



The Rotarian Genealogist

NOVEMBER 2026 | SECOND QUARTER 2026-2027

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FROM OUR PRESIDENT LUANNE NEWMAN

Dear Members,

It's already November? Is it me or the older we get, the faster the months fly by!?

Thanks to Gordon, Phyllis, RI, Anne, Sue, CeCe, and Conference Keeper for adding their wisdom and content to make this newsletter interesting!

Plans are already in the works for your FORG organization to have a presence at the 2027 Rotary International Convention in Barcelona. Touch base with us if you'll be there...we would invite you to share in the amazing opportunity to meet and greet visitors from all over the world and help them answer their questions. I've said it multiple times — my best days are those at the FORG booth in the House of Friendship!

Speaking of genealogy — weren't we? — I look forward to take it further and, after the end of the convention will visit my paternal branch of the tree in Piemonte, Italy for the ninth time. Much has changed in the family and we lost so many since the first visit some 36 years ago. I'm more prepared as I have taken up (the free version of) Duolingo Italian each and every day for the past 481 days! My travel Bud-dy (my husband) has jumped into Day One. Magnifico!

Look out for splinters in the bark but ENJOY your tree-climbing! Ciao!

FORG CALENDAR

01 November Newsletter Published

14 November FORG Family Reunion/Zoom

Anne M. Schmidt/"Reverse Genealogy"

HAPPY NEW YEAR — 2027!

01 February Newsletter Published

13 February FORG Family Reunion/Zoom TBA

FORG FAMILY REUNION MEETING

14 NOV 2026

"REVERSE GENEALOGY"



You may be wondering, "What exactly is "Reverse Genealogy?""" *Photo courtesy of Anne M. Schmidt*

Reverse Genealogy is a made-up term to describe the process of finding the living descendants in your family tree rather than the long-gone ancestors.

There are many tools you can use to find the living descendants in your tree and Anne will share her story and give you some insights on how to locate and connect with those whom you share DNA.

Anne began her foray into family history research in 1992. After moving to a new town with her husband's job, his boss told him he was working too hard and needed a hobby. His boss' hobby was genealogy, so that became her husband's hobby as well.

Sitting in church one Sunday, the priest was talking about the upcoming "Annual Polish Heritage Festival." Anne knew she was Polish, but knew nothing about *being* Polish — totally unaware of Polish holidays, customs and language. Since no one had done any research on her dad's side of the family, Anne decided to take on the challenge.

To date, Anne has located more than 30 of her cousins that didn't know she existed, connected with them, and keeps in touch with many of them through Facebook.

JOIN OUR ZOOM MEETING

FORG Family Reunion - Anne M. Schmidt "REVERSE GENEALOGY"

14 NOVEMBER, 2026 19:30 London - 1:30 PM Central Daylight Time/US

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4337626224?pwd=elJoLzlPWkRpTTgzY2F3YlF0a2trQT09&omn=83760695621>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4337626224?pwd=elJoLzlPWkRpTTgzY2F3YlF0a2trQT09&omn=83760695621>

Meeting ID: 433 762 6224 Passcode: 20191110

NOTE: 7:30pm London = 2:30pm Eastern, 1:30pm Central, 11:30am Pacific



WHAT IS YOUR "WHY"?

Some years ago, we asked members some 'pressing' questions of our members. Here are some of their answers to: **Tell us a brief story about your interest in genealogy. When did it start and how? Why is it important?**



Susan Weber / Rotary Club of Annapolis, Annapolis, Maryland USA

I was hooked the minute my Uncle handed me my maternal family history going back to the mid 1600's. I love seeing the names and the occupations. With the advances in technology, I hope to trace the Wilson clan back even further. With my paternal side, I am starting from scratch.



