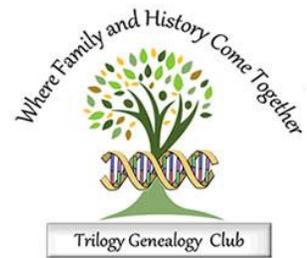




Newsletter
December 2022



Trilogy Genealogy Club Newsletter December 2022

Club Bylaws Revision

Version 3.0 of the Club Bylaws were approved at the November Board meeting and ratified by the members at the December meeting. It has been submitted to Resort Management, as required by the CC&Rs governing chartered clubs.

The new bylaws:

- **Remove all references to SIGs.** The SIGs were added in 2021 but proved to be unpopular. Since we no longer have SIGs, we have removed this section from the bylaws.
- **Add the webmaster as a permanent member of the Board.** The webmaster has always played a significant role in the Club's operation and needs to be part of the Board.
- **A Revised Election Process.** The current election process requires an email ballot with 50%+1 participation by paid members. As defined, this has proven to be an awkward process, especially considering that we usually have only one nominee for each position. Version 3.0 allows the President to seek approval in a club meeting with a yes or no voice vote. If there are multiple nominees for an office, a paper ballot will be used at the meeting.
- **A New section on Administration replaces separate job descriptions.** Each board member's responsibilities are outlined in this Bylaws revision, eliminating the need for individual job descriptions.
- **General wordsmithing to improve readability.**

2023 Officers

The 2022 election for 2023 officers was held per version 2.0 of the bylaws. Nominations were finalized at the November Club meeting, and ballots were emailed out the next day. The final count was forty-six votes, all in favor of all nominees, and we needed 31 for approval.

The 2023 Officers are:

President: Vicki Reisenfield

Vice-President: Albert Schwarzhaupt

Secretary: Hattie Dixon

Treasurer: Cheryl Widlak

The Year Ahead

2023 promises to be an excellent year for the Genealogy Club, with new officers bringing new ideas and skills to the table.

Vicki has already hit the ground running, collecting ideas and working on plans, including sending out a survey to which many of you responded. Here is a message from her on the topic:

“Thanks to the 43 club members who responded to the latest Genealogy Club Survey. The data is being analyzed by both the Family History Conference Organization Committee and the 2023 Club Officers to extract highly desired topics for the FHC and 2023 monthly club meetings. Detailed results of the survey will be presented after the scheduled speaker at the January 2023 meeting.”

Upcoming Meetings

January 9, 2023 – Dr. Duane Roan

In January, our special guest speaker will be Dr. Duane Roan, Professor, ASU. Those of you who have been with the Club for a long time will remember him from the past as one of our favorite speakers. His past presentations are available on the club website. Duane Roan has been tracing his roots since his teenage years, building a database with more than 32,000 ancestors. He and his wife, Maureen Roan, have recorded their family history since 1978 by writing more than 16,000 daily journal entries on their children and other family members. Combining his professional and personal interests, Duane worked with colleagues to establish courses on writing and recording family history at Arizona State University. He also is a founding coordinator of the Project for Writing and Recording Family History in the College of Integrative Sciences and Arts at ASU. Although Duane loves family history and life writing, he spends most of his waking hours serving as a faculty member at ASU

February 6, 2023 – Kim Harrison - Using County Histories as a Resource

Published county histories are a popular resource, but the researcher needs to understand their limitations, as well as the rich clues they provide for the genealogist. These clues may provide some of the best information at the local and county level—tips about disasters, financial expansion, business, and the ethnic make-up of the community.

Kim Harrison is a Teacher of Genealogical Classes, Librarian, Archivist, Historian, Accredited/ Certified Genealogist, etc.) Currently AzGAB President and 2nd VP of West Valley Genealogical Society, and genealogy consultant. She has worked for online providers, lobbied the National Archives for records preservation, & lecture on various genealogical topics. From 1998 to 2015 worked at Ancestry, NewsBank (GenealogyBank), ProQuest, Otherdays.com, and Gale, selling and later a product manager for genealogical and historical materials to the library world.

Family History Day April 3, 2023

The Club will have a Family History in 2023, thanks to six members who stepped forward at our November meeting and volunteered to serve on the organizing committee. The organizing Committee has moved the Conference to April to provide more time to organize and promote a first class event. My personal thanks to John Spearman and his team for taking responsibility for this. They will announce the date and provide more information in the future.

Quick Tip of the Month – Lessons Learned

I have been doing Family History work for a long time, made many mistakes, and learned many lessons. I created a slide set that included many “Lessons Learned” and presented it at the December meeting. Unfortunately, many of you were unable to attend. Therefore, I have extracted the highlights of lessons learned for this month’s Quick Tip. These are just the bullet points. The whole presentation is posted on the website if you want more details.

