

The Clarion

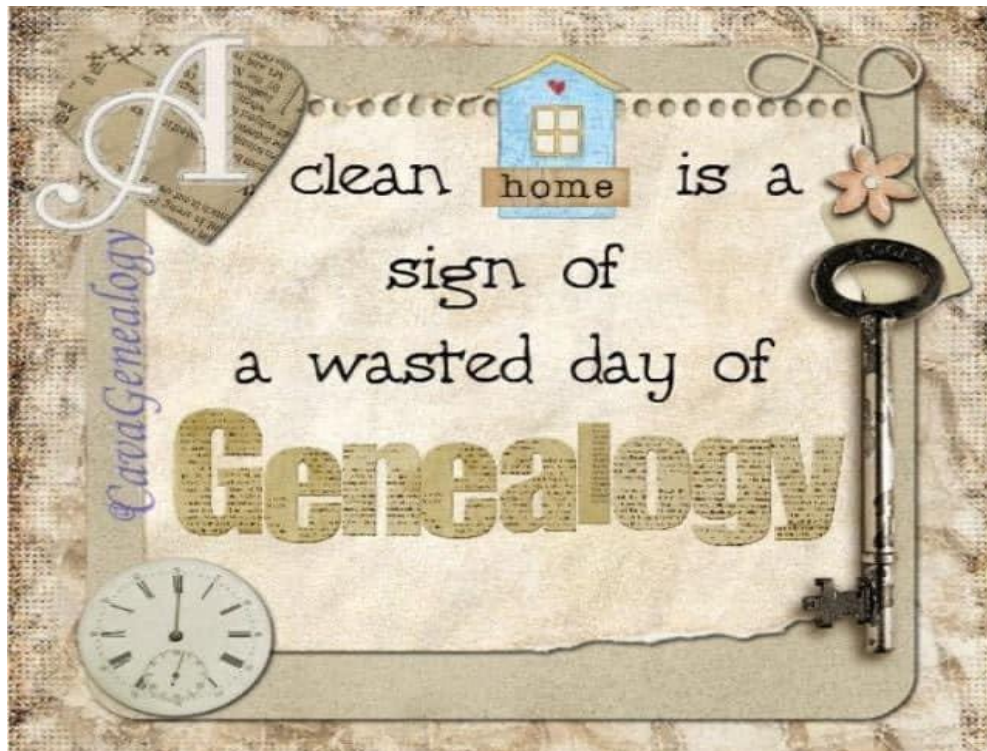
Bay County Genealogical Society of Michigan

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HOT DAYS & NIGHTS OF SUMMER



**Picture supplied by Genealogy Tips and Links (from FaceBook)

Genealogy Research and Name Changes

Submitted by Renee Neering Besaw

As Genealogists, we have all experienced the name changes we find in our research. Family name spellings often change over time due to factors like immigration, literacy levels and assimilation efforts. When people move to new countries, they might simplify or translate their surnames to better fit the local language and pronunciation or to make it easier for authorities to record them. It's crazy, but also keep in mind that the spelling of surnames was not standardized until the 20th century. In the 19th century and earlier, the vast majority of people were illiterate, so they didn't know or care how their names were supposed to be spelled. They just wrote down what they heard. Hence, the importance of phonetic spelling whenever you're looking for a surname in early records. If it sounds the same, it probably is the same.

My Neering ancestors were Flemish Belgians. There was a large concentration in the Detroit area and also in the Bay County. My family lived in Detroit before settling in Hampton Twp. The original spelling of the name was Neiryneck. You can see how the pronunciation came out to sound like "Neering". There is an interesting case in the paternal (Neering) side of my family. I came across this inquiry _ on a Netscape (remember that?) genealogy website – long before Ancestry- and thought it was an interesting way to keep families straight. I found this explanation in 1999, written by Jan Nearing, explaining why there are Nearing, Neering and Nehring spellings in Bay County.

"I guess you're related to Emil, et al. There was always major confusion about the three different families with this name. Yours, in Essexville, was indeed Flemish. Mine, from Portsmouth Twp (Indiantown)...later Munger and Bay City...was German/Polish, and Catholic. A third family from Frankenlust was German...not a drop of Polish (or at least so they claimed), and Lutheran.

It drove the postmaster in Bay City nutty. Finally in the early 1910's, he laid down an edict (illegal, but he did it none-the-less). Your family would be Neering. My family, which used a few variations (Nering, Nehring, Neering) would be Nearing. Those in Frankenlust became Nehring and had to lose all of their variations. According to my uncle Steve, the threat was that if one used any other version of the spelling, the postmaster would prosecute.

Being a bit of a tease, my great uncle Pat did start using Neering, saying that no one would tell him how to spell his own name. That was the name on all of his school records and he refused to change. This caused major problems in trying to research the family tree. When my father started courting my mother, my maternal grandmother was none too happy. Seems she knew my father's dad and his family, even went to Merritt School with many of them, and being French, they always picked on her. Mom and Dad decided that since his dad was dead and there was no one to burst their bubble, they would tell my grandmother (who was part Dutch) that he was part of her Belgian family.