M Gordon Seyffert / Los Angeles, California USA

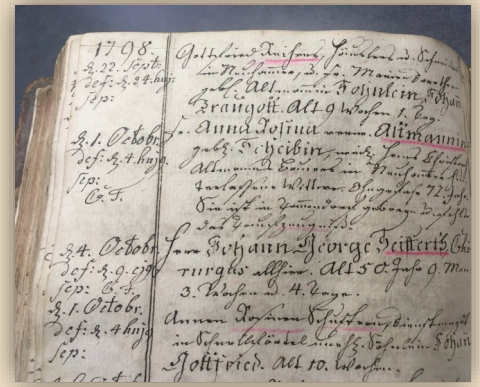
When my last grandparent died, in 1975, as the grandchild most interested in history I was presented with a box of yellowing newspaper clippings about one of my great-grandfathers. They were all editorials from East Coast newspapers stretching from Martha's Vineyard down to Washington, DC. And they all were roundly condemning my ancestor — of whom I knew very little. Naturally I had to find out more, and thus began a journey lasting a lifetime.

Genealogy is important to me because it answers many questions as to why things are as they are, and were as they were. Ultimately, as one good friend in genealogy says, one has reached the end of the search when one has traveled full circle back to knowing oneself!

(See the next page for a new and expanded answer from Gordon.)

MORE THAN NAMES AND DATES: DISCOVERING A FAMILY'S LOVE

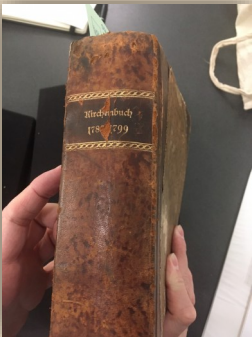
By M. Gordon Seyffert / Los Angeles, California USA



What has been the result of having a committed interest in REAL research, by which I mean: ...the hard work beyond grabbing the low-hanging fruit of online digitized records, and the unsupported claims of other people's trees and the Ancestry.com algorithm's green leaf?

By putting together records I had to find in-person (with the help and guidance of my good friend Dirk Weissleder, in German and Polish archives) with a deeper-than-average understanding of both German history and German culture, I was able to solve a mystery. When I was ten or twelve, my father told me what he knew of our paternal line:

1. We came to America in 1854 from the Kingdom of Saxony, where the family had lived in two towns, which he named for me.
2. My 2xGGF, immigrant husband/father, had fought in the revolution and came home defeated.
3. When he emigrated he came with his name, but not much else. However, unlike so many others, the spelling of our name did not change because of crossing the ocean.
4. But there was a man who was left behind — because he was serving in the Prussian army and could not be released from his duty.



As I began my genealogical journey and gained additional information, some things did not “add up” in this story. Surely you’ve spotted one issue already? But dedication and persistence pay off; I now know who the “man left behind” was!! And this after puzzling over the question more than sixty years.

He was indeed serving in the Prussian army, as a butcher for an infantry regiment. You’ve heard that an army “travels on its stomach?” Yes, they have to be fed, and he couldn’t leave because there was a war going on. The Napoleonic Wars. The story I was told confused two generations, as often happens. I assumed that “leaving” referred to leaving for America, when in fact it was in reference to leaving some fifty years earlier from the Prussian province of Silesia for Saxony — a different country (as the US was to “Germany”)!

It means so much to me because it speaks to the closeness of our family, their love for one another, at a time over two centuries ago. You can’t that kind of “answer” to a question by going online. You truly have to “earn it.”



BARCELONA
2027

SAVING THE DATE FOR RI CONVENTION IN BARCELONA SPAIN

Registration is open for the Rotary International Convention 2027 which takes place 23-30 June at Fira de Barcelona Gran Via (Fira 2), in L'Hospitalet de Llobregat. Every General Session and the House of Friendship are held in the same building — so you move from one event to the next in minutes, with no travelling between venues.

Barcelona, not just a place to meet



Video courtesy of the Barcelona Tourism Bureau.

- ➔ [REGISTER](#) for the Convention
- ➔ [SIGN UP](#) to work our FORG table in the House of Friendship

Graphics from Rotary International

BOUNCING AROUND BARCELONA

Barcelona Spain is incredible with amazing sites to see
"Here are some of my favorite sites in and around Barcelona."
Compliments of member, Anne M. Schmidt.

