



CENTRAL MASSACHUSETTS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY, Inc.
P.O. Box 811, Westminster, MA 01473-0811

THE SEARCHERS

–Innovative–Enlightening–Enriching–Enjoyable–

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE,

by Carol Bosworth



Does this look familiar? Seems like we all make resolutions as we begin a new year, in hopes they will keep us on track to achieve our goals. Hopefully some of those goals include genealogy, renewing our memberships, doing research, getting in touch with relatives from long ago just to name a few.

C.M.G.S is hoping to help you with some of those resolutions!

We have gone back to virtual meetings for the winter months, January, and February, then hybrid for most of the year, enabling individuals who are not able to meet in person to join us as well.

The **ANNUAL MEETING** is scheduled for **March 28, 2023**. This year we are combining the annual meeting with our annual dinner hoping to start off the “new year” with a great speaker and a great meal. The dinner will be served at 6 PM with the election of officers and the meeting at 7 PM.

The nominating committee, Diane Sanabria and Bonnie Bohnet are looking for individuals who would like to help CMGS on our path forward. The board meets virtually every month enabling those individuals interested are able to attend from anywhere, days and times are determined by the board members. CMGS currently has several openings on the board and would like you to consider joining us.

If you or someone you know may be interested, please contact the nominating committee; Diane Sanabria at martinfamily25@gmail.com, or Bonnie Bohnet at scrapqueen1945@gmail.com,

The Board of Directors consists of **12 members** including the officers. Each member serves for a one-year term and may be reelected annually. You do not have to make the commitment to be an officer to be a Board Member.

The following lists describe the duties of each Board member, so individuals will have an idea of what would be expected of them.

As a **Member** of the Board of Directors your responsibilities are to:

1. Transact the business of the Society between membership meetings
2. Direct committees
3. Approve membership meeting programs
4. Authorize disbursements
5. Appoint delegates to our affiliates

We hope you will consider joining the Board. Help us make plans for the year(s) ahead and keep our society a vibrant part of the genealogy community!

We are continuing the library help sessions on the first and fourth Saturdays in Leominster. Help sessions are also available at the Gardner and Townsend Public Libraries. Please email cmgsorg1@gmail.com for more information

CMGS is also planning on beginning an educational program for children at the Leominster Public Library beginning in March 2024

If you are interested in helping with this community service initiative in your community please contact me at cmgsorg1@gmail.com

TIME TO RENEW YOUR C.M.G.S. MEMBERSHIPS FOR 1 JANUARY 2024

(If You have done so already)

SPECIALS IN ADDITION TO THE ONE YEAR RENEWALS

Individual Membership:

One-Year \$15.00

Three-Year \$40.00

Five Year \$65.00

Family Membership

One-Year \$20.00

Three-Year \$55.00

Five Year \$90.00

Organizational Membership

\$25.00/year

For your convenience, you may pay your dues online, www.cmgs.org, through PAYPAL. To help the CMGS Treasurer credit the dues to your membership, send an email to CMGSOrg1@gmail.com confirming your transaction and the email associated with your PAYPAL account.

Our *“hybrid” meetings* are held at the **Hope Lodge 54 Central Street Gardner, MA at 7 PM unless otherwise noted.**

ORGANIZATION

Is organizing our genealogy one of those New Year Resolutions?

I recently read an article in Family Tree Magazine about, “Organize your Genealogy in a day”. I Thought I could do this, if I followed the suggestions in the article. So the challenge was on.

As I got into the planning stage of the article, I thought of many of my ‘Genealogy friends’ and the fact, this might benefit them. SO, I Challenge EVERYONE to a major ‘Genealogy Organization Day’, I’m going with March 1st, 2024, giving myself and those who join me time to prepare. We all agonize with keeping our genealogy organized. Whether we follow BSO’s or have a lack of time, we tend to run forward and neglect to finalize things before we jump ahead. Remember, preparing and organizing your plans today will create a productive and successful day on March 1st. Here is the suggestion from the article [Family Tree Web Version, December 26, 2023].

For the most efficient workday, prepare in advance.

Plan for child-care, pet-care or submit a request for time-off, make sure no appointments are scheduled for that day. Create goals – Be specific. What do you want to accomplish that day also, be realistic. Use the S.M.A.R.T. goal.

