoom.us/pricing.

Membership update

The new OGS membership year began Sep 1. As a reminder the membership years goes from September 1st through August 31st the following year. A special thanks to the following who also have provided a generous donation at the time of their membership renewal: Andy Carter, Karin Coppernoll, Eileen and Norman Dodge, Laurie Ducatt, Jon Halvor-

son, Jarlee McCormick, Rebel Romero, Cindy Stalnaker, and Kerry McHugh Upton. If I've missed anyone, I apologize sincerely. As a reminder:

Annual dues:

- Individual - \$30.00
- Family - \$35.00
- Student - \$15.00

As always, if you have any questions about membership renewal, OGS website login, or other membership-related issues, please contact us at membership@olygensoc.org.

- Bob Monn

OGS Beginning Genealogy Class

We have a small team of dedicated OGS genealogists who have been working through the Spring and Summer to bring a beginner class to our community. Joe Brookshier, Jerri McCoy and Peggy Cooley, with help from Judy Artley and Kathy Erlandson, have put together a 3- hour, in-person class at [Tumwater Library's Meeting Room](#) (7023 New Market Street, Tumwater, WA 98501).

The class will meet **October 19th from 10 AM-1 PM** and will include topics such as Forms, Research, DNA, and Documentation and Organization. We will talk about OGS and its' many programs and benefits for all genealogists.

On that day, we need a few OGS members to help with questions and such, for we all know budding genealogists want to know



everything! Cindy Stalnaker has already raised her hand to help. Contact Joe, Jerri or Peggy if you would like to help.

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Change to upcoming schedule: The *Family History Writing SIG* will meet on **September 9** from 7-8:30 pm (due to Labor Day Holiday). They will resume on the first Monday of the month in October.

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

Visit and Talk

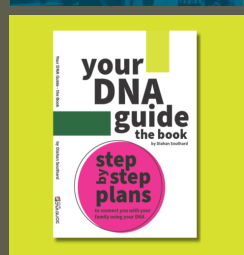
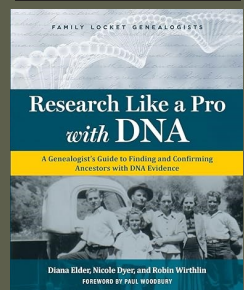
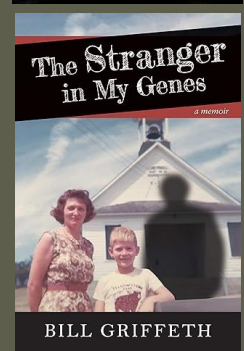
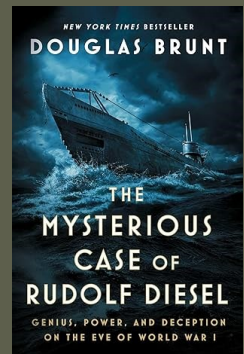
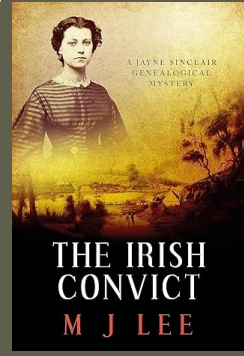
One of the first things a person just starting genealogy is told to do is visit with your oldest relatives and ask them for information. This is an absolutely great idea. Here are a few ideas to make it better and easier. First, if you can, record the session. That way you can concentrate more on the answers to your questions and less on writing it down, getting the spelling right and so on. If possible, get two or three of these people together. They will spark off of one another, and you will get a fuller and more accurate picture. Example: Person A will start a story and say it was when she was seven years old. Person B will chime in and remind Person A that it was the following year because Person A had gotten a new dress to start school in. Or some such way of talking. If Person A cannot remember an uncle's name, Person B may remember it, but not remember much about him. And so on. Make a list of the questions you want to ask – and make most of them open-ended; what I mean, give them a starting point, not something they can answer “yes” or “no” to or even 1910 or January. Now you do want to get names, places and dates or approximations if you can. That is the bones. Then you want meat! After asking where they grew up (unless you already knew that), find out what it was like. Did they start work early? Most of us older people did. I started at 14, and I was pretty late in some ways. My mother was married when she was 15 and I was born when she was 16. What was their house like? What was their first job? You will get very

different answers depending on where they were living. In my family I have people who grew up in logging camps in Washington and California; a ranch in South Dakota; a farm in Iowa; in town in Portsmouth, Ohio and in Cleveland, Ohio; Los Angeles, California. My people (and almost all of these I have talked with) worked on boats going down the Mississippi, in a shoe shop and doing other leather workings, on the railroad both building it and as a conductor, logging, carpentering, in the military starting at 17, raised horses, worked in a coal mine, had a hog farm, worked as a snake charmer in a circus. What did they do for fun? What was their school like? Did their family read? Did anyone play a musician instrument? What songs were their favorites? Did they go to church? What was it like? What kinds of clothes did they wear? Remember, life 50 or 80 years ago was very, very different from what it is like now. Think back on your childhood, how different it was from now. Try to imagine what it was like for your aunts or grandparents. What has changed? What changed most for them? What do they miss? What are they glad to see new? Do they have stories their parents or grandparents told THEM? There is so much information locked in the heads of our older generation, and it will stay there unless you can get it out. This is just a partial list. Imagine the person you are interviewing is someone you never met before and knew nothing about, came from another country. Think of what you would like to know about them. Good hunting!

