Colorado Genealogical Society

Newsletter

March 2026 Volume 51 Issue 03

Nancy Dierker, Editor

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President's Message

Dear CGS Members,

I extend my sincere thanks to those who generously supported the work of the Colorado Genealogical Society, the Denver Public Library (DPL), and the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) through their 2025 donations. Member contributions were designated to one of three important funds.

The Library Fund supports the purchase of books and supplies for the Denver Public Library's genealogy collection. Our CGS Library Liaison works closely with the DPL Genealogy Librarian to identify materials that strengthen and expand resources available to researchers in our community.

The Malcolm H. Stern-NARA Gift Fund, administered by the National Genealogical Society, provides equipment and supplies to assist NARA in digitizing federal records, including census, immigration, military, and post office records that benefit genealogists nationwide.

The CGS General Fund supports the essential operating expenses of our society, including Zoom access, speaker honoraria, and room rentals for in-person programs.

Because of your generosity, historical records are preserved, access is expanded, and family stories remain discoverable for future generations.

We are proud to recognize our 2025 donors in a special acknowledgment box in this issue.

Bobbi King

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Welcome to Our New and Renewing Members

The Colorado Genealogical Society is delighted to welcome our new members and extend a heartfelt thank-you to those who have renewed their memberships. Whether you are just beginning your research journey or have been tracing your roots for years, we are glad you are part of CGS.

Welcome New Members

Barbara Mershon
Linda Moore
Perry Lanell
Betsy Harrah
Michelle Shulten
Shannon O'Connor
Francine Lane
Todd Lewis

Renewing Members

Mildred Freeney-Hilton
Neil Bergstrom
Chad Horner
Mary Maybee
Heidi Short
Corrina Robert
Stephanie Vergara
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Kathy Emmel
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Barbara Janousex
Marion Hiltenbrand
George VanTrump

2025 Donor Recognition

The Colorado Genealogical Society gratefully acknowledges the following members who contributed in 2025:

Karin Conway
Margaret Dionne
Russell Frum
Susan Hicks
Carol Holitza
Carole Kadolph
Christine Keener
Zoe Lappin
Marcy Leonard
Jean Maguire
Kathy Miles
Suzanne Morine
Leon & Sheila Pack
Anne Ramage
Beth Reid
Len Richter
Gene Shirley
Douglas Short
Teresa Sweetman
Martha Van Driel
Marlene Williams

If we have inadvertently omitted anyone, please contact us so we may properly acknowledge your contribution.

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March Lunch Bunch — In Person

Thursday, March 26 | 11:30 a.m.–1:00 p.m.
Clancy's Irish Pub
7000 W. 38th Ave., Wheat Ridge, CO 80033

Join us for our annual lunch at Clancy's as we celebrate Irish traditions and cuisine. This popular gathering is always a lively event, offering plenty of opportunities to share stories of Irish ancestry, enjoy good food, and spend time in good company.

RSVP: lunchbunch@cogensoc.us

Research Tip of the Month from the Zoom Lunch Bunch:

Researching in the Great Genealogy Libraries

In honor of National Genealogy Day on March 14, consider taking your research beyond the screen. Some of the most powerful discoveries are still waiting on library shelves.

Some of the most valuable genealogical discoveries still live in books, manuscripts, and paper collections that are not fully digitized. A well-planned library visit can save hours of frustration — and uncover resources you didn't even know existed. Before you head to the library, spend a few minutes preparing by reviewing these suggestions to maximize your experience.

1. Determine What That Library Offers You
Not all genealogy libraries are the same. Before you go, identify what makes that institution unique. Ask yourself: What does this library have that directly supports my current research problem?

- The extensive genealogy journal collection at the Allen County Public Library (Fort Wayne, Indiana).
- U.S. and European book collections and limited digital access at the FamilySearch Library in Salt Lake City.
- Books specific to a geographic area housed in small local county libraries.
- State archives and state libraries with original records and manuscript collections.
- WorldCat — an online catalog that identifies books by topic, location, and availability worldwide.

2. Can You Access Materials from a Distance?
Sometimes you can gather what you need without ever leaving home. Before booking travel:

- Thoroughly explore the library's website.
- Use InterLibrary Loan (ILL) through your local library.
- Submit a PERSI request form for journal articles from Allen County's Genealogy Center.

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- Look for “Ask a Librarian” services.

