



Colorado Genealogical Society



Newsletter

August 2026 Volume 51 Issue 08

Nancy Dierker, Editor

President's Message

Dear CGS Members,

For years, here in Colorado, we knew Elitch Gardens as a raucous playground for our kids during the hot summer days of school vacation. Then, in 1994, the screaming roller coasters and musical carousels succumbed to the wrecking ball, disappearing from the skyline of the West Highland neighborhood they had dominated for more than a century.

Fortunately, the grand Elitch Theater survived and now, as the Historic Elitch Theater, continues to thrive as a cultural cornerstone for lovers of live theater and stage productions. Since 1890, the theater has stood on its original site, steadfast as the steel-and-concrete amusements were demolished around it. After surviving years of neglect and disrepair, it was carefully restored to its present magnificence as one of Denver's treasured cultural landmarks, rich in character and history.

CGS is pleased to join in sponsoring 150 Years of Colorado and Its Legendary Ladies at the Historic Elitch Theater this month. The performance celebrates the theater's 135th anniversary—a remarkable milestone for Denver's first professional theater and America's oldest summer stock theater. The first movies shown in the West were screened there. Performers such as Debbie Reynolds and Harold Lloyd began their careers there, and Douglas Fairbanks reportedly swept the stage to earn his way into the theater.

The Legendary Ladies represent just a few of the trailblazing women of the West, reminding us of a generation whose distinctive contributions helped shape pioneer life. Too often, their remarkable achievements were overshadowed in histories written primarily from the perspective of the men of their time.

We invite CGS members and their families who enjoy live theater and Colorado history to join us on August 22 for this special celebration of the Historic Elitch Theater and our state's rich heritage. Be sure to stop by the CGS display table to say hello, then step inside the Historic Elitch Theater and enjoy meeting the Legendary Ladies.

Bobbi King

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Gary & Denise Williams, Mailing
Libby Dollar, Google Manager & Web
Support
Martha Van Driel, Web assistant
Marilyn Alvord, Web assistant

Members Update

We are grateful to have you all as members of
the Colorado Genealogical Society!

New members:

Patrick Kowaleski
David Miller

Renewing members:

Sandra Johansen
Monica Di Bisceglie

August Lunch Bunch In-Person

August 20, 2026 at 11:30 am

BJ's Restaurant and Brewhouse

14245 W Colfax Ave, Lakewood, CO
(On Colfax in front of the new Whole Foods)
[Lunch special menu](#)

RSVP: lunchbunch@cogensoc.us

*One of my new lunch
favorites. The \$13.00 lunch
special can't be beat!*
Kelly Glenn

Celebrating Colorado Day: Discovering Family History in the Centennial State

By Doug Short

Each year on August 1, Colorado celebrates Colorado Day, commemorating its admission as the 38th state in the Union on August 1, 1876. Because statehood came during the nation's centennial celebration, Colorado proudly carries the nickname "The Centennial State." This year, the celebration is especially meaningful as Colorado marks the 150th anniversary of its statehood.

Colorado Day provides an opportunity to recognize the state's rich history, remarkable landscapes, and the generations of pioneers, miners, ranchers, railroad workers, and entrepreneurs who helped shape its communities. For family historians, it is also an excellent reminder that every place has a story—and so do the people who lived there.

Colorado's rapid growth during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries created a wealth of genealogical records. Prospectors arrived during the gold and silver booms, homesteaders established farms and ranches across the plains, and railroads brought workers and families from every corner of the country and around the world. These settlers left behind census records, land patents, mining claims, naturalization records, newspapers, city directories, church registers, and cemetery records that can provide valuable clues about an ancestor's life. Even if your family spent only a few years in Colorado, those records may reveal important details about occupations, migrations, military service, and family relationships.

Colorado Day is also a perfect time to explore the state's outstanding genealogical resources. The Colorado State Archives, History Colorado, local historical societies, county clerk offices, and public libraries preserve millions of documents that help researchers trace family histories. Many communities also have active genealogical societies whose volunteers have indexed cemetery records, newspapers, school records, and local histories that may not be available anywhere else. Combining these local resources with online databases can often solve family history mysteries that have remained unanswered for years.



Image created by ChatGPT with the help of Doug Short, in the style of Rembrandt.

As you celebrate Colorado Day this August 1 and Colorado's sesquicentennial, consider whether one of your ancestors lived, worked, traveled through, or dreamed of building a new life in the Centennial State. Every document you discover adds another piece to your family's story and deepens your understanding of the lives they lived.

Whether your roots in Colorado span generations or consist of only a brief stop along a westward journey, Colorado Day is a fitting occasion to honor your ancestors' legacy and continue preserving your family's history for future generations.

