
DESERT DIGGINGS

NEWSLETTER OF THE HI-DESERT GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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President's Message

Bill Luther

A few announcements to be made:

- Dues are increasing effective with the June 1 membership deadline. The new rate is \$25 per yr per individual and \$35 per yr per couple. If you paid your dues early and at the old rate, you will not be asked to make up the difference
- We have made the announcement that our May meeting will NOT be on the third Wed of the month. It will be held on the second Wed or May the 14th. Nancy Carlberg adjusted her schedule and will still be the speaker in May. Her topic will be Scottish ancestry.

Bill Luther

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Birthday Wishes

Diane Irwin	29-Mar
Shirley Sedam	5-Apr
William Luther	8-Apr
Luna Leggett (LM)	10-Apr
Natalie Levinson	17-Apr
Martin Landers	21-Apr
Lorraine Moffat	30-Apr
Ann Minter	1-May
Sherly Finch	7-May
Carol DiFaurio	11-May
Jean Steel	12-May
Nancy Werger	18-May
Scott Eckert	24-May

Fold3 Honor Wall

From Fold3 "Introducing the Honor Wall"

Unveiled in honor of Veterans Day, the **Fold3 Honor Wall** pays tribute to millions of men and women who served our nation, from colonial days to the present.

We invite you to visit the Honor Wall and help us pay tribute to America's veterans by sharing your own memories, stories, and photos of a loved one. Whether you have family or friends serving now, or have ancestors who fought in the Revolutionary War or other conflicts in between, join us in commemorating them. With your help, the Honor Wall will keep their stories alive.

The Honor Wall hosts millions of names, yet it's just the beginning. We've redesigned the Fold3 Memorial Pages.

Search for those you know—ancestors, friends, fellow service members, family members, or perhaps you! If you find who you're looking for, add your own dedication. If you can't locate a Memorial Page for someone, create one of your own and add it to the Honor Wall. It's easy!

Just follow the prompts to choose the conflict in which someone served, then add more facts about the individual, including military service. The "Find more records" button will even give you links to possible matches to records on Fold3, Newspapers.com, and Ancestry.com.

Once you've contributed to the Honor Wall, let others know. Choose the "Share" link at the bottom of any Memorial Page. Spread the word, and help us commemorate all of America's heroes.

View sample Memorial Pages for ideas of how you can create or add to your family's pages.

Revolutionary War: Ezra Carpenter

Civil War: Robert E. Lee

WWII: Jimmy Stewart, Courtney Brewer, and Billy Oakley

Vietnam War: Larry Oakley

Persian Gulf War: Ann Dunwoody

<http://www.fold3.com/wall/>

Spotlight: Kansas Cemetery Databases

by Valerie Beaudrault, Assistant Editor
Newton, Kansas, Cemeteries

The city of Newton, located in central Kansas, is the county seat of Harvey County. Established in 1872, Greenwood Cemetery has more than 15,000 occupied spaces. The city has made a burial and disinterment database for Greenwood and Restlawn cemeteries available on its website. The database may be searched by last name, first name, year of interment, and veteran status of the deceased, and by last and first name of the lot owner. Use the dropdown list to limit your search to a specific cemetery or to the disinterment records. The data fields in the search results are occupant name, owner name, location, and date of burial. Click the occupant name link to view the detailed record, which contains a number of additional fields.

Atchison Kansas Public Library

The city of Atchison, located in northeastern Kansas, is the county seat of Atchison County. The Atchison Public Library has made a cemetery database available on its website. Click the A-Z links to open files with alphabetical-by-surname lists. The data fields in the database include last name, first name, birth date, death date, age, and cemetery name. There is also a database of Cummings Cemetery headstone photos. Cummings Cemetery is located in Center Township, southeast of Cummings.

McPherson Cemetery

The city of McPherson, located in central Kansas, is the seat of McPherson County. The city has made a cemetery burial records database available on its website. The database can be searched by name or by burial location. Click "search by name" to open the burial record catalog. Select the first letter of the surname for which you are searching, then select the appropriate surname range. The data fields in the search results are name, male/female, year born, year died, marker, and grave location. Click the image of the cross in the marker field to view a photograph of the gravestone. Click the name of the deceased to open a detailed record. A search of the database by location will bring up a list of all burials in the selected block.

