

Publication Notes

The BCGS issues a two-part publication each quarter. The first part is the **Newsletter**, which contains news, activities, acquisitions, events, and information of general interest and assistance to members. Part two is the **Notebook**, which focuses specifically on genealogy research.

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Baltimore County Genealogical Society

Covering the Baltimore Metro Area and the State of Maryland

Quarterly Newsletter—Dec. 1, 2025



President's Message



President Dave Powell

The leaves are turning and the days are getting cooler, so it is prime time to do family history research. Our society continues to be actively involved in helping you with that endeavor. Our staff is more than willing to assist you at our library. Please come to visit us.

We also have a full line up of speakers in the coming months with topics that will interest you. Our website is brimming with additional tools to help you find that elusive ancestor. Our Maryland death and birth indexes have over 3 million names in them for you to search.

In order for our society to grow, we need your help. Please volunteer to help in any way that you can. We currently need a **Recording Secretary** primarily to help with taking minutes at our board meetings. With the help of an Artificial Intelligence assistant, this task is getting easier. We also need someone to help with **refreshments** once a month at our meetings. We need volunteers to index records or to scan records – so there are plenty of opportunities to help out.

Just contact me or **Greg Burton** if you would like to help. Special thanks to all those folks who are already helping, we really appreciate it.

Don't forget to check out our website for all our current activities!

Spotlight On...Newsletter Editor Dan Phelan



Newsletter Editor
Dan Phelan

Dan Phelan is, along with his wife Liz, current co-editor of the BCGS Newsletter and Notebook. Dan grew up in Govans, and graduated from St. Mary's (Govans) Catholic elementary school, Northern High School, and Towson University. While attending Towson University, he took a semester off in 1976 to ride his bicycle across the United States as part of the inaugural year of the Trans-America Bicycle Trail, developed by BikeCentennial, later called Adventure Cycling.

After graduating from Towson in 1977, Dan began working at the U.S. Geological Survey, Water Resources Division, Mid-Atlantic District. He retired from there in 2010 as a hydrologist. He continues his environmental efforts as a board member of The Friends of the Jones Falls as an advisor on hydrology. He is also a current member of Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup whose goal is to develop a state-wide cemetery inventory.

Dan and Liz married in 1979 and immediately began researching their family trees, primarily so they could figure out who were really relatives, and who were not, at large family gatherings. That process has never really ended as marriages bring new families to research. Dan has two children and four grandchildren who keep him very busy!

Dan became a member of the BCGS in 2018. He immediately volunteered to help the re-indexing of the Baltimore City death certificates, and completed about 13 years of data for that effort.

Dan is a long-time contributor to Findagrave.com memorials, having added over 7,700 memorial pages, and fulfilling over 5,700 photo requests. His specialty is researching and documenting burial places of Maryland WWII casualties while working with other specialists around the country on that task.

Dan was instrumental in getting permission for the BCGS to scan all the cemetery records of the New Cathedral Cemetery in West Baltimore (over 17,000 images for over 110,000 interments), and also the cemetery and sacramental records of St. Mary's Govans parish and cemetery. These records reside on the computers of the BCGS research library.

Dan is a very welcome member of the BCGS!

Statewide Cemetery Database

By Dan Phelan

During the 2025 legislative session, a bill entitled *Maryland Inventory of Cemeteries and Burial Sites Workgroup – Establishment* (SB354) was enacted which created a workgroup to study issues related to the establishment and maintenance of a statewide cemetery inventory system. The Maryland Historical Trust provided overall staff support for the Workgroup which met on an approximate bi-weekly basis from June through November 2025.

The Workgroup was charged with evaluating the feasibility and cost of establishing a grant program to provide financial assistance to governmental entities and nonprofit genealogical and historical organizations to expedite identification of cemeteries. The Workgroup was also directed to recommend a funding amount and source for a grant program beginning in fiscal year 2027. The final report to the Governor was to be delivered to the Governor on December 1.

Dan Phelan is a member of the Workgroup, and **Lance McPherson** also 'sat in' on meetings so he could forward comments representing the BCGS.

Mark Your Calendar!

Upcoming 2026 monthly meetings will be at 2 p.m. on the following Sundays:

December—No Meeting

January 25—12-4 p.m. the library will be open for research. Scanners and copiers will be available. Meeting at 2 p.m. but no speaker.

