



Benton County Genealogical Society

NEWSLETTER

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<http://www.begs-oregon.org>

LOCATED IN *Philomath, Oregon*
FOUNDED IN 1971 IN CORVALLIS, OREGON

Note from the President...

Hello fellow BCGS Members:

We have cancelled all BCGS activities for May and June and have high hopes that we will be able to resume our normal meetings and programs in September.

I hope you are all well and being safe during these uncertain and trying times. Cabin Fever can be a challenge, try to be positive and get things done around the house that you need and keep in touch with your family and friends.

George Davidson

The Benton County Genealogical Society

TYPICALLY meets on the 2nd Saturday of each month, September—June. The business meeting begins at 10 a.m. at the Benton County Historical Society, 1101 Main St., Philomath. ADA parking and access are available at the rear of the building. The program begins at 10:30 a.m. Refreshments follow at the Museum Annex. Guests are always welcome!

Coming Events

All meetings and programs are cancelled for May and June.

The library remains closed until further notice.

Stay tuned for announcements about our fall events and programs!!

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Anticipated 2020 BCGS Programs

10:30 am to noon

Benton County Historical Society Moreland Auditorium

July and August is Summer Break

Watch for announcements about the BCGS Library being open.

September 12 *Gathering Back Together & Sharing*

October 10 *Patti Waitman-Ingebretsen*

Stories of her great grandfather, Silas Norman Lilly, and local Benton County history

November 14 *Pam Vestal*

“How to Write Ancestral Stories Your Relatives Will Want to Read”

December 12 *Silent Auction and Potluck*

STAY TUNED

for rescheduling of BCGS programs we've had to miss

Tim O'Brien: Family Search—Finding Digital Records

Chris Meinicke: Sons and Daughters of Oregon Pioneers

Captain Mark Stevens Civil War - Life of a Soldier and more

Writing Challenge

The Writing Group was challenged by Sue VanLaere to follow the lead of Amy Johnson Crow in having a writing theme for each week of 2020. The suggestion is to use the theme of the week as the basis for writing a paragraph (or more) about an ancestor. You don't have to be a member of the writing group to try this out.

Which of your ancestors comes to mind when these themes are proffered?

April 29-May 5 . Where There's a Will

May 6-12: Service

May 13-19: Travel

May 20-26: Tombstone

“The tombstone above his grave was huge. The information on it rang true with the stories I had heard all my life..He was a member of George Washington's body guard...”

Send a paragraph or two to Ann Bateman for inclusion in the next newsletter!

WEBINAR

MyHeritage's Unique Technologies

sponsored by

Oregon Genealogical Society

May 15 a.m.

Pacific Time

By Chris Darrington

Technology has revitalized genealogy, opening new frontiers for research, preservation, & sharng while maintaining the thrill of the detective hunt. My Heritage's key technologies are precisely the intersection of technology and genealogy. SearchConnect, Global name Translation, DNA Matching, PedigreeMap and Consistency Checker are just a few.

Register

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/888038564625365774>

A recent article in Psychology Today, [Genealogy Gives Us the Strength to Persevere](#), provides a perspective on how knowing your family's past can help in getting through a crisis.

The History Guy's YouTube video entitled, [History Lost: The Tragedy of the 1890 Census](#), shares the story of the fire that destroyed the 1890 United States Federal Census.

Wedding of the Waters

book review by Linda Olsen

For anyone searching for information about the Erie Canal, its early history, how it impacted the economic growth in New York and the early development of New York state, I would highly recommend *Wedding of the Waters* by Peter L. Bernstein. This very well written and researched tome includes quotes taken from historical documents, newspapers accounts, and letters from the 1700s to 1825 discussing the advantages and disadvantages of such a monumental undertaking. Glorious promises from supporters of the canal project and tremendous out cries from non-supporters over the huge expense were publicly addressed.

Early letters, newspapers and committee reports reflected the struggles to build such a canal. George Washington and DeWitt Clinton were great supporters of a canal to connect the more developed eastern side and rural western side of New York across 363 miles connecting the Great Lakes to the Atlantic Ocean. Visionaries supported the canal mainly for economic benefits for New York.



Discussions and bitter arguments raged among political rivals for and against undertaking the mammoth canal project. Most of the population west of the Appalachian mountain range were farmers and did not have much influence in the decision making process. Plenty of questions remained for the supporters of the canal project to answer. How and where would the canal be constructed? The only way from the Atlantic to the Great Lakes was either over or through the Appalachians. Where exactly would be the best route? Should they start digging at New York City or go farther upstate using the Hudson River and begin the westward route at Albany? Many other questions and ideas were tossed around with no specific decisions until someone to manage the project could be found. Who were the expert canal engineers of the time? Several supporters traveled to Europe to tour their many canals, none of which were nearly as complicated as what early supporters had in mind for the grand canal of New York. How many years would it take to complete such a project, how many men would be needed to dig the canal by hand with picks and shovels, what would be the water source needed to fill the canal, who knew how to construct the locks needed to raise and lower the canal boats over the many difficult elevation changes between eastern and western New York? However, the all important, urgent question was funding. How would this enormous project be paid for? The state of New York was recovering from the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812 at the same time canal supporters were developing plans. The state of New York was not willing to fund the canal.

