



The Searcher

Suncoast Genealogy Society Newsletter

What's happening in July

**25 July 2026 Membership Meeting
1:30 - 4:00 pm at Palm Harbor Library**

Check our website:

sgsfl.com

Email us:

info@sgsfl.com

Connect with us on

[Suncoast Genealogy Society](#)
[Facebook](#)

Suncoast Genealogy Society

c/o Palm Harbor Library

2330 Nebraska Ave.

Palm Harbor, FL 34683

250th Anniversary of America's Founding

At our July member sharing meeting, we will honor the 250th anniversary of America's founding by remembering the men and women of the Revolutionary War era. Members are invited to bring a brief story about a Revolutionary War ancestor and share that ancestor's contribution to the cause of independence — whether through military service, patriotic support, or life on the home front.

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Proud Partner with



Members who do not have a Revolutionary War ancestor are encouraged to bring family heirlooms and treasures to share with the group. These might include photographs, letters, documents, military memorabilia, quilts, jewelry, Bibles, or other meaningful items connected to your family history. Every family artifact has a story, and we look forward to celebrating our shared heritage together.



Member supported. Free and Open to the Public!
For more information about SGS visit: www.SGSFL.com

22 Aug 2026 Membership Meeting

1:30-4:00 pm, Palm Harbor Library

1:30 SGS Meeting, 2:00 Program

Speaker live on Zoom

Mysterious Codes

Passenger Manifest Letters and Numbers



Christine Cohen

What do those letters, numbers, stamps, and pencil marks mean on Immigration Passenger Manifests? Does your ancestor have a letter "D" or "X" next to their name? Do you know what V/L. # 404. USB. Transit, CL, N.O.B.. C/A. LPC, SI, NQIV, PV, or C-XXXXX mean? We will learn if and when to contact the U.S. National Archives or USCIS to get more genealogical information from these codes. Plus, what insight we can learn about your ancestor's immigration experience based on these codes.

Christine is a long time member of the Whittier Area Genealogical Society (WAGS) and is currently the Program Director. In addition to WAGS, I'm also a member of the El Redondo Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (Past 1st Vice Regent), the Society of Daughters of Holland Dames and the Association of Professional Genealogists.

My interest in genealogy began in 1977 with the airing of the TV mini-series "Roots". My enthusiasm was piqued when I was given a typed pedigree chart, commissioned by my maternal grandfather, of our Dutch heritage from the New Netherlands in the 1650's. I am a native Californian, a graduate of UCLA in Political Science and have recently retired to pursue my genealogy interest full time.

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Our annual Mini Seminar is coming up October 24, 2026.

If there is a speaker you would like to hear, or topics you would like presented, send your ideas to Ann James jamesamsj@aol.com.

I am also looking for people to serve on the Seminar Committee.

If you want to volunteer, please contact Ann.

This is your Society and your input is important!



President's Message



It's July! We are celebrating the 250th anniversary of our nation's independence! The Declaration of Independence began our attempt to create a more perfect union by stating that all men are created equal and have the rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. And most importantly, the government derives its power from the citizens.

And while not all of us have ancestors who were here during the birth of this nation, people who immigrated here later came for the freedom we have created in this country. The freedom that our founding documents promised. Those stories are just as powerful.

Our union began not based of shared customs, religion, or language, but based on the idea of creating a more perfect union of rights and justice. Bringing together so many diverse people was not easy, and we were indeed a fragile union in those early decades. Our meeting this month will be a sharing of stories of ancestors who lived during the eventful time. Whether they were loyalists or rebels, they had a part in this story.

I suggest reading the Declaration of Independence again and reflecting on what it meant to those colonialists. Consider what it means to you today. Let us celebrate our founding and our country as we share our family stories.

Jean Turner Van Horn

SGS Board 2026-2028

Board of Directors

President: Jean Van Horn

Vice President: Robert Pierro

VP/Membership: Shari Harmon

VP/Programs: Ann James

Treasurer: Joan Baptist

Secretary: Marianne Bradley

Past President: John Matthews

Directors: Sue Martin

Peggy Toohey

Kim Croco-Brooks

Committee Chairs & Others

Education: Ann James & Jean Van Horn

Facebook: Beth Bleich

Help Desk: Marianne Bradley

Historian: Ann James

Library Liaison: Peter Cannon

Publicity: Jenny Kidd

Newsletter: Kim Croco-Brooks

Registered Agent: Shari Harmon

Sunshine: Mary Jane Hough

Web Development: John Matthews

DNA IG: Robert Pierro & John Matthews

Genealogy and DNA IG



Monday, Jul 13 @
1:00-3:00 pm
PHL Conference Room
In-Person Meeting
open to everyone

Topic: Proving Your Pedigree
with DNA
Presented by: Karen Stanbary

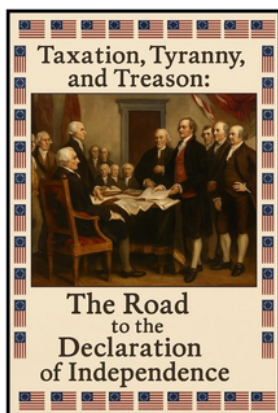
Next Meeting: Monday, Aug 10

DNA Mentors Available



Are you wondering how
to understand your DNA
results? Do you have
questions about your
DNA?