February 22—Speaker TBD. The library is also open on the 2nd & 4th Thurs. of the month & the 2nd Sat. of the month from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. for research.

Ha Ha! "I used to have a lot of free time... then I discovered genealogy."

Edna Agatha Kanely Award-Winner—David Powell

Upon the passing of long and valued Baltimore County Genealogical Society member, **Edna Agatha Kanely** in January of 1992, a meeting was held to discuss a way to honor her. It was decided to establish an award of appreciation and life membership in the Society. Selection was based on outstanding and long-lasting contributions by a member of the Society and not to be presented within any specific time period. Previous recipients have been: **Patricia Czerniewski, Eugene Gallagher, Carol Porter, Ken and Elaine Zimmerman, Lorraine Gordon, Charlotte LaMason, Herb Frantz, and Greg Burton.**



The ninth Edna Agatha Kanely Award was presented to **David Powell** during the Society's meeting on October 26, 2025 in appreciation for his many contributions to the Society.

Dave has been a member of BCGS for more than a decade. In 2013-2017 he served as our Treasurer and again in 2022-2025. He is now our current President, a position that is not new to him as he previously held his office from 2018-2021.

Dave maintains the Society's membership list and helps with our many church and cemetery scanning projects, both onsite and offsite. On Thursday research days, he can be found in the library often assisting patrons with their questions and problems. He also leads the Baltimore City Birth Certificate Index Project for the BCGS website.

Apart from our Society, Dave teaches genealogy courses for the Community College of Baltimore County and at local Senior Centers. Other Maryland Genealogy Societies also benefit from his association with them.

Recently Dave added a new program to our website which will help researchers navigate the library holdings. He also volunteered to repair our broken microfilm reader which seemed an impossible task, but after hours of research and labor he was successful. This willingness to pitch in for big jobs or small jobs is always appreciated. The members of the Baltimore County Genealogical Society congratulate Dave on this well-deserved award.

Membership Renewal Due January 1!

Our memberships run from January 1st to December 31st. Please renew your membership for 2026. Dues remain **\$15 for an individual or \$20 for a family**. Members who join after October 1st in any year are credited with the remainder of the current year and the next full calendar year as well.

You can renew on-line via PayPal here:

<https://www.baltimoregenealogysociety.org/BCGShome/membership>

OR

Mail a check to: BCGS P.O. Box 10085, Towson, MD 21285-0085

OR

Pay by cash or check at one of our monthly meetings or research days.

Murphy's Law— John, son of Thomas the immigrant whom your relatives claim as the family progenitor, died on board ship at the age of 10.

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Refreshments

Vacant

New Members

The BCGS welcomes the following new members listed here with the family surnames they are researching. If you need to contact a member regarding any surnames being researched, contact our librarian, **Lorraine Gordon**.

Genealogy Classes offered by the CCBC

The **Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC)** will be offering three genealogy classes during the winter semester in their Senior Adventures in Learning (SAIL) program. All three classes will be held at their Hunt Valley extension campus at 11101 McCormick Rd.

Find Your Family Roots - Beginners

Discover your family roots by learning the basic methods of genealogy tracing and begin to research and plan your family tree. Explore forms to use for research; the techniques and methods for research; the use of the computer and internet to do research; genealogy sources and citations; and among many other topics. Begin to create your family tree and charts, and document the sources of the research. *Tuesdays from 1/27/2026 through 3/17/2026 at 1:00 to 2:30pm.*

Foreign Genealogy Research

Enhance your genealogy research by exploring family history beyond the U.S. Topics include finding and using foreign records online, interpreting these records with English language tools, translating documents and understanding foreign record terminology. *Fridays from 2/6/2026 through 3/6/2026 at 10:00am to Noon.*

Family History Research using Ancestry.com

Discover the power of Ancestry.com for your family history journey. Learn to leverage its vast resources for storing and expanding your genealogical research. Unearth historical records, DNA insights, and family connections. With over 30 billion records from 80 countries, explore its potential to the fullest. Note that Ancestry.com requires a paid subscription for full access. *Thursdays from 1/29/2026 through 3/19/2026 at 1:00 to 2:30pm*

