GREAT FALLS GENEALOGY SOCIETY

The Falls Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2026

Established 1975

February 2026 Calendar of Events

Thursday, February 5th—Acquisitions Meeting, 3 pm
Thursday, February 5th—Board Meeting, 4 pm
Thursday, February 12th—General Meeting, 6 pm
Wednesday, February ?? - Wednesdays at 11, Janet D. Thomson, Facilitator, 11:00 am
Saturday, February 21—Learning Seminar—10:00—12:00 am, - Beginning Genealogy II All About the Census Stacey Corcino, Facilitator, Montana Room, RSVP to GFGS to save a seat—only 15 available spots!

Upcoming Conferences

March 5—7, 2026 RootsTech 2026—Salt Lake City, In Person and Virtual Registration

May 27—30, 2026 National Genealogical Society Annual Conference—Fort Wayne, Indiana, In Person and Virtual Registration

September 10—12, 2026 Montana Genealogical Society Conference—Montana Heritage Center, Helena. No Registration Page Yet.

September 24—26, 2026 Montana History Conference—DoubleTree by Hilton, Billings. No Registration Page Yet.

Interested in other conferences? Check out Conference Keeper. Conference Keeper was created as a single go-to website for finding information about genealogy and family history conferences. They list both virtual, hybrid, or in-person events. You can find a conference on almost any topic.

Membership News

Welcome to Our Newest members:

Michelle Bruner, Great Falls
Marsha Berland, Neihart
Karen Gonser, Great Falls

As we look for additional shelf space to our Montana collection, we have decided to deaccession city directories that are also available in the Montana Room or Online. Directories for Helena, Bozeman, Kalispell, Missoula, Miles City, and Billings are available for sale. Contact Larry at GFGS info@gfgenealogy.org.

2026 Planned Schedule for Meetings

For planning purposes, here are the 2026 scheduled dates and times for Committees, Board, and General meetings:

Acquisitions 3:00 pm	**Board 4:00 pm**
5 February	5 February
5 March	5 March
2 April	2 April
7 May	7 May
4 June	4 June
2 July	2 July
6 August	6 August
3 September	3 September
1 October	1 October
5 November	5 November
3 December	3 December
General 6:00 pm	
12 February	12 March
9 April	14 May
10 September	8 October
12 November 2026	10 December 2026

Dates and times may be changed if needed through the year. Currently, meetings are hybrid format. The program will be before the meeting and the business meeting will be after the program. The length of the program will be announced if possible so Zoom participants can attend only the General Meeting if they desire.

For the consideration of others, when on Zoom please remember to mute your computer/phone during the presentations and classes.

We are an affiliated library with FamilySearch

MISSION OF THE GREAT FALLS GENEALOGY SOCIETY

The mission of the Great Falls Genealogy Society is to promote and encourage active interest in genealogy, compile accurate and complete genealogies and collect and preserve genealogical records. Additionally, the Society will foster education and training in genealogy through courses and instruction in genealogy, lectures, forums, seminars, and special work.

Officers:
Stacey Corcino, President (2023-2026)
Janet Thomson, Vice President (2018-2026)
Pegi Palmes, Secretary (2025-2026)
Cheryl Lucas, Treasurer (2014-2026)
Trustees: Donna Winters (2026-2028)
Diana Kirol (2021-2026)
Merle Anne McLeish (2023-2027)

Committee Chairs:
Acquisitions: Larry Spicer
Membership: Stacey Corcino
Publicity: Stacey Corcino
Publications: Cheryl Lucas
Projects: Janet D. Thomson
Research: Diane Green
Technology: Cheryl Lucas

Webmaster: Merle Anne McLeish
Newsletter Editor: Cheryl Lucas,

Society Library Hours:
Monday—Saturday
12:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.
Sunday
1:00 p.m.—4:00 p.m.

The Falls Newsletter is published monthly by the Great Falls Genealogy Society, 301 2nd Ave. N. Great Falls, MT 59401. Members of GFGS receive the newsletter as part of their membership.

Members and the public are encouraged to submit material for publications. Articles should be sent electronically if possible. Deadline for submission is the fifteenth of the month. Neither Great Falls Genealogy Society nor the editor assumes responsibility for errors of fact or opinions expressed by the contributor. The editor reserves the right to edit material prior to publication. Send articles to the office at the above address or electronically info@gfgenealogy.org.

