



## Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.

### Contents

<a href="#">Upcoming Meetings</a>	p 1-2	<a href="#">Calendar</a>	p 13
<a href="#">President's Message</a>	p 3	<a href="#">New Member</a>	p 13
<a href="#">Membership Renewal</a>	p 4	<a href="#">About Us</a>	p 13-15
<a href="#">Member Only Benefits</a>	p 5	<a href="#">Membership</a>	p 15
<a href="#">Articles</a>	p 5 -10	<a href="#">Contact Us</a>	p 17
<a href="#">Free Online Offerings</a>	p 10-12	<a href="#">Email Update</a>	p 18
<a href="#">Brick Wall Queries</a>	p 12		

### Upcoming Meetings

#### August 2021 Meeting



We had such a great response to Marian Pierre-Louis' presentation to WMGS last March that we've asked her back for another visit. This time, she'll be presenting **"Warning Out and Settlement Law in Early New England."** Come find out about "strangers taken in" records, "warning out" records, and settlement law. Settlement law impacted all New Englanders whether rich or poor, transient or long-time resident. Discover what records were created as a result and why. You will be surprised at the level of detail you can find about your ancestors. Marian Pierre-Louis will take you into the depths of these rarely discussed New England records to reveal a wealth of information about your ancestors.

Marian Pierre-Louis is a genealogy professional who specializes in educational outreach through webinars, internet broadcasts, and video. Her areas of expertise include house history research, southern New England research, and solving brick walls. Since the rise in interest of genetic genealogy Marian has become addicted to using DNA to help solve genealogy mysteries. Marian is the host of the [Genealogy Professional Podcast](#). She has also produced and hosted 100 episodes of [Fieldstone Common](#), a history podcast. Marian is the Online Education Producer for Legacy Family Tree Webinars where she produces online genealogy education classes. Once a month you'll find her as the evening host of Legacy Family Tree Webinars.

Join us for this intriguing and helpful presentation on **Wednesday, August 4th at 6 p.m.**

## September 2021 Meeting



We are kicking off our 2021-2022 membership year with a fantastic presentation by Lisa A. Alzo!

Lisa will be presenting a lecture titled “**Navigating Naturalization Records,**” a difficult area of research for many of us. First papers, petitions, certificates, and registrations are some of the key documents for naturalization – the process of becoming an American citizen. Due to changing laws and an evolving process over time, locating the appropriate official paperwork can be a challenging task for family historians. Lisa will explain how to navigate naturalization records and what information they contain about your ancestors.

For those of you who haven’t met her, Lisa A. Alzo is a freelance writer, instructor, and internationally recognized lecturer who specializes in researching Eastern European genealogy, writing family history, and using the internet to trace female and immigrant ancestors. She grew up in Duquesne, Pennsylvania and earned a Bachelor of Science degree in nutrition from West Virginia Wesleyan College in 1987 and a Master of Fine Arts degree in nonfiction writing from the University of Pittsburgh in 1997.

Lisa is the author of eleven books, including *The Family Tree Polish, Czech and Slovak Genealogy Guide* and the award-winning *Three Slovak Women*. She has also written hundreds of magazine articles. She is a contributing editor for *Family Tree* magazine and works as an online educator and writing coach through her website [Research, Write, Connect](#). She also developed the Eastern European Research Certificate Program for the National Institute for Genealogical Studies. Lisa is a frequently invited speaker for national conferences, genealogical and historical societies, and webinars. An avid genealogist for more than 30 years, Lisa also chronicles her family history adventures on her blog [The Accidental Genealogist](#). We’re thrilled that Lisa will be presenting to us!

We hope that you will join us on **Wednesday, September 1st at 6 p.m.** for Lisa’s presentation!

***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 p.m.***

***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!***

[Return to Contents page](#)

## Message from the President

by **Jeanne Leblond**

Summer is in full-swing!

We hope that you have had a chance to enjoy some sun, visit with family and friends, and maybe even visit some of your favorite places.

Even though the lure of outdoor activities is there, August is a perfect time to work on genealogy projects. Whether the weather is too hot or stormy to be outside, or your favorite archive or venue isn't open, there are still lots of options available. Need some ideas?

Now that we can visit in person if everyone is vaccinated, consider visiting an older relative to interview them about their family memories. They'll love to see you, and you'll get some family tidbits.