Concerning Researching and Writing about Your Ancestors

- Even if you find a biography that someone else wrote, check the facts, and look for more information.
- Dig Deep – People live complicated lives.
- Look at the history of the time in which a person lived.
- Talking to family members can yield exciting information and even some old pictures.
- Timelines put things in perspective.
- Get to know your ancestors. They were amazing people.

Concerning Surnames

- Unrelated people may have the same last name (and sometimes even the same first name!)
- There are many Robert Alfords worldwide, but I am related to very few.
- This issue has led to many errors in genealogies, printed and on the Internet.
- Something published in a book, even if it is ancient, does not necessarily make it accurate any more than something posted on the Internet is true today.
- The history of a surname can be fascinating and may lead you to some vital information about your ancestors.

Concerning Building Your Own Custom Family Website

- Your own family website, beyond what Ancestry or MyHeritage can do, adds to the adventure. Mine is rtreeoflife.com.
- Public websites will allow you to maintain family sites, but they are not as flexible as a tool like TNG.
- TNG does not require writing any code but does require specific knowledge of how websites work.
- Personal sites are not for everyone and probably not for most people.
- Note that I still maintain trees on Ancestry and MyHeritage as research tools. I consider rtreeoflife.com as my master tree and copy from it to the other two periodically using GEDCOM files.
- If all of this is Greek to you, don’t worry about it. These sites are optional and only for a few of us.

Concerning Writing a Book About Your Family History

- Once you have a collection of biographies, publishing them as a book is a logical and primarily mechanical step.
- If you want to do something like this, start small. Start writing biographies about your ancestors. You can share them with family, create pdf files and upload them to your tree, or publish them as booklets on kdp.com. My booklets are typically 15-20 pages long. Including pictures and charts.
- Developing a biography for publication forces a mindset of completeness and quality that goes beyond what you might otherwise do.

Concerning Bad Data on the Internet

- Don't believe Other People's Trees (OPTs.) You can use them as hints, but always verify the data with reliable records. Sometimes people provide sources you can trace down, but if their source is OPTs, it is unreliable. Never use OPTs as a source in your tree.
- Don't believe Ancestry's shaky leaf. Check the hint, as it may point to a valid record, but often it does not, and many tips from Ancestry or MyHeritage are false.
- Don't ever, ever, ever let Ancestry, MyHeritage, or any other website automatically add information to your tree!

Concerning Family Legends built on Misinterpreted information

- If something doesn't smell right, it is probably wrong.
- Legends build larger each time they are told, even when they are based on false information.
- Look at the details in history.
- Words sometimes change meaning over the centuries.
- Old books can provide good information but may also contain errors, flawed assumptions, and fake news.
- Newspapers are not valid sources if they tell a story, especially about something that happened in the past. They are a helpful and usually accurate source when reporting current events such as marriages or deaths.
- Genealogy Societies and professional genealogists are fallible, especially when they don't provide verifiable sources.
- Original old church records written by the priest on the day of the event are solid proof. Sometimes they are difficult to read and translate, but the data is worth the effort.

Concerning Colonial Ancestors

- Our colonial ancestors were amazing people who overcame incredible hardships.
- Colonial history, as told by the original records left by those who lived through it, is much different than what we were taught in school.
- Revisionist history, as often promoted today, is even further from the truth.
- It takes some digging but learning what really happened during the times in which our ancestors lived enriches the story of their lives.

The Big Lessons I have Learned

- We all have some Amazing Ancestors
 - To find them, you need more than names and dates.
 - Look for them in church and government records.
 - Look for them in the business records of the town.
 - Study the history of the place they lived.

- Study the history of the world in which they lived.
- It is like puzzle that is never completely solved, but each piece you find brings you closer to knowing them.
- And they are worth knowing.
- Organization Matters! Use any system you wish, but choose one that lets you find anything you recorded in seconds.
- Truth Matters
 - Seek truth (quality, not quantity)
 - A false entry in your tree can lead to a whole section of the tree that is not your ancestors.
 - If it smells bad, don't swallow it.
 - Be skeptical; never trust OPT's.
 - Look for original records and reliable sources to verify everything.
 - Always state your sources to help those that read your work.
 - Proving a widely reported assumption false and finding the truth can be a gratifying experience.
- History Matters
 - Our ancestors lived in and made history.
 - To understand how they lived, what they believed, and why they did what they did, we must look at their world the way they did.
 - We must understand history as it was, not the retelling that appears in modern history books.
 - For example, if you study the historical records, you will find the relationships between the early settlers and the native Americans were not anything like what we were taught in school or what the modern rewriters of history would have us believe.
 - The truth is much more complicated and colorful when you understand what actually happened.
- Persistence Matters
 - Finding your ancestor and learning about them can be difficult.
 - If you get stuck, don't bang your head on a brick wall; that hurts!
 - Record your issue and what you know, then move to other ancestors, preferably related ones.
 - Keep a to-do list of challenging problems.
 - When you feel inspired, or have a new approach to try, go back and work on the problem.
 - Learn how to do cluster research.
 - Some mysteries may never be solved, but many will over time.
 - Additional records are being digitized and indexed all the time.
 - Don't let your brick walls discourage you from making progress with other ancestors.
- Enjoy the Journey
 - Genealogy is a fascinating hobby. It is like a vast puzzle that is never completely solved. Still, one bit of information leads to another. It becomes exhilarating when you find information on one of your family lines that tie in with your current records and gives you information about those that came earlier.

