



## *Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.*

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### Upcoming Meetings

#### October 2021 Meeting



We've got another great presentation with John Putnam lined up for our October meeting. John will be presenting a lecture titled **"New Englanders Become Americans."** This lecture is the 2nd part of John's earlier presentation to us, "Untangling Your England Roots," in July 2020. (If you missed it, it's archived in the Members Only section of our website.)

John will discuss the genealogy and history of New England from the French and Indian War to the 1800s. Did you have ancestors living in New England immediately before, during, or after the American Revolution or in the early years of the new republic? Do you know their history and how they coped with the many historic disruptions during this time? Even though you may not share any roots from this geographical area, there are many factors that started here that still impact us all.

In many respects, New England was a catalyst of the revolution — very active in the formation of the new republic, the site of the start of the American industrial revolution. It was also the source of many people who emigrated west during this time. John will share the importance of understanding these events and the very stressful times in which our ancestors lived, helping to improve your chances of tackling New England brick walls. While records are important to prove your genealogical past, it is often difficult to know where to look for these records unless you know the area's history, not to mention the formative activities that our ancestors undertook, which provide rich stories for your family histories. Certainly, events as disruptive as these can also disrupt the records, too.

A native of Western Mass, John grew up on a farm in Southwick, graduated from UMass Amherst, and earned a master's degree in political science from the University of Colorado. He now resides in Colorado. He's the past president of the Pikes Peak Genealogical Society and serves as their delegate to the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies. He's also a fascinating speaker and a 12th-generation American! Join us on **Wednesday, October 6th at 6 p.m.** for a virtual presentation via Zoom.

*(This presentation will be recorded and archived in the Members Only section of our website.)*

## November 2021 Meeting



Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG, FOGS will be joining us again on November 3rd for another not-to-be-missed presentation! Her topic will be **“Misbegotten Children; Tracing the Family Lines of the Illegitimate.”** Nearly all families have children with seemingly missing fathers. Yet there may be clues and resources to help us determine their ancestry. Illegitimacy can be both a surprise and an embarrassment as we discover more and more about our family's history. Treated with care and sensitivity, we can use many available resources to help us in our research.

Peggy Clemens Lauritzen, AG, FOGS has an amazing ability to bring laughter into the lives of her audience members. One of her favorite photos is a picture of her mother on her way to a church picnic, then on to an afternoon of cemetery transcribing. It was taken just four days before Peggy was born!

Having grown up with parents that were deeply involved in genealogy takes her love of family history to a new level. Some people are amazed that she knew people that were actually born in the 1800s — her own grandparents. Listening to the stories from bygone years and touching the fabrics from quilts, dresses, blessing gowns, and bonnets all have added to her admiration of previous generations.

Peggy is a frequent lecturer at many local societies in Ohio, as well as at family history seminars. She has presented at Brigham Young University and ICAPGen. She has also taught continuing education classes at several community colleges and The Ohio State University. One of her proudest moments was achieving the credentials to become an accredited genealogist, for it polished her research skills. She has maintained this credential for 24 years.

She is a featured columnist in *Reminisce* magazine, has written several Legacy QuickGuides, and has filmed as an instructor for Ancestry Academy. In 2018, she was honored to be awarded Fellow of the Ohio Genealogical Society and received the Laura G. Prescott Award for Exemplary Service to Professional Genealogy. She is a former researcher at Ancestry ProGenealogists. Peggy and her husband Kerry serve as Family History Center Directors in north central Ohio.

Mark your calendars for **Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> at 6 p.m. EST** as Peggy Clemens Lauritzen shares her knowledge about a difficult research topic.

*(This presentation and handout will be archived in the Members Only section of our website.)*

**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!*

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## Message from the President

by **Jeanne Leblond**



October is one of the best months for genealogy. Cooler temps and shorter days mean more time indoors for genealogy! Perhaps that's why it's been designated as National Family History month.

Do you have plans for this month? Webinars, virtual conferences, scanning family photographs, getting photographs and family treasures into archival safe storage, organizing your paper and computer files, writing your family history? I'm sure there are other possibilities that I'm forgetting. There are so many options from which to choose, as time allows and your mood strikes you.

