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Gen News

The newsletter of the Douglas County Genealogy Club
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Meeting Date

The next meeting will be held on Tuesday, May 2, at 6:00 p.m. at the Old Firehouse and Police Museum, 402 23rd Ave E, in Superior.

Meeting topics for 2017

January 3 – Business Meeting
February 7 – Cathy Tonkin on writing and publishing a family history (*postponed due to weather*)
March 7 – Cathy Tonkin on writing and publishing a family history (*see note in the meeting minutes that follow*)
April 4 – LDS Family History Center in Duluth
May 2 – Presentation on Superior Fire Department history at the Old Firehouse & Police Museum
June 6 – Open
July 11 - Cemetery Walk at the Jewish Cemetery
August 1 – Open
September 5 – Meeting at the Douglas County Historical Society
October 3 – DAR
November 7 – Richard I. Bong Center
December 5 -Holiday Potluck



April Meeting Minutes

Members of the club met at the Family History Center in Duluth on Tuesday, April 4th. No business meeting was conducted.

Dues Reminder!

Membership dues can be paid throughout the year for 2017, but non-renewal will result in the removal of a member's name from the newsletter subscription list. Dues can be sent to Robin Barrett, the new treasurer, at 313 Homcroft Ct, Superior, WI 54880. Checks should be made out to the DCGC.



Library Lock-In

On March 31, the DCGC and Superior Public Library held the second annual Foolin' Around with Your Family Tree genealogy lock-in at the library. For the second year in a row, this program was at full capacity. The featured speaker was Lee Grady from the Wisconsin Historical Society. He talked about researching ancestors using the records of county and state institutions including hospitals, prisons, and sanitariums. Following Lee's presentation, DCGC secretary David Johnson gave an excellent presentation on Ancestry.com. The evening ended with a prize drawing with giveaways of software, books, memberships, and more. Planning for the third annual Foolin' Around

with Your Family Tree event has already begun; it has been tentatively scheduled for April 6, 2018.

(Many thanks to Leslie Mehle for providing the lock-in information.)



Upcoming Events

DCGC= Douglas County Genealogy Club
TPGS=Twin Ports Genealogical Society
WSGS= Wisconsin State Genealogical Society
MNGS= Minnesota Genealogical Society
WHS= Wisconsin Historical Society

WSGS

Tuesday, May 16, 7:00 pm to 8:00 pm
Misbegotten Children: Tracing the Family Lines of the Illegitimate (Webinar)

Presenter: Peggy Clemens Lauritzen

Webinar Description: Illegitimacy can be both a surprise and an embarrassment as we discover more and more about our family's history. Treated with care and sensitivity, we can use many available resources to help us in our research.

Register at:

<https://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/1827781229875918081>

After registering, you will receive an email with information and a link to join us the night of the webinar. Please remember that this is a first-come, first-served webinar, and that there are a limited number of spots to view the webinar live. Registering does not hold a spot for you. Those that log in first will be admitted to the webinar.

MNGS

Saturday, May 13, 10:00 am to 12:30 pm
School Records Class at MHS (Classes)
Minnesota History Center

School records are kept every year and hold extensive details on relatives. Take a class on using school records in family history research, including private, public, religious, reform and ethnic historic school records.

The class is taught by Paula Stuart-Warren, CG, FMGS, FUGA. Stuart-Warren works internationally in genealogical and historical research, and her specialties include unusual records, problem-solving, major repositories and Native American research.

Cost and registration information can be found on the MNGS website (mngs.org).

Entries are now being accepted for the **Ninth Annual Family History Writing Competition**, sponsored by the Yankee Genealogical Society and the Minnesota Genealogical Society. Entries are due by June 30, 2017. Writing Competition Rules and Writing Competition FAQs can be found on the MNGS website.

The tenth annual North Star Genealogy Conference will be held October 6 and 7 at the Earle Brown Heritage Center in Brooklyn Center.

Featured speakers will be Paula Stuart-Warren, one of America's most popular genealogy educators and Cyndi Ingle, creator of Cyndi's List.

Full program information will be available in May; registration will open in early summer. See the MNGS website for more information.

Every attempt is made to keep **Upcoming Events** pertinent and timely. We invite all area genealogy organizations to submit their events with contact information for publication here to jnjsig@yahoo.com.

As always, if you have additional dates for the calendar or if you find a date in error, please email me at jnjsig@yahoo.com.



News from the Internet

Incomplete Birth Certificates Create a Bureaucratic Morass in Many Places

[Dick Eastman · April 25, 2017 · Genealogy Basics](#)
· [17 Comments](#)

I had to smile a bit today when reading an article in the Boston Globe about the “problem” of incomplete birth records. It seems the city of

Boston has many birth records from years ago where the baby's name is simply recorded as “baby girl” or “baby boy.” The reporter wrote, “A generation ago — when more families had six or more children — babies without official first names were surprisingly common. Overwhelmed new parents would leave the hospital without completing birth certificate paperwork.”

You can read more in the article by Andrew Ryan in the *Boston Globe* at: <http://bit.ly/2pedZ7w>. The same article tells how to amend a record and add a first name by providing documentation.

Actually, the “problem” is not unique to Boston nor to any particular area of the United States. An experienced genealogist probably can tell you of numerous similar examples. I have seen it many times, especially in the case of my mother and her siblings.

My mother's birth record at the town clerk's office in Ashland, Maine, records her first name as “baby girl.” All of her older brothers and sisters were recorded as “baby girl” or “baby boy.” However, the younger siblings (of the 16 children) are recorded with their correct first names. The same is true for many, many other families in the same town, recorded in the same records.

When my mother had to get a Social Security card in later years, it was a minor problem. Since there was no birth record showing her true first name, she had to get affidavits from several people who remembered the event. That wasn't hard for her since her mother (my grandmother) was still alive at the time and she gladly submitted an affidavit saying that she remembered the event well! Apparently, all of my mother's older brothers and sisters had to do the same when they applied for Social Security cards.

I have heard a number of different stories about why this practice was common, and some of

those stories contradict the other stories. As a result, I don't know what the truth is except that, after reading the town clerk's records and the records of other town clerks in the area, I do know it was a common practice in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Northern Maine was not the only area to create birth records with no first names. Boston officials estimated that, in the 1950s, roughly 1 of every 25 birth certificates lacked a first name.

I will disagree with one statement in Andrew Ryan's article in the Boston Globe: "Overwhelmed new parents would leave the hospital without completing birth certificate paperwork." In the case of my mother, her siblings, and my grandmother, there was no hospital involved. The nearest hospital was more than 20 miles away, a difficult trip at any time of the year and impossible during the winters in northern Maine, where 3 or 4 feet of snow was common and the (dirt) roads were never plowed in the winter.

My grandmother gave birth to all 16 of her children at home. I suspect some of your ancestors did the same.

My thanks to newsletter reader W. David Samuelsen for telling me about the article in [The Boston Globe](#).