3. Determine If You Need a Library Card
Many institutions require one for on-site or digital access. For example, the Denver Public Library offers library cards to all Colorado residents and in-state college students. If you’re traveling, check requirements in advance.

4. Organize Your Research Before You Visit
Time onsite is precious. Arrive with a plan.

Focus on:
- Books not available online
- Paper resources that have not been digitized
- Local newspapers unavailable digitally

Create a research plan specific to that institution:
- Identify call numbers in advance.
- Use Library of Congress (LOC) or Dewey Decimal classifications to cluster similar materials.
- Prepare at least two backup research objectives in case your first plan falls through.

5. If You Can’t Go Yourself
You still have options:
- Use the “Ask a Librarian” feature.
- Contact a local genealogy society member.
- Hire a professional genealogist (such as a Certified Genealogist®) to conduct on-site research.

March is Women’s History Month:

Women’s History Month invites us to look again at the women in our family trees. Women often appear in our research as supporting characters — listed as a wife, mother, or daughter — but their lives were far more complex than a single line in a census record. Here are practical steps to help you move beyond birth, marriage, and death dates.

1. Start With What You Already Have

Before diving into new sources:

- Review census records carefully. Look at neighbors. Are any extended household members listed? Occupation columns can provide interesting insights.
- Study marriage records for witnesses — often relatives.
- Examine death certificates for maiden names and informants.

Ask: What questions remain unanswered about her life?

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2. Follow Her Through Her Relationships

Women's records are often embedded in the records of others.

Look for:

- Husband's probate file (she may be named as executor or heir)
- Children's obituaries (often rich in maternal detail)
- Land transfers involving dower rights
- Guardianship records

3. Search Where Women Left Paper Trails

Many women were active in community life, even when not formally employed. Consider:

- Church membership rolls
- Women's auxiliaries and church societies
- Local women's clubs
- School records (as teachers or PTA members)
- Newspaper social columns
- Hospital or midwife records

If you're planning a library visit (a perfect National Genealogy Day project), local history rooms often hold club yearbooks and church histories not available online.

4. Look for Indirect Evidence

When direct documentation is thin:

- Study migration patterns
- Research the laws governing married women's property rights in that state and time period
- Examine household economics
- Investigate local historical context (war, epidemics, industry)

Sometimes understanding the environment reveals more than a single document.

5. Write a Short Narrative

Even a one-page summary can transform your understanding. Try this prompt:

What did an ordinary Tuesday look like for her?

Daily life questions unlock richer storytelling:

- What would she have cooked?

Dower Rights Explained

In many states during the 18th and 19th centuries, a widow was legally entitled to a lifetime share of her husband's real estate. This protection, known as dower, meant that a wife's consent was required when land was transferred. As a result, land deeds are often one of the few places women are named in early records.

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- How far did she travel?
- What responsibilities did she carry?
- What losses did she endure?

A March Challenge

Choose one woman in your tree and spend this month researching her as thoroughly as you would a direct-line male ancestor.

You may discover that she was the quiet stabilizing force in the family story.

Vietnam Veterans Day — March 29

March 29 is recognized as Vietnam Veterans Day, a time to honor the service and sacrifice of those who served during the Vietnam War.

For genealogists and family historians, this observance can also be a moment to remember and document the stories of veterans in our own families and communities.

Research Resources

The Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund maintains several valuable resources:

- [Vietnam War Casualties - Main Alphabetical Index]
  Memorial pages honoring Vietnam War casualties, listed by last name.

- The Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C., lists names in chronological order by date of loss.

- **The Wall That Heals** (a traveling replica of the Memorial)
  2026 Tour Schedule:
  vvmf.org/The-Wall-That-Heals/2026-The-Wall-That-Heals-Tour-Schedule

If your research includes a Vietnam-era veteran, take time this month to preserve their story through oral history, photographs, military records, or a written tribute.

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Traditional Irish Soda Bread

Simple. Hearty. Made from pantry staples.

Irish soda bread became popular in 19th-century Ireland when baking soda became widely available. Unlike yeast breads, soda bread relies on baking soda and buttermilk for leavening, making it quick and practical — perfect for busy farm households.

