



Seattle Genealogical Society December 2013 - February 2014

newsletter

SGS FALL SEMINAR: GENEALOGICAL POTPOURRI: A LITTLE OF THIS AND A LITTLE OF THAT

Three well known Puget Sound speakers, Cyndi Ingle, Steve Morrison and Karen Sipe, made the SGS Fall Seminar, "Genealogy Potpourri: A Little of This and a Little of That," a success! The seminar was held Saturday, 19 October 2013 at the Fairview Christian School.


Cyndi Ingle (see picture below) spoke on "Evaluating Websites: 13 Years Later," a topic that is more critical today. Cyndi noted the problem is determining if the website content is reliable and of a quality that one can use. Her advice was to first scan the site as a whole, especially the perimeter of the site where the administrative content is located. Next, read the About Us page and the Terms of Service/Use. Then check out the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) before you dive into whether "Gramma Gertie" is listed on the site. Also check the last revised date; this will help you determine if the site is stagnant or active.

Karen Sipe spoke on the Homestead Act and its successors and predecessors. Karen's presentation was especially timely as 2012 was the 150th anniversary of the Homestead Act, legislation that put land ownership within reach for millions of Americans. Karen also covered the Homestead Act, the Pre-emption Act of 1841, Timber Culture Act of 1873, and the Kincaid Amendment of 1904, all legislative acts passed by Congress to settle the western frontier. See more on page 7.

Steve Morrison presented on two topics, "Peopling the British Isles," and "Digging Up New Dirt: Unearthing the 'Real' New England Immigrant." The former was a discussion on the use of DNA testing to determine the origins of people living in the British Isles. Even attendees who did not have ancestors from the Isles found the discussion informative. "Digging Up New Dirt" was a case study of John Doane, a 1630's immigrant to the colonies. It was an illustration of a "reasonably exhaustive search," Genealogical Proof Standard Element #1.



Thanks to the speakers and to all the attendees for a successful Fall Seminar! And to the Seminar Committee for their hard work.

 If there is bad weather anywhere in the Puget Sound region, please call the Library to verify whether it is open. (206) 522-8658.

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BOARD ACTIVITIES

The following are topics discussed by the SGS Board over these last three months:

- The Board formally approved the digitization of the SGS Bulletin from 1965 to 2001 by the Seattle Public Library (see article on page 3.)
- Linda Fitzgerald, seminar coordinator, reported on the Fall Seminar and received approval from the Board to pursue a genealogist with a national reputation for our Spring Seminar.
- The Library Trustees will continue the insurance review.
- The Board approved a pro rata membership fee structure for the coming year. Starting 1 December 2013 to 31 May 2015, the fee will be \$55 for a single membership and \$70 for a dual.
- Effective immediately, Sunday library hours will change from 12:00 pm to 5:00 pm to 11:00 am to 4:00 pm.
- The Board formally submitted a request to the landlord for an extension of our lease until 2016. The lease will be formally discussed between the two parties in November 2013.
- The Board identified a need for a policy concerning SGS Library usage during hours it is closed. Issues include access, insurance and other liability concerns.
- The Long Range Planning Committee will begin its work with an all Board facilitated discussion. A date for this discussion has not yet been determined.
- The SGS Board determined that the financial health of our Society is strong for organizations of this type; however, there are some future expenditures (for example, a possible rent increase) which could negatively impact the Society's financial reserves.
- With the help of Richard Ambur, the Board tested and approved the purchase of a voice amplification system. The new system was used at the Fall Seminar.
- The Board received a donation of books from the family of Betty Robinson. The donation was made through the Seattle Public Library.
- Next Board meeting is 25 November 2013 at 6:00 pm at the SGS Library. All are invited.

LOOKING FOR HELP

We are currently looking for volunteers for several committees, including Publications, Long Range Planning, Publicity, Seminar, Programs, Archives and Cataloging. We also need Desk Volunteers to keep our Library open for researchers! It is only through the contributions of our members that we grow as an organization. If you can help, please email Michelle Khuon, Director of Volunteers at SGSVolunteers@gmail.com or sign up online at <http://www.seattlegenealogicalsociety.org/content/volunteer-signup>.



On 17 November Mary Roddy facilitated the SGS "Group Research Day for Members." About 7 members came to the Library to have an online demonstration by Mary of the various resource materials available. The goal of the demonstration was to help researchers break through some Brick Walls! Mary (dark hair, back to camera) illustrated the value of the WWI draft registration documents.