Eventually private investors were convinced to invest in the canal. The idea of making New York City a world wide port of destination for imports and exports was intriguing while opponents argued that such a wild scheme would cost a fortune and never be completed. DeWitt Clinton supported the canal and never quit using it politically to further his career. When he became governor of New York, he used every opportunity to espouse his support of the Erie Canal as a huge economic boon to all of New York. His arrogant personality did not help his cause, but he kept speaking in support of the canal at every opportunity expressing the future economic benefit to New York and specifically New York City. It was tough to make headway during the recession following the war of 1812. The country operated on promissory notes and did not have a standard currency for sometime after the War of 1812. However, when word spread that canal builders were needed to help dig the canal and would be paid a fair wage, workers, mainly those who had lost their jobs in the recession, were not hard to find. By 1817 the digging began, then the canal made real progress while stimulating New York's economy.

(continued on page 4)

Wedding of the Waters (continued from page 3)

Whatever problems in construction appeared, someone eventually solved them with American know-how as the profession of Civil Engineering did not exist yet. A newer limestone product similar to concrete was developed. An ingenious method for pulling out stumps cleared land along side the canal at a much faster pace with less brute strength and horse power. Many other construction problems were solved on the job.

By 1820 the construction on the middle part of the canal from Schenectady westward toward the Mohawk Valley was completed. This attracted larger investors. Riding the canal boats proved to be a safe, smooth, relaxing and lovely trip as opposed to the earlier bumpy rides in wagons or on horseback over unimproved, rut-filled trails while sometimes dragging a boat along to use on some rivers. Slow travel over the rough trails meant weeks to reach a destination when traveling east/west across the state. Travel on the poor or nonexistent trails was also limited to the good weather part of the year limiting the amount of trading that could take place.

The time it took to reach a destination became a major economic benefit almost immediately. Larger, flat-bottomed boats called Durhams, already in use elsewhere, could now be used on the canals. Shipping goods and produce in days instead of months, and sending much larger amounts of cargo at a time substantially lowered the cost. Population expanded along the canal in towns that provided food, rest and overnight lodgings. Public opinion began to change and farmers who owned land along the canal no longer resisted its progress.

Illustrations helped visualize the elaborate series of locks needed to raise and lower the canal boats through the changes in elevation and around the many barriers and navigating around steep falls and especially around Niagara Falls. Swampy areas created other hardships for the canal diggers. Not only did the heavy, sticky mud make digging nearly impossible, the mosquitoes were unbearable until the summer months. Buffalo, New York, only had a few hundred inhabitants when the canal waters first spilled into Lake Erie.



Docks were needed to load and unload the canal boats. As more infrastructure was built around the canal this also stimulated the economy. As travel and cargo moved quickly, along the completed sections of the canal, more inhabitants saw its benefits and realized how quickly their products could be transported and sold in more distant locations in way less time. The days of east/west travel struggling through rutted trails were over. Ports throughout the Great Lakes region and beyond would benefit from access to New York City as a world import and export capital of the world.

Once the Erie Canal was completed in 1825, Governor DeWitt Clinton filled a keg with water from Lake Erie and traveled on the canal to the Atlantic and poured the symbolic keg of water into the Atlantic Ocean declaring the “Wedding of the Waters” and completion of the most expensive, complicated and profitable canal ever built. New York City secured its position as an international port thereby securing economic security for New York state and completing the ambitions of those over the past 100 years who supported the dream of an east/west canal across New York state.

Home page for the Erie Canal <http://www.eriecanal.org/>

Mother's Day in Germany

In the 1920s, Germany had the lowest birthrate in Europe. The declining trend was continuing. It was attributed to women's participation in the labor market. Politicians - left & right, churchwomen, and feminists believed mothers should be honored but couldn't agree on a method. The groups did agree on the promotion of the values of motherhood. In 1923, *Muttertag*, the Mother's Day holiday as imported from America, was adopted. The head of the Association of German Florists cited "the inner conflict of our *Volk* and the loosening of the family" as his reason for introducing the holiday. He hoped the holiday would unite the divided country. In 1925, the Mother's Day Committee joined the task force for the recovery of the *volk*, and the holiday stopped depending on commercial interests. It began emphasizing the need to increase the population in Germany by promoting motherhood

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Facebook: *Sue Van Laere*

Publicity: *Lois Courtney*

Library Volunteers: *Lois & Sue*

Photographer: *Linda Olsen*

Financial Report

At the end of March we had a balance of \$6,001 in the bank. We are ahead for the year by \$190. We have no upcoming expenses as we have cancelled two programs. We did have a March expense of \$50 for the cost of our library WiFi connection for 5 months. The rate was going to almost double and after a discussion with library volunteers and staff, we decided it wasn't getting enough use to justify the expense. Our WiFi service has been discontinued.

Lois Courtney, Treasurer

On a cemetery stone in Elgin County, Ontario, Canada:

He was a humanitarian
He loved his mother-in-law

Do you have something you would like to see included in the newsletter?

Next Newsletter Deadline

May 27

Notice: Benton County Genealogical Society provides links to websites as a service to subscribers. Linked web sites are not controlled by Benton County Genealogical Society and the Society is not responsible for the information, advertising, products, resources or other material of any linked site. The inclusion of any link does not imply endorsement by Benton County Genealogical Society. In addition, please be aware that your use of any linked site is subject to the terms and conditions applicable to that site. Direct any questions regarding linked sites to the webmaster of that site.

The Benton County Genealogical Society **Newsletter** is published monthly September through June. The *Newsletter* editor is Ann Bateman. Send comments and information to her at tabateman@peak.org.

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