Visit a place where your ancestors lived and take photos of the surroundings. Maybe even take the grandkids with you. Then write up your ancestors' story and use the photos to illustrate it. I visited the tiny town of Hardwick, where my husband's great-grandparents worked in a mill. Their marriage record indicated that they were married in 1872 in a French-Canadian church in Ware, but lived in Hardwick. They likely traveled to Ware, which is about 8 miles away via train, so I took pictures of the tiny train station, the abandoned mill where they may have worked, and the workers' housing along the main road. This couple was a brick wall for a long time, until I found their marriage record, listing Zephirin Mochon as Jefferson Murphy and his bride, Josephine Dubois, as Josephine Woods.

If you're trying to beat the heat outdoors, it's never too early to start working on genealogy gifts for Christmas. Ornaments using family photos or picture books of some ancestors perhaps?

Not into crafts? Make your grandmother's blueberry, raspberry, or peach pie recipe!

Skip the reruns on TV and watch one of the webinars that are archived in the Members Only section of our website.

Catch up on your genealogy reading! We've included a terrific list of DNA books that are perfect reads for a hot afternoon, whether under a tree or in an air-conditioned room.

Lastly, don't forget to join us for our August 4th presentation with Marian Pierre-Louis on our poor ancestors and our August 26th training session with Abby Shaw on preserving your family heirlooms.

[Return to Contents page](#)

## Membership Renewal Time is Here!

**Now is the time to renew your WMGS membership! 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 made in July and August will run through August 31, 2022.



There are 2 options for renewing:

- 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.

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

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

Membership continues to be \$30 per member or \$45 for a couple residing at the same address.

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 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*.

## Member Only Benefits

### Special Interest Groups (SIGs) & Trainings

#### August 26th – 7 p.m. – Preserving Your Family Treasures - Choosing the Right Storage Solutions



Buffered or unbuffered? What does acid-free really mean? What is the best way to preserve my family Bible? Abby Shaw from Hollinger Archival Products will answer these questions and more about the best storage solutions for your family papers, photos, and textiles. Please bring your questions about your treasures to the meeting and she can recommend the approved method of storage.

This will be a wonderful opportunity to get professional advice from Abby Shaw. After Abby's presentation, we'll have time to ask for advice on preserving our family heirlooms and treasures. We're hoping that you can join us and share your items on camera for Abby's evaluation.

*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 p.m.*

[Return to Contents page](#)

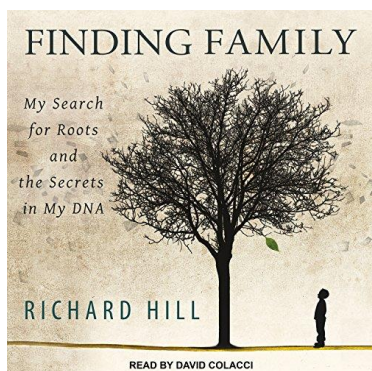
## Articles

### Summer Reading List Suggestions

Do you know someone who's found unexpected results in their DNA report? Has it happened to you? Or do you know an adoptee who is searching for their birth family?

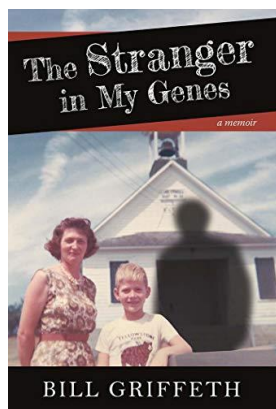
With the popularity of inexpensive DNA tests and the increasing number of results being posted on major DNA websites, it's become quite common to find unexpected results. Whether it's a newfound sibling, cousin, niece, nephew, parent, or grandparent or a story that you didn't expect about your adoption, you or someone you know may have been stunned by the results of a DNA test.

The books in this list help to not only give us insight into the strategies and techniques used to find answers, but also help to give us some perspective on some of the psychological issues and challenges connected with these discoveries.



