

Supporting family historians in the South Puget sound since 1974



OLYMPIA
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY

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UPCOMING DATES

- **GENEAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING:** Thursday, Oct 12th. Meet and Greet 6:30pm, meeting start 7:00pm
- **SIG MEETINGS** throughout Oct, page 2 for details
- **DEADLINE TO SUBMIT NEWSLETTER STORIES:** October 20th
- **OGS HOLIDAY PARTY** December 9th, 1-3pm

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olygensoc.org

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Vice President's musings

When I was a teenager, I started asking my dad questions about his life. He was quiet and certainly did not openly share details about his childhood or his years as young adult. When I asked questions, he would frequently say with a wry smile something like "What's it to you; you writing a book?" "Yes I am" I would respond, not knowing someday I might actually want to write a book. "Well leave that chapter out" he would reply, again with a smile. When I asked him how much formal education he had, he usually gave another joking answer: "Third grade;

then I didn't want to pass up my dad so I quit,". Unfortunately, I did not push my dad much past that for information, and therefore, like many of us with an interest in family history, was left with many unanswered questions, especially after he passed away in 2006. Though I may not have fully recognized it as a teenager, those questions to my dad were, in fact, the start of my genealogical journey. Fast forward to my own adulthood, and, in 1990, after growing up in Tacoma, I came to Olympia to take a job as a lawyer. I started my own family here and

have spent the last 30 years with my wife raising our children and practicing law. When my children were younger, I thought it would be interesting to gain more information about my parents, grandparents and further up the genealogical line to be able to pass along. I had an uncle who had done some research on my dad's family, and that provided a good starting point. On my mom's side I have Croatian roots. My research has been hit and miss over the last 20 years as family life and work obligations have taken **Continued to page 2.**

October Presentation:

"Picking Cottens: Doing Research on the Enslaved and Enslaver in Mississippi"

Nancy Cordell will present about family history research of enslaved and free African Americans in 19th century Southern states. This research requires patience, tenacity, and, sometimes, serendipity. The African American Cotten family of Port Gibson, Mississippi migrated to Wilberforce, Ohio in about 1859. James Cotten, a white enslaver, had arranged to move his African American partner and their eight (8)

children to the North before the onset of the Civil War. Uncovering this story required research online and onsite. Learn how Nancy uncovered this fascinating tale. Nancy Neville Cordell has been conducting genealogical research for 14 years, specializing in genetic genealogy and African American research. Her own family research is spread across much of the United States, except for the Northeast



Photo: Nancy Cordell

Vice President's musings continued...



Photo: Terry Church

priority. I started going to Olympia Genealogical Society meetings in about 2018. Upon joining I was impressed with the helpfulness and skills of board members and the general membership. I made it to as many in-person meetings as I could and began looking for ways to get more involved. In the last few years, I volunteered for an OGS committee to recruit board members from the general membership. In 2022 I was appointed to serve on a new program committee working

under the OGS Vice President William Kautz. William had really stepped up for OGS to take on the vacant vice president position at the time, and I wanted to help. Our job on the program committee was to contact potential speakers for the OGS monthly meetings and plan basic details around their presentations. I know I can speak for our other committee members – Diana Bargmann and Cindy Neff --when I say that we have really enjoyed the experience. Our monthly Zoom program committee meetings are always fun! Sadly, OGS Vice President and program committee leader, Wil-

liam, passed away last summer. We all miss his friendship, good nature and strong organizational skills. I was asked to take the vice president position for the 2023/2024 year and have been happy to do so. We've added another Cindy (Stalnaker) to our program committee, and she has brought enthusiasm and strong commitment to OGS. As OGS Celebrates its 50th Anniversary year, our line-up of monthly membership meeting presentations has mostly taken shape. You won't want to miss any! In the meantime, I'll also try to get back to that book chapter that my dad suggested that I leave out.
-Terry Church

Wondering how to make a donation to OGS in someone's memory? Go to olygensoc.org and click on "[Donations and Memorials](#)".