S. Specific - narrow in scope

M. Measurable – clear criteria, can it be completed

A. Achievable – can be done by you in one day

R. Realistic – can it be done within this timeframe and your resources

T. Time appropriate –

Remember you have a deadline

Some suggestions could be:

1. Standardize file names (either digital or physical)
2. Standardize place names, dates, or personal names in your online tree/software program.
3. Fill out new, “clean” research forms to outline the scope of your research and what progress you’ve made.
4. Scan several piles of photos or documents
5. Sort through a specific box(es) of unorganized materials [**This is mine**]
6. Create an inventory of records you have for each direct-line ancestor, and what you still need
7. Gather all your physical research—research notes, copies of records, boxes of unsorted materials, photos—in one place.
8. Collect digital files from multiple drives/servers onto one device.
9. Move data between trees or software: Ensure materials copied over correctly, and re-attach media and sources as necessary.

Remember, too, that the focus for this day is *organization*, not finding documents.

To do this, you may want to use the Eisenhower Matrix.

Using 3 sheets of paper or a document divided into 3 categories.

[1] Urgent/Important – Do these first.

[2]. Not Urgent/Important – Do these later.

[3]. Not Urgent/Not Important – Throw these out.

This method will help you spend your limited time wisely, plus help you determine what projects will still need to be worked on at another time. Maybe not the full day, but a smaller time you can set aside to do one project at a time.

You want to maximize your day, locate: file folders and tabs, a scanner, form printouts, a filing cabinet, boxes/papers/photos/documents, refreshments [Pack a lunch and snacks the day before, have them nearby and all ready, order in and have delivered at a specific time (pizza or sub-shop use Uber, or Door Dash), items to make the day more fun or comfortable [soft background music] .

Don’t forget to charge the electronic items you’ll need throughout the day and obtain any needed replacement batteries. Leave your phone in another room, have a family member take messages for you.

Plan breaks, to rejuvenate and keep your mind and body fresh. The 15/4 method is used commonly by business to comply with Labor Laws. Take one 15-minute break every four hours and one 30-minute break every six hours. Based on an 8-5 workday. You start at 8am, break at 10am for 15 minutes, return to work at 10:15am and work until Noon, take lunch from Noon until 12:30pm, work 12:30 until 2:45 when you take another 15-minute break, return at 3pm and work until 5pm. Remember break time is meant to relax, NOT start dinner, make

the beds, do laundry, it's a time to relax, so you're refreshed to return to your genealogy.

Treat yourself to a fun breakfast and make plans to go out to dinner. Be sure you keep hydrated, keep extra bottles of water on hand. Wear comfortable clothes and shoes. Make sure you have a comfortable chair for your breaks. Be sure you have plenty of lighting and a secure office chair for long periods of sitting, [although it's good to get up and move around every hour].

Document your journey. Take before and after pictures. This will help you feel accomplished and hold yourself accountable—and maybe even inspire others to take on a similar project.

Stick to your goals (attempting just one at a time) and stay far away from those oh-so-easy “rabbit holes.” Only review the materials you're organizing well enough to know what they are.

Focus is important. “Finish the project you're working on before you move onto another. If you start with too much, you'll get overwhelmed and end up with a bigger project than you started with.”

If part of your project is creating an [organization system](#) for your research, think about how you'll use that system moving forward. Make decisions based on the tools and goals you're already familiar with.

That system will look different for everyone; one size won't fit all. “Don't try to take on something that isn't intuitive for you and that you aren't comfortable with,” says Gena Philibert-Ortega. “You are successful at organizing when you choose systems that you will return to time and time again and not what someone tells you, you should use.”

Don't beat yourself up if you didn't accomplish everything you wanted. Work will never fully be done; even the most organized, “put-together” genealogist has unorganized parts of their research.

Some progress is better than none. You're just competing against yourself—your ***ultimate goal*** is that your research is **more organized today** than it was yesterday.

Most likely, you have made a list of any to-do items that came up during your organization project. Don't backslide! Continue to use and develop your organization system. “***The most important way to stay organized is to put things away immediately, and not just set it down to do later***”. This is the number. 1 reason people are disorganized. Take 10 minutes at the end of your genealogy research time to take care of the paperwork that has built up during this session.