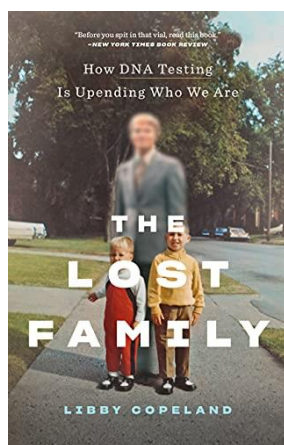
***Finding Family: My Search for Roots and the Secrets in My DNA*** by Richard Hill, self-published in 2012, published by Familius in 2017

One of the first accounts written by an adoptee trying to search for the truth of why he was given up for adoption, this story made the pages of the *Wall Street Journal*. Richard Hill learned that he was adopted at age 18, when his family doctor let the secret slip out. Sealed records and family secrets thwarted his efforts, but using old-fashioned genealogy sleuthing, he uncovered potential new family members. But the connections didn't tell the whole story until the advent of DNA testing and the new field of genetic genealogy. Even then, there were twists and turns. Hill takes us along his journey to find his biological family and shares his guidance and insight about the techniques he used, including DNA testing, adoption networks, and methods to bypass sealed records. Reading like a good mystery novel, Hill's story shares the knowledge he gained to help others, not only through this book, but also through a helpful website and genealogy guide.



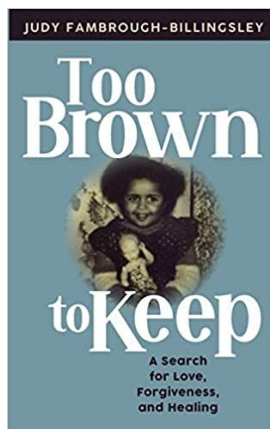
***The Stranger in My Genes: A Memoir*** by Bill Griffeth, 2016, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston, MA

Bill Griffeth, well-known television anchor on CNBC, had shared his genealogy hobby for years with a cousin. After being encouraged to take a DNA test with his cousin in 2012 to learn about their shared ancestral roots, he was stunned to learn that the man who raised him was not biologically related to him. Bill describes the visceral and emotional reactions that shook his entire world to the core. Following his discovery, Bill wrestled with whether to pursue the truth with his elderly mother and how to convince her that he indeed still loved her.



***The Lost Family*** by Libby Copeland, 2020, Abrams Press, New York

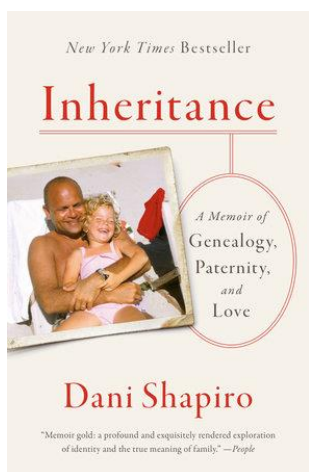
For most amateur genealogists, purchasing a home DNA test is just an enjoyable exercise that leads to knowledge about our ethnicity. Most often, we purchase the tests without understanding what the possible ramifications of the results might be. But are we prepared for unexpected results that challenge everything we think we know about our family? Are we aware that submitting our DNA sample might lead to an emotional journey that often leads to long-buried family secrets? Libby Copeland combines her personal story with an analysis of the genetic genealogy movement and its ramifications on both society and family relations.



*Too Brown to Keep, A Search for Love, Forgiveness, and Healing* by Judy Fambrough-Billingsley, self-published, 2019

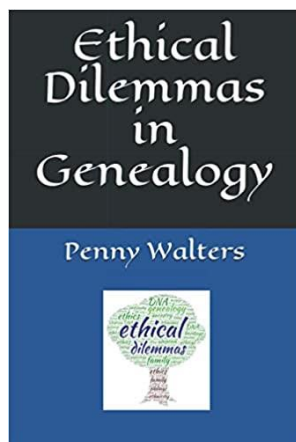
Judy Fambrough-Billingsley has written a touching account of her journey of discovery of her birth family. She learns that she is both an international and biracial adoptee, as her father was a Black American soldier and her mother was a white German woman. After her father's return to the United States, Judy and her sister were abandoned in a foreign orphanage by their mother. Both she and her sister were adopted through an international agency by a childless California couple who provided them with the love and family they needed. Judy's search for her birth parents required that she overcome her feelings of abandonment and grief, but it also required that she learn about the racism that led to her being rejected by her German family.

The author includes a helpful chapter on forgiveness and healing, along with a guide to researching and connecting with birth families.



