



# My Journey From Yesterday

Mid-Cities Genealogical Society

P.O. Box 407

Bedford, TX 76095

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

May 2013

Volume 36 Issue 5

Jane Aronhalt, President

Mid-Cities Genealogical Society  
meets the 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

## MAY SPEAKER: PAULA PERKINS

### TOPIC:

### With a Click of a Button, Demystify & Unlock the Secrets of Finding Family Records, Newspapers & Genealogy Books

Paula Perkins is a native Texan, involved in family history research for over 30 years and is a professional genealogical consultant, lecturer and instructor of genealogy classes. Currently Pioneer Families Registrar, she is a Past President for Collin County Genealogical Society. She created and maintains the web site as Collin County Coordinator for the TXGenWeb project – [www.rootsweb.com/~txcolli2](http://www.rootsweb.com/~txcolli2).

Paula has served as a volunteer in many capacities for genealogical societies and her local library including the Texas Heritage Online Users Work Group with the University of North Texas and the Texas State Library; Executive Vice President of Lectures/Fundraising for the Dallas Genealogical Society; President of Peters Colony Historical Society; Executive Vice President with Clayton Library Friends; and appointed multiple terms to the Denton County Historical Commission, serving on the Cemetery and Historical Marker committees. Currently she is the Administrator of the CCGS and Co-Administrator of both the Perkins and Cook DNA Surname projects.

Paula has authored several articles in genealogical and historical publications and has successfully accomplished research in Northern, Southern and National U.S. repositories. She is Past Coordinator for the Dallas, Texas local PBS station Community Outreach program, in conjunction with the PBS series “Ancestors.”

She is also involved with local boy scouts, assisting them in their Eagle Scout projects in area cemetery transcription and clean-up. Cemeteries are one of her passions as well as helping the youth learn about family history.

Topics she will address are:

- Skirts & Skirmishes, Wars & Windows: Honoring Our Veterans
- With a Click of a Button, Demystify & Unlock the Secrets of Finding Family Records, Newspapers & Genealogy Books from Anywhere in the United States locally
- Mining Message Boards for Gold
- Up Your Family Tree, DNA & It's Benefits When You Hit the Brick Wall
- Cemetery Searching & Answers from the Tombstone
- News Flash! What's in this Edition, Secular, Denominational, Ethnic & Trade Newspapers
- Making Sense of the Census: Tips, Types and Repositories
- Immigration, Passenger & Naturalization Records for Historians & Genealogists
- Who, What, Where & When: Identifying People, Places and Photographs

## 2013 MCGS GENERAL MEETINGS CALENDAR

June 6<sup>th</sup>  
To Be Announced

July 11<sup>th</sup>  
Speaker:

Richard Monroe

Program: Peters Colony and  
Immigration to Texas

August 1<sup>st</sup>  
MCGS 35<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Party  
& Ice Cream Social

September 5<sup>th</sup>  
Speaker:

Mic Barnette

Program: Immigration to and the  
Settlement of North America Before the  
American Revolution

## MEETING NOTICE:

The **May** and **June** meetings will be held in the **Local History/Genealogy Room**. Refreshments will not be provided as they are not permitted in this meeting room.

## WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!!

Ron and Linda Rappold

## MID-CITIES GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

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in your name or contact information.

*Editor's Note: The recent tragedy in the City of West, Texas, brought to mind the following story I read a while back in Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter dated January 15, 2013. Thoughts and prayers go out to the people of West.*

January 15, 2013

## The Great Molasses Flood of 1919



Today is the anniversary of one of the biggest twentieth-century disasters in the city of Boston. Genealogists normally like to study the current events of the times in which our ancestors lived. Wars are easy to study as they are well documented in history books. Yet other calamities of bygone times are often not so well known and documented.

One great disaster in the early twentieth century was the great Molasses Flood of January 15, 1919, in Boston, Massachusetts. This sounds humorous until one reads that 21 people died when an eight-foot high wall of molasses rolled down Commercial Street at a rather high speed. Two million gallons of crude molasses can move quickly when warmed by the sun. The result was an explosion heard many miles away. Half-inch steel plates of the huge molasses tank were torn apart. The plates were propelled in all directions, hard enough to cut the girders of the elevated railway.



