

Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society

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Vol. 16 Issue 2

Cheyenne Genealogy Journal

Musings by the President . . .

Wishing you all a great summer—full of rest and relaxation, time with family, successful research travels, vacation enjoyment...and getting reved up and looking forward to fall & our great CGHS program line-up!

Sue Seniauski, President



CGHS Annual Cemetery Walk to Highlight Notable Women During the Anniversary of Women's Suffrage in Wyoming

Discover some of the region's notable females during the Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society's annual Lakeview Cemetery Walk, on Saturday, August 24, 2019. The living history presentation, "Remember the Ladies," a tribute to the 150th anniversary of women's suffrage in Wyoming, begins at the main gate of Lakeview Cemetery off Seymour Ave. and features interesting characters who played large and small parts in Cheyenne's frontier history. This year there will be seven new female characters added and two start-times for the two-hour narrated walking tour. The first tour will begin at 9:00 a.m. and the second tour will begin at 10 a.m. Members



of CGHS in costume will portray Esther Hobart Morris, Nellie Tayloe Ross, E. Mason Smith, 'Apple Annie,' Helen Frances Warren Pershing, Daze Bristol, Lucy Phillips, Amolia Post and others, most of whose graves are located in or near Lakeview Cemetery. Participants who want to attend either of the tours for the Cemetery Walk should make reservations by calling Sue at 307-286-6239. There is a \$5 entrance fee for each adult, \$1 for youth and children; preschoolers are admitted free. Participants should begin to gather 15-20 minutes before the start of each

group. Walkers are encouraged to wear comfortable shoes and sun protection, and bring drinking water if desired. Proceeds help fund genealogy book acquisitions for the Laramie County Library by the Cheyenne Genealogical and Historical Society.

For those who still owe dues for membership or those want to join the Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society, dues for a single member are \$20; family of two—\$30 and for an organization—\$30. Please submit your membership application and dues payment to CGHS, P.O. Box 2539, Cheyenne, WY 82003

Upcoming Events:

31 July-2 Aug 2019
"BYU Conference on Family History & Genealogy" BYU Conference Center, Provo, Utah
Online Registration:
<https://familyhistory.ce.byu.edu/>

6 Aug 2019
"Attaching Sources to Family Tree" [Family History Library Webinar](#)
10:00 a.m.

13 Aug 2019
"Adding Memories to Family Tree" [Family History Library Webinar](#)
10:00 a.m.

15 Aug 2019
"WikiTree with Eowyn Langholf" Larimer County Genealogical Society Monthly Meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Good Samaritan Society, 508 Trilby Road, Fort Collins

20 Aug 2019
"Merging & Correcting Relationships on Family Tree" [Family History Library Webinar](#)
10:00 a.m.

24 Aug 2019
CGHS Annual Cemetery Walk, "Remember the Ladies" Lakeview Cemetery, Seymour Ave. 9:00 a.m. and 10 a.m. Registration required by calling 307-286-6239

10 Sep 2019
CGHS Monthly Meeting Program to be announced
6:15-8:30 p.m. Laramie County Library

28 Sep 2019
"Conference for a Cause: From Court Records to DNA" with Judy Russell, The Legal Genealogist
9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Medical Center of the Rockies, Loveland, Co.

Get to Know Your Genealogy Colleague: **Wandalee Williamson Wade**

This newsletter column will introduce you to the genealogical work of members of the Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society, to help you get to know your colleagues and perhaps to provide a few ideas or hints for your own research.

What is your full name?

Wandalee "Wanda" Williamson Wade

Are you named after any relative; if so who & why?

My parents, Garold A. Williamson and Verda Marjorie Freemyer Williamson were expecting a boy and he would have been named David. My father suggested that my name should be JennEva Rachel after my two grandmothers, JennEva Newland Freemyer and Rachel Edna Green Williamson, but my mother did not agree. I was told I was unnamed for about six weeks until they found the name Wandalee in a newspaper article.



Charles Freemyer and JennEva Newland wedding photo

What is your maternal ethnic heritage?

My mother's heritage is English and Northwestern European. Her grandfather Thomas F. Barnett was 20 years old when he left England with his father Henry Barnett. Thomas was the oldest boy in the Barnett family. They arrived in America

May 27, 1855. Henry and Thomas came to America with plans of sending for the other family members to join them after they had accumulated enough money and were settled. However Henry died in Kansas after 1860 and his wife Sarah Tomlins Barnett and the remaining five children never came to America. My mother's father, Charles Sherman Freemyer, was a descendant of the Palatine families who settled in Schoharie County, New York in the early 1700s.

