

Supporting family historians in the South Puget Sound since 1974



OLYMPIA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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MAY 2026

UPCOMING :

- **MEMBER MEETING:** Thursday, May 14th 7-8:30pm (Hybrid)
- **SIG MEETINGS** - throughout May
- **Newsletter articles due May 15th**
- **OGS Board Meeting May 19th,** 6:30-7:45pm

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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.

Musings

As July 4, 2026, approaches. I ask that you take time to explore and reflect on our 250 year old “experiment” means to you. Our nation-building didn’t spring forth as a finished product, but was years in the making. Politics, philosophical wran-

gling and of course, military battles, pushed us towards what the United States of America is today, “A republic, if you can keep it,” according to Benjamin Franklin. Our America 250! Celebration begins this month at the [Schmidt House](#). **We need volun-**

teers to staff our indoor table in 2 or 3 hour shifts. All you need to bring is your enthusiasm. Here are the volunteer shifts available: May 14, 15 & 16 from 12-6; May 23, 24, & 25; and May 28, 29, & 30. Contact Kathy Erlandson, Team Lead for America 250! at kathyerlandson@yahoo.com.

May program

You may have heard the family legend about American Indian ancestry, but how do find the facts? Use these important steps to unlock the keys to discovering your Native American ancestry. Billie Stone Fogarty, a full time professional genealogist, is past president of the Association of Professional Genealogists.



Photo: Billie Stone Fogarty

A frequent speaker at na-

tional and state genealogy conferences, she is also former president of the

Genealogical Speakers Guild. Billie is active on the regional, state, and local level in advancing genealogical research and open records access as the state liaison for the Records Preservation and Access Committee.

Her background as an educator shows through in her passion for leading others to discover their own family history.

Current volunteer opportunities

The following opportunities are available if you would like to become more involved in OGS and help continue the work of this organization.

- Seminar Coordinator (see April's issue for details on this position)
- Backup treasurer
- Backup Webmaster
- Backup Meeting Room Set up
- Drop In Genealogy mentor*
- Outreach Activities: Tenino Oregon Trail Days July 24-26

If you are interested in any of these positions email:

Info@olygensoc.org.

***Drop In Genealogy starting June 29 from 1-3 PM.** Looking for OGS volunteer mentors to help budding genealogists who drop in. Please bring your laptop or tablet to Tumwater Timberland Regional Library at 7023 New Market Skills St SW, Tumwater, WA 98501. Contact Diana Bargmann at barbourgenealogist@yahoo.com.



Did you know that OGS had a Quarterly Journal from 1974-2016? This was the place for members to publish their research on their families, otherwise unpublished data on mostly Thurston records (cemeteries, birth, deaths, city directories, etc.) and Ahnentafels. The available quarterly can be found on our website under Newsletters and scroll down. The Quarterlies were also sent to Allen County Library in Indiana and indexed through PERSI, the Periodical Source Index, and can be found at genealogycenter.info > PERSI.

1. Do you know an OGS member who is ill or could use some cheer due to the loss of a loved one? Contact the Sunshine Team leader Kris Retlin at 973-273-4791 or kristin.retlin@gmail.org.
2. OGS Board Meeting minutes are available on the olygensoc.org website under Downloads > Board Meeting Minutes (Can only see if signed into your OGS account)

SiGs are going strong. Check out the groups that we have and join in!

SIG	Facilitator	Meeting Information	Location
Ancestry.com	Greg Nordlund	4th Saturday 11:00 am – 12:30 pm	Google Meet
DNA	Nancy Cordell	2nd Wednesday 6:30 - 8:00 pm	Google Meet
Family History Writing	Laura Carroll	1st Monday 7:00 - 8:30 pm	Google Meet
Family Tree Maker (FTM)	David Abernathy	1st Tuesday 6:00 - 8:00 pm	Zoom
FamilySearch.org	Carolyn Gibbons	4th Wednesday 6:00 – 8:00 pm	Google Meet
Genealogy Chat	Peggy Cooley	3 rd Wednesday 1:00 - 3:00pm	In Person at Peggy's house

Book Reviews

Recently I have been going through the list of genealogy mysteries, memories and other books that we have listed on the website under Downloads / Miscellaneous. I have been focusing on books that are found in the Timberland Library system. I have read the first three books in the [Ruth Galloway mysteries](#) by Elly Griffiths. These are mysteries with more of a forensic anthropology theme set in modern times with Dr Ruth Galloway as the lead sleuth.

