

Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society

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Cheyenne Genealogy Journal

Musings by the President . . .

Welcome to fall...I hope your summer was spectacular. The summer has just flown by for me. It seems like I was just getting ready for the Annual May Banquet and here it is fall already and the Society's new year. Your Executive Board met in August to plan for the year. Suzanne Anderson and Dan Lyon have stepped into their positions as Vice President and Secretary respectively. Treasurer Tom Bonds presented the budget which was approved by the board to be brought to the membership for approval. Programs for the upcoming year were discussed and suggested, and our big summer fund-raising event, the Lakeview Cemetery Walk, *Remembering the Ladies*, was planned down to the last detail. The Cemetery Walk committee worked hard since last spring to ensure a successful event. Heartfelt thanks to Jo and her committee, Dan, Gloria, Jan, Jeanette, Joan, Judy, Sharon, Suzanne, Wanda, Wendy and me—and to all the actors for the many, many hours each one contributed. I won't try to delineate the work each person did because inevitably I'll leave something out—just know everyone worked extremely hard. Please thank them for their time and labor for a very successful event. We tried a few new things this year which proved to work well. Most notably we had two tours which enabled us to accommodate more participants. Another major change was having it on a Saturday. Everyone seemed to enjoy and appreciate the walk...and getting to know some of the interesting and notable females who were part of Cheyenne's history...and we'll be able to add lots of new books to the genealogy collection at the library. Starting with that event, 2019-2020 looks to be exciting and I am looking forward to our upcoming programs, meetings and research get-togethers! *Sue Seniaowski, President*



tails, visit the Virtual Genealogy Fair web page at www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair. Every year since 2013, the National Archives has hosted a free, virtual Genealogy Fair via live webcast on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) where each presentation during the day can be viewed or downloaded, with handouts available just prior to the event. This year's presentations will be:

The National Archives Will Present Its Seventh Annual Virtual Genealogy Fair-October 23, 2019 on 'YouTube'

Participate in the U.S. National Archives biggest genealogy event of the year when they host a free, live, virtual Genealogy Fair via webcast on YouTube on Wednesday, October 23, 2019, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. eastern (8 a.m.-2 p.m. mountain time) No reservations are needed. Six sessions will provide advice for all skill levels on family history research using federal records. For de-

tails, visit the Virtual Genealogy Fair web page at

www.archives.gov/calendar/genealogy-fair.

Every year since 2013, the National Archives has hosted a free, virtual Genealogy Fair via live webcast on [YouTube](https://www.youtube.com) where each presentation during the day can be viewed or downloaded, with handouts available just prior to the event. This year's presenta-

tions will be:

8 a.m. - Welcoming Remarks
8:05 a.m., Session 1 - Exploring History Hub for Genealogists and Researchers
9 a.m., Session 2 - Preserving Personal Collections
10 a.m., Session 3 - Immigrant Records: More Than Just Ship Passenger Arrival Lists
11 p.m., Session 4 - Using National Archives Records to Research World War I Naval and Marine Corps Records for Genealogical Research
12 p.m., Session 5 - Discovering and Researching Bureau of Indian Affairs School Records
1 p.m., Session 6 - The Homestead Act: Land Records of Your Ancestors
2 p.m. - Closing Remarks

Upcoming Events:

17 Oct 2019

"How-To with 'Who-Do': Inside 'Who Do You Think You Are?' With One of Their Talking Heads"

Larimer County Genealogical Society Monthly Meeting, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Good Samaritan Society, 508 Trilby Road, Fort Collins

21-25 Oct 2019

"German/Slavic Seminar" Family History Library Webinar

(Click link above for list of seminar topics about Dutch, German, Latin, Polish & Russian handwriting offered at various times)

23 Oct 2019

"Virtual Genealogy Fair"

presented by the U.S. National Archives
8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.,
Presented on YouTube
(see article on left)

1-2 Nov 2019

Colorado Palatines to America Fall Seminar
Lower Level Conference Center, Denver Public Library

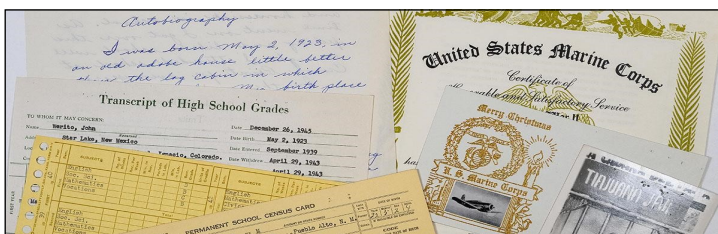
Fri 1:00-4:00 p.m.

"Conducting Family History Research in Europe," "German Research Materials on Family Search," free but registration is required

Sat 9:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

"German Immigrants in American Church Records," "German Census Records 1816-1915," "German Residential Registration Records," "Surnames in German-Language Regions of Europe," materials fee of \$35; register at

<https://www.palam.org/colorado-palam-chapter.php>



Get to Know Your Genealogy Colleague: **Vanelda Novak Mellblom**

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—maybe even a family connection!

