



President's Message

Last year at this time I was writing my first president's message. Yes, I was wondering how our society worked together to make it all happen but I was confident it would. I learned that Hazel Rasar was the big push in the background to hold the pieces together for our society in recent years. Seems like she knows everybody so her network of contacts is not only local but state-wide and beyond. Of course, she has had plenty of help from our active board members who are a very dedicated group of genealogists. Hazel has retired from active participation now but her advice and insight this past year have been invaluable to me. I thank her for this!

As it turned out 2015 was a busy year with many of us, especially our seminar leader Barbara Johnson and her committee, preparing for and holding our very successful September seminar. The board held a retreat last spring and I was able to learn more about our society's issues and the personalities and strengths of our board members. Over this past year our board approved the purchase of a projector screen, sound system, projector and laptop computer to update our society's equipment. Yes, 2015 has been a good year and we look forward to 2016.

Last year I mentioned that my goal was to keep education at the forefront to keep our society growing. Education through a series of classes and/or a seminar are critical to maintain and increase our membership. Our board will be considering our options very soon regarding classes and/or a seminar this New Year.

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 President: John Hayes
 Newsletter: Dottie Chandler
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Education is not limited to classes or a seminar. Our library volunteers and our Genealogist Diane Partington work with the public to educate and assist them in their genealogy research. Our monthly membership meeting programs provide another opportunity for educating our members and non-members alike. All phases of our society's educational program are important for enhancing our mutual interest in genealogy. Let's keep it fun and grow.

So 2016, here we come!

John Hayes

President
rosie@valleyint.com
 360-424-4608

Needed New Volunteers

Our genealogists is looking for new volunteers to train to help with research requests when she is gone. If interested please give Diane Partington a call at 360-336-5832 or send her an email at nonie.dl@comcast.net

PROGRAM for January

Overview of Family Search and what the Family History Center in Mount Vernon has to offer

RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Just a friendly reminder that dues are now due for the Skagit Valley Genealogical Society. In the event you may have already paid, it is possible that they were sent in and just haven't reached me yet. Our year goes from Jan. 1st through Dec. 31st. Dues this year have raised to \$15.00 for single membership and \$20.00 for family membership.

Christine Cooper
 Membership Chairperson



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Ways & Means: OPEN

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Special Committees

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OPEN

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Bylaws/Standing Rules: Joe LeBlonde
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Refreshments: OPEN

Raffles/Door Prizes:

SOCIETY EMAIL: genealogy0715@gmail.com

Your advice is needed. If you have suggestions of program topics for next year. Or if you just can't wait to present a program yourself, please contact Carol Torset at torset@comcast.net or 360-856-2410. She will happily take your ideas to heart.

The Skagit Valley Genealogical Society Newsletter accepts business card size advertisement. The cost will be \$10.00 per issue and the editor can help put one together for you if you don't have something ready.

If anyone would like queries or surnames to be posted in

Access Restrictions to Social

The Social Security Death Master File, maintained by the US Social Security Administration (SSA), is a database of death records collected from a variety of sources used by the SSA to administer their programs. This includes death information collected from family members, funeral homes, financial institutions, postal authorities, States and other Federal agencies. The Social Security Death Master File is **not a comprehensive record of all deaths in the United States**—just a record of those deaths reported to the Social Security Administration. By Kimberly Powell, Genealogy Expert.



SVGS Members,

We have a new BLOG on our website. If you are interested in participating in our blog go to skagit-valleygenealogy.Org/BLOG to see how you can register and log in.

Thank you.

SVGS Webmaster George E. Ridgeway Jr.

Burlington Public Library

820 E Washington Ave
Burlington, WA 98233
Phone (360) 755-0760
Email:
blibrary@ci.burlington.wa.us
Hours: Monday – Thursday
10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.
Friday & Saturday
10:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Sunday – Closed

SVGS Library Collection

located here. SVGS Volunteers available on Mondays from 11:00—1:00 to assist with questions.

Margie Wilson—SVGS Librarian



A long time ago in newspapers far,
far away....