Seeking Michigan

A must for those with Ancestry in the State of Michigan

Seeking Michigan is the online platform for the Michigan Historical Center. It includes Archives of Michigan research guides and indexes, a blog, and educator resources – all from the Michigan Historical Center and Archives of Michigan staff.

What is available online?

You can search digital collections from any page on Seeking Michigan by using the search box in the top right corner. If you want to search by name or other criteria, click the “ADVANCED SEARCH” button and additional search options will drop down.

There are more than a million records on Seeking Michigan and new material is added frequently. The most used collection is Michigan Death Records, 1897 – 1920.

In addition to death records, there are a number of collections ranging from pre-statehood to the late 1960s, and these include letters, diaries, photographs, postcards, and video. Any of the the links below take you to a landing page for a collection that explains what is in the collection and how to search within the collection. If you just want to go straight to the records, click the “Browse” button for:

State Census	Civil War Service Records
Civil War Photographs	Civil War Manuscripts
Plat Maps	Films
Civil War Battle Flags	Early Documents
Early Photography	WPA Property Inventories
Oral Histories	Music of Michigan
Maps	Main Streets
Architecture	Governors of Michigan
Lighthouses and Life-Saving Stations	
Civil War Volunteer Registries	

There is even a Tutorial:

A video guide to Seeking Michigan

This video of Archivist Jessica Miller’s *Abrams Genealogy Seminar* presentation explains how to search, browse, and find materials on Seeking Michigan. She also covers the new features on Seeking Michigan.

Seeking Michigan is found at:

<http://seekingmichigan.org/>

Happy Hunting 

Reunited after 80 Years

By Ariel Wittenberg

Posted in "South Coast Today" February 11, 2014

FAIRHAVEN — Helen Fisher, 80, doesn't remember the last time she saw her sister Mary Ann.

But one day in 1933, 12-year old Mary Ann carried then-infant Fisher into the Salvation Army in Mount Carmel, Penn. and left her there.

It was the height of the Great Depression, and after a period of sleeping in church pews to keep warm, the girls' parents realized they could no longer care for their 10 children.

Mary Ann and eight other siblings were put into orphanages. Fisher, too young to go with them, was left at the Salvation Army instead.

From there, she was adopted into a family where she was the only child. She didn't see Mary Ann or the other siblings again, never knowing they existed.

But on Monday afternoon, Fisher (her married name) met Mary Ann's daughter, Jean Carl, for the first time. She also met another niece, Barbara Garro.

Standing in the community room of McGann Terrace in Fairhaven, Carl held an iPad displaying a picture of Mary Ann up to Fisher's face.

They could have been twins.

"I look like my sister!" Fisher said with glee.

Eighty years in the making, Fisher's reunion with Carl and Garro almost didn't happen.

Mary Ann, who died in 2008, always wondered what happened to Fisher, and would tell Carl stories about the baby Aunt Helen who had been lost.

"We always knew she was out there," Carl said.

Mary Ann's daughter Carl, and a few other cousins, even tried to find Fisher a couple of times in the 1990s and early 2000s, "when the Internet wasn't what it is now," Carl said. They left postings on message boards, but to no avail.

"We were always praying, I hope Aunt Helen has a good day today," Garro said. "But we never knew."

Without any real information, the family made a point of being kind to the Salvation Army, which they knew had taken in the baby.

"But there was always the question of where is our lost Aunt Helen," Carl said. Meanwhile, Fisher said Monday, "I never knew I was lost."

Growing up, she knew she was adopted after being left

at the Salvation Army by a sister but was never curious about her birth family, she said.

"I was always happy where I was," she said.

She became an officer in the Salvation Army, married her high school sweetheart, Jesse, and had four children, never really wondering about her birth family.

But this year Fisher's friend from church, Marge Osman, took it upon herself to find Fisher's birth family.

"I would tell her, 'Marge, knock it off, don't worry about all that,' " Fisher said. "But what do you know, she found them."

Osman discovered a posting one of the cousins had left describing an infant being carried into the Salvation Army by her sister in 1933.

Fisher called the poster, another one of Carl's cousins.

"I said ask for her birth date," Carl said.

It matched the one Mary Ann had written in the family Bible years before.

In the two months since the discovery, Fisher has been in constant touch with her newfound nieces, Garro and Carl.

The nieces sent Fisher charts explaining her genealogy, complete with photos and life histories of each of her siblings.