URGENT! Board Vacancy

HELP! Due to unforeseen circumstances, OGS finds itself without a President. Now, the board appeals to you once again. We desperately need a president who:

- Has been attending OGS meetings regularly for

- more than a few months
- Has time to work with the board, not only at meetings, but through emails
- Likes working with people
- Will prepare agendas for the general and board meetings every month, and chair those meetings. Past

president, Kathy Erlandson, is happy to mentor a new president and help until he/she is comfortable in the new position. **PLEASE STEP UP!** Feel free to phone Kathy to talk it over. This is an urgent need if our society is to continue to thrive.—Kathy Erlandson

October presentation continued...

somehow her ancestors managed to skip that part of the country. After completing the Boston University Certificate Program in 2015, she retired from teaching Biological Anthropology to college students and started her own genealogy business, *Diggin' Our Past*. Her perspective in life and work

follows the credo "the goal of anthropology is to make the world safe for human differences."

Nancy earned a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Washington in 1991. She is the current President of the Puget Sound Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists. She served as president of the

Olympia Genealogical Society (OGS) for three years. Her volunteer activities for OGS include Seminar Coordinator, Seminar Speaker Coordinator, Events email manager, Google Workspace for Nonprofits co-coordinator, DNA SIG leader, and general troubleshooter.

Membership Dues Increase and a New Student Membership Option

After no changes in our annual membership dues in the past 20 years, the OGS Board at its September meeting decided to increase dues to \$30 for an individual membership and \$35 for a family membership effective Nov. 1. This means that this increase will not affect any current member this year who renews their membership within this year's grace period which ends Oct 31. So, if you are a dues-paying member and you haven't yet renewed, please do so

this month. Current members will see the increase for the 2024-2025 membership year beginning next Sep. 1. Anyone joining OGS after Nov. 1 this year will pay the new dues amount. Over time, this increase will help sustain our ability to deliver quality service to our members.

In addition to the above action, the OGS Board also decided to create a new [Student membership plan](#) for anyone currently enrolled as a stu-

dent (e.g., high school, trade school, community college, or university). The annual dues will be \$15 and those joining as Student members will be requested to provide a copy of their current registration. This plan provides its participants with access to the same benefits as other OGS members at an affordable cost, and it is hoped that it will help develop a younger age cohort in our membership. This plan is now available for current students to join OGS.

-Bob Monn

Washington State Archives Stacks Tour

A message from the Washington State Archives: "In celebration of Archives Month, we're opening the State Archives' stacks to the public! On Friday afternoons in October, we'll be guiding you through areas that are not normally accessible to the public

accessible to the public and you'll have the opportunity to explore the historical records of Washington state government. [Order your free tickets](#). During this **free tour**, you'll have the opportunity to delve into the **Washington State Archives** collections, which

houses an extensive range of historical records. From important legislative documents to historic transportation photographs, you'll gain a unique perspective on the events and people that shaped our state.

Membership update

Please extend a warm welcome to Jim Keogh and Debbi White who joined OGS recently.

A huge "Thank You" to all who donated as part of their recent membership renewals. The large number of donations apparently was a response to Kathy Erlandson's article in last month's newsletter on returning to in-person meetings. In any case, we thank you! Donors included: Terry

Church, Susan Cooksey, Peggy Cooley, Karin Coppernoll, Laurie Ducatt, Kathy Erlandson, Carol Jenner, Susan McDonald, Julia Miller, Pat Novarra, Wayne Olsen, Rebel Romero, Kerry McHugh Upton, and Helen Weagraff. A very special thanks to Pat Novarra for her unusually large donation!

The new OGS membership year began Sep 1 and the grace period for renewals ends Oct. 31. Thanks to those who al-

ready have renewed your membership.

If you are a dues-paying member who hasn't yet renewed your membership, when you log in to the OGS website you will see a notice in a red banner regarding the need to renew your membership. Please see the note at top of the Membership page for more info on how to renew including contact info if you have any trouble.

- Bob Monn

Genealogy Education GEDCOM for Genealogical Friendlies

The conversation usually starts out like this....I think we are related. Would you please send me everything you have on this family? You want to be friendly, and share information....but on whom? and how much? Your tool for Genealogical Friendlies is **GEDCOM**.

GEDCOM is an acronym for **GE**nealogical **Data** **COM**munication. It is a file written in a standard format independent of any particular genealogical computer program. It was originally developed by the LDS church as an aid to sharing genealogical research.

- Written in plain text, with tags to identify each line
- Contains info about individuals and links to other records
- There is a GEDCOM Standards Consortium. This group has to agree to an extension before it becomes part of the standard.
- Some programs have added their own proprietary extensions, which are not always recognized by other genealogy programs.

