

**GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER**



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**Some General
Genealogy Websites**

Cyndislist: A great entry-point to finding on-line genealogy websites

<http://cyndislist.com/>

Family Search: The LDS site with some resources on-line and the listing of microfilms available for rent

<http://www.familysearch.org/>

GenForum: Family surname bulletin boards for sharing information with other researchers

<http://genforum.com/>

Rootsweb: Genealogical resource with searchable databases, family trees, mailing lists, and message boards

<http://www.rootsweb.com/>

USGenWeb: County-oriented websites maintained by researchers; varied content by site

<http://usgenweb.org/states/index.shtml>

**COMPUTERS IN GENEALOGY—
BOON OR BANE?**

by Jesse Stewart

Having begun my family history research only a few short years ago (2001), I can hardly imagine what it was like before computers (BC). Computers have not only become a tool for us to manage all the data we collect, but have opened the world of information to us through the internet. However, it's important to remember that with all the benefits of using technology, there are some pitfalls—the boon and bane of computers in genealogy!



BOON: With the advent of

computer programs for recording the results of our genealogical research, we are freed from having to maintain index cards or family group sheets. We can print out revised family information in almost any format we want when we've found new details on our ancestors. We simply have to enter it into the computer and, voila, at the push of a button our records are undated!

BANE: If our computer "crashes" all our hard work inputting information on our families could be for naught, especially if we haven't backed-up our data recently. It will take countless hours to reconstruct our genealogy program. To avoid this irritation, be sure to do regular back-ups. You can copy your files to a floppy disk, a CD, a flash drive, or even to an external hard drive. And, in case of fire or some other catastrophe, consider storing a copy of your back-up away from home in a safe deposit box at the bank or on a flash drive you can take it with you at all times. You might also send a copy of your file(s) to relatives or friends or store them on-line through internet sites.

BOON: Computer programs such as Word and Excel allow us to make lists, charts, spreadsheets or other summaries that will help us evaluate our research and make it easy to take data when we go on research trips. These can be easily updated without having to re-write or re-type the whole thing.

BANE: It's easy to get caught up in creating lists instead of evaluating and analyzing the information we have. If we're not careful, we can end up focusing on the process and lose sight of our end goal. Our lists can become more important than the results of our research.

BOON: Computers have made it easier to share data with other genealogists through ged-com files. These standardized format files are readable by all genealogy programs, so

(Continued on page 3)

5 Tips for Fast Tracking your Genealogy Research

#1

Visit a State, County or historical Library website to search online indexes before you make a trip and start reading microfilm

#2

Comb the catalog online before you get to the library to save valuable time for working in the stacks

#3

Pick up leads from online pedigree databases, mailing lists, message boards, family websites and digitized books

#4

Streamline your internet surfing with the search tools available with your genealogy program.

#5

Run automatic database searches using Ancestry.com, Google Alerts, eBay, ablebooks or New England Historic Genealogical Society search engines.

If this list of tips has you over your head in computer lingo, use it as a basis for questions at the September 15th JCGS Monthly Meeting on "Computer Basics"

Family Tree Magazine
August 2006
page 20

COMPUTER RESOURCES AT THE RESOURCE CENTER

JCGS has purchased subscriptions to several genealogy-based websites to assist members in their research. Most sites can easily be searched by surname, or you may have more success by finding the specific database you are interested in and then searching by surname. Come by the Research Center and you may find unexpected information on your ancestors!

ANCESTRY.COM

The grand daddy of them all, we have the full subscription with the exception of newspapers that are not made available to libraries. The site merits a continual look as new databases are added all the time—some of which might be of interest to you. A few of the recent additions area:

Index to Irish Marriages, 1771-1812
Immigrants to the Middle Colonies, Tepper
Original Scots Colonists of Early America, David Dobson
Early Settlers of Alabama, Saunders
Australian Convict Records

NEW ENGLAND HISTORIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

This site offers many databases covering the New England States and New York. New databases are posted weekly, some of the newest include:

New York Wills, 1626-1836
New England Historical and Genealogical Register, 1847-2002
The Diaries of the Rev. Thomas Cary of Newburyport, Massachusetts 1762-1806
Probate Records of Norwich, Connecticut Vol 1-3
First Settlers of Schenectady, from 1662-1800

NEWSPAPER ARCHIVES

This site has scanned images of newspapers from many states and some international countries. Look to see the number of issues included for the paper of interest to you, sometimes it is only one or two. This site does not make up for losing the Ancestry newspapers, but it helps.