What is your full name?

Vanelda "Van" Elane Novak Mellbloom

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

No, but my parents wanted another "V" name for their children and my aunt, who was a nurse in Canada, suggested my given name.

What is your maternal ethnic heritage?

My mother's heritage is English, Irish, Scottish, Pennsylvania Dutch (probably German), and lots more when you go back far enough.

What is your paternal ethnic heritage?

My father's heritage is Czechoslovakian.

Give your maternal surnames three generations back:

STEVENS (STEPHENS), STREET, CIMERLY (ZIMMERLE)

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

YONAK, KUMHERA, KOZEBOVA

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

I was born in Rudyard, Montana, the fifth of six children. My brother, Victor, was the oldest and then there was Vivian, Verda, Valeria, Vanelda, Valencia. I graduated from high school in Rudyard and then after a summer of welding at Kaiser Shipyards in Portland, Oregon, I returned to attend college at Northern Montana College in Havre, MT. During college, I worked part-time as secretary to the president of the college and in the Placement Office which helped place graduates in jobs. I also did bookkeeping for the Farmers Union Wholesale Co. The following summer I worked in Los Angeles as a secretary for the Mission Orange Corp., returning again to Havre to continue college.



Anna and Vaclav (William) Novak, Van's paternal grandparents, taken before 1866.

After Howard and I were married (in Washington, D.C.), we lived in New Jersey, Virginia, Oregon, California, returning to Havre at the end of WWII. We owned and operated a small grocery store until the Korean War when Howard volunteered to go back on active duty. He flew off the Valley Forge aircraft carrier and when he returned we moved from California to Dallas, Texas, Seattle, Washington, Boston, Massachusetts, back to California and finally to Cheyenne, where he was CO of the Naval Support center. After he retired we opted to stay in Cheyenne. I have remained active in Women's Civic League, Genealogy Society, Colonial Dames 17th Century, Artists Guild, P.E.O. Chapter AD, Military Officers Wives Club, and Ascension Lutheran Church.

When did you start doing genealogy?

Probably in 4th grade when we had to do those family charts. Luckily my maternal grandmother was still alive and helped me out. I actually started serious researching in the early 1970s.

What got you interested in this crazy hobby?

My sisters thought I should research our Czech line.

Are you doing direct-line only or collateral research?

Mostly direct line, but I have also done some collateral lines.

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

My cousins.

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

I have family back to Charlemagne. Once I did my papers for Colonial Dames XVIIC using Gov. John Endicott, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, I did supplementals on Shatuck, Lippincott, Gaskill (Gascoyne), and Southwick. That research took me a long time and sent me in many different directions. However, it was my 13th or 14th great grandmother (Gov. Endicott's wife) Elizabeth Cogan, whose line took me back to Charlemagne.

What is the most interesting/funniest/most bizarre story you have uncovered? Explain what it was and was it accurate? If not, why not? What did you discover that disproved the initial information?

One of the first female counterfeiters was a distant relative by marriage! You will find her story in several books. The other was that my Uncle John (according to an online post) was married and had two children in Minnesota while he was actually married to my Aunt Etta and living in Montana. I found birth records for the children and the father was another Stephens—so don't believe everything you find online until you can prove it!

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

In addition to Charlemagne (-), my most famous ancestor is Governor John Endicott. He was the first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony and served in office as the Assistant Governor or Governor for 17 years. There is one exception—the year he cut the red cross out of the English flag! You can read about that in "Endicott and the Red Cross" written by Nathaniel Hawthorne. He was instrumental in bringing many early varieties of trees and vines to America from England. The Endicott Pear Tree was planted in about 1630 and still bears fruit! His place was called

Her Ancestors Include a Female Counterfeiter & the Governor of Massachusetts



John Endicott, first governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

the Orchard Farm. He was a Puritan and participated in the Salem Witch Trials, sending several of the women to the gallows—of which I am **not** proud.

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

Yes, I think you should share! Many times you will find unexpected help.

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

I had a DNA test with 23 and Me. I wanted to know if I was a polycystic kidney disease carrier. I **was—not** to my relief—because it is genetic from my mother's line.

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

Czechoslovakia, of course! I have my grandparent's marriage certificate and my grandmother's baptismal certificate with family names. Also during WWII we did have contact with a "cousin" of my father's.

What do you think are the best methods or best resources for researching?

Family members first...and then our many research aids at the library. I use online resources mainly for clues.

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...

If I am researching a certain line I try to stay with it until I hit a brick wall. Then I try another line that may provide a clue—which might say I am a bit of a "jump-around." However, if I find something exciting, I will really work that line.

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

My best work place is at home or at the library.

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

I use Legacy Family Tree.

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

The Cumberland and Cimerly lines. My grandmother said there were "Drakes" in her line, but in researching, I think they were in her maternal grandmother's line. I have lots of research to do there.

