



AFGnews

American-French Genealogical Society
Woonsocket, Rhode Island



September - October 2015

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FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK BY NORMAND DERAGON

I hope everyone has enjoyed the summer. Now that we are past Labor Day, the unofficial end of summer, at least here in New England, it is time to focus on projects and plans as we move into the winter months. Although I must say, we have been quite busy here this summer renovating the library.

By the time you read this our new wing will be open and our new reception center will be in operation in the library. It has taken several months of team work to bring this expansion to fruition. But it was certainly worth it. We held a ribbon cutting ceremony on September 20th followed by an open house to introduce potential new members to our Society and showed off our extensive genealogy resources.

The renovation includes installation of new research tables in the existing wing along with the new reception desk. Additional computers were installed in the new wing which give us a total of eight for use by members and visitors for research. We also increased our Internet speed and installed a new commercial router to improve the online research experience. Photos of the ceremony will be posted on our website

The entrance has now been relocated to the parking lot door. This eliminates use of the outside stairs at the old entrance. It will be less hazardous to folks entering the building, especially during the winter months.

The board of directors has begun work on a revised

strategic plan for the Society to cover the next three years. The plan will address our programs and projects with projected budgets and timelines. Once the plan is completed, which should take several months, we will make it available to our members.

A TIP FROM YOUR BOOKIE BY JAN BURKHART - AFGS LIBRARIAN

Genealogy should be more than a list of names and dates. I know we are all elated when we find a bit of vital information about one of our elusive ancestors but there is more to our family story than that. Do you wonder about the lives of the people who came before us? Why did they settle where they did? Why did they move? Were they involved in a war or conflict? What was the history behind that war? How did they dress? What did their houses look like? What were the customs of the day? At AFGS, we have numerous collections that could help you answer these questions.

For example, we have many biography and family books. These books may tell the story of your family or ancestor. You could find background information that you did not know.

AFGS has town and church history books. These books delve into the reasons towns and churches were established. Did people move to a particular area for land or a job? Also in these books you could find biographies about the pioneer settlers of the area.

AFGS also has numerous general history books about the history of Quebec from its founding to more current times. And we have military history books about the various conflicts in Quebec and the military men who fought them.

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AFGS has books about the Quebecois culture. These include music books, literature books, books on the arts, cook books and folklore. I particularly like the folklore books. Our ancestors seem to believe in werewolves, witches and magic!

AFGS has books that can help you make sense of that writing you find on early documents, dictionaries that will help you translate an occupation, household or farm tool term, or even a word or phrase that is particular to Quebec. You can find art books that will show you how people dressed in the early days of the colony and how the houses looked. Or you could look at books that contain pictures of Quebec monuments. Perhaps your family is listed on a monument.

There are many aides at your library that can help you fill in the blanks in your family's story. Check into them sometime. You could be delighted.

WHAT'S COOKING BY JAN BURKHART

Fall is a time when harvests are in full swing and we begin to think of mouth watering smells coming from the kitchen. This time I have chosen to give you recipes which use two Fall ingredients that are traditional and readily available - apples and butternut squash.

Caramelized Butternut Squash

Ingredients:

2 medium butternut squash (4 to 5 pounds total)
6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Cut off and discard the ends of each butternut squash. Peel the squash, cut them in half lengthwise, and remove the seeds. Cut the squash into 1 1/4 to 1 1/2-inch cubes and place them in a medium bowl. (You could buy the squash already cut into cubes in many grocery stores.) Add the melted butter, brown sugar, salt, and pepper. With clean hands, toss all the

ingredients together and spread in a single layer on a baking sheet. (To make cleanup easier, I would suggest you line the baking sheet with aluminum foil and spray with nonstick cooking spray.) Roast for 45 to 55 minutes, until the squash is tender and the glaze begins to caramelize. While roasting, turn the squash a few times with a spatula, to be sure it browns evenly. Taste for seasonings and serve hot.

This next recipe is easy as it is made in your slow cooker.

Cinnamon Apples

Ingredients:

6 medium Granny Smith apples, peeled and cut into eighths
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
1/2 cup chopped walnuts
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/4 cup sweetened dried cranberries (try Craisins)
1/4 cup butter, melted
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
2 tablespoons water
1 tablespoon cornstarch

Combine apples and lemon juice in a 4-quart slow cooker; toss well to coat. Add brown sugar and next 5 ingredients, combining well. Cover and cook on LOW for 3 hours.

Stir together water and cornstarch in a small bowl; stir into apples. Cover and cook on LOW 3 more hours or until apples are tender.

Bon Appetite!

INTERESTING WEBSITES SUBMITTED BY OUR READERS

I often forget to mention this site but I will correct that oversight right now! Have you visited our own website afgs.org lately? It is worth a visit. There is a wealth of information there for your enjoyment. Check out the dit name list. If you are doing French-Canadian genealogy, you will certainly encounter a dit name or two. This list will help you to figure out what changes your name may have undergone. It is quite comprehensive and helpful. You could browse the

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cemetery, headstone and obituary index databases. You could find books for sale. There is a wonderful Acadian Heritage section that contains a wealth of information. There is also a section that has many genealogical links. If you have not visited the AFGS website recently, do give it a peek.

