



Topeka Genealogical Society

Founded in 1965

NEWS & VIEWS

Editor:

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Website: <http://www.tgstopeka.org>

Blogaddress: <http://tgstopeka.blogspot.com>

Library Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday & Saturday - 1:00 - 4:00pm

Microfiche Machine

Internet Access

Computerized searches of selected files

CALL FIRST IN BAD WEATHER - CHECK FOR HOLIDAY CLOSINGS

Regular Meeting: 4th Thursday of each month-7:00 p.m. - Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library

Board Meeting: 2nd Thursday of each month - 7:00 p.m. -TGS Memorial Library - 2717 SE Indiana

2010 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings are announced in the calendar.

Please note that all Regular meetings will be held at the

Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library (TSCPL) on THURSDAY nights at 7 p.m.

April

April 1st, 7-8:30 p.m., TGS Member Forum: Sharing & Problem Solving, TGS Library

April 3rd, 9 a.m. to 12 Noon, Internet Genealogy Workshop, TGS Library

April 8th, 7 p.m., TGS Board Meeting, TGS Library

April 24th, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., 38th Annual TGS Conference featuring speaker Michael John NEILL
- see TGS website for details

May

May 6th, 7-8:30 p.m., TGS Member Forum: Sharing & Problem Solving, TGS Library

May 13th, 7 p.m., TGS Board Meeting, TGS Memorial Library

May 27th, 7 p.m., TGS Regular Meeting, "Stories in Stone at Topeka Cemetery,"
Lowell MANIS, Director of Topeka Cemetery

May 31st, Memorial Day, Library Closed



June

June 3rd, 7-8:30 p.m., TGS Member Forum: Sharing & Problem Solving, TGS Library

June 10th, 7 p.m., TGS Board Meeting, TGS Library

June 24th, 7 p.m., TGS Regular Meeting, "News & Updates at the National Archives," Jennifer Audsley MOORE, NARA Central Plains Region

July July 4th, Independence Day



Please check the TGS Website; www.tgstopeka.org for more program and event information.

FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

The Genealogist's Bucket List....

In the movie, *The Bucket List*, actors Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman portrayed two terminally ill men who made a list of everything they wanted to do before they died, and then set out to work their way through their lists. As you might imagine, there were some entertaining adventures. A recent article published in *Family Tree Magazine*, titled "9 Genealogy Libraries to Visit Before you Die," set me to thinking about what we, as genealogists, might put on our own "bucket lists."

What research remains unfinished? What locations of our ancestors would we most want to visit? What is the legacy we want to leave to our descendants?

I would suggest that thinking about the answers to these questions as if our own time on earth were short could be helpful in prioritizing and motivating us to tie up some of those loose ends. What is on your research "to-do" list? Are your research materials organized in a way that would make sense to other researchers? Are your family photos labeled? Have you written down your own memories of your younger days and family members now long passed away? Have you made provisions for how your research products will be preserved when you die? Have you been putting off the overwhelming task of compiling all your research findings into some more readable format, like a book, for those non-genealogist family members? Are there "some-day" trips to ancestral locations on your wish list? My own "to-do" list is long. And, in reality, time is short for all of us! A good reason not to waste another day.

Incidentally, the Midwest Genealogy Center in Independence, Missouri, made the list of nine libraries. I have yet to visit their new facility. There's another item for my Bucket List.

Barb

9 Genealogical Libraries to Visit Before You Die:

Whether your ancestors hailed from Michigan or Maine, Milan or Minsk, you're bound to make headway at one of these giant repositories (listed alphabetically):

- **Allen County Public Library**, Fort Wayne, Ind.,
- **Clayton Library Center for Genealogical Research**, Houston Public Library
- **Family History Library**, Salt Lake City
- **Library of Congress**, Washington, DC
- **Midwest Genealogy Center**, Independence, Mo.,
- **National Society Daughters of the American Revolution Library**, Washington, DC
- **New England Historic Genealogical Society Research Library**, Boston MA
- **New York Public Library**, New York City
- **Public Library of Cincinnati and Hamilton County**

Midwest Genealogy Center

You can always find some newly discovered websites which members of the Mid-Continent Library staff think are interesting in the Midwest Genealogy Center "NewsBytes" newsletter. Here is a link to where all the back issues are archived:

www.mcpl.lib.mo.us/genlhnews/

News & Views is published quarterly in January, April, July, October by the Topeka Genealogical Society (TGS). News items are welcome and are due by the first of the month preceeding each quarterly issue. Send items to the newsletter at the address below.