What is your paternal ethnic heritage?

My father's grandparents were from England, Ireland and Scotland. Several of the families settled early in Virginia. My paternal great grandfather, Loammi Williamson, was a descendant of Quaker lineage from North Carolina.

Give your maternal surnames three generations back:

NEWLAND; BARNETT; TOMLINS;
LOUDERBACK; SUMMERS

WARREN; SHADRICK; FORD;
SAUNDERS

FOLAND; SMITH; COFFMAN
SHREVES; LOUCKS; MATTICE;
BERG

Give your paternal wives or mothers' surnames three generations back:

GREEN; HIXON; ROBERTSON;
WILHOIT

GARRETT; HENDERSON
HESTER; BENNETT

Provide some information about yourself, your background, your family...

I was born in Ovid, Colorado which is located in northeastern Colorado between Sterling and Julesburg. The families of my mother and my father were early homesteaders in that area. My mother was a nurse and my father ran a draying company. During the sugar beet campaign my parents and grandparents worked for the Ovid sugar factory. In 1944 we moved to Denver where my father worked at Gates Rubber Company and by 1945 my parents and maternal grandparents moved

to Saratoga, Wyoming. Soon after that my parents divorced and I never saw or heard from my father again. My mother returned to Denver and worked as a nurse, while I stayed in Saratoga with my grandparents. I consider them my 'Life Teachers' and for the four years that I lived with them, they were always there for me. I was my Grandpa's hunting and fishing buddy. My Grandma was a great cook and the household was run in what I call a 'Tea Towel Calendar' - Wash on Monday, Iron on Tuesday, Mend on Wednesday....In 1949 my mother remarried and I started junior high school in Cheyenne that fall. My husband Harry's family had homesteaded in Laramie County in 1908 and I currently live in a home we built on the original homestead in 1981. Harry and I were married 53 years before he died in 2008. I worked in financial institutions for 35 years before I retired in 2001. Our three daughters have presented us with 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren.

When did you start doing genealogy?

Early 2000

What got you interested in this crazy hobby?

First, I was fortunate as a youngster to have known my maternal great grandmother Rose Ella Warren Freemyer who left Missouri in 1894 in a covered wagon with her new husband and headed to north-eastern Colorado. She loved to tell me stories of her life and sometimes they didn't make sense to me as a seven year old, but with my research I have begun to understand the life she was telling me about. Second, was my mother's deep interest in her genealogy research. Before her death, she made sure that I had her 'blue suitcase' with all of her handwritten notes and family charts. How easy we have it now compared to when she was researching the Soundex census information or waiting for the mailman to deliver the answer o that request she had written for

(continued on page 3)

5th Great Grandfather Served Jail Time for Refusing to Get a 'License to Preach'

(continued from page 2)

information. I have her hand written family sheets and they will be the first pages in the Freemyer/ Warren family book. After her death I tried to follow up on her work, but when I made my first trip to the Laramie County Library on Central Avenue, I got as far as the door to the genealogy room and my fear wouldn't let me go inside; I turned around and went home. When I finally returned, I met Sandy Wunder and she was the rock who taught me how to research; she was my mentor.

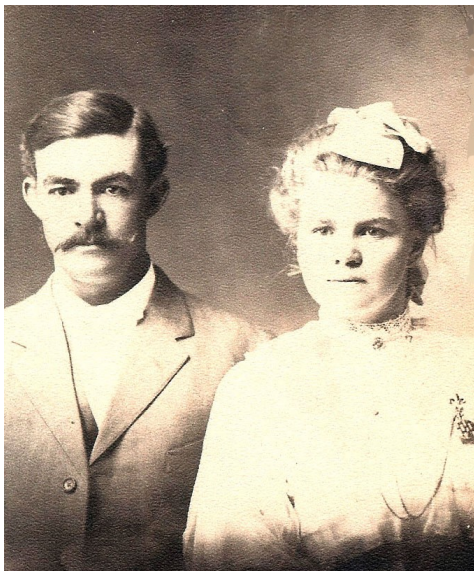
Are you doing direct-line only or collateral research?

I would say I do cluster and collateral research. To me the history of the times sometimes becomes more important than whether the person was a direct relative, and that history helps me understand the decisions that came to play in the lives of the family members. I still have my direct-line data, but I also find interesting stories about the family when I search cousins, aunts, uncles and relationships by marriage.

Who in (or outside) your family provided you with the most background?