Email info@sgsfl.com
to connected with a
Mentor.



TARPON SPRINGS LIBRARY

FRIENDS OF THE
LIBRARY ROOM
SATURDAY,
JULY 25, 2026
11AM-12PM

Speaker: Christopher Daley has been speaking all over New England
for the past 30 years and has recently moved to Florida.

Imperial Shift, Financial Strain, End of Neglect, The Sugar Act,
The Stamp Act, The Townshend Duties, Ideological Backlash, Boston Massacre,
Boston Tea Party, Coercive Acts, and The Road to Independence

Registration is required for this event.

Go to the tarponlibrary.org.

Registration will close on July 25, 2026 @ 10:00am.

Board Meeting

All SGS Members are welcome to come
to the Board meetings. They are on the
first **Monday** of the month on ZOOM.
The next meeting is on
Aug 3 @ 2:30pm

Genealogy Help Desk



Tues, Wed & Thurs
1:00-4:00 pm

PHL Genealogy Section

Need help researching
online, breaking down a
brick wall?

Beginners and members are
encouraged to stop by!

Come join us at the Help Desk!

Every 3rd Tuesday Tech with John

HAPPY
BIRTHDAY!
July

Sharon Cserep

Eugene Girardi

LynnRae Kidd

Kristie Swoboda

Suzanne Wood





Our Genealogy Friends

Pinellas Genealogy Society

Saturday, Jul 18 @ 10 am- 12 pm

Hybrid Meeting & via Zoom

Topic: Summer Workshop: Start Your Family Tree

<https://pinellaskenealogysociety.com/>

Florida Genealogical Society – Tampa

<https://fgstampa.org/>

Jewish Genealogical Society of Tampa Bay

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



East Lake Community Library

4125 E Lake Rd S, Palm Harbor, FL

Contact the library at 727-773-2665

Largo Public Library

120 Central Park Dr, Largo, FL 33771

Contact the library at 727-586-7410

Tarpon Springs Library

Genealogy Research Assistance

(727) 943-4922 ext 6010

Monday, Jul 13 @ 6:30 pm

Topic: Laptops & Snacks

<http://tarponlibrary.org/genealogy/>

Debbe Hagner available

Appt only



Manatee Genealogical Society

First Tuesday on Zoom

<https://mgsfl.org>

SAR, Clearwater Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Wednesday of the month, Sept thru May, 11:30 am, The Regency Oaks, 2nd Floor Conference Room, 2751 Regency Oaks Blvd., Clearwater.

Go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/SARClearwater/> for more information.

DAR, Caladesi Chapter

Members meet the 3rd Monday of the month Sept thru May, 11:30 am, North Dunedin Baptist Church. Contact Debbie Smyth, dsmyth927@gmail.com for more information

Family Search Center

St Petersburg/Seminole

9000 106th Ave N

Largo, FL 33777-1147

Hours:

Tues 10 am-6 pm

Thurs 10 am-9 pm

Sat 10 am-4 pm

FL_StPetersburg@familyhistorymail.org

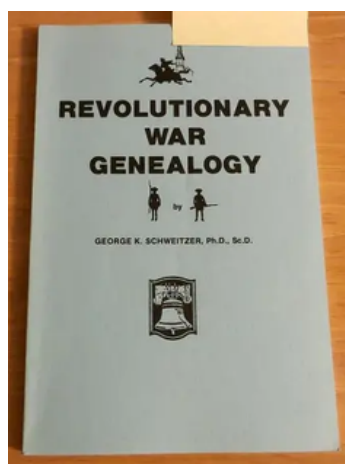
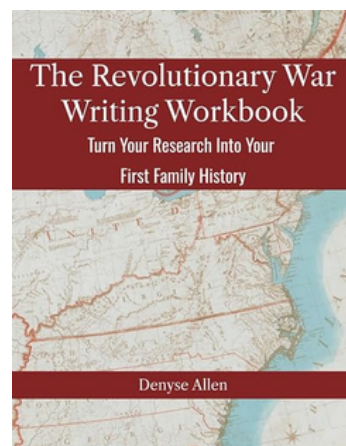
Services: Computers, Photo negative scanner, Photo scanner, Printer



The Revolutionary War Writing Workbook: Turn Your Research Into Your First Family History by Denyse Allen

You've done the research. You have the records, the names, the dates, the pension files. But the story isn't written yet.

