

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 36, NO 3

NOV 2025

UPCOMING DATES

- GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING: Thursday, Nov 13th, 7-8:30pm Zoom only
- SIG MEETINGS - throughout Nov
- Newsletter articles due November 15th
- OGS Board Meeting Nov 18th, 6:30-7:45pm

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Musings	1-2
Nov presentation	1
America 250	2
Genealogy 101	4-5
Book Reviews	5-6
Spring Seminar	7

Online Zoom only

Newsletter team: Peggy Cooley, Carolyn Gibbons, and Mandy Stahre  
Contact us: [newsletter@olygensoc.org](mailto:newsletter@olygensoc.org)

WEBSITE LINK:

[olygensoc.org](http://olygensoc.org)

FOLLOW US:



This newsletter is free to the community.

# Events and Opportunities

Autumn is here, and it has changed the tenor of our days. Sunrise is at 7:30 instead of 4:30 and dark descends just after 6 pm, which changes the daily schedule for many of us. Gardens are done, except for cleanup, and most genealogy trips are done until next Spring. There is more time for reading and learning, practicing new skills

and organizing our homes. This also extends to our genealogy, doesn't it? There is much you can do to keep your computer running smoothly; just Google® duplicate file cleanup and pick a program. There are also drivers and boosters on your computer that clog the efficient running of your computer. There are also programs for finding duplicate photos;

once those are deleted, it will be easier to label your photos! There are volunteer opportunities for all of us. Local charities and your own community can always use help to function and perform their good deeds. Online, transcription volunteers are needed at the National Archives and Records Administration, Family Search, American **continued to page 2...**

## Transcribing My Father-in-law's Naval Journals

Helen Edwards is a historian, author, and speaker with lifelong roots in Victoria, BC. With decades of experience in family history research, she has extensively explored her own heritage as well as that of her late husband's family. Helen is passionate about sharing her knowledge through public speaking engagements and has mentored numerous emerging researchers and authors. She is the author of six books and is currently working on her autobiography. Helen's first book, "Dutchy's Diaries," is a tran-

scription of journals her father-in-law kept daily up to 1929, providing a compelling first-person perspective on life as a young naval officer and offering valuable insights into naval operations of that era. This book received The Keith Matthews Award from the Canadian Nautical Research Society in 2021, marking it as the first self-published work to be honored with this distinction. Her second book, "Dutchy's Decades," chronicles the remainder of his distinguished career, including his service

during World War II.



Photo: Helen Edwards

## Events and Opportunities...continued

Ancestors, Washington State Archives and many other organizations and groups. You only have to ask.

The holiday season is nearly here. That means SALES! You can find bargains in DNA kits, genealogy tools, database

memberships and books. A good place to find out about sales is Thomas MacEntee's newsletter at [genealogybargains.com](http://genealogybargains.com). Have you checked out Legacy Webinars? You can either join to have anytime access to new

and archived webinars. Or watch a new webinar for the 7 days following the presentation for free. There are thousands of topics.

- Peggy Cooley



### Save the Date: December 13th

OGS Annual Holiday Party  
Where: Capital Vision Church,  
[1775 Yew Ave NE, Olympia, WA](http://1775YewAveNE.com)  
Details will be coming soon.



## America 250—Washington State Celebration

Kathy Erlandson and Diana Bargmann will coordinate activities for the celebration. The Schmidt House will have a month of activities in May 2026. Kathy and Diana are looking for volunteers to work on the project. Please contact one of them if you

would like to help. More information will be posted in the upcoming newsletters and you can check out the Washington State America's 250th website:

[america250wa.org/](http://america250wa.org/)



## Community News

1. Volunteer ‘Scribes’ are needed to transcribe and index historically important records for the [WA State Archives](https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/be-involved/historical-records-project). Visit their website to learn how: <https://www.sos.wa.gov/archives/be-involved/historical-records-project>
2. [The American Revolution](#), a film by Ken Burns, Sarah Botstein, and David Schmidt is premiering on PBS November 16 in a six-part, 12-hour documentary.



3. Did you notice that Ancestry has released updated [DNA results](#)? What did it change for you?
4. Karen Johnson of Schmidt House in Tumwater advised OGS that the Schmidt House is starting their series of historic talks with “Tumwater Historic Trails and Roads”, on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month. Visit <https://olytumfoundation.org/schmidt-house/> for more information.
5. RootsTech 2026 [registration](#) now open. Roots Tech will be held March 5th-7th next year.



