

The Stillaguamish Star

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE STILLAGUAMISH VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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Are you researching a possible Civil War Veteran in your family tree? Were they buried in Washington State? If so, you are in luck. There is a free website you need to check out. <https://civilwarvets.com>

Brian Houk, a SVGS member, does research for the website on veterans primarily buried in Snohomish County while other volunteers cover other parts of the state. The website provides documents connecting the veterans to their parents, siblings, spouses, and children, as well as documents proving or disproving veterans' status.

A Note of Gratitude

The Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society Board extends its sincere appreciation to Brian Houk for his dedicated efforts working on the Civil War website. His work has provided grant funding on our behalf. Through his work, SVGS received vital financial support that significantly strengthened our organization's overall stability.

This grant funding has made a meaningful difference in our ability to serve our members, preserve local history, and continue offering valuable genealogical resources to the community. We are deeply grateful for Brian's commitment to our mission and for the positive impact his efforts have made.

Thank you, Brian, for your advocacy, your time, and your belief in the work we do.

Upcoming SVGS Events:

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Tuesday June 9th
1PM

Navigating the Seven C's of Genealogy

Do genealogy “resolutions” really work? How about setting genealogy “goals” or “themes” instead? Here is a developed a list of seven “themes” to guide you this year and hopefully you can institute these as general “rules to do genealogy by” over the next few years. The themes cover most areas of concern for every family historian, whether you’ve been at this for some time or you are just getting started. Participants will learn how to focus on seven key areas in genealogy research: Clean, Collect, Curate, Create, Connect, Conserve and Continue.

(THIS WILL BE A “VIRTUAL PRESENTATION”).



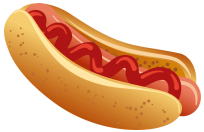
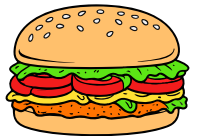
Thomas MacEntee

The speaker portion of Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society monthly meetings will be available in person only at the SVGS Library.
Our business meeting and board meeting will follow the presentation at 2 PM.

Tuesday July 14th
Noon



Mark your calendar for NOON so you don't miss the BBQ on July 14, 2025 at the SVGS library.

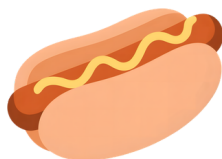


Come join us for our annual July Summer Potluck on Tuesday, July 14th at 12 PM.

Hamburgers and hotdogs will be supplied.

Please bring a side dish or dessert to share.

This is a great time of fun and fellowship with other members and guests.



SVGS Library Spring Cleaning and Lunch

Wednesday May 6th 10:00AM-3:00PM



Yes, your genealogy society library needs spring cleaning too, just like your house. Dusting, vacuuming and other tasks to choose from. We will supply the cleaning supplies but please bring your own gloves.



Lunch will be provided.



It's that time of year again



The SVGS Annual Meeting and election will be held following our NOON Potluck on Tuesday
May 12, 2026

at 1:00pm at the SVGS library.

Mark your calendar for NOON and don't miss the
SVGS Annual Meeting & Potluck and this year's
Silent Auction

(see the following page for details)

The current slate of candidates is as follows:

Vice President-Lisa Bartlow

Treasurer-Cheryl Clifton

Nominations will also be taken from the floor

IF YOUR LAST NAME BEGINS WITH:

A TO I

J TO R

S TO Z

PLEASE BRING:

SALAD OR SIDE DISH

MAIN COURSE

DESSERT

ANOTHER OPTION THAT ANYONE MAY CHOOSE IS TO BRING
APPETIZERS OR BEVERAGES.

Silent Auction

Our Annual Meeting will include a silent auction and now is the time to get ready.

The proceeds from the auction will be applied to our present budget shortfall. But for this to be successful we need your help now.

We are counting on you to provide items for the auction. Do you have a favorite coffee shop? Perhaps they would be willing to donate a gift certificate? How about your hairdresser/barber? The possibilities are as varied as the places you do business. Restaurants, nurseries, bakeries, are all potential donors. They get new business and great advertisement as well as donating to a 501 (c) (3) charity.