Suffering in this heat?

This is a great time to hit the library or your favorite archive.
Enjoy the air conditioning while hunting historical information!

MacFamilyTree User Group

Hosted by Chip Morris

Next Meeting: Thursday, August 20

Last month, we explored MacFamilyTree (MFT), taking a tour of its features and views while learning the basics of adding new people to your family tree.

This month, we're tackling the backbone of great genealogy: sources. Love them or loathe them, citing your sources is what separates family history from family folklore. Join us to learn how to document your evidence without losing your sanity.

Reminder: You don't need to be a Mac user to attend—everyone is welcome!

Ancestry.com User Group

By Kimberly Weed

The Ancestry.com User Group met on July 11. We began by exploring a couple of Ancestry.com's newest features—although, in true technology fashion, one of them had already disappeared by the time we met! We also discussed the growing integration of artificial intelligence (AI) throughout Ancestry.com and shared our thoughts on which AI features are genuinely helpful and which may be less essential.

Our main topic for the afternoon was **floating trees**. We examined what they are, how to recognize them, why they occur, and the different ways to correct them. We also looked at situations where intentionally creating a floating tree can be a valuable research strategy.

As an alternative, we took an in-depth look at **Networks**, a feature that has been in beta testing for quite some time. We covered when Networks can be useful, how to create one, and the advantages they offer for organizing research without adding individuals directly to your family tree.

Throughout the meeting, we also discussed using **tree tags** to organize research, identify questions, and keep track of records and individuals as your tree grows.

Looking Ahead to August

At our August meeting, we'll explore **ThruLines®**—how it works, how to evaluate the suggested connections, and how to use it as a research tool rather than simply accepting its hints.

We'll also demonstrate how to upload documents from FamilySearch and MyHeritage into your Ancestry tree using the Ancestry mobile app. If you'd like to follow along, please download the app to your phone or tablet before the meeting.

If you are travelling this summer, take care and get home safe!

Family Tree Maker (FTM) User Group

By Doug Short

July Meeting Presentation and Highlights

Linda Wyman presented a detailed demonstration on merging multiple source citations from the Source tab and then reviewing Source Groups in Family Tree Maker before completing the merge. While this is a very focused and advanced process, Linda carefully guided members through each step, explaining the details needed to ensure an accurate and complete merger of source citations.

The presentation generated many questions from the 19 attendees, reflecting both the complexity of the topic and the group's interest in mastering this advanced feature of Family Tree Maker.

News and Next Meeting

The August 19 workshop will continue with Linda's exploration of source citations, one of the more complex and least understood areas of Family Tree Maker. She will demonstrate techniques for creating, editing, unlinking, and managing source citations, including identifying and removing duplicate citations while sharing practical tips and common pitfalls from her own experience.



FTM Workgroup members also enjoyed a luncheon on July 22 at West Woods Golf Club in Arvada. Doug Short, Anne "Andy" Lawrence, and Linda Wyman gathered to enjoy good conversation in a beautiful setting.

Record of the Month: City Directories

Before telephones became commonplace, city directories served as annual "who's who" guides for a community. More than just a list of names and addresses, they often include occupations, employers, spouses, and even whether a person owned or rented a home.

For genealogists, city directories can help fill the gaps between census years, revealing when an ancestor arrived in or left a community, changed occupations, or moved across town. They can also identify neighbors, relatives living nearby, and businesses owned by family members.

Pay close attention to abbreviations. A listing such as "Mary Smith, wid John" tells you that John likely died before that directory was published. Likewise, a person disappearing from one year's directory—or appearing for the first time—can provide valuable clues for your next research step.

Watch Your Family Move West

By Sam Morrison

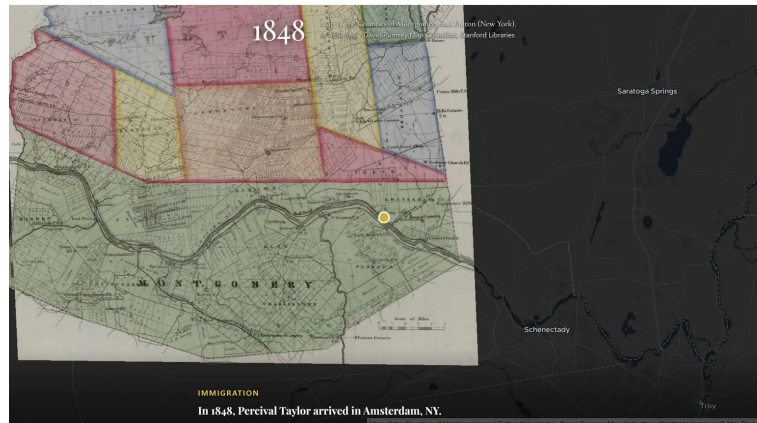
Most of us have stared at a pedigree chart and tried to imagine the miles behind it. [TreeAlive](https://treealive.com) is a free website that does the imagining for you.

