



# Twig Talk



Newsletter of the Muskegon County Genealogical Society

Since 1972

Vol. 11 No. 3

March 2011



## TWIG TALK

A publication of:

**Muskegon County Genealogical Society**

c/o Hackley Public Library  
316 W. Webster Avenue  
Muskegon, MI 49440-1209

[www.genealogymuskegon.org](http://www.genealogymuskegon.org)

[mcgs1972@yahoo.com](mailto:mcgs1972@yahoo.com)

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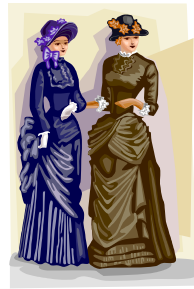
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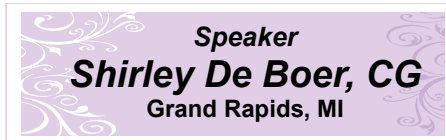
### Committees

- County Clerk..... Jane Gates  
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Jared Perreault



**Thursday,  
March 10, 2011  
7:00 p.m.  
Masonic Temple  
396 W. Clay Ave.**

**“Women in Countdown:  
Mothers, Daughters, Wives and Sisters“**



Shirley De Boer is Certified Genealogist, a professional researcher, and teacher. She has a B.S. in history, secondary certification from Eastern Michigan University, Ypsilanti, Michigan, and a Master of Arts in teaching and continuing certification from Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan. She has been an active member of Western Michigan Genealogical Society for thirty-five years. Shirley frequents Kent County Courthouse, LDS Library, Library of Michigan in Lansing, and Allen County-Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and other locations as needed. Specialty: Michigan and the New England migration through New York to the West.

The presentation begins with basic ways to find female given and married names and ends with more difficult case studies that were resolved in Shirley’s research. Using both traditional and the internet methodology, Shirley will provide a PowerPoint presentation that illustrates each concept and a four page handout as a handy reference guide to summarize the “How To’s” of her research.

***Guest Are Always Welcome To Come!***



## **WOMEN'S HISTORYOLOGY**

Who was the first President to proclaim the week of March 8th 1980 as National Women's History Week?

For the answer, see page 5.



### **Board Meeting**

Tuesday, March 1, 2011  
6:00 p.m., Torrent House

### **Genealogy Family History Workshops**

Saturday, March 12, 2011  
Hackley Public Library  
Local History & Genealogy Dept.,  
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.



**County Clerk's Office**  
Jane Gates,  
Dawn Kelley  
Barb Martin

Wednesday's 1:00—4:00 p.m.  
141 E. Apple Ave.  
2nd Floor

**Library**  
Barb LaBatt Martin



HPL Mon, Tues, Wed 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.  
Thurs, Fri, Sat 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.  
Sundays 1 to 4:30 p.m.

### NEW BOOKS

- **Our Dutch Roots**, by Gerry Noorman (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **De Familie Vonck Uit Humsterland**, by Egge Knol (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Genealogie Hoetjer Veendam**, by J.J. Hoetjer (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Genealogie Poortinga**, by D. Poortinga (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **The Schneider and Liegler Families of Racine, Wisconsin 1848-1959**, by Tim Delanty (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **The History of the Elenz Family Erie County, Ohio 1861-1896**, by Jerry Elenz (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Het Hogelandster Kwartierstaten Boek**, by Marten Jacob Wieringa (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Index of Vital Statistics From the Muskegon Chronicle 2010** (Gift of Matt Burns)
- **A New Home in Michigan: The Mexican-American Experience in Muskegon**, by Daniel Yakes & Connie Navarro (Gift of Connie Navarro)
- **Strangers and Pilgrims Travellers and Sojourners: Leiden and the Foundations of Plymouth Plantation**, by Jeremy Dupertuis Bangs (Gift of Colonial Dames)
- **Genealogie Smit**, by Marten Jacob Wieringa (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Genealogie Van Het Geslacht Rop**, by D. Poortinga (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **Genealogie Buitenwerf**, by Marten Jacob Wieringa (In Memory of Tressa LaFayette)
- **War on the Mississippi: Grant's Vicksburg Campaign**, by Jerry Korn & the Editors of Time Life Books (Gift of MCGS)
- **Twenty Million Yankees: The Northern Home Front**, by Donald Dale Jackson & the Editors of Time Life Books (Gift of MCGS)
- **The Road to Shiloh: Early Battles in the West**, by David Nevin & the Editors of Time Life Books (Gift of MCGS)



**Hospitality**  
Jane Walker Weber  
Paula Halloran  
Connie Fales

At our February meeting, Hackley Public Library Director, Marty Ferriby, presented Part I of project goals for [Hackley Public Library](#).

