

Editor: Jacque Rump, 3019 S. 204th St. #28, Seatac, WA 98198
E-Mail: jgrump@msn.com



Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday, October 20, 6:00 PM

Lecture Hall, Bangor Public Library

Julie Strong, Accredited Genealogist, will speak on researching the British Isles from this side of the pond!

Wednesday, November 17, 6:00 PM

Lecture Hall, Bangor Public Library

Janet Spencer and Annette Roberts, our co-presidents, will lead us in a brainstorming session on how to break down brick walls.

No meeting in December

Enjoy the holidays with your family and preserve the memories!



President's Message

Greetings to all members of our society!

Can you believe it? We are beginning the ninth year as a society and along with that comes the time of the year I love best---autumn. And in Maine it is glorious. It is still a great time to be out tromping in the cemetery or going to the library to do research.

This fall brings changes to our society's leadership. As you may know from our September meeting, Janet Spencer and I are going to attempt to fill big shoes, those of Dale Mower and Phil Getchell. We owe them both a huge thank you for their years of work and dedication in making this society what it has become over the last eight years. That is why it may take two of us to fill this role!

I'd like to start by telling you a little about each of us. Janet Spencer is a dear friend and neighbor, which makes it fun to take on this responsibility together. Janet's education and experience are in teaching and research. She taught for eighteen years. Then she worked for twelve years as a Research Coordinator for the Department of Epidemiology at the Harvard School of Public Health in Boston. This job brought the Spencers to Maine fifteen years ago. Janet has been researching her own family for twenty-five years. Two years ago she began taking genealogy courses with the National Genealogical Society in the hope of becoming a certified genealogist and lecturer.

My background is also in education, retiring from teaching special education and 2nd grade in Bangor after thirty-eight years. Now I am the person who schedules substitutes for teachers in Bangor when they need a replacement for the day. That is why it has been difficult for me to be at meetings as my workday takes up part of the evening from 7-9 PM. So when you see me having to leave early from meetings, you will know why. I have been enjoying doing family research for eleven years.

Janet and I are planning programs for this fall and the coming year which we think will

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Articles accepted for publication must be of genealogical nature.

Submissions should be forwarded to the Newsletter Editor.

be of interest to you all. We have chosen “**Breaking Down Brick Walls**” as our theme for this year. To open our new year, we have asked Julie Strong, AG, to speak to us. Since her area of expertise is research in the British Isles as well as America, we have asked her to speak on how to do research on the other side of the pond, while standing on this side. And we hope she will share other tips to help us break down those barriers to extending our research.

At our meeting in October, we will talk about what we would like to do for the meeting in November. As I mentioned at the September meeting, we do not plan to have a meeting in December this year. There was discussion before the meeting about the possibility of having a meeting every other month. For this year at least, we would like to carry on as we have in the past, with a program each month. We have some ideas in the works for 2011. Another item for you to know about would be regarding the newsletter. Our plan is to put out a newsletter quarterly, rather than five times a year. We would also like you to seriously consider receiving it via email if you can. For those without email, we would still mail them. However, the emailed ones would be more appealing as they would be in color and you could print them if you wished. With the printing, postage, labels, etc., the cost runs about \$125 per mailing.



Speaking of the newsletter, please consider sharing something you have found: a website, a helpful book, something that has happened as a result of your research or whatever you think could be of use to another member's research. Elizabeth is open and waiting for articles to put in the “Gen Tripper” column. I told her I have one for an upcoming newsletter. Please think about what you could share with all of us. We can all use a helping hand in our research.

Janet and I are really looking forward to leading our first meeting this month. We hope you will find our theme and the topic for October interesting and will come to hear Julie. We look forward to seeing you!

Annette Roberts

A Word from the Treasurer

As you know, our membership year runs from October 1st through September 30th each year. **Dues are now due!** If dues are not paid, you will not receive future newsletters. Dues remain at **\$10 for an individual membership and \$15 for a family membership.** Please fill out the form below and return it to me with your check. We want to be sure we keep your mailing and email addresses up to date. We look forward to seeing your renewal of membership in the mail soon! We do not want you to miss any of our newsletters. **Thanks to those who have sent your dues!**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email address: _____

**Penobscot County Genealogical Society
c/o Phil Getchell
Bangor Public Library
145 Harlow Street
Bangor, ME 04401**

QUERIES

To post a query, email mepcgs@yahoo.com

PLEASE NOTE:

We are getting an overwhelming amount of SPAM in our email account each month. To make sure a legitimate query is not missed please type the word QUERY at the beginning of the subject field.