Submitted by: *Bonnie Bohnet*

After you are organized and begin doing some of that research you might want to interview some of your family

5 QUESTIONS GENEALOGIST SHOULD ALWAYS ASK

Recap of an article written by: Vanessa Wieland in 2017

Submitted by Bonnie Bohnet

Genealogy research isn't just about finding records. It's not about your ancestor's existence. It's not about building a great family tree. It's about what we can learn from the information and understand our past. Ask questions about the record, to reveal hidden details.

1. WHO IS THE INFORMANT

Who provided the information about your ancestor. How much did they really know about the event? Do you recognize who the informant is? Do they have reason to lie? A firsthand witness is going to be more reliable than someone who heard about it through another source.

For example: you're trying to determine a birthdate for your ancestor. In a census record, the informant could be someone in the *household*, or a *neighbor*. Without knowing who the source is, we can't be certain that the information is correct. Perhaps it's an estimate? Perhaps they had reason to lie about their age?

Death records, on the other hand, contain the name of the informant, which can be very helpful in determining the reliability of the information. A spouse or parent is more likely to provide accurate information than a son, daughter-in-law or medical personal.

That's why it's important to find as many resources as possible. When you have conflicting accounts, determining who provided the information can help determine what's more likely to be true.

2. WHAT INFORMATION IS INCLUDED

When we're focused on answering a specific question, it's tempting to fall into the trap of only looking for information that provides that answer. Don't fall into the trap of overlooking other details! They can support or dispute your answer, and possibly provide clues to other records.

What is the record about? A death record's function is to record a death, it also may contain lots of other information, including,

but not limited to, hometowns or villages, names of parents, birth dates and spousal information. Those offerings, while not the primary to the record, provide supporting evidence and additional details.

In some cases, the record may not even be primarily about the ancestor you're researching, but if it contains any relevant information, it's a piece of the puzzle. Example, the only record I have right now of my great-great grandmother's name comes from her son's marriage record. It's not about Anna Krouse, but because it provides evidence of who she was and where she was from, it's a lead. You may want to ask yourself, what is NOT included in the record?

Sometimes, missing information can be just as illuminating as what's included. If you know your ancestor had three sons, but only two of them are included in the will, you may want to look into what transpired for them to be excluded.

3. WHEN WAS THE RECORD CREATED

DATES MATTER. When looking at the record, it's important to note the date of the event itself and the date the record was created. A memory of an event from two hours prior is fresh and far more reliable than a recounting of an event ten years later. Over time, details fade or are remembered differently, and two people can remember the same event very differently.

4. WHERE WAS THE EVENT RECORDED

WHERE MATTERS. Not only where did the event occur, but where in the record itself is it stored? Counties and boundaries change, so knowing where the original

record is can provide additional clues to finding other records.

5. WHY IS IT IMPORTANT

My grandmother always said, “the devils in the details.” One of my great granduncles was born in Louisville, KY while his older siblings were born in Wales and his younger siblings born in Cincinnati. That little detail indicates that our ancestors may have lived in Louisville for a few years, so when I’m searching for records around that time, I know to look for records in Louisville.

That’s not the only “why” question you should ask. In many cases, asking “why did the event happen?” can also provide some significant context, especially when it comes to migration. Knowing why an ancestor emigrated or moved from one city to another will add details to your understanding of your ancestor.

Up Coming Meetings

Join Zoom Meetings

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82137212466?pwd=dE51SHNmZTBpZm45MXJxTmY0MjQ0UT09>

Meeting ID: 821 3721 2466
Passcode: 512930

January 23, 2024

Virtual 7PM

Link above

Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous

By Sara Campbell

Sara Campbell brings her engineering training into solving genealogical problems. She is an author, editor, blogger, and educator through the non-credit offerings of local colleges. A member of her local Historical Society,

she has brought history programming into the schools. She believes that knowing more about “ordinary” people from the past helps us see our own place in history. Recent virtual conference experience includes the New England Regional Genealogical Consortium (NERGC), and the Massachusetts Genealogical Council, as well as virtual programs at many libraries and genealogical societies in New England.

February 27, 2024

Virtual 7PM

Link above

The Case of Martha Sleeper: “The Gadget Girl” Escape Room

by Thomas McEntee

This program is being offered in conjunction with the Friends of the Leominster Public Library. Join us for another fascinating escape room based on one of Leominster’s own, Martha Sleeper. Developed by Thomas McEntee this will be a fun filled learning journey into Martha Sleeper’s life. Thomas MacEntee: author, educator, student, advocate, marketer, storyteller, entrepreneur, and that “genealogy guy” who helps you accomplish your family history goals.