Another great site to explore is BANQ the site for the Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (www.banq.qc.ca). All of the site is in French but parts are also in English. Just click on English at the top of the page and it will be translated for you if a translation is available. This site has a lot of interesting material including a list of notaries and when and where they practiced. Take some time and browse through the many resources you will find there.

ARTICLE SOUGHT FOR JE ME SOUVIENS?

We are always aware that our members come from every state in the United States and from many Provinces in Canada. Because there are so many French Canadians in New England, many of our articles deal with stories that took place here. We would love to know more about our cousins who went West. People who settled along the Mississippi or in places like Detroit, St. Louis, Louisiana, Upper State New York, etc. Do you have a special interest like Native Americans, voyagers, explorers that you could share? How about sharing ideas about organizing records, using a favorite web site, or the story of an early ancestor? Perhaps you would like to send in a book review of an interesting book you have read. This is your Society. It belongs to all of you. We would love to have you share your expertise with us.

AFGS SEEKING JE ME SOUVIENS EDITOR

AFGS has many opportunities for volunteers. As a matter of fact, our whole organization is run by volunteers. No one is paid for any job that they do! The Society is so active that we often forget that we are an all volunteer army. Well, here is a vital volunteer position. We are in need of an editor for our

journal, Je Me Souviens. If you are interested, please contact Normand Deragon at nderagon@afgs.org. You need not live in the Woonsocket area to fill this position.

GENEALOGY BY BARRY NEWSLETTER

14 AUGUST 2015

BY BARRY J. EWELL

It's very easy to start researching one line of thought, become interested in another, and change direction, all in a matter of a few minutes. Soon you're surrounded with papers, documents, names, dates and locations and are left with a head full of swirling questions.

You will find your research more productive if you clearly identify your research goals, develop a research plan and focus on their completion. The following are a few ideas for keeping your research on track and manageable.

1. Focus on specific sections of your genealogy at a time. This can be:

- A specific family line or surname
- A specific time and place
- A specific family unit
- A specific question to solve

2. Once you have focused on a specific area to research, create a log to help you develop a big picture of what you have and where you want to go. Keep the log up-to-date — it will save you time and energy. Note when and where you viewed the information. The log can include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Who you have talked to and information provided
- Information you have found and citations
- The questions you still seek answers to
- Thoughts of where to research
- The answers you have found
- Ideas and assumptions you are making and why

3. Keep a to-do list — a plan as to what research you seek to perform. Organize the plan so the most important research gets done first. Often you find that when you focus on top-priority research, many other

items on your list are completed also.

4. Group your to-do items by the source you will use to conduct research.

5. Create a “future research” file. As you are conducting your focused research, you will always come up with ideas for research you want to conduct that is outside the focus of your current line of inquiry. Record it — whether it’s an idea, a paragraph, a printed document, a photocopy or whatever else — put it in the file and forget about it until you are done with the task at hand. You can then go through the file at a later date, organize your notes and start the next task. Don’t be surprised if you begin doubling your accomplishments.

6. Keep track of your progress.

7. Reach out for help as you need it.

8. If you have a hard time finding time or are spending too much time doing research, schedule time with yourself to conduct your research. Make your appointments start and end on time. There is something about a deadline that helps keep you on track.

9. See the big picture. While focused research will help keep your genealogy work organized and streamlined, it’s important not to get so focused on finding a single individual or piece of information that we don’t look at extended family, neighbors and the migration patterns of the entire community. Often the missing person (or piece of information) will pop up in someone else’s family in a completely different geographic location.

Sometimes the shortest distance between two points is not a straight line. There are many instances where researchers come to a dead end on an individual and, through researching related people (siblings, aunts, uncles, and so on), are led back to the individual of interest. Think outside the box. If you’re stuck, find unusual ideas and places to look for information.

26 Sep 2015 - **Finding Primary Sources Using The AFGS Film Collection** presented by Fran Tivey at 9 A. M. in the library. Fran, our film room coordinator, will talk about the many microfilms in our collection and how to utilize them.

16 Oct 2015 - **Hall of Fame**. Reception at 7:00 P. M. and Program at 8:00 P. M. held in our second floor conference room. \$15.00 per person. This is a wonderful evening when AFGS celebrates the achievements of people with French Canadian roots.

17 Oct 2015 - **Annual Meeting** - 10:00 A. M. in the second floor conference room. Come hear how AFGS is doing and our plans for the future of the Society. Let your voice be heard.

24 Oct 2015 - **Genealogy and DNA, Part 2** - 9:00 A. M in the second floor conference room presented by Tom Allaire, our DNA project administrator.

Please check the web site and the bulletin board at the library for updates and additional workshops and activities that may be scheduled. **Also, let us know if you have ideas for workshops you would like us to present.** We would like these presentations to be meaningful to you.

MORE THOUGHT PROVOKING QUESTIONS

1. In California, you cannot take a picture of a man with a wooden leg. Why not?
2. What was the President's name in 1975?
3. If you were running a race and you passed the person in 2nd place, what place would you be in now?
 1. Answer: You can't take pictures with a wooden leg. You need a camera to take pictures.
 2. Answer: Same as is it now - Barack Obama
 3. Answer: You would be in 2nd. Well, you passed the person in second.

REMEMBER TO RENEW YOUR DUES!