



# WMGS Newsletter

Winter 2011/2012



## WMGS Program Schedule

The following programs will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library in the Ryerson Auditorium. Meetings begin at 1:30 p.m., starting with WMGS business and followed by the speaker. Admission is free and everyone is welcome! Parking is free at the Library on Saturdays. Remember to have your parking ticket validated in the Library's main lobby. Refreshments are served after the speaker's presentation. Books and supplies may be purchased from the Sales Table before and after the program.

### December 3, 2011

#### **Great Lakes-Water Highway of the Midwest**

Matthew L. Daley, Associate Professor of History, GVSU is working on a biography of a Scottish immigrant and Great Lakes sailor named Alexander McDougall (1845-1932) who left an autobiography, but very few personal papers. During the past twelve years he has chased the bits and pieces of Alexander's life throughout the U.S. It has been a challenge both to uncover his role in maritime history and also how he presented his own life. Alexander built a series of unusual ships named "whalebacks," started shipyards in Collingwood and Kingston, Ontario, built ships for the First World War in Duluth, Minnesota, and played a role in building the Great Lakes into the water highway of the Midwest.

### January 7, 2012

#### **They're Alive! Searching for the Living**

In this Webinar (a remote presentation viewed on a projection screen) Thomas MacEntee will explain why genealogists have many reasons to locate living relatives - from connecting with long lost cousins to performing collateral searches to break down brick walls. Learn the most effective ways to find living people using Internet search engines and resources. In this session you'll learn not only why it is important to locate living relatives, but how to leverage the power of Internet to make certain you have the correct contact information. You'll also learn how making contact with the living can hone your genealogy research skills and actually help you break down those brick walls.

### February 4, 2012

We are stilling working on the February program details. Check [wmgs.org](http://wmgs.org) in the future for speaker and topic information. Please note that the Sales Table will not be at the February program.

## WMGS Mini Classes

Mini Classes are held in the Grand Rapids Public Library from 12:15 to 1:15. See the description below for the location. They are free to the general public. Mini Classes are held on the same day as the monthly WMGS Programs.

### December 3, 2011

#### **Street and Address Changes in Grand Rapids**

The first street name change in Grand Rapids happened in 1857 when Centre became Cedar. Most of us rely on the 1912 City Directory for street name changes, but where did the City Directory get this information? And what's with the address changes? The 1912 City Directory is a critical tool when tracing the residences, workplaces, and businesses of your late 19th and early 20th century relatives.

Come join us to learn more about the streets of Grand Rapids from historian and genealogist, Barbara Vander Mark. Get the background based on her new book the "Annotated 1912 City Directory." The class will be held in the Adult Computer Center.

### January 7, 2012

#### **Organize for Success: Clustering Families with Cited Documents Will Give You the Direction**

Shirley DeBoer, C.G. will help you focus your research efforts in the right direction by showing you how to cite and evaluate documents. This class will be held in the Vander Veer Center for the Book.

### February 4, 2012

#### **Going to Salt Lake? What to Expect**

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah has the largest genealogical collection in the world. Five floors containing over 2.4 million rolls of microfilmed genealogical records; 727,000 microfiche; 356,000 books, serials, and other formats; over 4,500 periodicals and 3,725 electronic resources can be a little overwhelming. Karen McCombs will help you plan ahead to get the most out of your trip. This class will be held in the Adult Computer Center.

## WMGS Family History Writers' Workshops

**December 20, 2011**  
**January 17, 2012**  
**February 21, 2012**  
**at 1:30 to 4:45 p.m.**

### **Dominican Center, 2025 Fulton St East**

The Writers' Workshops are designed to help and support each other's desire to write about our families with a kind eye and lots of humor. Everyone is welcome. We informally discuss questions relevant to each person's work, provide helpful, non-judgmental feedback on writer's current projects and have fun learning about each other and our research. Everyone is welcome to bring their latest writing project rather than the suggested topic for the meeting.

December: Childhood (or current) Comfort Foods. Bring a dish to pass for our annual Holiday Pot Luck.

January: Water in Our Lives. Stories about creeks, rivers, ponds, lakes, etc.

February: Our Military Veterans, recent and long ago

The workshops are held at the Dominican Center on the corner of East Fulton and Lakeside Drive. Please call Sister Michael Ellen Carling at 616-643-0208 (home) or 616-643-0225 (office) if you wish to attend. You may park in the Dominican Center parking lot on Lakeside Drive. Use the lower entrance on the east side of the large portico. Go down the steps or down the cement ramp to enter the building. The receptionist will direct you to the room.

### **December Sales Table Discount**

The WMGS Sales Table will offer a 20% discount off your entire purchase if you are a member of WMGS  
-OR-

a 10% discount off your entire purchase if you are NOT a member of WMGS.

