

WMGS

NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 2714 MISSOULA MT 59806-2714

January 1995

OFFICERS

President / Editor	Judith Field	728-1628
Vice-President	Jo Potter	251-3588
Treasurer	Hazel Harley	549-1471
Recording Secretary	Wanda Alsaker	543-5388
Corr. Sec./Librarian	Paulette Parpart	728-8054
Missoula Public Librarian-	Paulette Parpart	721-2665

MEMBERSHIP

Dues are \$10.00 a year for individuals or \$12.00 a year for a family, and includes the Newsletter (Sept-May). Please include an extra \$1.00 with your dues if they would also like to be a member of the Montana State Genealogical Society through the Western Montana Genealogical Society. Please send dues to the society mailbox or bring to the next meeting.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Held on the second Thursday of the month (Sept.-May) at 7:00 pm in the large meeting room of the Missoula Public Library (unless otherwise noted).

QUERIES

We welcome queries from members (published free) and non-members (\$2.00 each). The society will undertake brief search requests (cemetery index, obituary indexes, etc...) for a fee of \$5.00 plus copy costs. Send queries/research requests to the P.O. Box address.

JANUARY MEETING

Thurs., Jan 12th at 7:00 pm at the Missoula Public Library. The guest speaker will be journalist, author, and publisher Susan Reneau. Susan is the author of **The Adventures of Moccasin Joe: The True Life Story Of Sgt. George S. Howard, 1872-1877**, and editor for the new book, **From The Peace To The Fraser: Newly Discovered North American Hunting and Exploration Journals, 1900-1930**. Both of these books include original diaries of young men from the mid 19th and early 20th centuries. Susan is the first WOMAN editor for the 108 year old Boone and Crockett Club. Her topic for the meeting will be "My Mama Done Told Me: Unraveling The Mysteries Of Diaries And Journals."

FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY

The current FHL hours are Mon., Tue., Thurs. & Sat. 12:00-4:00 PM and Tue., Wed. & Thurs. 7:00- 9:30 PM. Please call 543-6148 during library hours to reserve your computer time. Reservations are for 1 hour, but you can use the computer after your time is up if no one else wants to use the computer.

MISSOULA PUBLIC LIBRARY

NEW BOOK - Researching Public Records: How To Get Anything On Anybody by Vincent Parco. R

027.5097 PARCO GenColl. The book cover states that "Vincent Parco is a former state government investigator and owns one of the largest private detective agencies in New York." Quoting the review, this book "will show you how to gather information about credit ratings, unpaid tickets, criminal, corporate, and real estate records, and much more. The book also reveals exactly how you can discover bits of relevant information that are not documented on the public records by using various detective techniques, such as surveillance, interviews, and interrogation." It "will help you find things out faster and more efficiently than you ever thought possible. This book is a must for fledgling detectives as well as adoptees, birthparents, investors, brokers, journalists, researchers, students, and anyone who's curious about what's on the public record." This sounds like a very interesting book, if only to see what may be available about oneself in the public records! If you would like a copy for your own collection, the book is available from Citadel Press for \$8.95.

MONTANA STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

• BOARD MEETING

The Montana State Genealogical Society executive board meeting will be held in Dillon on Jan. 16th at the home of Darlene Hildreth, 15 Mic Lane at 10:30 AM (phone 683-5398). The Beaver Head-Hunters Genealogical Society in Dillon will be hosting the 1995 Montana State Genealogical Seminar so they will be giving us a tour of the seminar site at Western Montana College. Their regular genealogical society meeting will follow at 1:00 PM with a program on "Hooking Into The Internet."

• MONTANA STATE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY SEMINAR

The Montana State Genealogical Society will hold their annual seminar April 28-30, 1995 at the Western Montana College in Dillon. It will feature a Western Theme with several workshops, vendors, and activities. Two of the speakers will be David W. Folfon on "Assets Unknown" about finding missing heirs to various sums of money, and Shirley Parmenter who will speak on "English Genealogy" and on "Problem Solving In The United States." Registration and motel information should be in the March newsletter, as well as a more detailed schedule. Please mark these dates on your calendar. There is always something for everyone and you may find new avenues to pursue in your own research. (from Montana State Genealogical Society's Big Sky Roundup, Dec. 1995.)

