



## *Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.*

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### Upcoming Meetings

#### October 2020 Meeting



John Putnam will be joining us again at our **October 7th** meeting for an intriguing presentation: **“The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Cauldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry.”**

As a descendant of both the protagonists and antagonists of those involved in the Salem witchcraft trials, the historical story of this event becomes a genealogical story for John as well. His direct Putnam ancestors were involved in most aspects of the witchcraft hysteria that occurred in his ancestral hometown of Salem Village (now Danvers, MA). John will share many genealogical, historical, religious, social, economic, and political factors that led to and followed the horrific events in 1692. Whether you have Salem ancestry or not, witchcraft hysteria affected many of our ancestors in countries around the world.

John is a native of Western Mass, grew up on a farm in Southwick, graduated from UMass Amherst, and now resides in Colorado. He's the past President of the Pikes Peak Genealogical Society and a fascinating speaker.

This is the second in a series of lectures on New England genealogy that John will be presenting to WMGS. Join us on Wednesday, **October 7th at 6 PM** for a virtual presentation via Zoom. You're sure to enjoy it!

## November 2020 Meeting



Edwin W. Strickland II has over 40 years of experience as both an amateur and professional genealogist. Raised on a farm owned by the Strickland family since 1789 and surrounded by family artifacts and stories, Ed developed a sense of heritage at an early age. His own research has focused on his ancestral lines, the descendants of Jacob Carter of Branford, Connecticut, the Strickland families of New England, and the families of Otis, Massachusetts.

Ed is a charter member of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council, past president of the Connecticut Society of Genealogists, Inc., past president and genealogist for the Descendants of the Founders of Ancient Windsor, Inc., and charter member of the National Society of the Descendants of Textile Workers of America, Inc. He's also a longtime member of WMGS.

He's a frequent lecturer at libraries, as well as historical and genealogical societies. In addition to presenting several lectures for WMGS in the past, he also presented at NERGC regional conferences many times.

At our **November 4th** monthly meeting, Ed will be presenting **“The Rise and Fall of Hampshire County (Massachusetts).”** Following a discussion of the steps from exploration to incorporation in New England, Ed will follow the history of Hampshire county (which at times extended from Worcester, Massachusetts west to the Hudson River and from within present Connecticut into Vermont) from its creation in 1660 onward. He will cover the various state boundary disputes, discuss the division of the four present counties of Western Massachusetts, and provide a guide to finding their records.

***NOTE: Until our regular meetings resume, our events will be held virtually, as much as possible..***

***How to Participate: Members will receive an email notice in advance of the monthly virtual meeting. You will be required to pre-register via a link in the email. After that, you will receive another email with the link to join the meeting via Zoom at the broadcast time. Monthly meetings will be broadcast at 6 PM.***

***Do you have questions about using Zoom or need assistance to join our meetings and trainings? Just send us an email at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com). We're available and willing to help our members to access everything that WMGS has to offer!***

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# Message from the President

by Jeanne Leblond

Six months into our pandemic, I'll admit, I haven't kept up with writing my experiences and thoughts about dealing with COVID-19. That little voice in my head keeps popping up, "You should be writing this...". My intentions were good and I started a Word document on my computer at the beginning of the quarantine so that I could quickly write a few thoughts. Even though I'm betting that even those few written words may be appreciated by future generations, I want to write as much as I can. Unless I get back to it, are they going to be wondering what happened to me during the pandemic? Will they be looking for a death certificate? Searching for a newspaper obituary? Something on Facebook? Hey, I'm still here!



October is celebrated as Family History Month, so one of my goals is to get back to writing and scan more pictures. How will you be celebrating Family History Month this year? Do you have plans for scanning family pictures, organizing your files, taking on a record indexing project at Family Search.org, or something else? Will you join me in writing up your experiences? We'd love for you to tell us your plans.

Yes, there are still challenges ahead and life won't be back to normal for some time. For many of us, one of the greatest challenges is how to stay connected with family, friends, and fellow members. For WMGS, Zoom has been working very well.

We've been pleased to have so many members join us virtually at our monthly meetings and training sessions. For those of you who haven't joined us at them, we'd love to have you come. There's absolutely no pressure to have your camera or microphone on, if you don't want to do that. If you aren't sure how to use Zoom, we can give you personal assistance to learn how to do it.