Thank you!

As we did not receive any queries for this newsletter, I will take the opportunity to include the following article Dale Mower originally contributed to the Maine Genealogical Society.

Tips to Writing a Successful Query

by Dale W. Mower

A query has to be specific to be effective. Where it is true you may want to know “everything about the Estabrook family,” asking for just that may bring you no assistance. It’s just too broad – the reader of the query won’t know where to begin to help. It is really vital to keep your query to one specific piece of information that you are looking for (remember, you can always post additional queries).

And it is also important to provide as much information as you have – whether names, locations, dates – so the reader of the query can quickly make a connection to the correct person(s) you are researching. Do keep the info short and sweet though – a longer query doesn’t necessarily make for a more productive query. Don’t overload or overwhelm the reader.

So – keep in mind – Simple, Specific, Concise, Informative. The goal is to write a short query that’s easy to read through and understand.

- Choose a (that is, one) primary surname for the query. This should be the surname for your heading, and you should use all CAPITAL letters for the surname – this will help make it stand out and grab the reader’s attention. While sometimes the urge may be there to incorporate several other surnames into the query, use caution. While a couple additional surnames may help identify the person you are asking about – don’t cross the line and have so many surnames that it becomes confusing and just darn too overwhelming when you look at it.
- Begin by telling what specific piece of information you are looking for. Avoid the urge to begin by requesting any and all the information about someone. You need to be specific – for example: seeking

the parents of ..., looking for the birthplace of ..., or seeking maiden name of.... Readers of queries are more likely to respond to a request for one specific piece of information.

- Provide key information about the subject of your search – persons, dates, location. These are vital to help the reader of the query associate information he or she has with the subject of your query.
- Provide not just the name of the person you are researching, but parents’ or spouse’s name as well. Charles Grant may be a common name, but Charles Grant, son of William and Ann Maidstone (Hillman) Grant certainly narrows the field.
- Dates help the reader not only identify the correct individual again, but also provides clues as to what resources are available to assist. Use exact dates if they are known, otherwise use an estimated time (use circa or about to alert the reader it is an estimate) or a range (before, between or after).
- Locations also assist in identifying that you and the query reader are talking about the same person, be as specific as you can. You can use multiple locations if you know the person moved – you may know where the person was born and then where he was living at a later date.
- Use standard query abbreviations. These include:
 - b. [birth, born]
 - bp. [baptized]
 - bro. [brother]
 - bur. [buried]
 - ca [circa]
 - ch. [child, children]
 - c.r. [church record]
 - co. [county]
 - d. [death, died]
 - dau. [daughter]
 - d.y. [died young]
 - div. [divorced]
 - fam. [family]
 - g.s. [gravestone]
 - int. [intention]
 - m. [married]
 - rec. [record, recorded]
 - rel. [related/relative/relationship]
 - rem. [removed]
 - res. [resided, lived at]
 - sis. [sister]
 - w. [wife]
 - wid. [widow]

- **Include contact information.** I highly recommend using both an email address and a postal address (email addresses tend to change more frequently than street addresses). And keep a log of where you have queries posted, particularly on the internet, so that if any information changes you can update your queries.
- **Once you think you have your query completed, reread it** to make sure it flows smoothly and the information is presented clearly. Are surnames in upper case? Is spelling correct? Do you have the correct punctuation? These may seem trivial, but they can have an effect on clarity and readability.

A final note: when posting a query, do NOT include any private information about a living individual.

Examples of Effective Queries

EDWARDS

Seeking parents of Elisabeth EDWARDS (b. abt. 1764, d. 2 Mar 1836 in Greene, Maine). She m. John MOWER or MOORE, 29 May 1782 in Charlton, Mass. She was listed as 'of Charlton' in marriage record. Fam. rem. to Greene, Maine about 1786. Published Mower Genealogy indicates she may be rel. to Rev. Jonathan EDWARDS.