This workbook walks you step by step from raw research to a finished family history about someone who lived through the American Revolution. Whether your subject was a Continental soldier, a Loyalist who lost everything, a woman holding a farm together alone, or someone who just tried to survive, this book gives you the structure to tell their story honestly and well.



Revolutionary War Genealogy by George K. Schweitzer

A concise 110-page guide (1984) that outlines the history of the war, archival sources, national and state publications, local records, and historical works. It also lists sites, museums, and memoirs relevant to Revolutionary War genealogy. Useful for quickly identifying where to start your research.

Save the Date

2026 MEETINGS

- 25 Jul: 250th Anniversary of America's Founding - Show & Tell
- 22 Aug: Mysterious Codes - Passenger Manifest Letters & Numbers
Speaker: Christine Cohen
- 26 Sep: Finding Your 19th Century Ancestors on Fold3
Speaker: Brian Rhinehart

SGS MEMBERSHIP MEETING MINUTES

GENERAL MEETING - 27 June 2026

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER: 1:36pm by
President Jean VanHorn

SECRETARY REPORT: for May 23, 2026
accepted as presented

TREASURER REPORT: Joan was absent,
no report

MEMBERSHIP REPORT: accepted as
presented, 67 members

PROGRAMS REPORT: Ann James
reported on the Field Trip to the
Family Search library, and 15 were in
attendance.

OLD BUSINESS: We need volunteers
for snacks in August and September

DNA interest group for July 13, no
subject as of yet

Katie Graves was recognized for
helping with the audit of the treasury
books.

NEW BUSINESS: President Jean
VanHorn installed Susan Martin as a
Director since she was not in
attendance in May.

GOOD AND WELFARE: none

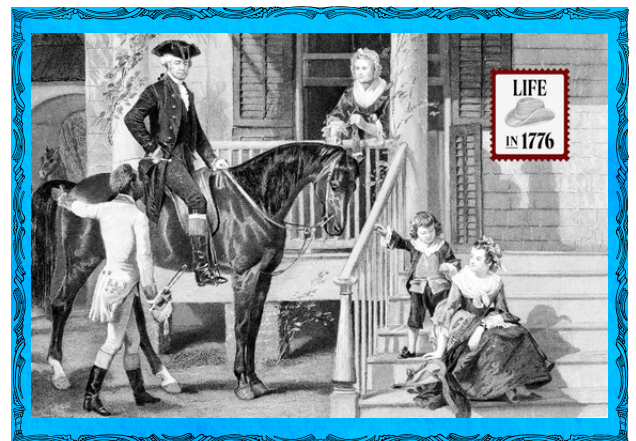
SHARE THE BASKET: Peggy Toohey was
our winner

DRAWING FOR DOOR PRIZE: Katie
Graves won the Genealogy Book
by George Morgan.

ADJOURNMENT: 1:50 PM

PROGRAM: Karen Fortin was
introduced to do her program on
Tying the Knot, Locating Alternate
Marriage Records.

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:
Marianne Bradley, Secretary.



The year 1776 was one of the
most consequential in American
history, marking the birth of a
new nation. Yet amid the debates
and battles, everyday life
continued — and with it, the
business of deciding what to wear.



German Ethnicity and Heritage Websites



German Genealogy Group

<https://www.germangenealogygroup.com>

German Roots

<https://germanroots.com>

This website is a massive website to explore.

Germanic Genealogy Society

<https://ggsmm.org>

Facebook: German Genealogy Groups

Start exploring and join a group.

German Researchers

<https://germanresearchers.com>

Do you need to hire someone to research for you?

This website is for you.

Unlocking your German Records

<https://germanologyunlocked.com>

Free Master List of German Records Websites include links to over 70 professional genealogy websites

Black Sea German Research

<https://blackseagr.org>

Our ancestors' historic and often perilous migratory journey in the early 1800s took them from their homes in Germany, Alsace, Poland, and Hungary to the Black Sea region of South Russia

[PGS] German Genealogy Special Interest Group

This group meeting will be a forum for answering questions and helping you navigate the unique challenges of researching your German ancestors.

We will demonstrate where and how to find the data that will help you trace your German family.

- Check out the **PGS**, they have many other meetings on German Roots.

Translate over 40+ Languages

<https://chatgpt.com>

Get fast translations without delays and keep meaning clear.