Even though I didn't grow up with my father after I was eight years old, I felt my children needed to know that part of their family history. So for the past 9 months I have been working on the genealogy of my 3rd great grandfather Henry Garrett Green, born in 1763 in Greenbrier County, Virginia and died in 1846 in Clay County, Missouri. Grandpa Henry is my line to the DAR even though he did not serve long enough to qualify for his pension. My father was one of 13 children and his mother died when he was fourteen. I only knew one of his brothers and one of his sisters, and needless to say, I have more cousins than I can imagine. I met my first cousin, Jean Williamson when we were about 45 years old and she generously provided me with copies of all of her Williamson/Green family research. Jean was also instrumental in compiling the historical books for Julesburg, Colorado and

Sedgwick County, Colorado. All of her research has directed me into Clay County, Missouri during the Civil War.



Daniel Caleb Newland and Armina Barnett Newland wedding photo, April 1886, Kansas

What is the furthest back that you have researched; what have you found?

About 1750 in Orange County, Virginia, I have two gentlemen who are my 5th great grandfathers. One is Job Shadrack who died in Orange County, Virginia about 1794. The other is Nathaniel Saunders/Sanders who is said to have been born in Virginia about 1735. Children from the Shadrack and Saunders families intermarried and appear in my direct line. I know from land records that Job and Nathaniel were neighbors and from the benevolent deeds they performed for each other I feel they were friends. For example, Nathaniel provided care for Job's wife after his death. Nathaniel Saunders/Sanders was a preacher at the Mount Poney Church in Culpepper, Virginia. It is written that he refused to obtain the 'License to Preach' as required by the King of England. His reasoning was that God gave him authority to preach and he did not need a license from man. I am sure he was not the only minister in this position at that time, and Nathaniel served time in jail for his refusal.

What is the most interesting/funniest/most bizarre story you have uncovered?

I am sure that some of you out there were told as children that they were part Native American. We were even told it was my maternal grandmother's relative and they were Osage. As an early researcher I always kept looking for that clue of relationship in the family.

Explain what it was and was it accurate? If not, why not? What did you discover that disproved the initial information?

Sorry, but the closest I came to being Native American was that my maternal grandmother JennEva Newland Freemyer and her siblings grew up in Brown County, Kansas. The county seat and most populous city is Hiawatha, and Brown County is the location of the Kickapoo Indian Reservation of Kansas. It's either that or everyone said the Newland kids were a 'Bunch of Wild Indians'.

Do you have anyone famous in your tree? If so, tell us who and a bit about this ancestor:

No

Do you think it is important to share your research or keep it to yourself?

I have compiled several manuscripts on different family members and I am always willing to share a copy. I feel that we must share the information that we have found, not only with our families but with people who are researching the same areas we searched. I consider that my work might be a useful tool for anyone who reads it and I hope that through my work someone else may tell me something I might have overlooked.

Have you had a DNA test...if so, what has it confirmed, disproved or confounded for you?

I had a DNA test that shows I am 74% English, Wales & Northwestern European; 24% Irish & Scottish and 2% Swedish. This is what I expected based on my research.

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She Desires a 'ReDo' in Missouri

(continued from page 3)

Where/what place are you yearning to visit to find information?

Harry and I went to Missouri a couple of times when I was ill-informed about what I should be looking for. I wish I could go back now that I have learned more about my family.

What do you think are the best methods or best resources (tools, sites, etc.) for researching? Why?

Of course, person to person conversations are the best resource, but that is current information and sometimes based on Family Lore. The most emotional experience is being at the actual location, seeing the land records and cemeteries and holding the original documents in your white gloved hands. Military pension files, microfilm of wills, probates, land records and county commissioner minutes, all have provided me with information for family connections. I am always cautious of obituaries and death certificates, because the information is given at a time of stress and is only as good as the informant remembers at the moment. I am currently using a published family history for some of my research in Clay County, Missouri. I enjoy the historical information but I compare the facts with other information that I have found before I use it. I use Ancestry.com, Family Search and Find a Grave as suggestion sites and I always try to prove or disprove the information before I include it on my family records.

Do you use timelines or research plans to help you stay on track & focus what you need to research?

I have used timelines and spreadsheets in my research, especially to track land transactions. It also helps me follow the family's location and make sure the people I am searching are actually members of that family.

Are you a skatter-shot, jump-around, location-focused, plow-through-one-line-only, or grab-em-all-in-a-family type of researcher? Explain a bit...

I generally search one family line at

a time, but I can easily wander off because I don't limit my research to direct lines. I document information about all of the siblings and the individuals they married. And I want to know the historical events that affected their lives.

Do you have a favorite place, method or time for doing your researching?