*Inheritance: A Memoir of Genealogy, Paternity and Love* by Dani Shapiro, 2019, A Borzoi Book published by Alfred A. Knopf, NY

After receiving results of DNA tests that the author and her husband took to explore their heritage, Dani Shapiro was shaken to the core when she discovered that she was only half-Ashkenazi Jewish. Stunned to learn that the father that she loved and adored was not her birth father, Dani begins to search for her birth father and tries to find out why her parents never told her about the circumstances of her birth. How do you form some type of bond with your biological father who was only a struggling student performing what he thought was a helpful gesture? The advent of fertility treatments has proven to be a scientific wonder for many families, but no one anticipated what would happen years later when DNA tests would be freely available. This book is a *New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Boston Globe*, *Wall Street Journal*, and National Indie bestseller!



*Ethical Dilemmas in Genealogy* by Penny Walters, Ph.D., 2019, independently published

Do you want to learn more about the ethical questions that surround genealogy research and DNA research? Are you struggling with what to tell family members about your genealogical discoveries? Perhaps you're trying to decide whether you should even purchase a DNA test kit, wondering what you'll find and how you'll handle any unexpected results. Or perhaps you'd like to explore a scholarly analysis of the ethics behind the genealogical DNA test movement. If so, this book deserves a spot on your bookshelf.

## Volunteers Needed!

### Join WMGS at the Mattoon Street Arts Festival

#### Volunteers Needed!

**Who:** WMGS Members

**What:** The Mattoon Street Arts Festival

**Where:** Mattoon Street, Downtown Springfield

**When:** September 11 & 12

**Why:** Let the public know about our society!



This year, WMGS will be hosting a table at the Mattoon Street Arts Festival in downtown Springfield, and we'd love to have some volunteers help us promote our society!

#### What's the Mattoon Street Arts Festival?

Every September for almost 50 years, the Mattoon Street neighborhood of Springfield has held its annual arts festival, featuring dozens of vendors selling handmade crafts. It's a relaxed atmosphere with local food, strolling musicians, and a chance to do some early holiday shopping.

Festival organizers open a few table slots for local nonprofits related to history or the arts. This year, WMGS will be one of them!

#### When is the festival?

Saturday, September 11 and Sunday, September 12, 2021. The festival runs from 10:00 a.m. to 5 p.m., but we will need volunteers for a half hour before to help set up our table and a half hour after to help pack everything up.



### **Where is Mattoon Street?**

Mattoon Street is in downtown Springfield, forming an L between Chestnut Street and Pearl Street. It's in walking distance to the Quadrangle and the Springfield Museums (including MOSH – the Museum of Springfield History).

### **What will volunteers do?**

We need people to staff the table and answer questions about WMGS. We'll have flyers and membership application forms for people to fill out there or take with them.



### **How long will my shift be?**

That is up to you. We are grateful for any time you can commit.

### **What do I need to bring?**

Just yourself! We'll provide the table and chairs. If you would like to bring a display featuring your research, that is welcome, too.

### **How do I sign up for a shift?**

Watch your email for an online sign-up form. You can also email us at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com) and let us know your time preferences.

### **How can I learn more?**

You can learn more about the Mattoon Street festival at its [website](#) and [Facebook page](#).

For more information about WMGS's table and volunteering, please email us at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com).

**Thank you!**



## Gift Certificates Available!

Looking for that perfect gift for someone who is hard to buy for? WMGS now has gift certificates available for your purchase to give a year of membership! This is a perfect time to buy one for a friend or family member



who has shown interest in genealogy or your family's story. Now that we are currently using Zoom for our presentations, friends who live at a distance are able to join us, plus we've added so many more offerings on the Members Only portion of our website. Your gift will entitle your recipient to membership through August 31, 2022, so by purchasing now, the membership may be used for the full length of yearly membership!

The cost remains the same: \$30 for a single membership and \$45 for a couple residing at the same address. You may pay by check or PayPal. Please provide us with your recipient's contact information (name, address, email, and phone number) on a note with your check or via email if paying by PayPal, so we may have this information for our records. Also, please advise if you would like the certificate and its welcome message and membership card mailed directly to your recipient or to your home for you to give to the person yourself.

Available throughout the year, this is the best time to purchase a gift certificate to take advantage of its full benefits!

[Return to Contents page](#)

## Free Online Offerings

\*Note: Our list of offerings has grown so much that we'll only publish new items each month. If you missed something, our complete list of previous offerings is available in the Members Only section of our website.

### New Offerings

#### [FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org)

Classes and webinars are free, but registration is required. To find classes go to Research Wiki, enter Webinars in the search box, click Family History Library, then Classes & Online Webinars, select Month, then Class.

