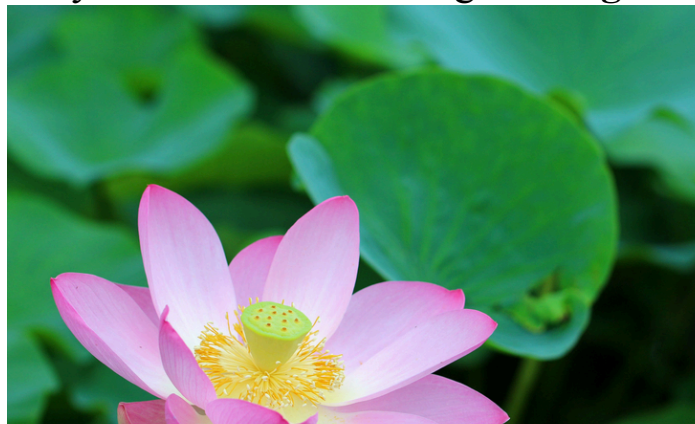


Hello fellow members,  
Spring is coming soon and enjoy the  
flowers as they smile upon us. Hope to  
see you at our next meeting. **George**



**' Benton County**  
**Genealogical Society**  
**NEWSLETTER**

Located in Philomath, Oregon  
Volume 43 No.4 March  
And April 2024  
founded in 1971

## SYMPATHY

**It is with sadness to learn the passing of two of our members:**

**Mary Dean Snelling: December 21 1941- January 4 2024**

Mary Dean was a soft spoken person who was always glad to see you. We had fun talking about anything but especially genealogy of course. Her life was filled with love of education, from Librarian to teaching of all levels, and of course, her family. She went to Europe several times to gather her information, and then shared us with what she found. Mary Dean will be very missed.

**Thomas (Tom) Herbert Bateman: June 3 1943 - December 19 2023**

Tom's life started in Corpus Christi, Texas as a baby. His life was soon filled with travel of every kind when he was young. His family came to Philomath for a time, but most of their time was in places such as Costa Rica, and U. Department of Defense. Ann and Tom returned to Philomath in 1997 and retired in 2003. They volunteered in our Genealogical Library and helped in many ways in the Library .  
Tom will be well remembered.

## Book Review

# Ellis Island -- the Gateway to America

## Book Review

Lovely, full page photographs of immigrants waiting in long lines, children dressed in their finest clothing representing the country they were from and families carrying all their possessions, fill this book. The chronology 1600 - 1989 details a review of Ellis Island beginning when it was little more than a few acres of manmade land. After many expansions, Ellis Island was designed to accommodate immigrants wanting to enter the U.S. Thirty million immigrants came to America between 1820 - 1920. Most of them came into the port of NY through Ellis Island after 1892. Most early immigrants were from Ireland, Germany and Scandinavia. Later arriving immigrants were mostly from Southern and Eastern Europe. Immigrants waited on large ships to be transported by ferry boats to Ellis Island a few hundred at a time.

Everyone was interviewed and had physical examinations. Not everyone was permitted to enter America. Immigrants with a disease or were suspected of being radicals or saboteurs, especially during the war years, were returned to the country from which they came. For about 10% of the immigrants "The Gateway to America" became the "Island of Tears."

Restoration of the Registry Room took laborious time to revive the history and art work in this building and by 1990 it became the Ellis Island Immigration Museum with an oral history recording studio, exhibits, theaters and library. Visitors also explored the grounds and imagined what it was like for the many immigrants or perhaps their ancestors to pass through this place called Ellis Island.

Essays: Norman Kotker, Shirley C. Barden, Charles Hagen and Robert Towombly and others Edited by Susan Jonas.

Published by Aperture in Association with the National Park Service U.S. Department of Interior and Montclair State College ISBN: 0-89381-397-4 (No longer in print). Many are for sale online.

This book was one of our BCGS donation books which were being sold to members for \$2. What a prize. By LINDA OLSEN



## Castle Garden

Before there was an Ellis Island, there was a Castle Garden

Between 1790 and 1820, an estimated 5,000 to 6,000 people freely immigrated to the United States each year. The sailing ships they traveled in were overcrowded and inadequate for passengers' health and comfort. Starting in 1820, the ships had to insure safer traveling and ship captains had to provide passenger lists to U.S. customs officials.

Castle Garden, open from 1824, was originally a resort. However in 1855 it was leased to the NY State Commissioners of Immigration. Castle Garden opened to immigrants in 1855 on the eve of a wave of European immigration. During the next 35 years, more than 8 million people passed through Castle Garden, especially from Germany and Ireland, and later from Italy and Eastern Europe.

By the end of the 1860's, over 31 percent of immigrants were German. Through 1890, most of the immigrants were Ireland, Germany, England, Scotland, Wales, and Scandinavia. Huge numbers of immigrants went through Castle in the 1870's and 1880.

One of those immigrants was my **Grandma**. She was born Caroline Christine Albertine Rittgarn on February 21, 1881, in Wustenfelde, Grimmen, Prussia. Her parents were able to get a permit for emigration in August 24. The next step was to get to Hamburg, about 200 miles away. They certainly knew they were never going back, they had five little ones to be cared for, and they probably didn't have much money. The next day would bring more to think about, yet it was a wonder to be doing it. And they weren't going alone; some relatives were going along.