When you get a donation, remember to give the donor a receipt and keep a copy for SVGS.

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SVGS Donation Receipt

Date_____

Dear _____

Thank you for your donation of _____ valued at
\$_____.

Your generosity is appreciated by the Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society,
a registered 501(c)(3) non-profit, registered in the State of Washington.

By _____

Monthly Special Interest Groups at SVGS

The first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM join a group at the library discussing New England focused research.

The third Thursday of each month at 1:00 PM join a group at the library discussing DNA research at all skill levels.

The fourth Thursday of each month at 1:00 join a group discussing how to write your family history using AI resources.

New

May 28th,

Bring your questions! Bring your narratives or laptop for help or feedback.
This class will be presented by Teresa Townsell and be interactive.

The *last* Saturday of each month from 11:00 AM to Noon please join us for American Ancestors Webinar Day.

New



May 30th, the topic will be-

Records and Resources at Library and Archives Canada: Online and Onsite

No matter what province your Canadian ancestors are from, the Library and Archives Canada in Ottawa holds a goldmine of records for family historians-both online and onsite. Join us for an introduction to what records are available, how to use the online catalog and online research guides, and how to plan a research visit to the repository.

AMERICA AT 250

Exploring the past. Charting the future.

The 250th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, which marks the founding of the United States, is fast approaching. To commemorate our ancestors that had a part in those early years, we would like to list them in an upcoming newsletter.

But we need your help.

Please email a list of your Patriots and other family members that participated in the Armed Services or in providing aid and comfort in other ways, during the Revolutionary period. Send your list to info@StillyGen.org and include your name.

Please list their Name, Rank (if known), Branch of service (Army, Navy or State Militia) or if they rendered civil or patriotic service in some other capacity (such as: selling a cow to General Washington, serving as a spy, letting troops sleep in their barn, etc.).



Annual Reports

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026

President -

Celebrating 40 Years of Service

The Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society has proudly served our community for 40 years. Since its founding in 1985 by Marrietta Roth, SVGS has grown in membership, expanded its outreach, and strengthened its role as a trusted resource for genealogical research.

Our library collection has increased substantially, offering a wider range of materials for discovery. Over the decades, the Society has relocated several times to accommodate expanding collections and activities.

On November 1, 2025, we celebrated our 40th anniversary with a gala at the library, sharing stories, memories, and the joy of connecting through genealogy.

Highlights of the Year:

Technology Improvements

- Upgraded phone and internet service to replace outdated “dial-up” speeds.
- Special thanks to Bill Allen for his technical expertise and support.
- Ongoing project: transforming stillygen.org into a fully responsive website for seamless use on tablets and mobile devices.

Member Activities

- A group of members traveled to Salt Lake City to research at the Family History Library.
- SVGS hopes to coordinate another trip in the coming fiscal year.

In Memoriam

This year we mourn the loss of several long-time members who passed away. Their contributions are remembered and their presence are deeply missed.

A dedicated obituary book honoring our members can be found in the Snohomish Room of our library.

Continuing Our Mission

SVGS continues to thrive thanks to the enthusiasm of our members and the many visitors who walk through our doors. I am grateful for the kind words shared by new and returning researchers throughout the year.

At the heart of our work is a simple but powerful commitment: we listen. We answer questions when we can, and when we cannot, we search for the answers. Genealogy is, after all, the art of detective work—following clues, uncovering stories, and connecting the threads of the past.

Looking Ahead

As we enter a new year, we remain dedicated to:

- Expanding access to genealogical resources
- Supporting researchers of all experience levels
- Preserving local history
- Embracing new technologies that help us connect across generations

Thank you for your continued support of the Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society.



Ruth Caesar
age 9

Annual Reports

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026



Leslie Bock
age 3

Vice President of the Library -

Library Report (June 2025 – April 2026)

New Acquisitions

During the 2025–2026 year, we added 196 new items to our collection. We gratefully received a \$250.00 donation from the Marcus Whitman Chapter, WSSDAR, which was used to purchase books on Native American history in the Northwest. In addition, we received a significant donation of New England research materials from the estate of Bill Grant. Thank you to Michele for bringing these materials to us.

