



Columbine Genealogical & Historical Society Newsletter

Vol. 49, No. 3

Third Quarter – July, August, September

Summer 2022

Columbine Genealogical and Historical Society Newsletter

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Centennial, CO 80161-2074

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Thank You Spring Speakers



Jonathan
Fairchild



Susie
Wickman



Jeffrey B. Miller

How DNA Revealed My Real Father

By Kim Hatcher

Years before you could check to see what your DNA story was, I found out that the dad I grew up with was not my biological dad. Although there were little signs here and there as I was growing up that made me think something wasn't quite right, I didn't know what they meant.

I had what I would call a great childhood. I had a mom and a dad, along with an annoying little brother. We had a nice house in a nice neighborhood and always plenty to eat. We went on a few vacations, and I spent most summers with my maternal grandmother who I loved dearly. We were what some would call the classic middle-class family.

I figured out early on that my parents had gotten married after I was born. In fact, five months to be exact. I had also noticed that my father's name that had been filled in by my mother on my birth certificate read "Non-Bio". I don't remember asking my mother about either of these things, I just wondered.

In fifth grade I was given an assignment to ask my parents for family history information. I remember how odd it was that my dad was unresponsive, almost annoyed that I was asking. It made such an impact on me that I still remember it to this day.

Years passed and I went on with my life. Around 1982, my parents divorced, and my mother remarried shortly after. For whatever reason, she shared with her new husband the secret she had kept for so many years. He in turn decided to share that information with my ex-husband. My ex chose to keep the secret until after my mom had passed in May of 1984.

Cont'd on Page 4

Meetings at Columbine

Meeting Times: (except June, July, Aug. & Dec.)

Program Meetings 1:00 pm - 2nd Tuesday of the month **In-Person & via Zoom**

Education Meetings 1:00 pm – 3rd Tuesday of the month **via Zoom**

Board of Directors Meetings 9:00 am - 2nd Tuesday of each month (except June, July & Dec.)

Columbine Writers' Group Meets via Zoom at 10 am on the 3rd Wednesday of the month.

Meeting Place: Good Shepherd Episcopal Church, 8545 E Dry Creek Rd., Centennial, CO 80112

For more information about Columbine Meetings, visit our website: www.columbinegenealogy.com

Program Previews

By Sean McGuire

Sept. 13, 2022

1:00 – 3:00 pm – In Person & via Zoom

Capt. Kenneth McKlem, Arapahoe County Sheriff's Office (ACSO) will present - A Historical Perspective on County Sheriffs in Colorado, with specific detail on the ACSO, the chief law enforcement agency for Arapahoe County.

Oct. 11, 2022

1:00 – 3:00 pm – In Person & via Zoom

Harry Glenn Ross will present - The Scots, the Irish and the Scots-Irish.

Mr. Ross is past president of Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies & the Longmont Genealogical Society.

Education Previews

By Jean Adams

Please Note: All Education Programs will be via Zoom, unless otherwise announced.

Sept. 20, 2022

1:00 – 3:00 pm via Zoom

Sara Dawson – Research Plans and Source Documentation. Organize your research and stop the “re-do.”

Sara is the owner of Descent Detective and guides clients through the tangled webs and brick walls to discover their connections to the past.

Oct. 18, 2022

1:00 – 3:00 pm via Zoom

Vivs Laliberte - YDNA & mtDNA and How They Impart Your Genealogy Research

Vivs is a member of the Ancestry ProGenealogist Group, a teacher at Study Groups Genetic Genealogy in Practice and genealogist at Orange County Genetic Genealogy.



President's Message

By Barbara Elliott

It's hard to believe that 2022 is almost half over. I would like to take this time to thank our wonderful Board for all the hard work they have put in so far this year. We have had some excellent programs and education classes. I also want to thank Kim Hatcher, one of our new members, for taking over as Facebook Editor. I hear she is doing a wonderful job and if you are on Facebook, please check our page out and let Kim know your thoughts. If you see something of genealogical interest, also let Kim and Nancy Reubert know, so it can be added. Be sure to check our website for the new look and the membership directory.

As some of you know, I will not be running as President for the 2023 term and we have a few elected positions that are termed out and need to be filled. When our nominating committee calls on you, please consider running. Being on the Board is a great place to get to know your fellow researchers and members. I have enjoyed my six years on the Board and will continue helping wherever I can.

