



Irving Genealogical Society

April 2009

Irving, Texas

Volume 17, Number 4

Officers:

President:	Eve Kellogg
Vice President:	Jeanne Mantooth
Secretary:	Barb Tsirigotis
Treasurer:	Erle Kellogg
Newsletter Editor:	Bill Matthews

DUES!

Have you paid your dues yet? Our yearly dues for 2009, which were increased to \$20.00 for individuals and \$25.00 for families, can be mailed to: IGS, P. O. Box 170881, Irving, TX 75017-0881. A copy of the Membership Application is included with paper copies of this newsletter and can be used to accompany your payment. Dues are our primary source of income and needed to pay for the operating expenses of the society, which the board has kept to the bare minimum.

This Month

- April 13th** Board of Directors meeting – 7pm. Genealogy Section at the Library, 3rd Floor. All members are welcome.
- April 20th** General meeting – 7pm 1st Floor, Central Irving Library. Speaker is Lynn Titus.

Next Month

- May 2nd** “It May Not Be a Goner: Conserving Your Treasures” Renee Tucker, Fort Worth Museum of Science and History.
- May 11th** Board of Directors meeting – 7pm. Genealogy Section at the Library, 3rd Floor. All members are welcome.
- May 18th** General meeting – 7pm 1st Floor, Central Irving Library.

Where's Spell-Check When You Need It?

A good-natured spoof on obituaries, this one appeared in the October 17, 1861 issue of the Nashville Christian Advocate. It read:

"A Western Obituary -Mitter Edgtur: Jem bangs vve are sorry tu stait, has dezeized, departed this life last mundy. Jem was generally considered a gud feller. He dide at the age of 23 years old. He went 4th without ary as peper-grass, migty smart. tu morrer we are cut down like a cowcumber of the ground. Jem kept a nice stoar, which his wife now waits on. His vischews was numerus to behold. Men ny, is the things we bot at his grocery and we are happy to stait to the admirin world that he never cheated. We never knew him to put sand in his sugar, tho' he had a big sand bar in front of his house; nur water in his lickers, tho' the Ohio River runs past his doar. He leaves a wife. 6 children. cow. 4 horses. qrocery stoar and other quodrepeds to mourn his loss, but in the splendid language of the past, his loss is there internal gane.

Highlights from the UNT Digital Collections

<http://texashistory.unt.edu/young/educators/newsletters/2009April.html>

[The World War I and World War II Poster Collections](#)

The Government Documents Department includes in its online collections nearly 500 original World War I and World War II posters. The [World War I](#) posters include some from our French allies, while the [World War II](#) group consists primarily of American home front posters.

War bonds, rationing, enlistment, security, and morale are all topics featured by these artworks. The collection includes posters by such famous artists as [Norman Rockwell](#), Theodore Geisel a.k.a [Dr. Seuss](#), and [Boris Artzybasheff](#).



Beginning Genealogy

Are you just getting started on your family research or do you need a refresher course? The Irving Heritage Senior Citizens' Center will host two programs sponsored by the Irving Genealogical Society.

May 9th Beginning Genealogy

May 23rd Cemetery Research

Classes run from 10:00 a.m. to noon and are held at the Heritage Senior Citizens' Center. Classes are free but you must be a member of the Heritage Senior Citizen Center to attend. Bring any genealogical work you have accumulated and bring your questions too. We hope to point you in the right direction to continue your research and answer some nagging questions at the same time.

To sign up, call Barb at 972-255-8966.

Grave Houses

Ever heard of a grave house? They've been around longer than you may think. John Waggoner Jr. is a cemetery hunter. He lives in Carthage, TN and started locating old cemeteries around his home about 10 years ago, often as a favor to the surviving family members. So far, he has found 630 obscure burial grounds in Smith County, most of them on farms, where families typically buried their dead prior to World War II.

Recently, Waggoner has focused his efforts on grave houses. He has located over 100 of the structures in seven states throughout the South. Some of the grave houses are built of logs, while others resemble miniature farmhouses. Most of the grave houses that Waggoner has located were built in the late 1800s and early 1900s, and, in many cases, there's not much left. They are disappearing fast due to age and weathering. While some grave houses were built of brick and stone, most were constructed of untreated lumber. More modern grave houses are made of sheet metal and angle iron.

There are various theories regarding the origin of grave houses, most agree their main purpose was to protect the burial ground from the elements, or from the hooves of livestock; and, out of respect, it kept the rain off their loved one's final resting place. Some grave houses are decorated with photographs, coal lamps, and tables set with the last dinner plate used by the deceased. Some think of a grave house as a miniature mausoleum but in reality it isn't; nor is it a crypt, because crypts are located below ground. Grave houses are in that netherworld in between.

Grave houses may be the upland South's version of the box and table tombs used in England in the early 1700s. The earliest reference found of a grave house dates to the 1830s in Middle Tennessee, which suggests that the tradition was brought over by settlers heading west from the eastern U.S.

- John Waggoner Jr.
- Donald Ball
- Morgan Simmons

Genealogy with a Mission November 6 & 7, 2009

The Texas State Genealogical Society will hold their 2009 conference in San Antonio. Guest speaker will be Craig R. Scott, CG. Details will be forthcoming in STIRPES and on their website at www.rootsweb.com/~txsgs. TSGS offers scholarships, certificate programs, writing awards, website and student projects contests. Awards will be made at the 2009 conference. If you have questions about any of these opportunities or want to submit an entry, contact Scott Fitzgerald at scottfitzgerald@tyler.net or 903-539-5572.

STIRPES has a new editor this year and is looking for material to publish. If you have something to be published statewide, contact Melinda Cagle at 1837texashistory@gmail.com or 281-367-9118.

Test Your Irving Knowledge

Here are some trivia questions about a specific part of Irving history:

1. What is the relationship between the Tompkins and Haley Cemeteries?
2. Are either or both of these Cemeteries "full"?
3. What public facilities are named after someone in one of those Cemeteries?
4. What legal restrictions exist for the Tompkins Cemetery?
5. Are these Cemeteries public or private?

For a bonus question – when was the last interment at one of these cemeteries?

Tune in next month for the answers.

“Cast Your Bread Upon the Waters”

How often have we heard this expression and how often has it become true as we search for information about our respective families? Several years ago I posted some information about my paternal grandfather (1860-1941) and his family and when they lived in and around the Lytle, Tx area. As a young man he was a cowboy and went on some cattle drives that started in Matagorda County and went to East Texas rather than Kansas City. After he married he became a schoolteacher. Several of his children followed in his footsteps. One of the schools where he taught was the Benton City School. That city is long gone and was taken over by Lytle. The stone shell of the school remains. Two months ago, a gentleman who is the chairman of a project to restore the old school and turn it into a museum contacted me. He is an avid collector of old school pictures and has provided me with several that I did not have.

Here is my grandfather and his students at the school in 1906.