Membership in TGS is \$25.00 per year for individuals and organizations, \$30.00 per family and \$40.00 for a sustaining membership.

Members receive the Newsletter and the TGS Quarterly. For a free fact folder write to:

TGS, PO Box 4048, TOPEKA, KS 66604-0048



Editor's Corner

This has been a brutal winter and I know everyone is hoping Spring hurries up and gets here. It may take weeks for the ground to dry out so we can get out and enjoy ourselves. Dave has already used the mower and needs to get it serviced, but he hasn't quite put the snow blower away. Obviously Mother Nature is letting us know just who's in charge!

As you noticed with the last Quarterly, as a cost savings measure, the Newsletter is now a part of the Quarterly. Between issues of the Quarterly and Newsletter, please check out the TGS website (www.tgstopeka.org) and the TGS Blogspot (<http://tgstopeka.blogspot.com>)

You may remember I mentioned one of my cousins was updating the genealogy she first did 25 years ago. It was a laborious and tedious adventure the first time on an old Royal typewriter. The new version of the PATTON/PATTERSON genealogy was accomplished on a computer with lots of pictures and memories from various family members. Jean's great-grandfather and mine were brothers. Looking at their pictures side by side they look like peas in a pod. I know there are others of you out there who have published your family genealogy and I applaud you for all the hard work. At a recent TGS board meeting, our Librarian, Janice WHITMAN said she has 34 or 35 large 3-ring binders on her family(ies). Because of another article in this Newsletter, I was privileged to look through one of her binders. Maybe some day I'll be that organized.

Have you been watching the NBC series, "Who Do You Think You Are?" Even Dave is intrigued with this series and what the participants have found. Like many, I was amazed when Sarah Jessica PARKER found she had an ancestor charged in the Salem Witch Trials. Luckily her ancestor survived. How powerful was it when she looked at the seats on the wall naming those who didn't survive. Lisa KUDROW met "Yuri" who told her grandmother in 1947 of the massacre of her own mother, other family members, a whole village of European Jews shot and burned to death during the Holocaust by the Nazis, and her emotion-filled trip to meet ancestors she didn't even know existed. Emmitt SMITH started his search in Burnt Corn, AL and traced back to a white slave owner named PURYEAR. Can you imagine the gut-wrenching pain at finding and reading a document that indicates your "alleged" white ancestor probably "bred" your great-great-grandmother and traded her and others to another owner along with horses? It's just inconceivable to us today. Dr. Henry Louis GATES produced a program on African American Lives on PBS, which included Oprah and YoYo MA. YoYo MA's genealogy goes back hundreds of years thanks to decades of ancestors and descendents. and . Now, we all know there were numerous professional genealogists working on the various stars' genealogy, producing much information in a short period of time, but it's still interesting to find out what their families went through.

While both of these programs have been very interesting, it would be nice to see the focus on an everyday, ordinary family's search for their roots. The results could be every bit as interesting! Every family has its own unique story - even if you haven't found it yet. Perhaps you have a Mayflower or Jamestown ancestor. Was there someone in the French and Indian Wars; someone at Valley Forge, Yorktown or the Cowpens? Did you have ancestors at the Alamo, Gettysburg, the Gold Rush in 1849? And don't forget all the women who stood behind and beside their husbands/brother/families to keep the homefront going. We are who we are because of those who came before us. We just have to dig and unlock their stories.

