

MIDWEST COMPUTER GENEALOGISTS

NEWSLETTER

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MCG'S REVIVED WEBSITE

With the shift away from live monthly meetings, it seemed a good time to resurrect the MCG website. The former site was no longer being maintained and its host site no longer in business. Julia Morse has set up a new site with the same MCGenealogists.org address.

As there are currently no live group gatherings, the website is a "place" for members and visitors to interact and contribute. Some of the posts have a place where comments can be left, and you can also email back your ideas, thoughts, and contributions at MCGenealogists@gmail.com.

Some of the features of the new site include:

- (1) An archive of MCG monthly newsletters. You can download them as PDF or text, or even have Internet Archive's read them aloud to you.
- (2) Highlights of the latest news and articles from MCG, encouraging you in your family history discovery and preservation.
- (3) A page with links to favorite free family research sites. (You can email us your own suggestions.)
- (4) Links and news on historical documents and narratives which we are uploading to Internet Archive's online library.
- (5) The ability for you to sign up for email notifications of new articles posted to the site.
- (6) The ability for you to search the MCG website.
- (7) A contact page and opportunity to leave a public comment for some articles.

Like the newsletter, content of the website focuses on computer-based genealogy discovery, historical context, and inspiration for preserving and sharing your family history. We are always looking for new contributions or suggestions. Articles on your

favorite genealogy search tools, appropriate family history stories, or other related submissions are welcomed! Do you have a favorite historical photo that others would enjoy seeing? This is your community and it takes more than a few people to make it happen. (Our newsletters will continue to be posted monthly on www.foxwoodsprings.org, the Foxwood residents' website, thanks to our Webmaster, Del Sherwood.)

THE PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Al Morse

In mid to late 1980's my wife, Dorothy Jean (Newcomb) Morse, and I went to her parents' farm to see her mother, Dorothy (McDaniel) Newcomb. The farm was located in Bates County, Missouri, a little east of Foster. Her mother had dementia, and it was later confirmed as Alzheimer's disease. On January 3, 1990, she was admitted to the nursing home in Prescott, Linn County, Kansas. We would travel to see her on Sunday afternoons. The trip there was about 90 miles from our house in Independence, Missouri.

Occasionally, we would stop to visit Dorothy Jean's cousin, Shirley (West) Tippie, and her husband, Billy. They lived about 5 miles west of Rich Hill, Bates County, Missouri. They had 5 acres, 3 ½ of them were on the west side of a gravel country road and 1 ½ acres on the east side of the road. On the west side, they lived in a house built by Billy. The land on the east side was vacant, except for a big walnut tree next to the road and a mimosa tree. Shirley would plant a garden on the land. The land on the east side was bordered on 3 sides by the Peabody Wildlife Area. One day, I announced, or complained, about the distance we were traveling, and Billy commented

that he might be willing to sell the 1 ½ acres if the right people came by. This property was less than 20 miles from the nursing home. We got the land by paying to have rural water brought a half mile to their property. Of course, we had water made available on the east side of the road as well. This was 1991.

In 1992, we built a 30 foot by 30 foot garage. Since Billy had built his own house and a garage, he was able, with my limited help, to build the garage. We had the intent to build the house, but decided that we should look for a double wide home. So we started looking. We were to retire in 1994. We bought a nice double wide and it was delivered and installed in October, 1994. We moved in. A nice big deck was added to the back of the house, and, eventually, a front porch was added.

We put in a big garden every summer. This is where we really got into canning. We bought a pressure canner to can green beans. We used an old hot-water canner that my mother, Mildred Catherine (Janssens) Morse had used, to do all of the other canning. We canned jellies, jams, tomatoes, sauces, pickles, and relishes. We also planted 12 apple trees, 3 pear trees, 2 plum trees, 2 peach trees, 3 grape vines, a strawberry patch, 6 or 8 blueberry bushes, 6 thornless blackberry bushes, black raspberry bushes, gooseberry bushes, 2 elderberry bushes, and other strange fruit trees or bushes that did not succeed. We also had flower gardens, flowering bushes, and shade trees.

We loved living there. We had our son's dog, Chief. He was a great dog in the country. We had two indoor cats. We enjoyed going mushroom hunting in the spring. Neither one of us had ever done that, but we learned. We had some very successful years picking morels. We enjoyed our walks, especially in the Peabody Wildlife Area. We saw birds that we had never seen before, such as bluebirds and Baltimore orioles. We had deer and turkeys go through our yard as well as raccoons, opossums, skunks, and other critters. We enjoyed watching flocks of geese gather in the fields near our house in the fall. From the fall of

2000 to 2004, our oldest son, Brian, attended Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. We would make 2 trips a year to visit him. We enjoyed those trips and did some sightseeing.