She never knew the truth until two years ago when I asked her about my grandpa Ed. "Ed's not your grandpa, he was a Pollack." Oops, I didn't know that she didn't know. Oh well, Mom and Dad were married for over 30 happy years. Both are gone now, and Grandma warmed to my dad through the years."

Bon Soir, Jan

Have You Ever Tried These Resources?

By Mary McManman

Mark G. has informed me that the 2nd floor, including the Local History and Genealogy Room, of Wirt Library is going to be closed to the public for three weeks from August 4th - 25th. They will be replacing the carpet, adding two study rooms and rearranging the shelving. That means, of course, that no volunteers are needed or able to be in the Local History and Genealogy Room during that time. The closure will be announced to the public around July 7.

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## A Look Back at Our Last Meetings:

### April 9<sup>th</sup> – Justin Frost – Repairing, Cleaning, & Researching Random Headstones

Just gave us step by step instructions on how to clean and take care of our family headstones. He showed us examples of his work and gave us a handout that included his instructions and a list of products that he recommends to us.



### May 14<sup>th</sup> – Jeff Mason – Breaking Down Brick Walls & Revising Dead Ends

Jeff's advice is to define your goal, be patient and have fun! Organize what information you have, where you have looked for records and what other leads you have about the person/family you are looking for. Use the scientific method. Construct a hypothesis about why they "disappeared" or where they went and then test your hypothesis. Do more local research in the area where you found them last. Consider hiring some professional help.

## **June 11<sup>th</sup> – Pot Luck & Auction**

Food was delicious as always. Charlie read his “Dad Jokes” while he auctioned off the mystery gifts. I thought I took pictures of this event but I can’t seem to find them on my phone. 😞

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Future Meeting Dates:

Sept 4th – Jon Ringelburg: Michigan Log Mark Registration/Log Marks

**Oct 8th – Alan Spencer: The Spencer Family Project – a Reverse Genealogy
Approach to the Four Spencer Brothers of Tuscola County**

Nov 5th – TBD

Dec 3rd – Potluck and Holiday Auction

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## **Website-FaceBook-Plus**

**By Charles Kocher**

### **Facebook (Bay County Genealogical Society-Michigan)**

Per Article IX of the Bay County Genealogical Society-Michigan Bylaws, the fiscal year of the Society runs from January 1st through December 31st, but per Article VII of the Bylaws, the Society meets from September through June. Thus, even though the Society only meets as a body ten months in a twelve-month period, the Society is in business for the full twelve months and so is Facebook and the Society’s website, where people can visit to ask for help or see what is going on at the Society.

Following is Facebook and website data compiled for the twelve-month period, July 2024, through June 2025 inclusive. This period covers the two months, July and August 2024, in which there were no meetings, but the Society could still be contacted.

### **Facebook (Bay County Genealogical Society-Michigan)**

There were forty-six postings during that period. Nineteen were queries for local information, and twenty-seven were notices of upcoming events and information that may be of interest.

### **Website (baymigen soc.com)**



There were 638 "Site Sessions", defined as visits to the website. The day with the most sessions was December 11, 2024, which had nine visits. Visitors came from the United States (579), Canada (34), Bangladesh (9), Philippines (4), Poland (2), United Kingdom (2), China (2), Turkey (1), Switzerland (1), Pakistan (1), Romania (1). Belgium (1), and Germany (1)

The town outside of the United States with the most visits was Laval, Quebec, Canada, which is a suburb of Montreal. Laval visited the website twenty-three times and looked at forty-eight pages. No other town was close.

The state, inside the United States and not named Michigan, with the most site sessions was Kansas. It had twenty-four visits, and they all came from the same town, Overland Park, which is in Johnson County. The next city, with the most site sessions, was Chicago, Illinois. It had twenty.

Within Michigan, most visitors came from Bay City (107), Saginaw (31), Midland (30) and Detroit (26).

Eleven items from June 29, 1936, edition of the Bay City Times were added to the website in June 2025.

## A New Headstone is Blessed!

Jim Verney, a BCGS member, discovered during his family history research that his great, great grandmother, Delia (born St. Aubin, an early Detroit area French family) Vernier Barlow Hovey (1835-1922) was buried in Calvary Cemetery in Kawkawlin but there was no gravestone. There is now a beautiful gravestone thanks to Jim and Karen! On May 8<sup>th</sup> her life was celebrated (she lived a long life and was widowed three times) and her new gravestone was blessed by Father Jose Maria Cabrera. A memorial gravestone was also placed and blessed for Delia's grandson, Johnny Vernier (1886-1891) who had a tragic death from fire burns.



# Instructions from Justin Frost:

This was provided at the April 9<sup>th</sup> meeting.