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

Not exactly, but in re-reading a will for one of my ancestors, John Street, it stated that he gave the care of his son Francis to a George Beale. I found court records that also gave me the name of John Street's wife, Mary. I found Niniam Beale who had children George and Mary who would more than likely be that George, as it was common to give over the care of a child to a brother-in-law or male relative.

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

The above find in that will—a definite "ahah" moment for me.

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

Not really. I sort of troll through several websites; I actually don't use the web that much anymore.

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

Finding the actual records I need.

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

I have lots of paper files, and digitally I use Legacy. I have folders for each line and for each generation.

What is your long-term goal for your research?

Long-term? Is there ever an end? I have really slowed down in the last few years.

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A Novak family collage (top row from upper left): Valeria, Victor, Vivian, (bottom row from lower left): Vanelda, Valencia, Verda and in the center: their parents, Frank Novak and Bertha Stevens Novak, about 1945. Because they all could not be home at the same time, the photographer suggested this collage in the place of a family photo.

The Endicott Pear: America's Oldest Cultivated Tree & a U.S. National Monument

Information in this article is from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia—https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Endicott_Pear_Tree

The Endicott Pear Tree, also known as the Endecott Pear, is a [European Pear](#) (*Pyrus communis*) tree, located in Danvers, Essex County, Massachusetts. It is believed to be the oldest living cultivated fruit tree in North America. [John Endecott](#), governor of the [Massachusetts Bay Colony](#), was probably among the first to cultivate fruit in the Colony, and imported the Endecott Pear Tree from England. The Endecott Pear Tree was



John Endecott—1st, 10th, 13th, 15th, and 17th Governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony

planted in its current location between 1632 and 1649. ([William Bentley](#) reports dates of 1630, 1631, and 1639 in his diary) by John Endecott—a governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, one of the Colony's earliest settlers and was probably brought from England on the [Arbella](#) in June 1630. Various reports indicate an alternate import year of 1628.

Tradition holds to the notion that the tree was planted by Endecott himself, according to Harriet Tapley in *Chronicles of Danvers* and to Judge Alden Perley White. According to

Van Mellblom Offers Her Best Research Advice: "Have Patience!"

(continued from page 3)

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?

My youngest son, Mark, is probably the one—he loves history, and has volunteered to save and continue my work.

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

I made family charts for my brother and each of my sisters. I have shared research with several lines which has benefitted all of us.

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

"Have patience" is my best advice!

Charles S. Tapley, a President of the Bay State Historical League, White recounted that Endecott personally planted the pear tree in the presence of his children and farmworkers and reportedly declared: "I hope the tree will love the soil of the old world and no doubt when we have gone the tree will still be alive."

The 1925 USDA Agriculture Yearbook, citing the memoir of Samuel Endicott—a descendant of Endecott (the spelling of the family name changed in the 18th century)—suggests that the tree may have been transplanted from Endecott's garden in Salem. An article in the *Salem Observer*, written in 1852 by Samuel P. Fowler, lends further credence to this idea, noting that it was in Salem proper that Endecott "probably planted his famous pear tree". Fowler also reports that Endecott was probably among the first to cultivate fruit in the Massachusetts Bay Colony.

The diary of Rev. William Bentley, who visited the Endecott estate (at the time known as Collins Farm and owned by Capt. John Endicott) on several occasions, makes numerous mentions of the Endicott Pear Tree starting in 1800. Bentley's diary confirms that the tree regularly produced fruit. In September 1809, Bentley passed along some pears harvested from the tree to former President John Adams; he received a letter from Adams concerning the pears the following month. On April 11, 1810, Bentley visited Collins Farm to obtain twigs from the pear tree to send to Adams. Thurl D. Brown, in a lecture before the Danvers Historical Society, suggested that "[t]he twigs must have taken hold," citing a letter from Adams dated September 24, 1815 that noted: "The hurricane of yesterday has covered the ground about me with pears." The Endicott Pear Tree was damaged by the [Storm of October 1804](#), a late-season major hurricane in the 1804 Atlantic hurricane season, but recovered to "yield many bushels" of fruit. The tree was damaged by hurricanes at least twice more in the 19th century: in 1815 and 1843. By 1875, the Endicott Pear Tree stood at approximately

80 feet. Sometime in the mid-to-late-19th century, a wooden fence was erected to protect the tree. In the early 20th century, Ulysses Prentiss Hedrick, a botanist and author of *The Pears of New York*—a 1921 monograph belonging to a series of publications on fruits, "all of which have become classic references on the fruit cultivars of the period" confirmed that the Endicott Pear Tree had not been grafted, as was suggested in an 1837 article about the tree in *Mr. Hovey's Magazine*. A 1919 account of the Endicott Pear Tree by James Raymond Simmons, author of *The Historic Trees of Massachusetts*, describes the tree as follows:

'Soil has gradually collected about the trunk until the two main branches appear to rise from the ground as separate trees. They evidently join under a heavy covering of sod. Surrounding them is a fence which acts as an effective protection. When the author photographed the tree it was covered in green fruit. It may be seen in a field near Endicott street at Danversport, and is worth turning aside to behold, for it is one of the most quaint and strangely impressive of all the historic trees.'

