

The Stillaguamish Star

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE STILLAGUAMISH VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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The Great Swedish Adventure

Shared by-
Pastor Chad Blood
Arlington, Washington

This past year, I was given an opportunity I never could have imagined. Out of nearly 4,000 applicants from across the United States, I was selected as one of just eight Americans to join the cast of Season 14 of Allt för Sverige—an award-winning Swedish television series produced for SVT, Sweden's national public television network.

Known in the United States as The Great Swedish Adventure, Allt för Sverige follows Americans of Swedish descent as they travel across Sweden discovering the country, its culture, and—most importantly—the stories of the people who came before them. Genealogy is at the heart of the experience.



Researchers trace each participant's Swedish family history through historical records, photographs, church records, passenger lists, maps, and other archival material, often taking participants to the very towns, churches, farms, and communities where their ancestors once lived. The show has been airing since 2011 and even received an International Emmy Award for Non-Scripted Entertainment.



The Cast of Season 14 of Allt för Sverige
The Great Swedish Adventure

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Upcoming SVGS Events:

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Tuesday Sept 8th
1PM

Bureaucracy to the Rescue

Please join us for a live video presentation by Crystal Hicks, the Head of Collections at the Washington State Library's Central Library in Tumwater, Washington. She brings a rich background in reference and genealogy services to her current role. Her work centers on building, preserving and expanding access to collections that serve historical research, public accountability, and community memory. She will share an overview of the archive holdings and how we can access the state publications and documents to help your family research.



Crystal Hicks

Tuesday October 13th
1PM

It's Time to....

Break up With Your Brick Walls!

Email us at info@stillygen.org by September 20th if you'd like help breaking that brick wall. Our genealogist team will only be able to select a few of your issues for this presentation coverage.



Maureen MacDonald



Bill Allen



LeAnne Koliha

Tuesday November 13th
1PM

Washington Speaks....

Please join us for this wonderful live presentation as we welcome.... His Excellency George Washington, who is:
"First in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen."



Vern Frykholm

Vern Frykholm began portraying Washington in February, 2012, and has given over 600 portrayals to more than 25,000 people. He has talked to students at public, private and home schools; service clubs; libraries; business and church groups; and regional and national conferences.

Monthly Special Interest Groups at SVGS

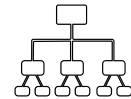


The first Tuesday of each month at 10:00 AM join a group at the library discussing New England focused research.

New!!

The first Tuesday of each month at 1:00 PM join a group to teach you how to Build Your Family Tree, not Brick Walls.

(This will be a hybrid class)



Join Maureen MacDonald as she teaches us how to become more effective researchers. Too often, we look at our resources without fully understanding all the information they contain. Maureen will guide us through familiar sources, beginning with census records, and help us discover details we may have been overlooking.

Whether you are new to research or have been doing it for years, this class is for you.

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 PM join a group discussing how to write your family history using AI resources.

September 24th,

Bring your questions! Bring your narratives or laptop for help or feedback.

This class will be presented by Teresa Townsell and be interactive.



New!!

classes tentatively begin Oct 8th

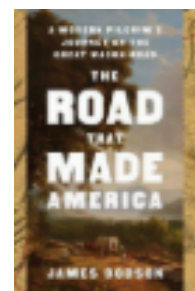
The *last* Saturday of each month from 11:00 AM to Noon please join us for American Ancestors Webinar Day.

September 26th, the topic will be-

“The Road That Made America:

A Modern Pilgrim’s Journey on the Great Wagon Road”,

with James Dodson



Before American settlers traveled west in the nineteenth century, they ventured south over the eight-hundred-mile long Great Wagon Road that ran from Philadelphia to Augusta, Georgia. *The Road That Made America*, restores this long-forgotten route to its rightful place in our national story.



Chad with fellow contestants -
from left to right - Brett, Chad,
Parker, Tracey
and Kacey

For me, being chosen was about much more than appearing on a television show. It was an opportunity to walk where my ancestors walked, discover stories in my family that had been separated by generations and an ocean, and better understand the Swedish heritage that helped shape my family's story. What began as a genealogy adventure became something much more personal—a chance to connect the names and dates on a family tree with real people, real places, and a history that is now part of my own story.