My mind allows me to visualize where, and how, my ancestors lived so my research is a trip to a different time and an escape. My office is filled with encyclopedias, maps and family photos, so my basic resources are at my fingertips. No TV, just my favorite music and my computer. I love the thrill of the chase anytime of the day.

What software program do you use for your own documentation and keeping your family tree?

I started with Family Tree but switched to Legacy several years ago. I like the format and the documentation that I can produce from the data base.

What is your biggest brick wall on which you would like assistance?

I have two brick walls. The first one is my maternal 3rd great grandmother Martha Bee Shreves, born 1796 in Pennsylvania. There are several people searching for her parents who are said to have been Quakers. The second is my paternal 2nd great grandfather and great grandmother, Joseph Green and Elizabeth Henderson Green last found on the 1870 census of Clinton County, Missouri.

Have you ever had a serendipity moment in doing genealogy when something you weren't expecting appeared or surfaced unexplained? Tell us about it:

About 4 years ago I contacted a lady who had posted a photo on Ancestry.com that was identified as Martha Ampire Shadrick, a sister of my 2nd great grandmother Mary Elizabeth Shadrick Warren. When she sent me the photo she included a copy of Martha's death certificate and a copy of a letter written by my great grandmother's brother. She said the family was not related to her and the documents were in a trunk she was cleaning out. She

thought Ancestry.com was the best way to find her family. I had found information for her up to the Civil War and had given up hope of finding anything else.

What is the most recent "Ahah!" moment you have had?

When I realized that the book I donated to the library in 2011 really does contain photos and information about family relatives.

Do you have a favorite website? Why is it your favorite?

I use Ancestry.com, Family Search, Find a Grave and the old websites that were started by the counties. I still find good information on the original county web sites, even though much of that is also now on Ancestry.com and Family Search. I guess Ancestry is my first go to place, but I always recheck anything I find on any site to prove or disprove the accuracy.

What is your biggest frustration, irritant or money-waster in this "line of fun?"

My biggest irritation is when people include individuals on a family tree on the internet without verifying that the relationship is accurate, or even possible.

How do you save and store your records & organize your results?

My computer is backed up nightly to a separate drive and I have hard copies in notebooks. I have color coded the notebooks for each family. My husband's family note books are all in shades of brown and my family notebooks are in shades of blue and green. It is easy for me to look at the shelves and know by color where to look for information.

What is your long-term goal for your research?

My long-term goal was to have transferred all of my information into a narrative book for each family, but to be more realistic, I am currently planning to print a narrative book from Legacy for each of my family files. It won't be perfect but it will be a hard copy of all of the data I have accumulated and will perhaps be easier to understand if the 'Long Term' plan is never completed. (continued on page 6)

Genealogy News You Can Use...

The ABC's of City Directories...Documents That Can Help Locate Relatives, Research Buildings

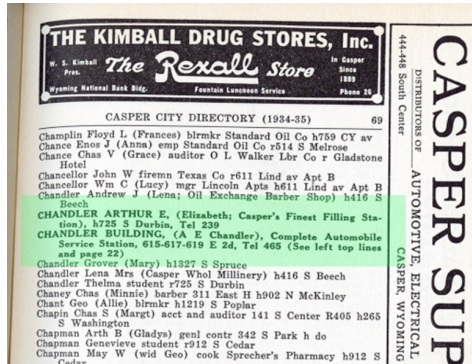
Information from this article was written by Robin Everett, processing Archivist at the Wyoming State Archives, in "Wyoming Postscripts," 17 October 2014. I stumbled across the article while researching a Western article and thought it still very relevant; Robin graciously consented to this reprint.

A wise researcher once said "genealogy without documentation is mythology." We will be taking a closer look at some of the wonderful genealogical documents & resources available at the State Archives and how they can help you dig deeper and possibly solve your family history research problems.



City directories first came in to use in what is now the United States in some of the east coast cities in the eighteenth century, and continue to be published today in both the US and Canada. While there were many publishers involved, the most recognized publisher was R.L. Polk & Co. The directories were used to help salespeople and deliverymen locate individuals for commercial and delivery purposes, and to provide advertising space for businesses, much like later telephone books. The directories were often produced annually or every other year. Before starting your research in city directories, review the table of contents and introductory text to better understand the organization, format and abbreviations in the book. The introduction may provide clues as to the organization of the particular directory. Included in the listing was the name of the head of household, the street address and often the occupation and employer of the head of household. This information can lead to some interesting discoveries, as well as the possibility of verifying family stories of what a great-grandfather did for a living. The listing may also include whether the individual was a boarder, renter, or owner.

