



Irving Genealogical Society

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Irving, Texas

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Officers:

President: Joe Sissom
Vice President: Jeanne Mantooth
Secretary: Eva Kellogg
Treasurer: Erle Kellogg
Newsletter Editor: Mary K. Weber

Coming Events

Monday, Apr. 21, 7:00 p.m., Irving Central Library – Our speaker, Judy Allen Knight, is presenting her program, *Census: Beyond the Federal Population Schedule – How genealogists can use non-population census schedules to learn more about their ancestors.*

Fort Worth Genealogical Society's Summer Seminar

Saturday, August 9, 2008 – 8:15 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Ft. Worth Botanic Garden Center

Henry Z. "Hank" Jones, Jr., a professional genealogist, author and screen actor, is the seminar speaker. His topics are:

When the Sources Are Wrong – A problem with which every genealogist has to deal.

Tracing the Origins of Early 18th Century Palatine and Other Emigrants – An authority on Palatines, his same approach works for other ethnic groups and other times, a step-by-step plan.

Family Tradition: How to Separate Fact from Fiction in Genealogical Research – A how-to-do-it case study.

How Psychic Roots Became an "Unsolved Mystery" – The story behind the TV program and books.

For more information contact: Ann Lefevre (817) 496-9265 or Rob Yoder (817) 535-7931 or go to <http://www.rootsweb.com/~txfwgs>.

2008 Community History Workshop Series

Sponsored by the Center for Texas Studies at TCU and the Fort Worth Public Library on September 6 - "Living at the Fort, 1895-1995: Four Generations of Fort Worth Photographers" with Byrd Williams, Collin College at Tandy Lecture Hall, Fort Worth Central Library, 500 W. 3rd St., Ft. Worth, TX from 10:30 a.m. – 12:00 Noon. For more information, contact Shirley Apley, Senior Librarian, Genealogy, History, Archives at the Fort Worth Public Library, 817 871-7740.

Newspaper Research By Gretchen Hough Eastman

I have done the Census work, filled out the family group sheets, and put the information in the computer, and all I have is thumbnail sketches of my immediate ancestors. Of course, I know my mother and Dad and who they were and what they did in life, but my grandparents are a different story.

Every since I heard a lecture by John Sellars about your "Sweet Sixteen," I have wanted to fill in the information on all of my grandparents. It isn't as easy as you would think, especially when my grandmother on my father's side died when my father was 18 and my grandfather on my mother's side died when she was 18 and neither of my parents talked about them much. Where should I look for information? I thought I would try newspaper research. In the past, I had spent hours reading pages and pages of microfilm and tired of small print and pages and pages of information that did not apply to my family.

More and more newspapers are becoming available on line. Although they fee-based to access, you can find interesting information. Ancestry has newspaper information, which you can access, or you can subscribe to one of the newspaper archives. Newspapers date back to the 1800's and have all sorts of wonderful information--vital statistics, gossip, business advertisements, pictures, and general news. I decided to try a 10-day trial subscription to www.newspaperarchive.com. It is easy to use and you can browse through the newspapers by state or country. Then, you can check newspapers for the dates you are interested in.

What did I find? I found information on my mother's mother's second marriage (which I knew about, but I had no information), my grandfather's obituary, and many articles about my grandfather's brothers and their families. I found my dad's mother's obituary and the second marriage information for her husband. I found my parents wedding announcement and a list of all the showers that were given for my mother. I found my birth announcement. I even found a shower for a cousin where I passed out the gifts. I found information on trips my family took over the years in the "gossip" columns. I found information on clubs my grandmother and mother belonged to and information on the social events they attended over the years. I picked the years I wanted to research and within minutes I had many hits. You can do one year at a time or select between certain years.

I had such good luck that I renewed my subscription for a year. I am going to increase my research to other family members and find out what the newspapers have to say about them. I am looking forward to the surprises I will find.

New Books in Irving Public Library Local History & Genealogy for July 2008

Cutter, William Richard. *Genealogical and Personal Memoirs: Relating to the Families of Boston and Eastern Massachusetts*. Clearfield. 1908, 2008

Fort Worth Genealogical Society. Ayto, John. *Encyclopedia of Surnames*. A&C Black. 2007
Historic Oakwood Cemetery with Calvary Cemetery and Old Trinity Cemetery of Fort Worth. 1994

Landregan, Steve. *Cathedral Shrine of the Virgin of Guadalupe*. Editions du Signe. 2006

Oxford Dictionary of First Names. Oxford University Press. 2006

Powell, Shana. *Gainesville and Cooke County*. Arcadia. 2000

Prillaman, Helen R. *Places Near the Mountains. From the Community of Amsterday, Virginia up the Road to Catawba, on the waters of the Catawba and Tinker Creeks, along the Carolina Road as it Approached Big Lick and other areas, primarily North Roanoke*. Clearfield. 1919, 1993.

