

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

VOL. 36, NO 6

FEB 2026

UPCOMING:

- **MEMBER MEETING:**  
Thursday, Feb 12th 7-8:30pm (Zoom only)
- **SIG MEETINGS** - throughout FEB
- **Newsletter articles due February 15th**
- **OGS Board Meeting Feb 17th, 6:30-7:45pm**
- **REGISTRATION CLOSES for OGS Virtual Seminar Thurs, Feb 5th 5:00pm**

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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)

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This newsletter is free to the community.

# Musings

As a budding genealogist, I spend countless hours following paper trails trying to trace the steps of my ancestors as they moved around the world. I've followed my great-grandmother as she sailed across the Atlantic, barely an adult with younger siblings in tow traveling to a new land where they could not have known what awaited them. I've traced my great-grandfather who upon arriving

in this country used the same name as his brothers who arrived in the months before and after his arrival. Other family came here long ago on the Mayflower and still others were recruited to fight in the American Revolution. Immigration is a defining feature of my family and one that I share with many of you. You see, my ancestors all had different reasons to come to this country and to leave everything they

ever knew and loved behind. Most never returned to their homelands not because there was nothing left after the ashes of war, but because they chose to make new lives here in this country. They chose to make homes and businesses and communities here. Most of all, they chose to make life here one that their descendants wouldn't need to flee from in order to have a better life.

- **Mandy Stahre**

# February program

**Program:** School Censuses: What, When, Where  
Discover one of genealogy's most overlooked resources—the school census. These records, often taken long before vital records existed, can fill critical gaps in family research, reveal the answers to family mysteries, confirm family migrations, and give a rare glimpse into daily family life and local history. Learn what they covered, when they were made, and where to find those that still exist. Bring your ancestors' early years to life—one classroom at a time.  
Billie Stone Fogarty, a professional genealogist since 1979,

has taught genealogical skills to audiences of all ages on all levels from local through national and international both in person and virtually. She is founder and co-creator with Matt McCormack of a learning retreat for professional genealogists called *Gen-Stock*. She also, along with Dr. David McDonald, created the *Genealogy Symposium*, an intensive, state library & archives-based genealogy methods program based on the theme "Thinking Genealogically". The inaugural *Genealogy Symposium* was hosted by the Oklahoma State Archives and the Oklahoma Historical Society of which Billie has been a

statewide-elected Board member since 2007. She is the founder and principal of the family history research firm, *HeritageTrackers*, based in Oklahoma City, OK.



Photo: Billie Stone Fogarty

## 2026 Seminar

Cyndi Ingle, a genealogist for more than 45 years, is the creator and innovator behind the award-winning and globally recognized [Cyndis-List.com](https://www.cyndislist.com). Cyndi is an expert in using technology for genealogy, research in the U. S. and bringing together traditional methodology with organization, computers, software, and the Internet. She is an internationally known guest lecturer, and she has authored numerous articles, two magazine columns, and three books. Cyndi is the Executive Director for the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research.

### Seminar Sessions

**1. The Path to Digital Libraries and Archives:** Today every nook and cranny of the Internet is filled with hidden gems in digital library and archive collections. Often part of a special project or a larger web site, these collec-

tions aren't always easy to find and explore. We will discuss methods for locating them and, once found, methods for using them to answer specific research questions.

**2. Coordinating to the Cloud: Collaboration with Genealogists Online:** Cloud-based tools for our research include options for file storage, note-taking, tree building, and more. Each of these tools make it easy to access your research from any device with an online connection. One of the best uses of cloud-based research is the ability to share your research with others and work together no matter where you are in the world.

**3. Pin Your Ancestors Down with Google Maps & Google Earth:** Google Maps and Google Earth provide two wonderful sources for geo-

graphical assistance in tracking your ancestors and pinning them down for your research. Combined with other mapping resources online we will demonstrate how using these Google tools can give you a visual aid for your research. Follow migration paths, historical routes, and your own family's path, marking them on the maps with information, photos and documentation.

**4. Be Your Own Digital Archivist: Preserve Your Research:** Are you doing everything you can to safeguard your genealogical research? Your documents? Your data? Your scanned images? We will talk about the importance of taking charge of your own materials and making sure they aren't going to disappear.

**Hurry! Registration Closes on Thursday. February 5th at 5:00pm**



OLYMPIA  
GENEALOGICAL  
SOCIETY

## 2026 OGS Virtual Seminar

# DECODING YOUR ANCESTORS: THE TECH EDITION

with Cyndi Ingle

Saturday, February 7, 2026  
9:00 am to 3:00 pm



Cyndi Ingle, a genealogist for more than 45 years, is the creator of CyndisList.com and the author of numerous articles and three books. She is an expert in using technology for genealogy, research in the US, and organizational methodology. She is the Executive Director for the Institute of Genealogy & Historical Research.