The tree was damaged by a hurricane again in 1934. The land it grows on changed hands several times and it suffered several attacks of vandalism. In 1997, it was protected by a chain-link fence. In 2011, the Endicott Pear Tree was named a U.S. national monument.



The Endecott Pear is a variety of European pear, *Pyrus communis*.



The Endecott/Endicott Pear Tree in 1997.

Genealogy News You Can Use...

FamilySearch Releases Online Editing Tool for Indexed Records to Easily Make Name Corrections

This article from the FamilySearch blog was written by Leslie Albrecht Huber, a professional genealogist who does communications consulting and contract work for nonprofit organizations.

Everyone can agree that indexed records make life easier. Instead of having to scroll through image after image to find information about your ancestor, you can use an index of searchable information to quickly find the person you're looking for. Unfortunately, indexing errors sometimes make the search process more difficult. Hard-to-read handwriting, damaged records, language barriers, and simple human error mean that no index is guaranteed to be 100 percent accurate. If you add the fact that sometimes the original documents had errors in the first place, it's easy to see how complications seep in. Errors in the records or index can render the index useless for finding certain ancestors and can even cause a researcher to skip over important records. In the past, if you came across an incorrect index on FamilySearch, there wasn't much you could do about it besides note down the error and perhaps grumble about it to yourself. That's all changed now! With the newest update on FamilySearch, you can make corrections to names in the index—with the ability to edit other details in the entries coming soon. By editing the index, you can help other people locate records—and ancestors—they might not have been able to find otherwise.

Merry C. Jacobson
United States Census, 1940

Name: Merry C. Jacobson • Edit/View History

Previous Edits: Merry C. Jacobson

Event Type: Census

Event Date: 1940

When to Edit an Index

The purpose of editing an index is to enable other researchers to find their ancestors more effectively. There are two main scenarios where edits could be helpful—when records were indexed incorrectly and when the original records contained incorrect information.

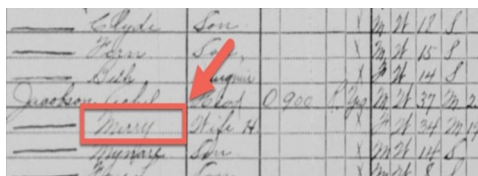
Indexed Incorrectly

You may find cases where an index does not accurately reflect the information in the original document. This kind of error can be seen in the example of Merry Christmas Jacobson in the 1930 United States census. The

index on FamilySearch lists her as Mary Jacobson:

Household	Relationship	Sex	Age	Birthplace
Achel Jacobson	Head	Male	37	Utah
Mary Jacobson	Wife	Female	34	Idaho
Mynary Jacobson	Son	Male	14	Utah

However, a look at the document shows that in the record she was correctly listed as Merry Jacobson. After the recent update, the index entry can now be corrected.

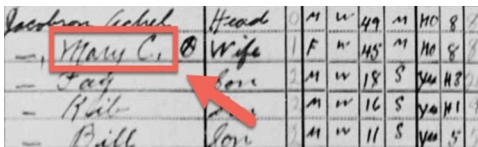


Wrong in the Document

In some cases, the record has been indexed correctly, but the document itself is incorrect. This other kind of error can again be seen with Merry Christmas Jacobson, but this time in the 1940 United States census. This index lists her as Mary C. Jacobson.

Household	Relationship	Sex	Age	Birthplace
Achel Jacobson	Head	Male	49	Utah
Mary C. Jacobson	Wife	Female	45	Idaho
Fay Jacobson	Son	Male	18	Utah

This time, when we check the original document, we see that the indexer read the record correctly, as it too says "Mary C. Jacobson." With our deeper knowledge of Merry and her family though, we know that this name is incorrect. This example is also a case where we can correct the index to reflect the correct spelling of the name.



Note: Not all indexed entries can be edited. The record must have an image available so that you can compare the index entry to the actual record. If you see a page and a camera icon by the record, the camera icon means that an image of the record is available.

Relationships	View
spouse: Achel Jacobson	
children: Fay Jacobson, Kib Jacobson, Bill Jacobson	

How to Edit

The process of editing an index entry is simple. After searching for an ancestor on FamilySearch, look through the search results for a promising record, and click your ancestor's name. A box will pop up with the indexed information on the left and the record document on the right. For indexes that are editable, you will notice the word **Edit** next to your ancestor's name. When you click

Mary C. Jacobson
United States Census, 1880

Name: Mary C. Jacobson • Edit

Event Type: Census

Event Date: 1880

Event Place: Bloomington, Bear Lake, Idaho, United States

Gender: Female

Age: 5

Marital Status: Single

Race: White

Race: W

Relationship to Head of Household: Daughter

the **Edit** button, a new box opens on the left with the document still displayed on the right. Here you can type the name as you believe it should appear in the index. Choose one of the two reasons for your change from the drop-down menu: **Indexed Incorrectly** or **Wrong in the Document**. Next, zoom in on the record, and click the **Highlight the Full Name** button. Highlighting the name in the document will help others see which name you are correcting. There is also space to add additional notes you may have. When you are finished, click **Save**. After you submit your edits, they should be searchable within a few minutes. Keep in mind that your edits do not override the information already on FamilySearch. Instead, you add new information. The old indexed information remains. Now your change and the original information are both searchable. There could even be several edits to the same record, helping others to find their ancestors more easily. Please edit carefully, however, since multiple edits can also muddy the waters. Your actions can help others have success in finding their ancestors.