Nora



We are looking for someone to take over as editor for the TGS Quarterly. Dave MURRAY, who has been producing our TGS Quarterly for the past eight years, has announced that he will retire as editor at the end of 2010. We are starting to look for a new editor now, so that the incoming editor will have a chance to work with Dave during 2010 to learn the production process. You don't have to write the content - just be responsible for gathering submitted materials and formatting it to create the publication layout. Some familiarity with publication software, such as Pagemaker or InDesign would be helpful. This is an interesting job that could be done at home on a flexible schedule. If you are interested in becoming our new editor, please contact Barb LaCLAIR at president1@tgstopeka.org.

NOTES FROM THE TGS MEMORIAL LIBRARY



TGS has published a new book for Sale. The official title is "Atlas and Plat Book of Shawnee County, Kansas." It was compiled by the latest data on record for 1921 and is a reproduction of the original book. The book original book was donated by Helen SMITH PUDERBAUGH, a TGS member. At 73 pages, the Atlas and Plat Book contains plats of townships, owner's names, a farmers directory, automobile and tractor ownerships and Honor Roll of Soldiers in WW I. The price at the library is \$17.00, tax included.

The TGS library collection currently includes about 9,500 books and more than 700 periodical titles. A list of the library holdings is available on the TGS website. . If you have any questions about a particular book, please call the Library.

What Was Your Ancestor's Property Worth?

Genealogists often find references to money in old deeds and other documents. Even US census records frequently recorded estimates of a person's real estate. Then we wonder what that would equal in today's dollars. Take a look at the Inflation Calculator at www.westegg.com/inflation. Canadians will find a similar Inflation Calculator for the years 1914 through 2009 at the Bank of Canada's webpages at www.bankofcanada.ca/en/inflation_calc.htm.

Source: Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter and Jots from the Point, Western Pennsylvania Genealogical Society, February/March 2010-Volume 36 Number 4.

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Pennsylvania History and Genealogy Blog

If you have Keystone State branches and leaves on the family tree, this blog posts lots of photos and other information of interest. <http://pahistoryblog.blogspot.com>

Scotland's History

If you are researching Scottish ancestors, take a look at these blogs. <http://scotgen.blogspot.com>; and Scotland is proclaiming 5,000 years of their history at <http://www.itscotland.org.us/scotlandshistory/>

Many societies have blogs these days, including TGS.

Check your favorite site to see what they might have posted.

Ours is at: <http://tgstopeka.blogspot.com>

Poor Farms

Have you ever wondered what happened to an ancestor when he/she disappears off the face of the earth? Have you thought about the "Poor Farms" or "Poor Houses" around the country, and even overseas? Bad times and bad decisions could have been hard on your ancestor. A poorhouse or workhouse was a government-run facility for the supporting and housing of dependent or needy persons, typically run by a local government entity such as a county or municipality. Early settlers faced extreme poverty in many cases. If a family couldn't or wouldn't take care of a family member, perhaps they were sent to a poor farm, almshouse, or a state hospital. Various terms have been used throughout history to describe a Poor House. In New England they were called "almshouses, country home, country asylum." Throughout the Midwest, they were known as "poor farms" or "county farms." The poor house is an ancient social institution dating back to an English workhouse in 1697. An English Poor Law in 1601 provided shelter for the old and infirm. (This law was passed in the reign of Queen Elizabeth I.) The law set parameters for future laws for the poor, including an "overseer of the poor," the collection of a compulsory tax and the creation of almshouses for the aged, infirmed, mothers of illegitimate children and children incapable of work. It established state responsibility for the poor. The English law followed early colonists to America. The first public almshouse in America was in Philadelphia in 1731. All recipients were housed together; the lame, the sick, the vagrant, the aged, children, unmarried mothers, the blind and able-bodied poor who worked for their keep. A "poor farm" might be described as a place where one went when there was absolutely nowhere else to go. There might have actually been a farm there, a dormitory and a cemetery. Conditions might have been decent or dismal depending on those in charge and available funding. Kansas Territory adopted general laws in 1855 which defined the "worthy poor" as aged, infirmed, blind, lame or sick and unable to support themselves. Laws of the time assumed that "destitution" was the individual's fault.