We've got some exciting news to announce for WMGS members that will provide two new options to assist your genealogy research. The first announcement is that we now have a searchable index to 35 years of our original newsletter, the *American Elm*, available in the Members Only section of our website. There's an article in this newsletter that describes in detail what's available in them. I think you'll be surprised how much valuable information they contain, as well as how much fun they are to read.

The second announcement is that we are starting a Members Only Facebook group, which will help us connect with and help each other in a new way. If you use Facebook for genealogy, as I do, you know what a fantastic resource it can be. This will be a private group available only to our members where we can share information, post questions or queries, and help each other on an ongoing basis. I follow many Facebook genealogy sites

and belong to several private groups. They've helped me to advance my research. There's more information on this new option in this newsletter as well.

WMGS is grateful for the tremendous amount of work that was required to create both of these new options for our members. Both Dorothy Cichonski, WMGS Secretary, and Dave Lapierre, WMGS Vice President, spent countless hours working on the index for the *American Elm*. Several board members contributed to getting the Members Only Facebook group up and running, and we thank them as well.

As a reminder, our 2022 membership year has begun and we'll be changing the password to our website shortly. Members will be receiving an email with the new password about October 15th. If you haven't renewed your membership yet, it's time to do so. Thank you to all of the members who have renewed so far. We're glad that you have done so!

Time to turn on the oven and bake some of your favorite family recipes to celebrate Family History Month!

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## Membership Renewal Time is Here!



Our new membership year has begun, so now is definitely the time to renew if you haven't yet. If you thought the summer flew by, so will the time until we change the Members Only password for our website on October 15th! This means that although you may see our newsletters online, you will not receive the new Members Only password or invitations to our Zoom meetings. We value you as a member and truly do not want you to miss the exciting upcoming presentations we have planned for you! **Please . . . don't delay!**

Annual memberships to the Western Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc. run from September 1st through August 31st of the following year. A sincere THANK YOU to all who have renewed already!

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.

You won't want to miss the upcoming exciting season at WMGS, including presentations at our monthly meetings, our newsletter, and our training sessions. Currently, we continue to offer our monthly presentations and training sessions to members via Zoom, so you can participate from home. When, and if, we are able to return to in-person meetings in the future, the Board has adopted a policy with plans to offer a hybrid model for our meetings.

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*.

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## Member Only Benefits

### Special Interest Groups (SIGs) & Trainings

#### October 21st – 7 p.m. – “Railroads Around Amherst and Northampton, MA”



Ever wonder how our ancestors traveled in the 19th and 20th centuries? What railroad or trolleys were available in our area? Or perhaps your ancestor lived near enough to railroad tracks that they heard the whistle or rattle as they rumbled by?

Join us for a fascinating tale of the “Railroads Around Amherst and Northampton, MA” presented by WMGS member Philip E. Johnson, a railroad historian and author. Phil has put together a presentation about railroad and trolley lines that some of our Hampshire County ancestors may have used.

Besides his interest in genealogy and family history, Phil has been a member of the Amherst Railroad Society for over 40 years and is graciously sharing his knowledge and love of railroads with fellow WMGS members. An engineer by profession, Phil enjoys researching the history of railroads and has a keen eye for spotting where railroads once ran based on the slope of the terrain.

During the 50s and 60s, Phil grew up in Springfield, MA, where he would watch the trains crossing in Winchester Square, by Watershops Pond, and by Five Mile Pond when swimming with his family. Early in

his career, he worked as a field service engineer in eastern Hampden County, where his job provided opportunities to view branch lines in operation and investigate abandoned lines.

This talk follows Phil's wonderful presentation to us last March based on his book *The Hampden Railroad – The Greatest Railroad That Never Ran*. You can still access his presentation in the Members Only section of our website.

*(This presentation will be recorded and archived in the Members Only section of our website.)*

***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.***

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## Introducing Two New Member Benefits!

WMGS is excited to introduce two new features for our members – a **Members Only Facebook group** and a **Searchable Index to 35 years of the *American Elm***, our original newsletter!

### ***Join Us on Facebook!***

Many of you know how helpful Facebook has been for genealogy. Besides allowing us to share news and photographs, Facebook provides an opportunity to share family history with the entire family, from those in our immediate families to newly discovered cousins. Many of us know what a great resource it's become for connecting with genealogists from around the world who share the same interests. There are Facebook groups for every genealogy topic you could imagine! WMGS has had a public Facebook page for years and many people around the country have learned about our society through it.