We also want to let you know how much we appreciate your comments about our efforts to provide members with virtual events. We're enjoying our virtual offerings as much as you! We're gaining new skills and enjoying each other's company.

Please don't forget that our Annual Meeting, which was postponed from May, will be held on Wednesday, October 7th after our presentation by John Putnam. We hope you'll join us!

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## Membership Renewal Time is Now!

**The WMGS  
Members  
password will  
change on  
October 15!**



**Now is the time to renew your WMGS membership if you haven't done so already! We wouldn't want you to miss the exciting upcoming presentations we have planned for you!** Annual memberships to the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc. run from September 1st through August 31st of the following year. Both new memberships and renewals which are made in July and August will run through August 31, 2021.

**The WMGS Members password will be changing on October 15 so it's important to renew now if you haven't done so already! Renewing will continue to give you access to our Zoom presentations and the Members Only portion of our website! Members will be notified of the password change via email.**

There are 2 options for renewing:

- Mail your check (made out to WMGS) to our society at:

WMGS, Inc. P.O. Box 418  
West Springfield, MA 01090-0418

- Join or renew through our website.

Here's the link to the Join page: <https://westmassgen.com/join/>

Simply scroll down the page, select a single, couple, student, or lifetime membership. Then, click on the PayPal link. **YOU DO NOT NEED A PAYPAL ACCOUNT** to use this secure, convenient, and simple method.

Don't delay! You won't want to miss the upcoming, exciting season at WMGS, including monthly presentations, our newsletters, and our Special Interest Groups and trainings. And we are currently offering our monthly presentations and trainings to members via Zoom, so you can participate from home.

Members enjoy exclusive access to the Members Only feature of our website with archived meeting presentations and handouts, our DNA Boot Camp videos, our list of Western Massachusetts and Massachusetts Genealogical Resources (with links), previous editions of our current newsletter, and archived editions of our newsletter, the *American Elm*.

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## Member Only Benefits

### Special Interest Groups (SIGs) & Trainings

#### October 15 – 7 pm – Applying Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps to Research



Sanborn Fire Insurance maps offer unique and valuable information about the locations where your city-dwelling ancestors lived. The Sanborn Map Company published maps from 1867 to 1970 to evaluate fire insurance liability in urban areas. The maps are detailed street plans on large sheets of paper—one sheet shows about four to six city blocks. You can learn a lot about your ancestor's house and neighborhood or research the history of your own old house. These maps show building outlines, locations of windows and doors, building use (including the names of most public buildings), property boundaries, house and block number, street names, and more. In this video class, you'll see an example of the role Sanborn maps played in a research situation.

#### October 22 – 7 pm – Inspiring Ways to Captivate Non-Genealogists



If you are researching your family tree but haven't shared it with your family in a way that sparks their interest, then you are only experiencing half of the joy of genealogy! And if your descendants don't grasp the importance of their heritage, your hard work may tragically find its way to the city dump when you are gone.

Don't just collect your family history and store it away in binders and files! Learn how creative displays and crafts can capture the imagination of your non-historian friends and relatives, while honoring your ancestors. These projects are guaranteed to inspire your family to ask you to tell them more about the family tree!

*How to Participate: Members will receive an email notice in advance of the training sessions. You will be required to pre-register via a link in the email. After that, you will receive another email with the link to join the Zoom webinar at the broadcast time.*

*Note the time change for training sessions only. Training sessions will be held at 7 PM.*

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## Articles

### FGS & NGS Upcoming Merger

The boards of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) and the National Genealogical Society (NGS) have announced that the merger of both societies will be effective on October 1, 2020, following several votes by members and each society's board. The National Genealogical Society (NGS) name will be retained after the merger of the societies.

The National Genealogical Society (NGS), founded in 1903 in Washington, D.C., was the first national genealogical association in this country. NGS published the first national genealogical journal, co-created the Board for Certification (BCG), and has been a leader in genealogy education through conferences, seminars, workshops, research tours, published material, and most recently, online courses. GenTech, a division of NGS, helped to facilitate a bridge between genealogy and technology and is known for the GenTech Genealogical Data Model. This model has been used by many developers who write genealogy software.

The Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) has been serving the needs of genealogy societies since its founding in 1976. FGS has been advocating for record preservation and access, has provided educational resources and opportunities for genealogical societies, especially society management topics, and has helped societies grow and thrive in many ways. WMGS has taken advantage of their society management resources and most recently, their extensive review of our Bylaws.

FGS also serves as a clearinghouse for individuals seeking societies around the country through their Find a Society link on their website. WMGS has been a member of FGS for many years and we've been proud to display their logo on our website, on our Facebook page, and in our brochures. In addition, we are listed on their website with other societies around the country, which increases our profile.

With the merger, the new "NGS" will allow both individuals and organizations to be members and to exercise their voting rights on all National Genealogical Society matters. The hope is that the merger will build a stronger and more vibrant community of family history organizations to benefit both individuals and societies.

WMGS is excited that we will soon become a member of the National Genealogical Society.

### Annual Meeting Postponed to October 7th

Our annual meeting, which was originally scheduled for May 6th, will now be held virtually on October 7th via Zoom.

According to our Bylaws, our elections are conducted at our May annual meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the state mandates on quarantines, the annual meeting was postponed. Because terms of half of our officers and directors expire on that date each year, those holding positions up for re-election were reappointed until we could hold an election, so that we could continue to function as a society.



Since there is no end in sight to our quarantine, the Board has decided to proceed with an abbreviated Annual Meeting which will be held virtually via Zoom. Following our speaker's presentation on October 7th, we will hold the Annual Meeting. The agenda will include a budget report by the Treasurer, discussion and vote on proposed Bylaws revisions, and an election of a vice-president, secretary, assistant treasurer and one director. A Nominating Committee has been appointed and they will present a slate of candidates at the meeting. Nominations will also be accepted from the floor.

Our annual audit and Founders' Award presentations will continue to be postponed because of the inability to meet in person.

This year, the Board will be presenting major revisions to our Bylaws to our membership. Our Bylaws are our most important document, as they provide a framework for how we function as a non-profit genealogical society. Our Bylaws guide us in everything that we do to ensure that we are in compliance with both state and federal laws, that we use sound management practices, and that we fulfill our responsibilities to both our society and our membership.

One of the duties of a society's board is a periodic review of the society's Bylaws to ensure that they are current, meet best practices, and meet our needs.

WMGS is fortunate that as members of the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), we are entitled to a Bylaws review by the FGS Reviews Committee. We submitted our Bylaws to FGS last year and they were returned with extensive, helpful comments and suggestions for revision. The review highlighted some areas of confusion or inefficiency and suggested ways to strengthen our Bylaws so that they meet current standards.

Last fall, a subcommittee of Board members met to revise our Bylaws using the comments and suggestions by Bobbi King from the FGS Reviews Committee. In addition to being a member of the FGS Bylaws Review Committee, Ms. King has served as an FGS board member and as vice-president of administration and parliamentarian. She is also the co-author of the *Bylaws Workbook: A Handbook for New & Established Societies* (2012).

The WMGS Board of Directors has approved the subcommittee's Bylaws revision. The next step is to present them to our membership and for the membership to vote to accept them.

Both our current Bylaws and the Proposed Bylaws with Revisions are available in the Members Only section of our website in the Official Documents section. At our October 7th meeting, we will be conducting a vote on whether or not to approve them. Please take the time to review both documents and join us at our Oct. 7th meeting.

## Newsletter Items Needed!



At the end of each edition of our newsletter, we have a statement that asks for newsletter submissions. It's still there, but we're adding another request in the middle of this newsletter to get your attention!

Over the years, members have submitted articles about their research or ancestors that they have discovered. The articles have always been well-received and enjoyed by fellow members. In fact, they are the best articles because they come from you – our members!

Have you made a family discovery during your pandemic research? Solved a brick wall? Found an ancestor who was a rogue or black sheep? Someone famous? Maybe not so famous, but had an interesting life?

Have you discovered new techniques or tips that you can share with other members? Helpful websites or databases? Share your findings with fellow members!

You certainly don't have to be a professional writer, as most of us are not. Give it a try; we'll all be glad that you did.

## What Were the Goblins Wearing That Year?

by Joanne Mason



“What are you going to be for Halloween?”

In the 1970s, in my neighborhood full of kids, this was a million dollar question. And secrecy was paramount! Nobody wanted to reveal their costume before Halloween night, although we all tried to trick each other into providing clues.