Dale Mower

e-mail: dale@mower-family.com

185 Norfolk Street

Bangor, ME 04401

OR

PARKER

Seeking parents of James PARKER (b. 1786, d. 6 Mar 1866 in Glenburn, Maine). He m. 29 Sep 1813 in Troy, Maine, Lydia SIMMONS (b. 1795, d. 25 May 1884 in Glenburn, Maine), dau. of Lebbeus and Mary (DOUGLAS) SIMMONS.

Dale W. Mower

e-mail: dale@mower-family.com

185 Norfolk Street

Bangor, ME 04401

Once you have your query done, sit back and, well, do keep researching while you wait as sometimes it can take a while for your query to be read by just the right person that may be able to help you out.

And always, keep the genealogical spirit going – be courteous and don't forget to thank any respondents.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Boston Family History Day

October 16

Seaport World Trade Center, Boston, MA

This event is sponsored by the NEHGS, (New England Historical and Genealogical Society) and Ancestry.com. Events will include classes, experts answering questions, high-speed photo and document scanning, and much more. The event is \$38 including parking. For more information, go to www.FamilyHistoryDay.com or email questions to info@familyhistoryday.com.

Using Federal Records in Genealogical Research

With John Philip Colletta

April 23, 2011

Grandeur Sun, Waterville, Maine

I am sad to report that one of our long distance society members, Helen Dotts, past away on June 16th. Thank you Annette for locating her obituary so we can include it in our newsletter.

Helen Dorothy Dotts was a modest woman, quiet and observant in her ways. She was outgoing and action oriented and she very much liked to "take charge". She was trustworthy and traditional in her approach to her life and in her relationships. She was tough-minded with the kind of "stick to it" attitude that earned the respect of all who knew her. She was also a woman who was meticulous, carefully disciplined, and orderly in virtually everything she undertook. Realistic about life, she was always at the ready, prepared to take on responsibility. Helen was born in Augusta, Maine, on October 7, 1924. She was the daughter of Otis and Doris (Simpson) Burnell. Helen grew up in Redondo Beach, California. She had two siblings, a younger sister, Lea and a younger brother, Arthur (Bud). Helen was usually involved in all sorts of activities with her siblings. She and her siblings experienced rivalries typical of a growing family, but they shared many life experiences over the years. A typical teenager, Helen had a fairly happy high school experience, making that critical transition from adolescence to adulthood. She graduated from Redondo Beach Union High School in 1942. Always considered a "good" friend to those she knew, Helen enjoyed a broad group of acquaintances and several very close friends during her lifetime. While growing up, one of her best friends was Jeri. Later in life, she became friends with Billie Bolton, along... Helen Dorothy Dotts was a modest woman, quiet and observant in her ways. She was outgoing and action oriented and she very much liked to "take charge". She was trustworthy and traditional in her approach to her life and in her relationships. She was tough-minded with the kind of "stick to it" attitude that earned the respect of all who knew her. She was also a woman who was meticulous, carefully disciplined, and orderly in virtually everything she undertook. Realistic about life, she was always at the ready, prepared to take on responsibility.

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cence to adulthood. She graduated from Redondo Beach Union High School in 1942.

Always considered a "good" friend to those she knew, Helen enjoyed a broad group of acquaintances and several very close friends during her lifetime. While growing up, one of her best friends was Jeri. Later in life, she became friends with Billie Bolton, along with numerous friends from Yucca Valley.

Helen's first marriage was to Les Galloway on April 4, 1942, in Yuma, Arizona. Her second marriage was to Dick Dotts on March 3, 1973, in Loveland, Colorado. Empathic and loyal, Helen was committed to making her family happy.

Helen worked hard to be a good mother to her children and she did her best to fulfill their needs. Helen was blessed with four children and one step child; daughters, Sheri and Paula; sons, Jim and Don and stepson, Dick. Another blessing for Helen was the gift of 8 grandchildren, Jodie, Pam, Leslee, Jamica, Geoff, Matt, Cambria and Erin and 2 stepgrandchildren, Loren and Lindy.