Reorganization of Materials

As our collection continues to grow, books are periodically shifted on the shelves to accommodate new additions. Duplicate and outdated materials have been set aside and are available to members and guests. Please check the bookcase in the lobby to see if any of these items are of interest.

Work is also underway to reorganize our various forms with the goal of making them more accessible to both librarians and patrons. A new system has been created that librarians will use to maintain a running inventory of the collection.

Maintenance of our Books and Equipment

Over the past year, eleven books were repaired by David Richardson. The total cost of \$687.00 was fully covered by donations from individual members through the SVGS Adopt A Book program.

We also received three donated computers, and a much needed inventory of computers and digitizing equipment was completed by Bob Bock.

Events

October is Family History Month, and once again we focused on the importance of digitizing family memories. Our DNA, New England, AI Writing, and Thursday Special Interest Groups (SIG groups) continue to meet regularly. In addition, we introduced a monthly Saturday morning webinar featuring presentations from American Ancestors.

Librarians and Volunteers

I would like to take this chance to thank our newest librarian and volunteer, Cheryl Clifton and Patti Boehner. They have been great additions to our team and we appreciate their willingness to serve.

Annual Reports

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026

Publicity-

Reaching the broader community with information about our meetings and events continues to be an ongoing challenge. Throughout the year, SVGS announcements—including meetings, special interest groups, library closures, volunteer needs, and library events—were shared across multiple websites and social media platforms.



Diana Keehn
age 3

If you follow SVGS on Facebook, please remember to “like” and “share” our posts with your friends and any local groups that may be interested in genealogy. This simple action greatly expands our reach. Our events have been posted on community pages such as **Arlington Living**, **What’s Up Arlington**, and **Everything Snohomish County**. According to Facebook, each posting reached approximately **2,500 viewers**, and **95% of those viewers were not yet followers** of the SVGS page. We are also grateful to the many genealogy groups that follow us and regularly share our posts with their own members.

Our meetings and events were submitted to the **Washington State Genealogical Society** for inclusion in their weekly blog. (Anyone may subscribe to receive this blog by email each Thursday at no cost.)

During **Family History Month**, SVGS events and a call for volunteers were featured in the **Arlington City newsletter**.

To strengthen our visibility at community events, we ordered new banners this year for use at the **Arlington Street Fair** and for display on the fence outside the library. In addition, our **location and contact information** on Apple Maps, Google Maps, and Yelp was recently updated, making it easier for new patrons to find us.

Our volunteer librarians continue to play a vital role in publicity. They introduce patrons to the library’s resources, encourage new memberships, and share information about upcoming meetings and events. When asking new visitors how they discovered us, the most common answer remains the same: **they saw our signs and wanted to learn how we could help them find their family**. The signs provided by the City of Arlington—and our own sandwich-board signs—remain some of our most effective outreach tools. (New sandwich boards are on the way.)

Ultimately, the best publicity for SVGS continues to come from our members. Your enthusiasm for genealogy and your willingness to share the benefits of belonging to SVGS with friends, neighbors, and fellow researchers make a tremendous difference.

The Publicity Committee is currently in need of a **co-chair**. I would be delighted to share this role with someone who enjoys outreach, communication, or community engagement.

As always, suggestions for new publicity opportunities are warmly welcomed.

Annual Reports

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026



Maureen MacDonald

Education-

Program Highlights: June 2025 – April 2026

- **June 2025 – Sally Buckingham**

Presented on the **Signers of the Declaration of Independence**, sharing historical context, biographical details, and lesser-known stories about the individuals who shaped the founding of the nation.

- **August 2025 – Jason Rice**

Introduced the **Sons of the American Revolution (SAR)**, explaining their mission, current projects, and membership requirements. He also demonstrated how to navigate the SAR website and highlighted the types of genealogical information available there.

