

Workshops and Seminars

The Mid-Valley Genealogical Society sponsored several workshop, and the first was a big one! This workshop, held May 17 and 18, 1974, was advertised:

"Arlene Eakle and Nancy Poolman at LBCC

"An advanced workshop in three parts:
"Friday evening: Solving American Pedigrees
- Migrational Patterns.

"Saturday morning: How to Find Birth,
Marriage and Death Dates Prior to 1900.
"Saturday afternoon: Solving American Pedigrees-
Land, Probate, Court and Tax Records.

"From the Genealogical Institute,
Salt Lake City, Utah"

With little money in the treasury, the members arranged with Linn-Benton Community College for space for the workshop and personally provided transportation from Portland and in-home housing for the presenters. We can assume the housing included breakfast, and maybe other meals, too.

Subsequent events were far easier to arrange, as they were one-session meetings. On May 10, 1974, Ron Bremer was the speaker. In April 1981 the Society held a Research Session. On May 9, 1988 Leland Metzler from Heritage Quest spoke. On November 4, 1989, Ron Bremer spoke; on March 15, 1990, Leland Metzler of Heritage Quest returned. And on May 16, 1994, Ron Bremer again came, with the Benton Historical Society as cosponsor.

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We close this series with a quotation from a speech by Mrs. Esther Ervine, possibly made at the September, 1971, organizational meeting, and preserved on page 5 of the first Historical book.

"WHY GENEALOGY?"

Some take up genealogy purely as a hobby with all the incident benefits of a hobby. Some take up the subject as a means to preserve precious records for their patriotic organizations. Still others find genealogy an interesting sideline to the study of history and many more look upon it as an integral part of the doctrine of their church. But the urge which drives some more than others is that of a solver of puzzles. The genealogist becomes a master detective with an almost impossible problem to solve. An immense jigsaw puzzle lies in front of him, each piece of which must be painstakingly located before fitted into place.

But even deeper and more vital comes the realization, after a study of his family tree, that not only are the chromosomes of these ancestors passed on from generation to generation but their every word and deed, their very emotions have had some effect on their descendants. The genealogist can show the importance of the individual man in his present life and his responsibility to the future. The genealogist can prove his own immortality. No less a man than Daniel Webster has said, "Those who do not consider themselves as a link connecting the past with the future, do not perform their duty to the world."

The genealogist must be both tolerant and democratic. Tolerant of those on his tree who have "slipped" for he can see how circumstances molded their fates. Democratic, because he becomes aware that in the last analysis all peoples came from the same source. The genealogist may point with pride to some one illustrious name on his family tree, but he feels a great deal prouder of the hundred unassuming, hard-working, God-fearing people who never got their name on the printed page. The genealogist desires to breath life into the history of his own family.