Trans-Mississippi West 1804-1912: A Guide to Federal Records for the Territorial Period. National Archives and Record Administration. 2007

DON'T IGNORE EARLY CENSUS RECORDS

By Mary Penner 13 July 2008

I knew that Sarah Gum married Stephen Mills in 1847. The 1850 census record for Stephen and Sarah showed five children aged six to sixteen with the surname Gum. Clearly, a Gum man lurked in Sarah's past.

But, no marriage record existed in that county between a man with the last name Gum and a woman named Sarah. Meanwhile, I noted that a sixteen-year-old with the surname Mills also resided in the household in 1850, which suggested that Stephen had likely been married before, too. Again, I couldn't find a marriage record in that county for Stephen and his presumed first wife.

So, I turned my attention to the 1840 census. Aha. There was Stephen Mills, and guess who lived right next door? Jesse Gum. Now I was getting somewhere.

More digging revealed that not only were Stephen and Jesse neighbors, they were also brothers-in-law. Their first wives, Mary and Sarah, were sisters. So, the widower Stephen married his wife's sister. But, that's another story. The story here is that the 1840 census set me on the right track.

Family historians rely heavily on census records to open all kinds of ancestral doors. But, too often we slam the door shut on census records prior to 1850. The 1850 and all subsequent census years include the names and ages of everyone in the household--very handy.

The 1790 through 1840 census records, however, list only the head of the household and give approximate ages for everyone else--not as handy. Don't count out the early census records, though; they could provide just the boost your research needs.

Some tips for using early census records:

1. For 1790-1820, the census date was the first Monday in August. The 1830 and 1840 census date was 1 June. This is important to remember because the census-takers occasionally had to slog through remote countryside, often on foot, trying to track down citizens.

They didn't even reach some households for a year or more after the census date. For the 1790 census, U.S. marshals (the first census-takers) pounded on residents' doors collecting information for nearly seventeen months. No matter when the census-taker showed up, though, the data was supposed to reflect the household conditions on the census date.

For example, in 1820 the census date was 7 August 1820, yet the census-taker didn't reach your ancestor's door until 7 August 7 1821. Suppose a child was born on 8 August 8 1820 and another one showed up on 6 August 1821. Technically, neither of those children should have been counted in the 1820 census. This time lag often led to confused answers and, for genealogists today, perplexing data.

2. For the 1790-1820 censuses, the census-takers had to supply their own paper and draw their own lines and columns on the page. Plus, they had to make two sets of copies of every page. Some enumerators rose to this penmanship challenge more handily than others. Crooked and haphazard looking census pages aren't unusual.

3. Up until 1830, the original census records were retained by district court clerks in each state. In 1830 Congress ordered that the 1790-1820 records be sent to Washington. Unfortunately, some of those records never made it to the capital.

Check the National Archives website to see a list of the early census records known to exist.

4. When plowing through early census records, get census forms that identify each column. The columns on the actual records usually weren't labeled, so you need to know what those numbers scratched on the paper mean. When looking at a census record on Ancestry.com you'll see a link near the top of the page labeled "blank census form."

The data collected changed slightly each year. For example, the 1820 census tallied the number of household members who weren't citizens, as well as the number of persons engaged in agriculture, commerce, and manufacturing. Also, be on the lookout for extemporaneous notations by the enumerators. One 1820 Massachusetts census-taker thoughtfully included the initials "Wd" after all of the widows.

5. Finally, remember to check the neighbors. Family groups often clustered near each other. Unfortunately, some Type-A census-takers, when copying their records, alphabetized everyone on their lists, nixing the neighbor bonus for researchers.

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Some Family Humor

A little girl asked her mother, "How did the human race appear?"

The mother answered, "God made Adam and Eve and they had children and so was all mankind made."

Two days later the girl asked her father the same question.

The father answered, "Many years ago there were monkeys from which the human race evolved."

The confused girl returned to her mother and said, "Mom, how is it possible that you told me the human race was created by God, and Dad said they developed from monkeys?"

The mother answered, "Well, dear, it is very simple. I told you about my side of the family and your father told you about his."

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