## **-Suggested Cleaning Supplies**

D/2 Biological solution (Cemetery Preservation supply LLC, Holland supply)

Soft Brush (nylon, Tampico, horsehair)- Hand test- if it hurts your hand its too stiff

Plastic or Wood scrapers (drywall scraper, paint stir sticks, skewers, tooth picks)

Towels/Rags

1-2 Gallon garden sprayer (dedicated for D/2)

1-2 Gallon bucket for rinse water

Plenty of water

## **How to clean- Step By Step- all you need is D/2 biological solution, water, a brush and a bucket**

1. Wet the stone down with water
2. Allow water to soak in and repeat
3. Keep stone wet while scrubbing with soft brush (dip brush in water)
4. DO NOT OVERSCRUB! Remove only loose material
5. Detail brushes can be used to clean lettering if desired
6. Rinse thoroughly with clean water
7. Allow water to run off for 5 minutes
8. Apply D/2 Biological solution over entire stone and leave it
9. Come back in a few weeks or months and check for remaining growth
10. Lightly brush trouble areas and reapply D/2 as needed

**[www.Gravestonecleaner.com](http://www.Gravestonecleaner.com)**

**10% off code – PAST10**

**Contact me any time if you have questions!**

**Justin Frost**

**(989) 750-8516**

**Email: [PastPreservation1@gmail.com](mailto:PastPreservation1@gmail.com) You can also find me on Facebook, Instagram, and Tiktok**

# I am my own grandpa!

Many many years ago when I was twenty three,  
I got married to a widow who was pretty as could be.  
This widow had a grown-up daughter who had hair of red.  
My father fell in love with her, and soon the two were wed.  
This made my dad my son-in-law and changed my very life.  
My daughter was my mother, for she was my father's wife.  
To complicate the matters worse, although it brought me joy,  
I soon became the father of a bouncing baby boy.  
My little baby then became a brother-in-law to dad and so became my Uncle,  
Though it made me very sad.  
For if he was my uncle, then that also made him brother  
To the widow's grown-up daughter who, of course, was my step-mother.  
Father's wife then had a son, who kept them on the run.  
And he became my grandson, for he was my daughter's son.  
My wife is now my mother's mother and it makes me blue.  
Because, although she is my wife, she's my grandmother too.  
If my wife is my grandmother, then I am her grandchild.  
And every time I think of it, it simply drives me wild.  
For now I have become the strangest case you ever saw.  
As the husband of my grandmother, I am my own grandpa!

**\*\*found on a FaceBook Genealogy Page.**



## Meeting Schedule 24-25

Meetings are held in the Community Room  
at Wirt Library

Time: 5:30-7:30 pm

|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| September 11 <sup>th</sup>   | March 12 <sup>th</sup> |
| October 9 <sup>th</sup>      | April 9 <sup>th</sup>  |
| November 12 <sup>th</sup> ** | May 14 <sup>th</sup>   |
| December 11 <sup>th</sup>    | June 11 <sup>th</sup>  |
| January 8 <sup>th</sup>      | July No Meeting        |
| February 12 <sup>th</sup>    | August No Meeting      |

\*\*Tuesday Meeting

If Bay City Schools are canceled due to bad  
weather, our meetings are also cancelled.

## Library Hours

### Auburn & Pinconning

|           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| Sun-Mon   | Closed    |
| Tues-Thur | 10am -8pm |
| Fri-Sat   | 9am - 5pm |

### Sage

|          |             |
|----------|-------------|
| Mon-Tue  | 9am – 5pm   |
| Wed-Thur | 12pm – 8 pm |
| Fri      | 9am – 5pm   |
| Sat-Sun  | Closed      |

### Wirt

|          |                 |
|----------|-----------------|
| Mon-Thur | 10am – 8pm      |
| Fri-Sat  | 9am – 5pm       |
| *Sun     | 1pm – 5pm       |
|          | *(Sep-May only) |

## Contact Information

Please send all questions to one of the  
following:

Facebook: Bay County Genealogical Society MI

Website: baymigenesoc.com

Email: bcgs13@yahoo.com

Snail Mail: BCGS

P.O.Box 1366

Bay City, MI, 48706

## 2024-2025 BCGS Officers

|                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| President      | Ruth Wilke    |
| Vice President | Barb Connor   |
| Secretary      | Judy Berner   |
| Treasurer      | Mary McManman |
| Librarian      | Heather Leser |
| Publishing     | Heather Leser |
| Clarion Editor | Heather Leser |

## Membership Dues

All membership renewals are due by the  
end of December. Yearly dues are \$20.00  
for a single person or \$25.00 per  
family/one household.

## The Wirt Genealogy Room

Our BCGS volunteers are available on  
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and  
Saturday from 1pm-4pm.

There is access to Ancestry.com,  
Heritage Quest, Fold3, and  
Familysearch.org