

WESTEND SENIORS GENEALOGY GROUP

Meeting monthly on the first Wednesday - September through June



A Word from the Facilitator - Paul Rose

A New Year is the dawn of new beginnings, one of hopes and dreams, resolutions and goals. As we launch the New Year of 2025, I want to wish all our members a very Happy New Year filled with promise, good health, happiness and prosperity. And for we genealogists, here is hope that maybe this year you will find that allusive missing link, that mysterious unknown relative, that lost and forgotten story to your family history. I have heard it said that a genealogist 'will do anything for a date'. Perhaps there is some truth to that, but here's hoping that your research unfolds some answers to the many mysteries we all have of our ancestry.

In the coming months we will continue to bring topics to our group that will hopefully be of interest to everyone. Our January meeting will definitely be one of learning where those members who attended the Family History Fair in Edmonton in October will each speak on 'What They Learned' at the fair. We have topics on using Family Search, using Canadian Census records, Strategies for Organizing Research Material, Protecting Sensitive Family Information, and several others. This meeting may carry over into our February meeting, but over the following months through to June we will be having presentations on The Harvest Excursions and Women on the Prairie, Diseases and Illnesses, Military History, Computers and Genealogy, and Polish Immigration to Canada.

I am convinced that all of us have stories to tell, knowledge to share, experiences to relate, and it is my hope that many of you will bring topics to our group meetings and share with others. I have consistently been amazed at the information I have learned from several of our members, and I encourage everyone to keep this learning and sharing coming. Also, if you know of others who may provide our group with a presentation on a genealogy topic, please let me know, I would be glad to follow-up with them.

Once again, I wish everyone a very Happy New Year and look forward to the continued success of the WSAC Genealogy Group. Thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely
Paul



Genealogy is all
about chasing your
own tale



Rootstech 2025:

Registration is now open at [Familysearch.org/](https://familysearch.org/)

When: March 6 – 8 2025

Where: Salt Lake City, Utah or On-Line

Options:

- On-Line is Free – 200 on-line sessions, keynote speakers, on-line Chat
- In-Person (attendance at the Conference) – 250 sessions, 120 exhibitors

1 day at US \$79.00 OR 3 days at US \$129.00



AGS Genealogy Faire:

Registration opens in March 2025

When: Saturday, April 26, 2025 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Where: Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints,
3002 – 47 Avenue, Red Deer, AB

<https://rdfamilyhistoryfair.blogspot.com/p/registration.html>



WHAT'S HAPPENING AT WSAC GENEALOGY

January 8.25: 'What We Learned at the Family History Fair' – presentations by members of their attendance at a variety of learning sessions at the Family History Fair held October 19.24 – using Family Search, Writing Your Life Story, Elevating Cemetery Sleuthing, Strategies for Organizing Research Material, and more.

February 5.25: 'The Harvest Excursions' and 'Women on the Prairies' – the import of men from Eastern Canada to help with the grain harvest in the early 1900s, and the campaign to attract women to the prairies. ❤️

March 5.25: 'Diseases and Illnesses' – what were the many diseases our ancestors encountered and how did they deal with them, as well as the trauma of the birth of children.

April 2.25: 'Military History and Research' – a guest speaker from the Royal Alberta Museum will guide us through the challenges of conducting research of our ancestors' military careers.

May 7.25: Computers in Genealogy – "Writing on the Back of Digital Photos with Photo Media", a Zoom presentation by Art Taylor from the Ontario Genealogical Society.

June 4.25: Polish Settlement in Canada: a look at Polish immigration across Canada with a focus on the Western Prairies, as well as genealogical research of Polish Ancestry.

July and August - summer break



We have identified topics for presentation at the duration of our meetings through to June 2025. But we need to plan ahead for the following year. Arranging speakers and outside presenters sometimes takes time and as much preparation ahead of time is beneficial.

With that in mind, what would you like to see discussed or presented at future meetings? Our meetings are intended for the benefit and learning of all members, so please give some thought to topics you would like to see discussed and send them to me. All contributions are gladly accepted.

Learning Moments

We will be introducing what will be called 'Learning Moments' into our monthly meetings. These sessions will run approximately 10 to 15 minutes in length and are intended to provide members with some new aspect of genealogy research. It could be the introduction and demonstration of a website, a particular resource, a research location, a genealogical research experience by a member. We are open to whatever particular topics can be introduced in these sessions, but invite members to introduce their topic in these sessions. I ask that members submit their topic to be discussed to the Facilitator within three days of a meeting.

Welcome New Members

We are always looking for New Members to join our group. If you know of someone who is a member of the WSAC Seniors Association and has an interest in genealogy, please pass along a welcome for them to join our meetings.



Genealogy Quips

“It’s hard to understand how a cemetery can raise its burial cost and blame it on the cost of living!”

“My hobby is genealogy. I raise dust bunnies as pets.”

“When researching for ancestors, if only people came with pull-down menus and on-line help”.

“Isn’t genealogy fun? The answer to one problem leads to two more!”

“Genealogy: The hobby of tracing yourself back to better people”.

“I’m always late. My ancestors arrived on the JuneFlower”

Celebrating the New Year Around the World

These traditions offer a fascinating glimpse into how different cultures celebrate the start of the New Year, each with its own way of ensuring good fortune, love, and prosperity.

1. Eating 12 Grapes at Midnight, Spain

In Spain, it's believed that eating one grape with each bell toll at midnight brings luck and happiness for the upcoming year. This quirky tradition began in 1909 when the country's grape surplus was distributed to the public, creating a new festive custom.

2. Carrying Empty Suitcases, Colombia

For Colombians, walking around the block with an empty suitcase on New Year's Eve symbolizes the hope for exciting travel and adventures in the coming year. It's a fun and meaningful way to ring in the New Year with anticipation.