They also sent Fisher her mother's Bible.

"They wanted me to have something from my mother I could hold in my hands," she said.

All of Fisher's siblings are dead, including Mary Ann, but in getting to know the nieces, Fisher said she grew to love the whole family.

"I'm really the last of the Mohicans," she said. "But I went from being an only child to one of 10. It's very overwhelming."

On Monday, the three women hugged and kissed like old friends as they met for the first time. They exchanged gifts and rifled through folders of old photographs, laughing and telling jokes the whole time.

In March, Fisher and her husband will go to Carl's home in Pennsylvania to meet even more cousins.

"I feel like we've known her forever now," Garro said.

"All we talk about now is Aunt Helen. We're so excited she found us."

awittenberg@s-t.com

Ten Great Places to Trace Your Family Roots

Larry Bleiberg, *Special for USA TODAY*
11:08 a.m. EST January 14,

Television shows like TLC's *Who Do You Think You Are* and PBS' *Genealogy Roadshow* have fueled an interest in tracing family history. And now travelers are planning trips around researching their family tree. **Jennifer Utley**, head of research at Ancestry.com, the world's largest online genealogical resource, shares some places to trace your family roots.

Family History Library, Salt Lake City

This Mormon Church-sponsored research facility is the world's largest with records from 110 countries. The staff is in the process of digitizing all the records, but often the best way to get family information is to visit. "It's good to do a little research ahead of time. There's so much there that you can get lost if you don't have a goal in mind," Utley says. 866-406-1830; familysearch.org/locations/saltlakecity-library

National Archives, Washington, D.C.

The federal government's extensive files provide a motherlode of information for family research. From military to maritime, to land and pension documents, they all can help piece together a family tree, Utley says. It's also one of the best places for Native American family information. 866-272-6272; archives.gov/research/genealogy/

Ellis Island, New York

Many families trace their history to Ellis Island, the first stop in the country for more than 20 million Americans, Utley says. "You can look for people and passenger lists, and it's also about understanding the experience that your immigrant ancestors experienced." Because of damage from Hurricane Sandy, the park and museum are open on a limited basis, so check before visiting. 212-363-3200; nps.gov/elis

Heritage Library Foundation, Hilton Head, S.C.

The center focuses on local history and culture, including African-American research materials that date from before the Civil War, Utley says. The library contains resources such as plantation and smugglers' records. "It's really a different picture of America," Utley says. 843-686-6560; heritagelib.org

New England Historic Genealogical Society, Boston

The nation's first family-history society dates to 1845 and contains more than 12 million documents, manuscripts, records, books, microfilms, photographs

and other artifacts dating to the 14th century. Visitors can book an appointment with and hire an on-site genealogist to help with research. Many families can find information here. "If you have roots that have been in America for a long time, you're going to have come through New England," Utley says. 617-536-5740; americanancestors.org

Newberry Library, Chicago

Utley wrote a book about using the resources at this renowned research repository, founded in 1887. There are materials from across the country, but it's especially good for regional research. "They specialize in local history," she says. "They look at churches of all the denominations, and church records in family-history research are really important." 312-943-9090; newberry.org

Family history cruise,

You can learn how to trace your family tree on the high seas on a variety of family-history cruises, Utley says. Trips usually feature top genealogists and provide a chance to meet others who are piecing together their pasts. The trips are also a way to learn about the latest research tools and resources. One company, UnlockthePastCruises.com, specializes in genealogy trips, and Cecruisegroups.com also plans one for 2014.

Poland

Local experts in Poland can help plan a family-research trip, booking hotels, arranging transportation and perhaps finding a living relative. "These people already know where to find records in each town and can get you in and facilitate and help you find places easier," Utley says. polishgen.com

Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research Houston

If your roots lie in the West, this Houston public library research center should be on your itinerary, Utley says. "You're going to get Wild West and Mexican border stuff." But the library, one of the nation's most extensive for family research, also has information for every state, along with 100,000 books and 70,000 rolls of microfilm. 832-393-2600; houstonlibrary.org/clayton

Lodge at Doonbeg, Ireland

This five-star resort in County Clare on the Atlantic coast has an on-site genealogist to help guests track down their Irish family roots. "He might be able to help you find the ancestral village or an ancestral home," Utley says. She notes that many people have a connection to Ireland, the second-most-common family ancestry in the USA. 866-366-6234; doonbeglodge.com

Editor

Bill Luther



I just realized this morning (April 3) that this Newsletter edition is for Quarter one and we have already entered into the second quarter of the year, my apologies to all.