- **Using the FamilySearch Catalog** (August 2 at 12 p.m.)
- **Overview of FamilySearch** (August 3 at 12 p.m.)

- **Jump-start Your German Research With Ortsfamilienbücher/Ortssippenbücher** (August 4 at 12 p.m.)
- **United States Territorial and State Census Records** (August 5 at 12 p.m.)
- **Portuguese Immigration Patterns to the United States: 19th and 20th Centuries** (August 5 at 2 p.m.)
- **Navigating Nordic Names** (August 7 at 11 a.m.)
- **The Denmark Regional Series: Fyn** (August 7 at 12:15 p.m.)
- **The Denmark Regional Series: Vejle, Skanderborg, Århus** (August 7 at 2:30 p.m.)
- **Mantals Tax Records in Finland** (August 7 at 3:45 p.m.)
- **Exploring Court Records in Norway** (August 7 at 5 p.m.)
- **Navigate, Add, Edit, Standardize, and Print on FamilySearch Family Tree** (August 10 at 12 p.m.)
- **The Research Process, Research Help, and Searching Records on FamilySearch** (August 17 at 12 p.m.)
- **United States Descendancy Research** (August 19 at 12 p.m.)
- **Tips and Tricks for Finding Elusive Records in FamilySearch** (August 24 at 12 p.m.)
- **Attaching Sources to FamilySearch Family Tree** (August 31 at 12 p.m.)

More information is available at

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

### [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. Topics for August include the following:

- **Burying the Body in England** (August 3 at 10 p.m.)
- **10 Ways to Find Your Native American Ancestor Using Mitochondrial and Autosomal DNA** (August 4 at 2 p.m.)
- **Freedmen's Bureau Labor Contracts** (August 6 at 2 p.m.)
- **New Tools for DNA Matches Research** ( August 10 at 2 p.m.)
- **Introduction to Researching Your Mississippi Ancestors** (August 11 at 2 p.m.)
- **Standards for Genealogical Documentation** (August 17 at 8 p.m.)
- **Using Zotero to Organize and Annotate Your Family History Research** (August 18 at 2 p.m.)
- **Early Ontario Research** (August 20 at 2 p.m.)
- **Fire, Water, and the 1890 U.S. Census: Researching Beyond the Ashes and Mold** (August 25 at 2 p.m.)

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

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

- **Stories from the Archives: Family Bible Records** (August 19 at 3 p.m.)

More information: <https://www.americanancestors.org/education/online-classes>



## **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.

[Return to Contents page](#)

## **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.

[Return to Contents page](#)

## Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
August 4, 2021 6 p.m.	<b>WMGS Meeting Online!</b> Marian Pierre-Louis presents “Warning Out and Settlement Law in Early New England.”
August 26, 2021 7 p.m.	<b>WMGS Training via Zoom.</b> Abby Shaw presents “Preserving Your Family Treasures - Choosing the Right Storage Solutions.”
September 1, 2021 6 p.m.	<b>WMGS Meeting Online!</b> Lisa Alzo presents “Navigating Naturalization Records.”
September 13, 2021 6:30 p.m.	<b>WMGS Board Meeting via Zoom.</b>
September 16, 2021 7 p.m.	<b>WMGS Training via Zoom.</b> Brian Rhinehart presents “I Have a Civil War Ancestor. . . Now What?”

[Return to Contents page](#)

## New WMGS Member

The Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc. (WMGS) welcomes our newest member.

**Larry Mandeville**

We hope that he will avail himself of all that WMGS has to offer and that he finds success in the hunt for family ancestors.

[Return to Contents page](#)

## 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 p.m. 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 Ascioti – Founder
Carol Lynne Bagley, Cara Seitchek, and Joanne Mason – Directors	

### Meeting Details

We generally meet year-round for our monthly meeting on the first Wednesday of each month, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. 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 p.m. to 8 p.m., 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!

[Return to Contents page](#)

## 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 the 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.**

[Return to Contents page](#)



**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 and share your knowledge.**

[Return to Contents page](#)



## 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.**

[Return to Contents page](#)

## 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).



Copyright © 2021 by the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc. All rights are reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any way without written permission of WMGS. For permission to reproduce any article in this newsletter, contact the editor at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com).

The editor reserves the right to edit all contributions.