Find: Looking Back on the Original *Star Wars*

When *Star Wars* (later retitled *Star Wars Episode IV: A New Hope*) was released in the United States on May 25, 1977, it was an immediate sensation. Show after show sold out, with many viewers returning to see the film more than once. It received near-universal praise from film critics as well and went on to break all kinds of records for box-office earnings, attendance, and length of run. It surpassed *Jaws* as the top-grossing film of all time and retained that title until 1982, when it was overtaken by *ET*, though it still remains one of the most financially successful films.



Excerpt from Newspapers.com

Genealogy Quiz

1. You have the names of three siblings born between 1884 and 1887 and need to know the names of their parents. Which census would be the best one to start with?

- ☐ 1880
- ☐ 1890
- ☐ 1900
- ☐ 1910

2. IGI stands for...

- ☐ International Genealogical Index
- ☐ Index of German Immigrants
- ☐ Itemized Guardianship Inventories
- ☐ Irish Geographical Index

3. The best place to start your genealogical research is...

- ☐ Internet
- ☐ Grandma
- ☐ National Archives
- ☐ Mormon Library

4. It's been said that "genealogy of place" is vital to doing research. This means that the most important thing to do when you find out the name of the town an ancestor was from is to...

- ☐ learn the important people in a town's history
- ☐ determine where the town is located and how boundaries have changed over time
- ☐ go to the town itself to research your family's history
- ☐ learn where the cemeteries are located in the town

5. An ancestor died intestate. This means...

- ☐ he left no will
- ☐ he was traveling out of state when he died
- ☐ he died in a state prison
- ☐ his body was never found
- ☐ great aunt
- ☐ half-sister
- ☐ second cousin
- ☐ first cousin once removed

6. Your grandfather's sister's daughter is your...

- ☐ great aunt
- ☐ half-sister
- ☐ second cousin
- ☐ first cousin once removed

7. The standard way to write May 8th, 1904 is...

- ☐ 5/8/04
- ☐ 5/8/1904
- ☐ 8 May 1904
- ☐ May VIII 1904

8. You do not know your grandmother's maiden name. She was married several times. The surname you will use for her on a pedigree chart is...

- ☐ the surname of her first husband
- ☐ the surname of your grandfather
- ☐ the surname she had when she died
- ☐ none of the above

9. You found several records that give your ancestor's birthdate. Rank the sources for reliability.

- ☐ 1834 baptismal record
- ☐ 1850 census
- ☐ 1902 death record
- ☐ 1974 family history book

10. Finding the original meaning of your surname will help you in researching your ancestors.

- ☐ True
- ☐ False

Answers to Genealogy Quiz

1. 1900

The siblings were not born in 1880, so that census would do no good and by 1910, they were probably not living with their parents. The 1890 census was 99% destroyed and for all practical purposes, does not exist. Learning what is available on each census is a basic bit of knowledge for [genealogists](#).

2. International Genealogical Index

The IGI is the world's largest genealogical database with births and marriages of over 300 million people worldwide. What makes it so valuable is that it is derived from primary sources. Information from the birth/marriage records of many U.S. counties and European churches has been extracted to the IGI. It also contains unverified information sent in by individuals, but you can easily tell which is extracted and which is submitted. This information is available free of charge at any LDS Family History Center as well as many public libraries. The Mormons (Latter Day Saints) are interested in [genealogy](#) for religious reasons but you don't have to be Mormon to take advantage of their work. They have amassed an incredible collection of records from all over the world. These records are on one and a half million rolls of microfilm and are housed in a giant library in Salt Lake City. If you can't get to Salt Lake, they maintain branch libraries known as Family History Centers where you can rent the microfilms for a few dollars each. I can't imagine doing genealogy without using this resource.

3. Grandma

Grandma and the rest of your older relatives should be where you start. The biggest regret family historians voice is that they didn't ask questions when they could. Since you always start from what you know and work back from there, you'll take what you learn from Grandma to make family group sheets and pedigree charts. Next, you'll probably want to write to the county courthouses to get vital records (birth, marriage, death) of all the people on your pedigree chart. The National Archives, home of the census and important immigration and military information, is probably your next stop. Then you'll want to explore all the goodies at the Mormon library and on the Internet.