This page from the 1934-35 Casper Polk Directory includes A.E. Chandler. From the entry we find his full name was Arthur E., his wife's name was Elizabeth. We can also see that Chandler



WSA Polk Directory, Casper 1934-35

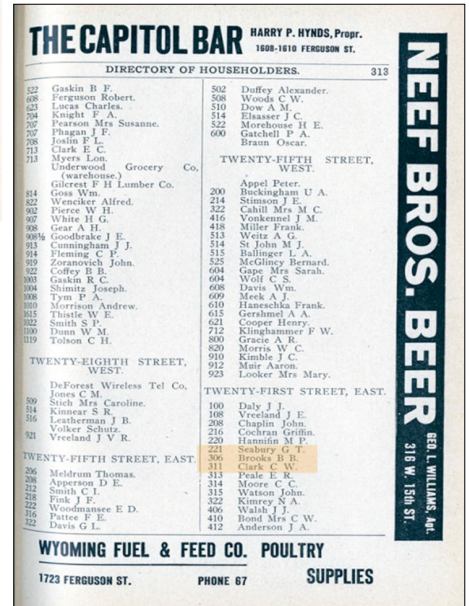
ran Casper's Finest Filling Station. Business must have been going well because he had a telephone at both his home and the business.

In some directories, only the head of household was listed, which, from the family historian's viewpoint, can be frustrating. As children became adults they were listed as well. When a man died, his wife was often indexed as "Smith, Mary, widow of John". (This can be a clue to a death date.) By the mid-twentieth century these directories included a street cross-index, which is useful for determining neighbors, or who lived in the house prior to and following your ancestor. Looking through the street index this researcher discover Gaylord Everett, who was going by Gale Everett.

It is much easier to determine the address of a residence using the directories than from census records. They also give the researcher the opportunity to go to the physical address and visualize where their ancestors lived. In the absence of census records, directories are very helpful in tracking the movement of elusive ancestors more frequently than census enumerations since they were published annually or bi-annually. Many directories include community pages which would list houses of worship, clubs, cemeteries, businesses and possibly a city map. If your ancestor lived in a small town or a big city, chances are they can be found in a city directory.

The following "directory of householders" includes the area surrounding the Historic Governor's Mansion in Cheyenne. This portion of the directory can help identify neighbors or neighboring

businesses. It is also quite helpful when researching buildings. Once you have a name, the "white page" style listing can tell you more about the individual.



WSA Polk Directory, Cheyenne 1907

As with any mass-produced item, however, accuracy may be an issue. In some instances, people had to pay to have their names included in a directory and ethnic and racial minorities were often excluded. Also the year on the cover is most often the publication date, which is not necessarily the year the information was collected. But most of all, don't be surprised if you find yourself "reading" the whole directory! They are full of clues, and facts that help place your ancestors in historical context.

Family Tree Magazine Lists Fifteen Essential Google Tools for Genealogy

Over the past 20 years, [Google](https://www.google.com) has grown from a simple search engine—the brainchild of two PhD students at Stanford University in 1998 in a Menlo Park, Calif., garage—to the most visited website in the world. Most of Google's tools are free, and they work on computers and mobile devices helping you stay organized, virtually travel to ancestors' neighborhoods, locate essential information about history and records—and lots more. *Family Tree Magazine* says if you're not using these [15 Google apps](https://www.familytreemagazine.com/2019/04/15/google-tools-for-genealogy/) and tools for genealogy, you're missing out...so increase your Google IQ, by trying these today.

2019 "Conference for a Cause" Will Feature Judy Russell, The Legal Genealogist; Registration Is Open for the Loveland Event

The Larimer County Genealogy Society's 5th annual Conference for a Cause will be held from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, Sept 28, 2019 in Loveland, Colo., at the Medical Center of the Rockies, Community Room. The theme for the day is "The Genealogical Toolbox: From Court Records to DNA" presented by the featured speaker, Judy G. Russell, who is a genealogist with a law degree who writes and lectures on topics ranging from using court records in family history to understanding DNA testing. She is on the



faculty of numerous genealogy institutes and is a member of the Board of Trustees of the Board for Certification of Genealogists®, from which she holds credentials as Certified Genealogist® and Certified Genealogical Lecturer™. Her award-winning blog

is www.legalgenealogist.com. She will present the following topics:

--Session 1: "No Person Shall Gallop Horses in the Streets—Using Court Records to Tell the Story of Our Ancestors' Lives."

"Think of your research as a skeleton—look for the bones of the family, then work on filling in the fun details..."