Since we were now closer to the nursing home, we had the opportunity to go and visit, although Dorothy's mother's health kept getting worse. She no longer recognized us or could visit with us. Dorothy would go over there and play the piano. She and I would sing. We also got involved in a bible study once a month with the residents. Dorothy's mother died on June 10, 1999, after being there nine and a half years. We continued going over to do bible study each month.

We also saw heartache. Billy and Shirley were in a terrible car wreck in 2001 and Shirley died. We remained close to Billy and helped him as he had a long recovery. We also each had cancer surgeries. We had those in Research Hospital in Kansas City. We had kept our house in Independence because we kept going to our doctors in the city. Dorothy had open heart surgery in February, 2004. We made the decision that we needed to move back to Independence. We put the country house up for sale and started moving things back to the city. We moved back in November. The house in the country did sell in February, 2005. Many times we would look at the pictures we took down in the country. She even took some of those photos to paint pictures of them on canvas.

MCG'S NEW ONLINE LIBRARY AT INTERNET ARCHIVE

In addition to relaunching the MCG website , mcgenealogists.org, Julia Morse has now set up for us an MCG library space at Internet Archive. You may view it directly at <https://archive.org/details/@mcgenealogists> or link to it from the MCGenealogists.org website. This is the same digital archives which libraries around the world, (such as the Library of Congress and Allen County Public Library Genealogy Collection), use to share and preserve their digital collections.

We foresee the following purposes of our online library:

- (1) To preserve MCG newsletters and documents for future generations (even after MCG might cease to exist in the future).
- (2) To increase searchable access to MCG documents for worldwide researchers.
- (3) To professionally present MCG documents in multiple accessible formats, including formats for the visually-impaired, or those who would wish easy text-to-speech audio.
- (4) To provide easy access for members to contribute their own unique documents to be accessible in this world library.

We have just begun uploading past newsletters. The process is slow, as we are providing searchable subjects and summary information for the catalog as we upload—so if you are looking for past newsletters, come back again to check for more! We also intend to contribute some unique historical documents and transcripts.

FIFTEEN “UNCOMMON” COMPUTER-BASED WAYS TO DISCOVER MORE ABOUT YOUR ANCESTORS

Julia Morse

Genealogist Lisa Lisson of the blog "Are You My Cousin?" (<https://lialisson.com/>) has recently published a series of 31 short YouTube videos on "Uncommon" avenues for learning more about your family history. You can explore all the videos at her playlist, entitled "31 Days of Uncommon Genealogy Tips," at: <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLdwcCRgmrNMxkF0-J2mFWLHe4v4ucsY1v>. Be sure to check out the description area beneath her videos for the related text blog post, where you can find links to key sites described in the video. Her first web blog post on this series begins here: <https://lialisson.com/volunteer-31-days-genealogy-tips/>

From Lisa's 31 tips, I summarize here with my own comments fifteen tips which are applicable to computer-based genealogy:

- (1) Volunteer. Some volunteering, such as transcribing records or support for a local history organization, can be done over the computer. Strategic volunteering gives you access to people and resources in your location or historical interest, so can pay back toward your own family history research in multiple ways. I will address this in a future article (or you can see Lisa's video for her own thoughts).
- (2) Explore genealogy wikis to learn from others. (Just search on "genealogy wiki.")
- (3) Explore society and community news pages in small and rural newspapers. Understand what was going on in the region and time that may have impacted your ancestors. Small-town newspapers often included frequent news about visitors and travelling which can help confirm family ties, provide links to lost family, and detail the closeness of association of friends and family.
- (4) Explore and research religious periodicals. These can be searched out on Archive.org, Google Books, historical libraries, and sometimes from the denominational archives and colleges. I was able to solve a decades-long mystery of a missing Missouri pioneer brother by stumbling on an 1849 West Virginia church academy publication that included an article about his death. Solving this mystery also gave us deeper insight into the religious commitment and educational background of our pre-Civil War Miller family in Bates County, Missouri.
- (5) Join a Facebook group dedicated to genealogy, surname-based groups, or in geographic regions of interest. Get to know others, get insight, and reach out for help.
- (6) Learn more about DNA. Using DNA for genealogy research is complicated and can be daunting, but there are great videos on YouTube that will help you learn more. Lisa recommends the "Family History Fanatics" videos on DNA as a good starting place.
- (7) Use your ancestor's occupation to guide your search. Occupation gives insight decisions that the family made when moving. Some occupations leave specific record trails that could be explored: pastors, government positions and appointments, business advertisements, etc. I finally figured out what Great Grandpa Peter Y. Morse was doing

during his brief time in Osceola, Missouri when I found an advertisement for his undertaking and carpentry business in the 1866 newspaper. For family names that are very common names or words (and thus difficult to search), searching on words associated with the occupation can sometimes help refine your search to get you to the articles of interest.