University of South Carolina Holds Donation of 11 Million Feet of Historic Newsreel Footage: the "Moving Image Research Collections" Are Being Preserved for Public Viewing

This article is slightly condensed for space; it was originally published as "Newsreel or Not Real," in the Spring 2019 issue of *Humanities Magazine*, a publication of the National Endowment for the Humanities, written by Leah Weinryb Grohsgal, a senior program officer in the Division of Preservation and Access. Read the entire article at: <https://www.neh.gov/article/newsreel-or-not-real>

Newsreels enthralled theater audiences from the 1920s until the 1960s, when people looked to flickering television rather than movie theaters for their news. And though the newsreel may be history, vast collections of it remain, much of it unseen. Eleven million feet of newsreel now live at the University of South Carolina in its Moving Image Research Collections, where curators, archivists, and preservationists work to preserve this material and open it for public viewing. Donated by 20th Century Fox in the early 1980s, the footage spans the silent era through the Second World War. "It's very rare, actually, for silent newsreels to be extant," says director of Moving Image Collections Heather Heckman. "A lot of it is lost," she explains, because "it was seen as ephemeral by studios that made it."

Even later newsreel footage with sound is seldom available to the public, and not with the context and organization provided by the USC library team. The Fox Movietone collection is the largest set of newsreels freely available online, with thousands of stories meticulously organized and described. (The UCLA Film & Television Archive holds the Hearst Metrotone News Collection's 27 million feet, but most of that is not available online.) The Fox Movietone Digitization project was supported by two NEH grants, the more recent in 2013 for \$230,000. Using newsreel and other moving-image collections, the University of South Carolina is developing an open source tool to capture image and sound in digital scanning of motion pictures with the support of two NEH grants, totaling more than \$500,000. USC also has the newsreels' "dope sheets," the accompanying paperwork filled out by cameramen describing each piece of film, including notes, shot lists, and often other materials relating to the stories such as clippings and articles. The footage holds historical interest, and also the innocence of an earlier time. Newsreels show a day on a farm, whales in the Pacific, a visit to the president's summer camp, marathon

runners, mountain trappers, and political conventions. Two men wheel the "latest flivver plane" out of a barn, then take off and land on the beach as the inventor touts this cheap solution for people in rural areas who "can't get anywhere." During Prohibition, the U.S. Coast Guard displays a "Rum Runner" schooner captured off the Massachusetts coast. Sailors dynamite the ice around the trapped Soviet expedition ship *Chelyuskin*, judging this a "brilliant chapter of human struggle against the elements" and avoiding "another arctic tragedy." If you watched newsreels in theaters, you probably remember dramatic music, narration, and quick cuts, but this collection has little of that. It consists mostly of raw footage, about 90 percent of which was never used on the big screen. Some of the film is lighthearted, some serious—and some in between. Because the newsreels themselves were edited and the footage occasionally staged, historians and scholars have debated their value as artifacts. But the editing reveals assumptions and priorities. And the massive collections provide a valuable glimpse into bygone times. After Charles Pathé produced the first silent newsreels for American audiences in 1911, theaters across the country showed them with great fanfare. Communities shared and interacted with news near and far. "The Pathé weekly is shown at the Rex every Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday and a new Pathé Weekly at the Cozy, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. This Pathé Weekly alone is worth the price of admission," noted a theater column in a 1915 Boise, Idaho, newspaper. Residents would "regret it" if they missed the weekly and the Keystone comedy, which would "be the talk of our city."

Communities didn't just gather to watch the news but also to make it. In 1913, Tennessee's *Columbia Herald* newspaper breathlessly reported on Pathé plans to film their mule market. Being featured in a newsreel showed that "the fame of Maury County as a mule market is not confined to Tennessee and the South alone" but "at once puts Columbia in the national class." Fox Film Corporation soon changed the game by incorporating sound in newsreels. "The Event of Events! Our Screen Talks!" cried an Elizabeth City, North Carolina, newspaper. "And now you'll hear voices as natural as the human voice as they speak from the screen through this 8th Wonder of the World." "Fox tried to differentiate themselves by pushing the idea that they could go out into the world, not just record in studios,"



The Hindenburg airship explodes at Lakehurst, New Jersey, on May 6, 1937. Four newsreel agencies and one amateur filmed the disaster, providing footage that became iconic to generations.

says Heckman, enabling us to "experience the place and the sounds in the place as well as the images." That summer, newsreel of Charles Lindbergh's nonstop flights to Paris and back produced crowds so great that the same newspaper advised readers nearly two months later that "this Movietone subject is still being shown at the Roxy, in New York."