A GEDCOM file has a header, a trailer, and in between are lines that represent the people, families, sources, notes, and other types of miscellaneous information from your computer program. Think of it as a numbered indented outline, but without the actual indentation.

- Level 0 is the beginning of a section
- Each level number will have a descriptive tag. Most are obvious, some a bit obscure.
- @ signs surround a pointer to another record.
- 0 @I57@ INDI means this is the beginning of a section/record. The INDI tag means it is for an individual. The @I57@ is a pointer number for this person.
- Subdivisions of this section will be a level 1
- Subdivisions of the level 1 entry will be a level 2
- Each subdivision group will increment the level number

Here is an example of a **PERSON** section:

```
0 @I57@ INDI
```

```
1 NAME Andrew Walter /
Hulshizer/
2 GIVN Andrew Walter
2 SURN Hulshizer
1 SEX M
1 BIRT
2 DATE Jul 1860
2 PLAC Mason City, Mason,
Illinois, USA
2 SOUR @S99@
2 SOUR @S198@
3 PAGE Precinct P
3 QUAY 3
```

This person's record would continue with additional information, including MARRIAGE, DEATH and BURIAL info, when the record was last changed, and pointers to the family in which he is a child, and some notes about him.

This would be the section for source S198 listed above:

```
0 @S198@ SOUR
1 ABBR NE, Seward Co, 1880
Federal Census
1 TITL 1880 Federal Census
Seward Co, NE
```

So, you can see that it is basically a plain text file of records

Continued to page 5

GEDCOM continued...

with pointers that keep all the relationships straight. While you should be able to decipher a GEDCOM file with a text editor, you will still find it much easier to let your computer genealogy program read it.

Sharing your information.

- Share freely, but only give them what they need...and be careful with the privacy of others.
- Determine who will be your "focus" person in your family tree. This will usually be your common connection with the person with whom you are sharing this file.
- Determine the number of ancestor generations you want to include, and also the number of descendant generations to include. You can adjust these numbers each time you generate a GEDCOM file.

How to generate your GEDCOM

file. The main steps are common, but the individual steps and screens will look different in different programs.

- Open your genealogy program.
- Navigate to the main person of interest. Your "focus" person.
- Navigate to the Export GEDCOM command in your program. Most programs have this under the FILE menu.
- Choose to use the GEDCOM 5.5 export option unless you know exactly what genealogy program and version the other person is using.
- Make sure you are NOT including confidential data, so that it stays confidential.
- Start selecting the people you want to include in your GEDCOM file. You would usually start with the person you chose as your "focus" person, the select how many ancestor and descendant generations you want to include. There will

probably be some additional options for inclusion.

- Once you have completed all the selection options, save and return to the previous window.
- Click on the EXPORT button. It will ask you where you want to save the GEDCOM file, and will also ask you to give it a name. Choose a meaningful name, and put it someplace where you can remember where it is. (I created a folder called GEDCOMS and put them all there.)

Your genealogy program will tell you when it is finished creating the file. Then you can send your GEDCOM file to your friend by email. Because the GEDCOM file is just text, the file will be surprisingly small, and easy for email to handle. Also, because it is just text, it will NOT include any pictures or other media files. - **Jerri McCoy**

**SAVE the DATE Saturday, December 9th,
1-3pm OGS Holiday Party**

Genealogy Bytes

1. [Ancestry](#) now has a fan chart for trees-it's in Beta testing. Go to Trees>Left column "View" and select Fan-Beta. Remember, this is in Beta testing, and does have limitations!

2. [Digital Library of Georgia](#)

Adding to Searchable Historic Newspaper Page Available Free Online. Newspapers 1763-2023.

3. Ohio Genealogical Society Official Podcast, called [Ohio Roots](#) or wherever you listen to podcasts. For additional info go to www.ogs.org.

4. Buffalo (NY) Genealogical Society of the African Diaspora has African-American funeral programs. Collection will be digitized. Read more in article by Harold McNeil, <https://tinyurl.com/4s45ufak>.