The first book is "The Crossing Places" which introduces the reader to Dr Ruth Galloway who lives at the end of the road across the marshlands to the sea. The marshlands have been home to archaeological sites of early man. Whenever bones are discovered, Dr Ruth is the first

who the police department calls to determine if they are modern bones or ancient remains. The underlying story plot deals with bones found of a child and two missing girls. Enjoy the read and meeting the cast of characters in this "who done it".

The next book in the series is "The Janus Stone". A Janus Stone is found in doorways, entrances or exits of a building. Early man believed that to prevent harm to the dwellers a young child needs to be sacrificed and buried under the Janus stone. During an archeological dig, remains are found of a young child in a doorway. Meanwhile, a developer is having a children's home torn down to build yuppy apartments when a child's remains are found under the doorway slab. Dr Ruth has been called in to examine the

remains and to date when and how the child died. Another entertaining mystery by Elly Griffiths.

I just finished the third book, "The House at Sea's End". When the remains of six men are found in a remote cliffside below the house on the cliff, the police call in Dr Ruth Galloway to determine the cause of death and the timeframe of when the men were killed. Bone analysis determines that the men were most likely from Germany which brings to light what had happened during the war years and the home guard.

All of the books are available at the Timberland Libraries as well as the rest of the series. I may get back to reading the rest of the series as time allows. In the meantime, off to another author!

Genealogy 101

Family Search Part 5

This is my fifth and final article on Family Search. There is a lot more to be learned and talked about, but I have exhausted the topic for now. I will try to portmanteau (you'll know that word if you read Alice and Wonderland in your youth) a few things. Two are reasonably new and the third has been around quite a while but I do not think it has been used as much as it might be. I know I don't get around to it. First, Family Search has **Newspapers!!!** They are still adding information but there are quite a few. To-

day there are only 14 entries, but a few have a large collection within the category. British Archive Family Notices has 4,015,477 as of now and British Archive Obituaries has 717,216 items. There is also in the US GenealogyBank Historic Newspaper Obituaries 1815-2013 with 31,807,561 entries. There are filters on the right hand side to filter for 15 categories such as Birth, Marriage, Death or Military. I tested GenealogyBank but that only gives an index; images are not available there, though it will give you more information than you had, perhaps.

The entries I looked at gave me the URL in GenealogyBank but it also gave me the names of everyone in the obit. There is information in newspapers throughout the world though a limited amount.

I also looked quickly at the records available in Ireland; I have a couple of lines there. I found some hints that my people might have been from Cork – several births and obits in Cork with my surnames, while not so much in other counties. This is no kind of proof, as you well know. I will be digging more into this soon, myself.

Genealogy 101 continued

Family Search also has **Cemeteries** – links to both Newspapers and Cemeteries are at the bottom of the Search drop down tab. While scrolling around the world, I hit Ireland and the map was covered with red cemetery icons. I also tried Scotland (with many, many icons) and Ukraine with again many icons. Each time I hit a picture the listing said, “showing 100 out of xxx sites.” In Scotland there were a few thousand. Ukraine only had 216 sites, but since that is in the Soviet Union, that sounds pretty marvelous to me. I do have to say, though, that looking at where the sites were, most were NOT in Ukraine as it is now, but in Poland on the edge, Slovakia on the edge and Hungary on the edge. Still.... This Cemetery database is definitely worldwide. Now to get back to my original topic. Still in the Search tab, third item from the bottom is the Research Wiki link. Hit that and a world opens up to you – and I mean the map of the world. This is the **Family Search Research Wiki Main Page**. Above the map is a title “A Genealogy Resource Guide” which claims (today) 149,991 articles. Right below that is a search bar which says, “search by place or topic.” You can also find places by clicking on one of the six areas of the world, and then working your way down. Once you first click on an area, often there are no more divisions than the first that comes up. For example, among Europe’s first listings is Azerbaijan. There is not a caret in front, so it does not have lower divisions to start with. This page opens up with a short discussion on history. Then on the right hand side of the page are links to Beginning Research, Record Types, Azerbaijan

background, Azerbaijan Genealogical Word Lists (only Russian), and Local Research Resources. These are the same things you will find in all the pages in the Wiki.