# Genealogy 101

For the past couple of years I have been talking about government documents – birth, death and marriage certificates; census records; probate and estate documents; and deed records.

There is more, however: Newspapers. These can help you find vital records that, for one reason or another, were not filed in the courthouses. Maybe the courthouse burned; after all between wooden buildings and coal oil heating, there were many, many fires. Perhaps the document was never filed, only kept by the preacher. Then again, during the 1800s and probably the 1700s, notices of deaths, marriages and births were only in the newspapers in the same way that people put the same life events on Facebook.

I have a 3-volume set of vital records from the *Fayetteville Observer* (NC) taken from paid advertisements, each usually a couple of lines, though sometimes four or five. The dates are from 1816 (most of the early five or six years are missing) through 1865. There are almost 1,000 pages and most are not to be found in courthouse records. This doesn't count the deaths and marriages in the "news" part of the paper, such as a man being mugged (and maybe killed) or a fire which burned and killed a family. The later issues can give a much fuller picture of the family one may be researching: as an example, I have a family in Oklahoma which I was researching for my great-grandson. Two separate items. When his father Joshua Banks was born in 1984, the parents were liv-

ing in Mesquite, Dallas, Texas, yet he (Joshua) was born in Siloam Springs, Benton, Arkansas. When Joshua was born, there was also an item listing his parents, sibling, grandparents and his great-grandmother, along with other relatives, and everyone's residence.

In addition to vital records found, there are just plain interesting items which help fill out the picture of the family.

Often one can find an item such as this from the *Mason County Journal* of 7 Jun 1889: "Mrs. E. W. Rex left on Tuesday morning for a visit to her former home, Malone, New York, intending to be absent about two months." Or this from the same issue: "A niece of Jacob Hauptley's arrived from Illinois last Friday and left for the Webb farm the following morning. Mr. Hauptley and family had gone to Olympia to meet the visitor, but unfortunately missed her." This particular newspaper is filled with visiting people coming and going, businesses starting, houses being built and moved into and other such items.

The North Carolina newspapers I know go back into the mid-1700s. I have seen lists of soldiers in the Revolutionary War, the War of 1812 and the Civil War, along with their units. Something I just learned from an email from Newspapers.com – during the early 1900s many newspapers had a genealogy column in which was printed all the items one would expect from such a column such as people writing to exchange information.

There were also reprints of old Bible records.

Good deal. Now where do you find old newspapers? Several places. Libraries often have newspapers online or in their stacks, many digitized. Many state ar-



chives have varying amounts of local newspapers online.

[www.Newspapers.com](http://www.Newspapers.com) comes with an Ancestry subscription.

[www.NewspaperArchive.com](http://www.NewspaperArchive.com) is a paid subscription; I know of no other subscription it is tied to like Ancestry. It has many of the newspapers in Newspapers.com but also others; they each have massive amounts of newspapers. Newspapers.com has, they say, as of 22 Oct, 29,580 publications. NewspaperArchive.com claims to have 16,700+ publications. Their earliest issue is 1607, and they say they cover 46 countries. My Heritage, if you get the full sub-



scription, includes

[www.OldNews.com](http://www.OldNews.com) which I have not yet explored. I accidentally got a subscription (and keep meaning to cancel) to [SmallTownPapers.com](http://SmallTownPapers.com). It has a lot of newer



# Genealogy 101

items, but I am mostly looking for before they start, though they do have access to Small Town Papers that are not found elsewhere. Another place which I have used

hundreds if not thousands of digitized newspapers.



of



frequently is [Chronicling America](#), a part of the Library of Congress and is the new, upgraded version (per the website when I visited 21 Oct). This is free, of course. They have

the newspaper you want is not digitized, the site will tell you which issues are extant and where you can find them. One further (sometimes) source

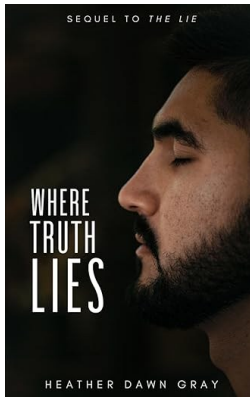
Search by state, time period and so on. Additionally, if

newspaper items is [RootsWeb](#) in the county where one's family were living – or visiting. This is an often overlooked source of so much good information. Spend some time looking up and adding color to your family!

