

# Western Montana Genealogical Society

## WMGS NEWSLETTER

Western  
Montana  
Genealogical  
Society

November 2003

### MONTANA STATE DEATH INDEX SEARCHABLE ON ANCESTRY.COM

[This was posted on Ancestry.com this week.]

This database is an index to death records for the state of Montana from 1907 to 1953. It also includes a few pre-1900 records and some from 1900 to 1907. From 1907 to 1953 there are also some gaps in missing years due to the fact that the Montana State Genealogical Society is still in the process of indexing them. The missing years are: 1922-1924, 1927-1930, 1934, 1941, 1944, 1947, and 1950. These years will be posted as they become available to Ancestry.com. Information contained in this index includes

given name, middle initial, and surname of the deceased, their sex, age, date and place of death, index number, and occasionally there will be other comments. The index number refers to the death record number assigned by the Montana State Vital Statistics. This number is needed in order to obtain a copy of a death certificate from the office of Vital Statistics at this address:

Office of Vital Statistics  
Department of Public Health and Human Services  
111 N Sanders Rm. 209

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**WMGS Meeting,  
THURSDAY, Nov.  
13th, 7:00 pm, at  
the Missoula Public  
Library Large  
Meeting Room.**

#### WMGS Officers 2002/2003

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## WMGS NOVEMBER MEETING

### THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 13th

The Missoula Public Library will be closed Tuesday, Nov. 13th for Veterans Day. The WMGS will meet on **THURSDAY**, Nov. 13th, at 7:00 PM in the Large Meeting Room of the Missoula Public Library. After the business meeting we will have a presentation on "Search Engine Tips." It will focus on

how to use Internet Search Engine key search commands and 'Search Engine Math' to improve your search results.

**Need a ride or want to car pool?** Call Judith Field at 728-1628 if you need a ride or can volunteer to pick up people who need a ride.

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## In The Mail



**BEAVER HEAD HUNTERS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**, 15 S. Montana Ave., Dillon, MT 59725; <http://www.3rivers.net/~abcs/BHH/>; Oct. 2003, Issue 2003.3. This is a new address for the Beaver Head Hunters Website. The Beaver County site on USGenWeb is <http://www.rootsweb.com/~mtbeaver>. If you think you may be interested in joining the DAR see the article "Daughters of the American Revolution" to see how to find out if any of your ancestors (born ca. 1715-1767) could be a possible patriot ancestor. The article "Most Popular Names Through the Years" ranks the top 10 male and female names for 1900, 1950, and 2001. See Bits & Bytes for the SSA web site address.

**FADED GENES**, Lewis & Clark Co. Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 5313, Helena, MT 59604' [www.mth.mtlib.org/Local%20Information/L%20C20genealogy.htm](http://www.mth.mtlib.org/Local%20Information/L%20C20genealogy.htm); Sept. 2003, Vol. 20, No. 3. They are starting to index 7 books of birth records in the Clerk & Recorder's Office. "A Best Kept Secret!" talks about the kinds of records kept by the County Superintendent of Schools. "Some Excellent Cartographic Sites" from George Morgan's "Charting A Research Course With Online Maps" gives links to some good sites for old and new maps.

**FAMILY HISTORY MAGAZINE**,

**GEN-BUG NEWS**, Yellowstone Genealogy Forum, % Parmley Billings Library, 510 N. Broadway, Billings MT 59101; Oct. 2003. See "Did You Know?" for information on the Historical Archives at the Peaks to Prairie Museum in Red Lodge, and "100 Years Ago" for some facts from 1903 like "most women washed their hair once a month and used borax or egg yoke for shampoo."

**FAMILY CHRONICLE**; Dec. 2003. There lots of good articles here: "Federal Records of Your Immigrant Ancestor" by John Phillip Colletta, "The British 19th Century Surname Atlas," "My Favorite Sources" by Donna Potter Phillips, "Genealogical Gems Found in Land Records," "10 Ways to Relieve Genealogical Burnout," "Acquiring a REAL Coat of Arms," "Eight Ways to Cross the Ocean," and "Websites Worth Surfing."

**HERITAGE QUEST**; Sept.-Oct. 2003. Features include "Finding That Final Resting Place," "House Histories." "Search High, Low, Above and Below" with tips and a number of Internet sources to help locate cemeteries, plus "Immigration Sources & Strategies: Church Records to the Rescue."