Once you register through the Leominster Public Library you will receive the material for this genealogy evening.

March 26, 2024

Hope Lodge Gardner, MA

6 PM

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Registration form on last page with the membership new/renewal form

March 26, 2024
Hybrid meeting
Link on page 6.
Hope Lodge Gardner, MA
7 PM

**"New England Lighthouses and the
People Who Kept Them"**
Jeremy D'Entremont

Jeremy D'Entremont, author, photographer, maritime historian, has been called the leading expert on New England's historic lighthouses. He is the author or co-author of more than 20 books, including *The Lighthouses of Maine*, *The Lighthouses of Massachusetts*, *The Lighthouses of Rhode Island*, *The Lighthouses of Connecticut*, *Great Shipwrecks of the Maine Coast*, *The Lighthouse Handbook: New England*, *All About Nubble Light*, and *Ocean-Born Mary: The Truth Behind a New Hampshire Legend*.
He will have books available for those who wish to purchase them at the program.

April 23, 2024
Hybrid meeting
Link on page 6.
Hope Lodge Gardner, MA
7 PM

TBA

Carpooling available for hybrid or in
person meetings
Cmgsorg1@gmail.com

We need your help!!

The newsletter needs to focus on Central Massachusetts. The resources and interesting information relating to our community activities and/or special research opportunities that make us unique. We are asking you all to help us

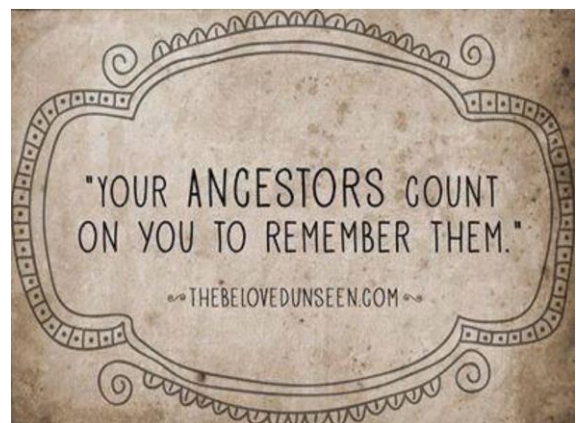
If *you or someone you know* would be willing to write an article focused on any topic you are interested in we would greatly appreciate it. Articles can be a couple of paragraphs or longer.

You would decide on the topic

Ideas might include:

Interesting ancestors. History of the homestead. Why ancestor settled there. Unique offerings within the community. Military. Historical offerings. Brick walls that you have been able to breakdown (or not). Boundary changes. Occupations of a specific era. Value of memberships. Or any other topics you can think of

Questions or submissions can be sent to
Carol Bosworth at cmgsorg1@gmail.com



**TIME TO RENEW YOUR C.M.G.S. MEMBERSHIPS FOR 1 JANUARY
2024**

Central Massachusetts Genealogy Society, Inc.
P.O. Box 811
Westminster, MA 1473-0811
www.cmgs.org

TYPES OF MEMBERSHIPS (check one)

- Individual - \$15.00/yr
 \$40.00 -3yr.
 \$65.00-5 yr
- Family * \$20.00 / yr
 \$55.00 -3yr
 \$90.00-5yr.
- Organizational - \$25.00/yr

You are invited to join any of the following committees:

- ◆ Membership ◆ Publicity ◆ Nominating
- ◆ Newsletter ◆ Publication ◆ Programs
- ◆ Technology ◆ Historian ◆ Library
- ◆ Hospitality

Monthly meetings the 4th Tuesday, January-November from 7-9 P

Name: _____ Phone #: _____

Address: _____

e-mail: _____

**DINNER MEETING 4/26/2024 6 PM
MENU**

Tossed Garden Salad with Croutons and assorted salad dressings.
Oven Roasted BBQ Chicken, Mashed Potatoes (no instant).
Dinner Rolls, Roasted Carrots.
Coffee & Tea and some kind of flavored drink and water.
Cake

COST \$12.00/PERSON

RSVP on or before April 20th

Send checks to CMGS, PO Box 811, Westminster, MA
Or PayPal

www.cmgs.org

Remember to include your names with your reservations

Central Massachusetts Genealogical Society, Inc.
P. O. Box 811
Westminster, MA 01473-0811
www.cmgso.org

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED