



My Journey From Yesterday

Mid-Cities Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 407

Bedford, TX 76095

Visit our Website at: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~txmcgs>

January 2014

Volume 37 Issue 1

Jane Aronhalt, President

Mid-Cities Genealogical Society meets the 1st Thursday of each month at:

Eules Public Library
Meeting Room, 201 N. Ector Eules, Texas
6:30 p.m. – Social
7:00 p.m. – General Meeting
Visitors are welcome.

2014 MCGS GENERAL MEETINGS CALENDAR

February 6, 2014

Meg Hacker:
"Fort Smith"

March 6, 2014

Kathleen Kent:
"The Outcasts"

April 3, 2014

Bernard Meisner:
"Applying Family Naming Conventions to your Genealogy Research"

May 1, 2014

Carl Oehmann:
Topic to be Announced

June 5, 2014

Earl Armstrong:
Topic to be Announced



JANUARY SPEAKER:

Marilyn Hay

TOPIC:

My Canvas

Born and raised in Fort Worth, Texas, Marilyn attended East Texas State University and was one of the first graduates to receive her degree in Law Enforcement. She immediately began work with the Dallas Police Department where she remained for 32 years. She became interested in genealogy when her aunt gave her letters written by her ggg grandfather during the Civil War. After retirement, she found interest in genealogy field trips to cemeteries all over the metroplex and beyond. She volunteers to fulfill photo requests from Find A Grave and tries to fit in a research trip now and then. Her Criswell family came to Texas in 1831 and participated in the Texas Revolution. She believes that is why she is so interested in genealogy and a BIG fan of Texas. She also teaches iPhones, iPads and an Online Genealogy course in the Senior Ed program at Tarrant County College.



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www.facebook.com/TXMCGS

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YEAR IN REVIEW

BY:
JANE ARONHALT

What a roller coaster year we have had at Mid Cities Genealogical Society! We have had some extreme lows and highs. In late 2012 we lost two valuable long time members, Jerry Post and Marie Talbott. But we have also gained many new friends with the former Irving Genealogical Society joining our group.

Carole Crawford redesigned the newsletter and made it much easier to read. Her articles have been informative and up-to-date with what was happening in our local area and national genealogy world.

Bernard Meisner added and maintains a Facebook page for our society. I enjoy going to Facebook and seeing the latest updates on MCGS.

We celebrated 35 years as a society in June. Terri O'Neill gave a wonderful talk about our past.

Last February, Ancestry.com asked us to host an all day workshop in the Dallas/Fort Worth area. Thanks to the expertise of our Seminar Coordinator, Sandra Crowley, the MCGS board, and the many, many volunteers, we had a very successful event. Ancestry.com was impressed with our society and our teamwork.

So what about our future? Now that we have a healthy bank account, we would like to give back to the community. We want to hear from you and what you think would be the best option for our society. Email me at jaronhalt@tx.rr.com and share your ideas. Some of the ideas that we have heard so far are: a donation to the Eules Library. The Eules Library has supported our society for many years and gives us the use of the library for our meetings and storing of our supplies. We could also donate to preserve the War of 1812 Records. Ancestry.com will match funds donated dollar for dollar.

We have also considered doing a free workshop on DNA research. There are several good speakers in the area who can explain what your DNA report means.

Another exciting event coming up in August is the Federated Genealogical Society (FGS) which is hosting a workshop in San Antonio August 27th to August 30th. Hopefully a group of our members will be interested in attending. These events are always more fun if we have friends to share the trip with.

I look forward to what awaits us in the coming year, and I hope that you have a Happy New Year.

NATIONAL ARCHIVES AT FORT WORTH

Friday Freebie: Highlights of the National Archives at Fort Worth

The National Archives at Fort Worth – Montgomery Plaza location presents its “Friday Freebie: Highlights of the National Archives” at Fort Worth on Friday, January 10, 2014 beginning at 12:00 noon. Ever wonder what else the National Archives holds besides records that relate to genealogy? The National Archives at Fort Worth holds over 115,000 cubic feet of original records from over 100 Federal Agencies dating from ca. 1803 – 2004. Join Education Specialist, Jenny Sweeney, for a glimpse into some of the fun finds. History lovers will enjoy the stories behind these records, and you just never know what you might find at the National Archives!

The National Archives at Montgomery Plaza is located at 2600 W. 7th Street, Suite 162, Fort Worth, Texas 76107. Please email ftworth.education@nara.gov to reserve your spot. Space is limited!

