

President's Note:

by Kirk Leyndyke, President

You may recognize my last name as I am married, happily, to one of your Past Presidents, Brenda Leyndyke. Many of you have asked how much arm twisting was done for me to volunteer as President. None. I knew the society was in need of a President and that Brenda was committed to her role as President of the Michigan Genealogical Council and would step up if no else did. I decided I could donate a few hours a month to the society. I have a great group of board members and the upcoming year will be a good one with their help.

My background includes being a school counselor in the Lakeview School District for 26 years before retirement. I have another 13 years as a teacher and counselor in Ludington, Deckerville, and Harbor Springs, Michigan.

Other volunteering I have done is with the Boy Scouts of America Eagle Scout Board of Review,

Michigan Counselors Association and various church and school activities.

Programs are planned through June and I hope you will participate in all of them. Upcoming meetings include learning about free genealogy websites, Zhang Legacy Collection, Michigan County Poor Farms, and a Genealogy Story Slam. There is more information on all of these in this newsletter.

Two field trip type meetings are scheduled as well. Join other CCGS members and friends when we take a trip to WMU to research. The May meeting will find us at the Fort Custer Museum and Library for a tour. The library is a CCGS project and it will be interesting to see the completed work.

I hope to see and meet you at our upcoming events.

Kirk

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Meetings

February 25, 2020

"Fast and Free: Top Genealogy Sites" with Brenda Leyndyke

March 24, 2020

"Using the Zhang Legacy Archival Collection at WMU" with Sharon Carlson

March 28, 2020

Research Trip to Zhang Legacy Collection Center, WMU, 1650 Oakland Dr., Kalamazoo

April 28, 2020

"Michigan County Poor Farms" with Adam Oster

Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held at the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 16036 Old 27 N, Marshall, MI. Meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of the month, except for December, January, July, and August.

<http://www.migenweb.org/calhoun/ccgs.htm>

Winter Meeting Cancellation Policy

Occasionally, CCGS needs to cancel regular meetings because of the weather. Our policy is *if Marshall schools are closed that day, or they cancel evening activities due to bad weather, then the CCGS meeting will be cancelled.*

Please check WWMT.com for complete closing information.



Officers

President-Kirk Leyndyke

Vice-President-OPEN

Recording Secretary-Darlene Stange

Corresponding Secretary-Chelsea Johnson

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Hospitality-Laurie Hodge

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Newsletter-Brenda Leyndyke

Nominating-Alex VanZanten

Pioneer Certificates-Darlene Stange

Programs and Publicity-Brenda Leyndyke and Luanne Frey

Research-Chelsea Johnson

Social Media-Luanne Frey

Special Projects-OPEN

Website-Toni Ardis

Other Society Positions

Past-President-Jennifer Wood

FGS Delegate-James Jackson

MGC Delegates-Brenda Leyndyke and Chelsea Johnson

Alternate-James Jackson

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If you have suggestions for Generations articles, program ideas or speakers, or if you have questions, contact us at

MichiganCalhounGene@yahoo.com

Fast and Free: Top Genealogy Sites

There are many paid websites that genealogists use in their research but did you know there are many free ones that are just as good? Ten free websites will be presented. Criteria for inclusion in this top ten list are they have to be free, they are United States focused, and the website has to be reliable.

Speaker, Brenda Leyndyke, is President of the Michigan Genealogical Council and Past-President of CCGS. For the past nine years she has written the award-winning genealogy blog, *Journey to the Past*, a two time winner of Family Tree Magazine's 40 Best Genealogy Blogs. Brenda revised and updated *Research in Michigan* book, part of the Research in the States Series, published by the National Genealogical Society.

Join us for the February 25th meeting.■

Using the Zhang Legacy Collection at WMU

The Zhang Legacy Collection at Western Michigan University has resources at the university, local and regional history level. Its holdings include newspapers, manuscripts, diaries, letters, local business records, tax rolls, court records, township minutes, WMU records, and more. The collection is the repository of records for 12 southwest Michigan counties.

