

June 10, 2016

[Bainbridge Island Genealogical Society](#)

BIGS News - Message from President Betty

Membership survey and what we learned

Here are some of the key things we learned from the recent member satisfaction survey in comparison to the previous survey in early 2014. Our thanks to all who responded.

In both surveys, meetings with speaker presentations and the website were among the top 3 in importance. In 2014, "opportunities to connect with others" was rated the second most important activity. In 2016, we asked for input about the relative importance of several different ways to "connect" and the degree of active participation we might expect. We asked about social time at meetings, ways for members to share their knowledge and experience in meetings, small informal groups ("genealogy play dates"), and coffee/lunch gatherings.

Members sharing findings, breakthroughs, experiences in meetings (e.g., one-time or ongoing Special Interest Group or program meetings) ranked more important than the other activities. Social time at meetings was ranked somewhat more important than "genealogy play dates" or coffee/lunch gatherings.

You can help. Several respondents expressed willingness to help the organization, sharing your knowledge and experiences in meetings. Since the responses were anonymous, we don't know who you are! So, please [let Claire or I know](#) so we can explore how you might contribute to future meetings.

In both surveys, about 70% of members reported being very satisfied with being a member of BIGS (67% in 2014 and 71% in 2016) with most of the remaining respondents reporting being mostly satisfied. A few individuals in each survey reported being somewhat satisfied. The overall survey response rate in 2014 was about 41% compared to about 50% in 2016. The complete survey results can be found [here](#).

[Betty Wiese](#)

President

Meetings

July 8, 10:00 AM - Noon, Gary Zimmerman, President of the Fiske Genealogical Library in Seattle will be talking to us about ***Using City Directories in your Research.***

July 15, 10:00 AM - Noon, William Dollarhide, author of genealogy books including ***Map Guide to the U.S. Federal Censuses, 1790-1920***, will be presenting ***Finding Living Relatives Online.***

The [complete meeting schedule](#) is on our website.

To get a copy of a handout from one of our guest speaker presentations, contact our historian, [Rebecca Pratt](#).

Special Interest Groups

Here are our upcoming SIG meetings in chronological order. Go to [our website](#) for the complete schedule.

Computer Skill Building, second Friday of every other month (odd numbered months)

- **Friday June 10, 10:00 AM - Noon**, at the Bainbridge Library, upstairs conference room
- **Topic: *Accessing Premium Genealogy Databases for Free***
- Leader: Claire Smith

Northeast Mid-Atlantic, quarterly

- **Wednesday June 15, 1:00 - 3:00 PM**, at the Bainbridge Library, downstairs conference room
- Leader: Mary Ferm

Evening Discussion (EDG), monthly

- **Monday June 27, 7:00 - 9:00 PM, 4th Monday this month only**, at the HomeStreet Bank community room
- Leaders: Mary Ferm & Sue Elfving

Irish

- **Tuesday June 28, 10:00 AM - Noon**, at the Bainbridge Library, downstairs conference room
- We're looking at starting a new Irish SIG. Come if you're interested in making this happen. Sue Hassenmiller is the contact person for this exploratory meeting.

Skill Building, second Friday of every other month (odd numbered months)

- **Friday July 8, 10:00 AM - Noon**, at the Bainbridge Library, upstairs conference room

- **Topic: *Watch those Assumptions***

- Leader: Anna DuPen

Southern States, quarterly

- **Thursday July 21, 1:00 - 3:00 PM**, at the Bainbridge Library, downstairs conference room
- Leader: Paula Schmidt

Computer Skill Building, second Friday of every other month (evennumbered months)

- **Friday August 12, 10:00 AM - Noon**, at the Bainbridge Library, upstairs conference room
- Leader: Claire Smith

All Things DNA, every other month

- **September, date and time to be announced**, at the Bainbridge Library, downstairs conference room
- Leader: Sue Hassenmiller

Scandinavian, quarterly

- **October, date and time to be announced**, at the Bainbridge Library, downstairs conference room
- Leaders: Sue Hassenmiller & Mary Fern

Members' Corner

- **James Murray's Watch**

by Pat Murray Scott

Clipping from Wheeling Register Newspaper:

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January 15, 1883

"The contest for the Knights of Labor silver watch, chain and charm closed at the K. of L Hall over McGregor's store on Saturday night. Mr. James Murray, a stonecutter of this city, held the lucky number and carried off the watch. Ticket No 73 drew it. He is the happiest man in town."