At break, we enjoyed treats provided by Kristi Burns and Claudia McPherson. Candied heart cookies, fruits, and veggies made a welcomed, delicious selection. Thanks for your contribution!!

Sandra Kelley won the door prize of a caddy with research aids. Lyle Monette was a winner of an old-time photo printed tile of Muskegon. Joan Gawron provided this collectible prize. Thanks to you, Joan! Will there be



**Membership**  
Susan Boos Gerst  
[tsgerst@yahoo.com](mailto:tsgerst@yahoo.com)  
Kathy Broughton DeCormier

**Welcome our newest member.**

Judy Tierney – N. Muskegon, MI  
**Surnames:** Tierney, Mackey, Eldridge, Durgin, Smiley

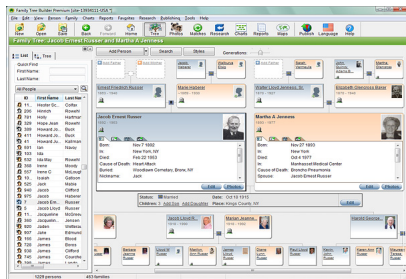
### Congratulations Susan and Tom

We welcome Katie Marie Gerst, the new addition to Tom and Susan Gerst's family history. Katie Marie 6 lb. 2 oz. Born Feb. 5th 2011 - THE CLOSEST GUESS WAS Nancy Zissler (6 lb 8 oz).

### FREE GENEALOGY SOFTWARE—Yes FREE

Submitted by Kristi Burns, Editor.

I have been using **My Heritage's Family Tree Builder** for a few years now. I wanted something that I didn't have to keep my client family tree history online. This one has basic features of reports, family trees, pictures and a variety of details similar to Ancestry.com. You can publish online or turn this feature off (*turn off the auto publishing right up front*). So if you don't want to sign up for Ancestry.com or if you want to get familiar with a genealogy program, give this one a try! You can find it at <http://www.myheritage.com/family-tree-builder>



### Genealogy for Kids

**Family Tree Kids!** is a kid-focused genealogy Web site from Family Tree Magazine, that helps kids learn how to become a "family detective" and dig up clues about your ancestry.

There are games and activities just for kids. They even have a

"kid-friendly" family tree that can be downloaded for free! Check it out at



<http://kids.familytreemagazine.com/kids/default.asp>



## **Genealogy News & Tips**

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(P.S. If you see typos, we can't change it because it is copyrighted.)

### **Commonly Confused Letters in Old Handwriting & Script**

Some letters in old handwriting are often difficult to recognize or are commonly confused because of curls and flourishes, plus the differences in old style writing and modern day writing style. This may cause errors in transcriptions taken from old handwriting, making it important that you understand these commonly confused letters in order to account for possible surname variations when searching for your ancestors. For example, the letters I and J were often used interchangeably and often appear identical. The old style S often appeared as f or p, especially when followed by a second s. This is apparent in commonly mis-transcribed words such as Jefse and Jepe for Jesse. Therefore, when searching for surnames, please keep in possible transcription errors in mind. To aid you in your search, here are a few of the most commonly confused letters in old handwriting transcriptions.

### **Don't know how to scan? Just shoot.**

Here's a tip, if you don't have a scanner, then just take a digital photograph of your historic photo or document with a camera or phone and simply upload that.

### **Check Photo Frames**

I've been trying for years to figure out the birth dates of my great-grandmother's siblings. We've had a picture of the family house in Philadelphia on the wall since I was born, but it never seemed to be particularly relevant—until I took it down. Looking for the address, I popped the back off the frame and found my great-great-grandmother's handwriting on the back listing all the children that had been born in the house including the dates and their parents' full names, including their mothers' maiden names! Sometimes important sources are hiding in plain sight. **Sandi Gammon**

### **Be Care of What you Throw Away**

When my ex-wife passed away, I had the task of helping my son to plow through the endless boxes of "stuff" in her house. I refused to just throw things away, opting for systematically going through the boxes to be sure nothing useful was lost. I was sitting on the floor, about 3/4ths through a 2' x 2' x 2' box when I saw a mouse (complete with nursing babies) fly through the detritus in the bottom of the box. I caught her and (I used to raise laboratory animals) found a safe home for her and her babies. Then I went through each thing in the box. There was a folded up, yellowed piece of paper that the mouse had been chewing on (folded three times in one direction and twice in the other with a paper clip on it). I could so easily have thrown it away. Notice the mouse's teeth marks. Inside were the names and birth dates of her great-grandfather and seven of his siblings. Be careful what you throw away. The tiniest thing may be the key to lost relatives. **Regards, Wayne Peterson, Hillsborough, NC.**



## **Look What's Coming For 2011**

All programming is at the Masonic Temple (next to the Muskegon Chronicle) 396 W. Clay Avenue, Muskegon, MI in the Lower Level (stairs or elevator available).