If some of you read my last piece in the newsletter, you'll know that I started an Excel file on my German line. I thought I would update you on how it is going. I purchased a new laptop and during the change over from the old laptop, I lost a bit of work. But I was able to redo what I lost and the Excel file has been helpful. I printed it out so I could mark off who I have entered in my RootsMagic file without messing up the original Excel file. I created three Excel files, one each on marriages, deaths, and baptisms.

Like a lot of families in the 1700's my ancestors married neighbors and relatives with the same last names. So, I have last names of Sturmer, Muller, Bach, Cornelius, all marrying each other. I research the whole family, making it difficult to keep those lines straight. It doesn't help that they all named their children the same names. It's been fun.

I have three films that I look at simultaneously to figure them out. Increasing the challenge is that these children were also baptized in two different Catholic churches in two different towns.

Please remember that our Zoom account is available to members for use. This can be for personal use, such as a reunion, keeping in touch with family members or helping in someone with the genealogy. We had a couple of Special Interest Groups last

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CGHS



BOARD OF DIRECTORS – OFFICERS 2022

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Barbara Elliott

1st Vice President - Programs

Sean McGuire

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3rd Vice President – Bookstore

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Stan Harms

Mailing

Shirley Jenkins

Facebook Editor

Kim Hatcher

summer, and we can also do that again this summer. If you're interested, contact a board member and we'll be able to set you up.

Since we won't have any programs or education over the summer, if you're having difficulties with your research, we do have our mentor program. Contact Jean Adams to set you up with someone to help you.

I wish everyone a great and safe summer. See you in September.

Beginner Genealogy Workshops

Sept. 9, 2022

Time: 1:00 – 2:30 pm – In Person Only

Location: Bemis Library

6014 S. Datura Street

Littleton, Colorado 80120

Fee for class is \$35.00 and includes 2022-2023 CGHS membership, a resource notebook, and our mentoring program.

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**Sept. 10, 2022**

**2:00 – 3:30 pm – In Person & Via Zoom**

**Location:** Englewood Library

1000 Englewood Parkway, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor

Englewood, CO 80110

This workshop will be offered **Free** per Englewood's regulations. Englewood's Librarian will make copies of the handouts for participants.

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### **DNA, Cont'd from Page 1**

Around 1985, I was told that the man that had raised me, the man that I loved and cared about, was not my biological dad. My response was one of denial. I would say "You must have misunderstood." or "They got married because of me." or "As far as I'm concerned, he is my dad." My non-biological dad was still alive at the time, and I could have asked him what he knew, but I did not want to hurt him. I loved him and it just wasn't important enough at the time to ask him. He had always been the one who was more attentive to me. He was the one that took me shopping for school clothes. He was the one that picked me up from school. He was the one to compliment me and encourage me. He was my dad, even if he wasn't related to me biologically.

I decided to call my grandmother wondering if maybe she knew the story. She did and she was not happy that I had found out. Her response was "How did you find out? You were never supposed to know." What she shared was that my mom met my biological dad in Cheyenne, Wyoming at the Air Force base. He was in the military and my mom worked in the commissary. That was all she claimed to know. That was all I had.

Years passed; life went on. I would ask relatives. No one seemed to have an answer. More years passed and again time went on. I remarried and moved and still in the back of my head I wondered, who was my biological dad. My husband had been on Ancestry for years tracing both sides of his family back further and further. Of course, I had told him my story and one Christmas he gifted me a DNA kit. I was so excited at the possibility of finally finding out who my dad was. Did he know about me? If he did, why had he left me?

Not understanding how to read the matches and not having much time to really research the information that was included, more years passed. I contacted several people through Ancestry off and on, asking questions but with no real success. As time went on Ancestry improved. More people did their DNA. I started looking more closely into my matches and joining genealogy groups on Facebook that might be able to help. One of them suggested having one of my mom's siblings have their DNA tested so I could sort out my maternal side from my paternal side. I was in luck; my mother's younger sister was willing to help. After her DNA was tested, I was able to separate my maternal side from my paternal side. Although, I knew a good deal about my maternal side, getting clarification from my aunt's DNA made it easier to understand.

Unbeknownst to me a young woman in Georgia had ordered a DNA test around this same time. As I periodically checked Ancestry to see what was new, after about seven years I had lost hope that I would ever find out about my paternal side. Then one evening in early December 2020, I looked and there was someone new. She matched me with 856 centimorgans (cM's). More than anyone else other than my aunt, at the time. This had to be someone who was related to me on my paternal side. I didn't recognize her and wondered how we could possibly be related. I immediately messaged her through Ancestry. I did that several times in fact. After all these years there was hope!