4. Determine where the town is located and how boundaries have changed over time

Whether you are searching in Elk Garden, Virginia or Vörsstetten, Germany, knowing the location is vital to being able to do your research. And not only do you need to know where a place is *now*, you need to know where it was when your ancestors were there. Since for the US, the county is the keeper of many of the records, knowing how county boundaries have changed tells you where to look for the records of your ancestors. Other parts of the world have their own "genealogy of place." German records, for example are mostly kept at the local level. Kingdoms, duchies, and states all changed boundaries over time. Having names and dates without places is useless and does not tell you anything about the lives of your ancestors. Whenever I see a "genealogy" on the Internet with just names and dates, I click the Back button. The people listed may be related but I have no way of knowing.

5. Died without a will

Before you spend your time and money climbing your [family tree](#), learn the terms used by genealogists so that you can communicate with others. Find a book at your local library or a [site on the Internet](#) that discusses the principles of genealogy and these basics concept

Standard forms and conventions
Primary vs. secondary evidence
Documenting sources
Record groups: census, vital, military, church, probate, land, immigration
How to construct a query

6. First cousin once removed

Relationships are what families are made of, so be sure you know the terms used to define a family. And don't think a fifth cousin is too distant to care about -- you'll want to know all the branches of your family and you'll meet many of them online.

7. 8 May 1904

Always use a 4-digit year -- the year 2000 problem is nothing new to genealogists! Put the day before the month, as they do in most countries. Spelling out the month helps avoid confusion.

There are conventions and standards used by genealogist. Learn how names, dates, and places -- the basic building blocks of genealogy -- are written before you start entering the information on charts or in your computer.

8. None of the above

Always use a woman's maiden name. If you don't know a person's name, don't substitute another one.

Some other name and place conventions are: Do not use titles such as Mrs., Dr., Jr., III, or Esq. in a person's name. They are relative terms and not part of their name.

Write US places as city, county, state. Since the county is vital to doing US genealogy, don't leave it out. Look it up if you don't know it. There are standard conventions for other countries as well.

9. 1 - 2 - 3- 4

The baptismal record, recorded at the time the event occurred is the most reliable. In general, the closer the record to the event, the more reliable. Another consideration is who supplied the information. The census information was probably given by a parent but could have been given by a neighbor or a child. Keep in mind that if it had been the 1840 census instead of the 1850, no names other than for the head of household are given and other family members are just "hash marks" under sex/age range columns. Information on a [death record](#) is usually filled in by someone who was not present at the birth and so birth information is second-hand information. Unless the family history book includes sources, the information in it can be considered merely clues for you to research. Same for undocumented information you find on the Internet.

10. False

Surnames were used long before they were commonly recorded. You will probably not be able to trace back to when surnames were first used. (There are some exceptions, for example the early Dutch in America.) So how your ancestors got the name will not help you find them.

Before this century, spelling was not important, most people could not write, and foreign names were mangled or contorted. Over the many years since your ancestors first started using a surname, it could have changed in ways you could not know. For these reasons, saying something like, "Our Elliotts have always spelled it with two L's and two T's" may mean you'll miss some important clues.

And don't forget that the surname you have is not the surname of all your ancestors. It is, in fact, your least reliable line, but often the one pursued most vigorously by men (yes, men) who are newcomers to genealogy.

This Newsletter is published by the Members of SKAGIT VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY and is distributed free of charge to members. A non-profit organization, membership is open to all persons interested in historical research, preservation and publications of genealogical interest.

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION - 2016

APPLICANTS NAME _____

ADDRESS STREET, CITY, STATE & 9 DIGIT ZIP CODE _____

AREA CODE ()

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

E-MAIL ADDRESS _____

New Member _____

Renewal _____

Previous Member _____

FAMILY \$ 20 _____

INDIVIDUAL \$15 _____



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