Below the opening paragraph are three colored boxes with links; 1st is to Azerbaijani Online Genealogy Records; 2nd is to Online Research Help; 3rd is to Getting Started. Below these is a map with the – I would call them states – and below that is the listing with links of the 59 districts, 11 cities and 1 autonomous republic, according to the list. All of the pages you open from the large world map will have similar items.

To go to a place more of you are interested in – England, say, and see what is there. When you first hit “England” a list on the left hand side opens up with all of the counties in England listed. At the top is “England” or you can hit one you know about. I hit just England. There is a short paragraph about England with a map below with all the counties and parishes listed. On the right is the list of, similar to what we saw in Azerbaijan, Beginning Research, Record Types, England Background, England Genealogical Word Lists, Cultural Groups and Local Research Resources. Note that Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland are separate even though they are part of the United Kingdom. I will, more or less at random, go to Somerset. I have people there, but they left in the 1600s to come to America.

This gives us a new set of boxes, much the same as on the upper

levels. That makes it so you don’t have to learn a new way of thinking at each level. Again, a short description of Somerset with a map on the right showing in red where Somerset is. There is a link to all the parishes. Note that one of the sentences on the upper level said, “Genealogy records are kept at the parish level in England.” Again, on the far right are the lists of Somerset Wiki Topics. In the center below the links to parishes are links to Civil Registration Districts. Below that are links to websites. Meandering through the various links (and also clicking on links on the right hand side such as “Probate”) you will be taken to various lists and links. Some are paid sites such as Ancestry or Find My Past; some are free from various British places. All have information and links to information. I think before I myself go any further I need to read and absorb the three Beginning Research topics on any of the individual counties – Guided Research, Research Strategies and Record Finder or the more complete list for England Beginning Research. Good luck to you!

- Carolyn Gibbons

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

OGS Elected Officers

President — Andy Carter

Vice President — Terry Church

Secretary — Kris Retlin

Treasurer — Carol Jenner

Past President—Kathy Erlandson

Team Leads

Librarian — Traci Ragen Clawson

Membership — Helga Warner

Newsletter — Peggy Cooley

OGS Historian — Cindy Stalnaker

Publicity — Gail Sanders

Research — Jerri McCoy

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

April Program:

There are many resources for finding members of your family tree in the Evergreen State. Roxanne will share a few free resources for those with Washington State (and Washington Territory) roots. Even if you don't have Washington ancestors, many of the resources may apply to you. She will also talk about the Washington State Genealogical Society's Pioneer Pursuit program. Roxanne is the proud great granddaughter of Washington pioneers Daniel and Mary (Donovan) Murphy who came to Chehalis County (now Grays Harbor) in 1888. She is the past president of the Grays Harbor Genealogical Society and webmaster of the Washington State Genealogical Society's website. She was the 2024 recipient of the WSGS President's Award for Outstanding Achievement.

APRIL OGS MEMBERSHIP MEETING

April 9, 2026

Past President Kathy Erlandson called the meeting to order at 7 pm.

Cindy Stalnaker introduced speaker Roxanne Lowe who spoke on "Researching in the Evergreen State".

At 7:55 the Past President resumed the Membership Meeting.

Website: Three new America250 pages have been added to the OGS Website. They show events at the Schmidt House, in Washington and nationwide. The website will also include family histories. Look at the page and take the civics test!

Newsletter: Please submit a family history of an ancestor who lived in the colonies by the time the war ended. The history must be 300 words or less.

Nominating Committee: All current officers are running for re-election. The committee will be looking for volunteers and ideas.

America250: The committee is looking for volunteers to man a table at the Schmidt House.

Programs: Two programs for 2026-2027 have already been booked. Contact the team leaders if you have ideas for presentations.

DIG: Will start at the Tumwater Library on the last Monday of each month. Stop by, we need a good turnout for the first three months to continue. Some current members joined because of the prior DIG at the Olympia Library.

Seminar: The Seminar is still seeking a Team Leader. The current team will continue and the current leader, Nancy Cordell, will help. Contact Nancy if you want more information.

Membership: Two new members this month, one attended the April Membership Meeting.

There were 45 members in attendance online and in person. The meeting adjourned at 8:10.

Respectfully submitted-Kris Retlin