Around that same time, I joined a group on Facebook called Search Squad. This is a group made up of members who have extensive knowledge of DNA research. They volunteer to help find missing relatives and friends. I contacted them and they asked for all the information I had and about my top matches. By the next day I was contacted and told with complete certainty who my biological dad was, and I was also told that I had four half-sisters! I had never even thought about siblings.

The young woman I had matched with was the daughter of my youngest sister. My search angel, Annabelle, sent me pictures, phone numbers and addresses for all my half-sisters and relayed the message that my bio dad had already passed. I had finally found the information I had been looking for since 1985, but the news was bittersweet. I would never meet my biological dad or find out why he hadn't been in my life.

Annabelle cautioned me not to contact my sisters through Ancestry. Too late! She stated they would think it was a scam and would most likely not respond. She was right, my newfound niece did not respond. What she had done, I found out later, was take the information to her mother. Her mother then relayed the information to her siblings and I became their Christmas surprise. What could I want? What was I up to? In January I started writing a detailed letter to send to each of my new sisters, as Annabelle had recommended. But by February, I had decided that I did not need to contact them. Why disrupt their lives? I didn't realize that, of course, I had already done that.

I had provided my contact information through Ancestry and around mid-February I received a phone call from my youngest of the four sisters, Lisa. She was elated and curious to talk to me. She said that our shared dad, Jimmy Furgerson, was a wonderful dad and grandfather and that if he had known about me, he would have taken care of me. That same sentiment was shared again and again as I talked to Connie, the second to the youngest sister, and two of my newfound nieces. They said he was a good hard-working man and that he loved his family. I found it comforting to know this. What had happened though? Had my mom not told him she was pregnant? I will never know what took place once my mom found she was pregnant with me. She was only eighteen at the time and had been living with her paternal grandparents in Cheyenne Wyoming.

From what I've been told, my grandfather insisted that she move back with the family in Lander, Wyoming, where I was born. At some point a decision was made to not tell me about my background. I can only believe she did what she thought was best for me at the time.

Not long after I was born, my biological dad married. Within a year and a few months my first sister was born, with three more to follow. What's interesting is that I had never thought about whether I had siblings. I had only been looking for my dad. I have many questions that will likely never be answered, but I now have sisters to get to know.

My younger brother unfortunately passed in August of 2018. I remember telling him what I had discovered and that we were only half siblings. His response was “No, you’re my sissy.”

I remember feeling so lost after he had passed. Both of my parents had passed years before and now I had lost my brother and was alone. However, now I have sisters. Although we will never have shared memories of childhood, they will be able to share memories with me about my bio dad and what it was like growing up with him. Sometimes its bittersweet, but at least I know more now.

Without DNA, Ancestry, Search Squad and my Search Angel, Annabelle, I would still not know about my biological background, my history, my family. I will finally get to meet my sisters this September 2022. From what I can tell they all have very different personalities. I don’t think we look alike, but I might see more that is recognizable when we are in person. One of my nieces found a picture of me when I was in my teens. She posted that picture alongside of one of her cousins, Heather, the daughter of the oldest sister Theresa. We look so much alike Heather thought it was a picture of her mother (Theresa). I can’t wait to meet them.



Jimmy Furgerson,  
my biological father.

My mom, Ruby, with me as a baby.



L-R: Me and my half-  
niece Heather.

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## *Debunking a Family Tale*

By Margaret Lile Schmidt

It’s a story that sounds like it came from a movie script - a romantic adventure of the wagon train that transported a pioneer family westward from Pennsylvania, and the trail rider/escort who fell in love with the daughter in the family. He “set his cap” for her, and they married in Illinois, only part-way to their destination.

The wagon train crewman, the escort in this story, is my great-grandfather, Malachi Allen Lile, who lived in Daviess County, Mo, not far from Kansas City. His wife is Mary Emma Day, my great-grandmother.

The story was published in the Sumner County Kansas History Book in 1987. My dad’s first cousin wrote the story, but it is not accurate. The first discrepancy that I noted was the location of their marriage. Marriage documents show that it took place not in Illinois, but in Grundy County, Missouri. From there, the story unravels quickly.