- Judy Artley (bytes 2-4)

OGS SIGs

I was excited when OGS decided to put together a DNA SIG. I've been involved with it since the beginning. I have learned a lot! This is a fantastic group of people that are willing to help newbies (and those of us who have been in the game for a while). We have used various books (especially those that pertained to Spring Seminar speakers) as a guide in our monthly meetings. We talk about how we have applied the things learned and where we have questions or concerns.

You are wondering what

books? Our first book was by Blaine Bettinger & Debbie Parker Wayne entitled "[Genetic Genealogy in Practice](#)". This was in 2018. As a companion, I also used "[The Family Tree Guide to DNA Testing and Genetic Genealogy](#)" by Blaine T Bettinger. We

learned these were not for beginners. These were great for explaining the different types of DNA but really didn't help you when you were looking at your test results from the various testing companies. The next book we decided to use was "[Your DNA Guide the Book](#)" by Diahn Southard. Now this was a great tool because it took you through a step-by-step process. Me . . . I'm still working through the book. I also subscribe to her emails and watch some of her you-tube videos. She does a great job explaining things to beginners (and the not so newbies). I even subscribed to a couple of her videos on overviews of the testing sites (using their websites).

Last year, we decided to use another book published by the Family Locket Genealogists entitled "[Research Like a Pro with DNA](#)". This is also a great

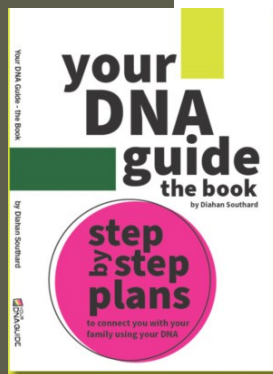
book, and it helps you write up your research goals and what you have learned. We are planning to repeat the book since so many of us got lost in the weeds (or at least I did).

Regarding the Family History Writing SIG

Have you thought about writing your family history? Don't know where to start? Well, the Family History Writing SIG is the place to be! I have learned a lot since the group started. We've covered basic writing styles, copyrights, photos, citations, etc.

I started out writing about my DAR Patriot until I hit a snag. I found that I needed to do more in-depth research to make sure that I am writing about the right person. At the time, I was still working full-time and busy with extracurricular activities.

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Sneak Peak Spring Seminar

Spring seminar is coming early this year. We are excited to announce the spring seminar will be held Saturday, February 3, 2024. More details to come but here's a sneak peak. Rich Venezia is a New Jersey native who now calls Philadelphia home. He founded [Rich Roots Genealogy](#) in 2013. He was a member of the research team of [Genealogy Roadshow](#) (PBS) for two seasons, and also consulted on Follow Your Past (Travel Channel). He is an ex-

pert in the research of 20th-century immigrant ancestors, especially underutilized record sources and federal records. He also specializes in Italian and Irish research. Additionally, he assists clients with dual citizenship applications for Ireland and Italy, and is a proud Italian dual citizen. He holds a Certificate in Genealogical Research from Boston University. He lectures nationwide, and spoke about "[How to Grow Empathy From Uncovering Your Roots](#)"; at TEDx



Photo: Rich Venezia

Pittsburgh 2017.

OGS SIGs continued...

After listening to others in the group, I decided to switch gears. I had been listening to my dad talk about his youth and younger days being in the National Guard. I realized I needed to write up these stories.

I started with our immigrant ancestor. Wrote about where he was born, how he came to America, and where he settled. Rather than make it a dry genealogy chart, I added tidbits of history – what was going

on in the world at that time. It helped place them in history. I've submitted the first story for publication on our OGS website (it's not there yet). I plan on covering each direct ancestor in a separate chapter. So far, I have completed my great-great grandfather and my great grandfather. I'm still working on my grandfather. Then I will work on my dad then me. I have been doing thorough research that documents the infor-

mation found – this includes state and federal census records, directories, and vital records. I have also been creating a timeline – births, marriages, and deaths of family members as well as when the various wars were happening, when they moved, county and state formations. This is a great group to use as a sounding board and to have as a third-party editor. Everybody in the group has their own style. So, come join us!

- **Marcy Kludt Belles**

Do you have tips and tricks to share with other budding genealogists? Send them to newsletter@olygensoc.org by the 15th.

OGS Needs You!

1. 50th Anniversary - This group will plan how we'll celebrate our 50th Anniversary in 2024. Commitment would be for this year only. Ideas include event planning, helping with news media, scanning photos for Facebook and Instagram posts, etc. Please email info@olygensoc.org if you are able to help!