**NGS NEWSMAGAZINE**, Sept.-Oct. 2003, Vol. 29, No. 5. See "A Wider View of the Census," "Family History Online #12—The 1840 Census of Pensioners," "North American Immigrant Database," "Genealogical Records of the Grand Army of the Republic," "Passport Applications, 1795-1925."

**NGS QUARTERLY**, Sept. 2003, Vol. 91, No. 3. Interesting articles are "Jumping Over the Broomstick: Resources for Documenting Slave 'Marriages'" and "An Unusual Naturalization in Bay City, Michigan."

**TALES & TRAILS**, Columbia Gorge Genealogical Society, % The Dalles Public Library, 722 Court St., The Dalles, OR 97058-2270; Oct. 2003, Vol. 17, No. 4. The William G. Dick Library is located in the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center in The Dalles. It was begun 5 years ago and specializes in Local history and other topics about Wasco Co., and to a lesser extent Hood River, Klickitat and Sherman counties.

**TREASURE STATE LINES**, Great Falls Genealogy Society, High Plains Heritage Center. 422 2<sup>nd</sup> St. South, Great Falls, MT 59405-1816; <http://www.mt.net/~gfgs> and e-mail [gfgs@mt.net](mailto:gfgs@mt.net); 2003, Vol. 28, No. 3 & 4. This issue contains "Cascade County Death Index 1903," "British Sources Update," "Montana Woman is Ironmonger," a story of Cerula Woodbury, a listing of the "Art and Thelma Marshall Collection" (Genealogy sources,) the GFGS Current Membership, and the Treasure State Lines Index 2003.

**THE TREE BRANCH**, Dawson Co. Montana Tree Branches Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 1275, Glendive, MT 59330-1275; [www.cheyenneancestors.com/dawson](http://www.cheyenneancestors.com/dawson); October 2003, Vol. 12, No. 2. There is an article on "Butte County CA Pioneer Settlers, Heinrich Buschmann and Susan Ann Beede Buschman," and "Dawson County Death Notices Jan-Jul 2003."

## Bits & Bytes

### Social Security Administration Most Popular Baby Names Search Site

You can search for the most popular baby names by year from 1990-2002, or go to the bottom of the page and search by decades from 1880 to 1990. My name (Judith) was the 8th most popular female name in the 1940's. The top male name in Montana in 2002 was Ethan, and the top female name was Madison. My newest granddaughter, 4 month old Tayah, didn't appear anywhere in the top 1000.

<http://www.ssa.gov/OACT/babynames/>

**Finding Bible Records** This site is maintained by Tracy St. Clair of Sleepy Hollow, IL. He finds bibles at garage sales, second-hand book sellers, antique shops – and then tries to match them with a descendant of the bible's original owner. The site contains links to other sites with family bibles.

<http://www.biblerecords.com>

### ProQuest Trial Site Free Until 12/15/2003

ProQuest is offering free searches for HeritageQuest Online and ProQuest Historical New York Times until 15 Dec. 2003.

**HeritageQuest Online** free search is for the Census 1790-1930 for which they have indexes for 1790-1820, 1860-1870, and 1890-1930. The indexes are for head of household only. You can view and download the full census images for those names returned by a search. You can also browse the not yet indexed census records.

**ProQuest Historical New York Times** covers the years 1851-2001. In the advanced search you can search by name over a time span or on a specific date. The full articles are retrieved in Adobe Acrobat format (it will allow you to download Adobe Acrobat Reader if you do not have it.) The articles can be printed from the site or saved to your computer. This is a great source for the New York / New Jersey area.

Both sites can be accessed from:

<http://riversideregionallibrary.org/>

Once at this site click on ProQuest Historical

New York Times or HeritageQuest Online and the password "welcome." Links to both the ProQuest Historical New York Times and HeritageQuest Online will then appear and you are free to search both.

### Farber Gravestone Images Online

More than 13,500 images documenting the sculpture of more than 9,000 gravestones, most of which were made prior to 1800, make up the Farber Gravestone Collection. The American Antiquarian Society (AAS) converted the photographic collection to digital form, and now, with help from David Rumsey's Cartography Associates, a digital publishing company, this unique collection is available for free public access online. (I used the *Insight Browser* available on the sight.)

The Farber Gravestone Collection reflects the work of the late Daniel Farber of Worcester, Massachusetts, and his wife, Jessie Lie Farber, who photographed historic gravestones (Massachusetts area) for more than 20 years.