Door opens at 6:30 P.M.  
with the event starting at 7:00 P.M.

Thursday, March 10, 2011

Shirley De Boer CG, Grand Rapids, MI

**"Women in Countdown:  
Mothers, Daughters, Wives and Sisters"**

Thursday, April 14, 2011

Dean Cumings, Kent City, MI

**"Ellie: A Pioneer Girl's Journey West"**

Thursday, May 12, 2011

Paul Petersen, Norton Shores, MI

**"Photography for Genealogist"**

Thursday, June 9, 2011

Shirley Hodges, Albion, MI

**"Whither Thou Goest:  
Tracing of your Female Ancestors"**

Thursday, August 11, 2011

Graphologist, Jeanne Drew, Muskegon, MI

**"Examining Handwriting for Genealogical  
Clues"**

Thursday, September 8, 2011

Robert Myers, Spring Lake, MI

**"Hard Tack & Coffee"**

Thursday, October 13, 2011

**"Family History Month"**

TBA

Thursday, November 10, 2011

Annual Meeting and Elections

Thursday, December 8, 2011

**"HOLIDAY GATHERING"**

6:30 P.M. to 8:00 P.M.

Torrent House

315 W. Webster Ave.

Use side door entrance or elevator

**GUESTS ARE ALWAYS WELCOME!**

## **Strategies for Finding Female Ancestors**

Originally published 9/27/2009 by Lisa A. Alzo

Family Tree Magazine

<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/article/Strategies-for-Finding-Female-Ancestors/#>

### **Know your names.**

Why can it be so difficult to trace women in genealogical records? Prior to the 20th century, most historical records were for and about men. Property was usually listed under the man's name, and men ran businesses and the government. Meanwhile, a woman typically changed her name each time she married, and, of course, children carried men's surnames to the next generation. If finding the females in your family tree has you singing the blues, get back in sync with these eight research strategies.

Note the names of each woman's husband, children and siblings-and especially any unusual middle names, which could be the mothers' or grandmothers' maiden names (such as Evelyn Vallis Neville).

### **Make a timeline.**

A timeline puts your ancestor in historical perspective and points you to genealogical records. Begin the timeline with the woman's birth and end with her death. Between, write everything you know about her, including her marriage date and children's birth dates and places. Add events, such as migrations and hospitalizations, as you uncover them. Include significant national occurrences, such as wars and epidemics, and local events you glean from county histories. Web sites such as [OurTimelines.com](http://OurTimelines.com) and our [Women's history timeline](#) will help, too.

### **Ask around.**

Women are often the "communicators" in families, so talk to your older female relatives and schedule a visit to talk about your family. Ask each woman about her mother's maiden name, how she met her husband, what motherhood was like and favorite family recipes. Missed your chance? Interview your ancestor's children, grandchildren, other relatives, friends and neighbors. Pay special attention to names, dates, places and unusual occurrences that could point your research in a particular direction.

### **Explore records.**

Since no magical record set focuses on females, researching them in genealogical documents is more about strategy than anything else. To determine which records to look for, examine your ancestors' timelines and note events that may have generated records. Weddings mean marriage records; children may have birth and baptismal certificates; migrations could lead to land records. Note social or religious groups, or fraternal benefit societies a woman might've belonged to through her church or community. Contact the main office to ask about historical records. If the organization no longer exists, a historical society or library archive may have its files.

You'll find more places to look for records in Christine Kassabian Schaefer's book, *The Hidden Half of the Family: A Sourcebook for Women's Genealogy* (Genealogical Publishing Co., \$39.95). It contains a state-by-state resource guide with important dates, laws governing your female ancestors' lives, and advice for finding records they left.

### **Investigate her associates.**

You'll find yourself looking for your female ancestor in records of her husband, father, brothers and other men she's associated with. She may show up as a household member, godparent, heir or in-law. In particular, witnesses named in a woman's or her family members' marriage licenses, naturalization papers and baptismal records may be related to her.

