

DCGS NEWS

D E N T O N C O U N T Y G E N E A L O G I C A L S O C I E T Y

FEBRUARY MEETING THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2006



1896- Denton County Courthouse-

The Denton County Genealogical Society meets on the second Thursday during the months on September-November and January-May. 6:30 P.M.

Denton Public Library, Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland St., Denton, TX 76201

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Program: "After Their Spirit Left"

Using Funeral Home, Cemetery, and Monument Records for Genealogical Research

Albert Hickman has been doing genealogy research for over 20 years. He has personally researched in 53 County Courthouses, in nine states; National Archives – Southwest Region; Texas and Arkansas State Archives; Texas State

Library and Texas and New Mexico State Land Offices, as well as over 35 libraries in several states. He was a charter member of "Friends of the National Archives – Southwest Region" and served as President and Vice-President, and is a past officer in Mid-Cities Genealogical Society. He published a family newsletter, The Hickman Herald, for three years and serves as treasurer and correspondent for the Hickman Family Reunion. He has spoken

at over 20 Genealogical and Historical Societies, Tarrant County College Genealogy Classes and the Hickman Family Reunion.



GENEALOGY AFTER HOURS

The Denton County Genealogical Society and the Denton Public Library are sponsoring a "Genealogy After Hours" program on Friday, February 24, 2006 at the Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland St., Denton, TX. The hours for

this program are 6:00 p.m.– 11:00 p.m. The featured speaker will be Lela Evans, who will speak about the TXGenWeb Project. There will also be plenty of time to do research. Genealogy society members and the library staff will provide assistance.

Dinner, snacks and drinks are included in the registration fee. Register at Emily Fowler Central Library or call 940-349-8713. Registration fee is \$10.00. Make checks payable to the Denton County Genealogical Society.

P R E S I D E N T ' S C O L U M N

Here it is only February but it's time to be thinking about new officers that will be elected at our annual meeting in May. At the February meeting we will need to establish a nominating committee that will come up with at least one nominee for each officer. The slate will be presented at our April meeting. I hope all of you will give some thought about serving on the Executive Board of the DCGS or at least the

Nominating Committee. Don't be afraid to speak up and volunteer before being asked. If you have questions about what any office involves, I can show you the duties and responsibilities as listed in the society's bylaws.

I want to encourage you all to make use of the time provided before the meeting to visit with each other and to exchange information or to ask questions about your

research if you have hit a snag or road block.

The society's newsletter is another venue for your questions. We have discussed setting up a regular column for questions and answers but we need you to submit the questions. Also, if you send the question in, you possibly could get the answer at the upcoming meeting.

Elsewhere in the newsletter you will find information about an upcoming 'After Hours at the Library' on February 24 and about a project that you can participate in for the society in your own home.

See you at the meeting.

Linda

T R E A S U R E R ' S R E P O R T

Balance December 31, 2005
\$ 1,375.79

Funds Deposited

Dues \$ 45.00
Sale Birth Book 35.00
Interest .18
Total Deposits \$ 80.18

Funds Disbursed

Sales Tax \$ 23.51
Postage 39.00
Domain Name Fee 15.66
Total Disbursements \$ 78.17

Balance January 31, 2006
\$1,377.80

2005-2006 Paid Members—
44

Library Donations

April 1995 - May 02 \$1,994.22
June 2002 - May 03 799.15
June 2003 - May 05 83.15

Birth Books Sold (52) \$1,670.00
Printing Cost (200) 2,049.13
Postage -118.69
Sales Tax Paid -104.78
Advertising (1) -30.00
Profit \$ -632.60

Death Books Sold (136) \$3,104.72
Printing Cost (300) -1,593.15
Consignment Fees 390.00
Postage -156.99
Sales Tax Paid -77.19
Advertising -237.45
Profit \$ 649.94

Respectfully Submitted, Holly
Hervey, Treasurer



MINUTES – JANUARY 2005 MEETING

The Denton County Genealogical Society met in the meeting room of the Denton's Public Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland Street, Denton, TX. on January 12, 2006. Margaret Schulze and Barbara and Ralph Pyke provided delicious refreshments for the 6:30 to 7:00 social time. The thirty-six people in attendance enjoyed sampling the great refreshments, mingling with one another and participating in a door prize activity planned for the evening by Diana White.