You could say that these unfortunate people were molassesed to death. That is not exactly how I wish to go. You can read an account of this bizarre accident at:

<http://www.mv.com/ipusers/arcade/molasses.htm>

## NEW HBO COMEDY SERIES "FAMILY TREE"

Down on his luck in love and life, having recently lost his job and girlfriend, 30-year-old Tom Chadwick has an unsure sense of his own identity. But when he inherits a mysterious box, Tom starts investigating his lineage and uncovers a world of unusual stories and characters, acquiring a growing sense of who he and his entire family are. FAMILY TREE kicks off its eight-episode season SUNDAY, MAY 12 (10:30-11:00 p.m. ET/PT), exclusively on HBO, followed by other episodes subsequent Sundays at the same time.

Written and created by Christopher Guest & Jim Piddock, the new comedy series is a single-camera, documentary-style show in the manner of Guest's acclaimed feature films (such as "Best in Show," "Waiting for Guffman" and "A Mighty Wind"). Chris O'Dowd ("Bridesmaids") stars as Tom Chadwick in the HBO presentation, along with Tom Bennett and Nina Conti. The series also features appearances by Carrie Aizley, Bob Balaban, Ed Begley, Jr., Maria Blasucci, Matt Griesser, Christopher Guest, Don Lake, Michael McKean, Lisa Palfrey, Jim Piddock, Kevin Pollak, Amy Seimetz, Meera Syal, Ashley Walters and Fred Willard.

Tom Chadwick (O'Dowd) has been bequeathed an old chest of curios by his great aunt Victoria. With the help of his sister, Bea (Conti), best friend Pete (Bennett) and friendly neighbor Mr. Pfister (Piddock), as well as many other well-meaning but unconventional characters, Tom embarks on his quest to learn more, following leads and clues in London that eventually bring him to America.



## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT:

### JAN EDWARDS

Jan is a retired Licensed Professional Counselor. She holds a BA from the University of Texas and a Master's Degree from University of North Texas. Jan served as Director of Counseling at Shick Shadel Hospital in North Richland Hills for many years, treating adults with addictions. She also served for five years as a psychiatric case manager for Intracorp in Dallas. She has been retired for 12 years.

Jan is divorced with four children, all of whom live nearby, and has seven grandchildren (ages 14 to 32) and a four year old great-granddaughter.

She has been a member of MCGS for several years, though she was unable to attend meetings prior to her retirement. Her earliest memory of family history occurred at age six. "My mother would put a quilt on the floor when she was ironing, and we would lay on it while she told us stories of when she was a child and about her family." Jan's father had five Aunts who shared wonderful family stories at family reunions. Her mother was "always writing down her family line, and she wrote her memoirs when she was 80 years old." Jan was also fortunate to have a first cousin who collected 20 years of research before she even started thinking about doing it when she retired. Jan has just added to her cousin's work.

Her most challenging ancestor was finding the parents of her 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandfather, Wesley Harrison Kyle. She finally broke through the brick wall when she visited the Harrisonburg, Virginia Genealogy Association. They had a file on the Kyle family which contained documents proving who his parents were. She has since found other documents and information which added to that.

Her favorite ancestor is her 4<sup>th</sup> great-grandfather, Jesse Coe. He was a Methodist minister and owned a large plantation in Florida. He donated the land for the Florida State Capital. Jesse "lost everything in the civil war but was a well respected person."

If she could talk with one ancestor, it would be her 2<sup>nd</sup> great-grandmother, Epponina Micheaux Kyle, about what it was like for a woman to travel from Virginia to South Carolina to Florida, then Texas, and raising 11 children. The most surprising fact Jan learned from her family history is the number of Methodist ministers on both sides of her family.

In addition to online research, Jan loves to travel to the areas where her ancestors lived, going to courthouses and cemeteries. As a result of DNA testing, she has been able to connect with, and talk with, distant relatives.

In addition to genealogy, Jan loves to travel, exercise, attend theater, study Spanish and spend time with family. Her "bucket list" includes travel to South America and Antarctica, and a river cruise from Moscow to St. Petersburg.

## MEMBER NEWS

This past week, **Joyce Bentley** underwent double by-pass surgery, and **Betty Mizell** underwent renal surgery. Prayers for these ladies are requested. We wish them a speedy recovery.

## A WORD ABOUT GENEALOGISTS

An Excerpt from *Who Do You Think You Are?*

By Megan Smolenyak

As a tour guide into the world of genealogy, I feel somewhat protective of you, so I want to impart to you a piece of advice: Genealogists – me included – can occasionally be just the tiniest bit snarky. If you'd like to test this out find any sort of family history forum and post a message that includes "geneOlogy." Then run for cover!