Kansas Poor Farms were no different than those in other states. They struggled to stay afloat and provide services to their inmates. The grandparents of Janice WHITMAN, TGS Librarian, Nicholas BURNEY and Zelma SERVICE BURNEY, ran the Franklin County, Kansas Poor Farm and Infirmary from 1906 to 1917. Janice has vivid memories of her grandparents and within the last few years was able to take a tour of the rebuilt facility, which burned on March 20, 1911. The BURNEYS lived in the chicken house after the fire until the building was rebuilt.

If your ancestor was physically unable to take care of him/herself and needed more intensive care, he/she might have been institutionalized in a state hospital. How long they stayed may be reflected in hospital records. Perhaps the family was reluctant to let others know a relative spent their last days in a state hospital or poor farm because the family was simply no longer able to take care of their relative. Remember that many individuals sent to the state hospital may not really have been "insane," as currently identified. The family "might" have had them declared "insane" simply to have them admitted to the hospital because they were too much for the family to handle at home. There were no nursing homes as we know them today.

At one time or another, most of the counties in Kansas had some form of poor farm. The TGS Library has a large amount of information on the Shawnee County Poor Farm, as well as some information on other county farms. The Kansas Historical Society also has a large collection of information. On March 1, 1974, the Topeka Capital Journal indicated the Shawnee County Infirmary was closing - 50 years after it opened. I would guess that if you typed in the words "poor farm" and a state name in your favorite search engine, you might find a wealth of information.

And much as we'd all like to think all of our ancestors were fine, upstanding people, don't forget prison records. In early years, people were sent to prison for things we just don't comprehend today. Children were sent to prison for stealing a loaf of bread! You can imagine those prisons were Godforsaken places. You might have to be really creative to find those elusive ancestors. Can't you imagine they'd be surprised that we care what happened to them?

Sources: Kansas History Museum; John Michael Neill (our Conference speaker)

State Census Records

IOWA

The 1925 Iowa Census! Who else but a family historian would have thought to include not only the place of birth for both parents of the person enumerated, but also both parents' names - including a mother's maiden name? And if that's not enough to give you a happy dance, they also included the parents' marriage location and age at last birthday. There are many more answers on the census, including religious affiliation, military service, length of time in the US and length of time in Iowa. This apparently is a six-page enumeration form. <http://iagenweb.org/census/>

KANSAS

The 1915 Kansas State Census wanted to know how many books were in your ancestor's home library if they owned more than twenty. (Was one of those the family Bible we're all seeking?) The 1915 census lists all members of household by name, including age, sex, race or color, and state or country of birth. Also listed: where from to Kansas (state or country) and military record (condition of discharge, state of enlistment, letter or name of company or command, number of regiment or other organization to which attached, arm of the service, and name of military prison if confined in one).
<http://www.kshs.org/genealogists/census/kansas/census1915ks.htm>

MISSOURI

The 1876 Missouri State Census lists the number of livestock, amount of crops grown, and gallons of whisky, wine and molasses produced. Not all of the Missouri state censuses survived, but Ancestry.com has some surviving enumerations. An extraction of the census records is available in their archives. It includes the names of every person in the household, their age in range (1-10, 10-18, 18-21, 21-45, 45+), sex, and occasionally a special notation.

http://www.win.org/library/other/historical_society/1876_state_census.htm

Good news for Missouri researchers! With the help of donations, the State Historical Society of Missouri has been able to generate enough funding to support a return to their regular 6-days-per-week operating schedule, at least for the next four months. Starting February 5th, hours were restored to 8am - 4:45 pm Monday thru Friday, and 8am - 3:30 pm on Saturdays. Additional donations will still be needed to continue this schedule beyond the next four months. See their website for more information on how you can help.