- Carolyn Gibbons

## Book Reviews by Kerry McHugh Upton

"[Where Truth Lies](#)" by Heather Dawn Gray - this novel is a sequel to "The Lie" where a DNA test leads Jahana to



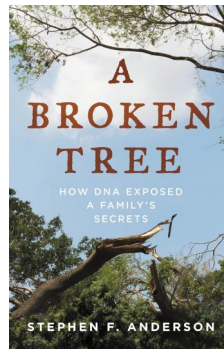
a half-brother Omar. "Where Truth Lies" picks up the story line from Omar's relationship with his father, who is very close to. When his father becomes seriously ill, Omar

posts his DNA on a public forum hoping to find an organ donor for his father. As matches start being posted, Omar is forced to face the truth. A well written story dealing with unforeseen DNA matches. This book is available at booksellers and via Kindle. For the time being I have this book available to lend.

"[A Broken Tree, How DNA Exposed a](#)

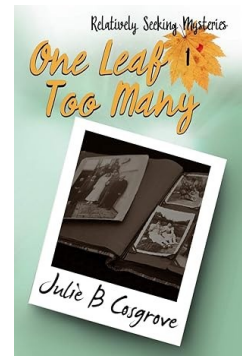
[Family's Secrets](#)"

by Stephen F. Anderson. This story is based on Stephen F Anderson's own family experience, being one of nine children he learns that one of his brother's is not a blood match to their father. As the years pass and DNA tests become more common, Stephen's siblings that are still living have a DNA test which reveal surprising results. This book shares how each of his siblings and mother deal with the revelations. He wrote this book for the next generations of his family, so that the truth doesn't get watered down as the generations come along. He wanted to preserve the truth of their ancestry. This book is available at book sellers. For the time being I have this book available to lend.



"[One Leaf Too Many, Relatively Seeking Mysteries, book 1](#)" by Julie B Cosgrove.

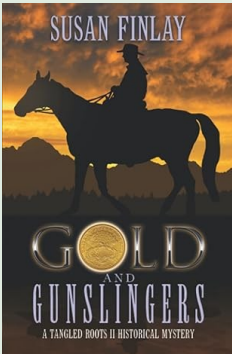
This book is an easy read for those looking for a lightweight family history mystery. The primary character Bailey knows very little about her family history as neither of her parents want to share anything about their families. Bailey sets out to discover who the mystery girl in the photos is. I am hopeful that the next book in the series delves into more genealogy research and has less fluff to the storyline. This book is available at booksellers and through Kindle.



**Continued to page 6.....**

## Book Reviews continued...

### "Gold and Gunslingers, A Tangled Roots II Historical Mystery, Book 1"

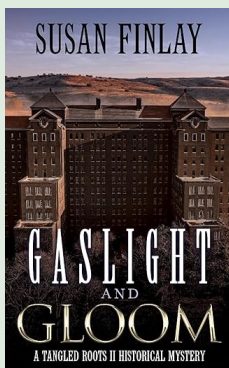


by Susan Finlay. In my last book reviews, I wrote about Susan Finlay's first Tangled Roots Historical Mystery Series featuring Lucas Landry's family research during WWII Germany. This series features his young-

er brother Seth who has caught the bug. He decided to take up searching for their early American ancestors. Using old diaries of five individuals in the attic, he uncovers how they are all connected, as well as connected to his family. This first book takes place during the California Goldrush, not far from their home in Sacramento. Another well written mystery giving us an insight to the 1850's in the gold country. I have this book to loan as well as it is available through book sellers and Kindle.

### "Gaslight and Gloom, A Tangled Roots II Historical Mystery, Book 2"

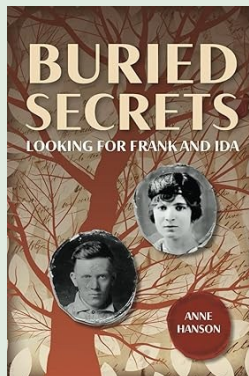
by Susan Finlay. This is the story of Seth's paternal ancestors who settled in Telephone Texas. The family were cotton farmers in this small community. After fourteen years of marriage, the husband decided to com-



mit his wife into an insane asylum. The historical part of this story is from her vantage point. Finlay weaves in a modern day story of Seth, after his first wife was murdered. He and his second wife bring the older two children home to live with their family. I look forward to the next book in this series, stay tuned! I have this book to loan as well as it is available through book sellers and Kindle.