Dr. Sharon Carlson, Zhang Legacy Center Archives and Regional History Collections Director, will be our guest speaker on Tuesday, March 24th at 7 pm. Dr. Carlson will prepare attendees for future research at the archives, including CCGS' research trip on Saturday, March 28th.

Dr. Carlson has been an archivist for over 20 years. She earned her doctorate of history from WMU and her MLIS from Wayne State University. Dr. Carlson oversaw the move of the archival collection to its current location at 1650 Oakland Dr, Kalamazoo, MI.■

Michigan County Poor Farms

Long before the advent of modern social welfare, county governments in Michigan maintained poorhouses or poor farms. Explore the early history of these facilities in their attempts to care for Michigan's poor, elderly, and destitute. Discover the lives and records of the inmates that resided at our state's poor farms. Join us Tuesday, April 28th, at 7 pm.

Adam Oster, Community Engagement Librarian at the Library of Michigan will be our speaker. Adam's love of history and genealogy research led him to receive a Bachelor of Arts in History from Grand Valley State University and his MLS from Indiana University. Adam has more than 18 years of library experience.■

Calhoun County Genealogical Society

PO Box 879, Marshall MI 49068-0879 • MichiganCalhounGene@yahoo.com • <http://www.migenweb.org/calhoun/ccgs.htm>

Become a CCGS fan on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CalhounCountyGenealogicalSociety>

Organizational Member of National Genealogical Society • Michigan Genealogical Council • Federation of Genealogical Societies

Zhang Legacy Collection Research Trip



Saturday, March 28, 2020, CCGS will be taking a research trip to Zhang Legacy Collection Center at Western Michigan University. This is an opportunity to put into action what you learned at the Tuesday, March 24th meeting. The Zhang Legacy Collection Center is an archival repository of the Archives of Michigan. It covers twelve counties in southwest Michigan (Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Calhoun, Cass, Kalamazoo, Kent, Muskegon, Ottawa, St. Joseph, and Van Buren). More collection information can be found

online at <https://wmich.edu/library/archive-collections>.

We will meet at the library at 10:00 am, 1650 Oakland Dr., Kalamazoo, MI. Car pooling is available by phoning Brenda Leyndyke, 269 275-0462, by Thursday, March 26th. Meet at the Park and Ride, 14401 Beadle Lake Rd, Exit 100, Battle Creek, MI. at 9:20 am, if you are car pooling.

The library is open from 9 am to 4 pm on Saturdays, you are free to come and go during that time. Lunch is on your own. There isn't any place to eat a sack lunch at the Archives, but there are a lot of food choices on Stadium Dr. Parking is free and available at the Archives on Saturdays.■

Tour Fort Custer Museum and Library

Save the date of May 23rd (1 pm) or May 26th(7 pm) to tour the Fort Custer Historical Society Museum and Library. You will need to call Brenda at 269 275-0462 if you plan to attend. Brenda will need to submit a list of attendees to the Museum director. Registration will begin May 1st for both the 23rd and 26th dates.

One of the big changes is the completion of the Library, located in Moran Hall, at Fort Custer. CCGS members, Jan Gay and Brenda Leyndyke, have spent the past year and a half inventorying, organizing, and categorizing the collection. There are thousands of materials in the collection. The day of the visit you will need to stop at the entrance and provide your name and a picture ID to gain entrance to Fort Custer.

Fort Custer Training Center entrance is off of Denso Rd.■

Tell Your Story at June Meeting

What is a Story Slam, you ask? A story slam is based on the poetry slam format, but using stories, family history ones for our program, instead of poems.

You sign up by emailing MichiganCalhounGene@yahoo.com or by calling Brenda Leyndyke at 269-275-0462.

Anyone can participate, members and non members. The rules are simple.

1. Use real life stories, preferably from your own family history.
2. Each storyteller gets ten minutes to sell their story.

Your story can be on any topic. Some ideas to get you

started might be a family recipe that ended in disaster, ancestor's unusual job, immigration story, family trips, military stories, a first kiss, quirky traditions, a talented ancestor, sibling rivalry, criminal caper, ancestors interaction with historical events, teen angst, funny dating stories, wild escapades, whatever captivates your imagination. These are just a few ideas, but you are free to tell your story. Keep it PG-13 rated, please.