WORLD VITAL RECORDS

We just signed up for this site which is new to the Research Center. It is sponsored by Everton Publishers and you will find the old collection of information from *The Helper* magazines as well as their *Roots Cellar* family group sheets. Parts of the site are not well presented and it can be confusing to get around. There are some newspapers, some book references, although these seem to be through Google Books, and land references including a modern day map of locations. It is worth taking a look, you never know what gem might be hiding here.



BOON OR BANE (CONT.)

(Continued from page 1)

can be used regardless of what software created it or reads it. As the sender, you don't have to print out many sheets of paper to exchange data; as the receiver, you don't need to re-type all the information into your own software.

BANE: If we're not careful in importing a ged-com file from another researcher, we might overwrite our data in our own genealogy program. We might end up with un-proven or incorrect data and we need to remember that we should analyze the work of others to evaluate it's accuracy and completeness. Sharing research and information with others may also requires us to keep up-to-date on new operating systems and software programs. If we continue to use older versions of either, we may not be able to share with people using newer versions.

BOON: The internet has provided a major breakthrough in how we might conduct research. Not only can we communicate with others researching our families through e-mail, we can sometimes locate their research on websites. We have access to an increasingly growing number of books which have been "digitalized" as well as actual documents which have been scanned and placed on-line by counties, states, the federal government, historical repositories and genealogy societies. Library catalogs on line allow us to prepare for our visits so that we can maximize our research time while there. We know what books are available before we arrive. Many of us can take our research a long way by simply sitting at home and "searching the net". And, with the advent of records such as censuses on line, we are more willing to follow peripheral family members because it's easier. This is good research technique as a sibling might provide insight into our ancestor when he or she doesn't leave much behind.

BANE: If we think we can do it all on-line we're fooling ourselves. Not only are we at the mercy of good folks to put information on the internet, but we can also be fooled by human error when indexes or transcriptions are full of typos and mistakes. We, too can be lulled into a state of bliss when we find genealogies of our families on line. Often, these write-ups lack documentation and sources, so we can't evaluate how accurate they are until we follow up with our own research. Remember the old computer adage—"garbage in, garbage out"! Further, there are skills required to seek out all the available information on the internet. As we've all discovered, using the proper word/words in a "google" search or even in an index or library catalog is required to find what one is looking for. We might miss a relevant document or book simply because we didn't "search right", so talking to a real person or browsing the shelves in the library may still provide rewards. When personal computers came of age, we were told that we would become a paperless society. It's likely that we actually have more paper now as it's easier to print out numerous pages of data, more than we would have collected by photocopying or hand extracting at earlier times! Finally, it's hard to curl up with your computer in front of the fire and enjoy reading the county or family history. It's not the same as paging through a book!. Many of us find it hard to read a significant amount of pages on line— it's uncomfortable and sometimes hard on the eyes.

BOON: Both genealogy and word-processing software have made it easier to put together a book on our family history. Some genealogy programs have book publishing options imbedded in them that will collect data from our family files and put it in an easy-to-read format. Word processing software allows us to play with fonts (the way the type looks), insert pictures, create indexes and tables of contents, and more.

BANE: Unless we are willing to put in time to "play" with our software programs, they can be intimidating. It's easy to get frustrated trying to figure out how to make things work. Taking a class or asking for help from others might make it easier to familiarize ourselves with the intricacies of these programs. But practice and repetition are the only ways to make things "second nature".