At my house, my mother encouraged my older brother and me to make our own costumes. When I was four, she helped me fashion a wand from cardboard and glitter for my fairy princess costume. When I was ten, she allowed me to sew ornaments to a green bathrobe – and stick a wire through the hem – so I could be a Christmas tree.

Sometimes, neighborhood kids teamed up. My best friend and I went as salt and pepper shakers one year. And my brother frequently went as the Unknown Comic from “The Gong Show.”

I look through old albums, and I see so many photos of my brother and me. But I've never seen any pictures of my parents celebrating Halloween as children. What kinds of costumes did kids wear in the 1930s and 1940s?



Online sleuthing brought me to several interesting links:

[The Most Popular Halloween Costume the Year You Were Born](#)

by Melissa Mills (*Reader's Digest*, September 15, 2020)

[Halloween Costumes That Disguised, Spooked and Thrilled Through the Ages: Photos](#)

by Becky Little (*History.com*, October 23, 2019)

[125 Years of Halloween Costumes](#)

by Brie Dyas (*Good Housekeeping*, October 4, 2016)

What was your favorite Halloween costume? Or the most original one you've seen at your door? Feel free to share your story (and pictures if you have them) on the WMGS Facebook page!

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## Brick Wall Queries

### How to Submit or Respond to a Query:

**Submitting:** Queries and responses should be sent via email to [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com) or submitted through the Contact Us section on our website. Non-members should submit their payment (\$5.00 per query) via the Donate tab on the website. Members are entitled to post three (3) queries per month.

**Responding:** Please send your response directly to WMGS. To aid in matching answer to question, please identify the question you are answering by using the month of the newsletter and the question number. (example Oct 2018-Q1, Oct 2018-Q2) Answers submitted should include the source(s) of information found or specific information on a website or database. WMGS will forward the response to the person who asked the question, post it in the next newsletter, and archive it on our website.

**Note:** Because of space limitations, WMGS reserves the right to limit the number of queries that are listed per newsletter. When necessary, queries will be posted in the next available issue. WMGS and its members are not responsible to conduct research, to provide answers for the query, or for the accuracy of the information posted or received. Always verify any information received by checking its source.

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## Free Online Offerings

Take a tour, attend a free presentation or webinar, explore a new resource, or just relax with the ducks at the park. There's so much available without having to leave home! (New listings added monthly.)

### [American Battlefield Trust – Washington, D.C.](#)

Tours, videos, and historical resources about the Revolutionary War, War of 1812, and Civil War.

### [Amherst Historical Society](#)

You'll find archived videos of their popular lunchtime History Bites lecture series, links to online books and documents pertaining to Amherst's history, links to city directories from 1889-1923, and several films related to local farming and the 160th anniversary of the Morrill Land Grant Act to establish the University of Massachusetts.

### [Boston Public Library](#)

The Boston Public Library offers several online events each month through its Local & Family History Lecture Series. This one may be of interest to genealogists:

- **History of the Hub: Resources for Local and Family History at the Boston City Archives**  
(October 27, 2020 at 6 pm)

See more information [here](#).

### [Commonwealth of Massachusetts State House – Boston, MA](#)

Tour the Great Hall, Senate Chamber, Office of the Speaker of the House, and more. You'll also find pictures and descriptions of artifacts and documents.

### [FamilySearch](#)

Follow these steps to find webinars on this site:

- On the home page, click on the **Search** tab.
- Go to the **Research Wiki** section.
- In the **Getting Started** section on the left side of the page, click on **Family History Library**.
- Scroll down to the **Family History Library Information** section.
- Click on **Classes and Online Webinars** and **Current Month Schedule**.

Or use the link below:

[https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family\\_History\\_Library\\_Classes\\_and\\_Webinars](https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars)

### [Franco American Portal Project: Beta](#)

This is a new, collaborative, five university project focusing on archival material related to French-Canadian, Quebecois(e), and Acadian diaspora communities in the Northeast. In its initial stages, the free public database will bring together archival material from around the world. The beta test version is available now.

### [Historic Deerfield](#)

Join their email list to view short video tours of Historic Deerfield and their collections and to learn about upcoming virtual events and tours.