This holiday discount will only be available at the December 3, 2011 membership meeting.

## WMGS Beginner Computer Classes

**December 8, 2011**

### **Introduction to Ancestry.com Databases**

Participants will gain an understanding of the various databases available through Ancestry.com, as well as hands on experience with searching and displaying, printing and saving individual pieces of data to USB thumb drives. Participants should bring research material for searching. The class will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library, Adult Computer Training Center, Lower Level from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m.

**January 12, 2012**

### **Getting Started in Electronic Research**

Participants will learn what it takes to become an electronic researcher through an understanding of genealogy database software, and techniques for locating and organizing family history information. Several key online databases will be explored to illustrate the usefulness of the data. The class will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library, Adult Computer Training Center, Lower Level from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m.

**January 19, 2012**

### **Upgrading or Converting to Family Tree Maker**

The class will cover the essential elements and process for upgrading the Family Tree Maker software and the considerations that the user must grasp when their family data is reformatted. This class will be very helpful for folks thinking about migrating to a different genealogical software. The class will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library, Adult Computer Training Center, Lower Level from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m.

**February 21, 2012**

### **Family Tree Maker for Beginners – Part I**

This is a two (2) session class and will introduce the participant to the basics of using Family Tree Maker. Participants should bring their laptop with the Family Tree Maker Software installed. This class is most useful for the 2008 through 2012 versions of the software. The first class will be held in the Grand Rapids Public Library, Adult Computer Training Center, Lower Level from 6:45 to 8:45 p.m. on Feb. 21. The second class will be held in the same location, same time on March 22.

## FamilySearch.org

FamilySearch adds new databases and microfilm images to their website every week. It pays to check their lists of record collections often. This fall, Michigan County Marriages was added. These are images of county marriage records (the county records are different than the state level marriage ledgers.) The collection contains images of marriage records from 50 counties in Michigan. The index hasn't been completed, but if you know the date and location of the marriage, you can still find the record by browsing through the images.

The United States Census for 1900, 1910, 1920 and 1930 have been indexed. Only the images for the 1900 census can be viewed directly from FamilySearch. FamilySearch does show the person's name, birthplace, relationship to head of household, city, county, state of residence, marital status, race, sex, parents' birthplace, family number, page number and all members of the household. The search engine at FamilySearch is excellent for easily retrieving variations on given names and surnames. If you can't find someone with Ancestry, try searching with FamilySearch.

Several searchable collections with records for veterans were added this fall. The titles for these records starts with *United States* and can be found in the alphabetical list that appears when you click on the USA, Canada and Mexico link on the main search page.

## SeekingMichigan.org

You may have had trouble finding death certificates for people at SeekingMichigan.org simply because some of the certificates had not been added to the website. Certificates issued in Alcona, Alger, Allegan, Alpena, Antrim, Arenac, Baraga, Barry, Bay, Benzie, and Berrien counties in 1908 and issued in Ionia, Iosco, Iron, and Isabella counties in 1909 have been added. Missing certificates from Detroit and Wayne county in 1911 have also been added.

If you have a correction for this website, please send the information that currently appears in the Metadata section below the image of the death certificate and the corrected information to The Library of Michigan at [librarian@michigan.gov](mailto:librarian@michigan.gov).

The digitization and indexing of the Michigan state censuses had been completed. Ancestry.com is busy creating the database. The completed database should be available for searching soon and will be free.

## Ancestry.com

Ancestry has updated its Civil War Draft Registrations Records, 1863-1865. The records list the residence, name, age, race, profession, marital status, plate of birth and former military service of men between the ages of 20 and 45 who registered.

## Fold3.com

What's Fold3.com? It's the new name for Footnote.com. Fold3's future efforts will focus on military records from the National Archives. One current project is the War of 1812 Pension and Bounty Land Warrant Applications which can be viewed for free. Surnames starting with the letter A are complete. Surnames starting with the letter B are beginning to appear. The Federation of Genealogical Societies continues to raise funds for this project. If you would like to make a donation, visit [www.fgs.org/1812](http://www.fgs.org/1812). A \$25 donation will pay for the digitization of 50 images.

## Social Security Death Index

A major change was made to the SSDI on November 1, 2011. The Social Security Administration changed its policy on records used to create the Public Death Master File. State death records will no longer be used to create new entries. The worst news for genealogists is that approximately 4.2 million entries based solely on state death records have been removed from the SSDI. You will still be able to order a copy of an Application for a Social Security Application Card (SS-5) even if it does appear in the SSDI by using form SSA-711, Request for Deceased Individual's Social Security Record. The cost is \$27 if you know the SSN and \$29 if you do not know the SSN.