Helen enjoyed her leisure time by taking part in various hobbies. Her favorite pursuits were genealogy, stamp collecting, crafts and gardening. She was content to enjoy her favorite pastimes alone but was also willing to share her interests with others. Helen also enjoyed bowling.

Throughout her life, Helen was a doer and was always actively involved in professional and community organizations. Throughout her later years, Helen was an active member of the American Heart Association, American Legion and Daughters of American Revolution.

Helen was a woman who took pride in upholding her beliefs. So it is little wonder that she took an active role in her community, serving on committees for the Morongo Basin Historical Society, St. Mary's Catholic Church and a founding member of Sherman Gardens (Corona Del Mar) and Quail Quilters.

Helen's faith was important to her. She was a member of St. Mary's Catholic Church of Yucca Valley and St. James Catholic Church of Redondo Beach. During that time, she was on many various church committees.

Helen enjoyed traveling and time away on vacations. It was a chance for her to renew and relax, to visit new places and



experience new things. Favorite vacations included Ouray, Colorado, Washington D.C. and Maine. Helen was a lover of animals and cherished her pets. Two of her favorites was Tootsie, a mix breed dog and Tok, an Alaskan Huskie.

Helen's husband retired in 1979 and their new life involved relocating to Yucca Valley, California. In retirement, she found new pleasure in traveling with Drifters RV group. Even in retirement, Helen continued to stay in touch with her old friends while making plenty of new acquaintances. Helen was active in her new community and felt fulfilled with the opportunities retirement offered her.

Helen passed away on June 16, 2010 at her home in Beaumont, California. She is survived by her children, Sheri, Paula and Don, stepson, Dick and their families. Graveside services were held at Holy Cross Cemetery, in Culver City, California on June 22, 2010. Helen was laid to rest in Holy Cross Cemetery, Culver City, California.

Simply stated, Helen was a good and kind person, an individual who will for all time be remembered by her family and friends as being a caring and giving person, someone who was a vital part of their lives. Helen leaves behind her a legacy of life-long friendships and many cherished memories. Everyone whose life she touched will always remember Helen



Baby makes family history as sixth living generation

BY CAITLIN HEANEY (STAFF WRITER)

Published: August 29, 2010

Schylar Widzon crawled across the floor with a smile on his face as his great-great-great-grandfather looked on.

The 8-month-old made history with his birth as he became the family's sixth living generation.

"I feel old," joked 97-year-old patriarch Russell Bennett, who lives in Forest City. "I am old."

From Mr. Bennett, the family line descends to Schylar through Darlene Molinaro of Jermyn, Mary Frisbie of Archbald, Jennifer Sweetman of Jessup and Bryana Sweetman of Olyphant.

At 56, Ms. Frisbie points out that a lot of her friends are not grandparents yet, let alone great-grandparents like her.

"It feels good, but I wasn't quite ready for it yet," she laughed.

Life as a new mom is "filled with lots of adventure," said Bryana Sweetman, who has another baby for that sixth generation on the way. Schylar recently grew in his first two teeth, and his family describes him as a good baby who seldom cries.

"I immediately fell in love with him," Ms. Frisbie said.

The challenge the family now faces is figuring out what name Schylar will use for each of his grandparents and their predecessors.

Schylar has many years to go to match his great-great-great-grandfather's longevity, but the family joked that it will have seven generations living 20 years from now. Jennifer Sweetman recommended he "keep smiling" and "keep his chin up."

With the generations of his family gathered around him, Mr. Bennett kidded around about how he has lived to 97 despite doing everything he "wasn't supposed to." He had a stroke at 58 and recalls how he has long out-lived a doctor who once told him to "go home and die." "We just hope we have his genes," Ms. Frisbie said.



Jason Farmer / Staff Photographer All six generations, from left, Bryana Sweetman, Mary Frisbie, Darlene Molinaro, Russell Bennett, Schylar Widzon and Jennifer Sweetman.



Maine State Offices Closed - Please note that the state offices, Library and Archives will be closed near the dates of national holidays. The state website lists the following dates:

Thursday, December 23, 2010
 Friday, January 14, 2011
 Tuesday, February 22, 2011

Friday, March 18, 2011
 Tuesday, April 19, 2011
 Friday, May 27, 2011