### 4 One-hour Sessions on Technology Tools for Genealogy

- ✓ The Path to Digital Libraries and Archives
- ✓ Collaboration with Genealogists Online
- ✓ Pin Your Ancestors Down with Google Maps & Google Earth
- ✓ Be Your Own Digital Archivist: Preserve Your Research

**\$35 OGS Members**  
**\$45 Non-Members**  
**\$100 Sponsor**

**REGISTER TODAY AT**  
**WWW.OLYGENSOC.ORG**

# Lacey Historical Society

Formed in 1980, the Lacey Historical Society is an all-volunteer non-profit organization whose mission is “to be a voice for the early citizens of Lacey, and to be their stewards protecting the historical heritage they have given us”. To promote interest in the history of the Lacey area and to assist in the collection, cataloging, preservation and interpretation of Lacey history for the education of the public. The Lacey area has a rich history going back to the late 1800s, long before the City of Lacey was incorporated in October 1966.

The City of Lacey’s Historical Museum, now located at the Bell Center building, 4200 – 6<sup>th</sup> Ave, Lacey holds many exhibits about the early years of the Lacey area, including the many resorts that surrounded the five lakes: Chambers; Hicks; Long; Pattison & Southwick. And of course, the City’s replica of the 1890 railroad station is the focal point of community gatherings, food trucks and vendors now. In the future,

Lacey will have a brand new History Museum at the wedge between Lacey Boulevard and Pacific Avenue, not far from the Lacey Post Office. The Lacey Historical Society (LHS) website – [www.laceyhistoricalsociety.com](http://www.laceyhistoricalsociety.com) has copies of all our past newsletters and may historical photos and stories. Our Facebook page, Lacey Historical Society’ has many postings about the early pioneers of the area and the people who built the neighborhoods and businesses we now know as Lacey.

Our 2025-26 projects include: refurbishing our “Remembrance Place”, the garden of dedicated plantings honoring some 120 historic figures, located at the Russell House (former Lacey History Museum location) on Lacey Street; and a permanent tribute to honor Lacey’s first physician, Dr. William A. Ehlers, who served our residents for 45 years, from 1953-1998. He was President of the medical staff of Providence St. Peter Hos-

pital and routinely checked on patients in their homes. We would welcome you joining LHS to help us carry out our mission and keep history alive. Remember that today’s stories are the history of the future. Lacey Museum is now open! Hours: Thursday and Friday: 11-3 pm, Saturday 10-4 pm. Address: 4160 6<sup>th</sup> Ave SE, Suite 101, Lacey Phone: 360-438-0209 - Jon W. Halvorson, President of LHS



## OGS News

1. Upcoming Membership Meetings:  
**March:** Karen Wallace Steely: Bounders, Bigamists, and Grass Widows: Using Divorce Records in Genealogical Research (hybrid)  
**April:** Roxanne Lowe: Researching in the Evergreen State (hybrid)  
**May:** Billie Stone Fogarty: Researching American Indian Ancestry (hybrid)

2. OGS Scrapbooks from 1974 to

2021 are now on our website! Each scrapbook was scanned and stored into a single PDF file. The scrapbooks have photos and newspaper clippings about OGS activities and members. On the [website](#), go to the [Downloads](#) menu and select the [Scrapbooks](#) category. You do not need to be logged in to download the files.

3. Do you remember “Drop In Gene-

alogy (DIG)” at the Olympia Timberland Library? Do you want to start this again at the Tumwater Library Branch? This is a program where OGS volunteers at a specified time and community members can drop in and get one-on-one genealogical advice. Are you interested in volunteering? Send a message to [info@olygensoc.org](mailto:info@olygensoc.org).

# Genealogy 101



## Family Search Part 4

Still continuing with [Family Search](#) and the ins and outs of Full Text search. Last time we did searches using the filters Places and Dates. This month I will talk about some of the other filters that can be used. (I hope you followed along with me last months, or at least tried it on your own people.)

I want you to understand we are learning this together here. Instead of putting in any name, I entered a location. For this test I will use Coles, Illinois. My family arrived that area ca. 1829 – there were, as was usual in that time, a father and mother, several grown and married children with their spouses and sometimes in-laws of various sorts. Whether they traveled all together or in different groups, I don't know but I may find out something about that here. This time I am not looking for a specific document such as a will or marriage, but instead looking at the entire family group and their movements. Let us find out what we can see.

Full Text gave me over 300,000 results. Obviously, that is way too much for me. The first things showing up, for instance, are naturalization records starting in 1892. Definitely not what I am interested in as my direct family had moved on to Wisconsin ca. 1860. To narrow it, I am offered "Collection" or "Year" or "Place" (where I am but I assume that can be narrowed) or "Record Type." Not that I am interested in narrowing the place down much, but let us see what is offered. Clicking on that takes us back to the world. Not using that now.

