HAPPY NEW YEAR?

This season signals the time of the changing of our officers (see article on p. 3) and it seems reasonable to review some of the initiatives of this past year and look ahead. A few major initiatives included:

The Financial Review Committee presented its final report to the membership. It outlined areas in the Society’s financial processes and where improvements could be made. The Board continues to implement their recommendations so as members, you can feel confident in the fiscal health of the organization. While this was not a financial review, the committee noted that the Board allocates its financial resources very conservatively.

Library Work Days have resulted in some changes to make our collection even more accessible and its cataloging up to date. This involved volunteers cataloging our historic books, and identifying duplicates and preparing them for the Spring Sale at the Spring Seminar. Volunteers are always welcomed on Library Work Days.

The Society held two terrific seminars this year. Our fall seminar, ““Re” -Search and Prove”, was a series of concurrent sessions taught by local experts on topics that ranged from diseases of the 1800s to mapping with Google. Ginny Sommarstrom was our keynote speaker on using the FAN Club (Friends, Associates and Neighbors) to solve brick walls. The Spring Seminar was equally well received. Judy Russell, CG, CGL presented a great overview of the impact of the law on our ancestors (do you know what a femme covert is?) and then followed that up with presentations on probate/wills, women and the law and the use of court records. A truly terrific seminar, no matter what your skill level.

We applied for and received grants that have assisted us with the scanning of the VFW cards and the 1890 project. The 1890 Project needs volunteers. Call the office and let us know if you can help. The SGS Bulletin will soon be accessible through the Seattle Public library due to our on-going relationship with them. And best of all, they will be searchable.

Volunteers in a number of areas are needed. A few have been noted above. Don’t be shy. Just call the desk and let them know you wish to help.

And best of all, we get to look forward to the Society’s 90th Birthday Bash!
Here are some topics of discussion with the SGS Board these last few months.

- We are celebrating the conclusion of the Annual Spring Seminar with Judy Russell. Judy’s presentation made the law, no matter the era, extremely accessible and very helpful in answering those questions of “Now, why did they do THAT?”
- 9 June, from 1-3:00 PM is our annual membership meeting. Come and hear your Board report about its activities and vote on the proposed budget.
- We have new Publications and Writing Guidelines. These include a release statement to be signed by all authors of the SGS Bulletin. These permissions will allow us to post the SGS Bulletin on our website.
- The library continues to be improved with every Library Work Day. Substantial progress has been made in reorganization in the library. Volunteer and make a difference!
- The Seattle Public Library, working with SGS, has digitized the SGS Bulletin from 1951 to 2001. This will soon be on line and available to all on the SPL page.
- Director of Operations, Christine Schomaker, continues to implement the recommendations of the Disaster Recovery Plan.
- With the recent success and continued demand for the advanced/intermediate classes, such as the one taught by Judy Russell, expect to see more opportunities in the future. But, don’t be shy. Every session has something for everyone.
- The scanning and indexing of the VFW Post 1416 membership cards is now complete. The scanning was funded by a 4Culture Heritage Preservation grant. They continue to be a great partner to our on-going activities. Thank Ginny Sommarstrom for all her leadership.
- Ginny wrote another grant requesting $6000 from the National Endowment for the Humanities for preservation assistance. We won’t know the result until January 2014. Grants like this are critical to the sustainability of the library. If you have grant writing experience or just are a good writer, let us know. You can help.
- The Treasurer’s report for this past month looks good, but until all the costs are in for the Seminar, we will not have the full picture. The Board, however, continues to be very frugal. It is anticipated that the rent will increase as will the property taxes for this coming year. There will be a final report at the June membership meeting.
- Our 90th birthday is this October and the Board is planning some special events throughout the year. Stay tuned!

LIBRARY WORK DAY

On 28 April, a group of dedicated volunteers converged on the SGS Library to work on the collection under the direction of Amber Case, SGS Library Director. Activities included cataloging recent acquisitions, preparing surplus books for the Spring Sale and relocation of the NEHGS collection to eye level. Caught in the act of volunteering were Linda Fitzgerald, Therese Berg, Richard Ambur and Marilyn Rose (left to right) Thanks to all the volunteers who assisted.
Elections have been held and the following Board members will serve for the 2013-2014 year:

President: Marilyn Rose
Vice President: Jean Roth* (not pictured)
Secretary: Ann Emory (not pictured)
Treasurer: Therese Berg
Education: Karen A. Thompson
Library: Daniel Harmon, MD
Membership: Julia Marconi
Operations: Christine Schomaker*
Publications: Jill Morelli*
Volunteers: Michelle Khuon*
Past President: Linda Fitzgerald
SPL Liaison: John LaMont (appointed)*

* indicates returning for another term

We wish to give a hearty thanks to our departing Board members for their outstanding service to the organization:

Linda Fitzgerald (President)
Linda Dougherty (Secretary)
Richard Morrill (Treasurer)
Ida Skarson McCormick (Education)
Amber Case (Library, not pictured)
Pat Younie (Membership, not pictured)
Ginny Sommarstrom (Past President)

Volunteer Day

Volunteer Day is when we open the library and allow the volunteers to do research and/or talk with our resident experts without the distractions of needing to be on call at the front desk or performing any of the myriads of tasks our volunteers undertake. It is the Society’s way of saying “Thanks”. In addition, each attendee who had donated 50 or more hours received large dark green tote bag. Thanks to everyone who brought food. It was delicious.
Judy Russell was the featured speaker for the SGS Spring Seminar held on 18 May 2013 at Fairview Christian School. This event was attended (see photo below) by 107 genealogists from the Puget Sound area. Judy is trained as a lawyer which brings a unique set of skills to genealogy and a greater understanding of the documents held by state and federal offices and which of those provide genealogical information.