With our new **Members Only Facebook group**, WMGS members can connect with each other and help each other with their genealogical and historical research. We're encouraging members to share tips and tricks, information on helpful websites, research tools, and information about events that are happening in the region — basically, anything related to genealogy. It's the place to ask questions, ask for help, post queries, and share brick wall problems. We also hope that you'll share your discoveries, new finds, and breakthroughs, as they help to inspire other members!

Only WMGS members can join the group, see who's in the group, and post items, as it will be a private group and not accessible to non-members. To join the new **WMGS Members Only Facebook group**, you need to have a free Facebook account. Once you log into your account, enter **WMGS Members Only** in the search box. Click on the name, then on the **Request to Join** button. A group administrator will verify your membership, and you'll be admitted as a member.

If you want more information about Facebook accounts, privacy settings, and various features, there is a helpful resource in the Members Only section of our website under Trainings and Special Interest Group (SIGs) handouts. You can also send us questions at [westmassgen@gmail.com](mailto:westmassgen@gmail.com).

We hope you'll join our new Members Only Facebook group!

### *Search the American Elm!*



We are so pleased to inform you about another new WMGS benefit that is now available. Before we jump into the details, we must take a moment to thank Dorothy Cichonski, WMGS Secretary. Last winter, while she and her husband were in Florida, she asked if there was anything she could do to help out WMGS. We asked her if she would be interested in helping to create an index of all the articles, stories, queries, etc. in the 35 years of the *American Elm* newsletters. She willingly accepted the challenge.

An Excel file was created so she could enter newsletter editions, authors, topics, and links. We can only imagine the number of hours Dorothy spent creating this index for us. It had to be hundreds of hours. Dorothy did an amazing job, going through every newsletter, logging each article, and providing all the details for each one. She typed over 6,300 lines of text into the spreadsheet. Many, many thanks to Dorothy - - without her, this would never have been achieved!

The *American Elm* is the original quarterly newsletter of WMGS. When WMGS first began in 1972, members decided to produce a quarterly publication that would assist genealogists all over the country. They continued to produce it for 35 years, until 2007. The information contained in these publications is incredible: how-to articles, 5-generation charts, cemetery listings, vital records, surname listings...the list is endless.

Up until September 2021, the only way to find an article of interest in the *American Elm* was to go through each issue, page by page, and manually search for what you were interested in. That has all changed. WMGS now has the American Elm Newsletter Database. We have indexed all 35 years of the *American Elm* newsletters (1972 - 2007), and this collection is now searchable!

At the September 1, 2021 meeting, our scheduled speaker Lisa A. Alzo had internet issues and was unable join us. We are rescheduling her presentation for our February meeting. Since we had over 45 members in attendance, we decided to present the new American Elm Newsletter Database. The Board of Directors had

not even seen it yet! We hit the record button and launched into a demo of the database — what it is and how to use it. We even did some search requests from the attendees that evening. You can click the link below to watch the recorded presentation. It is also available on our Members Only page, under Meeting Video Recordings, as well as under American Elm (Searchable Index).

### [Video Link](#)

To access the American Elm Newsletter Database, go to our website ([www.westmassgen.com](http://www.westmassgen.com)), click on Members Only, enter the password, click on American Elm (Searchable Index) and then click on the image of the *American Elm* newsletter.

We strongly suggest you watch the recorded video as it goes through accessing the database, setting number of search results that display per page, searching, sorting columns, navigation, and general tips.

We hope you find this new member benefit useful and that it allows you to break through some of your brick walls.

### ***Thank you Dorothy and Dave!***

WMGS owes a huge THANK YOU! to both Dorothy Cichonski, WMGS Secretary, and Dave Lapierre, WMGS Vice President and Technology Coordinator, for the tremendous amount of work that they did to create our new *American Elm* index. Dorothy spent countless hours reviewing 35 years of the *American Elm* and typing an Excel index of articles, names, dates, and topics for each edition. She also included links which connect directly to the item on our website.



Dave then worked with our website provider to upload the material and create a searchable index for the website.

There were many glitches along the way which needed to be solved, and we appreciate both Dorothy's and Dave's efforts and diligence in bringing our new American Elm Searchable Index to our members.