All three classes are being taught by **David Powell**, the President of the Baltimore County Genealogy Society and a Maryland Genealogy Society Board Member. Register for the course(s) by calling 443-840-222 or visit this website: <https://www.ccbcmd.edu/Admission-and-Registration/Register-for-Classes/Continuing-Education/Registration-and-Payment.html>

NEW MEMBER NAME

SURNAMES BEING RESEARCHED

LAST	FIRST				
Arildson	Sandy	Bankhead	Wilson		
Benson	Mary P	Dell	Hickey	Imhoff	Morgan
Dunning	Wendy	Dunning	Stull	Stock	
English	Mary F	Maliszewski	Chmielewski	Nowalowksi	Jaroncinski
Felix	K				
Flynn	Daniel	Rider	Dorsey	Stansbury/ Sternberg	Gorsuch
Greenhood	Johanna				
Hamed	Mary M	Seth	Hamed	Marsiglia	Mull
Kuvshinoff	Barbara	Hammond	Naff	Batzler	Kohlhepp
Snyder	Kelly	Ensor			
Weems	Timeka	Weems	White	Anthony	Hickerson

Thank You Irish Festival Volunteers

For the second year in a row, on November 7-9, the BCGS participated in the Irish Festival at Timonium Fairgrounds. For three days we were there helping folks with Irish, and other, heritage questions, as well as recruiting new members. Many thanks to **Dan Phelan, Greg Burton, Thomas Redmond, Liz Phelan, Lynne Ann Straw, Lance McPherson, Deanna Medlin, and Mary Wilson** who volunteered at this successful outreach opportunity.

Thank You Speakers!

September—Out thanks go out to **Ken Zimmerman** for his talk on *Using Maps for Genealogy*. He discussed many types of maps including Atlases and Historical Atlases, Census Enumeration maps, Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, Land and Plat maps, Cadastral maps, as well as many other types of maps that are helpful when doing genealogy research. (See page 6 for more information on his talk.)

October—Many thanks also go out to our President **David Powell** for his talk on 'BCGS Databases and Their Uses'. While we all knew that there are extensive resources on our library computers, we don't all know how to easily find what we were looking for. Dave showed a new resource called 'Library Portal' that now shows up on the computers' home screen. Opening that takes you to a choice between 24 large icons representing the major topics used for searches. Each of these entry points brings a user to easily-found lists of available data for the respective data bases. This is a very useful tool! Please come by our library on open dates and try it

November—Thanks go out to **Sharon Lina Pearce** for her talk on writing a personal genealogy book. She shared how she did it, how she decided to tell each story, how to organize the information, and what tools she used to publish her books. Advice was also shared based on both successes and failures during her efforts.

New Refreshment Schedule

To help ensure an ample supply of refreshments for our meetings, we request that members contribute munchies and snacks by adhering to the schedule below. Please take home your leftovers, and be sure to collect your container if it is reusable.

Directions: Members with a last name beginning with the letters on the left are asked to bring a refreshment item to share for the months indicated.

Member Last Name Initial

A, B, C, D
E, F, G, H
I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R
S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z,
Everyone

Monthly Meeting

January & May
February & June
March & October
April & September
November

MY CHRISTMAS GENEALOGY WISH LIST:



I ALL ANCESTORS THAT I'VE HIT A
BRICK WALL WITH (FROM THE LAST
400 YEARS) MAGICALLY SHOW UP
ON MY DOORSTEP!



Using Maps for Genealogy by Kenneth Zimmerman

Speaker at BCGS October 2025

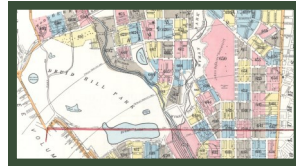
Why Use Maps for Genealogy?

Maps not only provide clues as to where your ancestors lived, but they can also help you track down important documents such as birth, marriage, and death records, probate records, land and property records, and more.

Many of these documents were – and still are – held in the counties where they were created, so knowing where an ancestor lived, worked, went to school, spent his social time, etc., is vital to successful research.

There are many types of maps that can help with your family history research.