—Good Advice From Seasoned Genealogist, Wanda Wade

(continued from page 4)

Do you have anyone in your family who will take over your research and continue this adventure? Who is it and why are they the selected, volunteer or chosen one?

I have two granddaughters who may be interested. One has her own tree on Ancestry.com.

What or how (if anything) have you paid forward, given back, or shared your expertise?

I volunteered in the Special Collection room at The Laramie County Library for several years. While I was there I indexed the micro-film collection and a portion of the Laramie County Marriage records. Now I volunteer two days a week to answer research requests at the Wyoming State Archives and I also

--Session 2: "No, No Nanette—What Negative Evidence Is...and Isn't."

--Session 3: "No Vitals? No Problem—Building a Family Through Circumstantial Evidence" (a Family for Isabella—Tracing a Woman Married Before the 1850 Census.)

--Session 4: "After the Courthouse Burns: Rekindling Family History Through DNA."

Cost for the conference is \$50 until August 1 and after that date, \$55. Additional donations are gratefully accepted. The Conference offers two ways to register. You can register & pay online at [Eventbrite](https://www.eventbrite.com) or use a paper registration by printing this [downloadable document](#) and mailing it with a check to the Larimer County Genealogical Society (C4aC in Memo Line) to: C4AC c/o Carol Stetser, 4614 Kitchell Way, Fort Collins, CO 80524. For more information, go to www.lcgsc.org, or to Facebook, lcgscfac@lcgsc.org. Refunds (minus a small, prepaid registration cost) are only available if the speaker is unable to attend. If you are unable to attend, your registration fee will be considered a donation and will be tax deductible. Lunch is "on your own" by brown bag, MCR cafeteria or nearby restaurants.

answer the research requests that come in for the Cheyenne Genealogical Society.

Do you have any thoughts or words of wisdom for your colleagues on doing genealogy?

A little bit of solid information is better than nothing. Don't expect to find everything for all of your families, so think of your research as a skeleton—look for the bones of the family then work on filling in the fun details. Don't believe everything you see on the internet, or in 'Grandma's Family Lore'—everyone tends to stretch the truth now and then. Most of all enjoy what you find and be proud of the lives your relatives lived and the history, good or bad, that they left for you.

Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference Will Offer Family History Enthusiasts a Wide Variety of Programs in Washington D.C.

Join fellow family history enthusiasts for the 2019 FGS National Family History Conference at the historic Omni Shoreham Hotel in Washington, DC, August 21-24. There will be something for everyone. Hosted by the Federation of

Genealogical Societies in cooperation with sponsoring local societies, corporate sponsors, and partner organizations, FGS 2019 offers a new full four-day format jam-packed with topics of interest to every genealogist. Whether you're a beginner just starting to explore your family history or an old hand at research, the wide variety of new and inclusive topics offers something for you. And true to its own roots as a federation composed of genealogical societies, FGS offers society management topics throughout all four days of the conference rather than a Wednesday-only focus as in years past. Explore the rich resources in Washington's many research repositories with records for everyone—whether you have colonial Mid-Atlantic roots or twentieth-century recent American immigrants. It starts with pre-conference activities like guided research at the Library of Congress, the DAR Library and the National Archives and an opportunity to see the new National Museum of African American History & Culture.

D. Joshua Taylor, president of the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society, will keynote on *Coming Home: Finding Our Place in America's Tapestry*, and then there are four full days of inclusive topics—many brand new—presented by the nation's top family history experts and specialists from local resources. The tracks this year include: America's Resources; Mid-Atlantic Region; The Tapestry of America; In America's Service; Circle the Globe; Colonial History & Settlement; Social & Cultural Community; Women's Studies and more. There will be three separate DNA tracks, covering Want foundations, methods, and practice. Online Conference [Registration](#) closes at midnight August 2.



"Opt-Out is Not Informed Consent"—Judy Russell Cautions Users About Use of DNA Tests

This article is reprinted with permission from the author, Judy G. Russell, a New Jersey genealogist with a law degree, from her blog, "The Legal Genealogist." The article, "[Opt-out is Not Informed Consent](https://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/2019/03/31/opt-out-is-not-informed-consent/)," was posted on 31 Mar 2019. To see more of her articles, visit her blog at <https://www.legalgenealogist.com/blog/>.

Outing the Unwitting

There's an old adage that may date back — if internet sources are to be believed — as far as Roman times.

"It's all fun and games until somebody gets hurt."