Webinars

I am afraid this is going to be pretty short this time because I can say what is necessary in very few words, even as long-winded as I am. I don't know if any of you attend webinars frequently. I usually don't feel I have time. Today, I was disabled of that idea. I attended a webinar from Legacy (for this one, you had to be a member and I had accidentally subscribed) by Elizabeth Shown Mills on deeds and wills. She had made up two documents, one of a will from Fincastle County, Virginia, and one of a deed from Chowan County, North Carolina. Then she took each one, almost line by line, and showed what you could KNOW and what you could INFER from each. Then she described what you should do to follow up on the documents – how to look for more information, places to check, and a list of what to do. I have worked with deeds for over 30 years and have worked in North Carolina and Virginia during most of that time – and I learned new things. I am not going to go into the webinar; she gets paid for doing this, and the material I am sure is copyrighted. I do not want to plagiarize. I can only say – there are so many webinars out there, both free and fee-based, you need to check them out and dip your toe in. There are webinars on almost any subject you can think of. Family Search of course has many free ones. Legacy has free and paid. We (the Olympia Genealogical Society) are starting to have more in-person and video presentations by experienced and extremely competent people. At least try one or two of those.

- Carolyn Gibbons



M.J. Lee's latest book is "[The Irish Convict](#)". This is the 8th book in the Jane Sinclair Genealogical Mysteries. This book continues along the story line, where Jane and her stepparents find themselves in Australia during the COVID lockdown. Jane is hired to look into her client's family history to uncover who letter writer "D" is. This book weaves the historical background story of an Irish woman who is sentenced to Australia for stealing apples. While serving her sentence in Australia, her new life begins, and she becomes a founder of a famous store. A great read, teaching us about the Irish convict experience. I have this book to lend out along with most of M.J. Lee's books. Please contact me if you would like to borrow any of these books.

"[The Mysterious Case of Rudolf Diesel: Genius, Power, and Destruction on the Eve of World](#)

The OGS DNA SIG continues to meet virtually the 2nd Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm. We continue the philosophy that we learn better by doing. All participants in the SIG are asked to select a DNA project to work on and help each other do the work on that project in a step-by-step manner. Everyone starts with a research objective that is specific to their needs. We will work together to develop a plan for

Book reviews

[War I](#)" by Douglas Brunt. This is not quite a genealogical subject matter, but a fascinating read on the inventor Rudolf Diesel. Douglas Brunt has researched his life as the inventor of the Diesel engine. The historical context of what is occurring in Europe in the latter half of the nineteenth century puts meat on the bones of my German ancestors' historical timeline in Europe. The technical detail of the engine design is not the basis of this book, but the players in this historical timeframe. Even if you are not into engineering and machines, you will find this a fascinating read. Rudolf Diesel was at the World's Fair in Saint Louis held in 1904. I have a photo of my grandmother as a little girl with her mother attending that World's Fair. It is one of the few photos I have of my great grandmother. To think that they may have seen the Diesel

engine along with my great grandfather and what engines had meant for our ancestors with the inventions of the automobile.

"[The Stranger in My Genes, a Memoir](#)" by Bill Griffeth. Bill Griffeth is a financial journalist who is passionate about genealogy. He has written "[By Faith Alone: One Family's Epic Journey Through 400 Years of American Protestantism](#)" based on his family research including his Griffeth family. Bill's cousin is also into genealogy research but has taken to using DNA tests in his research. Bill agreed to have his DNA tested only to find out that they don't match up. Bill's DNA doesn't include any Griffeth's in his results. Enjoy this memoir as Bill comes to terms with the stranger in his DNA. It is a quick but insightful read on how the results of a DNA test can come up with surprises. The book is available through the Timberland Library system.
- Kerry McHugh Upton

DNA SIG

achieving that goal. That plan includes both analysis of DNA results and the application of traditional genealogical research. Every month participants are asked to share what they've accomplished since the last meeting and ask questions. If there is time, those who did not work on their project can ask questions. We use [Research Like A Pro with DNA](#) (2021) by Diana Elder, Nicole Dyer, and Robin

Wirthlin and [Your DNA Guide: The Book](#) (2020) by Dihan Southard to guide us. Nancy Neville Cordell, PhD and Karin Copernoll, both professional genealogists, facilitate the SIG. We meet virtually using Google Meet. If you are interested in joining us, either send an email to dnasig@OlyGenSoc.org to get on the mailing list or login to the "Members Login">SIGs>DNA to find the meeting link!