Thanks, Mary, for helping with this session and to everyone who participated.

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DIGITIZATION OF THE SGS BULLETIN: AN INTERVIEW WITH JOHN LAMONT, SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY Genealogy Department & Representative to the SGS Board



At the September SGS Board meeting, John LaMont, genealogy librarian for The Seattle Public Library (SPL), presented a virtual tour of the new addition to SPL's Special Collections Online--SGS Bulletins from 1952 to 2001! This work has been an on-going collaboration between the two groups since 2012 and represents the very best cooperation that can exist between public access and our society.

In November, Jill Morelli, Publications Director, spoke with John to obtain more information about the process and the involvement of each party.

Question: John, how did you convince The Seattle Public Library to digitize the *SGS Bulletin* and what was your role?

John: This project was a natural outcome of my roles on the SGS Board and being a genealogy librarian for SPL. The Board was discussing grant funding for digitization and other projects, and I suggested the possibility of partnering with SPL to digitize the Bulletin. The Board thought it was a good idea, so I pitched it to SPL and they thought so too. I'm pleased to say that the digitization was accomplished at no cost to the Society. SGS provided unbound copies of the Bulletin to streamline the digitization process, and SPL provided the staff time, equipment, hosting, and expertise to put the collection online. This was a great project because it coincides with the Society's 90th anniversary.

Question: So, how was the digitization actually accomplished?

John: We digitized the SGS Bulletin from the first issue in 1952 through 2001, covering fifty years (10,300 pages total). By separating the individual Bulletins, we could use bulk scanning machines which sped up the process considerably. Technology has also caught up with printed works so we could use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technology as the scanned images were uploaded. OCR makes the entire set searchable by name, place, topic, or virtually any words found in the text. Please tell the membership, however, that OCR technology is not perfect and sometimes it reads the letters incorrectly. If you're not finding what you're looking for and know it's in the Bulletin, you may still have to browse the individual issues.

Question: How does one access the collection?

John: It's quite simple and we hope to make it even more so in the future.

The direct link to the SGS Bulletins 1952-2001 at The Seattle Public Library, Special Collections Online, is:

<http://cdm16118.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/landingpage/collection/p16118coll4>

Since that is a little hard to remember! The path is to start at our home page: Seattle Public Library => click on "Special Collections Online" (right sidebar) => Click on "Go to Special Collections Online". Scroll down and there it is. SPL will be putting a direct link on the Genealogy page. But for now, that is how you can access the Bulletins.

Question: What else are you working on that will be of interest to our members?

John: Most of our digital projects focus on Seattle history, and we have a number of projects in the works. I've just started digitizing the Seattle Municipal News, an historic newspaper for Seattle, and have an ongoing project to digitize Seattle's Polk city directories. My colleagues are developing the Seattle Neighborhood History Project, which includes digitized historic Seattle photos, restaurant menus, maps, books, and other materials. And, of course, we always solicit new ideas from the SGS membership as to new items to scan and post.

Thanks, John. It is nice to know that this positive collaboration brings great content to our membership.

FALL SEMINAR ALBUM



It always starts with registration.

Thanks to the entire Seminar committee for putting on another "class act." Over 120 attendees learned about new tools and tricks for solving their own genealogical issues. Our three speakers helped.

The following individuals helped Linda Fitzgerald, chair of the Seminar Committee, with the seminar planning: Jan Walker, Mary O'Brien, Kay Doolittle, Nancy Parks, Richard Ambur, Jim Ryan, and Christine Schoemaker. Other attendees helped on the day of the event.

Thanks to everyone.



Attendees look at some of the deals--that's a lot of books! The traditional book sale garnered \$600 for the Society.



The food was delicious! The break allowed ample time for friends -- new and old -- to connect.

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SGS WINTER QUARTER CALENDAR: DECEMBER 2013, JANUARY, FEBRUARY 2014

Unless stated otherwise, events are held at the Seattle Genealogical Society Library. SGS classes are free to SGS members and are \$5 for nonmembers. Call SGS at 206-522-8658 for information about program cancellations or closures due to adverse weather conditions. This listing is subject to change or additions. For up-to-date information, access the SGS website: <http://www.seattlegenealogicalsociety.com>.