### **Search databases smartly.**

When searching genealogy database sites such as [FamilySearch](#), the subscription site [Ancestry.com](#) (a version called Ancestry Library Edition is free at many public libraries) and [HeritageQuest Online](#) (also free through many libraries) look for both maiden and married names-women in some cultures used their maiden names on official records. A woman also might appear under an initial or nickname, and not necessarily the same nickname in every record. Look at other details in the record, such as age, birthplace and husband's name, to help you determine whether she's your ancestor. As with any name search, try alternate name spellings and different combinations of search parameters.

If you can't find your female ancestor in a census or immigration database, search for her children. And look for people who appear with her in other records-they might be relatives or friends she traveled with and settled near, and her name could be barely legible on the next line.

### **Read her diaries and letters.**

Men's deeds are most often recorded in history books, but women may have "spoken" their thoughts in a diary and in letters to distant relatives and soldier sons. They can provide both genealogical details and insight into female ancestors' lives. Journals and correspondence of other community members also may mention your ancestor. Search for them in the local library, historical society or museum. You'll find memoirs-perhaps even a relative's-catalogued in *Laura Arksey's American Diaries: An Annotated Bibliography of Published American Diaries and Journals from 1845 to 1980* (Gale Group, out of print).

Writings of unrelated ordinary and famous women, in the absence of records on your own ancestor, will help you tap into her daily life. If your aunt, for example, was a WWII "Rosie" or planted a Victory Garden, learn what her life may have been like from the transcribed essays at [What Did You Do in the War Grandma?](#)

## [Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) Marks Black History Month

### with 250,000 New African American Records

Information provided at [DearMYRTLE](http://blog.dearmyrtle.com/2011/02/ancestrycom-250000-new-african-american.html) at <http://blog.dearmyrtle.com/2011/02/ancestrycom-250000-new-african-american.html>.

The [Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) African American Historical Record Collection includes thousands of poignant stories that bring this part of American history to life. One story outlines how Solomon Northup was lured from New York to Washington, D.C with the promise of a job in a circus. Instead he was kidnapped, put on a boat to New Orleans and sold into slavery. His liberation in 1853 prompted him to write "Twelve Years a Slave, 1841-1853," which became both a popular seller at the time and an important historical document. The ship record of his transfer to New Orleans, which also lists most of the cast of characters from his book, can be found in [Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)'s Slave Ship Manifests from New Orleans, 1807-1860. (*original record images available*)

The five new collections form part of the 60 million records already included in [Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com)'s African American Historical Record collection—the largest online collection of African American family history records available. These new collections are:

- **US Colored Troops Service Records, 1861-1867:** Approximately 178,000 African American troops served the Union in the final two years of the US Civil War. Their compiled service records include enlistment papers, casualty sheets, death reports and correspondence.
- **Slave Ship Manifests from Savannah, 1789-1859:** Although the transatlantic slave trade was banned in 1807, the internal transportation of slaves remained, especially as the tobacco industry diminished in the North while the cotton industry boomed in the South. These port records document the arrival and departure of more than 10,000 slaves through the port of Savannah, GA.
- **Slave Ship Manifests from New Orleans, 1807-1860:** Another important Southern port, this collection includes records for more than 100,000 slaves who arrived or departed through the port of New Orleans.
- **Freedmen's Bureau Records, 1865-1878:** The Freedmen's Bureau was formed after the Civil War to aid in Reconstruction efforts. This collection contains hundreds of thousands of records relating to former slaves the Bureau helped find work, to establish schools, negotiate contracts, seek medical care, legalize marriages and more.

Slave Narratives, 1936-1938 (updated): In the early 1930s, an effort began to document the life stories of 3,500 former slaves. The result is a series of moving, individual accounts of their lives, as told in their own words.

With collections such as these now online and searchable for the first time, exploring African American roots is becoming increasingly accessible and popular. For example, leading African American actress and singer [Vanessa Williams](http://www.ancestry.com)' own family journey will be showcased during the second-season premiere of the hit NBC series "Who Do You Think You Are?" on Friday, February 4. [Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) is the official sponsor for the NBC series and worked closely with the producers to provide the family history research for those celebrities featured. Lionel Richie's family history will also be showcased this season, building on the compelling African American stories of Spike Lee and Emmitt Smith, who were featured last season.



## BOOK REVIEW Back to the Beginning – Remarkable True Stories of Adoption Searches & Reunions

Ava Friddle, Judy Andrews, Kristen Hamilton, with Joe Bardin

Adoption Searches are unique to each person involved. Some clients simply want medical histories. For others the stakes are much higher: a daughter seeking to understand the trauma her birthmother went through at the time of relinquishment; a son wanting to set the record straight on his own family history; a birthfather who never even saw his daughter when she was born, but never forgot her; a birthmother who wanted reassurance that she did the right thing when she placed her child for adoption 21 years ago.