Each storyteller will have ten minutes to tell their story at our June 23, 7 pm, meeting. We will limit the number of storytellers to eight, but if we get more interest we will add a second night of storytelling.

Don't have a story to tell? We need audience members to support your fellow oral historians. It will be an evening of fun. Please join us.■

Annual Bus Trip to ALLEN COUNTY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Fort Wayne, Indiana

Sponsored by Kalamazoo Valley Genealogical Society (KVGS)

Join us for a day of genealogy research



DATE: Saturday, March 28, 2020
(No refunds after March 14, 2019)

COST: \$35.00 per person for bus, not meals

<u>City/Town</u>	<u>Leave</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Return (approx.)</u>
Kalamazoo	7:00 am**	The Crew Family Restaurant 3810 East Cork St. & Sprinkle Rd.	9:00 pm
Marshall	7:30 am	Exit 36, I-69 Park-n-Ride	8:30 pm
Coldwater	8:00 am	Exit 13, I-69 Park-n-Ride	8:00 pm

***Park on north side of parking lot, near Cork Street (away from the Crew Restaurant entrance)*

Departure from ACPL at 5:30 pm -- Dinner stop at Cracker Barrel on way home in Auburn, IN

Complete one form per person. Make check payable to KVGS.

Mail form & check to: Jan Wright, 1853 Cumberland St., Kalamazoo, MI 49006
janwright8607@yahoo.com 269.349.8622 (cell)

Clip at line

Clip at line

Clip at line

Clip at Line

NAME: _____ **CELL PHONE:** _____

EMAIL: _____ **HOME PHONE:** _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT: *(Please bring a list of current medications)*

