



February 2015
Volume 30
Issue 2



**TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 10
10 A.M.-NOON
BOARD MEETING**

Held each month on the Tuesday before the general meeting in the Philomath Community Library's meeting room. All members are welcome.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14
10-11 A.M.
BUSINESS MEETING**

Held the second Saturday from September through June. The meeting begins at 10 a.m. in the College United Methodist Church's Social Hall (1101 Main St., Philomath). Everyone is welcome.

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14
11 A.M.
MONTHLY PROGRAM**

The Benton County Genealogical Society's February program will be a workshop to help members and guests work through difficult family research challenges. So, if you've hit a brick wall, bring it to the program and perhaps a new idea will surface during this interactive event.

Do you have an idea for a monthly program. Contact Katie Ross at 541-929-2884.



>>>>By Ron DeYoung

From the Desk of the President

Preparing for a presentation to a group of area residents not familiar with family history, I pondered how to help them understand not just what genealogists do, but perhaps more importantly, why we do so. What is the source of our motivation, objectives, purposes, drive and passion which we bring to our study, networking, searching and recording?

Perhaps all family history enthusiasts put this much effort forth because we find it fascinating to discover who came before us, what they did and how they lived, in essence learning more of "who" we are and where we are from.

For me, I am more than flesh and bone, In a very real sense, I am

part of a family that extends outward, back in time from varied lands, experiences, cultures, strengths, hopes and dreams which are handed down to me across the generations and form who I am.

One remarkable benefit of knowing, recording and sharing one's family history is outlined in a New York Times article from March 2013, "The Stories That Bind Us" by Bruce Feiler. He shared the results of a number of studies which determined why some youth rise up out of the fierce poverty and tragic environmental conditions, becoming successful, productive and stable adults. The single common factor was that

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The Benton County Genealogical Society installed officers at the January meeting. From left, Lois Courtney, treasurer; Linda Olsen, secretary; Katie Ross, vice president; and Ron DeYoung, president.

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successful youth were members of families that knew and communicated a strong family narrative. They knew where they came from, the stories of those who came before them, the successes and failures, all subliminally communicating that as a family, there are good and bad times but as a family, they pull together and get through.

The difference seem not to be available social programs, location in which they lived or other external factors; the difference was knowing their family history. I wonder, if more families communicated in their story if there would be less teen tragedy?

Probably all who research and write their family history have found black sheep, rogues, ne'er-do-wells and perhaps some outlaws that pepper our family trees; these seem to add some contrast, interest and overall, honesty! Most believe their stories should be recorded as well, treating them delicately and respectfully but including these family

members as family well. Such individuals can provide our own families' version of a teaching moment to those who follow.

I find my ancestry intrinsically interesting, learning of my ancestors' lives and times in which they lived. Each location, family and time has provided an opportunity for new learning, a wider scope of history that affected these people; this pays dividends in understanding of the world.

We each know our families better than anyone who will follow after us and can make their lives' stories available to future generations. My focus in writing can be summed up quite simply; I will never have the opportunity in mortality to sit with my fifth great granddaughter who may not be born for another hundred years; I write to tell her of the wonderful people I know, her wonderful family and to tell her that I love her.

The best thing that I can do is to learn, record and preserve and hand down her legacy. Here's to wishing you success in recording for your posterity as well.

Ancestry.com releases 'Historical Insights' app

*From Ancestry Insider blog
(published Dec. 11)*

Ancestry.com released a cool new feature last week for its Apple app: Historical Insights. In their blog, they wrote:

So how does it work? In some ways, insights are like hints. While we can't be positive that your family member experienced a certain event like the San Francisco earthquake, we use information you've added to your tree and historical records to determine whether your relative might have been in the city in 1906 when it occurred. And like hints, you have the ability to accept an insight and keep it in a person's profile or ignore it.

User feedback was pretty positive. Either they loved it, or they wanted it on their non-Apple device. Ancestry.com wrote their intention to add it to their website app. Nothing was said about any other mobile device.

In my brief look at the feature, I was impressed. In the example to the right, Ancestry.com detected

The Ancestry Insider



an ancestor who lived in Illinois in 1840 and Utah in 1850. It surmised (correctly) that he had immigrated on the Mormon Trail.

Some hints have pictures, some don't. All have the barely legible not-quite-white text on a lime green background. (I'm always mystified that interface designers are more concerned about aesthetics than legibility. But don't get me started...)

The success of the feature will depend on two things: can they assemble a large enough store of historical facts to make the feature worth their efforts, and can they present pertinent hints to the right people. For one of my ancestors who left Vermont, they mentioned the volcano eruption that caused the year without a

summer. That's a good call on their part. That's an important events that many people don't know about that precipitated a large number of people to leave Vermont.

For another ancestor they mentioned that he was living in Kentucky where they may have witnessed "the night the stars fell." That's another cool event, but they need not associate it with Kentucky. It was visible across the entire country. They did make some bad calls. My American born and died ancestors were almost certainly not affected by the discovery of gold in New South Wales and may not have been affected by immigration precipitated by wars in Europe.

This is a great feature. It has the potential of becoming a strategic tool that could bust through brick walls. I hope they continue to hone it into an important tool for understanding why our ancestors did what they did.

For more information, see the announcement on the [Ancestry.com blog](#).

AARP members: Get Ancestry.com at reduced cost

If you are a member of AARP, tell Ancestry when you renew yearly membership. Regular membership for "World Explorer" is \$299 but with AARP membership, cost is \$209. Have your AARP membership card handy when you renew as you will need to give them your AARP number.

(Thanks to Pat Coolican)



Librarian Susan Van Laere announced a number of book donations.

January Program



Mary Gallagher, Benton County Historical Society & Museum collections manager, shares research information with Benton County Genealogical Society members.



BCGS members make their way through the Peter and Rosalie Johnson Collections Center as part of the January program.

Collections center tour

Benton County Genealogical Society members and guests were treated to a tour of the Peter and Rosalie Johnson Collections Center. Thanks to Mary Gallagher for sharing the vast collection of history within its walls. The Benton County Historical Society & Museum has been busy with the addition of the Horner Collection, which numbers about 60,000 artifacts.



The collections center holds a lot of history and as a result, it's a tight fit to make it through the aisles.

CONTACT US

BCGS BOARD

Names, email and phone numbers removed for security reasons.

See: www.bcgs-oregon.org

Automate your Google searches

From Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter (published Dec. 16)

One of the best tools for transcribing old handwritten documents is called GenScriber, a FREE program for Windows and Linux created by Les Hardy. A Macintosh version is also available although it operates as a Windows version packaged inside a wineskin wrapper.

GenScriber is a transcription editor for census records, church records, birth, marriage, baptisms, burials, index records, and more. GenScriber is useful for transcribing both free-form text as well as columns of data, such as U.S. census records. It is designed to be used for easily transcribing digital images of old, handwritten documents.

GenScriber is simple to use. Of course, any data entry program is only as good as its ability to import from and export to other applications. GenScriber will import and export several different formats. It can import a GEDCOM file. Imported files are always converted to CSV files. Exported files may be in CSV, ODS, XML or GEDCOM formats.

GenScriber is free for non-commercial use. GenScriber may be found at genscriber.com/genapps. A number of videos showing how to use GenScriber may be found at genscriber.com/genapps/genscriber/help/tips_and_tutorials/200_videos.

Benton County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 1646
Philomath, OR 97370