If you're interested in watching this reality TV genealogy show when it airs, keep an eye out for a follow up story in a future SVGS newsletter or a blast email to members. Additionally, if people want to follow behind the scenes as the show progresses, they can follow Chad on Instagram @chadaaronblood

SVGS is deeply grateful to Pastor Chad for dropping into our Library to share his "Great Swedish Adventure". These are truly the stories that bring our genealogical heritage to life.

Pastor Chad Blood with Anders Lundin, the Host of the show.

Labor Day: Honoring America's Workers

Labor Day is a national holiday in the United States observed on the first Monday in September. It celebrates the social and economic contributions of American workers and recognizes the labor movement's role in improving wages, hours, and working conditions. The holiday began in the late nineteenth century, when workers and labor activists called for a day to honor the people whose efforts helped build the nation's strength and prosperity.

The first Labor Day celebration took place in New York City in 1882, and the idea quickly spread to other states. In 1894, Congress made Labor Day a federal holiday. Today, many people mark the long weekend with parades, community events, cookouts, and time with family. While it is often seen as the unofficial end of summer, Labor Day remains an important reminder to value the work, dedication, and achievements of workers across the country.

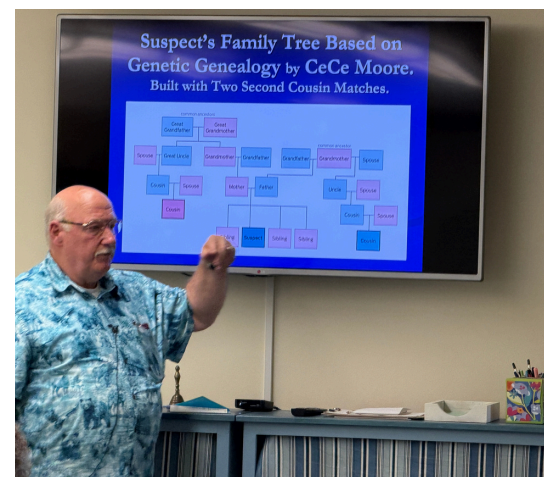
Labor Day is more than a day off from work or school. It is a time to remember the efforts of workers who helped shape the nation and to appreciate the importance of fair treatment, dedication, and hard work in every community.

The Case DNA Solved:

We were joined for an "in person" presentation by retired Snohomish County Sheriff's Office Detective, Jim Scharf at our August meeting. Jim was known for his relentless pursuit of justice, particularly within the Cold Case Unit. His innovative approach, notably the use of genetic genealogy, led to groundbreaking convictions such as the Tanya Van Cuylenborg and Jay Cook case, marking a historic moment in forensic science.

Jim's collaboration with Parabon Nanolabs and CeCe Moore not only brought closure to families, but also set a precedent for genetic genealogy in criminal investigations worldwide. His story offers a unique perspective on the evolution of investigative techniques and the impact of perseverance in solving complex cases.

Jim's presentation was well received by attendees and many are hoping he will return and share more cold cases solved with the use of genetic genealogy.



Retired Detective
Jim Scharf



Our Patriots Remembered

Many Stillaguamish Valley Genealogical Society members, in the course of their research, have discovered ancestors who played small and large parts in American History.

Below you will see the second installment of this series.

If you would like to see your Patriot listed in our next installment please email info@stillygen.org

NAME	RANK	SERVICE RENDERED	LOCATION
<i>Ancestors of Ruth Caesar</i>			
Elijah Pettibone	Private	CT Militia under CAPT. TITUS WATSON, and COL. CHARLES BURRELL	Litchfield County, CT
John Comstock	Lieutenant	1) 1LT, 3RD CO, COL. SELDON 2) WADSWORTH'S BRIGADE; TAKEN PRISONER- 15 SEP 1776 3.) Death: 10-28-1776	White Plains, NY

Ancestors of Cheryl Clifton

Jacob Surber enlisted as a Private in the armed forces of his country during the Revolutionary War. He was an Indian spy from 1777 to 1780 under Capt. Jonathan Denton and was stationed at Windell's Fort in Shenandoah Co. While continuously ranging the mountains, Jacob had many adventures which he reported along with the Indian movements in Shenandoah and nearby counties to his Capt. Denton. During the entire time, he and his company spied on the Indians, they killed only one hostile one.