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Great Falls Genealogy Society is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit so your donations are tax deductible.

Society Business

New in The Library As of January 2026

* Piece of Cake Scotty, Piece of Cake
* We Like 'em Tough
* First English Lutheran Church Scrapbook
* Great Falls Central Catholic High School 50th Year Class Reunion 1954-2004
* Great Falls High School 50th Year Reunion 1954-2004
* Great Falls High School Class of 1958 Golden Reunion 1958-2008
* Great Falls High School Class of 1959 45th Year Reunion 1959-2004
* Great Falls High School Class of 1950 55th Year Reunion 1950-2005
* CMR & GFHS Class of 1967 40th Year Reunion 1967-2007
* Central/CMR/GFHS Class of 1966 30th Year Reunion
* CMR High School Class of 1966 20th Year Reunion 1966-1986
* Great Falls High School Class of 1951 55th Year Reunion
* 3D Map of Montana
* The Big Hole Valley Volume 3
* Mining Camps of Mineral County Montana
* Montana Mining Camps
*Murder on Montana's Hi-Line
* Big Skies White Hoods The 1920s Klan and a History of Hate in Montana
* Mining in Shoshone County Idaho
* Frontier History Along Idaho's Clearwater River: Pioneers, Miners & Lumberjacks
* South Dakota Geographic Place Names

Free Sites Bookmarked at the Library

GFGS bookmarks several free websites for use at the library. You can also use these websites at home. These include:

⇒ FamilySearch
⇒ Find A Grave
⇒ Billion Graves
⇒ Chronicling America
⇒ National Archives
⇒ Montana History Portal
⇒ Montana Newspapers.

If you cannot make it into the library but you would like something researched for you on one of the sites, please visit our website gfgenealogy.org for our research policy and fees.

Watch us on YouTube

Don't forget to like and subscribe to us on YouTube. It helps get our content out to the masses. Thank you for all your support!

Check us out on facebook

We are now on Instagram! Check us out!

Make sure to follow!

greatfallsgenealogysociety

Wednesdays at 11—As you have probably noticed on the front page, we do not have a firm date for the Wednesdays at 11 in February. Jan is having family issues that are not letting her plan for days except for one week in advance. She will send out an email when she has been able to firm up her schedule. Thank you.

Society Business

GFGS 2026 SEMINAR & CLASS SERIES

BEGINNING GENEALOGY II WORKSHOP

All about the Census

Bring your:

- Pedigree Chart
- Family Group Sheet
- Family Timeline

Get ready to add some details to that family chart!

FEBRUARY 21, 2026

10AM - 12PM

GFPL - MONTANA ROOM

Limited to 10 so be sure to RSVP

MORE INFO AND RSVP:

GF Genealogy Society & Library
406-727-3922

Society Business

Statistics for Library Resources Usage in 2025

Have you ever wondered how much our resources are used? Here are some of the statistics for 2025.

GFGS Membership:	103 Individual 18 Joint 8 Life-Individual 4 Life-Joint 133 Total Memberships 155 Total Individuals	
Facebook:	453 Followers From December 10, 2025–January 6, 2026 1,709 views	
Instagram:	3 followers (only been active for a couple of months)	
YouTube:	365 views in 2025	
Researchers in library:	4,003 visitors signed in 74 from out of county 6 international	3,856 from Cascade County 67 from out of state
Website	19,284 Unique Visitors	36,841 Page Views

News You Can Use

Library of Congress and Government Publishing Office Make Available 10,000 Digitized Volumes of the United States Congressional Serial Set

The Law Library of Congress and the U.S. Government Publishing Office have achieved a major milestone by uploading and making available the 10,000th volume of the United States Congressional Serial Set on the GovInfo website. Those volumes contain more than 185,000 individual government documents and reports.

This is part of a multi-year effort with the Law Library and GPO to digitize and make accessible the United States Congressional Serial Set back to the first volume, which was published in 1817. The U.S. Congressional Serial Set, commonly referred to as the Serial Set, is a compilation of all numbered House and Senate reports and documents, including executive reports and treaty documents, issued for each session of Congress.