Ingredients

4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 ¾ cups buttermilk
(Optional additions: 1–2 tablespoons sugar, raisins, or caraway seeds)

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, and salt.
3. Make a well in the center and pour in the buttermilk.
4. Stir until a soft dough forms.
5. Turn onto a lightly floured surface and gently shape into a round loaf.
6. Place on a baking sheet and cut a deep cross on top. Bake 30–35 minutes until golden and hollow-sounding when tapped.

The cross traditionally allowed heat to penetrate the loaf — and, according to folklore, "let the fairies out."

Corned Beef & Cabbage: A Tradition Born in America

written by Doug Short

For many Americans, corned beef and cabbage is synonymous with St. Patrick's Day. Yet the story of this dish reveals something deeper — a story of immigration, adaptation, and cultural pride.

Origins of Corned Beef

The term "corned" refers to the large grains of salt — called "corns" — historically used to cure beef. Salt-curing meat dates back centuries in Europe as a preservation method.

Although Ireland produced large quantities of salted beef in the 17th and 18th centuries, most of it was exported to England and elsewhere. Beef was often too expensive for ordinary Irish families to consume regularly. Instead, rural households more commonly ate pork — especially boiled bacon — along with cabbage and potatoes.

Cabbage in Ireland

Cabbage has long been a staple crop in Ireland, thriving in the cool, damp climate. A more traditional Irish meal would likely have been boiled bacon with cabbage and potatoes — not corned beef.

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The American Connection
The association between corned beef and St. Patrick's Day developed in the United States during the 19th century.

Irish immigrants, particularly those settling in cities like New York, found beef more affordable in America than it had been at home. Living near Jewish immigrant communities, many purchased kosher corned beef from Jewish butchers. The flavor and preparation were similar to the boiled bacon they were accustomed to in Ireland.

Over time, corned beef and cabbage became an affordable and celebratory substitute for traditional Irish fare. As St. Patrick's Day celebrations expanded in the United States, the dish evolved into a symbol of Irish-American identity.

In Ireland Today
Interestingly, corned beef and cabbage remains more of an Irish-American tradition than a common St. Patrick's Day meal in Ireland. In Ireland, families are more likely to serve lamb, bacon, or other traditional dishes.

What feels deeply "Irish" to many Americans is, in fact, a reflection of the immigrant experience — adapting old traditions to new circumstances while preserving cultural identity. For genealogists researching Irish ancestors, this culinary history is a reminder that traditions often evolve after immigration — a powerful reflection of resilience and community.

Where Our Members Live: Mapping the Heart of CGS

Understanding where our members live helps the **Colorado Genealogical Society** better understand the makeup of our community and the broad geographic reach of our organization. A recent review of membership data reveals a clear and encouraging pattern: CGS is strongly rooted along the Front Range, with meaningful participation extending across the state.

Six cities account for **approximately 75 percent of our total membership**: Denver, Littleton, Lakewood, Centennial, Highlands Ranch, and Aurora. Together, these communities form the geographic heart of CGS and reflect where many of our members call home.

At the center of this distribution is the **Denver metro core**, which includes Denver, Lakewood, Littleton, Centennial, Aurora, and Englewood. This area alone represents **more than half of the entire membership**, highlighting the strong presence of CGS members throughout the metro region.

Beyond the metro core, several additional clusters stand out. The **South Metro area**, including Parker, Highlands Ranch, Castle Rock, Franktown, and Lone Tree, represents a substantial and growing segment of the membership. These communities illustrate how CGS continues to expand across the southern Front Range.

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To the north, the **North Metro cluster:** Broomfield, Arvada, Westminster, Thornton, Brighton, and nearby communities form another strong concentration of members. This regional presence reflects steady engagement across multiple neighboring cities.

Further north, **Northern Colorado** communities such as Longmont, Berthoud, Fort Collins, Loveland, and Wellington show consistent participation and continued interest in genealogical research and society activities.

CGS also proudly includes members living in the **Foothills, mountain communities, and the Western Slope**, including Golden, Woodland Park, Eagle, Glenwood Springs, Grand Junction, and Fruita. While smaller in number, these members contribute to the Society's truly statewide character and often stay connected through virtual programs and publications.

Overall, this geographic snapshot highlights both the strength and reach of CGS. It affirms the value of offering a mix of in-person and virtual opportunities and reflects a diverse, engaged membership spread across Colorado.

Family Tree Maker (FTM) Workgroup

March 18 | 7:00–8:30 p.m. (Mountain Time)

The FTM Workgroup has refreshed its meeting format to better serve members and enhance the learning experience for users of this popular genealogical software.