Sneak Peek 2025 OGS Seminar

OGS is pleased to announce the 2025 Virtual Seminar for Saturday, February 1, 2025. The title is “A.I. Made Easy: Boosting Your Genealogy Research with Technology” by [Blaine Bettinger, PhD, JD](#). We have all been using artificial intelligence (AI), without knowing it, for many years. Autocorrect features (for spelling and grammar, for instance) have been a part of our lives for a very long time. The AI tools that have emerged in the last couple of years are different in nature. They are creative, or generative” in nature. When the 1950 US census became available in 2022, both FamilySearch and Ancestry used handwriting recognition tools to transcribe the census in a matter of days.¹ It took 9 months for an army of humans to transcribe the 1940 US census in 2012. The photo tools on MyHeritage to colorize, put your face on a variety of pe-

riod costumes, make your ancestor’s face move, etc. are all AI tools. Generative AI tools are being used more and more in genealogy. And the tools and applications are changing so quickly that Steve Little (the AI Program Director of the National Genealogical Society) was the first the webinar presenter for 2024 on [Legacy Family Tree Webinars](#) and he will be the final presenter in 2024, so he can help us understand that changes that have occurred during those intervening 12 months. With any new tool, we need to learn how to use it properly and efficiently. That includes learning what that tool cannot or should not be used for. That is certainly true for AI. AI is not a new, magical research tool. It is a tool that uses Large Language models to help generate words, not facts or data. Please join us on Saturday, February 1, 2025 to learn how we can all learn how to use



Photo: Blaine Bettinger

AI to help us with our genealogy. Our speaker, Blaine Bettinger, is well known to us from the OGS 2019 Seminar on DNA. If you were amongst the 125 attendees, you probably remember what a great instructor he is! **Registration** will begin on Thursday, November 14, 2024. Watch for more details in the OGS Newsletter and [Website](#).

- **Nancy Neville Cordell**

1. “Leveraging Artificial Intelligence Tools for Genealogical Research,” Assoc of Prof Genealogists Quart, Vol. 38(4) (Dec 2023).

23 and Me

You may have heard that there are problems at 23andMe. The details aren't important, but they do leave us wondering what the long term impact will be for those of us who have tested there.

Many folks are suggesting that everyone at least download their raw data. It is quite simple to do so. The instructions can be found at <https://customercare.23andme.com/hc/en-us/articles/212196868->

[Accessing-Your-Raw-Genetic-Data](#) .

If you have ever used DNAGed.com, you may also want to use that to download your list of matches and ICWs (in common with). If you are interested in using this tool, you will need to download version 4, even though it is currently in open beta. You do not need to have a subscription to download using DNAGed.com, but you do need to create a login.

If you have any questions, please let me know.

- **Nancy Neville Cordell**



OGS Elected Officers

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Vice President — Terry Church
Secretary — Carol Jenner
Treasurer — Karin Coppernoll
Past President—Kathy Erlandson

Team Leads

Book Management— Rebel Romero
Information Technology — Joe Brookshier
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

Sept presentation

Karen Wallace Steely presented "Using Photographs In Your Research" at our September general meeting. Learn advanced research methods and techniques for identifying the subject and setting, occasion, location, and the stories behind your photographs. Strategies for locating photographs of your family and the places they lived will also be discussed, along with copyright guidelines for using photographs in your research. Case studies are included that provide examples of photos found and researched using the recommended techniques. 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 1 January 2025.

Sept General Meeting Minutes

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

Program: Diana Bargmann introduced our speaker, Karen Wallace Steely, who presented "Using Photographs in Your Research."

Business Meeting:

Treasurer: Karin Coppernoll reported balances of \$1,800.10 in checking, \$1,644.77 in PayPal, \$10,167.46 in savings, and \$4,276.55 in the CD.

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."

Special Interest Groups: Kerry Upton noted that all members are welcome to participate in the SIGs, and may also form a group around a topic not represented in the OGS offerings.

Technology: Joe Brookshier and the web team are still awaiting the Blue Crab update.

Sunshine: Gayle Strom asked that members make her aware of anyone experiencing difficult times.

Secretary: Minutes for the June 2024 membership meeting were approved as published in the OGS newsletter.

Of note:

Ann Olson brought historical journals and other items for members to take home.

Registration for the October 19 Beginning Genealogy class began on September 1 at the Tumwater Timberland Library.

Adjournment: President Andy Carter adjourned the meeting at 8:39 pm.

Thirty-eight members and guests were in attendance (23 via Zoom and 15 in person).