## 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!

## Free 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.

### Library Offerings

#### Boston Public Library

- **History of the Hub: Resources for Local and Family History at the Boston City Archives** (October 20 at 6 p.m.)
- **Genealogy: Researching Your Italian Ancestors** (October 28 at 6 p.m.)

#### Chicopee Public Library

The Chicopee Public Library is again offering in-person genealogy open labs every Tuesday and Thursday from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and again from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Experienced volunteers are available to answer questions and help you use the library's genealogy resources, which include Ancestry, Fold3, Heritage Quest, FamilySearch microfilm, books, and more. Location: Computer Lab.

Contact: Chuck Abel by phone (594-1800 x3) or email ([cabel@cwmars.org](mailto:cabel@cwmars.org)).

*Please note: The Chicopee Public Library currently requires masks, regardless of vaccination status.*

## New Offerings

### [FamilySearch.org](https://www.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** (October 4 at 12 p.m.)
- **Using the FamilySearch Mobile Apps** (October 5 at 12 p.m.)
- **A Glimpse into the Societies of the Mid-Atlantic States** (October 7 at 12 p.m.)
- **Using the FamilySearch Wiki** (October 12 at 12 p.m.)
- **The Knowles Collection, What Is It and How Do I Use It?** (October 14 at 12 p.m.)
- **What's New at FamilySearch** (October 19 at 12 p.m.)
- **Organizing Your Genealogy** (October 21 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 October include the following:

- **Born a Slave: Rediscovering Arthur Jackson's African American Heritage** (October 1 at 2 p.m.)
- **A Cargo of Criminals: Transportation to Australia** (October 5 at 9 p.m.)
- **DNA Health Tests and Your Family Health History** (October 6 at 2p.m.)
- **Context: A Powerful Tool for Problem Solving** (October 8 at 11 a.m.)
- **Seven Immigration Methodologies With Case Studies Across the Centuries**  
(October 8 at 12:15 p.m.)
- **Investigate the Neighborhood to Advance Your Research** (October 8 at 1:30 p.m.)
- **What am I Missing? Recognizing Resource Holes in Available Sources** (October 8 at 3:30 p.m.)
- **Using Mind Mapping as a Visual Research Plan** (October 8 at 4:45 p.m.)
- **Private Land Claims – Complicated? Yes, But Worth it!** (October 8 at 6 p.m.)
- **Navigating Your Way Through FamilySearch** (October 12 at 8 p.m.)
- **My Ancestors Were Irish – or Were They? The Origins of Irish Surnames and Building Your Family Tree Using Irish Naming Patterns** (October 15 at 2 p.m.)
- **My 20 Year Mystery – Finding Family Origins With Y-DNA** (October 19 at 8 p.m.)
- **Comparing the Genealogy Giants 2021: Ancestry, FamilySearch, FindMyPast, and MyHeritage**  
(October 20 at 2 p.m.)

- **Building Family Trees for Your DNA Matches** (October 27 at 2 p.m.)
- **Tech with Thomas (MacEntee)** (October 29 at 2 p.m.)

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



## 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.

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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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## New WMGS Members

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

Luanne Frey  
Dena Calvanese

We hope that they will avail themselves of all that WMGS has to offer and that they find success in the hunt for family ancestors.

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## Calendar

DATE/TIME	EVENT/PLACE
October 6, 2021 6:00 p.m.	<b>WMGS Meeting Online!</b> John Putnam presents "New Englanders Become Americans."
October 18, 2021 6:30 p.m.	<b>WMGS Board Meeting via Zoom.</b>
October 21, 2021 7:00 p.m.	<b>WMGS Training via Zoom.</b> Philip E. Johnson presents "Railroads Around Amherst and Northampton."
November 3, 2021 6:00 p.m.	<b>WMGS Meeting Online!</b> Peggy Clemens Lauritzen presents "Misbegotten Children: Tracing the Family Lines of the Illegitimate."
November 8, 2021 6:30 p.m.	<b>WMGS Board Meeting via Zoom.</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 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!

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**Newsletter Deadline**  
Please submit all information  
for the next newsletter by  
**October 15, 2021.**

**We welcome submissions from our members!  
If you have an article idea, please let us know!**

## 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.**

## 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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