SUMMARY: The computer has made our lives as family historians easier in many ways. It's simple to record and update our findings and effortlessly generate reports that suit our needs, and the internet has allowed us to gather a great deal of information that would have taken trips or many letters to acquire in the past. But remember, the computer is only a tool to help us in our endeavor. We still need to rely on solid research techniques to know what questions to ask, where the answers might be found and how to evaluate the information we receive.

Bottom line...

We must continue to be good researchers regardless of what means we use to record our data or communicate with other researchers.

WELCOME!**New JCGS Members***Jim and Linda Henley**Gail Sprague**Dezi Rose**Justas Osmer***DON'T MISS IT!**

JCGS has a full schedule of events for coming quarter. You can refer to the calendar in this issue for dates and times (don't forget to mark your calendars), but some of the special things coming up include our monthly meetings, discussion groups and resource corners:

September Meeting: Claire Smith from Bainbridge Island Genealogical Society will present a program on "Computer Basics" - understanding technical "lingo" organizing files and folders; and using flash drives, CDs and other ways to back up information. Bring your questions about how to get the most out of your computer.

October Meeting: Janet Baccus will join us to discuss Adoption Research. It can sometimes be very difficult to track down adopted ancestors. Come hear about some ways to break through this tricky brick wall.

November Meeting: Rebecca Redshaw will present "Getting Started Writing Your Family History". Come get inspired to start your writing, or at least to get suggestions for when you're ready to do so in the future.

Writing Your Family History Discussion Group: we will continue supporting each other in our efforts to write up our family history in a way that someone might actually want to read. It is an informal group, so don't hesitate to give it a try.

Regional Research Discussion Group: there's so much to discuss regarding researching our German ancestors that we will be extending this topic for another three months. So far we have talked about the language problem and the difficulty with names. It has been helpful to compare notes. So, please do come by.

September Resource Corner: following up on the monthly membership meeting, we will have about 10 computers available for hands-on practice of basic techniques. No question is too stupid. This is your chance to learn some of the tricks that make life easier.

October Resource Corner: Marge Samuelson will share her secrets for effectively conducting research from the comfort of home. Emphasis will be on writing effective requests for research help.

November Resource Corner: using Genealogical CDs. So many resources are now available in this format, and we have purchased a number of them for the Library as they take up much less space, yet many of you have had trouble using them at home. We will review the various types of CDs and how to make them work.

October Research Trip: our trip this month will be to the Tacoma Public Library which houses a great collection of genealogical research materials. We might also stop by the Family History Center in Tacoma to take advantage of the "permanent" films available.

BEGINNING GENEALOGY CLASS

Eileen Martin, Bev Brice and Jesse Stewart will be teaching a 5 week Beginning Genealogy Class. The purpose of the class is to give an overview of the basic steps for successful genealogical research. This can be helpful to researchers who have started to work on their family as well as for those who are truly "beginning".

The use of family group sheets, vital records and census records will be covered. We will give a brief introduction to the other types of records available such as land, probate, military, immigration and newspapers. There will be particular attention paid to online research, but you do not have to use a computer to take the class, as all types of references will be covered.

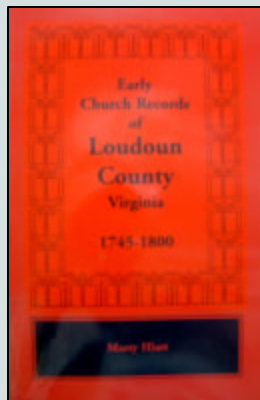
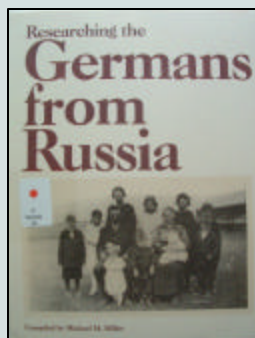
The class will be held on 5 Monday afternoons, October 15th through November 12th from 1 to 3:30 PM at the Research Center. The cost is \$30 for JCGS members and \$45 for non-members and the class is limited to 18 students. Registration will be accepted through October 8th. To register send a check to : JCGS, PO Box 627, Port Townsend, WA 98368. Please write "class" on your check. For questions call Eileen at 385-0673 or Bev at 385-6599.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER * OCTOBER * NOVEMBER