OTHER SEMINAR ANNOUNCEMENTS

4 Corners Ancestor Fair - July 21-22, 1995, sponsored by the Washington County Historical Society, 509 W. Spring St., Fayetteville, AK 72701. This fair will have beginners workshops, an Indian research workshop, and a workshop on using the University of Arkansas Special Collections. Cost is by workshop attended, from \$5-\$10 @. For more information write to Chairman Ann Sugg at the society address or call her at (501) 521-2020. We have a few brochures available the WMGS.

IN THE MAIL

BIG HORN COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER, Box 51, Hardin, MT 59034, Dec. '94.

- **Prize for Genealogical or Family History Book** - If you have published such a book you could win a prize if you send a copy to the Washington Co. Genealogical Soc., Box 446, Washington Iowa 52353-0446. Deadline is June 30, 1995.
- **Looking For A Veteran** - from WWI, WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, Desert Storm. Try the American Legion Finders Seekers, Personnel Locator, P.O. Box 411007, St. Louis MO 63141. Send a SASE and \$15.00 along with your surname. They will send a listing of surname, location address, branch, and unit served with. (via Clark Co. Gen. Soc.)

THE LAST LEAF, 1477 HWY 200 S, Glendive MT 9330-9402, Vol 5-2.

- **Story on Dawson Co. gold strike of 1894.**

ROOT DIGGERS GENEALOGICAL SOC., P.O.Box 249, Glasgow MT 59230, Nov. '94.

WMGS NEWSLETTER

- **Debugging Heirlooms** - in your freezer!

SMOKE SIGNALS, Assiniboine Gen. Soc., Box 321, Havre MT 59501, Summer '94.

- **History of Loma, Montana**

THE TRI-COUNTY SEARCHER, Broken Mountains Genealogical Soc., Box 261, Chester MT, Sep. '94.

- **Chouteau Co. Marriage Index -D's**

FADED GENES, Lewis & Clark Co. Genealogical Soc., P.O. Box 5313, Helena MT 59604, Dec. '94.

- **Surname Index to 1994 Faded Genes, Vol. 11, 1-4**
- **Paf Quick Reference Source Guide**
- **Ohio Land and Tax Tips**
- **Helena Weekly Herald -Obits & Death Notices**

BITS AND BYTES



Newberry Library On-Line Catalogue - You can access the Newberry Library's on-line catalogue by telnetting to illinet at "illinet.aiss.uiuc.edu". You can also get to the Illinois State Historical Library through illinet.

Internet Connection - Costco has 2 books describing the Internet for under \$20.00 @. At least 1 of these comes with a program disc that will help you use Internet services. They had another little booklet and disc with similar programs for \$5.95.

SONS OF NORWAY CELEBRATE 100TH ANNIVERSARY ON JANUARY 16TH

On Monday, January 16th, the Sons of Norway will celebrate their 100th anniversary. The latest issue (Jan. '95) of the *Sons of Norway* magazine has a great article on Norwegian immigration to the U.S. Harold Fisher said that he will leave a copy of this article at the FHL.

Odd (Sverre) Lovoll's book, **The Promise of America: A History of the Norwegian-American People** is an excellent resource. Lovoll holds the King Olav V Chair in Scandinavian Studies at St. Olaf College in Northfield, MN.

Historians date Norwegian emigration as beginning in 1825 with the sailing of the sloop "Restauration" from Stavanger, Norway, with 52 people (crew and passengers) on board. All intended to emigrate to the USA. Most of them were from Rogaland and settled first in upstate New York before moving to the Fox River valley in Illinois to become one of the major "waystations" for other Norwegians coming through to the midwest. Cleng Peerson, the "father of emigration" or "the pathfinder" was the leader of the group.