Get it Done

(From *Family Tree Magazine*, Oct/Nov 2013)

Just looking for a simple way to keep a to-do list on your phone or computer? Try these popular apps:

CLEAR - www.realmacsoftware.com/clear
\$1.99 for iPhone/iPad touch or \$9.99 for your Mac.

DOIT.IM - Doit.im

Free basic version, \$20 per year Pro version; Android, iPad, iPhones; Firefox, Safari and Chrome web browsers

LIVING ORGANIZED – livingorganized.com
\$9.99 for iOS; free for Android.

REMEMBER THE MILK –
www.rememberthemilk.com

Free basic account; \$25 per year Pro account; Android, iPad, iPhone and BlackBerry mobile devices; works with Google Calendar, Twitter and Microsoft Outlook.

WUNDERLIST – www.wunderlist.com

Free; Android, iPad and iPhone devices; Windows and Mac desktop.



**MEMBER
SPOTLIGHT:**

**CAROLE
CRAWFORD**

A west Texas girl, I was born in Lamesa but spent my elementary school years in Pecos, a one-horse town with two claims to fame: The Cantaloupe Shed (a barrel bag of cantaloupes went for \$1.00) and a later-to-become-well-known-whitecollar-criminal, Billy Sol Estes. My two brothers and I were raised by a single mom and lived at an Air Force Base that had been renovated for low-income housing. We didn't have much in the way of possessions but we had a lot of love.

At age 12, we moved to Kennedale to be near my mother's family. Jumbo jets never flew over Pecos, and I recall being frightened at the sound of them here in Fort Worth. We also didn't have freeways in Pecos or rush-hour traffic. Periodically the Army would stage maneuvers in El Paso, traveling through Pecos in route. There would be DAYS of bumper to bumper jeeps, tanks and other equipment rolling through our one main street. It was quite a sight, and a bit un-nerving as this occurred during the height of the Viet Nam War. It was in Pecos that we watched the historic funeral for President Kennedy. A hush settled over our little town for several days. A profound sadness.

I have served as an Executive Assistant for architectural firms since 1983; prior to that I worked as a medical secretary for 13 years. My first office position was at Fort Worth Medical Laboratories, where I met Marilyn's mother, Iris Hay, and learned how to transcribe medical terminology and how to spell words like "gastrojejunoduodenoscopy." I am currently employed with Cameron Ahead, Architect Inc. in downtown Fort Worth. I have about four more years until I can retire, and I cannot WAIT!

I have one beautiful daughter (a certified medical coder), one sweet granddaughter (artist and bookworm) and a wonderful son-in-law. I am so proud that he served our country with three tours of duty in the middle east as a sniper/scout, earning many marksmanship awards while with his unit, "Brave Rifles."

I have been a member of MCGS for about three years, after making contact with Marilyn on Facebook. It was my aunt, now 87, who sparked my interest in genealogy. Over a period of years, she painstakingly researched our family (before searching on the internet was possible) and created a 3-ring binder for each of us so that we would know our history. Genealogy is not for everyone, though; her daughters said, "But mom, they're dead people!" I, on the other hand, keep that binder by my computer at all times and refer to it often.

My most challenging ancestor is my mother's brother. He died at age 6, and I have been unable to find anything at all on him. My favorite ancestor is my mother's Aunt Hazel. Apparently she was quite a character and party girl. If I could talk with one ancestor, it would be my paternal grandfather. He was a gunslinger and later a Texas Ranger. The most surprising fact I discovered was when I pulled up a death certificate of an uncle by marriage, which showed the cause of death as "legal electrocution." A newspaper clipping reported that when a bill collector came calling, the uncle shot him, threw him in a car and set the car on fire.

My genealogy research is mostly on-line. I do love to walk through old cemeteries, read the markers and imagine what their lives might have been like.

My bucket list? I want to feel the wind in my hair as I gallop atop a beautiful Palomino across wide open country in Montana; I long to visit the lush green fields and castles in Scotland; and I would love to talk with the Reverend Billy Graham.

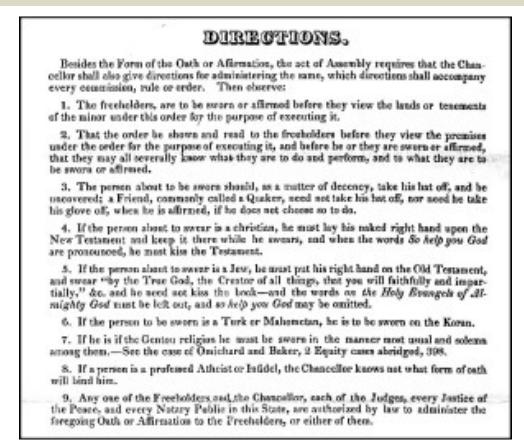
From the Blog:
**THE LEGAL GENEALOGIST:
 TO TELL THE TRUTH**

Posted December 20, 2013

(contributed by Barb Lancaster)

The Form of Oath

At this time of year when an innocent wish that someone else enjoy happy holidays can bring down the wrath of some folks, The Legal Genealogist was pleasantly surprised when poking around in court records to find evidence of a more tolerant approach to religion early on in America.