### "Buried Secrets, Looking for Frank and Ida"

by Anne Hanson This is a story about Anne Hanson's grandparents and who they were. Her father and his siblings grew up only knowing bits and pieces about their parents, Frank and Ida Hanson. Any time a question was answered about their early years bits of truth were mingled in with semi-fabricated bits. Some information was told what Ida's maiden

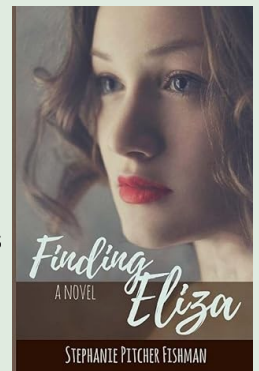


name was, which actually was her mother's maiden name. Street names in New York were really street names from the town that they grew up in. This story has actual facts woven in with Anne's imagination of what probably happened, based on stories that she learned from her newly discovered relatives. This is an enjoyable read, one of self-awareness

through all of the generations, from her grandparents' need to hide their past to Anne learning to enjoy family who are not of her social economic stance. For the time being I have this book available to borrow, as well as available through book sellers and Kindle versions.

### "Finding Eliza, a novel"

written by Stephanie Pitcher Fishman. Set in a small town in Georgia in modern time; Lizzie agrees to attend a genealogical meeting at their local church, headed up by her grandmother, her only living relative. Lizzie's grandmother shares an old diary which captivates her, she's hooked! The diary belonged to her great grandfather who wrote of hidden family secrets of a local lynching. Lizzie searches for the truth of what happened and to find redemption. A well written novel with bits of historical research. I have this book to lend as well as it is available through book sellers and on Kindle.



Take a look and see if you have read them all. Simply log onto OlyGenSoc.org as a member. Click on Publications/Files, click on Downloadable Files, then click on Genealogy Mysteries & Other. You'll be able to click on the Excel or Adobe links to download either format. This is a perk of being an OGS Member! Enjoy good reading!



# 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](http://www.olygensoc.org)

Registration opens  
this month! Keep an  
eye out for details!

#### Special Interest Groups and Facilitators:

- ANCESTRY - Greg Nordlund; meets 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm
- DNA - Nancy Cordell; meets 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday (previously Tuesday) 6:30 pm
- FAMILY HISTORY WRITING - Laura Carroll meets 1<sup>st</sup> 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 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm
- GENEALOGY CHAT - Peggy Cooley; meets 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday 1:00 - 2:30 pm, in person at Peggy's home!
- LEGACY FAMILY TREE - Jerri McCoy; meets 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 Stalnaker

Publicity — vacant

Research — Jerri McCoy

Spring Seminar — Nancy Cordell

SIGs—Kerry McHugh-Upton

Sunshine—Kris Retlin

Technology—Joe Brookshier

Outreach—Daina Bargmann

**Community Partners**

City of Lacey — Erin Quinn Valcho

Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

**October General Membership Meeting**

Karen Wallace Steely presented "Even in the Best Families: How to Research and Share the Skeletons in Your Family Closet". Finding skeletons in your family history may be disconcerting but can also provide an opportunity to uncover new information about your ancestors. We discussed a variety of less common record sources which may be created when an ancestor behaves badly, as well as the challenges of deciding how to handle those skeletons in family histories and research reports. A recording and handout of the meeting is now available to OGS members, log onto website; see Community Events / Recordings\*. Corresponding handout is available by clicking on Publications/Files; Downloadable Files; Program Materials - OGS Only\*; Carlile. Handout and Recording are available through 16 October 2025.

**Olympia Genealogical Society**

**Membership Meeting Minutes**

**October 9, 2025**

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

**Business Meeting:**

**Schmidt House:** Karen Johnson of Schmitt House in Tumwater advised OGS that the Schmidt House is starting their series of historic talks with "Tumwater Historic Trails and Roads", on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month.

**America250:** Kathy Erlandson and Diana Bargmann will coordinate activities for the celebration. The Schmitt House will have a month of activities in May 2026. Kathy and Diana are looking for volunteers to work on the project. Please contact one of them if you would like to help.

**Membership:** No new members since the last meeting but renewals are coming in.

**Newsletter:** The newsletter is full of information. Submissions to the newsletter are always welcome, anything eventful in your genealogy research is welcome.

**Book Manager:** A new leader is needed for this position.

**2026 Seminar:** Save the date! February 7,2026

**Zoom Meetings:** This is the last hybrid meeting until March. The November meeting will be via Zoom.

**Program:** Cindy Stalnaker introduced the speaker, Karen Wallace Steely, who presented "Finding Skeletons in your Closet". The presentation was taped and can be found at [olygensoc.org](http://olygensoc.org) in the member's login.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 8:20 pm. Approximately 36 members and guests were in attendance.

Respectfully submitted,  
Kristin Retlin, Secretary