DATE	MEETINGS AT RESEARCH CENTER UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED (SEE PAGE 4 FOR DETAILS ABOUT MEETINGS)
7 September	Executive Committee Meeting (9:30 AM)
8 September	Writing Your Family History Discussion Group (10:00 AM)
15 September	Monthly Meeting: "Computer Basics" (9:30 AM)
21 September	Regional Discussion Group: Germany (10:00 AM)
27 September	Library Volunteer Meeting (10:00 AM)
29 September	Resource Corner: Basic Computing (10:00 AM)
5 October	Program Committee Meeting (9:30 AM)
13 October	Writing Your Family History Discussion Group (10:00 AM)
15 October	Beginning Genealogy Class (1:00 PM) continues for 5 weeks
19 October	Regional Discussion Group: Germany (10:00 AM)
20 October	Monthly Meeting: "Adoption Research" (9:30 AM) Tri-Area Community Center
25 October	Library Volunteer Meeting (10:00 AM)
27 October	Resource Corner: Conducting Research From Home (10:00 AM)
1 November	Library Committee Meeting (10:00 AM)
9 November	Executive Committee Meeting (9:30 AM)
10 November	Writing Your Family History Discussion Group (10:00AM)
16 November	Regional Discussion Group: Germany (10:00 AM)
17 November	Monthly Meeting: "Getting Started Writing Your Family History" (9:30 AM) Tri-Area Community Center
24 November	Resource Corner: Using Genealogy CDs (10:00 AM)
29 November	Library Volunteer Meeting (10:00 AM)

**New Library
Books
and CDs**



NEW BOOKS IN THE JCGS LIBRARY

We've had a busy quarter adding to the library catalog – over 50 new books or additions to our periodical collection! Thank you Bev Brice, Pat Stomberg, Jesse Stewart, Lu Person, Marge Samuelson, Catherine Potts, Charlie Peterson, Eunice Franklin, Jim Richards, Sharon Cottier, Carla Michaels, and Karen Niemi for your donations and/or participation in the 50/50 book purchase program. JCGS has supplemented the contributions made by members with purchases of its own.

Although the additions to our catalog are too numerous to mention individually in the newsletter, a few highlights follow. We encourage you to stop by the Research Center and discover what we have (both new and old)!

Germans to Russia	We now have a great start on a collection of books relating to those families that emigrated from Germany to Russia beginning in the mid 18th century
German Research	Church records are often the best source of data on German ancestors; we now have more resources to help you find and understand these records
Canada Research	On the heels of our monthly meeting on Canada research, we now have some books to help you find family in our neighbor to the north.
Tennessee	If your ancestors were in Tennessee, we now might have just the thing you need among the 13 new books and CDs
Virginia	Many of our families emigrated through Virginia on their way south or west. A nice group of county and general Virginia research guides have been added to our library
Other	In addition, we have new resources for Ireland, Sweden, Maryland, New York, Ohio, Oregon and Washington

You Can Help Build the JCGS Library

50/50 Book Purchase Program

You can add a book to our library that you want to use. You pay half and the Society pays the other half (postage and tax added to shared cost). You use the book for up to six weeks and then it is placed in the JCGS Library. Make a suggestion of a book you want and the Library staff will review it and, if approved, you are good to go! We have suggestions if you need ideas.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S SOAPBOX

by Jesse Stewart

As you might have guessed, the theme for this newsletter is using computers in our genealogical research. What a boon they have provided for collecting and storing information. This doesn't mean one can't do good work without a computer, however, so if you are one of those that haven't "gotten into" the new technology, you can still be a great family historian!

Speaking of computers, in July, JCGS launched its newly designed website. Our goal was to make it easy for both members and Jefferson County researchers to use. We wanted to have information on upcoming events and our holdings at the Research Center easily accessible to members so they can take advantage of the offerings of the Society. And, we wanted to assist researchers in obtaining records on their ancestors who lived in Jefferson County. If you haven't seen the new site, check it out at:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wajcgs/>.