I came across it when leafing through a set of records from the Delaware Orphans' Court – a court "founded" 'to inspect and take care of the Estates, Usage, and Employment of Orphans – that care may be taken for those that are not able to take care for themselves.' Subsequent legislation gave the court added responsibilities relating to the guardianship of minors, real estate left intestate, partition of real estate, adoptions, and appeals from register of wills decisions. The Orphans' Court was abolished in 1970, and its responsibilities and functions were divided among the Court of Chancery, Superior Court, and Family Court."¹

The particular document I was looking at was an order to value the property of a minor to determine what its rental value was,² and the pre-printed form called on the court to name freeholders from the county to set the value. And every one of the freeholders had to take an oath to perform his task faithfully.

Now think for a minute. We've all seen the television scenes and movie scenes. The witness or the official who's taking an oath raises his left hand, puts his right hand

(continued at right)

(Continued from left)

on the Bible and swears to tell the truth or act faithfully or whatever it is he's swearing to "so help me God."

Right?

Except that's not what the law required.

And certainly **not** what so many of our ancestors did – particularly not if they were Quakers or Moravians or Mennonites or Jews or Muslims or "Gentou" – an archaic term not defined in the legal dictionaries but meaning Hindu.

And in Delaware, 1834, the law understood that it was different strokes for different folks. So the directions on this particular form outlined what the court was to do depending on the freeholders' particular beliefs:

The person about to be sworn should, as a matter of decency, take his hat off, and be uncovered; a Friend, commonly called a Quaker, need not take his hat off, nor need he take his glove off, when he is affirmed, if he does not choose so to do.

If the person about to swear is a Christian, he must lay his naked right hand upon the New Testament and keep it there while he swears, and when the words *So help you God* are pronounced, he must kiss the Testament.

If the person about to swear is a Jew, he must put his right hand on the Old Testament, and swear "by the true God, the Creator of all things, that you will faithfully and impartially," and he need not kiss the book – and the words on the *Holy Evangelists of Almighty God* must be left out, and so *help you God* may be omitted.

If the person to be sworn is a Turk or Mahometan, he is to be sworn on the Koran.

If he is of the Gentou religion, he must be sworn in the manner most usual and solemn among them³

The directions even intimated that there might be unbelievers in the community as well. But, the directions added: "If a person is a professional Atheist or Infidel, the Chancellor knows not what form of oath will bind him."⁴

And it turns out, Delaware was hardly alone in recognizing these differences. Virginia, as early as 1779, provided for oaths "according to the solemnity used by the church of which (a person) professed to be a member," and by 1806 allowed a person to use "the solemnity and ceremony, and repeat the formulary, which, *in his own opinion*, ought to be observed."⁵

With regard to the ceremony or form of administering an oath, that form is obviously the best which most clearly conveys the meaning of the oath, and most forcibly impregates its obligation. And since this is not an essential part of the oath, but entirely of human institution, and has varied in different times and countries, though the substance of the oath must be the same in all, it is obviously necessary to allow men to swear according to the peculiar ceremony of their religion, that is, in the manner which they consider binding on their conscience.

. . . Common sense requires that witnesses should be allowed to swear in that particular form which they consider binding on their conscience. A Quaker affirms the truth of what he states. A Jew swears on the Pentateuch, with his head covered. A Gentou touches with his hand the foot of a Brahmin. Mahometans are sworn on the Koran; and upon the same principle, all persons ought to be sworn according to the ceremonies of their peculiar religion. Whatever be the form, the meaning of the oath is the same.⁶

And by the middle of the 19th century, even the law dictionaries recognized that "(t)he oath . . . may be varied in any other form, in order to conform to the religious opinions of the person who takes it."⁷

And so, I swear, happy holidays, folks, whatever you (or I) believe.