The book is published by University of Minnesota Press 1984, ISBN 0-8166-1331-1 hardback or 0-8166-1334-6 paperback. The English language version is a translation of Lovoll's original Norwegian work, Det loeftrike landet, which was published in Norway by Universitetsforlaget in 1983. Lovoll's book is available from Sons of Norway Heritage Books in Minneapolis, MN.

Another book which tells of conditions in Norway which led to the emigrations is, Between Rocks And Hard Places by Ann Urness Gesme.

STATE RECORDS

Group says that state records are unnecessarily secret

Helena (AP) - Examining birth and death records for genealogical research is harder in Montana than in any other state, according to the Montana Historical Society.

That is because of the way the state public-records law is interpreted, the society said in announcing it will bring the Utah state archivist to Helena for a seminar on Jan. 5.

"Complete, accurate and accessible public records protect the legal, financial and other rights of the state and its people, yet hundreds of Montanans are denied access to public records every year," the society said Wednesday in a news release.

Utah's public-record laws are considered innovative and will be discussed by Utah archivist Jeffrey Johnson at the seminar next week. Sponsors are the Historical Society and the Montana Historical Records Advisory Council.

The society said an informal study last year found examples of Montana agencies restricting access to public records even though no state or federal laws or regulations required the restrictions.

"Sometimes access to records is denied because the records no longer exist," the society said. "Occasionally the records were illegally destroyed or removed. Examples exist of Montana officials shredding or otherwise destroying their records before leaving office. In 22 other states such actions are a felony; in Montana, there is no penalty."

The society said access problems have grown with increased use of computers. Computerized records may contain a small amount of confidential information, but rather than masking that portion, officials seal the entire record for reasons of confidentiality, the society said.

(This article is quoted in its entirety from the *Missoulian*, Wednesday, Dec. 28, 1994.)

WMGS NEWSLETTER

This seminar was held at the Haynes Museum in the Montana Historical Society. It was well attended by records custodians from around the state as well as several genealogists. Utah state archivist Jeff Johnson, handed out copies of the Utah records law which is called GRAMA for Government Records and Management Act.

While the Utah law does not apply to Vital Records (because they were covered by laws enacted previously to GRAMA and are controlled by the Department of Health), the law does cover other records of interest to genealogists, i.e. probates, land records, etc. The law defines record types, defines classification categories for records, and provides guidelines for how long records are to be kept. While the creating agencies are responsible for classification of records which they create, the State Records Commission is usually called on to assist in classifications and anyone denied access to a record can challenge the denied access/classification by appeal. By law, such appeals are to be heard in a timely manner.

Of particular note was the fact that this law specifically mandates that only "reasonable" fees may be charged for records - i.e. actual copy costs for photocopies, and that no charges were to be made for searches. It sounded like a good law and one that Montana legislators should be encouraged to adopt.

It was also mentioned that an Initiative will be introduced in the Montana Legislature to provide money for records preservation. Do write your legislators and encourage them to support this initiative. As yet I do not have the wording or number of this initiative, but will provide more info as it becomes available.

Greetings in the New Year!

Actually this is really the mid-year for the WMGS as our new year starts in September. Since the beginning of last year the society has gained 12 new members, and lost 15 who did not renew their memberships this year! In order to maintain the WMGS we need the help of all members.

There were only 3 responses to the member survey enclosed in the September Newsletter. We are still looking for programs for February, March, April, and May, and I am always in need of articles / helpful hints / tid bits for the Newsletter. The indexing projects also could use more volunteers. Please take a minute to see if there isn't some way that you can help out.

Thanks,

4

JANUARY REFRESHMENT

- Cookies Jo Potter
- Punch Judith Field

WMGS NEWSLETTER

WESTERN MONTANA GENEALOGICAL SOC.
P.O. BOX 2714
MISSOULA MT 59806-2714



PAULETTE K. PARPART
415 E. MAIN ST.
MISSOULA MT 59802-4772