They departed from Hamburg, Prussia, on October 5 and arrived on Oct. 20 in Castle Garden. They lived in Danvers, Illinois, for 6 years and then went to Nebraska for the rest of their days.



My grandmother Caroline (Lena)  
About 18 or 20

## Would you like to write yours or ancestors stories but don't know how to start?

**First**, you can start with yourself. You're the person who knows you best!

You probably have wished to have asked questions from your mother and father and others. It's just the same for your children and others who want to see who you are. You might even want to know yourself better.

### **Here is how I started to tell my stories**

I always had something in my head, and I just started writing. I'm pretty sure that it was this story:

#### ***Christmas Tree Hunting 2012.***

This is the story of it being about 4:30 in the afternoon, and deciding to take two of our grandkids into our trees and cut the perfect one. We found one and suddenly it was DARK. We cut the tree and the rest of the story is full of dark, trees, a ditch, rain, blackberries, a racing dog and a scream, and much more/

I liked the memory of the "**Christmas Tree**" so much that I just kept writing other things that came to my mind. Today it's in a large three-ring binder that has most of the stories. I'm still writing!

#### **CHILDHOOD**

**Mike & Me**

**California**

**Wisconsin**

**Oregon**

#### **Start Writing**

As you begin writing, don't be too critical of your writing. Get the information, stories, feelings, events recorded first. Later you can polish what you have written. Don't worry about grammar and punctuation. You can fix it later. HAVE FUN!

The Christmas Tree story is on pg. 4

## Christmas Tree Hunting 2012

About 4:30 in the afternoon a couple of days before Christmas, grandkids Bryson and Katie came over to say it was time to go look for a Christmas tree down in the woods. It was a nice day out so I put on my coat and we started down the hill. It took about ten minutes to get down to where we might be able to find a good tree. As we started looking, we realized it was getting dark already.

But it was fairly warm, so we just kept looking. We finally found a tree for their house and Bryson cut it down. Suddenly it was pitch black and big rain droplets started coming down. Without a flashlight, we tried to figure out the easiest way to get the tree back up the hill and finally decided that it would be best to go to Columbine and come up Marys River Estates road that way. I knew there was a deep ditch we'd have to cross to get over to Columbine. I told the kids that I couldn't go that way, but they should, and I'd walk up the hill through the woods.

I took the bow saw and Jake, the black lab, with me and trudged up the hill. Rain came down steadily in even bigger drops. I was thoroughly soaked, and I could see less and less through my glasses. My protector Jake took off and I was half blinded by rain, but I still had my trusty saw for protection. I could see a bit of light if I looked straight up, and I was sort of familiar with where the trees were closer together. I was trying to avoid that area because I didn't want to plow through blackberries and ferns.

Thinking I was on the right track, I kept plodding along, using the saw as a cane. The woods stretched straight ahead, blacker and blacker, and I knew I was heading through the thickest trees. Telling myself that I just had to keep going uphill and I would run into either our house or Andrew and Kim's, I held down the panic. All of a sudden I heard something come rushing toward me through the brush. I screamed, then realized it was Jake. I was so shocked, I think I forgot to swear.

Jake took off again, but by that time I saw a light in the forest, so to speak. It turned out to be our house. I dragged myself up the rest of the hill and went into the house completely soaked.

All this time, I had been worrying about Bryson and Katie, too. I called over to their house and they had just made it home. Katie was in the shower trying to get warm. Later, they told me they had climbed the fence between our property and Wren Hill, went down to Columbine and then climbed the road to get home. Every time a car came by, they'd step into the ditch to make sure they didn't get run over. I hope they'll always remember this time as one of their more interesting expeditions with Grandma! Sue Van Laere

**PO Box 1646, Philomath, OR 97370**

Voted Positions

President: George Davidson, 928-205-2121

[bcgsor@gmail.com](mailto:bcgsor@gmail.com)

Vice President: Kathryn Moss

[mosskathryn@gmail.com](mailto:mosskathryn@gmail.com)

Secretary: Linda Olsen

Treasurer: Lois Courtney

[loiscourtney@cmug.com](mailto:loiscourtney@cmug.com)

Appointed Positions

Membership: OPEN

Librarian: Liza Wilson

Programs: OPEN

Historian: OPEN

Photographer: OPEN

Audit: Connie Patterson

Refreshments: Pegge Gee

Host: Kathryn Moss

Research: Lois Courtney

Website: George Davidson

Facebook: Payton James-Amberg

Newsletter: Sue Van Laere

**What is your most  
embarrassing  
genealogical mistake?**

"Marking myself as  
dead." -Chris Ferraiolo

"I thought Unk was an  
actual surname." -Peter  
Roberts

"I wrote a semi-  
fictional book." -Terry  
Jackson

"I followed the shaky  
leaves with no questions  
asked." -Michael Stills

"I wrote down the  
information, but not the  
source." -Star Kline

"Awfully bold of you to  
think I've peaked! -John  
Vaskie

from WikiTree Feb 28, 2024,  
online newsletter

Thanks to Linda Olsen