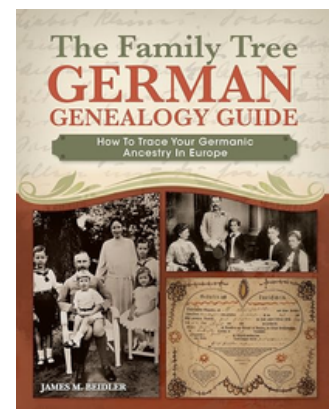
Google Translate

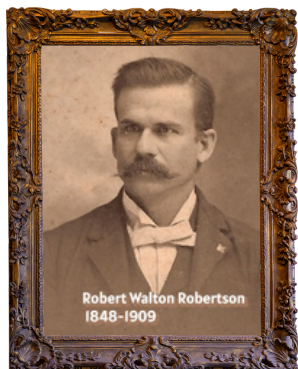
<https://translate.google.com>

Do you need to a language?



Dragon sculpture breathing fire
Wawel Castle in Krakow, Poland Wawel





This is a story of Marianne Bradley's great-grandfather,
Robert Walton Robertson (1848-1909).

This goes to show that the interest in genealogy is not new, as some today believe. This is also why I inherited so much "genealogy stuff" from my grandmother, his daughter.

I think his message is interesting, as he is concerned about the continuation of the family genealogy information in which he was entrusted.

Below is a copy of his note that was with his papers. I think it shows the attitude we all should have about getting our information out to other to be saved.

The 19th century English is also fascinating!

Breface.

Frequent inquiries made by family connections, the difficulty of adequately relying thereto, and a realization of the fact that the task committed to me years ago by my revered grandfather may fail of fulfillment if further delayed impell me to publish this pamphlet in its incomplete state. I trust that others of the family connection will be induced thereby to supply missing data.

The death of my father left me at an early age an inmate of my grandfather's home and his companion in his old age. During the latter years of his life, which closed in 1870, my grandfather Robert Walton arranged many letters and memoranda bearing upon the subject herein treated of, and under his personal supervision and direction most of the data contained herein was tabulated. For some time after his death the record remained without being placed in a form accessible to others. "The cares of the world and deceitfulness of riches" which bore so hard on those of us who passed through the reconstruction period following the Civil War, made the procurement of sustenance for the living paramount to the completion of a record of the dead. From this cause many gaps which might then have been easily repaired in our family record may never be made whole again.

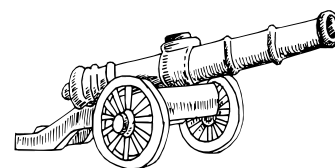
In later years my Mother and my beloved Aunt Catherine Elizabeth Walton have assisted me to complete this record to the point now attained.

The recent death of the latter, whose beautiful physical, intellectual, and spiritual gifts are ever present with those permitted to share her life, is an additional incentive to me to forego all further delay and place on record the data collected, rather than risk its destruction by fire or otherwise while in my possession alone.

Those who may have other data accessible to them bearing upon this record will earn my gratitude by communicating such information to me, that I may embody it in a revised edition at some future time or leave it in such shape that others may do so.

Robert Walton Robertson.

New Orleans, Louisiana. March 1st, 1899.



June Meeting Tying the Knot

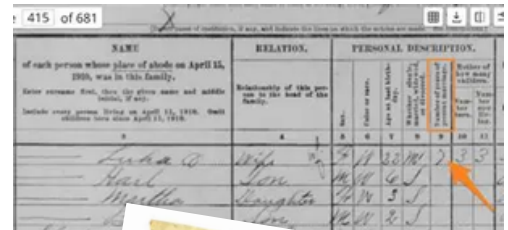
**Marriage records did not come about until the late 1800's,
so how do you find them?**

Karen Fortin shows how to find them.

- Church & Religions Records
- Newspapers
- Intenions to Marry
- Government & Legal Records
- Census Records
- Family Records

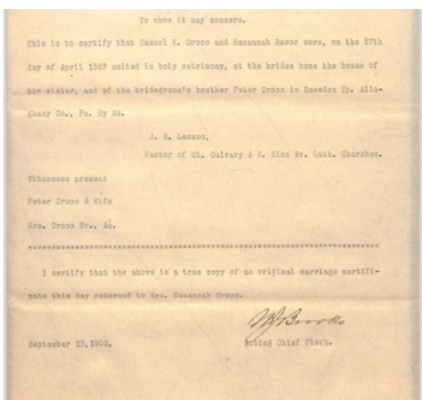


Karen Fortin



Histories Books

- Local History
- County History
- Family History



A true copy of the
marriage certificate,
though Samuel K Croco
Civil War Pension



Members sharing marriage stories of their ancestors



Katie Graves
won, *The*
Genealogy Book
by George
Morgan