Mary Emma Day was born in 1855 in Pennsylvania, the oldest daughter in a large family. When she was about five years old, her parents, Nathan and Catherine, moved the family to Ohio. They lived there for seven or eight years, then moved to Grundy County, Missouri in about 1868. The 1870 census shows them living there with their seven



Malachi and Mary Emma Lile

children. The oldest, Mary Emma, known as Emma at that time, was age 14 in the census, so she would have been 12 years old when they moved to Missouri.

My great-grandfather, Malachi, was born in 1844 in Daviess County, Missouri, the third Lile generation to live there. He had married at age 22 in 1867 to Martha Hixon. Two children were born, but the second one died as a baby, and Martha died shortly after that, in 1871, from a fever. This left Malachi with a young son to raise.

Compare the two circumstances in 1870. Malachi was a married man of 26, living in Missouri with his son and pregnant wife. Mary Emma was age 14, living at home with her parents, also in Missouri. If he had escorted her family to Missouri, it would have been from their home in Ohio, not Pennsylvania. Mary Emma would have been about 12, and Malachi would have been a married man at that time. The facts do not support the story as it has been told. It is certainly possible that Malachi worked on wagon trains at some time as a young adult, providing some “potential for confusion” in the stated story.

After Mary Emma got a few years older, she and this widower from a neighboring Missouri county would meet. Perhaps he “set his cap” for her at that time. They married in 1874 in Grundy County, Missouri.

In 1875 or 1876, a few years after Malachi and Mary Emma were married, they moved to Anson in Sumner County, Kansas with Malachi’s first son and their new baby. It turned out to be a temporary move for them, but Mary Emma’s parents moved there too, and for them this was a permanent move. It is likely that they traveled together in wagons. We know the Day family lived there by 1880, when Nathan bought land. Could this have been the “wagon train journey” when Malachi escorted the Day Family to a new home, as told in the original story? It is a possibility.

There is a vast difference between the family legend and the real story, so checking all known facts – censuses, birth dates, and marriage dates – was an important step in my research. Our family story that sounds like a movie plot was wrong, probably the result of being told and retold, and sometimes misunderstood. We must leave our incorrect family narrative behind, but an accurate account of those events would have been a wonderful history to have in the family.

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## ***Nominating Committee Seeking Volunteers***

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Are you good at getting the word out about events and letting people know about activities? If so, our **Second Vice President/Publicity** position might be for you.
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If you are good at note-taking, we could put your skills to use as **Recording Secretary** for the organization.  
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Are you an organizer? Do you enjoy chatting with other genealogists about Columbine and what it has to offer? If so, consider becoming our **Membership Coordinator**.
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Are you the family photographer, good at capturing special moments? If so, consider our **Photographer’s** position.  
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If you are good at organizing refreshments at get-togethers maybe you could be our **Hospitality Coordinator**.
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Do you use the resources of the Colorado Council of Genealogical Societies? If so, consider being our **Colorado Council Representative**. All this position requires is attending the monthly meeting on Zoom and reporting to membership on Council activities.

Interested in one of these volunteer opportunities? Contact Phyllis Seminara at [ColumbineGenealogy@gmail.com](mailto:ColumbineGenealogy@gmail.com).





**COLUMBINE GENEALOGICAL &  
HISTORICAL SOCIETY, Inc.**

P.O. Box 2074  
Centennial, CO 80161-2074

**Columbine Genealogical &  
Historical Society, Inc.**

Est. 1976

Meetings:

January-May and  
September-November

Regular Meetings,  
1:00 pm, 2nd Tuesday

Education Programs via Zoom  
1:00 pm, 3rd Tuesday

Board Meetings:

2nd Tuesday, 9:00 am via Zoom

No meetings in June, July, and  
August

Holiday Event,

2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday in December

**Location:** Good Shepherd  
Episcopal Church  
8545 E. Dry Creek Rd.  
Centennial, CO 80112

**Annual Dues:**

Individual - \$35.00

Couples - \$45.00

**BAD WEATHER PROCEDURE**

If the President postpones a meeting due to an emergency or bad weather, the VP of Publicity will send emails to members. ***Please do not call the Church office.***

Visit Columbine online at:

[www.ColumbineGenealogy.com/](http://www.ColumbineGenealogy.com/)

Find news updates at:

[www.Facebook.com/ColumbineGenealogy/](https://www.facebook.com/ColumbineGenealogy/)

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