The collection provides some insight into the private lives of historical figures, such as Paul Revere, Sr., the father of the legendary silversmith who warned of the coming British. Upon viewing this grave marker and rechecking historical facts, one quickly realizes that Paul Revere, Sr., never knew of his son's contribution to our nation's history, having died a year before his son's well-known ride. The collection also confirms that John "Grizzly" Adams is not a work of fiction. He died in 1860, and a carving of a hunter with a bear appears on his marble gravestone where he is interred in Charlton, Massachusetts.

The collection can be found online at:

<http://www.davidrumsey.com/farber/>

### The David Rumsey Historical Map Collection

has over 8,800 maps online. The collection focuses on rare 18th and 19th century North and South America maps and other cartographic materials. Historic maps of the World, Europe, Asia and Africa are also represented. Collection categories include antique atlas, globe, school geography, maritime chart, state, county, city, pocket, wall, childrens and manuscript maps. The collection can be used to study history, genealogy and family history.

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## Judging Your Own Research

— Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG

It can be difficult to judge our own work. Because I am an editor, I find it easier than many researchers do to change hats and assume a purely analytical role. Recently I found it necessary to define some of the questions I raise when analyzing research. You may find it easier to analyze your own work by asking yourself these five questions.

### Does the Chronology Fit?

List all of the events for each family, each with an associated date and place. Sort them chronologically.

Indicate for each event if the date is REAL (from a record), STB (Said To Be, as in a family history which did not give a REAL source), or EST (estimated). Are there far more entries labeled STB and EST than labeled REAL? If a date is STB, this implies that you should be able to track down the source and turn it into a REAL.

Examine events with EST dates. We often have to estimate events in areas with insufficient records. However, consider whether it is a reasonable estimate based on other events or whether you estimated it as you did because that's what you wanted it to be.

Add events such as county formations to indicate that the switch from Brown County to Greene County was probably not a move. Add an event for any moves. This is usually a range of years. Make sure that the number of moves is reasonable and that they make sense. This is a good way to spot same-name problems.

Jot down the age at which significant events such as first marriage, first purchase of land, and death occurred. Make sure they are reasonable. Calculate the time between the births of the children. Any gap that is too small indicates a serious problem. Any gap that is larger than expected may suggest the death of a wife and a remarriage.

### Are the Cousins All Accounted for?

I find it scary to contemplate how much of my research was done solely by tracing my lineage, before I understood the value of whole family research. Again and again I have seen invalid lineages revealed in information sent by clients as soon as I started compiling a whole family with all the siblings and cousins.

I find that it often helps to view any family group as having three generations (parents, children, grandchildren), not just the two provided on the standard family group sheet. One benefit is that when I carefully determine birth dates for all grandchildren (not just those in the line of interest), use their birth dates to estimate marriage dates in the second generation, and use the marriage dates to estimate birth dates in the second generation, sometimes a significantly different family structure appears for the parents and children in the first and second generation than I got by focusing only on them.

This is another good way to highlight potential same-name problems. When cousins, nephews and uncles, or fathers and sons share the same given name, reexamine all events to see that each is assigned to the correct individual.

### Did You Follow the Females?

Is your research unbalanced? Do you have much more information on sons and brothers than on daughters and sisters? Quite frankly, it's easier to focus on the males in a family. They left more records, and they didn't change their names. You probably found it relatively easy to find records for all the males in a family because they were listed in the index right there with the male ancestor you knew about and were researching.

Females are a different matter. First, there are more names to check. You'll have to look for the records of them, their husbands, and their children under their married surname(s). Second, it is unlikely that you started your research knowing all of those names. Make a list of all female names (with their spouses) and review all of the sources you examined originally.

### Was Your Ancestor a Widower?

What evidence do you have that the woman whose name is listed as the wife of your ancestor is the mother of his children? Many widows and widowers remarried, particularly those with children still in the home. Look at each of the children, not just your ancestor, and ask yourself why you think this child belonged to both the man and the woman you have listed as parents.

Some common "gotcha's" derive from the US census, which did not request relationship information until 1880. Even then, stepchildren of the head of household may have been listed as children and possibly even shown with the same surname. Be sure you have found every child on every census during their life to protect against this problem.

What is the last record you have for each female? Have you been looking unsuccessfully for a tombstone, death certificate, and other record under the surname of your paternal ancestor? You won't find them if she remarried.

### Have You Used Up the Leftovers?

Leftovers are records that aren't assigned to an individual in a whole-family construction. If you researched properly and collected information on all persons of the surname in the time and locality, you usually have leftovers.