Newsreels were chock-full of the unforgettable details that make professional and amateur videos go viral today: the clamor of little boys playing sandlot baseball, the judging of a "Miss Grandma" bathing beauty contest at Steeplechase Park, three-year-old golf wunderkind Eddie Rule boasting "I can even hit it blindfolded" as he tees a golf ball on his grandfather's head and then gives the ball a whack. By the 1930s and '40s, newsreels warmed up audiences waiting for feature films. Companies opened theaters dedicated to newsreels, including the Embassy in New York, the Trans-Lux in Washington, D.C., the Telenews in Detroit, and the Regent in Oakland, California. Luxury train lines like the Pennsylvania Railroad's Jeffersonian offered a newsreel theater on board. Scholars estimate that at least 40 million people in the United States and more than two hundred million people worldwide watched newsreels each week in the late 1930s. And perhaps neither the filmmakers nor their audiences grappled too hard with the question of their historic significance.

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The Fox Movietone Collection is the Largest Set of Newsreels Saved for Posterity

(continued from page 6)

Newsreel Companies sent cameramen and sound trucks all over the world, even strapping a camera to a bobsled ready to plunge down Mount Van Hoevenberg during the Olympic Winter Games at Lake Placid.

Newsreels also captured wars, political events, and other weighty subjects. What made it into the final newsreels shown in theaters and trains was only a small portion of the footage captured. "They were making judgments as all journalists and editors do," says Moving Image Research Collections Curator Greg Wilsbacher, "for the here and now, not necessarily for posterity." Most of the time, extra footage was carefully stored in the Fox library in New York. Or, sometimes, not. Wilsbacher points to the visual importance of cameraman Al Brick's films of Pearl Harbor on the morning of the Japanese attack. Brick's images, used by the Navy Department and Fox Movietone in approved newsreels, quickly became the quintessential representation of the attack. But while Wilsbacher says that Brick filmed all day and into the night, documenting the second wave of the attack and fires burning in the harbor, he turned over his film to the Navy and little raw footage of that day remained in the Fox library. Newsreels were pivotal in bringing news of 1930s conflicts in Europe and Asia, and then World War II, back to the home front. During the Second World War, the War Department and the Office of War Information "were deliberative in the way they handled motion picture film images," says Wilsbacher. Due to concern from the White House "that the American people weren't seeing enough graphic footage and weren't aware of the level of violence American soldiers and sailors were going to be experiencing," the War Department authorized more filming and release of graphic combat scenes to make clear to the public the human stakes of war—for example, in footage of the horrific losses at the 1943 Pacific Battle of Tarawa. Whether shot by armed services personnel or newsreel cameramen like Fox Movietone's Al Brick, Hearst's Jack Lieb, or *Time Life's* Robert Capa, film shot overseas was vetted and censored by the Office of War Information and the War Department and then repackaged.

"Every newsreel company got the same allotment of film," according to Wilsbacher. Questions about authen-

ticity and methods—and even accusations of fakery—have appeared in the years since the war. The surrounding outtakes, dope sheets, and documentation of editorial decisions in the Fox Movietone collection provide critical context for the fever-pitched newsreels of the 1930s and 1940s. The mix of the monumental and the mundane give the edited newsreels a back-in-time feeling, and the expansive footage left behind provides a bigger picture. One of Wilsbacher's favorite examples is film of Charles Lindbergh as an air-mail pilot, flying the inaugural air mail run between Chicago and St. Louis in 1926. The newsreel company at the time didn't even think it worth recording his name—he was only an anonymous pilot. But the next year the cameraman sent an urgent telegram to Fox: They already had footage of the now-famous pilot in their vaults!

By the 1950s, television had become the public's preferred method for news consumption. Newsreel theaters closed their doors, and the last American-made newsreels ceased production in 1967. But the medium is not lost entirely; what survives helps open a window on the sights and sounds of the past. Researchers, filmmakers, and writers

have already used the Fox Movietone collection. Footage of people rowing ghuffa boats along the Tigris River in Baghdad in the early 1900s became the opening scene for the movie *Letters from Baghdad*. Historian Melissa Cooper watched outtakes of President Calvin Coolidge's 1928 vacation to Sapelo Island, Georgia, and found an early fascination with African-American Gullah islanders and their culture. Greg Lambousy, director of the New Orleans Jazz Museum, identified longtime street performer and jazz artist "CoCoMo" Joe Barthelemy from outtakes of him dancing as a child in New Orleans. And film preservation experts painstakingly adjusted and stabilized outtakes of Babe Ruth hitting a home run and rounding the bases in a 1931 game against the Red Sox—film that is now shown each year to hundreds of thousands of visitors to the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York. For Heckman, the collection's range is also illustrated by a clip of children in New York's Central Park, in which "the cameraman is having them, for some reason, fake laughter." Still, she finds it charming. Just like today, she says, "a hundred years ago, people liked kids and pets."