## 1940 U.S. Federal Census

Mark your calendar for 9 a.m., April 2, 2012. That's when the 1940 U.S. Federal Census will be available for viewing on Archives.com. Researchers will be able to browse, view and download images for free. You will not be able to search for names until an index has been created. To effectively browse the images you will need to know the Enumeration District number. If you know the street address within a city or the name of the township your family live in you can identify their Enumeration District number by going to [stevemorse.org/census/quiz.php](http://stevemorse.org/census/quiz.php) to take a quiz. The quiz will lead you through his website step-by-step to find the ED in 1940. FamilySearch is seeking volunteers who are willing to help create that index once the images have been posted on April 2. Go to [familysearch.org/1940Census](http://familysearch.org/1940Census) to sign up.

# Michigan Events

December 3, 4, 10 & 11, 2011

## **Christmas at the Voigt House**

Tour the beautiful Voigt Home, decorated in its period-appropriate finery, and learn about Victorian holiday traditions. 12:00-5:00 at 115 College SE, Grand Rapids.

Coming in January 2012

## **The Michigan Experience: The American Civil War Years**

This four-part documentary series, produced by Rodney W. Brown, Leon Collins, and Donna Ullrich, examines Michigan's role in the Civil War and provides a better understanding of the significant role and impact of Michigan's involvement. It is narrated, written and portrayed by people living in Michigan. For additional information and local TV schedule information, visit iMichigan Productions' website at [www.imichiganproductions.org/tme.html](http://www.imichiganproductions.org/tme.html).

January 7, 2012

## **And the Rockets' Red Glare:**

### **Online Resources for War of 1812 Research**

Curt Witcher, Manager of the Historical Genealogy Department of the Allen County Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana will present information about researching War of 1812 ancestors. 1:30 pm to 4:00 p.m. (Meet at 1:30 for refreshments and conversation. Program is at 2 p.m.) at Christ Church Cranbrook, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

January 12, 2012

## **St. Mark's Episcopal Church**

Join the Grand Rapids Historical Society at St. Mark's Episcopal Church as Karen Hunter presents the history of the church. You will hear about the famous members of the church, how the current building was born from the river, how the congregation survived the Great Tune Book War, the church bell's story and a story about the disappearing deacon and his French pony. 7 p.m. at St. Mark's, 134 Division Ave North, Grand Rapids.

January 13, 2012

## **GRPL Lock-In**

The Grand Rapids Public Library will hold their next Lock-In on January 13, from 5:30-10:00 p.m. This is a great opportunity for people who are new to genealogy to get help from members of WMGS. As always, printing is free and Ancestry.com and Footnote.com are free. Registration at [www.grpl.org/perl/events.pl](http://www.grpl.org/perl/events.pl) is normally open 30 days prior to the event. This is a very popular event with a long waiting list. If you register for this event and later learn that you are unable to attend, PLEASE call the GRPL to let them know you won't be attending and give someone else the chance to attend.

January 14, 2012

## **Civil War Saturday, GR Public Museum**

Come see the Public Museum's exhibit, *Thank God for Michigan! Stories from the Civil War*, about Michigan's participation in the Civil War. From 10:00 am to 3:00 pm you will also be able to learn more from members of local societies and experience the sights and sounds of the Civil War. WMGS will be on hand to help you find your Civil War ancestor's records. The exhibit will unveil uniforms, weapons, photographs, letters, and more from the Museum's vast collection. These artifacts will give you a rare glimpse into the lives of the local soldiers and officers who volunteered to fight and the civilians on the home front that supported them. The exhibit is included in the general Museum admission fee.

January 21, 2012

## **History Detectives**

The Grand Rapids Public Library will once again host a series of talks about Grand Rapids and its people. The program will include Don Bryant's discussion of using prosopography to learn more about the residents of Cherry Street and Diana Barrett presenting a talk about the WWI women's registration cards at the GRPL. The times and a complete list of speakers and topics will be announced at a later date.

February 3, 2012

## **Who Do You Think You Are?**

NBC brings back Who Do You Think You Are for a third season. The first episode will air on Friday, February 3 at 8:00 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

February 4, 2012

## **DTE Ethnic Heritage Festival**

The Grand Rapids Public Museum will once again offer a FREE day of celebration of music, dance, crafts and food representing the various ethnic groups that call West Michigan Home. Don't forget to visit the Civil War exhibit *Thank God for Michigan! Stories from the Civil War* while you are there. The museum will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

February 20, 2012

## **Researching the Vertical Files and Obituaries at the WMU Archives**

WMU's Vertical files contain a wealth of information for genealogists researching in West Michigan. Ardis Pierce will show you the ins and outs of finding valuable information in WMU Archive's Vertical Files. The program starts at 7:00 p.m. at the Portage District Library, 300 Library Lane, Portage, Michigan. Go to [www.mikvgs.org/directions\\_pdl.html](http://www.mikvgs.org/directions_pdl.html) for directions to the library.