I'd like to give a BIG THANKS to Landon Kimbrough who designed the graphics for our website and spent countless hours putting it on-line. Without his expertise and efforts we'd still be dreaming of updating our site. THANK YOU LANDON!!!

During the next three months, we will be offering opportunities for our members to become more proficient in the use of computers. Our September meeting will be a good place to start as Claire Smith gives an introduction to computer lingo and basic techniques—even those who have used computers will probably learn some little trick to make things easier. Our Resource Corners for the quarter will also focus on how computers can aid our efforts. Most of us learn better by doing, than by listening, so our September Resource Corner will be a chance to ask how to do things and then practice them at a computer.

If you are interested in furthering your computer skills, you might want to consider taking a class at Peninsula College (www.pc.ctc.edu). The College offers a number of classes for both Mac and PC users, including basics in using *Word* and *Excel* as well as Desktop Publishing and *Photoshop*. There are also on-line courses available.

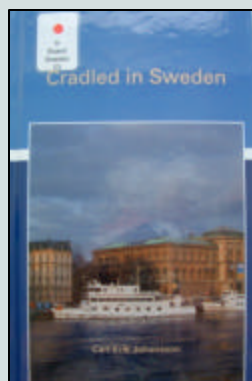
Your Society has other things going on as well. If you are new to Genealogy or want a refresher, consider joining the Beginning Genealogy class offered for 5 weeks beginning Oct 15th (see related announcement on page 4). And, we're preparing for a very special year in 2008 as JCGS will be celebrating its 25th Anniversary! In this newsletter we are announcing an exceptional seminar next year—on March 8th, we'll be joined by Elizabeth Shown Mills, a leading voice in family history research (see page 8). Look for news of more fabulous events and celebrations in the coming months!

The finances of JCGS remain robust as reported by our new Treasurer, Al Standish. Our end of July account balances include \$117,992.97 in the Seattle Foundation endowment fund and \$13,541.72 in our bank accounts for a total of \$131,534.69. We expect a substantial infusion of working capital funds from the endowment in October when declared dividends are paid out. Consequently our stable financial status allows us to continue to provide access to Ancestry.com, New England Historic Genealogical Society, Newspaper Archives, and World Vital Records (new!) databases free of charge to our members. We have also purchased 40 new books for our library and continue to update certain software suites. Since postage unit costs increased in May, any members who wish to receive the full-color newsletter or other correspondences by e-mail are encouraged to do so now and help minimize our mailing costs.

We look forward to seeing you at our meetings and educational events this fall!



*more
new library books
and CDs...*



WHATEVER HAPPENED TO THOSE INDEX CARDS?

by Marge Samuelson,

Jefferson County Historical Society Research Center Archivist

In 1991 when the archival community realized the potential for indexing archives, the Jefferson County Historical Society was a little slow to catch on. We did have one Mac computer but mostly we used the standard index cards, using a typewriter (anyone remember those?). Our volunteers continued to use the cards but we also started creating newspaper indexes on the computer. It didn't take long to realize the search capabilities of these databases. At the same time, the library began a volunteer program on the Historic District of Port Townsend. There was miscellaneous information from the 1970's and 1980's but only on paper.

By the 1990s our vertical files were stuffed with information on the properties in the Historic District. In the mid 1990s a volunteer created a database in Microsoft Access and other volunteers began entering the data that had been collected over the years. By the year 2005 the project had slowed down, as these projects do, until a determined volunteer began cleaning up the files, scanning and adding the earlier information, even adding the Sanborn maps to the computer. Today there are hundreds of entries not only on the historic district of Port Townsend but many other Jefferson County buildings.

At the Research Center our computers are networked (something we only dreamed of in the 1990s) and this database and our PastPerfect Archives & Photographs database can be searched from any of six computers. Researchers coming to the Research Center can quickly find the information they are seeking. Those old index cards? There were unceremoniously recycled!

SAVE THIS DATE—SATURDAY, MARCH 8TH!