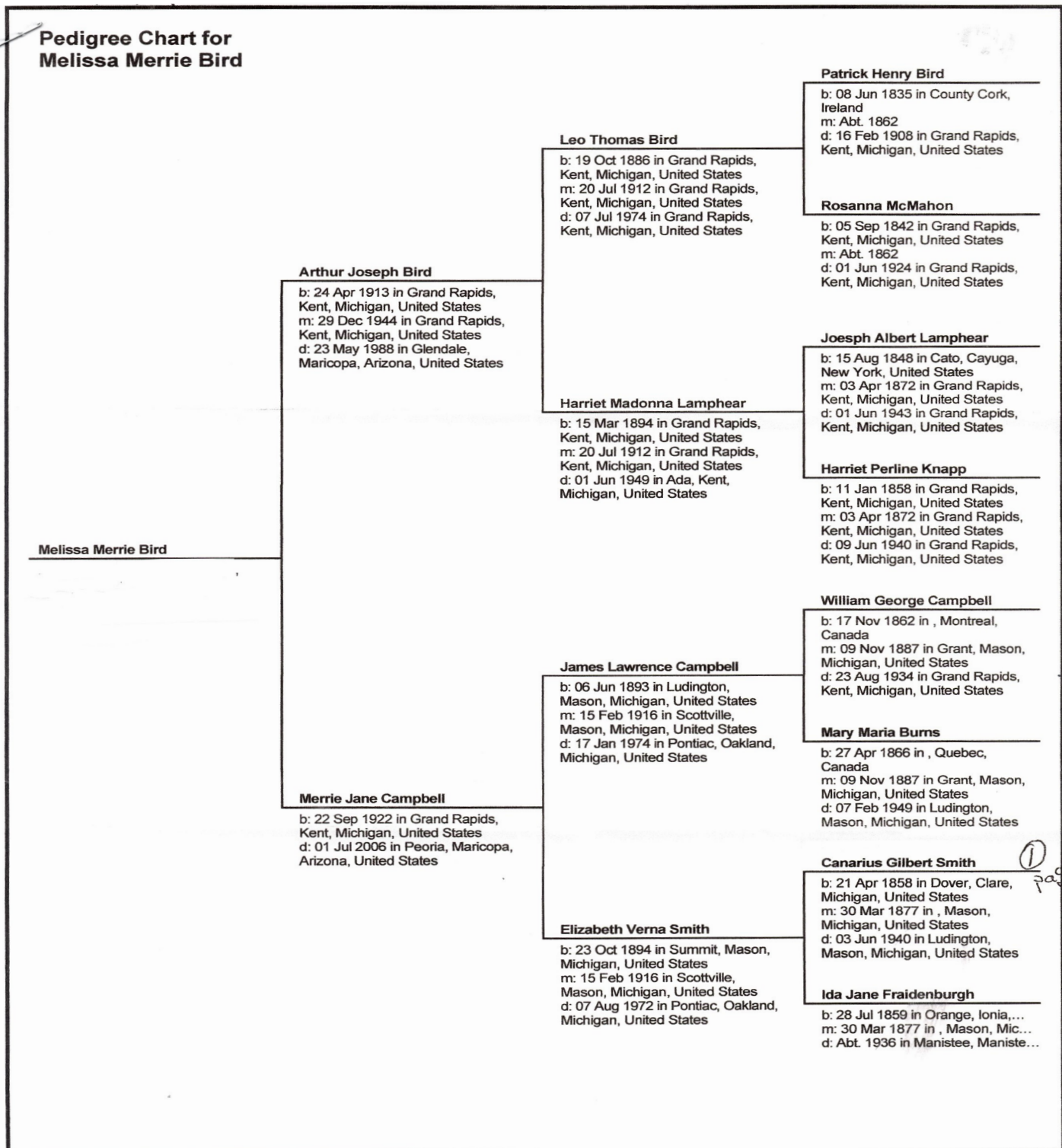
NAME: _____ **PHONE:** _____

PICK-UP POINT *(Please circle):* **K'ZOO** **MARSHALL** **C'WATER**

KVGS Website: www.mikvgs.org

Pedigree Chart for Melissa Bird

Do you have a pedigree chart you would like to share with CCGS? Please send it to CCGS, P.O. Box 879, Marshall, MI 49068.



Including Oral Histories in Your Genealogy Research

How many times have you said that you wished you had asked your ancestors questions while they were alive? I know, I have. Conducting oral history interviews is one way to see that you and younger generations don't have these regrets.

Oral History is an important part of genealogy. The Oral History Association defines it as a field of study and a method of gathering, preserving and interpreting the voices and memories of people, communities, and participants in past events.

Oral history brings a richness to your family history that no other source can. It tells the stories of a time gone by. It goes beyond the facts on your family tree and leaves behind a legacy for generations to come.

Once a family member dies their history is lost to his/her family forever. Now is the time to put oral history higher on your genealogy to do list.

To get started with your family oral history you need to identify who in your family to interview. Start with the oldest members of your family. Include grandparents, aunt and uncles, and cousins. Getting different perspectives on the same question is interesting.

Once you know who to interview, contact the person you want to interview. Ask if you can visit to ask a few family history questions. Setting up a time to meet is better than just dropping in on them. Sometimes they are reluctant to be interviewed and you will need to start simply. Have them identify family photographs and let those conversations flow into a question and answer period. Others may be happy to talk to you. Be sensitive to their feelings. You can always ask again, just don't be a pest.

Create a list of questions you would like to have answered, but be flexible. Let the conversation flow freely. You may be surprised where your questions go.

You may encounter sensitive topics and emotional responses, be prepared for it and never go where your interviewee doesn't want to go. Check the online resources section on the next page for help with types of questions to ask and how to handle sensitive topics.

If you plan to share your interview it is a good idea to print off a permission form for the interviewee to sign. Many good ones can be found online for free.

Think about how you want to capture your interview. Having something you can go back to is the best way. Writing is an option, but can you write as fast as a person speaks? Plus, you want to be engaged with your relative not having your face looking down at a notebook. Think about using unobtrusive recording equipment. Many

smart phones are inconspicuous and have audio and video capacity. Don't have a smart phone look into inexpensive audio or video recording devices.

Next, transcribe what you learned. You can transcribe it word for word and go back and summarize it for sharing, if wanted. You may find you want to do a follow up visit to clarify some answers. This could be done with a phone call or another scheduled visit.