Judy began with an introductory topic of “How Knowing the Law Makes Us Better Genealogists.” Covered was the importance of the Genealogical Proof Standard, a set of standards that Ginny Sommarstrom presented at the Fall Seminar. Also covered were the different types of law, what they governed and, more importantly, what they did not cover. Judy made the law very approachable.

Judy gave freely of her time before and after the presentations to answer this specific question from Sandra Johnson.

She concluded the morning sessions with “Where There is -- or Isn’t -- a Will” covering the legal process of death, types of wills, probate records and again, how knowing the law at the time can answer those questions that we have about why our ancestors did things in the order they did.

After lunch was a session on “Don’t Forget the Ladies” with a focus on the difficulty of identifying women as they became legally subsumed by their husband as soon as they married (femme covert). Throughout all of the sessions, Judy incorporated Washington laws and how they evolved, as well.

The last session of the day was “Using Court Records to Tell the Story of Our Ancestor’s Lives.” The examples illustrated how court records can be used to provide context for your family histories. Some examples included finding the cost of a pint of beer and dinner in the early 1800s, under what conditions were individuals placed in the stocks and what it cost to raise a child in 1870—all outlined in the court records.

A wonderful handout was chock-full of resources for improving genealogical research. Look elsewhere in this newsletter for some of those sources which resonated with your Publications Director.
ADVANCED CLASS

With the expertise of Judy Russell, CG, CGL, available to us, the SGS Board scheduled an advanced class for 25 lucky SGS members on 19 May at the SGS Library. Judy presented a case study, using her own family, showing how circumstantial evidence can be used to provide genealogical proof. No vital records--birth, marriage or death--exist for Isabella Rankin (nee Gentry) Robertson.

Proving the case, using the Genealogical Proof Standard, included document types such as census, land and family records, death records of the children and the process of elimination of identified candidates, Judy walked us through the process of developing the proof. Comparison tables were created which revealed where gaps or similarities existed.

SGS has been asked in the past to provide such programs for intermediate and advanced genealogists. The Board supports that and anticipates similar classes in the future.
Events are held at the Seattle Genealogical Society Library unless stated otherwise. SGS classes are free to SGS members and are $5 for nonmembers. Call SGS at 206-522-8658 for information about program cancellations or closures during adverse weather conditions. This listing is subject to change or additions; for up-to-date info: http://www.seattlegenealogicalsociety.com>

June 2013

1  Saturday, 10:15 am – 12:15 pm, CANADIAN INTEREST GROUP.  
   Led by David Robert.

4  Tuesday, 5:30 – 7:00 pm, TOUR THE GENEALOGY SECTION OF THE SEATTLE PUBLIC LIBRARY.  
   Location: The SPL Central in downtown, 1000 Fourth Avenue, Seattle 98104. Phone: 206-386-4636 or go to http://www.spl.org for information.

9  Sunday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, SGS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING.  
   Installation of new officers and directors, and adoption of 2013-14 SGS budget.

11 Tuesday, 10:00 am – 12:00 pm, HERITAGE CRAFTS TUESDAYS CLASS: Your Family on Tiles.  
   We will be making magnets, tumbled marble coasters or a picture block with your 2x2 or 4x4 family photos. Limited to 10 participants. Email: brightgenealogy@gmail.com to attend and receive a supply list. Presenters: Mary Roddy and Cary Bright.

12 Wednesday, 7:00 – 9:00 pm, MAC USER GROUP.  
   Held at the Fiske Foundation Library in Madison Park; 1644 43rd Ave. East, Seattle 98112. Led by Lou Daly, Chair and Diane Hettrick, Co-Chair. This group is co-sponsored by SGS. For information contact the Fiske at www.fiskelibrary.org.

15 Saturday, IRISH & GERMAN Interest groups on summer break.  
   Will resume meeting on Saturday, 21 September.

29 Saturday, 10:00-12:30 pm, DNA Interest Group  
   North Seattle Alliance church, Cary Bright and Herb McDaniel, Co-Chair. SGSDNASIG@gmail.com

29 Saturday, 2:00 – 4:00 pm, UMBRELLA WRITERS GROUP MEETING.  
   Join with members of the established SGS small writers groups and other SGS members interested in writing about genealogy and family history. Help form new small writers groups of 5-8 people each. The public is invited (nonmember fee: $5). Focus on success stories and tips for writers. For information contact SGSEducation@gmail.com.