That's a lesson that the genealogical community may end up learning the hard way if we cannot convince certain players in the DNA testing world that there's a big difference between opt-in and opt-out when it comes to informed consent — and if police and prosecutors don't protect unwitting "genetic informants" in their unthinking quest to solve cold cases at all costs. Because there are in fact personal and individual consequences to the person who tested his or her DNA purely for genealogical reasons, or even for mere curiosity as to ethnic origins, and whose results are then exposed to and used by police to investigate crime. And those consequences can be something far, far different than what we're being sold — the whole "crowdsource justice" argument we're hearing now, particularly from Family Tree DNA as it scrambles to defend its decision to allow law enforcement access to its matching database for crime scene kits.

[Earlier this year], a Washington State woman learned that her identity as a distant relative of a man arrested for murder in Iowa had been disclosed in one of the search warrants issued in the case.¹ She had uploaded her data to GEDmatch.com where it was used to identify the suspect. Now in that particular case, at least so far, no one close to the suspect has decided to take any action against the unwitting relative whose test was the key to identifying the suspect. But let's rewrite the story a little, shall we? Let's say it's one of us, sitting here reading this blog, and we wake up one morning to find that our DNA was used to identify a distant cousin as a cold-blooded killer. Congratulations, we're told. We've helped crowdsource justice in that case. And that distant cousin we never knew existed? Who now has our name and identifying information?

His name is Vito Corleone.

You do know who Vito Corleone was, don't you? If not, you might want to see where you can access the Academy-award-winning 1972 film *The Godfather* and the 1974 Academy-award-winning sequel, *The Godfather Part II*. And pay particular attention to the revenge part... Nobody but nobody can guarantee that this won't happen, sooner or later. Some nut case in some branch of some family directly impacted by one of these cases is going to blame the unwitting genetic informant and go after that person — or that person's loved ones — for helping identify the bad guy.

But hey... it's just crowdsourcing justice, don't you know? This is all a good thing. Give up your privacy, without being asked, and then — someday, for some person — maybe end up giving up your personal safety, or that of your loved ones.

Yes, indeedy — "It's all fun and games until somebody gets hurt."

Now there will be people out there who think the chances of this happening are small enough that they're willing to take the risk. That's absolutely their right. They can choose to accept any level of privacy loss, any level of personal risk, that they choose. Anyone has the right to make this decision and give informed consent to it. But what about everybody else? All those people who tested and whose identities are now at risk of being disclosed as the unwitting informants in these cases — and who never affirmatively said yes to it?



Family Tree DNA has yet to accept that **not** saying "no I don't want to run this risk" **isn't** the same thing as saying "yes I'm willing to run this risk." It hasn't yet learned just what informed consent is — and how a company can secure it from its customers. Here's a hint: telling customers that their data may very well be exposed to police investigators, and — now, we see — to the bad guys and their supporters as well, unless they opt-out of law enforcement matching is **not** informed consent.

Let's look for a moment at the textbook definition of informed consent: "an agreement to do something or to allow something to happen, made with complete knowledge of all relevant facts,

such as the risks involved or any available alternatives."²

Agreement in this context can't be passive. We **never** get informed consent from someone who doesn't take some affirmative action to demonstrate agreement. An example: you and I are attending a conference. We both want the aisle seat, second row, so we can see and hear the speaker. You got there first, and I come up to you and say, "If you don't get out of that seat, I'm going to push you to the floor." You ignore me.

Would anybody in the world seriously argue that I now have your informed consent to push you to the floor? Of course not. Your silence in the face of my demand is **meaningless**. That's exactly what an opt-out system is for law enforcement access to our DNA results. It's demanding that we give up our privacy and potentially become that unwitting genetic informant unless we step forward and say no. But we're not agreeing to *anything* if we do nothing. We may not have received the notice. We may not understand the notice. The notice certainly doesn't tell us our identities may well be disclosed to the bad guys, not just to the police, so we're not being told about all the risks. Our silence in the face of that demand is **meaningless**.

Informed consent can **never** be secured when the form is "I'll assume you're fine with this unless you say no." It can **only** be secured when the form is "You have to show me that you're fine with this by saying yes."

Opt-out is not informed consent. And outing the unwitting, who've never given informed consent — "It's all fun and games until somebody gets hurt."

Sources:

1. See "[Distant relative learns her DNA led to arrest in Michelle Martinko slaying](https://www.thegazette.com/2019/03/22/distant-relative-learns-her-dna-led-to-arrest-in-michelle-martinko-slaying/)," *The (Cedar Rapids, Ia.) Gazette*, posted 22 Mar 2019 ([https://www.thegazette.com/](https://www.thegazette.com/2019/03/22/distant-relative-learns-her-dna-led-to-arrest-in-michelle-martinko-slaying/) accessed 30 Mar 2019).
2. Wex, Legal Information Institute, Cornell Law School (<https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/> : accessed 31 Mar 2019), "informed consent."