Load a GEDCOM file from any genealogy program, or connect your FamilySearch or WikiTree account, and TreeAlive turns your tree into an animated map. Each generation appears on a historical map from its own era, letting you watch your family move west while changing territorial boundaries unfold beneath them.

The maps are the real thing—more than 80,000 georeferenced maps from archives, including Stanford University's David Rumsey Map Collection. Everything runs in your browser, your tree is never uploaded, and there is no account to create or fee to pay.

Start by viewing the sample family at treealive.com/?demo=johndoe, then bring your own family to TreeAlive.com.

TreeAlive was created by Sam Morrison, a family history hobbyist who wanted to watch his own family's journey west.



An arrival in Amsterdam, New York, 1848.
Credit: David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford Libraries.

AI Query of the Month: "What am I Missing?"

Ask AI to critique your research. Instead of asking:

"Who were John Smith's parents?"

Try asking:

"I'm trying to identify the parents of John Smith, born about 1825 in Ohio. Here is everything I know... What assumptions am I making? What evidence is missing? What records would you search next?"

AI often identifies gaps you've overlooked. It may suggest probate records instead of census records, recommend researching siblings or neighbors, or point out conflicting evidence that deserves another look. Remember, AI doesn't know the answer—it helps you think like a better researcher.

CELEBRATING 150 YEARS OF COLORADO STATEHOOD
and
135 YEARS OF THE ELITCH THEATRE

COLORADO'S *Legendary* LADIES

MARY ELITCH LONG
MARGARET "MOLLY" BROWN
ELLEN E. "CAPTAIN JACK" JACK
FRANCES WISEBART JACOBS
MAUD NELSON
AUGUSTA TABOR

ELITCH THEATRE EST. 1891

SUNDAY
AUGUST 23, 2026
1:30 PM

HISTORIC ELITCH THEATRE
38TH & TENNYSON
DENVER, COLORADO

TICKETS
\$20

COLORADO GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

PROUD MAJOR SPONSOR
OF THIS EVENT

★ PUBLIC TICKET SALES BEGIN IN JUNE ★

Colorado's Legendary Ladies Take the Stage at Historic Elitch Theatre: Celebrating 150 Years of Colorado Statehood and 135 Years of the Elitch Theatre

The Colorado Genealogical Society is the major sponsor of this special theatrical event honoring Colorado's rich history and remarkable women pioneers.

This unique performance will take place on Sunday, August 23, 2026, at 1:30 PM at the Historic Elitch Theatre, located at 38th and Tennyson in Denver. As part of this milestone

celebration, the acclaimed Legendary Ladies performers will bring to life six extraordinary women who helped shape Colorado's history:

- **Mary Elitch Long** - Visionary cofounder of Elitch Gardens who built the Historic Elitch Theatre in 1891 and helped establish Denver as a cultural center of the West.
- **Margaret "Molly" Brown** - Philanthropist and Titanic survivor known worldwide for her resilience and spirit.
- **Ellen E. "Captain Jack" Jack** - A bold and unconventional pioneer who thrived during the mining boom in Gunnison County.
- **Frances Wisebart Jacobs** - Known as the "Mother of Charities," whose work helped lay the foundation for organizations such as United Way and National Jewish Health.
- **Maud Nelson** - A trailblazer in early professional baseball who organized and led traveling teams across the country, including Colorado.
- **Augusta Tabor** - Remembered for her strength, perseverance, and later charitable contributions during and after Colorado's mining era.

The Historic Elitch Theatre, originally opened in 1891 and recently restored after 31 years of closure, provides the perfect setting for this immersive journey into Colorado's past. Notably, Grace Kelly, later Princess of Monaco, performed at Elitch Theatre in 1951 at age 21, where she received the call that launched her Hollywood career.

Tickets are \$20 each.

- Public tickets are available now. Get yours through the [CGS Events page](#).
- A sellout is expected, so early purchase is encouraged

The Colorado Genealogical Society invites members, history enthusiasts, and the public to save the date and watch for upcoming ticket announcements.

Family History Discovery Day in Longmont

The Longmont Genealogical Society invites you to attend their Family History Discovery Day.