- My narrative version:

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"Men's laughter tumbled down the stairwell from the Hall above McGregor's Store. At the doorway, one by one, men, laborers all, stepped into the winter air rising from the river. They closed their collars against the bite and hollered "goodnights" into the wind. One

man paused, raised a silver watch and chain in reply, and braced himself for the walk to his house on the edge of the Ohio River."

- I relish fictionalizing my great-grandfather's moment of success. I want to imagine the moment when James Murray walked in the door of his home in Bellaire, Belmont County, Ohio, with such a prize in his hand. An Irish Stonemason of earned repute, he survived the Great Famine, and supported his family for twenty years by building roads, walls, bridges in Ireland before emigrating in 1869.

This Irishman deserves this bit of Irish luck, and he should be laughing all the way home. A simple prize long due.

If you'd like to share your story in a future BIGS newsletter, please [contact Sue Hassenmiller](#).

Genealogy News

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- [The New England Historic Genealogical Society \(NEHGS\)](#) is offering free access to all of their New York databases for the entire month of June. Sign up for free access [here](#).
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- The [Historical Society of Pennsylvania](#) is building a searchable database of William Still's, the "conductor of the Underground Railroad", journal. This journal lists biographies of some 400 fugitive slaves who Still aided in the 1850s. If you can't wait for the database, you can see [photos of the journal online](#) now. Read more about this story [here](#). Find the link under Ethnic Groups > African Americans on our Links page.
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- If you're researching your Irish ancestry, [RootsIreland](#) can be an important source. It's pretty pricey though at \$255 annually. They've just introduced more affordable options though: monthly for \$28, or a 1 day for \$11. I can get a lot done in a day if I turn off my phone and email!
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- Here are links to the latest updates from some of the major genealogy websites, with highlights in areas BIGS members are researching:
- - [Ancestry recently added and updated these collections:](#)
 - - [U.S., Applications for Seaman's Protection Certificates, 1916-1940](#)
 - [Northern Territory, Australia, Probate Index, 1911-1994](#)
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Subscription required. Access the library edition for free at the Kitsap

Regional Library or any Family History Center if you're not a subscriber.

- [Familysearch Historic Records Collections](#) - Click on "Last Updated" to sort by date to view the latest records.

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- [Arkansas, County Marriages, 1837-1957](#)
- [California, San Francisco County Records, 1824-1997](#)
- [Connecticut Marriages, 1640-1939](#)
- [Georgia, County Marriages, 1785-1950](#)
- [Iowa, County Births, 1880-1935](#)
- [Iowa, Grand Army of the Republic Membership Records, 1861-1949](#)
- [Kentucky, County Marriages, 1797-1954](#)
- [Louisiana Naturalization Records, 1831-1906](#)
- [Massachusetts, Town Clerk, Vital and Town Records, 1626-2001](#)
- [Michigan Probate Records, 1797-1973](#)
- [Ohio, County Births, 1841-2003](#)
- [Washington Birth Records, 1869-1950](#)
- [Denmark, Probate Indexes, 1674-1851](#)
- [Hungary, Jewish Vital Records Index, 1800-1945](#)
- [New Zealand, Archives New Zealand, Probate Records, 1843-1998](#)

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- [Findmypast](#) - This month's additions include:

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- [US Marriages Collection](#)
- [Queensland Deaths 1829-1964](#)
- [British Royal Navy & Royal Marines Service and Pension Records Browse, 1704-1919](#)
- [Greater London Burial Index](#)
- [Ireland, Poverty Relief Loans 1821-1874](#)
- [Ireland Surnames & Family Histories](#)

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Subscription required. Access the library edition for free at any Family History Center.

- [GenealogyBank](#) - You can access the library edition, America's GenealogyBank, for free from home with your [Seattle Public Library](#) card.

Kitsap County residents are eligible for free Seattle Public Library cards. Click [here](#) to sign up for a card.

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- [MyHeritage](#) - Subscription required.

- [Australian Newspapers](#), with over 11 million pages online
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- The [New England Historic Genealogical Society \(NEHGS\)](#) - Although a subscription is required to access many databases, there are quite a few that you can access free of charge.
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- They are continuing to add 10 new sketches each week to [Western Massachusetts Families in 1790](#).

Tip of the Month

Even though a genealogy site may provide a general search function, all of the record sets on the site may not be searched when you use it. There may be some records that aren't indexed or that haven't been transcribed correctly. If you don't find what you're looking for, you may just want to try browsing through the records as well as searching.