During my working years, as West Coast General Manager for a large international company, I managed three companies. Metal fabrication facilities in Southern Cal and Texas and a Plastics Company also in Southern Cal. I relished the challenges and opportunities presented me, dealing with the likes of Home Depot, Costco, and of course Walmart. Working with engineering on new designs and innovations, attending Trade Shows to gather customer input, negotiating freight contracts, looking at new manufacturing equipment, and techniques to improve efficiency and reduce costs, were all part of the job. I traveled the U.S. and Europe looking at equipment, and buying at auctions. High stress, sometimes, but not often.

I can say with a high degree of certainty that I was successful. People ask, how could you do that and manage the day to day operations too? The answer is simple, people. I had good people working with me not for me. Success is a team effort, no matter the job.

In retirement, I hate to say, I have lost my edge. Time management is nonexistent. Why, "because I have all the time in the world". Not true, I realize now. I do not have all the time in the world and I have several things I must accomplish before I move on. My gg-grandfather's biography awaits, my grandmother's family history also waits a revision. It is time and the time is now. My Xbox will be retired (well maybe limited) my volunteer time is being reduced, and my time management skills will be honed once again.

Kind of a roundabout way to say I am retiring as the Newsletter editor. When Ann decided to retire, I thought it important to continue, so I volunteered. I love writing, but a Newsletter is not writing, it is all about editing. Seeking what one may think others will find interesting, making announcements, etc. While I have not served the time Ann did, I feel it is time to move on.

So, HDGS members, who will assume the reins of continuing *Desert Diggings*? I will do one more edition and will be happy to contribute a column to the new editor.



Family History Classes

Lynette Robertson

Classes are being offered every Thursday evening at 6:30 p.m. at the Victor Valley Family History Center, 12100 Ridgecrest Road, Victorville (corner of Bear Valley Road). Last week's class (Mitochondrial DNA) was videotaped and has been posted on Computer #2 in the FHC. It is in a folder called FHC Training Videos.

If you have missed our classes, don't worry; each class is independent of the others. Our three upcoming classes will be very important:

April 3--Autosomal DNA for Family History.

Learn how to use your own DNA to trace your ancestors. Yes, you can document and extend your family tree with DNA. You will love this.

April 10--Documenting Your Family Tree

Learn about the brand new system at FamilySearch.org for adding documentation to your online family tree. The documents are scanned images of originals (birth, marriage, death certificates, census records, and many more). They have been fully indexed by volunteers at FamilySearch Indexing and are now available to add to your family tree. The new system (only a few days old) is a vast improvement over the prior one. Come learn how to use it--It will amaze you!

April 17--My Family Tree is full. What do I do now?

For those who think there is nothing left to find on their family tree because people have been working on it for years, you will learn how to find many more family members (guaranteed!). For Family History Consultants, LDS members who are looking for ancestors who need temple work, or those doing DNA research, this class is essential.

The above classes will be taught by Linda Jonas. Classes begin promptly at 6:30. Don't miss them! There will be lots of new information in each session.

Family History Center

In the LDS Church located on the corner of Bear Valley Road and Ridgecrest. For more information call 760-243-5632

Library hours (call to confirm):

Tuesday; 9 am to 5 pm, Thursday; 9 am to 8 pm

Friday; 9 am to 1 pm, Saturday; 10 am to 2 pm

Hours provided by answer machine

Classes on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings to be announced. ☺

HI-DESERT GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Membership

New and renewing members; \$20.00 Couples; \$30.00
Corporate memberships; \$25.00
Please make checks payable to HDGS.

Available Resources

The Genealogy Books belonging to the Society are no longer located in the Newton T. Bass Apple Valley Branch Library

Website

<http://www.cagenweb.com/hdgs/>

Facebook

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/ancesgen/>

HDGS Meeting

The HDGS meets at 7:00 pm on the third Wednesday of every month except November and December at:
Victorville ELKS Lodge, No. 1877
14041 Hesperia Rd., Victorville, CA 92392
Non-member visitors are welcome at all meetings.

Council Members are:

President	Bill Luther	ancesgen@verizon.net
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ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

Mailing Address Label