

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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UPCOMING DATES

- GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Thursday, Sept 11th, 7-8:30pm
- SIG MEETINGS - throughout Sept
- Newsletter articles due September 15th
- OGS Board Meeting Sept 16th, 6:30-7:45pm

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Musings	1-2
Sept presentation	1
Obituary	3
Genealogy 101	5
SIGs	6-7
Spring Seminar	7

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

OGS OUTREACH IS ALIVE AND WELL!!

OGS outreach was its most active ever this year with possibly more events to come! Plus, we engaged more of our OGS members than ever before, too – a number of whom returned to help again and again. In April, we were again lucky to be part of Norway Day (sponsored by the Sons and Daughters of Norway) at the Thurston County Fairgrounds in Lacey. As usual, we experienced a lot of interest and high attendance from the public at our table there. We found out there really are a lot of Norwegians in this area!

The first weekend of May found OGS just outside of west Olympia at the historic 1910 Delphi one-room schoolhouse. Holding their annual fund raising rummage and plant sale, the schoolhouse group was excited to have an equally historic (50 yrs) genealogical society as part of the scene. Granted that most of the crowd was focused on finding treasures among the rummage items within the schoolhouse, we still had a healthy amount of interest and attendance at our outdoor table. Weather was on our side except for

the occasional frisky breeze. The end of July saw our most ambitious outreach undertaking yet as we participated in the Oregon Trail Days of Tenino – a lively 3-day event held in their city park, attracting a large, bustling crowd of festival goers. We estimated that there were some 60-70 people who stopped by our booth over that 3-day period and we handed out many information sheets on starting a family tree, sources for research, etc. We heard lots of family and ancestor legends, several stories concerning family bibles, and **Continued on page 2...**

Researching Oregon Trail ancestors

The Oregon Trail extended approximately 2,000 miles from Independence, Missouri, to Oregon City, Oregon, from 1840 to 1869. More than 50,000 people traveled to Oregon, and a great number died on the journey. This talk will cover resources for researching people and their lives along the trail. Dawn Carlile is a professional genealogist, educator, and lecturer who enjoys teaching others about researching their

families as much as she does about researching for her own family and the families of others. She has completed 15 institute courses at Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Genealogical Research Institute of Pittsburgh, Institute of Genealogical and Historical Research, and Genealogical Institute on Federal Records. She is currently the president and an instructor for the Oregon Genealogical Society. After many years of helping



Photo: Dawn Carlile

others with their research, Dawn started Genealogy Roots and Branches in 2021.

OGS Outreach continued from Page 1.

and fielded numerous questions from the crowd. Often all of our members were helping as many individuals at the same time so there was lots of talking going on! One woman who came to our booth said she had come specifically to see OGS – she had to go a circuitous route to find us, visiting the OGS website, the website for this Tenino event and eventually phoning the organizer of Oregon Trail Days to find out if we were there for sure before coming. The next day, the same organizer stopped at our booth and informed us yet another person contacting him that very morning inquiring about us, too. I think our organization made a pretty darn good impression for our first time ever at that event. Our booth was located in the historical part

of the park, right by their museum and one-room schoolhouse, and right next to the DAR booth (we got along famously with them, especially since there are a number of OGS members who belong to DAR, too). Tenino was our first time displaying our new spiffy banners which greatly added to our visibility from a distance and attracted crowds.

Many thanks again to all those OGS members who volunteered their time at these various outreach events. Everyone sounded like they were having a good time visiting with the public and each other. I hope all of you had fun and found it gratifying to represent OGS and help people start or continue to connect with their family histories. The following members were present at

or helped on the sidelines with Outreach this year:

Andy Carter, Richard Kern, Laurie Ducatt, Diana Bargmann, Cindy Stalnaker, Marilyn Miller, Peggy Cooley, Kathy Erlandson, Sue McDonald, Marcy Belles, Mandy Stahre, Jon Halvorson, Cindy Neff Stevens, Greg Nordlund and Linda Fialkowski. Special mention goes to Greg Bargmann for carting all of the stuff we needed – canopy, tables, chairs, etc. - and most of all for putting up with me during all those weeks of preparation.

If you would like to be added to the list of volunteers for future events, please contact me at barbourgenealogist@yahoo.com or call me at (360) 338-3017. I'd love to include you!