(8) School records are increasingly becoming available at Archive.org and digitized historical libraries. School records are sometimes noted in small-town and rural newspapers. More likely avenues are accomplished by contacting the local historical society or library about possible physical archive records which have not been digitized.

(9) War of 1812 Pension Records are being digitized on Fold3. Lisa states that these records are free to view without a subscription. They provide birthplace, death place, spouse, and occupation. (There are only about 75% done, so not all there yet, but a lot are.)

(10) Explore the mortality schedules of the 1850-1880 census. These are the individuals who died in the 12 months prior to the census. You can find what they died of and a general date range, whether they were single, married, or widowed at the time of death. Mortality schedules are usually available at the same place where you access census records.

(11) Examine other "non-population schedules" of the censuses. For example, there is an agricultural schedule which gives highly specific information on ancestor farms, such as livestock numbers and acreage. Similarly, there is a manufacturer's schedule. "DDD" schedule lists ancestors with handicaps. "Slave schedules" provide insight for families in the slave states.

(12) Explore ArchiveGrid (<https://researchworks.oclc.org/archivegrid/>) to find out what archives might house historical documents in your regions of interest. You can contact archivists for information of ways they might be able to help you access key information.

(13) Explore <https://www.worldcat.org/> to see if there are books at libraries around the world that house something of interest to your family name--books that may not yet digitized at Archive.org, Google Books, or Hathitrust Digital Library

<https://www.hathitrust.org/>). WorldCat will list libraries where physical or microfilm copies of the publications are housed. Sometimes books can be obtained free through your local library with interlibrary loan.

(14) Use Flickr photo-sharing site. Many libraries and archives are posting photographs. You may or may not find photos of your own ancestral families, but certainly historical photographs in regions, and aerial maps. It is also possible for you to post your own historical family photos for others to find—which sometimes also brings you into connection to distant cousins with documents and family stories.

(15) Seek out maps online. Use Google StreetView to see what that area looks like today. Sometimes the buildings where your ancestors lived are still there, and you can see what it looks like! Look for military maps to learn about the movements of the battles. Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps at the Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/collections/sanborn-maps/about-this-collection/>, have rich information on city and towns, including specific business locations types of building construction, in the latter 1800's and early 1900's. Lisa also recommends exploring the Dave Rumsey Map Collection, <https://www.davidrumsey.com/>, where you can search and freely download maps by pressing the "EXPORT" option.

Many thanks to Lisa Lisson for originating these recommendations. You can check out more at her blog, <https://lialisson.com>

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

Marjorie Slavens

March is Women's History Month, and what better subject could I find about whom I should write than my mother, Mildred Marie Welty Slavens (1910-2008)? Mother was born December 2, 1910 in Westport, Missouri. Her parents, Edward Alonzo Welty (1884-1954) and Hattie Lee Kerr Welty (1889-1979), were both born in Jasper

County, Missouri. They were married February 10, 1907 at the home of her parents, a hotel which they owned in Medoc, Missouri. (Medoc is one of those little towns which has disappeared, except for a church and a cemetery.) Edward Welty was a Railway Mail Clerk on the Kansas City Southern route from Kansas City to Silome Springs, Arkansas for many years. Mother was the oldest of their 5 children, Edward Charles (1913-2010), Helen Virginia (Olson, 1915-2001), Kathryn Elizabeth (Farr, 1918-2009), and Evelyn Dolores (Stewart, 1920-2020). The family moved from Westport to Kansas City Kansas in 2014, believing that the Kansas educational system would be better for their children. All of the children graduated from high school in Kansas City, and mother attended a teacher training program for the KCK schools for two years, finishing the course work but not completing her student teaching. During World War II, she wanted to teach on a temporary certificate because there was a need for teachers during the war, but my father was absolutely opposed to this work because he believed that only he should work to support his family.