### [Historic Northampton](#)

Historic Northampton has several collections of historical material related to Northampton and the surrounding area, including photographs, maps, atlases, and Northampton State Hospital information. Their website includes virtual exhibits, online research material, and digital collections.

### [John Adams Historical Museum - Adams National Historical Park, Quincy, MA](#)

Take a virtual tour of the birthplaces of both John Adams and John Quincy Adams, America's first father and son presidents, at this national historical park and see some of the artifacts and collections associated with this family.

See also: <https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/adams-national-historical-park>

### [Joseph Allen Skinner Museum – South Hadley, MA](#)

Short tour of the museum founded by the famed industrialist and owner of the Skinner Silk Mills.

### [Legacy Family Tree Webinars](#)

Legacy Family Tree offers free webinars, but you must register for them. If you can't watch the webinar at the scheduled time, they are available for free for one week. If you become a member, they are free long-term. Fourteen free webinars are planned for October. Topics include:

- **Use MyHeritage Records to Quickly Discover and Write the Story of Your Ancestors**  
(October 13 at 2 pm)
- **Comparing the Genealogy Giants 2020: Ancestry, FamilySearch, Findmypast, and MyHeritage**  
(October 21 at 2 pm)
- **In Black and White: Finding Historical Newspapers From Around the World**  
(October 28 at 2 pm)

See the entire list at <https://familytreewebinars.com>

### [Lower East Side Tenement Museum, New York City](#)

This site provides a fascinating glimpse of life in ethnic immigrant communities in New York City in the 19th and early 20th centuries through virtually guided tours of two tenement buildings. In addition, there are featured stories of immigrant families into the 1950's.

### [Massachusetts Historical Society](#)

Fascinating collection of material about the various time periods in our history, starting from the colonial period up to the present.

### [McCord Museum – Montreal, Canada](#)

View online collections of items related to Canadian culture, including items related to the daily lives, work, and leisure activities of residents from Quebec province and throughout the country. Then, check out the historical and genealogical material in their archives.

### [New England Historic Genealogical Society \(NEHGS\)](#)

NEHGS has a large number of free webinars and training material available on their website. See registration information and other online programs here: <https://www.americanancestors.org/education/online-classes>

Free NEHGS offerings for October include:

- **What's New at AmericanAncestors.org?** (October 8 at 3 pm)
- **Using Bank Records in Family History Research** (October 15 at 3 pm)

Other interesting resources from NEHGS are available here:

<https://www.americanancestors.org/education/learning-resources/watch>

### [Norman Rockwell Museum, Stockbridge, MA](#)

This museum offers virtual exhibitions, videos of the museum experience, an online gallery, and a lovely collection of Storybooth sessions of immigrant experiences.

### [Old Sturbridge Village](#)

Take a virtual tour of Old Sturbridge Village to learn what life would have been like for your ancestors in the 1830s.

### [Quabbin Park Cemetery](#)

This website includes a short virtual tour, map, and historical pictures collection of the cemetery, which was created in the early 1930s to hold the remains of 6,601 graves that were removed before the creation of the Quabbin reservoir.

Be sure to check out the handout from our Oct. 2, 2019 presentation on the cemetery for more information.

### [Salem Witch Museum – Salem, MA](#)

This tour allows you to view sites around Essex and Middlesex counties that are related to the Salem Witch events of 1692. There are over 120 links to museums, historical societies, cemeteries, and historical markers in the cities and towns associated with key figures in the trials. Included is a link to a list of resource material and helpful websites.

### [Smithsonian's National Museum of American History – Washington, D.C.](#)

Where to begin? There's so much available here.

### [Stanley Park Webcams – Westfield, MA](#)

View live activity at the Covered Bridge, International Bridge, and the Ozzie Memorial. View pictures of the colonial-era village, greenhouse, and gardens to delight your senses between your ancestor searches.

### [Strawberry Banke Museum – Portsmouth, NH](#)

Time travel through almost 400 years of the Puddle Duck neighborhood, established along a tidal inlet in Portsmouth in 1623.

### [Westfield Athenaeum](#)

You'll find a browsable online collection includes an impressive array of material related to the Woronoco Indians, early maps, early records of Westfield's settlers, documents, town meetings, ministers' sermons, and military documents.