- Diana Bargman

Obituary for Norman Earnest Dodge

Norman died of metastatic prostate cancer on June 1st in Lacey, Washington. Norman was born on June 6, 1940, the eldest child of Earnest and Ruth (Sumner) Dodge. He graduated from Roosevelt High School, attended Everett Junior College, Clark Junior College and the University of Washington. He was employed at the City of Seattle Electrical Engineering Department, working there for 44 years and retiring in 2006. In 1976 and 1990 he was awarded Seattle City Light Employee of the Year. Norman married Eileen in 1967. When they found they could not have children of their own they took in foster children – 30 in all, 28 boys and 2 girls. Some of the foster children stayed for a few weeks, some for a few months, some for several years. They also adopted two special needs children. Norman and Eileen also served as volunteer King County Court appointed advocates for abused and neglected children. In 1990, Norman and Eileen received the City of Seattle Mayor's Award for their outstanding work on behalf of Seattle's children and youth. Norman joined the Boy Scouts in 1949 and maintained membership all of his life. He contributed his time and talents in their programs of Explorer Search and Rescue (both as a rescuer and teacher), Order of the Arrow, Scoutmaster of various troops, and served on the Eagle Scout board of review in Thurston County. His scouting awards included God and Country, Silver Marmot, Vigil Honor in Order of the Arrow, and the Silver Beaver award. He carried an Amateur Radio License and used a CB radio for a number of years in Search and Rescue. For many years in Seattle, Renton and Olympia he taught small boat sailing to youth and adults. Genealogy was a passion for Norman. He served 3 years as President of the Olympia Genealogical Society, and enjoyed assisting others searching for their genealogy roots. For several years he was the president of the Dodge Family Association, and co-authored a Dodge Genealogy Book published in 2008. For several years he traveled across the United States and Canada attending Dodge family reunions, and traveled to England 5 times to research his family roots. His immigrant ancestor was William Dodge who was born in East Coker, England in 1604 and in 1629 sailed into the Massachusetts Bay Colony at Salem Harbor. Norman was a proud member of the Sons of the American Revolution, first with the Alexander Hamilton chapter and later a charter member of the George Rogers Clark chapter, honoring his ancestor Charles Dodge who fought at the battle of Lexington and Concord. Norman is survived by wife Eileen and son James; brother Russell and wife Carol Dodge; sisters Nancy Laybourn, Gail Dimock and husband Lawrence, and Lynne Dodge, as well as many nieces and nephews. Predeceased by his son, Christopher. The family thanks the doctors, nurses and health care workers at Kaiser Permanente, Providence St. Peter Hospital, and Envision Hospice Care for their guidance through Norman's journey of prostate cancer. Most especially we want to thank the owners and staff at McAllister Park Senior Living for their loving and compassionate care for Norman as he transitioned from this life to the next. Per Norman's request there will be no public memorial or celebration of life.

Membership

Thanks to everyone who has renewed their OGS membership for 2025-2026, and a very special thanks to Andy Carter, Sandie Deighton, Laurie Ducatt, Linda Fialkowski, Susan R. McDonald, Siri Nelson, Wayne Olsen, Barbara Ritchey, Rebel Romero, Terry Sisson, Anne Thom, and Maureen Vanek for their generous donations to OGS.

Norman Dodge generously left a bequest of \$5000 for the Olympia Genealogical Society. The funds have been placed in a Certificate of Deposit until the Society decides on its' disposition.

Membership news

Please welcome John Calambokidis (Olympia), Elizabeth Grady (Olympia), Rachael Lundmark (Tumwater), Lea Mitchell (Olympia), and Gary Robbins (Gig Harbor) who joined OGS this summer. Helga Warner is the new OGS mem-

bership lead role. If you have any questions about membership or logging in to the OGS website, please contact us at membership@olygensoc.org. Remember, OGS memberships are up for renewal as the mem-

bership year runs from September 1st through August 31st of the following year.

Annual dues:

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

Washington State Library's Research Library, Washington Talking Book & Braille Library Closed to Public Due to Budget Shortfall

Reprinted from <https://www.sos.wa.gov/about-office/news/2025/washington-state-librarys-research-library-washington-talking-book-braille-library-closed-public-due>

June 06, 2025

OLYMPIA – The Washington State Library (WSL) announced program closures for their research library and the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library and a restriction of services at those locations after funds to keep them open were not included in the signed 2025-27 state budget. Both the research library in Tumwater, Washington, and the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL) in Seattle will be closed to the public beginning on July 1 and continue to be closed until further notice. Staffing and resource cuts at both locations made keeping them open and running impractical.

“The lack of budget appropriations to retain our knowledgeable staff and keep our programs running was an unfortunate casualty of the large budgetary shortfall facing our state legislature,” Secretary of State Steve Hobbs said. “The impact of the closures will risk denying communities access to the information, literacy tools, and resources they depend on. Libraries are cornerstones of civic life and education in many areas of our state.” On the last day of the legislative session, the State Legislature passed the 2025–2027 Operating Budget without including any of the \$6.7 million requested to support library operations. This decision arrived amid a severe budget deficit for WSL, driven by a sharp decline in real estate transactions and loan refinancing, both of which contribute recording fees that help fund WSL.