President Linda Touraine called the group to order at 7:03 and presided over our business meeting. Guests were

acknowledged and welcomed warmly. The minutes for the last meeting in November were approved and after a short discussion concerning the exact number of our Death Books, the treasurer's report was accepted pending clarification. Linda asked for help with refreshments for future meetings and announced an executive board meeting for 6:00 P.M. on January 26, 2006 at Emily Fowler Central Library. Help and discussion with next year's programs, changes members might like to see happen, and general questions and comments held by any and all members were encouraged for

discussion during the January Board Meeting. She then turned the meeting over to the program chair person..

At 7:15, Vice-President Mary Jo Bruce introduced Dreanna Belden, our speaker for the evening. The speaker's knowledge and easy presentation style made for a delightful evening. She used her vast knowledge in Information Science to share a program entitled "The Invisible Internet: Finding Your Ancestors in Digital Collections and Databases." Her presentation was comprehensive and very well organized. The eleven-page handout that she provided, Digital Collections, encouraged

us all to go home and get on the Internet anew. Members were allowed time to comment and ask questions and were encouraged to use her email information listed at the end of the handout. She left with us brochures and pencils from UNT Libraries' The Portal to Texas History, a program she works for at UNT that provides access to collections held in Texas museums, archives, libraries, and historical societies. The program was over at 8:35 and the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn Simms,
Secretary

NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

Here's some exciting news! While attending the American Library Association Conference last month, I happened across a genealogy book publisher in the exhibit hall. Arphax is a company that publishes the Family Maps series of Federal Land Patent books. Their website is www.arphax.com. The library has decided to purchase the deluxe editions of these books, and to place a standing order for future publications. The books cover

only those states that are Federal Land states. Unfortunately, Texas is not a Federal Land State.

From what I saw, these books are one of the valuable research tools to be published in the genealogy community for a long time. They include indexes of the land patentee, maps of the townships within the counties, historical maps showing cemeteries, towns, rivers, and railroads.

Look for these books soon in the library! I can recommend this

series to anyone wishing to donate a memorial book in honor of a family member.

Please join us on February 24 for our "Genealogy After Hours" program. Register at the library, or call 940-349-8713.

Registration is \$10.00. Make checks payable to the Denton County Genealogical Society.



THIS AND THAT

Funeral Home Records by Holly Hervey

Many long years ago, the newly formed Denton County Genealogical Society took on a project to copy all the funeral home records from the Shepard Funeral Home and the Schmitz Funeral Home from 1906 to 1940. After the project was complete the cards were indexed and shuffled from one member's house to another. The information on the cards was very useful to those members doing research on early Denton residents but otherwise they were not being used. Not too many years ago the Society decided to add obituaries from the *Denton Record-Chronicle* to the oldest funeral home records and publish a book. With this in mind, a new project was started. The funeral home cards were copied and issued to members willing to copy the obituary from the newspaper. The obituary was either written on the paper or a copy of the newspaper article was attached. In the meantime, the finished cards and obituaries were being typed in preparation for the book to be published. That project fell to this writer. All was going smoothly until the disk they were stored on died a horrible death. The lecture about saving material in several places has been repeated to this writer more times than really necessary. I got the picture! At a recent meeting of the executive committee, it was suggested that retyping these funeral home and obituary records could become a project that members could participate in. The project was being typed in Word and would be easy to import the typed records into a common file.

No one would be expected to do over 10 or 15 at a time so it could be done in the time it takes to play an hour's worth of Free Cell.

If you are interested in participating in this project, there will be some of the records ready for typing at the February meeting. Since this writer will not be there, they will be available from Diana White.

How Old Were You When You Started Doing Genealogy?

Our Webmaster Chris Strauss submitted his answer to the question.

I started working on genealogy back in 1980, when I was in my early thirties. After my grandfather died, I received a copy of a family tree done by my great-grandfather Strauss. I started writing letters to family members, but I was discouraged in my quest by a great uncle. I guess there were just too many skeletons he didn't want me to uncover.

I didn't return to this endeavor until about twenty years later when my wife, Kathy, started working in the Emily Fowler Reference Department, helping genealogy patrons. Her enthusiasm was catching, and I was soon hooked again.

I have worked so diligently on genealogy the past few years that I neglected working on finishing my dissertation. I am now trying to finish my doctoral research, so I have had to put a hold on genealogy for a while. Once I finish, I plan to resume the quest for my ancestors.