- Atlases and Historical Atlases
- State and County Boundary Maps
- Census Enumeration Maps/ Enumeration district maps
- Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps (1867-1970)
- Land and Plat Maps
- Cadastral Maps
- Military Maps
- Railroad Maps
- Topographic Maps
- Township Maps
- Ethnographic Maps
- Population density maps



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map

Family Tree Magazine Store

Historical Maps Cheat Sheet

Regular price \$9.99 USD

[Historical Maps Cheat Sheet – Family Tree Magazine Store](#)

Genealogists and historians alike love old maps! In addition to being beautiful pieces of artwork from centuries' past, historical maps can be valuable resources for your genealogy research. Using maps, you can pinpoint your ancestor's home or farm, find missing ancestors in census records and view your ancestor's community as he would have seen it. This cheat sheet download will show you how to find and use historical maps online, plus how to apply them to your research.

Inside, you'll find: Seven of the most useful kinds of historical maps, plus annotations that highlight their research value. You'll also find resources for finding maps online, and tips for using web tools like Google Earth to compare historical maps with modern ones

Speaker?

*One of the highlights of our meetings is exposure to new information and techniques that broaden our genealogy research skills and knowledge. Toward that end, we are always looking for speakers for our meetings to help with that. If you have an expertise to share, or know of someone who might be interested in speaking to our group for an hour, please contact Vice President **Jim Cross**.*

Murphy's Law — The public ceremony in which your distinguished ancestor participated, and at which the platform collapsed under him, turned out to be a hanging.

Bible Records in the BCGS Library

Received January 2025 thru December 2025—

Submitted by Carol Porter

CANNON-ROBINSON - Bible publication date: none; residence: Dorchester Co., MD; earliest birth: 1820; earliest marriage: 1844; last recorded date: 1971; other surnames: CHRISTOPHER CLARK, GOSWELLEN, McNAMARA, MYERS, NORRIS, WILLEY. Donor of photocopies: Upper Shore Genealogy Society of MD

CODER, Jacob Coy – Bible publication date: none; residence: Calvin, Huntingdon Co., PA, Cecil, Baltimore Co. MD; earliest birth: 1884; earliest marriage: none; last recorded date: 1907, other surnames: COOK, PHEASANT, PODGORSKI, PUMPHREY, SHAFFER. Donor of photocopies: Upper Shore Genealogy Society of MD.

MATTHEWS, Thomas – Bible publication date: none; residence: Wales, Chester, Lancaster Co., PA, Cecil and Baltimore Cos. MD; earliest birth: 1721; earliest marriage: none; last recorded date 1771, other surnames, none. Donor of original page: Estate of George Price.

MULLIGAN – HOLMES – PARROTT – Bible publication date: ca. 1874; residence: Dorchester Co., Trappe, Talbot Co. MD, Baltimore City, Washington, DC; earliest birth: 1810; earliest marriage: 1840; last recorded date: 1916; other surnames: COLE, GRANT, HEARDIN, REED. Donor of photocopies: Upper Shore Genealogy Society of MD

OPDYKE, Amos – Bible publication date: 1815; residence: Hunterdon, New Jersey; earliest birth: 1781; earliest marriage: 1806; last recorded date: 1864; other surnames: BELLES. Donor of scanned copies: Michael Opdyke.

OPDYKE, John Belles – Bible publication date: 1850; residence: Hunterdon, New Jersey; earliest birth: 1812; earliest marriage: 1831; last recorded date: 1859; other surnames: CASE, FICKE, ROBINSON. Donor of scanned copies: Michael Opdyke.

SCHIESWOHL – Bible publication date: none; residence: York Co., PA, Baltimore MD; earliest birth: 1851; earliest marriage: 1870; last recorded date: 1955; other surnames: DEMEDON, HUPPMAN, KESSLER. Donor of scanned copies: Michael Opdyke.

TAYLOR – HOPKINS – Bible publication date: none; residence; Wicomico Co., MD; earliest birth: 1856; earliest marriage: 1883; last recorded date: 1967; other surnames: BANKS, GRAY, HASTINGS, JONES, LOVE, PUSY, RIGSBY, RUARK, STROUTH, WHITE.

Donor of photocopies: Upper Shore Genealogy Society of MD. Submitted

Help Wanted!

Help is always needed for the Maryland Birth and Death certificate indexing projects. You can work from home on your own computers, or come in and use the library computers. Please contact Greg Burton for the death certificate indexing project, and David Powell to help with the birth certificate indexing project.



Murphy's Law — You finally find your great grandparents' wedding record and discover that the bride's father was named John Smith.