Impacts on Services, Communication

● Research Library in Tumwater

- The research library will be closed to the public.
- Access to important historical and governmental collections will be restricted and digitization options are limited.
- Those calling the State Switchboard phone line and the library directly will leave voicemails that will be responded to within one week.
- Email inquiries will also be answered within one week.
- Subscriptions to genealogy databases will be discontinued, and the acquisitions of new materials will be drastically limited.

○ The Washington Talking Book & Braille Library in Seattle

- WTBBL will be closed to the public.
- Phone service will consist of responding to voicemail messages, so response to requests will be slowed.
- Registration of new borrowers will be slowed.
- Circulation of materials may be slowed.

Programming includes multisensory story time, Low Vision Workshop, Touch of Braille workshop, and others will be canceled. “These disruptions jeopardize equitable access to information for some of Washington’s most underserved residents unable to read standard print,” said Washington State Librarian Sara Jones. “While a newly signed bill will provide some funds in the future, the current funding gap is affecting our employees and important services now.”

Genealogy 101

I have been working on my genealogy (with varying degrees of intensity) for just shy of 60 years. I will turn 83 on the 4th of September so what to do with it all is becoming more and more of an imperative. Most of my family, while interested in the results, have no interest in doing the work. I am right now spending hours trying to get my database corrected – sources that I have either left out or incorrectly entered; people with no surnames or sometimes no name at all; people whom I have not followed up on and I just have one date or location – but the real problem is what do I do with it all.

For years we genealogists have been encouraged to donate our work to libraries or genealogical societies. I have two very distinct problems with that (as I am sure you all do).

First, my family – just talking about my direct ancestors, not even counting all the peripherals I have been following up on – are scattered around the country. My ancestors include a Mayflower family; lines in New Amsterdam before it was New York, which slopped over into New Jersey then Virginia and North Carolina. Speaking of North Carolina, I have direct lines in the northeast, around Mecklenburg county and at least two in Rowan and surrounding counties; Maryland in 1658 – and so on. Out of the 50 states I could qualify for pio-

neer certificates or their equivalent in probably 30 of them. Which library or genealogical society would be best for my research?

Secondly, libraries for the past 20 or 30 years, and now even more so, have not had the staff nor the space to accept genealogies unless they are in book form. They are unable to sort and catalog most offerings. As we know to our sorrow, genealogical societies are closing down; the ones that are not closed are usually without any space to keep donated genealogy works.

So – What do we do???

Familysearch.org has stepped up and is ready to help. (You knew I would talk about them, didn't you?) Right now, they cannot and will not accept raw data; it has to be in a form they can use such as in a book or digitized. Previously, in addition to their worldwide Family Tree, you could upload a genealogy of your own. The problem with that was you could not edit it – no additions nor corrections could be made. However, among their new Experiments is the CET (Controlled Edit Tree). This is still in the experimental stage. You can now upload a GEDcom to Family Search and edit it, using all the tools in Family Search, or upload a document from your own computer. Family Search is working to have it integrated with various software programs for genealogy so that you can sync your data. Not yet done, but soon expected. You can limit who can see it or allow anyone to

see and use your information on all deceased members of your tree.

This will stay online forever, or as near forever as you can hope for in this changing world.

I want to add, too, that the New England Historical and Genealogical Society also has a way for you to upload a database; you can edit and add to that, though it is more difficult to use – at least for me.

I have mine online now. I have not yet managed to see it. Because I am signed in to www.familysearch.org I cannot see what others see. I am thinking about making a second account, using my other name and seeing what I can see. Or someone else can search for my “Carolyn Nora Watkins Tree.” If anyone has managed to do that, let me know how it comes out.

I am still in the learning phase about this, but it is very exciting!

- Carolyn Gibbons



Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) are a benefit of membership so make sure your membership status is updated to access this wonderful benefit.

SIG News Olympia Genealogical Society DNA Special Interest Group Plans for 2025-26

- Nancy Neville Cordell, PhD

OGS DNA SIG: Looking Ahead to 2025–26

The OGS DNA Special Interest Group (SIG) continues to thrive! We are pleased to announce that our meetings will remain virtual for the 2025–26 genealogical year, and we will maintain our commitment to the philosophy of *Learning by Doing*.

Back to Basics

This year, our group has chosen to return to the fundamentals. We encourage everyone to revisit essential resources such as *Research Like A Pro with DNA* (Elder, Dyer, and Wirthlin, 2021) and *Your DNA Guide—the Book* (Diahan Southard, 2021) to ensure we are following best practices and not overlooking any critical steps. This renewed focus also presents an excellent opportunity for newcomers to join us; the only requirement is that you have already taken a DNA test.