Beginning in March, each session will be divided into two parts:

Live Demonstration

A focused presentation on a specific issue or feature designed to expand members' skills and address common challenges.

Q&A and Shared Learning

An interactive discussion where members can share experiences, pitfalls, lessons learned, and discovered "gems." Topics emerging from these discussions may become hands-on demonstrations in future meetings.

Also starting in March, the group will meet 30 minutes early for a brief practical lesson on using Google Meet functions and controls, helping members feel more comfortable participating online.

March Topic

The March meeting will include:

- How to add adopted children in your family tree

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- A demonstration on starting a new family tree

All CGS members are welcome to join this monthly gathering, held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. via Google Meet. Registration is required and attendance is limited to CGS members. Please visit the CGS website to reserve your spot.

Ancestry.com User Group

March 14 | 2:00–4:00 p.m. (Mountain Time)
Zoom Only. Registration is required each month.

Ancestry.com User Group | The Colorado Genealogical Society

Ancestry.com has introduced a new feature called Search Full Text, expanding how researchers can explore records beyond traditional indexed searches.

Although still developing, this feature builds on AI technology Ancestry used to read handwritten documents during the transcription of the 1950 U.S. census. We'll take a closer look at what this may mean for everyday research and how you might begin using it.

During the March session, we will explore:

- Ancestry's new Full Text Search feature
- Emerging tools designed to transcribe — and potentially translate — handwritten documents
- Highlights and announcements from RootsTech 2026

Whether you come to listen, learn, or ask questions, you are welcome. This session is designed to help researchers of all experience levels better understand the evolving tools available on Ancestry.

Members are encouraged to bring examples or questions from their own research.

Ancestry.com User Group Tip of the Month

By Kimberly Weed

Did you know that **Ancestry.com now offers Full Text Search**?

From the home page, hover over the **Search** tab on the main menu and select **Full Text Search** from the drop-down menu. You can search using a name, event year, keyword, and/or location. Try different combinations—and remember, sometimes **less is more**.

Ancestry's Full Text Search is still in its early stages. While it does not yet include the robust handwritten court documents available on FamilySearch, it does provide access to lesser-known printed sources such as published genealogies, city directories, German registers, and military publications.

If you discover a hidden gem, be sure to let us know!

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Family Discovery Day Hosted by the Boulder Stake of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

March 28, 2026 from 10 am to 2 pm
Boulder stake for LDS, 701 W South Boulder Rd, Louisville

Family Discovery Day, hosted by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in the Boulder/Louisville area, aims to help individuals connect with their heritage and discover family stories by providing free, engaging, and interactive activities for all ages, strengthening family bonds and fostering a sense of belonging through shared ancestry.

This fair-style genealogy workshop will have booths and displays teaching visitors about different aspects of family history. Featuring engaging activities including technology training, photo digitization, DNA learning and cultural displays, Family Discovery Day is for anyone looking to explore their family tree, record their personal history and bridge the gap between their ancestors, their present family and future generations.

Community members are invited to bring their laptops or tablets or use those provided to start or extend their family trees using FamilySearch features.

There will be over a dozen booths and displays touching on: Using FamilySearch, scanning photos, documenting memories, vintage clothing, understanding your surname's origin and meaning, discovering connections with other attendees, getting involved in genealogy, DNA, family heirlooms (show and tell), etc.

Visit the Colorado Genealogical Society booth and explore Colorado genealogical resources.

March Program Presentation - Genealogy 102

presented by Lisa Vogele

Saturday, March 21 - 9:30 – 11:30am

Ready to move beyond the basics? You've mastered the fundamentals, experimented with AI-generated hints, and built a solid foundation for your family history research—but what's next?

This engaging lecture is designed to supercharge your genealogy journey and breathe new life into your family history projects. Discover creative ways to maximize the tools you already use, dive into overlooked & unknown resources, and refine your approach to uncover new insights. Whether you're trying to break down brick walls or simply want to add depth to your family story, this presentation will give you the skills, sources, and strategies you need to take your genealogy journey to the next level. Plus, Lisa will unveil her personal "cheat sheet toolkit" which she uses to keep research projects focused, efficient, and in context.

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Just for Fun: March Mini-Holidays

🥜 Peanut Butter Lover's Day — March 1

Celebrate one of America's favorite pantry staples by enjoying peanut butter in all its forms — from classic PB&J sandwiches to cookies, smoothies, and even savory sauces. A perfect excuse to revisit a favorite family recipe.