"UnSplash.com" Posts Thousands of Online Stock Photos—Some Historic—That Can Be Used Free of Charge

Information in this article is from Dick Eastman's [Online Genealogy Newsletter](#) of 24 September 2019.

Sometimes you can find valuable gems in unexpected places. One example is the [UnSplash.com](#) web site. According to [Wikipedia](#): "Unsplash is a website dedicated to sharing stock photography under the Unsplash license. The website claims over 110,000 contributing photographers and generates more than 9 billion photo impressions per month on their growing library of over 810,000 photos. Unsplash has been cited as one of the world's leading photography websites by *Forbes*, *Entrepreneur Magazine*, CNET, *Medium* and *The Next Web*." I am amazed at the many photos about all sort of topics that may be found on UnSplash.com. Best of all, you may download and use the photos for all sorts of purposes free of charge. For instance, while looking for photos I could use in my genealogy newsletter, I went to Unsplash and entered a search for "Ellis Island." The site then displayed dozens of photos that are relat-

ed in some way to Ellis Island. Some of them were modern photographs, obviously taken within the past few years. However, intermixed with them were dozens of historic photos that apparently were taken soon after the immigration center opened in 1892 or in the early 20th century. You can find all sorts of topics covered, both historic and other topics. You probably won't find photographs of your ancestors although that is theoretically possible. For instance, if you are a descendant of Robert W. Knox, you will be very interested in this photo of his World War I identity card. Try it...you might find something.



The National Genealogical Society (NGS) and Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) Announce Merger in 2020

In a historic move, the boards of the National Genealogical Society (NGS) and the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) announced recently their intent to merge. The two organizations, both non-profit leaders in the dynamic genealogy industry, will form one consolidated group that will continue to operate as the National Genealogical Society. Both boards approved a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which was announced at the FGS Family History Conference in Washington, D.C. in August. Leaders of both organizations believe this merger will serve the genealogy community by improving the support of both individual members and societies in the pursuit of genealogical excellence.

The organizational structure of NGS will be modified to increase functions that support genealogical societies and family organizations. Digitization projects of genealogical importance such as the War of 1812 pensions will continue. The two organizations will continue to operate independently while all details of the merger are completed, no later than October 1, 2020.

FGS was formed in 1976 in order to provide support to genealogical and historical societies. Key objectives during the past four decades have been to: promote the study of genealogy, stimu-

late the activities of state and local organizations, provide resources that enable genealogical organizations to succeed in pursuing their missions, & advocate for the preservation of records.

Faye Stallings, President of FGS, said: "the Preserve the Pensions project launched in 2010 raised more than \$3 million to digitize and make freely available the pension files from the War of 1812. Fundraising for the project was completed in 2016. The Preserve the Pensions project will continue under its existing arrangements. FGS has an agreement with NARA for the preservation and digitization of the records and Ancestry is coordinating the digitization process. The funds for completing this project are set aside in restricted accounts."

She also explained that plans are still in place to hold the FGS annual conference in Kansas City, Missouri, in 2020. Starting in 2021, the combined organization will hold one conference with four full days of genealogical lectures and a fifth day dedicated to society management topics. "I believe this merger will serve our members and the genealogical community by improving support of both individuals and societies in the pursuit of genealogical excellence."

MyHeritage Announces Its New Online Resource Center to Help Users Learn About Its Many Features to Navigate Family History Research

MyHeritage has introduced [MyHeritage Education](#): a new online resource center for enhancing users' understanding of MyHeritage's tools, products and services, and to help them make the most of their family history research. At MyHeritage, they're always striving to improve the user experience and to make genealogy research easy and intuitive. MyHeritage Education takes users step-by-step through the different features, providing a seamless understanding of the different tools available as one explores their family history on MyHeritage. It includes a wealth of educational materials that will help users learn about every facet of the site: articles, how-to videos, and webinars covering a wide variety of topics, including plenty of tips for everyone from beginner family history enthusiasts to seasoned genealogists. MyHeritage Education is currently available in English, German, Dutch, French, Swedish, and Norwegian, and they will be adding new languages in the

future. It is open to everyone and is free of charge. They will be adding new content to the site on a regular basis, and stated that if there's anything that you'd like to learn about, to just let them know!

"A New Leaf," Television Series by Ancestry Made Its Debut on NBC

Set your DVRs for a new genealogy television show that makes its debut on NBC in October. Feedback from the show "Who Do You Think You Are?" told Ancestry that viewers wanted to see everyday people embark on journeys of personal discovery too. So they are bringing forth "A New Leaf," which each week will follow people on the cusp of key life inflection points, who using family history, genealogy, and sometimes AncestryDNA® analysis to appreciate and understand their family history and ancestors in order to make life decisions. Read more in the *Ancestry.com* Blog at: <https://tinyurl.com/eogn190924b>.