BIGS Website

New Links

- Websites for genealogy research are listed on our [Links](#) page. Here are this month's new links. All new entries are tagged with * on our website so it's easy to see what's new.
- FamilySearch now has a collection of [United States Enumeration District Maps](#) online to help in researching census records. An enumeration district was an area that could be covered by a single census taker in one census period and varied in size from one city block in urban areas to an entire county in rural areas. Go to Census Records on our Links page.
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- Looking for the latest genealogy news on a specific topic like Polish genealogy or preservation? Try the [Genealogy Blog Finder](#). Go to Genealogy News blogs on our Links page for this link.
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- Thank you, Sue Elfving, for sharing a link to the complete [historical timeline for Alabama through 1840](#). Go to Places > United States > Alabama on our Links page.
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- [Genealogie Online](#) from the Dutch archives has a great English-language interface. Go to Places > Holland on our Links page.
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Local Events

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- **2nd Thursday of every month, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM [Brick Wall Workshop](#)**, at the National Archives on Sandpoint Way in Seattle, FREE.
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- **Wednesday June 22, 2016, 1:00 - 2:00 PM [Trails West: Crossing the Continent, 1840-1869](#)** Mary Kircher Roddy at Puget Sound Genealogical Society, Kitsap Regional Library, 1303 Sylvan Way, Bremerton, WA 98310. Mary will show how to map overland and water migration routes, relive journeys and discover your ancestors' travel timelines. Visitors are invited to remain for the June meeting, 2:00 to 3:00. FREE.
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- **Saturday June 25, 2016, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM [Genealogy 101](#)** Webinar Class with Peggy Clemens Lauritzen at Puget Sound Genealogical Society, Kitsap Regional Library, 1303 Sylvan Way, Bremerton, WA 98310. She will show us how to get started in genealogy, use compiled sources, obtain, evaluate and organize information into a genealogy to benefit future generations. Registration required: call 360 475-9172, or visit the Genealogy Center, Sylvan Way Branch of the Library. FREE.
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- **August 7-12, 2016, 10:00 AM - Noon [36th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy](#)** in Seattle, hosted by the [Jewish Genealogical Society of Washington State](#)
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- **Monday August 29, 2016, 2:30 - 4:30 PM [Beginning Your Family History Research](#)** at the Seattle Public Library, downtown. Registration required, FREE.
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- **August 17-20, 2016 [Northwest Genealogy Conference](#)** in Arlington, hosted by the Stillaguamish Genealogical Society
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- **Monday September 12, 2016, 2:30 - 4:30 PM [Genealogy Databases: Ancestry Library Edition](#)** at the Seattle Public Library, downtown. FREE.

Members

Check out our [Members page](#) to find out what other BIGS members are researching. If you'd like to add or change your interests, just [let us know](#).

Library

See our [Library page](#) if you'd like to borrow a book or CD from another BIGS member. If you're willing to loan or do lookups of your books or CDs, just [email us](#) to have them added to the list.

Other BIGS Business

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- **BIGS-net**
- BIGS-net, is an email discussion group, where BIGS members communicate with other members, e.g., post a question, identify a resource, carpool to a class, meet informally. We often post about free access to premium websites and discounted genealogy subscription deals there too. Join the network by clicking the Network button on [our website](#) or [contact Sue Hassenmiller](#), the BIGS-net moderator, if you have questions.
- **Mentors**
- Would you like a new perspective on your genealogy research? An annual consultation with a mentor is a benefit of BIGS membership. Contact [Betty](#) to find a mentor who can best help you.
- **Basics Class**
- If you're a new BIGS member or would like to attend a **Basics class**, please contact [Mary Ferm](#). Basics classes are open to all members. Sometimes we all need a refresher.
- **Facebook**
- Visit us on Facebook. Just scroll to the bottom of the page on [our website](#) and click on the Facebook logo!

BIGS scholarships are available. Any member in good standing can apply to the **BIGS Scholarship Fund** for funds to take a genealogy related class. Up to four individual scholarships may be awarded. There's a maximum of one scholarship per membership each year. Funds may be used for transportation, class materials and class fees. You can submit your [application](#) by email or in person to [Betty](#) or [Claire](#).

Feedback and ideas from our members are always welcome. BIGS is your group so [let us know](#) what you'd like to see!

[Claire Smith](#)

Vice President & Newsletter Editor