Day Trips from Barcelona:



The Monastery (Montserrat)

THE "DALI TRIANGLE"



The Dali Museum (Figueres)



Dali's Home (Port Lligat)



**The Castle Bought for Dali's Muse, Gala
(Púbol)**

Must See When in Barcelona:

**La Sagrada
Familia**



Casa Batlló

Park Guell



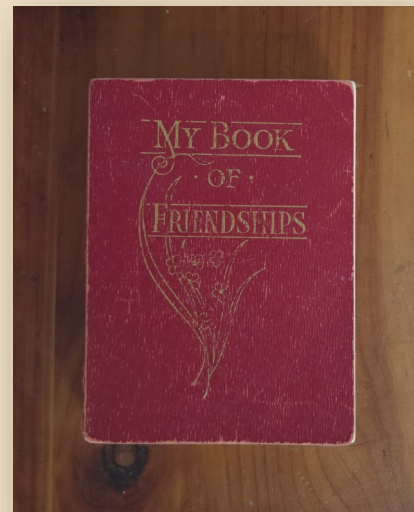
**Hop On
Hop Off
Sightseeing
Bus**



WHAT'S IN A DATE?

by Luanne Gatti Triolo Newman, Seabrook, Texas USA

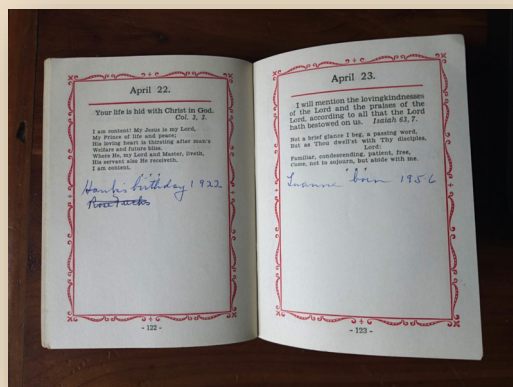
What is in a date? Those of us who share the passion for family research, we are all over dates. For some, numbers and dates have a special meaning. Celebrating a person on their special date can be a family ritual.



Let's take birthdays, for instance. Each family or individual remembers a birthday differently than others. While some brush it off as just another day, others are treated like King or Queen for the day....or maybe that is just during their younger years.

Some of our family tree software programs have the ability to create a report of birthdays, or wedding days, or even death days. That is the beauty of a custom report – getting just what you ask for. You could be the great-aunt or grandpa who has that list and never forgets to send a birthday card. My own grandmother used to send us each a \$2 bill in our cards.

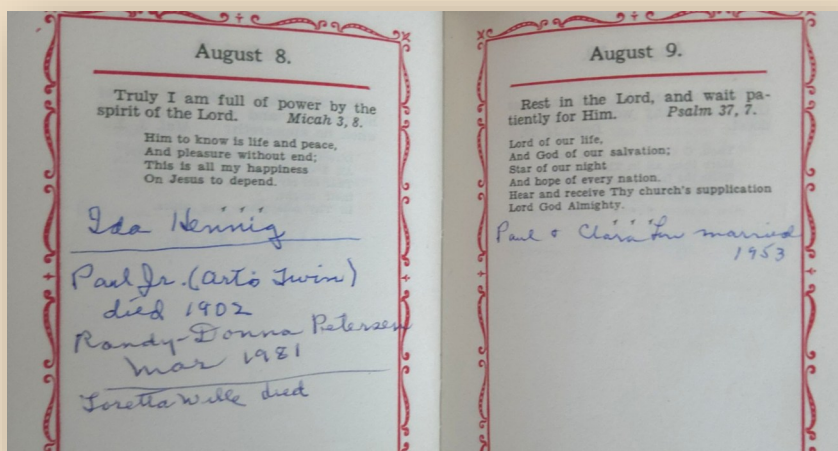
My sister gave birth to her four children at home in Colorado and California. It was her ritual that, as she began labor, she would begin making a cake (from scratch, of course). After the birth and the baking of the cake, they would celebrate their **BIRTH DAY** with birthday cake.