July 2013

4  Thursday – 8 Monday, FOURTH OF JULY HOLIDAY, SGS LIBRARY CLOSED.  
   SGS Library re-opens Tuesday, 9 July.

7  Sunday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, VETERANS OF CALVARY CEMETERY TOUR.  
   Meet at Calvary Cemetery, 5041 35th Avenue NE, Seattle. Join Amber Case and Lisa Oberg for a walking tour of Calvary Cemetery. This tour will highlight veterans laid to rest at Calvary as well as interesting grave symbolism. Please be advised the tour will include walking across grassy uneven surfaces and up hills. Tour is limited to 25 participants and advance registration is required. Please email Amber at ajrock@uw.edu to register.

13 Saturday, 10:00 – 11:30 am, UNDERSTANDING THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (NARA).  
   Located at NARA, 6125 Sand Point Way NE, Seattle 98115 (located across the street from the SGS Library). Advance registration is advised, To register call 206-336-5115 or email: seattle.archives@nara.gov. This is a FREE workshop.
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13 Saturday, 1:00 – 2:30 pm, THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES (NARA) ONLINE.
NARA is working to make their 12 billion original documents more readily available by placing document descriptions and digital images online. Come find out how to access these resources, including an update of the new indexes for the 1940 US census! Advance registration is advised. Classes are held on a first come, first served basis. To register, call 206-336-5115, or email seattle.archives@nara.gov. This is a FREE workshop.

14 Sunday, 2:00-4:00 pm, BEYOND ANCESTRY.COM: SEARCHING FOR YOUR ANCESTORS ONLINE
learn about other resources, Bothell Library meeting room. Presenter: Claudia Brelan

20 Saturday, IRISH & GERMAN INTEREST GROUPS on summer break.
Will resume meeting on Saturday, 21 September.

20 Saturday, 10:15 am – 12:15 pm, SOLVING PROBLEMS WITH GENEALOGICAL PROOF STANDARD (GPS)
Stymied by a common surname used by unrelated families? The Genealogical Proof Standard (GPS) can help solve difficult genealogical problems, even those considered "brick walls." The common problem of identifying the next generation—an ancestor's parents—will be demonstrated for two Clark sisters of Ashtabula County, Ohio. Applying the GPS involves these steps: a reasonably exhaustive search for sources; source documentation; analysis and correlation of the information collected; resolution of any conflicting evidence, and writing a conclusion. Presenter: Edward R. Godfrey.

August 2013

3 Saturday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, GRAND ARMY OF THE REPUBLIC CEMETERY TOUR.
Meet at the Grand Army of the Republic (GAR) Cemetery located at 1200 E Howe Street, Seattle (across the street from Lake View Cemetery). Join Amber Case and Lisa Oberg for a walking tour of the GAR Cemetery. You will learn about the lives of men who fought in the Civil War and the impact they had on Seattle and the surrounding communities. Tour is limited to 25 participants and advance registration is required. Please email Amber at ajbrock@uw.edu to register.

17 Saturday, IRISH & GERMAN INTEREST GROUPS on summer break.
Will resume meeting on Saturday, 21 September.

18 Sunday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, BREAKING THROUGH BRICK WALLS.
Do you have a branch in your family tree that just won't grow? Come listen to three case studies from Lisa Oberg, Michelle Khuon, and Amber Case, highlighting a specific genealogical problem from their family tree and learn the strategies they employed to overcome this "brick wall."

24 Sunday, 1:00 – 3:00 pm, UMBRELLA WRITERS GROUP MEETING.
Join with members of the SGS small writers groups and other SGS members interested in writing about genealogy and family history. The public is invited (non-member fee: $5). Speakers: (1) Jill Morelli on publishing her family histories and (2) Sarah Fleming on publishing her family history article in the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. Success stories and tips.

31 Saturday, August – 2 Monday, September, LABOR DAY HOLIDAY, SGS LIBRARY CLOSURE.
SGS Library reopens on Tuesday, 3 September.

Books and other recommended readings by Judy:


Our Volunteer of the Quarter is Dona Bubelis. Dona Bubelis is at the SGS library almost every Thursday and is always willing to lend a hand. Dona retired from the Seattle Public Library in 2010, where she worked as a Periodicals Librarian. She brings her library expertise to SGS by checking in and organizing our periodical collection as well as countless other library tasks, including helping with our membership database, working as a desk volunteer and helping out on library workdays. Dona is a long time resident of the Seattle area, having graduated from Federal Way High School and from the University of Washington in Library & Information Science. She is also a contributor to FindAGrave, posting her parents’ burial information (Hales in Boone Co., Indiana.) Give Dona a warm “thank you” the next time you see her.

In addition, SGS is proud to name Bernice Keller as our nominee for the Washington State Genealogical Society’s Volunteer of the Year Award. Congratulations, Bernice.

GiveBIG Day netted SGS $2300 plus the additional match which has not yet been determined. Thanks everyone who made a contribution! The book sale at the seminar netted over $700.