December 2013

- 3 Tuesday, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, HANDS-ON BRICK WALL RESEARCH AT SGS
come and work on your most troublesome relatives with a panel of volunteers from SGS
- 7 Saturday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, CANADIAN Special Interest Group (SIG)
meets monthly. led by David Robert.
- 10 Tuesday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, HERITAGE CRAFT CLASS
contact Cary Bright (clbright@comcast.net) for information on this session and registration.
- 10 Tuesday, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, BEGINNING DNA
Do you understand what DNA is and what you can do with it? If not, this is the beginning class for you.
- 14 Saturday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, BEGINNER'S CLASS #3
The conclusion of the three part series for beginners.
- 17 Tuesday, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, VITAL RECORDS 101
Learn or refresh your skills on how to locate vital records (birth, death, marriage) and how to effectively use them in your family history search.
- 22 Dec - 3 Jan Sunday through Friday 3 Jan: SGS LIBRARY is closed for the holidays. Have a joyous holiday with your descendants. We will be open on Saturday 4 January 2014.

January 2014

- 1 - 3 Wednesday through Friday, 6 Jan: SSS LIBRARY is closed for the holidays. Happy New Year!
- 7 Tuesday, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, UMBRELLA WRITERS GROUP
Meet with other interested writers to discuss methodologies for writing your family history or other genealogy related articles.
- 10 Friday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, BEGINNER'S CLASS #1
Curious about your family history but don't know how or where to start? Come to our 3 part series. Learn basic Genealogy 101 skills and start on your own family tree! No registration required but contact can be through sgseducation@gmail.com.
- 11 Saturday, 10:30 am - 12:30 pm, HANDS-ON BRICK WALL RESEARCH AT SGS
Panel assistance to help you break through your brick walls in locating your ancestors.
- 14 Tuesday, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm, HERITAGE CRAFT CLASS
contact Cary Bright (clbright@comcast.net) for information on this session and registration
- 15 Wednesday, 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm, MILITARY RECORDS 101
Learn about how and what to access to retrieve much needed military records for your ancestors.

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January 2014, continued

- 18 Saturday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, IRISH SIG
Come and discuss Irish genealogy; meets monthly. led by Jean Roth, jeanroth@juno.com
- 18 Saturday, 1:00 pm -3:00 pm, GERMAN SIG
Come and discuss German genealogy; meets monthly. led by Jean Roth, jeanroth@juno.com
- 21 Tuesday, 10:30 am - 12:00 pm, PHOTO ORGANIZING CLASS
Learn from a professional how to organize and protect your precious photos as well as learning to scan and other useful tips.
- 24 Friday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, BEGINNERS CLASS #2
Continuation of three part series for Beginners Genealogy 101.
- 25 Saturday, 10:00 am - 12:30 pm, DNA SIG
DNA discussions, led by Cary Bright and Herb McDaniel, Co-Chair. SGSDNASIG@gmail.com

February 2014

- 7 Friday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, BEGINNERS CLASS #3
Conclusion of three part series for Beginners Genealogy 101
- 8 Saturday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, COMPUTER SIG
restart of our Computer Special Interest Group. Come join! led by Ida Skarson McCormick.
- 15 Saturday, 10:15 am - 12:15 pm, IRISH SIG
Come and discuss Irish genealogy; meets monthly. led by Jean Roth, jeanroth@juno.com
- 15 Saturday, 1:00 pm -3:00 pm, GERMAN SIG
Come and discuss German genealogy; meets monthly. led by Jean Roth, jeanroth@juno.com
- 16 Sunday, 11:30 am - 1:30 pm, GPS Element #1: REASONABLY EXHAUSTIVE SEARCH
Class #1 in our new Intermediate/Advanced series. Ed Godfrey will lead this class as we investigate each of the Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) elements. This series will continue for a total of 5 classes through May 2014.
Mark your calendars: Elements 2 & 3 will be held on March 9th and 30th, 1:30 pm to 3:00 pm.
- 23 Sunday, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm, POST VALENTINE'S DAY OPEN HOUSE
attend our presentation on courting rituals through the years while having free access to the SGS Library. Should be lots of fun and "sassy." Open to ALL.



Between December 1954 and August 1957, *Seattle Times* staffer Parker McAllister painted more than 35 watercolor paintings of explorers, their ships, and Native Americans. In 1963, the *Seattle Times* donated 120 watercolors of these Pacific Northwest historical scenes painted by McAllister to The Seattle Public Library. Original artwork by McAllister from the Library's collection and complementary historical materials will be on display Sept. 23 through Dec. 31 at the Central Library, Level 8, during open hours. -- from The SPL website.