### [Wistariahurst Museum](#)

The Wistariahurst Museum in Holyoke has an extensive collection of historical material to add to your ancestors' stories. Here are two:

[Online collection of Holyoke postcards](#)

[Online history exhibits including the Holyoke Street Railway, Wm. Skinner & Sons silk manufacturing, Holyoke & Pioneer Valley history resources](#)

### [Worcester Historical Museum](#)

Here, you'll find an online collection of Worcester city directories, city directories, Worcester magazine (1901-1914), historical photos, and items from the Worcester Society of Antiquity Collection

### **WMGS Monthly Presentations and Trainings**

Join our upcoming presentations and trainings from home. Our schedule of webinars and trainings is available in our newsletter and on [our website](#). Members will receive an email with a link to join the presentation at the scheduled time. Be sure to join in at that time, as some presentations can't be placed on our website per the contract with our presenter.

In addition, catch up on archived presentations in the Members Only section of our website. There are over 25 videos available of our monthly presentations and 12 individual training videos from the DNA Boot Camp from Hack Genealogy.

*Special thanks to Jeanne Leblond for her help compiling these listings!*

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## Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
Wednesday, October 7, 2020 6 PM	<b>WMGS meeting online!</b> John Putnam presents “The Salem Witchcraft Hysteria: A Cauldron of Religious, Economic, Social, and Political Ingredients Gone Awry.” WMGS Annual Meeting to follow.
Thursday, October 15, 2020	<b>WMGS password will be changed.</b> Members, look for an email announcing our new, confidential password!
Thursday, October 15, 2020 7 PM	<b>Zoom training:</b> “Applying Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps to Research”
Monday, October 19, 2020 7 PM	<b>WMGS Board Meeting via Zoom</b>
Thursday, October 22, 2020 7 PM	<b>Zoom training:</b> “Inspiring Ways to Captivate Non-Genealogists”
November 4, 2020 6 PM	<b>WMGS meeting online!</b> Edwin W. Strickland II presents “The Rise and Fall of Hampshire County (Massachusetts).”
November 9, 2020 7 PM	<b>WMGS Board Meeting via Zoom</b>
November 12, 2020 7 PM	<b>Stay tuned for our new events. More information is coming in the next newsletter.</b>
November 19, 2020 7 PM	<b>Stay tuned for our new events. More information is coming in the next newsletter.</b>

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## About Us



The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society was founded in Springfield, Hampden County, Massachusetts in 1972, and officially incorporated on 6 February 1973. We are devoted to the research and documentation of our family ancestry and history. We also assist others in the pursuit of discovering their ancestry.

We meet year-round on the first Wednesday of each month from 6:00 to 8:00 pm at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. We welcome non-members and beginning genealogists. Please join us!

Most of our membership is from the Western Massachusetts area, but a number of our members live all over our country and have ancestors from Massachusetts or New England.

We receive numerous inquiries each month via U.S. mail and e-mail from people looking for information on area families. Our members are happy to volunteer to research these requests.

Jeanne Leblond – President	Dave Lapierre – Webmaster & Technology Coordinator
Dave Lapierre – Vice President	Joanne Mason – Newsletter Editor
Deborah Woodford – Treasurer	Carol Lynne Bagley & Joanne Mason – Facebook Editors
Jeanne Lockhart – Assistant Treasurer	Jeanne Leblond – Surname & Queries Editor
Dorothy Cichonski – Secretary	Bob Whitney – Fundraising Coordinator
Deborah Woodford – Membership	Diane Ascoti – Founder
Carol Lynne Bagley, Hillary Schau, and Terry Pearsons – Directors	

## Meeting Details

We generally meet year-round for our monthly meeting on the first Wednesday of each month, from 6 pm to 8 pm at the Agawam Senior Center, located at 954 Main Street in Agawam, Massachusetts. On rare occasions, a holiday or other significant event may disrupt that schedule causing a meeting to be held on the second Wednesday. You will be informed of date changes well in advance.

Our Special Interest Group meetings and training sessions are typically held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> & 4<sup>th</sup> Thursdays of the month from 6 pm to 8 pm, also at the Agawam Senior Center. However, some of these sessions are held on different days of the week, depending on the availability of each session's host. Check our monthly calendar for each month's schedule.

*(Note: Until further notice, WMGS will hold meetings online. Please watch your email for instructions, and feel free to contact us at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com) with any questions.)*

Occasionally, inclement weather causes the Agawam Senior Center to close. If our presenter is coming to us via a webinar and gives us permission to do so, we will broadcast the presentation live to our members via the internet, using a web-based platform, such as Zoom. Members will be emailed the link before the meeting.

Also, when a speaker allows us to record a presentation or a webinar, we archive the presentation in the Members Only section of our website. Many of our monthly presentations have been recorded and are available, along with handouts, in the Members Only section of our website.

We look forward to you joining us at our next meeting or event!

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## Membership

The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society is a growing group of members, both local and from around the United States. We welcome you to join our society!

### **Reasons to Join Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society:**

1. Meet people with similar interests in family history and genealogy.
2. Attend monthly meetings featuring local, regional, and national presenters.
3. Attend our Special Interest Groups meetings, trainings, and classes.
4. Receive access to our archive of previously recorded presentations and handouts, DNA Boot Camp videos, Western Massachusetts and Massachusetts genealogical resources (with links), and handouts in the Members Only section of our website.
5. Receive assistance from our members on your family research.
6. Access our library of resources including books and CDs.
7. Serve as a volunteer, coach, or as a member of the Board of Directors.
8. Join us on exclusive WMGS field trips.

One of our key "member benefits" is access to the **Members Only** section of our website, which contains archived recordings of our previous speakers from around the U.S.: Judy G. Russell, Maureen Taylor, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Elissa Scalise Powell, Dr. Shelley Murphy, Nora Galvin, 'Dear MYRTLE' a/k/a Pat

Richley-Erickson, Russ Worthington, Melissa Barker, Jennifer Alford, and many more! Our Members Only section also includes handouts from many of those meetings and historical copies of the *American Elm*, the original WMGS newsletter publication, which contains genealogical material and family trees from our early members. Once we receive your membership application, we will send you a welcome letter with the confidential password to access the Members Only section of our website.

### **Membership Dues:**

Annual membership runs from September 1<sup>st</sup> to August 31<sup>st</sup> each year.

Membership rates are:

- \$30 for an individual membership



- \$45 for a couple of the same household
- \$15 for students
- \$500 for lifetime membership

If you are new to our organization, click [here](#) for the WMGS Application for Membership; the image is near the bottom. Click to open the pdf to view, save, and print.

There are three ways to join or renew your membership:

- Pay by cash or check at the monthly meeting.
- Print and mail an application, found on the Join/Renew page of our website (if a new member) along with your check, or, if renewing, just the check to  
WMGS, P.O. Box 418, West Springfield, MA 01090-0418.
- Use the secure PayPal button on our website (you **do not** need to have a PayPal account, just use your debit card or credit card). Here's the link to our Join/Renew page: [JOIN](#)

**Note: All FIRST TIME MEMBERS must complete and submit an application by mail with your check, or as an attached link in a separate email to us when using PayPal as your payment, so that we have all the necessary information for our membership list.**

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## Newsletter Deadlines

**Please submit all information to be entered into the next newsletter by October 15, 2020.**

We are looking for articles written by our members. Have you been to a repository or a federal or state archive? Have you been to where your ancestors lived? Have you tried a new gadget or software? You do not have to write the article yourself. If you would like to do an interview about a subject, that would be helpful as well. What are you interested in? Tell us, share your knowledge.

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## How to Contact Us:

Have a question, comment, or suggestion for someone at WMGS?

Need information about your membership status or how to access our Members Only material?

Want to send in a query or provide an answer to one?

Have a comment or suggestion for us?

**There are two options available for contacting us via email:**

Our **Contact Us** page on our website has an easily completed form to use. First enter your name, email address, topic, and the name of person to whom the email is being sent. Then, write your message and click on Submit.

Or you can send an email directly to us at: [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com).

Of course, you can also correspond with us by sending mail to:

WMGS, Inc.  
P.O. Box 418  
West Springfield, MA 01090-0418

**Note: Please do not write directly to any board member's personal or business email. For legal reasons, our board members cannot conduct WMGS business using emails, other than through WMGS. Thank you for your consideration.**

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## E-Mail Update

Please let us know if you have changed your e-mail address, mailing address, and/or phone number. We want to make sure that you continue to receive all of our updates, meeting reminders, and electronic newsletters. Just send your name and new email address to us at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com).



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