- Don't let the lack of information about one ancestor stress you out when there are so many to explore.
- You can't get very far with a jigsaw puzzle by picking up a random piece and trying to fit it in somewhere.
- Staring at a hole and trying to find the piece that goes there is only slightly better, and if that piece is missing, you will never get anywhere.
- Solve what you can, and other pieces will start to fall into place.
- Our ancestors were amazing people, and they are worth knowing.
- Relax and enjoy the journey.

Well, that is a very long Quick Hint, but it was a lengthy presentation and a very long journey.

This Month's Banner

This month's banner is about the Dawning of a new day, which is dawning in more ways than one. The Genealogy Club has a new and highly qualified management team motivated to provide you with what you need and want to advance and enjoy your Family History. They have shared some of their ideas with me, and I keep wondering, "*why didn't I think of that?*" I urge you to participate in the adventures that lie ahead.

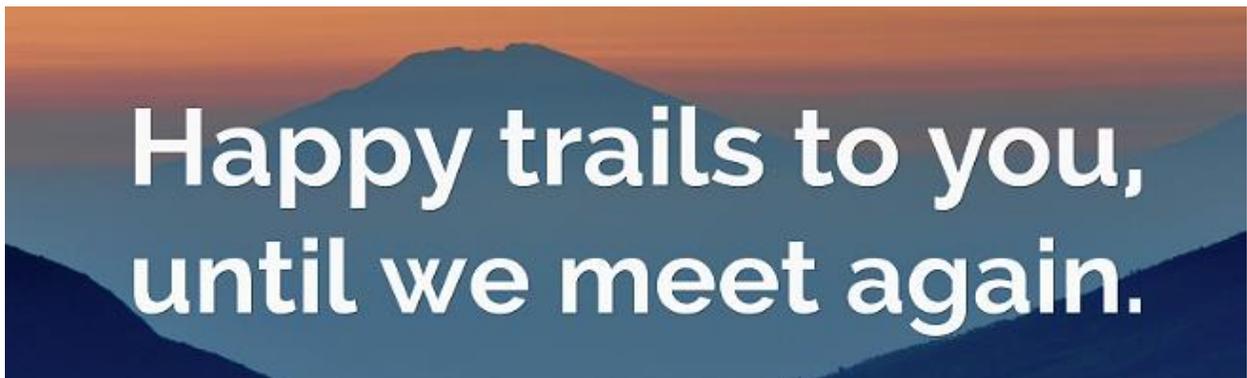
A new day is dawning for me as well. Muriel and I will be moving to Inspirata Point at Royal Oaks, probably in February, and selling our home in Trilogy. We have lived in Trilogy for fifteen years and love it here, but it is time for a new chapter in life.

Royal Oaks is a Life Care Community where you move into independent living, which is like living in a luxury hotel suite with most of the amenities that Trilogy has. If and when the time comes when you need it, one or both of you can move to assisted living, memory care, or the care center (last stage) at no additional cost. The entry price and monthly fees are high, but your ongoing living facilities and care are guaranteed if you ever run out of money. This arrangement means that neither of us will ever become a burden on the other or our children, and neither of us has to worry about what will happen to the other if they pass first.

Inspirata Point is a new section of Royal Oaks now nearing completion. We have a new 1,500 sq ft two-bedroom apartment that should be ready for us to move into sometime in February or early March.

I have been a member of the Trilogy Genealogy Club for over eleven years, was the webmaster of ten of those, and have served on the Board twice. It has been an honor and a pleasure to serve as your President for the last two years. I leave Trilogy and the Genealogy Club with mixed emotions, but I know that the Club is in excellent hands and that this move is right for Muriel and me.

I wish you all, Happy Trails



Feedback is Appreciated

How can the Trilogy Genealogy Club help you with your Family History?

What ideas or suggestions do you have for future meetings?

How can we improve what we are doing to benefit our members? Please write to vreisengen@comcast.net.