Program Highlights

- **Sharing Success Stories:** We will begin the year by discussing our DNA successes from recent years. Success is defined not only as breaking through genealogical brick walls but also as deepening our understanding of DNA tools and methodologies.
- **Project Summaries:** Each member will prepare a one-page project summary to share with the group via Google Drive. Access to the OGS DNA Google Drive will be provided to all DNA SIG participants.
- **Tool Review:** We will review both established DNA tools—especially those with recent updates—and explore new tools that may be unfamiliar to some members.

Writing Our Stories: Members will be encouraged to document their discoveries. Capturing these stories ensures we can share our findings with family and future generations.

Meeting Format

We will continue with our established format:

- Each month, members will have homework assignments tailored to their individual DNA projects.
- Progress will be shared at each meeting.

Members who complete their homework will have the first opportunity to speak and ask questions. If time permits, others may also contribute.

We look forward to another year of collaborative learning, discovery, and mutual support within the OGS DNA SIG! The OGS DNA SIG meets the second Wednesday of every month, starting on September 10 at 6:30pm on Google Meet. If you are interested in joining, please send an email to Nancy Cordell at DNASIG@olygensoc.org.



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

SAVE THE DATE

FEBRUARY 7, 2026

OGS Annual Virtual Seminar
Decoding Your Ancestors: The Tech Edition
 with Cyndi Ingle

Check our website for registration information.
www.olygensoc.org

Special Interest Groups and Facilitators:

- ANCESTRY - Greg Nordlund; meets 4th Saturday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
- DNA - Nancy Cordell; meets 2nd Wednesday (previously Tuesday) 6:30 pm
- FAMILY HISTORY WRITING - Laura Carroll meets 1st Monday 7:00 - 9:00 pm
- FAMILY TREE MAKER - David Abernathy; meets 1st Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 pm Via Zoom
- FAMILY SEARCH.org – Carolyn Gibbons; meets 4th Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- GENEALOGY CHAT - Peggy Cooley; meets 3rd Wednesday 1:00 - 2:30 pm, in person at Peggy's home!
- LEGACY FAMILY TREE - Jerri McCoy; meets 3rd Saturday 1:00 pm

OGS Elected Officers

President — Andy Carter

Vice President — Terry Church

Secretary — Kris Retlin

Treasurer — Carol Jenner

Past President—Kathy Erlandson

Team Leads

Book Management— Rebel Romero

Membership — Helga Warner

Newsletter — Peggy Cooley

OGS Historian — Cindy Stalnakar

Publicity — vacant

Research — Jerri McCoy

Spring Seminar — Nancy Cordell

June General Membership Meeting

Kyle Kisebach presented "Working with the FamilySearch Center" at our June 12 general meeting. He reviewed the mission, history, people and resources of the FamilySearch program including its website and wiki and its Olympia FamilySearch Center.

SIGs—Kerry McHugh-Upton

Sunshine—Kris Retlin

Community Partners

City of Lacey — Erin Quinn Valcho

Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

Olympia Genealogical Society

Membership Meeting Minutes

12 June 2025 Hybrid

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

Program: Diana Bargmann introduced our speaker, Kyle Kisebach, who presented “Working with the FamilySearch Center.”

Election of 2025-2026 OGS Executive Board: Andy Carter introduced the proposed slate of officers for the upcoming year:

Anthony (Andy) Carter – President, Terry Church – Vice President, Kristin Retlin – Secretary and Carol Jenner – Treasurer.

Andy Carter called for additional nominations from the floor; no nominees were offered. Jon Halvorson moved that the proposed slate of officers be approved. Kerry Upton seconded the motion. The slate was elected by unanimous vote.

Team Reports

Special Interest Groups (SIGs): Kerry Upton reported that the Family Tree Maker SIG and the FamilySearch SIG will be meeting through the summer. The DNA, Writing, Ancestry, and Legacy Family Tree SIGs will be on hiatus until September.

Outreach: Diana Bargmann noted that there will be an outreach opportunity at the Tenino Oregon Trail Days, 25–27 July. She will contact members on the outreach list.

Program Team: Diana Bargmann noted that programs for September through December are lined up.

Membership: Bob Monn reported that one new member has joined since the last meeting.

Tech Team: Joe Brookshier will proceed with the new responsive website design. He requests a photo of Olympia suitable for the website banner.

Seminar: Nancy Cordell reminded us that next year’s seminar presenter will be Cyndi Ingle (of Cyndi’s List), covering technology topics for genealogy. The seminar date is 7 February 2026.

New Business

Norman Dodge, former OGS president, passed away on 1 June. He requested that his wife, OGS member Eileen Dodge, give the society a legacy. Eileen presented a check for \$5,000.00 to President Andy Carter. The funds are to be used at the discretion of the OGS Board.

Jon Halvorson, OGS member and president of the Lacey Historical Society, invited all to attend the society’s annual meeting, 5–7 pm on 9 September at the Lacey Community Center.

Adjournment: President Andy Carter adjourned the meeting at 8:02 pm. Approximately 35 members and guests were in attendance.