This book offers not only true stories that touch the heart, but invaluable experience in understanding the dynamics of adoption reunions from the perspective of all those involved in the Adoption Triad.

The authors of this book operate a licensed P.I. firm in Scottsdale, Arizona – specializing in adoption searches. I found the stories to be very compelling – and not only interesting, but educational from the standpoint of one interested in the research process. I highly recommend this book to my readers.

Order from the publisher at: Research Etc., Inc., 8390 E. Via De Ventura #F110-184, Scottsdale, AZ 85258-3188; or [www.BackToTheBeginningBook.com](http://www.BackToTheBeginningBook.com); CF9411; ISBN: 978-0-9816412-0-1; \$18.95 plus \$4.00 p&h.

Information courtesy of Leland & Patty Meitzler, Genealogy Blog, <http://www.genealogyblog.com/?p=619>

### Answer to Question on Page 1: President Jimmy Carter

For more information visit: <http://www.nwhp.org/whm/history.php>

### DID YOU KNOW???

[Ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com) has FREE webinars. Audience members may arrive 15 minutes before scheduled webinars. Archived Webinars contain actual video that can be viewed at any time at no cost.

Topics include Getting Started, Interviewing Family Members, Coming to America: Finding Your Immigrant Family, Finding Females in Your Tree, New York Research, and many other helpful topics.

Check it out at <http://learn.ancestry.com/LearnMore/Webinars.aspx>



## Upcoming Events Dates to Remember—2011

### Board Meetings

1st Tuesday  
Doors open at  
at 6:00 p.m.  
**Torrent House**  
315 W Webster

March 1  
April 5  
May 3  
June 7  
September 6  
October 4  
November 1

**OFF**  
**Jul, Aug & Dec**

### Regular Meetings

2nd Thursday except July  
Doors open at 6:30 p.m.  
Starts at 7:00 p.m.  
**Masonic Temple**  
396 W. Clay

March 10  
April 14  
May 12  
June 9

**(Off Jul)**

August 11  
September 8

**“Oct., Family History Month”**

**October 13**  
November 10

**“Family History Holiday Gathering”**  
**December 8**

### Genealogy Family

#### History Workshops

2nd Saturdays  
10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

**Hackley Public Library**  
Local History & Genealogy Dept.  
Lower Level  
316 W. Webster

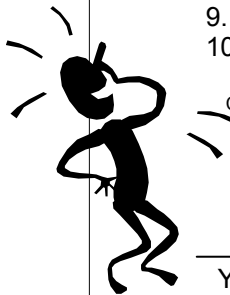
March 12  
April 9  
May 14  
September 10  
October 8  
November 12

**OFF**  
**Jun, Jul, Aug & Dec**



### *What to Bring to Meetings*

- Pencil and notepaper for all the great information we will share and present.
- Bring change for the Sales Store ... folders, books, magazines, and other great surprises. (If you have any genealogy items you would like to donate for the sales table, please contact us.)
- 12 and 15 Generation Charts are on sale for \$3.00 each
- Your ideas, advice and questions - someone may be able to help!!
- If you would like to make a gift of money donation, please make checks payable to MCGS, and always remember your donation is a tax deductible.



## THE FUNNY PAGES

### TEN ONE-LINERS FOR YOUR EMAIL SIGNATURE

1. My ancestors must be in a witness protection program!
2. How can one ancestor cause so much TROUBLE??
3. I'm not stuck, I'm ancestrally challenged.
4. A family tree can wither if nobody tends it's roots.
5. Genealogists are time unravelers.
6. Genealogy is like playing hide and seek: They hide... I seek!
7. Only a Genealogist regards a step backwards as progress.
8. Genealogists live in the past lane.
9. Genealogy... will I ever find time to mow the lawn again?
10. I researched my family tree... and apparently I don't exist!

Courtesy of Funny Genealogy Tales at <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~frankbarton/stories/funny.html>

### TEN REASONS TO KNOW THAT YOU ARE AN ADDICTED GENEALOGIST

You're Addicted....

- when you brake for libraries
- if you get locked in a library overnight and you never even notice
- when you hyperventilate at the sight of an old cemetery
- if you'd rather browse in a cemetery than a shopping mall
- when you think every home should have a microfilm reader
- if you'd rather read census schedules than a good book
- when you know every town clerk in your state by name
- when you're more interested in what happened in 1697 than 1997
- if you store your clothes under the bed and your closet is carefully stacked with notebooks and journals

Reasons courtesy of FOSTORIA LINEAGE RESEARCH SOCIETY at <http://www.fostoria.org/history/Genealogy/StoriesJokes.html>