“The digitization of and free public access to the 10,000th volume of the Congressional Serial Set marks a major milestone in our commitment to open government and historical preservation,” said Law Librarian of Congress, Aslihan Bulut. “This achievement would not be possible without our partnership with the U.S. Government Publishing Office, whose collaboration helps ensure that scholars, students and the public can explore the documentary record of Congress and better understand the decisions that have shaped make even more of the documents available online.”

News You Can Use

Bitter Root Chapter, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution Conference

The Bitter Root Chapter, National Society, Daughters of the American Revolution in conjunction with celebrating America's 250 anniversary is organizing a conference at the Doubletree-Edgewater Hotel in Missoula, "History is the Key: Discovering Family Lineages and Uncovering Your Story" on April 25, 2026. This conference is framed for those who are just beginning their family history story and those who are well versed in genealogy.

Our keynote speaker is noted author, historian, Richard Bell, from the University of Maryland who will be speaking on "America's Birth Certificate: The American Revolution." His newest book, published in November, is "The American Revolution and the Fate of the World."

Contact The Bitter Root Chapter at https://www.bitterrootdar.org/homepage/contact/ for more information.

Regards,
Nancy Schmitz, Ed.D.
Regent, Bitter Root Chapter, NSAR

Be S.M.A.R.T. About Family History Research in 2026

By Beth Steury www.bethsteury.com email: bethsteury@gmail.com

My part of the world is especially dreary in January and February creating the perfect time to delve deeply into all things relating to family history. Truth is, I rarely/never need incentive to peruse old family photos, dive into archived documents and records and memorabilia, OR pore over DNA results. Still, the arrival of a new year encourages me to reflect upon my genealogy agenda for 2026. Because I know that the more *intentional* the researching/digging/detecting/piecing together of clues, the more effective and successful said researching will be. And intentional pursuits require targets and objectives and strategies. You know, *goals*.

Whether you're the "must set goals" type or a soul who flees from the very notion, the flip of the calendar can—if you allow it—create an urge to consider your genealogically-inclined pursuits.

SO, let's look at how to be genealogically intentional in 2026.

· Begin with a mental review of 2025. Consider both PURSUITS—the goals you worked toward and activities you engaged in sans goals—and ACCOMPLISHMENTS—goals achieved, tasks completed, mysteries solved.

· Next, accept that *facts are facts.* Whether this review reveals an awesome A+ and you're now doing a happy dance OR you're staring at a dismal F and hanging your head in shame, it is what it is.

· Celebrate where appropriate, for sure, but choose not to sweat what didn't get done. Consider that reflection's *purpose* is to *inform* future progress, NOT to create a pit in which to wallow sorrowfully.

· Then, acknowledge that only YOU know if targets for 2026 should extend what took place, or failed to take place, in 2025. Maybe, yes. Maybe, no. It's a different year, one that likely finds you in a different place, either in minor or major ways.

Now, on to the agenda for 2026. The S.M.A.R.T. goal-setting model offers a simple, practical approach for genealogy enthusiasts to strategize effective goals. Even for folks who shy away from the notion of goals. *I promise.*

· SPECIFIC

Generic objectives such as "research more" aren't specific enough to be effective. But "research Grandpa Mullins parents" directs a specific course of action.

· MEASURABLE

Hone the specific goal into something tangible. Such as, challenge yourself to find confirmation of Grandpa Mullins parents' names, children's names, birth and marriage dates. OR, record all info you can gather in an hour/afternoon/day of focused online research.

· ACHIEVABLE

Think realistic, based on your available time and resources. If an *hour* of research fits into your schedule while an *afternoon* would strain your calendar and a *day* would leave you stressed out about what else wasn't getting done, then an *hour* it is.

· RELEVANT

What person/question/mystery interests you most? *Did* Grandma have a husband before Grandpa as has been rumored for decades? What challenges split your maternal relatives when they set out for the Missouri Territory? The thing you most want to know—that's where you begin in 2026.

· TIME-BASED

Time and again it's been proven that deadlines work. An expressed timeline produces a sense of urgency that encourages structure which boosts focus and . . . voilà! You're on the road to goal-completion success when your S.M.A.R.T. goals include a timeline.