JCGS is planning a very special seminar for 2008, the 25th anniversary year of our organization, so mark your calendars now for Saturday, March 8th.

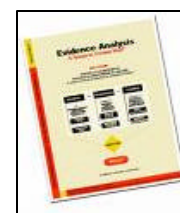
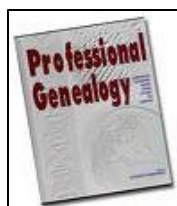
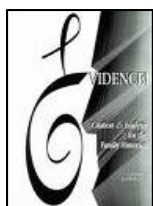
Elizabeth Shown Mills, CG, CGL, FASG, FNGS, FUGA., the author of such genealogical standards as *Evidence Explained: Citing History Sources from Artifacts to Cyberspace* and *Professional Genealogy: A Manual for Researchers, Writers, Editors, Lecturers and Librarians* as well as the historical novel, *Isle of Canes*, and over 500 journal and magazine articles related to family history will be our speaker.

Cited by her colleagues as "the person who has had the most impact on family history in the post-Roots era", Ms Mills' accomplishments in and contributions to the field of genealogy are too numerous to mention. But a few include being past editor of the *National Genealogical Society Quarterly* and a regular speaker at the NGS conferences; many TV and radio appearances; president of the Board for Certification of Genealogists and the American Society of Genealogists; and instructor at Samford University Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research.

We're very excited that Elizabeth will be joining us next March! Look for reservation forms to be available in the near future.



*Elizabeth
Shown Mills*



ORGANIZING YOUR ELECTRONIC GENEALOGY FILES

*excerpted from an article by Rick Crume
published in the Feb. 2004 issue of Family Tree Magazine*

Here are six housekeeping chores that will help you organize your genealogy computer files:

Housekeeping Chore #1—Organize your hard drive. To do this you should give your data files meaningful names; group your files by surname and coordinate your electronic and paper filing system.

Housekeeping Chore #2—Organize your e-mail messages. You should put your messages into folders; give your messages descriptive subject names; and flag messages.

Housekeeping Chore #3—Organize your web favorites or bookmarks. Do this with tools provided by either Internet Explorer, Netscape Navigator or America Online.

Housekeeping Chore #4—Organize your image files. Various photo management programs will help you with this such as Adobe PhotoShop Album, Point Shop Photo Album or Picasa

Housekeeping Chore #5—Back up you files. Most genealogy programs make it easy to back up your genealogy files onto any of a number of storage devices such as CDs, zip disks or flash drives. Be sure to back up your email files, your favorites list, your photos and other data files.

Housekeeping Chore #6—Catalog your files. Even if your have organized your files logically in folders by surnames, places and other topics you still may need to create a catalog or indexes that shows file information and locations at a glance. Various data base programs may help with this or at a minimum a simple table created in Microsoft Word will help. A data-base should include, at a minimum, the following information, for example:

Name	Place	Date	Record Type	File Type	File Name and Location	Description
Hall	New England		book	PDF	Surnames\Hall\ Index1-20.pdf	First 20 pages of the indexes to Halls of New Eng- land

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Librarian	Bev Brice	bb@olympus.net	385-6599
Newsletter Editor	Karen Driscoll	plumwild@olypen.com	732-4426
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Research and Obituaries	Lora Eccles	lora@cablespeed.com	344-4860
Programs	Eileen Martin	eileenm@olypen.com	385-0673
Trip Coordinator	Jesse Stewart	jessebirder@cablespeed.com	437-8103
Membership	Tom Berg	grebmot@olypen.com	379-2577