Jacob was in Capt. George Rinker's Co.; Col. Jacob Rinker's regiment in 1781 when the Tories assembled at Capon Gap. They dispersed them after wounding one and capturing four of them.

In July of the same year, Jacob was in Capt. George Rinker's Co.; Col. Tipton's regiment when they marched from Shenandoah Co., to the Burnt Ordinary (Tavern) in eastern Virginia and back to Shenandoah Co. After about three weeks Jacob again volunteered under Capt. All; Col. Darke's regiment and marched to the siege of Yorktown. There he became well acquainted with General Washington and LaFayette. He was wounded in the left arm by a musket ball. He received a written discharge and returned home. He served seven terms in the volunteer army for a total of twenty months and twenty days.

My Revolutionary Ancestors

By-LeAnne Koliha

My 20 revolutionary ancestors include: 5 Minutemen who were at Lexington/Concord, 2 who fought at Bunker Hill and 1 who was with Washington at Valley Forge. There are 6 sets of fathers and sons and 4 sets of fathers-in-law. The Revolutionary War was truly a family affair for my ancestors.

Fathers and sons

Jonathan Danforth Sr. and Jonathan Danforth Jr.

Jonas Cutting Sr. and Jonas Cutting Jr.

John Flint Sr. and John Flint Jr.

Richard Dow Sr. and Richard Dow Jr.

Nathaniel Page and Ruben Page

Benjamin Goodridge and Levi Goodridge (Benjamin had 2 other sons who also fought)



Fathers-in-law

Nathaniel Page and Daniel Stevens

Rufus Montague and Joseph Robinson

Ichabod Sabin and Daniel Ballard

Joseph Hale and Benjamin Goodridge

Other patriots

James Humphrey (had 2 other brothers who fought)

Jedidiah Merrill

A FREE VIRTUAL WORKSHOP
Sponsored by the Washington State Genealogical Society

Make AI Your Personal *Genealogy* Assistant

Lisa Louise Cooke is the author of several books including [The Genealogist's Google Toolbox, 3^d edition](#), as well as producer and host of the popular *Genealogy Gems Podcast* and videos at the [Genealogy Gems YouTube channel](#).



LISA LOUISE COOKE, YOUR GUIDE FOR THE EVENING

Discover how Artificial Intelligence tools can act as your personal genealogy assistant. Learn the best strategies for using AI to help you with a variety of genealogy tasks, from organizing information to identifying new research avenues. This session also covers how to automate repetitive tasks and streamline your genealogical workflow.

Discover the incredible potential of AI to enhance your genealogy research!

DATE

Thursday, October 22, 2026

TIME

6:30 – 7:30 PM

WHERE

Live on Zoom

REGISTRATION OPENS

September 15, 2026



Space is limited to this FREE seminar. Registration opens **September 15**. A Zoom registration notice will be sent to WSGS members, local societies and Blog subscribers. For more information, email Info@WASGS.org and put AI Workshop in the subject line.

Want to Scare Up Some Fun This Fall?

Join us on a Headstone cleaning day at Evergreen Cemetery in Everett on September 5th anytime from 9am to 3pm or at a future cleaning. All appropriate cleaning supplies are provided by the DAR and SAR. All you need to provide is your time and elbow grease. SVGS members have been participating over the summer, cleaning and repairing a multitude of historic headstones.

Michelle DeFreece cleaning a historic headstone on
August 19th, 2026



Have a Happy Halloween ⁹

Send us your submissions!

If you have a story that our readers might enjoy, please send it to us!
Newsletter submissions for the **Nov/Dec** issue should be sent
to newsletter@stillygen.org by **October 26th**.



Find us on Facebook:

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



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SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2026