Date is, I think, a first choice. I will select the early 1800s and see what I get. Sometimes the sorting and reading are not too good; I saw 1100 for the year which made me very curious. Gave me 3 hits in Macon, Illinois, es-

tate files labeled 11xx. I also saw one hit for an item which the reading of it was very garbled. Al is not perfect, remember, and this proves it. Under 1500s there was a book of genealogies which went back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century, but it also had in the book marriages in Coles County, Illinois from 1858-1861 giving the license date, marriage date and official. There are also records from other counties in Illinois and some family genealogies in the book. I will look at it later. None of the entries say in the description "Coles County" but the 10 entries may have information for me. Under 1600s, there are 69 entries; the ones I looked at were biographies and historical entries on the first discoveries of Illinois.

Moving on to more lucrative and easily discovered things, I check 1800s which gave me much more than I wanted. To many documents over the entire century. I will hit the down arrow on 1800 and check only 1820 and 1830. This still gives me too many hits because I am getting a lot of the historical and geographical information. Now I will narrow using Collection. Clicking on the down arrow I find many collections, but I will narrow to something I want.

Looking at when Coles was formed (should have done that before) in 1830, it was formed from Edgar and Clark counties, so my records will be in those counties for the beginning of my family, if all is correct. Now I need to look at deed indexes. Well, the Grantor Index starts at 1875 in Edgar County. No good to me. I suppose I could start at 1829 and look forward through each deed book, but instead I will start over and put Dryden and Balch in the search terms. Then I put in place

Coles, Clark, Edgar, Cumberland counties in Illinois and ate 1820s and 1830s. Came up with 111 results: easy enough to go through. One of the first hits was a [History of Coles County, Illinois](#) published in Chicago by Wm. Le Baron, Jr., & Company, and consisted of a series of articles compiled by various historians. The volume is 699 pages and filled with Balch, Dryden and assorted other families of mine with biographical data from very early in the 1800s (one I saw born 1802 in Tennessee and came to Illinois in 1814). By clicking on various record types and so forth, I also found a Marriage Register for 1850-1861 and some other records.

I have my work cut out for me. Maybe you can find things for yourselves.

I just went back, started over, with Balch Dryden in the original search box, then Place to Illinois, Clark and Edgar and got 52 hits. With no other filters, that should be easy enough to go through.

I want to mention one more thing: when you first go to the results page you will see at the top right a small box with a light bulb in the far left and the words "Learn how the updated filters can improve your search." Click on the word Learn and a small box will open in the center of your screen with "Finding records just got easier" and Start Tour. Click on Start Tour and get 6 small boxes explaining and showing behind the boxes ways to enhance your search. Have fun!

**Carolynn also leads the Family Search SIG that meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month on Google Meet.**

**OGS Elected Officers**

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Spring Seminar — Nancy Cordell

SIGs—Kerry McHugh-Upton

Sunshine—Kris Retlin

Technology—Joe Brookshier

Outreach—Diana Bargmann

**Community Partners**

City of Lacey — Erin Quinn Valcho

Timberland Library — Agatha Burstein

**January Program:**

Topographic maps and soil maps should help us identify a community, including neighbors, ferries, mills, cemeteries, historic houses, and many other landmarks. By using a combination of resources, the picture of this community will be more visible and more clearly understood.

**Speaker:**

J. Mark Lowe describes himself as “born to be curious.” He is a professional genealogist and educator who specializes in original records and manuscripts throughout the South. He coordinates “Research in the South” courses at IGHR, SLIG, and TIGR, worked on several TV series, a YouTube channel, and does webinars.

JANUARY

OGS MEMBERSHIP MEETING

January 8, 2026

President Andy Carter called the Zoom meeting to order at 7PM.

Diana Bargmann introduced the speaker, Mark Lowe who spoke on the topic “Finding Uncle John’s Grist Mill, His Neighbors and that Cemetery Using Mags, Records and Stories” – by using a combination of resources, the picture of the community becomes more visible and understood.

Following the speaker there was a short Membership meeting.

Diana Bargmann noted that the February Membership meeting will feature School Census’. If you have a state you are interested in, please contact Diana prior to January 15.

America250 – an email for committee volunteers was forwarded, please contact Kathy Erlandson if you would like to help coordinate the OGS efforts in this celebration.

The new website is fully operational. If you are having trouble logging in send an email to: [webmaster@olygensoc.org](mailto:webmaster@olygensoc.org) . You can also find that email address associated with “Technology/Website” on Team Leads on the website.

The 2026 Seminar is less than 1 month away. Please register! Cyndi Ingle is the speaker on “Decoding Your Ancestors: The Tech Edition”.

There were 29 participants in the Zoom Meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 8:24.

- Kris Retlin, Secretary