Those of us on Facebook receive daily reminders for all of our friends' birthdays. They even tell us whose birthday to get ready for in the coming week. One day, I received an email from Wiki Tree Family News, letting me know my Dad's and my birthday were coming up. Good thing they told me, right?

WHAT'S IN A DATE? (CONTINUED)

Many of us use something more “techy” like Microsoft Outlook’s recurring event reminder to help us remember our loved one’s birthdays. On the more artistic or craftier side is a hanging plaque or ruler-shaped object, affixed with 12 pegs or hooks – one for each month – and hearts or other shapes with names of the birthday boy or girl. It’s easy to spot at a glance who will be celebrated in the upcoming month. Above is a photo of my Grandmother’s date book where she made notes of birthdays, anniversaries, but also dates when people passed away.



Yes, dates are important to some of us. My Mother’s birthday was July 18th, 1926. When planning my wedding, I wanted to honor her memory and we agreed to choose that as our date. Special dates. Celebrations. Memories.

What traditions and customs does your family have or what other ones have you heard of? [Drop me an email](#) or [post on our FORG Facebook page](#) and let us know.



*Pages from the
"Memorable Date Book"
of Luanne's
maternal grandmother,
Olga Wille Fromm
(1901-1989)
on left and right .
Photos courtesy of
Luanne Newman*



FORG "GATHERED & SHARED"

Something new in 2026 is our FORG
"GATHERED & SHARED" newsletter column.
[Send us](#) any suggestions.

➔ NOVEMBER 3-4, 2026
EXPLORING THE NORWEGIAN DIGITAL ARCHIVES

➔ NOVEMBER 6, 2026
CEMETERIES IN CENTRAL EUROPE PRESENTER:
ROGER P. MINERT, PHD

➔ NOVEMBER 11, 2026
FAMILY BOOK GENERATION

➔ NOVEMBER 12, 2026
THE GENEALOGIST'S GOOGLE SEARCH METHODOLOGY:
LISA LOUISE COOKE

➔ NOVEMBER 25, 2026
AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH WORKSHOP

FOR OTHER EVENTS [CLICK HERE](#)

[Above links Courtesy of Conference Keeper](#)

➔ I4GG INSTITUTE FOR GENETIC AND GENEALOGY
INCLUDING CECE MOORE (www.i4gg.org) CONFERENCE
DEC 5-6 - LAGUNA BEACH, CALIFORNIA.
ALSO LIVESTREAMING.

[Above link courtesy of CeCe Moore, Genetic Genealogist](#)



“MEMBER ASSISTANCE? YES, I NEED SOME!”

From time to time, our members have a question, a request, or want to connect. You are all a huge resource for others but sometimes even we need HELP.

If you have a need for assistance, [send us an email here](#).



“TO FORGET ONE’S ANCESTORS IS TO BE A BROOK WITHOUT
A SOURCE, A TREE WITHOUT A ROOT.” – CHINESE PROVERB

Graphics created by Microsoft Copilot and ChatGPT.

FAMILY RECIPE SHARING

Today's recipe is from:

PHYLLIS RINEHART
Rotary Club of Friendswood, Texas USA



Here is a family recipe for bread noodles. My mother's family was German and this dish was enjoyed many times while I was a child and visiting amongst the various aunts and uncles.

GERMAN BREAD NOODLES

3 cups all purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 to 1 1/4 cups water

3-4 tablespoons shortening
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup water

Mix together flour, baking powder and water. Knead. Roll into 3 inch short cigar-shaped noodles. In a heavy skillet, combine shortening, salt and 1/2 cup water. Heat until boiling. Place noodles in skillet in rows with sides touching. Cook at 325 degrees for 5 minutes and then turn down to 260 degrees or cook on medium high for 5 minutes and cut back to medium. Cook 15 to 20 minutes. Do not remove lid while cooking.

Verna Morse



DAN WAGNER FAMILY HERITAGE COOKBOOK



COMPILED AND EDITED
BY
CAROLYN S. MORSE
1994

All photos provided by Phyllis Rinehart.