🥧 Pi Day — March 14

Pi Day honors the mathematical constant π (3.14), with the date matching its first three digits. First celebrated at the Exploratorium, the day blends math appreciation with the fun tradition of eating pie. Consider celebrating with a favorite family pie recipe — bonus points if you record it for future generations.

🌭 Something on a Stick Day — March 28

This lighthearted holiday celebrates the creativity and convenience of foods served on sticks — from corn dogs and popsicles to skewered meats and fruit. It's a nod to fairs, festivals, and backyard gatherings — and perhaps a reminder to capture those everyday family traditions before they disappear.

See What You Might Have Missed

Members of CGS have access to Video Links of Programs and Classes. These recorded programs will be available, at least for a limited time (usually around 30 days), in the Members Only section of the CGS website.

Questions??

Do you have questions for or about the Colorado Genealogical Society? Did you know you can email us at **cgscontact@cogensoc.us**?

If you have questions about any of the excellent archives around the state, you can save time by contacting them directly.

Newsletter Submissions

Have something you'd like to share in the newsletter? Submissions must be received by the **20th of the month** to be considered for the next issue. While publication isn't guaranteed, all submissions will receive a response from the newsletter team.

Send submissions to: newsletter@cogensoc.us.

Unless otherwise noted, all Colorado Genealogical Society meetings are free and open to the public. Please remember to register in advance for all Zoom activities, as attendance is limited to 100 connections. If you're unable to attend, kindly cancel by clicking the "cancel" link in your registration email.

Don't forget to register for events at http://www.cogensoc.us/

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90 Days of Genealogy with CGS - Mark Your Calendars

To register for any of this month's events, go to www.cogensoc.us.To join the In Person Lunch Bunch, email lunchbunch@cogensoc.us. Future months are subject to change.

March	April	May
8 - 1:30pm-3:30pm **WriteNOW** **9** - 7:00pm **Monthly Board Meeting** **12 -** 10:00am **Master Genealogist Users** **14** - 10:00am **Beginning Genealogy** **14** - 2:00pm **Ancestry.com User Group** **18 -** 7:00pm **Family Tree Maker Users** **19** - 11:30am **Zoom Lunch Bunch** **21** - 9:30am-11:30am **CGS Monthly Meeting** **Genealogy 102** by Lisa Vogele **24** - 7:00pm **Tech on Tuesdays** **What's New at FamilySearch** by Lori White **26** - 11:30am **In-Person Lunch Bunch** @ Clancy's Irish Pub	**8 -** 10:00am **Master Genealogist Users** **11** - 10:00am **Beginning Genealogy** **11** - 2:00pm **Ancestry.com User Group** **12** - 1:30pm-3:30pm **WriteNOW** **13** - 7:00pm **Monthly Board Meeting** **15 -** 7:00pm **Family Tree Maker Users** **16** - 11:30am **Zoom Lunch Bunch** **18** - 9:30am-11:30am **CGS Monthly Meeting** **Westward Migration** by Sylvia Tracy-Doolos **23** - 11:30am **In-Person Lunch Bunch** **28** - 7:00pm **Tech on Tuesdays** **The Right Tool for the Job** by Sylvia Tracy-Doolos	**2 -** 3:00pm **Intro to Genetic Genealogy** **9** - 10:00am **Beginning Genealogy** **9** - 2:00pm **Ancestry.com User Group** **11** - 7:00pm **Monthly Board Meeting** **13 -** 10:00am **Master Genealogist Users** **14** - 11:30am **Zoom Lunch Bunch** **16** - 9:30am-11:30am **CGS Monthly Meeting** **Family Reunions: Bringing Genealogy to Life** by Roberta "Bobbi" King **17** - 1:30pm-3:30pm **WriteNOW** **20 -** 7:00pm **Family Tree Maker Users** **21** - 11:30am **In-Person Lunch Bunch** **26** - 7:00pm **Tech on Tuesdays** **Finding the Living: Genealogy, Social Media and People-Search Websites** **presented by Nancy Dierker**

The articles in this newsletter have been written by the people in the know. The articles may have been edited by ChatGPT 5.o to add clarity and consistency. Our feature, AI Query of the Month, is written in conjunction with ChatGPT.

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