2. DIG Virtually - Help members in the community similar to our previous work at the Olympia Library, but virtually. Virtual meeting times and frequency will vary depending on the number of volunteers. Training will

be provided. Please email info@olygensoc.org if interested.

3. Historian - The historian keeps a record of our events and members in the news for the past 50 years. Position is currently open. Duties include posting our live history in our scrapbooks and attending and voting at board meetings. Being on the board, you'll be in a front row seat as our history is happening. Please contact Kathy Erlandson pastpresident@olygensoc.org if interested.

4. Meeting Tech Team - In order to transition to hybrid general membership meetings, we need 1 or prefera-

bly 2 people who can help with the tech setup each meeting. Set up is simple— bring OGS laptop to each meeting and set up internet connection. If you are interested, contact Joe Brook-

shier webmaster@olygensoc.org or Bob

Monn membership@olygensoc.org

5. Speakers Bureau - Available to speak to groups about genealogy and OGS. It would be great to have a few members who would like to speak for 30-45 minutes. Opportunities for this maybe once or twice a year depending on how many setup to represent OGS. Great outreach opportunities to grow our organization. Send an email to Info@olygensoc.org if you have an interest!

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 *The September meeting will be on the 11th, same time.
- FAMILY TREE MAKER - David Abernathy; meets 3rd Tuesday 1:00 - 3:00 pm Via Zoom platform
- 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
- LEGACY FAMILY TREE - Jerri McCoy; meets 3rd Saturday 1:00 pm

OGS Elected Officers

President — Vacant

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 — Vacant

Publicity — Mandy Stahre

Research — Jerri McCoy

Spring Seminar — Nancy Cordell

SIGs—Kerry McHugh-Upton

Sunshine—Gayle Strom

Technology—Joe Brookshier

Meet OGS—September meeting

As we begin a new OGS year (Sept—June), we're reminded of all the inner opportunities and benefits of belonging to our organization. Or could there be some we are not sure of or don't know entirely? Kathy Erlandson and Kerry McHugh Upton discussed our website, newsletter and more. Make the most of your OGS membership this year!

A recording of this meeting will be posted soon under Community Events/Recordings; OGS member login required.

Community Partners

City of Lacey — Erin Quinn Valcho

Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

September Meeting Minutes

President Tom Miller called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and welcomed new and returning members.

Secretary: The June 2022 general meeting minutes were approved as published in the September newsletter after a minor revision related to this month's meeting date.

Vice President: Terry Church reported that the Program Committee (Terry, Cindy Neff and Diana Bargmann) have finalized most of the programs for this year. Next month, Nancy Cordell will present a case study involving research in the South. Cyndi Ingle will present in November.

Treasurer: Karin Coppernoll reported balances of \$2,762.72 in checking, \$10,102.32 in savings, \$4,225.51 in the CD (which has rolled over), and \$2,949.33 in Pay-

Pal, totaling \$20,039.88.

Team/Committee/SIG Reports:

- Karin Coppernoll reported that the DNA SIG held their first meeting of the year. The six attendees will prepare their DNA research questions.
- Kathy Erlandson reported that 3 February 2024 is the date set for our annual virtual seminar. The speaker will be Rich Venezia, a well-known speaker who will present topics related to the general theme of immigration. Kathy explained that society-sponsored seminars typically include four presentations with breaks. The tentative cost for the 2024 seminar is \$20 for members and \$25 for non-members.
- Peggy Cooley reported that the Newsletter Team requests articles, book reviews, and members' bios. Write-ups about genealogy trips and your current projects are welcome.
- The Genealogy Chat SIG meets at Peggy's home. Email Peggy if you plan to

attend.

- Kerry Upton noted that there are seven active SIGs, mostly meeting online. The OGS website publishes a current list of active SIGS with contact information.
- The Washington State Genealogical Society has recognized Bob Monn and Kerry Upton for their contributions to OGS, particularly during the period of adjustment during COVID-19. This month's newsletter contains a complete description of their contributions to OGS.

Program: Terry Church introduced our speakers, Kathy Erlandson and Kerry Upton, who presented "Meet OGS", a program full of pointers to help us make the most of our OGS membership.

Adjournment: President Tom Miller adjourned the meeting at 8:18 p.m. Thirty-six members were in attendance.