The word is pronounced as if it had an "o" in it, and this classic misspelling is so widespread that some have made money off of Web sites that deliberately used this incorrect version. But that doesn't stop it from irritating folks. In general genealogists are among the kindest, most generous people out there, but there's something about changing that "a" to an "o" that brings out the Hulk in us. So save yourself some avoidable needling by mastering the spelling of your pursuit!

## COAT OF ARMS

An Excerpt from *Who Do You Think You Are?*

By Megan Smolenyak

Here's your coat of arms! This isn't so much a myth as a marketing phenomenon. If you've ever seen those carts in malls that purport to give you a history of your family name along with your coat of arms, please don't be fooled. Heraldry is very precise, and coats of arms were usually given to individuals who might or might not have had the right to pass them along to descendants. There may well be a given family with your surname who's entitled to a coat of arms, but simply having the same name doesn't mean it applies to you. In fact, the odds are that it doesn't. And I hope I'm not disappointing anyone, but those "family histories" they offer? Not yours. Just a generic collection of random tidbits that they'll sell to anyone who happens to sport your surname.

## The Domino Desk

Barbara Tsirigotis

I wasn't tired at all. Really! Mother said it was almost 10:00 but I wasn't at all tired. Having Papa, Ma, Ma's baby sisters Aunt Blanch and Aunt Ella, Uncle Jimmy and Uncle Johnny visit for dinner and a game of dominos was always exciting. On Saturday nights they would sit around the domino desk until the wee hours of the morning playing dominos and telling stories of their childhood. Their stories brought to life people I had never met – people who had died long before I was born – my ancestors.

When the ladies went to the outhouse, I would grab my pillow and blanket and crawled underneath the desk. It was an old teacher's desk Papa had brought home when they tore down the Bagley school. It had a privacy panel on one side and a shelf below that made a perfect bed for me. Neither Daddy, Papa, Uncle Jimmy nor Uncle Johnny ever gave me away; otherwise, Mother would have hauled me off to bed for fear I would hear something during the conversation that I wasn't supposed to hear. After all, every family has their secrets.

It was from this perch that I learned about Ma's one and only bicycle ride. She was 12 years old and desperately longed to ride her brothers' bicycle; however, in 1912 young ladies did not ride bicycles, according to her mother. Only her brothers, Elmer and Delmer, rode the bicycle. But early one December morning, Ma crept out of the house while her mother was busy preparing breakfast for her family of seven. She mounted the bicycle and rode in circles around the house, ducking beneath the clothesline and again as she rode past the kitchen window. She described the wind in her uncombed hair, the crispness of the morning air, and the cold, hard pedals beneath her bare feet. I, having ridden a bicycle since the age of ten, can only imagine what a liberating feeling that must have been. Had she lived in a different era, Ma would certainly have been a tomboy.

She was amazed at how well her plan had worked, flying freely and almost silently around the house time and time again, unnoticed. Her main concern was that her mother not see her, for that would certainly bring some sort of harsh punishment. Ma was the oldest of the children and was expected to set an example for her younger sisters. On what resulted in her last lap around the house, with her eye on the kitchen window, she forgot about the clothesline. It caught beneath her chin and flipped her off the bike. She landed on her back with a thud; and, the bike continued on its path, off into the garden. She immediately looked toward the door expecting to see her Mother and Father running out to pick her up and paddle her good; but, no one had noticed. The pain in her little toe was excruciating; but, she dared not cry out. As she flipped off the bike, she had struck her foot on some wooden planks which served as a walkway from the kitchen door to the outhouse. Crying would give her away; so, she brushed herself off and stumbled back inside the house.

No one ever knew of Ma's early morning ride until she confessed over the domino desk. She had evidently broken her little toe during that fall, but never told anyone; which explained why her toe was always crooked.

I must have taken mental notes from my perch beneath the domino desk, for years later when I discovered genealogy; all those stories came back to me and provided a foundation for my research. Somehow, I found the ancestors they had discussed, rather familiar to me.

### Fannin & Hunt County Ancestors

Mother.....Reba Ray (Bishop) Lancaster  
Daddy.....Cal T. Lancaster  
Ma.....Ollie Mildred (Harrison) Bishop  
Papa.....Albert William Bishop  
Uncle Johnny.....Johnny Todd  
Aunt Ella.....Ella (Harrison) Todd  
Uncle Jimmy.....James Edwin Bishop  
Aunt Blanche.....Blanche (Harrison) Bishop  
Elmer.....Elmer Harrison  
Delmer.....Delmer Harrison