Some leftovers are understandable. For example, if you have three Samuel Smiths in your family (father, son, and nephew), all of whom were between 25 and 50 in 1841, and you have a record for a Samuel Smith who served on a jury that year, you will not be able to determine which Samuel the record should be assigned to.

On the other hand, if the 1841 record is a marriage, but

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 PO BOX 4210  
 Helena MT 59604

According to the Report of the Montana State Genealogical Society Conference, each society will be given a free CD copy of this index, and will receive \$.01 for each record they added to the index. The index was sold to Ancestry for \$.02 per record with the State Society retaining all rights to the index.

## ANCESTRY.COM UPDATE

### 1870 Census Index

The most recent update to the 1870 Census Index includes the index to the 1870 Montana Territory. The only areas **NOT YET INDEXED** for 1870 are: Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Ohio, Vermont, Virginia, West Virginia, Wisconsin, and Wyoming Territory.

### World War I Draft Registration Cards

The Montana World War I Draft Registration Cards are online at Ancestry.com and they have just added those for part of New York.

## WMGS 2003 ELECTIONS

The current officers, who are all in their first year in their current positions, elected to run again in September. We will vote on acceptance of this slate at the November meeting,

## NEW HOURS AT SLC LIBRARY

The Family History Library in Salt Lake City announced a cutback in the hours it will be open effective 1 July 2003:

Mondays 8:00 am—5:00 pm

Tuesday-Saturday 8:00 am—9:00 pm

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Using the *Insight* Browser you can access this map collection at:  
<http://www.davidrumsey.com/>

## Family History Library

### COMPUTER RESERVATIONS

Call 543-6148 during library hours.

### FHL HOURS

Mon. 12:00 - 4:00 PM

Tue. 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM & 7:00 - 9:30 PM

Wed. 7:00 - 9:30 PM

Thurs. 12:00 - 4:00 PM & 7:00 - 9:30 PM.

Sat 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM

### Missoula Family History Center Online

The Missoula Family History Center's online computer has been offline for the last few weeks due to a modem problem. Hopefully, it will be fixed in a week or so. If you plan on using the Internet, it would be good to call and see if we have an Internet connection before coming into the library.

**Please try to call ahead or come into the library and sign up to insure you will be able to use a computer when you visit.**

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according to your family construction all three men have wives at the time, then you have a problem. A BIG problem. Dig in and research this, even if no Samuel is in your ancestral line. Resolving this may rearrange the family and realign your own ancestral lines as a result.

There is another type of leftover to watch for--a potentially important person such as a beneficiary in a will or a sponsor to a baptism whom you did not identify. They may hold the key to answers you seek.

### Conclusion

Why do these questions matter? I can't predict for any given case, but I do know that asking these questions and following up often changes lineages, rearranges families, and leads to solving genealogical problems.

*Patricia Law Hatcher, CG, FASG, is a technical writer, instructor, and professional genealogist. Her oft-migrating ancestors lived in all of the original colonies prior to 1800 and in seventeen other states, presenting her with highly varied research problems and forcing her to acquire techniques and tools that help solve tough problems. She is the author of Producing a Quality Family History. Copyright 2003, MyFamily.com*

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Genealogical Society

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2206 1/2 W. SUSS  
MISSOULA MT 59801

## Dues & Queries

Dues are \$11 a year for individuals and \$13 for families, which includes a Newsletter (Sep, Nov, Jan, Apr, & May) and membership in the Montana State Genealogical Society. Queries are published free for members, \$2 for non-members.

We appreciate any submissions of articles on genealogy for the Newsletter including *How You Solved It*, local pedigrees, book reviews of local history/genealogy books, and any genealogy news items.

## Dues Due For 2003-2004?

Please check the mailing label on this Newsletter. An '03 after your name means dues are due for the new year; '04—you've paid! If you have an '03 this is your last Newsletter unless dues are paid by Jan. 1st.

## Upcoming Conferences

### 15th Annual Montana State Genealogical Society Conference

This Conference, Sept. 23-25, 2004 in Helena. This conference will be hosted by the Lewis & Clark and the Jefferson County Societies. Guest speaker will be Hank Jones of San Diego, CA, the author of "Psychic Roots" and "More Psychic Roots."

### Clark County Genealogical Society Spring Seminar 2004

This seminar will present Dr. John Phillip Colletta on Saturday, March 20, 2004, at the Washington State School for the Deaf, in Vancouver, WA from 9 am to 4:30 pm. The cost is \$45 for non-members (includes lunch.)