- **September 2025 – Susan Maza**

A member of the **Narcissa Whitman Chapter, DAR (Yakima, WA)**, discussed **how the colonies funded the American Revolution**. She also brought a collection of artifacts representing daily life in colonial America, giving members a hands-on look at the era.

- **October 2025 – LeAnne Koliha**

Spoke about the wide range of **lineage societies**, outlining their purposes, membership benefits, and how they support genealogical research and historical preservation.

- **November 2025 – Kathie Webber**

Presented **“Creating a Virtual Cemetery”**, offering an in-depth tour of **FindAGrave** features and demonstrating how she uses the platform to organize, document, and enhance her research.

- **January 2026 – Teresa Townsell**

Demonstrated how to use **AI tools** to assist in writing a **family history book**, including strategies for organizing material, improving narrative flow, and enhancing research efficiency.

- **February 2026 – Thomas MacEntee (Webinar)**

Presented **“What’s Been Done: Using Someone Else’s Genealogy Research”**, focusing on evaluating, verifying, and responsibly incorporating existing research into one’s own work.

- **March 2026 – Sue McNeil**

Presented **“Ancestry Revisit – New, Updated and Upcoming Features”**, highlighting recent platform changes and tools that can help members improve their searches and manage their trees more effectively.

- **April 2026 – Nate Cushman, Sno-Isle Libraries**

Presented **“Tools and Strategies for Property Research”**, demonstrating library resources, maps, and research techniques useful for tracing land ownership and understanding historical property records.

Annual Reports

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026

Membership -



LeAnne Koliha
(5th Grade)

We started this year with 140 active memberships. Of that number 66 were lifetime memberships, 3 family lifetime memberships and 45 organizational memberships. This past year we lost three long time supporters, Joanne Wetmore, Pat Manning and Phylis Hebert. We ended the year with 137 active memberships; 70 lifetime memberships, 3 family lifetime memberships and 45 organizational memberships.



Michele Cozad
(Age 3)

Genealogist Report

June 1, 2025-May 31, 2026

Genealogist -

Flynn (Clarke) Kennedy



Photo with twin sister-
Brenda on right
(Summer 1958)

This has been a remarkable year of discovery and connection! From revitalizing local landmarks to breaking through long-standing genealogical brick walls, the work accomplished in 2025 has truly brought history to life for our neighbors and patrons.

Below is a sampling of the year's projects, categorized by their scope and community reach.

Continued on following page

Community Heritage Projects

Connecting our residents to the places they live and work.

- **The Stilly Diner Collaboration:** Partnered with the owners of The Stilly Diner to design an interactive "Table Talker" timeline, allowing diners to explore the property's rich history before their meal is served. To further enhance the atmosphere, I researched and successfully dated **10 historic framed photographs** to be permanently featured on their walls.
- **Warm Beach Land Research:** Facilitated a foundational discovery for a local patron by locating the **original Land Patent** for the historic Warm Beach area, providing a primary-source link to one of Washington's most beloved coastal spots.
- **Arlington HOA History:** Empowered a local resident to share the story of our town by curating specific resources for a **"thumbnail history" of Arlington**. This research was utilized to educate and engage their Homeowners Association on the local heritage of their neighborhood.

Family History Research

Restoring individual narratives and solving ancestral mysteries.

- **Transcontinental Discovery:** Collaborated with a patron to bridge the gap between continents, successfully identifying the specific **European city of origin** for their immigrant ancestor couple.
- **Restoring Lost Narratives:** Conducted research for a patron that resulted in locating the **exact residence of their formerly enslaved great-great-grandparents**, providing a tangible connection to a vital piece of their family's journey after the Civil War.
- **Solving Name Mysteries:** Delved into the finer details of family lore to uncover the **specific origin of a great-grandmother's middle name**, bringing a satisfying conclusion to a multi-generational question for the descendant.

It has been a privilege to serve as a bridge between the past and the present this year. I look forward to the new stories we will uncover together in 2026!

Send us your submissions!

If you have a story that our readers might enjoy, please send it to us!
Newsletter submissions for the **July/August** issue should be sent
to newsletter@stillygen.org by **June 25th**.



Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/stillygen/>



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