FamilySearch Celebrates 20 Years Online: Happy Birthday!



20 years ago, global nonprofit FamilySearch launched an innovative new website, a free internet genealogy service to provide access to the world's genealogical records and create fun family history discoveries for everyone. The site now boasts over 7 billion searchable names, over 3 billion searchable images of historical records, and patrons have added 1.4 billion ancestors to its collaborative family tree.

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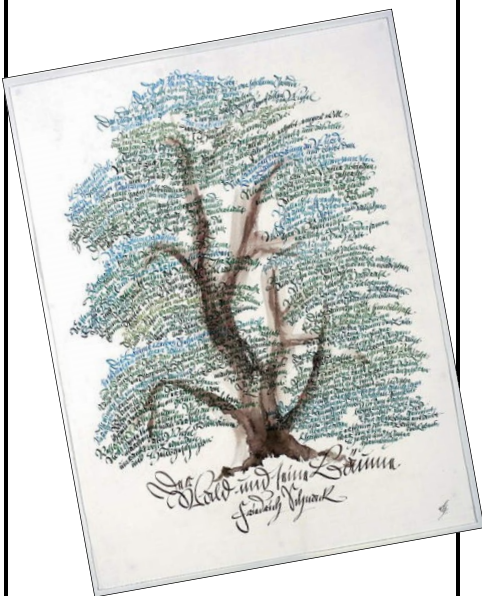
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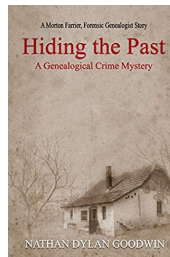
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The Cheyenne Genealogical &
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Smith**, a new member who re-
cently joined the organization.



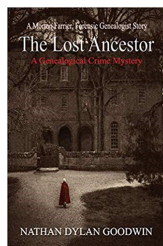
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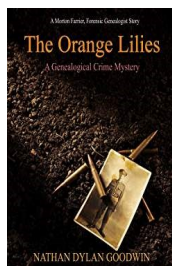
***Hiding the Past (The Forensic Genealogist
Vol 1)*** by Nathan Dylan Goodwin (c 2013; 256 pages;
North Charleston, South Carolina—Fiction)

Peter Coldrick had no past; that was the conclusion drawn by years of personal and professional research. Then he employed the services of one Morton Farrier, Forensic Genealogist—a stubborn, determined man who uses whatever means necessary to uncover the past. With the assignment yet, where all of his investigative and genealogical skills are put to the test. However, others are also interested in the Coldrick family, people who will stop at nothing, including murder, to hide the past. As Morton begins to unearth his client's mysterious past, he is forced to confront his own family's dark history, a history which he knows little about. This is the first book in the Morton Farrier genealogical crime mystery series.



***The Lost Ancestor (The Forensic Genealogist
Vol 2)*** by Nathan Dylan Goodwin (c 2014; 264 pages;
CreateSpace by Amazon, North Charleston, South
Carolina—Fiction)

From author Nathan Dylan Goodwin comes this second book in the Morton Farrier genealogical crime mystery series (although it can be enjoyed as a stand-alone story), featuring the redoubtable forensic genealogist, Morton Farrier. When Morton is called upon by Ray Mercer to investigate the 1911 disappearance of his great aunt, a housemaid working in a large Edwardian country house, he has no idea of the perilous journey into the past that he is about to make. Morton must use his not inconsiderable genealogical skills to solve the mystery of Mary Mercer's disappearance, in the face of the dangers posed by those others who are determined to end his investigation at any cost.



***The Orange Lilies (The Forensic Genealogist
Vol 3)*** by Nathan Dylan Goodwin (c 2014; 118 pages;
CreateSpace by Amazon, North Charleston, South
Carolina—Fiction)

Author Nathan Dylan Goodwin presents his third book in the Morton Farrier genealogical crime mystery series: Morton Farrier has spent his entire career as a forensic genealogist solving other people's family history secrets, all the while knowing so little of his very own family's mysterious past. However, this poignant Christmas novella sees Morton's skills put to use much closer to home, as he must confront his own past, present and future through events both present-day and one hundred years ago. It seems that not every soldier saw a truce on the Western Front that 1914 Christmas.

—Books available from Amazon.com; book reviews by
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