3. Smashing Plates and Jumping off Chairs, Denmark

In Denmark, people throw old plates at the doors of friends and family to ward off bad spirits and bring good fortune. At midnight, they also jump off chairs, symbolizing a leap into the new year filled with positivity and luck.

4. Interpreting Shapes of Metal, Finland

Finland has a unique way of predicting the future by casting molten tin into water. The hardened shapes, such as hearts, rings, or pigs, offer clues: a heart or ring signals a wedding, while a pig predicts a year full of food and abundance.

5. Burning Effigies, Panama

In Panama, burning effigies known as "muñecos" marks the end of the old year. These effigies, often of famous personalities, are set alight to drive away evil spirits and make way for a fresh start in the New Year.

6. Throwing Out the Old, South Africa

In Johannesburg, South Africans toss old appliances and furniture out of their windows on New Year's Eve. This bold act symbolizes the removal of past troubles and the welcoming of new opportunities and growth in the year ahead.

7. Round Shapes for Prosperity, Philippines

Round shapes, symbolizing coins and prosperity, are everywhere in the Philippines on New Year's Eve. Whether it's wearing polka dots or displaying round fruits on tables, Filipinos believe these symbols will bring wealth and good fortune.

8. Wearing Special Underwear, Brazil

In Brazil, as well as in parts of South America, wearing specific colored underwear on New Year's Eve is a must. Red is believed to attract love, while yellow is thought to bring financial prosperity in the upcoming year.

9. Hanging Onions, Greece

Greece has a unique tradition of hanging an onion on the door on New Year's Eve to symbolize rebirth. On New Year's Day, parents tap their children on the head with the onion to ensure a fresh and prosperous start to the year.

10. Eating Abundantly, Estonia

Estonians embrace abundance on New Year's Day, with the tradition of eating multiple meals throughout the day - seven, nine, or twelve times. The more they eat, the more plentiful the year's harvest and food supply will be.

Top 10 New Year's Resolutions

1. Exercise more
 2. Lose weight
 3. Get organized
 4. Learn a new skill or hobby
 5. Live life to the fullest
 6. Save more money / spend less money
 7. Quit smoking
 8. Spend more time with family & friends
 9. Travel more
 10. spend more time on genealogy
- Okay, so I just added that last one. Actually it was
Read More....

New Year's Resolutions are a tradition as old as time. To be precise, they're about 4,000 years old. The ancient Babylonians were the first people to make them.

Every year in mid-March as the Babylonians prepared new crops, they would celebrate Akitu, a 12-day religious festival to honor their new king or current ruler. During this time, the Babylonians would pray to their gods and make promises to pay back their debts and return items that were borrowed.

They believed that if they kept their word, the gods will reward them for good behavior. If they didn't follow through with them, they will be punished. These beliefs are said to be the earliest practice of New Year's Resolutions.

<https://www.verywellmind.com/why-we-uphold-new-years-resolutions-6827314>

Here are some things you can do to help you stay on track with your New Year's Resolutions

Stay positive

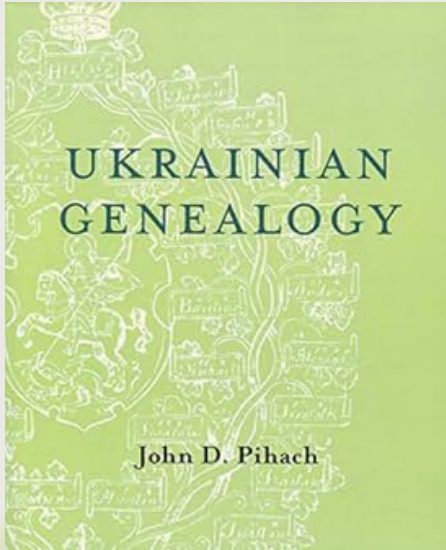
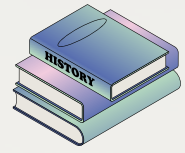
Try not to make big/quick changes

Change should be gradual

Build on smaller changes

Allow a little room for error

Book Review



At our November 6. 24 meeting we welcomed Jars Balan from the University of Alberta Institute of Ukrainian Studies. Jars spoke on Ukrainian settlement on the Canadian Prairies. For those members wishing to further research the topic of Ukrainian settlement in Western Canada, the book 'Ukrainian Genealogy: A Beginner's Guide' by John D. Pihach may be of interest. Known as one of the "bibles" of Ukrainian settlement, this book is available on most major on-line book retail sites.

"John D. Pihach's Ukrainian Genealogy is a guide to tracing one's Ukrainian ancestry in Europe. Consideration is also given to North American records that are specifically Ukrainian or relate to the immigrant experience. Because the overwhelming majority of people of Ukrainian origin in Canada and the United States have roots in western Ukraine or southeastern Poland, the guide concentrates on the resources of those regions. This handbook is intended primarily for those whose ethnic roots are Ukrainian, although some of the material in it may be useful to other groups with roots in Ukraine."

www.amazon.ca

February is National Black History Month when we recognize the legacy of African, Caribbean and Black Canadians and their communities in our City.

For events see:

https://www.edmonton.ca/attractions_events/schedule_festivals_events/black-history-month

For books written by Black Canadian Authors check out this link at CBC

<https://www.cbc.ca/books/40-books-by-black-canadian-authors-to-read-1.5908504>





Family History is the connection between our past and our children's futures.




Meeting Schedule

Wednesday - January 8th
Wednesday - February 5th
Wednesday - March 5th
Wednesday - April 2nd
Wednesday - May 7th
Wednesday - June 4th



From 1 to 3 PM
in the boardroom at WSAC



Print this page and put it on your fridge for easy reference.



“Embarking on genealogy: where the research never ends, and neither do the stories.”