Virtual Cemetery of Civil War Veterans in Kansas & Missouri

If you are searching in Kansas or Missouri for the final resting place of a Civil War veteran, you will want to take a look at this amazing website. John Jackson, retired after 21 years of service in the U.S. Army, has set a goal of photographing every Civil War veteran's grave in Kansas by 2011, the 150th anniversary of the start of the Civil War. As his project progresses, photos of each gravesite are being posted to http://www.flickr.com/photos/civilwar_veterans_tombstones/

John has also posted more than 800 obituaries and biographies of Civil War veterans at http://skyways.lib.ks.us/genweb/civilwar/civil_war_veterans.htm

Some online military indexes and records may be obtained at: www.militaryindexes.com/

Take a few minutes and look at the state you're interested in. Perhaps they have a state census or military census that will provide some answers to your family questions.

Sources: Ancestry.com, Email Newsletter, 15 November 2009; TGS Blogspot; "Show Me State" Genealogical News, Vol 30 #4 Winter 2009

Fairfax County Virginia Records

Some Fairlax Circuit Court Historical Records finding aids have been posted online. These finding aids include indexes to Deeds from 1742-1841; Wills from 1742-1866 and Marriages from 1853-1957. Please visit their website for the complete list. www.fairfaxcounty.gov/courts/circuit/historical-records-finding-aids.htm.

Source: Katrina R. Krempasky, Fairfax Circuit Court Historical Records; Susazanne Levy, GeneLib Mailing List

1940 Federal Population Census

The 1940 US Census will be released digitally on April 2, 2012. The digital images will be accessible at NARA facilities nationwide through their public access computers as well as on personal computers via the internet. The 1940 and later censuses are not yet available for public use because of a statutory 72-year restriction on access for privacy reasons.



Questions asked on the 1940 census are similar to the questions found on earlier census schedules. Enumerators went door-to-door and recorded the location of the household and provided additional household data, such as the names for each member of the household and their relationships to the head of the household. Enumerators also recorded a personal description for each member including their age and sex, education, birthplace and naturalization status. A unique question asked about their residence on April 1, 1935. (Wonder what that was for?!) In addition, all individuals over the age of 14 were asked questions about their employment and 5% of the population was asked 15 additional questions. This sample question asked about their parents birthplace, earliest language spoken in the household; questions relating to veterans, social security and occupations. A final section specifically for women recorded marital status and the number of children born.

Researching African-American Genealogy:
Getting Past Brick Walls



Traci WILSON-KLEEKAMP presented a very interesting program on tracing African American Ancestors at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library on February 6th in conjunction with the TSCPL. WILSON-KLEEKAMP presented information that could pertain to anyone looking for an ancestor.

If you've hit a roadblock; you're looking for someone or something in your genealogy research that appears not to exist or the pieces you've put together don't seem to add up; the real trick to breaking down that brickwall may be just as easy as putting your records aside for awhile and then coming back to them with fresh eyes. The most difficult part of conducting African American research is the period of pre-1870 - before African Americans were enumerated in the census. The 1870 census is the first census where African Americans appeared. Although some families may have oral histories or older family members who can provide information, many do not. In the absence of oral history or family members who can provide information or resources; every new discovery is exciting and adds another piece to the puzzle. The real mystery is "who owned my family?" "What happened to them?" "Where did they come from?" It's just a matter of unraveling all those elusive pieces.

If you have followed the NBC series "Who Do You Think You Are?", the lives of Emmitt Smith and Spike Lee show just how difficult information can be to obtain - even with the assistance of professional researchers. There are a number of resources available at the TGS Library that could assist with African-American Family History. We all know that every family has a story. Some of our ancestors left lives behind that they didn't or couldn't talk about. We have to respect that.

**Topeka Genealogical Society
38th Annual Conference**

Co-Hosted by and held at the
Kansas Historical Society
6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka, KS

**Speaker:
Michael John Neill
“Our Elusive
Female” Ancestors”**



**April 24, 2010
8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

MEMBER SOCIETY OF:



**Barbara LITTLE VINES,
Speaker**

April 30, 2011

**Topeka Genealogical Society’s
39th Annual Conference**

8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**Co-Hosted by and held at the
Kansas Historical Society**

6425 SW 6th Avenue, Topeka, KS