(Refer to Sources on next page)

SOURCES

1. "Orphans' Court," *Agency Histories*, Delaware State Archives (<http://archives.delaware.gov/> : Accessed 19 Dec 2013)
2. Kent County, Delaware, Orphans' Court, Order to Value Rent, 25 Mar 1834, Estate of John Killen, deceased, 1834 – 46 #43; Delaware Public Archives, Dover; digital images, "Delaware Orphan Court Records, 1680-1978," *FamilySearch* (<https://familysearch.org>: Accessed 19 Dec 2013)
3. Ibid., "Directions."
4. Ibid.
5. William Waller Hening, "What Solemnities May Be Used Instead of Oaths," *The New Virginia Justice*, 2nd edition (Richmond: 1810) 409; digital images, Google Books (<http://books.google.com>: Accessed 19 Dec 2013)
6. Samuel March Phillips, *A Treatise on The Law of Evidence*, 4th American Edition (New York: Gould Banks & Co., 1839), vol. I:22, digital images, Google Books (<http://books.google.com>: Accessed 19 Dec 2013)
7. John Bouvier, *A Law Dictionary Adapted to the Constitution and Laws of the United States of America and of the Several States of the American Union*, Rev. 6th ed. (1856): HTML reprint, The Constitution Society (<http://www.constitution.org/bouv/bouvier.htm>: Accessed 19 Dec 2013), "oath."

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

It has been my pleasure to edit the MCGS newsletter for the past year or two, and I hope you have found it to be interesting and informative. I'd like to take a break, however, to focus on a few other projects.

If you would be interested in filling this position, please contact Jane Aronhalt at (817) 727-9759 or jaronhalt@tx.rr.com.

5 MUST READ BLOGS

From Michael Leclerc's *Genealogy News*
November 12, 2013

There are many genealogy blogs out there on the interwebs. Trying to keep track of all of them can be challenging. Here are five blogs that I consider to be among the best reading in the field. They cover various aspects of genealogy, and will give you great help.

1. NEWS: Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter

Dick Eastman does a wonderful job of getting information out there. If something is happening in the field of genealogy, he will hear about it and let you know. You can also find great reviews of books, and software. Dick also leans on his decades of experience in the computer industry to discuss issues around technology.

2. DNA: The Genetic Genealogist

If you don't know the difference between x, y, mt, and autosomal (and even if you do), then this blog is for you. Blaine Bettinger brings his experience in biochemistry to explain genomics to you in plain English. There is a certain level of technical language that always has to accompany scientific topics like this. But Blaine does his best to keep the dry talk to a minimum and to make it easy to comprehend for the average reader.

3. TECHNOLOGY: Hack Genealogy

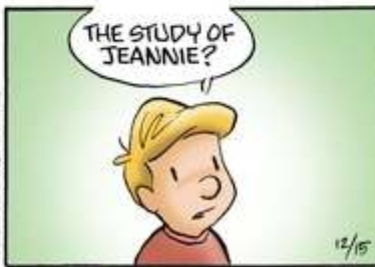
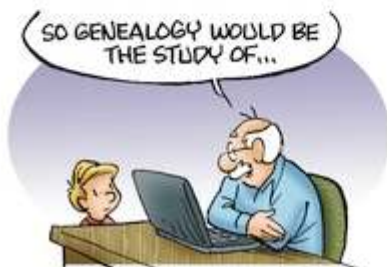
Over the last few years, Thomas MacEntee has made quite a name for himself in incorporating technology and social media into genealogy. This year he launched Hack Genealogy, dedicated to "re-purposing today's technology for tomorrow's genealogy." As Thomas describes it, "Hack Genealogy is about sharing technology resources, discussing our personal interactions with technology, and moving the entire genealogy community forward in terms of how it embraces technology." I recently had the pleasure of doing an interview for Thomas for the site. You will find a great deal of technology news and advice here.

4. THE LAW: The Legal Genealogist

Just as scientific topics (such as DNA) can be dry and boring, discussing the law can be a major snooze. Not so whenever Judy G. Russell is involved. She makes every topic interesting and informative. Mixed in with her discussion of legal topics are personal stories that resonate chords in any reader. This is one of the blogs I read most frequently, and I've obtained invaluable information from Judy's personal, and sometimes humorous discussions.

5. OPINION: RootDig

John Michael Neill writes multiple blogs, and it took me a moment or two to decide which to highlight here. But RootDig is one that I truly enjoy. John Michael calls it like it is, and takes people to task for mistakes, errors, and problems, as well as providing kudos to those who merit it. He also shares experiences from his own research that can help you with your own brick walls. One of my recent favorites was, "Don't Forget to Include Why You Didn't Include It."



**HAPPY NEW
YEAR!!!**