You have created the questions, scheduled a visit, asked the questions, and transcribed them. You don't want all that work to go to waste. You need to plan a way to preserve the stories.

Create your own book, blog, scrapbook, etc. to share with other family members. Be sure to give your interviewee a copy. Also, consider donating it to a local library, genealogical or historical society in the area your ancestor lives. If your ancestor was a veteran, see the next page, "Preserving Veterans' Voices" article.

Just don't wait until it is too late. Celebrate the life stories of your ancestors starting now. ■



Michigan Oral History Association

Organized in 1979, the Michigan Oral History Association's (MOHA) mission is to provide for effective cooperation and communication among persons, programs, and institutions concerned with the techniques, uses, and promotion of oral history.

MOHA can help oral historians and genealogists by offering workshops, oral history manuals, advice, and resources.

MOHA will be holding their 2020 Conference at the Michigan Library and Historical Center, Lansing MI. on May 16.

Diverse presentations such as

- Alienation and Belonging in the Oral Histories of Michigan Iranian Americans

- Creating, Promoting, and Growing a University Archives Oral History Program
- Using Oral Histories in Family Genealogy
- Capturing Ethnic Communities
- Incorporating Oral Histories in the College Classroom
- The Detroit/Southern Michigan Punk Scene
- Capturing Oral History Through a Museum
- And more...

Look for upcoming registration information at <https://michiganoha.org/>

MOHA is available to help you with your oral history needs. ■

Online Resources

50 Questions To Ask

<https://www.thoughtco.com/fifty-questions-for-family-history-interviews-1420705>

150 Questions to Ask

<https://www.deseret.com/2014/2/11/20534743/genealogy-150-questions-to-ask-family-members-about-their-lives>

Oral History Association

<https://www.oralhistory.org/>

Michigan Oral History

<https://michiganoha.org/>

Oral History & Genealogy

<https://library.unc.edu/wilson/shc/community-driven-archives/how-to-guides/oral-history/>

History Detectives-Oral History

<https://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/technique/oral-history/>

Creating Oral Histories

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Creating_Oral_Histories

The Importance of Oral History

https://www.genealogy.com/articles/research/2_oralhs.html

The Why of Oral Histories

<http://www.marple.com/whyoral.html>

Why Oral Histories are So Crucial to Good Genealogy

Part 1: <https://ancestralfindings.com/why-oral-histories-are-so-crucial-to-good-genealogy-part-1/>

Part 2: <https://ancestralfindings.com/why-oral-histories-are-so-crucial-to-good-genealogy-part-2/>

And many more...

Preserving Veterans' Voices

Of the 16.1 million United States World War II veterans less than 1 million were living in 2017, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. Most of those are in their 90's. Many community organizations have taken on the task of recording these historically important stories.

Grand Valley State University, Allendale, Michigan has partnered with the Library of Congress to collect veterans' stories since 2006. The Veterans History Project is a digital collection of interviews with people who served during war time, whether they saw combat or not. Veteran stories from WWII, Korean, Iraq and Afghanistan wars are included. Stories of civilians working in the war industry, aid workers, peace activists and civilian contractors are available at GVSU.

Currently, over 1200 interviews are available for viewing at <https://www.gvsu.edu/vethistory/>.

For more information, including interview questions for Veterans, check the Library of Congress Veterans History Project website. <https://www.loc.gov/vets/> ■

Generations

Calhoun County Genealogical Society
PO Box 879
Marshall, MI 49068-0879

*Celebrate the life stories of your
ancestors starting now*

Membership Information

Calhoun County Genealogical Society Membership

New _____ Renewal _____

_____ Email Family \$15

_____ Postal Mail Family \$18

DATE _____ PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Would you like someone to contact you about volunteer opportunities with CCGS? Yes No

Would you like to donate to CCGS? Yes No If yes, amount _____

Make checks payable to CCGS, send check and completed form to:

CCGS Membership Chair

P.O. Box 879

Marshall, MI 49068

If you would like to receive a membership card, please include a stamped, self addressed envelope with your membership.