Jefferson County

PO Box 627
Port Townsend
Washington
98368-0627
360-385-9495

Research Center Location & Hours

13692 Airport Cutoff Road
Hours: 11 to 4
Tuesday–Saturday
\$4.00 admission for
non-members
\$2.00 children

We're on the Web!
<http://www.rootsweb.com/~wajcgs/>

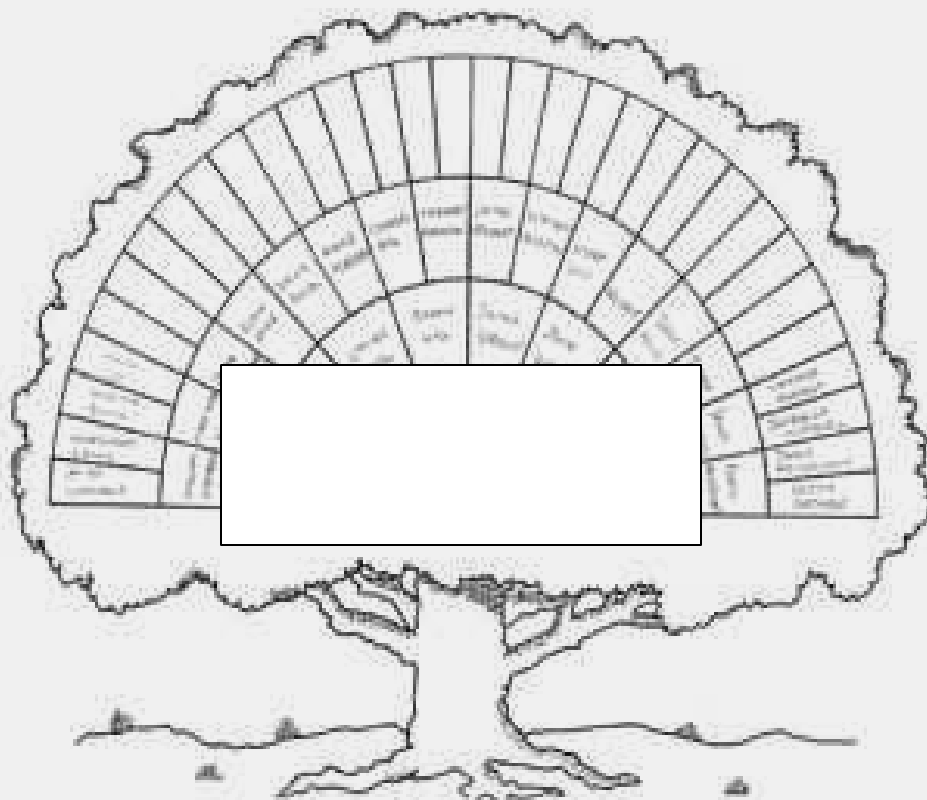
Meetings:

**3rd Saturday
9:30 AM**

**Tri-Area
Community
Center**

**Chimacum,
Washington**

**Visitors
Welcome**



COMPUTER TOOLS FOR GENEALOGY: “INSERTING A TABLE”

There are many instances when a simple table with rows and columns is the best and clearest way to present some information you are working with, either for your reader or for your own record keeping. Computer programs make it wonderfully easy to “insert a table” into your document. These tables can be endlessly adjusted and added to as you work. They can even help you with automatically sorting your material alphabetically or chronologically. Some programs such as Access and Excel offer sophisticated table making but they have a steep learning curve for the beginner and often are more than you really need. The simple table tools available in Microsoft Word are worth learning.

To insert a table in a Microsoft Word document, simply click on the word “Table” near the top of your screen. A menu opens up and you click “Insert”. The next menu asks you how many rows and columns you want. Chose 1 or 2 rows (you can easily add more as you work) and then decide how many columns you need based on the data you are going to put into the table. Plan to put each piece of data in a separate column based on how you may need to sort it later (i.e. last name separate from first, state separate from the rest of the address, etc.—you may need to ask for help on this when you are beginning) The screen offers you a choice of formats. You can just use the one automatically selected by the computer—it is usually a good start. Now click “OK” and voila a little empty table appears on your page! When you click on the table you can use your mouse to reposition it, resize the columns and many other useful actions. When you click inside a cell you can start typing your words. Press “tab” on your keyboard to get to the next cell and the next row. Give it a try and keep experimenting to learn more or ask a computer buddy for help. (If you don't have a computer buddy—get one!!)

Tables	are	fascinating	to	work	with!
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