TIMBER CULTURE ACT: A CASE STUDY

by Jill Morelli

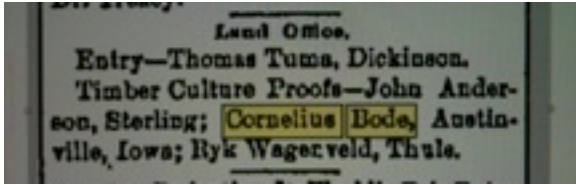


figure 1: Article in Bismark, ND paper showing Cornelius Bode Proving a Timber Culture Act claim. [1]

When Karen Sipe discussed the Timber Culture Act (TCA) at the recent Fall SGS Seminar, I remembered I had a tie to that Act. My great great uncle, Cornelius Bode, proved a Timber Culture Act claim in North Dakota while living in Austinville, Iowa. Cornelius, procured the right to this land by agreeing to plant trees on it, had satisfied the requirements and now had full possession of the property.

To find out more, I went to the University of Washington library (virtually) and found a wonderful article by C. Barron McIntosh on the Act and its uses and abuses. [2] I have shared this article with Karen Sipe. The following are some of my findings from the article:

- The Act was passed in 1873 and repealed in 1891 because it was deemed a failure. (note: in figure 1, Thomas Tuma has an Entry noted in the newspaper published in 1893. Because the Timber Culture Act was repealed in 1891, this Entry must be for some other of the Acts and not the Timber Culture Act.)
- The theory of the act was to encourage settlement and encourage the planting of trees, a cash crop.
- Since it was the belief that "rain followed the plow," the intent was to adjust the climate to bring more precipitation to the arid portions of the Great Plains. This did not work.
- The entryman, the applicant, was to plant 10 acres of trees on 160 acres of land.
- The four states of North and South Dakota, Nebraska and Kansas combined for over 9.5 million acres of Timber Culture Act land.
- It was felt that most entrymen would be individuals who were already settled in the area and could use the Act to add 160 acres to their present holdings, which were often obtained through the Homestead Act. (Investigation by the author of the article found that the addition of land to existing holdings wasn't as prevalent as assumed but still approached 50%.)

Did it work? McIntosh toured areas of Nebraska in 1974 to determine whether there was timber on the land. He found that only 4 of 49 TCA parcels had a timber stand remaining. Two had recently cut their timber for trash, not for profit.

McIntosh noted that "The intentions of the law could be abused because an entryman did not have to live on his tree claim, nor in the same county, or even in the same state," (p. 353) That proved to be the case for my relative who lived in Iowa.

So, Cornelius...were you a speculator? I know he did not live on the land. Perhaps a relative did and he was aiding that relative in obtaining more land. If so, he would have been a part of the "problem," i.e. fueling speculation. The Bode's, generally a wealthy land owning family, may have, like many others, used the law to benefit themselves. Obviously, more research is needed to find Cornelius' property, identify who was living on it and determine the relationship if any; but that's a search for another day. [3]

1. "Land Office." *Bismark (ND) Tribune*. 20 September 1893, online *Newsbank*. (<http://genealogybank.com> : 30 June 2013).

2. McIntosh, C. Barron. "Use and Abuse of the Timber Culture Act." *Annals Of The Association of American Geographers* 65, no. 3 (September 1975): 347-362. (accessed June 30, 2013).

3. Jill Morelli, "What is the Timber Culture Act?" 5 July 2013, online blog (<http://genealogycertification.wordpress.com>.) This article was modified from Ms. Morelli's blog posting.



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CULTURE

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VOLUNTEER OF THE QUARTER: KIRSTIN JENSEN

Congratulations to Kirstin Jensen, our Volunteer of the Quarter! Our regular members may not be aware of Kirstin's contribution to the Society, but the individuals who need a look up in the library and live far from Seattle certainly do. Kirstin is the individual responsible for the SGS "Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness." She has assisted genealogists from around the country, and even the world, with acquiring information the Seattle Genealogical Society holds within its Library--all for a small donation to the Society. She is often found seeking that elusive bit of information in a City Directory or local newspaper that will help break a brick wall and will access the records at SPL or UW Suzzalo Library if SGS does not have the item readily available. One of her most unusual requests for information was from an individual in prison. Unfortunately, the request was not specific enough and could not be satisfied. Please thank Kirstin for her service and remember that you too can give back to the SGS community in your own way.