GenealogyGuysLearn.com Offers a Variety of Web-Based Genealogy Courses & Videos by Subscription

Aha! Seminars, Inc., the producers of The Genealogy Guys Podcast, the Genealogy Connection podcast, and The Genealogy Guys Blog is pleased to announce the launch of [GenealogyGuys Learn](#) (genealogyguyslearn.com), a subscription-based educational website designed to provide genealogy courses and videos for researchers of all skill levels. At its launch, *GenealogyGuys Learn* consists of five text/image-based courses on such topics as basic research, intermediate research, the Social Security Death Index, wills and probate records, and military records.

GenealogyGuys Learn also contains a dozen recorded presentations by George G. Morgan and Drew Smith, including All About the U.S. Federal Census, Principles of Effective Evidence Analysis, Finding Archived Newspapers, and Organizing Your Research Process. Another feature of the *GenealogyGuys Learn* website is that it provides quick access to information about books written by George G. Morgan and Drew Smith; other recommended books, quick sheets, magazines; recommended software, hardware, and online services; and links to websites related to the content provided in the courses and videos.

"Drew Smith and I have been speaking at genealogy conferences for decades," said George G. Morgan, president of Aha! Seminars, Inc. "But attending conferences is not always practical or within the budget for all genealogists. With the launch of *GenealogyGuys Learn*, we're able to provide our affordable educational services directly to the genealogist in their own homes on their own schedules."



The *GenealogyGuys Learn* website automatically keeps track of courses and videos users have viewed, so that users can see their progress at a glance. The website will be updated each month with additional content (new courses or videos), providing continuing value to subscribers, who will be able to provide feedback to George and Drew as to which topics they would most like to see added in the future. For more information about *GenealogyGuys Learn*, contact George G. Morgan, aha@ahaseminars.com, 813-220-6274, or visit genealogyguyslearn.com.

Cheyenne Genealogical & Historical Society

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suggestions and/or
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wendywy04@aol.com

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The Cheyenne Genealogical &
Historical Society welcomes
these new members who re-
cently joined the organization:

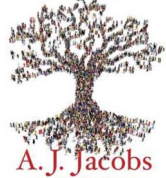
—Karen Leavitt
—Barbara Owens Moon
—Carol Russ
—Sheryl Swilling



"Check This Out"

Family history-related fiction & nonfiction
book reviews by CGHS members & others

It's All Relative
Adventures Up and Down
the World's Family Tree



***It's All Relative: Adventures Up
and Down the World's Family Tree***
by A. J. Jacobs (c 2017; 336 pages; Simon &
Schuster, New York—Nonfiction)

New York Times bestselling author A.J. Ja-
cobs undergoes a hilarious, poignant quest to
understand what constitutes family—where it
begins and how far it goes—in *It's All Relative*,
a "thought-provoking...delightful, easy-to-
read, informative book" (Kirkus Reviews).

A.J. Jacobs has received some strange emails over the years, but
this note was perhaps the strangest: "You don't know me, but
I'm your eighth cousin. And we have over 80,000 relatives of
yours in our database." That's enough family members to fill
Madison Square Garden four times over. Who are these people,
A.J. wondered, and how do I find them? So began Jacobs' three
-year adventure to help build the biggest family tree in history.
In *It's All Relative*, he "muses on the nature of family and the
interconnectedness of humanity in this entertaining introduc-
tion to the world of genealogy" (Publishers Weekly). Jacobs'
journey would take him to all seven continents. He drank beer
with a US president, sung with the Mormon Tabernacle Choir,
and unearthed genetic links to Hollywood actresses and real-
life scoundrels. After all, we can choose our friends, but not
our family. Now Jacobs upends, in ways both meaningful and
hilarious, our understanding of genetics and genealogy, tradi-
tion and tribalism, identity and connection. "Whimsical but also
full of solid journalism and eye-opening revelations about the
history of humanity, *It's All Relative* is a real treat" (Booklist).

—Book information and reviews from Amazon.com

Plaques & Mural in Downtown Cheyenne Celebrate the 150th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage

In 1917 a plaque was placed on 17th Street in downtown
Cheyenne to commemorate where the resolution allowing
women the right to vote was passed. After 102 years of wear
and neglect the plaque was sent to Pennsylvania to be re-
stored, and it's now on display once again. A dedication cere-
mony was held in September to unveil the refinished plaque
(top left), along with a new mural honoring the advocates who
helped push for the right to vote for the women of Wyoming,
as part of the state's commemoration of the 150th anniver-
sary of women's suffrage.

Jeanette Hursman, member of DAR (Daughters of the
American Revolution) [and CGHS member], was instrumental
in getting the plaque restored. She said, "now it can reside
and shine in a highly visible location on this building for all to
see and remember the signing of the first women's suffrage
bill. It was not forgotten, but as 2019 approached, we knew it
was the perfect time to have it restored to its original beau-
ty." The Cheyenne Chapter of DAR was formed in 1900 to
perpetuate memories of the revolution with historical monu-
ments. The local chapter donated the original bronze plaque in
1917.