In June, 1930, Mother was visiting her grandparents, Charles and Millie Kerr, in Asbury, Missouri, when she met my father, Ralph Westmeier Slavens (1907-83), who was working in the mines and living with his grandmother, Laura Hesler. They were married in KCK October 12, 1930. They lived briefly in Asbury, then with his parents in Oklahoma, then with her parents in Kansas City during their first year of marriage, but they returned to Oklahoma to live for 8 years following the birth of my brother, Everett, in October, 1931. My sister, Beverly, and I were born in Shidler, Oklahoma, and our sister, Carol, was born in Joplin, Missouri. Although my father continued to work there, there were many financial problems for them in the 1930s, as there were for many people. He went to work for the National Lead Company on April 1, 1940 in Baxter Springs, Kansas, where he received his first regular pay check. He retired from that company in 1972. We lived in Shidler, Oklahoma, Pittsburg, Kansas, Columbus, Kansas, Carl Junction, Missouri, and moved to Fredericktown, Missouri in 1945.

Mother first thought about her family history when she interviewed her father about his parents in the early 1950s. He told her very little about his family; Welty's, typically did not talk a great deal. After her children were grown in the 1970s, she started investigating the family history. Her sisters said, "Mildred, you are the oldest, so you should write our family history". She first did research at the St. Louis Public Library, and she also spent as much time as possible at the Mid-Continent Library in Independence when she was visiting her daughter, Carol, in Blue Springs. She moved to Blue Springs in 1990 and spent a great deal more time at that Library. Carol and I went on a number of research trips with her to court houses, libraries, cemeteries, genealogical societies, and more and more cemeteries in Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, and Virginia. My sister used to see a cemetery along the road and ask her, "Mother, there is a cemetery; do you think we should stop to see if we have anyone there?" Having a laptop and a GPS would have been helpful during those years.

When she began her family research, Mother knew nothing about most of her ancestors beyond her own grandparents. Federal and state Census records were very helpful in tracing the family back from members whom she knew. Her father told her about the family of his mother, Catharine Mary Eppright Welty, but he told her nothing about his mother's family, although he knew his grandparents, uncles and aunts. She had a family Bible that belonged to her great grandfather, John Kerr, and she was able to trace some of her grandfathers 13 siblings by John Kerr's first two wives through this record. In addition to her visits to so many places, she maintained correspondence with family members throughout the country. Once she learned to use the Internet, her correspondence increased. She had many requests for her books, and she sold and mailed them to many people for the basic cost of the copies. She used such sites as Ancestry.com, Fold3, Genealogy.com, Family Search, and Gencircles and contributed information to these sites as well.

Mother published family books on her Welty, Eppright, Kerr, Heape, and Crawford families, some of which had 2 or 3 editions. I gave her a computer for her 86th birthday, and she had to learn to use it herself because I did not live here, and my sister worked and could only help her occasionally. She also had unpublished manuscripts on her Miller, Brumbaugh, Adams, Tefertiller lines and some family lines related to ours, as well as manuscripts on my father's Slavens, Parks, Hesler, Westmeier, and Gilman lines. I have used all of this material from time to time in the MCG Newsletter. When Mother fell two weeks before her death on June 30, 2008, she was working on the third edition of her Eppright book. I interviewed her several times on the family history and her genealogical research, and members of the family both have family books and copies of these videos.

EDITORIAL: PRESERVATION OF MCG

Marjorie Slavens

In November, the MCG decided to discontinue our genealogy activity together because we could not find a Program Chair for our meetings. However, MCG is experiencing a great new "Renaissance", primarily because of the efforts and dedication of Julia Morse, who has spoken at our MCG meetings several times about her genealogical research concerning the Morse family and its history before and since the Morse family found its way to Bates County, Missouri.

Julia Morse is an amateur computer genealogist and a volunteer schoolhouse teacher interpreter for the Yesteryear Museum of Salina, Kansas. Professionally, she is a Certified Manufacturing Engineer and Associate Professor at Kansas State University. She certainly has a full-time job, different from those of us who postponed our genealogical research until after we retired, Julia is doing this genealogical work while she is still working full-time. She has invested a great deal of time creating our new website and posting newsletters on Archive.com.

Julia writes, "Glad you feel good about it! You can probably tell that I have had a great time working on the website. It is a great brain-break for me, and I have additionally learned a lot already by uploading the newsletters to Internet Archive, researching on digitization and archiving options, etc. I feel good that I am making progress on my own genealogy-related goals by working on this!

One thing you might add to the newsletter: Please encourage readers, when they visit the site, to sign up for email updates. (There is a link in the middle of the home page.) That way we can keep thoughts and ideas going a bit between the newsletters--perhaps people going to the website more regularly".

Go to mcgenealogists.org to see the various options for participation in MCG that Julia has provided on this site. We welcome comments, suggestions, contributions, articles, etc. Through this site, we can continue to share our genealogical research with others, and, perhaps, we will make some new contacts with other family researchers that we have not yet met either in person or on the net.

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