Picking Funeral Directors' Brains

By Richard J. Kee

I recently returned to my home town to attend the funeral of a family member. Before the funeral service began, I was talking with one of the funeral directors who had know our family for three generations. We talked about a late uncle who had also been involved in family history, and he commented to me that there was a cemetery some ten miles from where we were that had some "old graves" with our family surname. He gave me directions to the cemetery and directions within the cemetery to the gravesites. No one in our family knew of the graves. The find led to information on family members for which I had been searching for more than eight years. Tip:

When you're searching for specific surnames, ask the funeral directors in the area. The only people who visit cemeteries more frequently than family historians are funeral directors.



THIS AND THAT

Ancestry Quick Tip Jamboree! Cemetery Hopping! 3 Feb 2004

Bucket and Extra Shoes

The idea of taking a milk crate to the cemetery to sit on is good. I also take a bucket and an extra pair of shoes. I can fill the bucket with water to rinse off grimy head stones. The extra shoes come in handy when I end up pouring more water on my shoes than the stones. Shirley

Gotta Have a Good Map

I have had great luck in going into small "mom and pop" roadside stores and asking if they have a county map for sale. Often they do, whereas Wal-Mart and the big chain stores don't. I have bought North Carolina and Virginia maps for the counties I am researching. They usually cost a couple of dollars, but even the one that was \$6 was worth it. They open up big and show every little dirt trail. (Well, almost all of them.)

I also go to funeral homes and ask if they have a cemetery map. Sometimes they are offered for free, and typically they show all the cemeteries, whether they are currently accepting new burials or not.

These are not only useful in finding graves, but also in showing details like creeks that I have used to find the metes and bounds of family land as described in deeds.

Chain stores sell state atlases, but often only for the state you are in. If you can find an atlas that is topographical, it will be very helpful with creeks and "up the hill, past the ferry" kind of descriptions.

If you're looking for a map from a distant state, sometimes they can be found online or ordered by mail, but I just ask friends there to mail one to me. When I am going out of state, I often bring them back for other researchers as well. You can't have too many maps!

I am a great garage sale map buyer too—the older the better. Old gas station maps will show what the area was like before newer roads and other manmade features

went in. Catherine "Cacky" Fryer Cline

Check Neighboring Headstones

This tip is intended for all researchers, but I hope that I, too, will learn a lesson from the example set me by a wonderful volunteer who did some cemetery look-ups for me. Months ago I posted a request on a county message board in Illinois asking for help in locating the grave of my great-great-uncle, William Morgan STREETER. A very kind lady in the county offered to do the look-up and send photos if there was indeed a gravestone (he was an old, single, and nearly penniless bachelor). She not only located the grave, but also sent photos via e-mail.

Several months after that, I wanted to see if I could find someone who could look up a couple of other names for me (a set of 2-great-grandparents [Peter T. and Letitia Streeter KENNEDY]). I found a volunteer, serendipitously, and as she was making a genealogy trip to the same cemetery, she volunteered to look for my relatives and send photos.

Imagine my delight when I found not only the gravestones of Kennedys, but also photos of the gravestones on either side of them! The best finds were in those other photos. One of the neighboring graves was a daughter of my ancestors, but on the other side was my Uncle William Morgan STREETER! The first volunteer found that he had a gravestone (a military headstone, since he was a veteran of the American Civil War), and now I know that he also was buried next to his sister!

So my tip for today is: If you volunteer to do look-ups (of any kind), please try to take a few minutes to look nearby, wherever you are, and see if there might be other names in the same index or on the same page, and send that information on to the person making the request. In cemeteries, send a photo of the gravestones next to the "target" stone, especially if the surname is the same. Even if it isn't the same surname,

it may be a relative anyway, and you may wind up giving someone the gift of a lifetime.

I cannot thank these two women enough for their help in locating my relatives' graves, especially since I live a couple of thousand miles away. To all volunteers, a heart-felt THANK YOU, and may you experience all the best in your own searches!

Miriam Dapra, Hartville, Wyoming

Treats for Cemetery Staff Help Break the Ice

Just a note to add my experience to Bettie West's idea of taking donuts to a cemetery when asking for help. I had spoken to the personnel at a local cemetery and they weren't very helpful.

Therefore, on my first in-person visit I took a box of fancy bakery-style cookies. That really seemed to break the ice. The two staff members said no one else had done that before. I noticed that they have a dog in the office so if I go back, I think I will take a dog treat in addition to cookies or donuts. I made some great finds there, so I also sent a thank you note after my visit. Carol Swanson



DENTON COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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