## RENEWAL REMINDER

Now is the time to think about renewing your membership. Renewing before January helps us plan our yearly budget and minimize mailing costs by sending your *Michigana* with bulk mail. Look at the upper right corner of the mailing label on this newsletter to see if your membership expires this year.

If your label says **Expiration Dec 2011**: Fill out the MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION form in this newsletter and mail it with the appropriate dues to the address shown at the bottom of the form.

If your label says **Expiration Dec 2012** or later: If your mailing label shows that your membership expires December 2012 or later, you have already paid for 2012 and you do not need to do anything.

## Latzek Funeral Home Records

At last! The Latzek Funeral Home Records were microfilmed, and the microfilms are now available for use at the Grand Rapids Public Library. The microfilms are located in the Misc Genealogy Drawer (top drawer) of microfilm cabinet #5. Search for your relatives with the Latzek Funeral Home database at <http://data.wmgs.org/>.

## West Michigan Newspapers Database

WMGS has added an exciting new feature to our Newspapers database. We are adding links to SeekingMichigan's death certificates. If a death certificate has been matched to someone with an obituary in the database, you will see a button in the Extras column that will let you view that person's death certificate. It couldn't be easier! The database currently includes links for about 85% of the people that died between 1915 and 1920.

## New FamilySearch Project

The Michigan Genealogical Council is once again sponsoring a FamilySearch indexing project. The project is *US, Michigan--Port of Detroit Manifests, 1906-1954*. There are 56,662 batches consisting of 849,185 images. The project is considered a "Beginning" level project and is easy to index. There is only one record per image and about 15 Images per batch. Unlike the last project, this project has only two or three different forms. If you are new to online indexing, this is a great beginner project. To get started go to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) and click on the blue text "FamilySearch Indexing lets people search more records online." When you set up your account select Michigan Genealogical Council for your Group otherwise this project will not show up in your list of projects. If you have any questions, send an email to [findexing@mimgc.org](mailto:findexing@mimgc.org).

If you, as a new or renewing member, would be willing and able to hold an office or work on a committee or project, WMGS would appreciate your help very much. You may indicate your area of expertise and/or interest on this membership form. We will be happy to contact you about your desire to help. Thank you!

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

NEW \_\_\_\_\_

RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_

\$20 in the USA

US\$25 Outside the USA

Make checks payable to: Western Michigan Genealogical Society

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE: \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP+4: \_\_\_\_\_

What is your level of genealogy experience? (circle one):    Beginner            Intermediate            Advanced

Would you like someone to contact you about volunteer opportunities with WMGS?    Yes            No

Do you use computer software to manage your genealogy?    No    Yes \_\_\_\_\_  
list the software you use

Send checks and completed form to:  
WMGS Membership, Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
111 Library St NE, Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268



Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
c/o Grand Rapids Public Library  
111 Library St NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268

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## About WMGS

The Western Michigan Genealogical Society is dedicated to gaining knowledge, preserving records and teaching others about genealogy and family history.

**Membership:** An annual membership to WMGS is \$20 and begins on January 1<sup>st</sup> of each year. Membership benefits include: 10% discount on all items at the Sales Table, four issues of *Michigana* per year, free queries in *Michigana*, free online brick wall help and leadership opportunities. Your membership in the Western Michigan Genealogical Society will also include use of the private files of the Society and publication of your genealogy online at [trees.wmgs.org](http://trees.wmgs.org).

**Change of Address:** (Temporary or Permanent) If you will be permanently moving to a new address or going on an extended vacation, please notify WMGS before your address change occurs. Be sure to include the date your address will change or the dates when you will leave and plan to return. Email your address change information to the Society at [membership@wmgs.org](mailto:membership@wmgs.org)

or write to: WMGS – Membership  
Western Michigan Genealogical Society  
111 Library St NE  
Grand Rapids MI 49503-3268

## 2011/2012 WMGS Officers

President	Don Bryant email: <a href="mailto:president@wmgs.org">president@wmgs.org</a>	Recording Secretary	Janet Jensen email: <a href="mailto:JanetJ6990@aol.com">JanetJ6990@aol.com</a> Phone: (616) 874-8035
Vice President	Marcia Shears email: <a href="mailto:U08554@hotmail.com">U08554@hotmail.com</a> Phone: (616) 458-1221	Immediate Past President	Mindy Koole email: <a href="mailto:koole2@comcast.net">koole2@comcast.net</a> Phone: (616) 691-7986
Treasurer	Marlene Fabbro email: <a href="mailto:mfabbro@sbcglobal.net">mfabbro@sbcglobal.net</a> Phone: (616) 530-8232		