Drop in anytime on Saturday, September 19, 10AM to 4PM at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 1721 Red Cloud Road, Longmont CO (corner of 17th & Alpine).

This FREE event welcomes everyone, from those who are brand new to genealogy to experienced family historians. No registration required, just bring your curiosity!

Enjoy short, beginner to intermediate level classes, exhibit tables & even refreshments. There will be 1 to 1 sessions to help you explore your ancestors. Bring what you know (names, dates, locations, etc.) and we will help you build your family tree.

Visit LGSCO.org for more details on the Society & their Discovery Day events. We look forward to meeting you.

JUST FOR FUN: Unique Genealogical Celebrations in August

By Doug Short

August 6 - National Root Beer Float Day

National Root Beer Float Day celebrates one of America's favorite sweet treats, first created in Colorado (See Note below). Sharing a root beer float at a family gathering can spark conversations about childhood memories, favorite soda fountains, and the traditions that have been passed down through generations.

Those stories often reveal names, places, and family connections that might never appear in official records. This fun holiday is a perfect reminder that preserving family memories is just as important as preserving birth certificates and census records.

August 18 - Never Give Up Day

Never Give Up Day is a fitting reminder that persistence is one of a genealogist's greatest strengths. Every family historian eventually encounters missing records, conflicting information, or ancestors who seem to disappear without a trace. Many of the most rewarding discoveries come only after revisiting old clues, exploring new record collections, or asking a different research question. When one search reaches a dead end, determination and patience often lead to the breakthrough that uncovers another chapter of your family's story.

August 28 - National Red Wine Day

National Red Wine Day offers an opportunity to reflect on the vineyards, wineries, and family traditions that have been part of communities around the world for centuries. If your ancestors came from regions known for winemaking, such as France, Italy, Spain, Germany, or parts of the United States, learning about their local customs can add rich context to your family history. Historical records related to vineyards, land ownership, agricultural occupations, and local festivals may provide valuable insights into the lives of those ancestors. Raising a glass in celebration can also inspire conversations with relatives about family recipes, harvest traditions, and stories that deserve to be preserved for future generations.

Note: The Root Beer Float was invented in Colorado Springs, Colorado, in 1893 by Frank J. Wisner. According to legend, Wisner accidentally dropped a scoop of vanilla ice cream into a glass of root beer while experimenting with flavors. This combination quickly became popular, leading him to serve it to his customers. The drink gained further popularity during Prohibition as a non-alcoholic alternative.

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.

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.

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/>

The articles in this newsletter have been written by the people in the know. The articles may have been edited by ChatGPT to add clarity and consistency.

This Month in Genealogy History

August 1, 1876 - Colorado becomes the 38th state.

August 4, 1790 - The first U.S. Census Act is signed into law.

August 18, 1920 - Ratification of the 19th Amendment, opening new avenues for records documenting women's civic participation.

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.

August	September	October
<i>Colorado Statehood 150</i> 8 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 8 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 13 - 10:30am Master Genealogist Users 13 - 11:30am Zoom Lunch Bunch 19 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 20 - 11:30am Lunch Bunch In-Person - BJ's Brewhouse, Lakewood 20 - 7:00pm MacFamilyTree User Group 22 - 3:00pm Intro to Genetic Genealogy by Anna Phillips at Hoffman Heights Library, Aurora. Reminder: Some events are on hiatus in July and August. They will return to the event schedule in September.	9 - 10:00am Master Genealogist Users 12 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 12 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 14 - 6:00pm CGS Board Meeting <i>Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month begins</i> 16 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 17 - 11:30am Zoom Lunch Bunch 17 - 7:00pm MacFamilyTree User Group 19 - 10:00am Colorado State Archives Workshop by Dina Carson (3 hours) 22 - 7:00pm Preserving Family Photos - Keeping Images Safe by Roger Dudley 24 - 11:30am Lunch Bunch In-Person - TBD <i>27 - Ancestor Appreciation Day</i>	<i>Family History Month Italian-American Heritage Month</i> 8 - 10:00am Master Genealogist Users 10 - 10:00am Beginning Genealogy 10 - 2:00pm Ancestry.com User Group 12 - 6:00pm CGS Board Meeting <i>Hispanic-Latino Heritage Month ends</i> 15 - 11:30am Zoom Lunch Bunch 15 - 7:00pm MacFamilyTree User Group 17 - 10:00am Women Owning Property: A Historical Perspective by Carol Darrow 21 - 7:00pm Family Tree Maker Users 22 - 11:30am Lunch Bunch In-Person - TBD 27 - 7:00pm A Wealth of Websites: Deciphering German Handwriting by Katherine Schober