



Partner Society Roundup

A quick review of the genealogy landscape of Texas is highlighted in the following TxSGS Partner Society vignettes. Information on all partner societies is listed on the TxSGS website at <http://www.txsgs.org/partner-societies/>.

District 1:

To give back to their community, the **Rio Grande Valley Hispanic Genealogical Society** is launching a scholarship program. RGVHGS hosted a fundraising luncheon on Saturday, April 23, to raise money for scholarship funds; the first scholarship was awarded in May. Active members continue to index records from Mexico with several indexing projects underway. One book has been published in a new series of land grant indexes slated for Reynosa, Mexico.

The **Tip-O-Texas Genealogical Society** meets twice a month with a program for each meeting. For their many “winter Texan” members, TOTGS

recently hosted a session on Germanic genealogy. According to Mary Torres, Vice-President and program chair, many of their winter Texans present programs for the society. One spoke on finding living cousins using Facebook and LinkedIn and shared about visiting her ancestral Swedish home to connect with cousins she found through her research. This past year, TOTGS focused on developing good society management techniques, producing their first annual report in 2015, revising bylaws, and creating a new policies and procedures manual.

District 2:

The **Coastal Bend Genealogical**

Society meets every other month at 2 p.m. in the Board Room of the Corpus Christi Public Library. The May 14th meeting featured Mark and Christine Robbins; Mark is a professor of history at the Del Mar Junior College in Corpus Christi and Christine is an assistant professor of Anthropology at A&M Kingsville.

District 3:

Workshops and monthly genealogy programs provide opportunities for **Genealogical Society of Aransas County** members to improve their research skills while collaborating with fellow genealogists in pursuing their family heritage.

The past year brought monthly meetings with programs that educated and entertained the Matagorda County genealogist. Meetings resume in September after the **Matagorda County Genealogical Society** annual summer hiatus.

Genealogy presentations the

second Monday of each month enrich members and guests of the **Victoria County Genealogical Society**. Meetings are held at 7 p.m. at the First Christian Church Fellowship Hall in Victoria. The July 11th meeting features Gary Dunnam speaking on "The Frels Family."

William and Isabella Mooreland Ponton Family Descendants keep up-to-date with the latest in family developments through an active Facebook page and a Ponton Family reunion held each year in April.

District 4:

The **Bay Area Genealogical Society** now has Special Interest Groups featuring ethnic research plus a mentoring program, "Members Helping Members," for beginning genealogists. Two hundred strong, BAGS encourages new members with a New Member Luncheon each month. A Telephone Committee contacts members with event reminders and a pre-meeting slide show advertises news and upcoming events along with photos of past programs. Frequent trips to the Clayton Library plus a journal, newsletter, and website encourage members in their research and publication efforts.

The **Houston Genealogical Forum** had an exciting and productive 2015-2016 year under the leadership of Marjorie Lowe. Monthly meetings featured presentations on a wide-variety of topics including African-American genealogy, the Cherokee Trail of Tears, and criminal records. The HGF Fall Workshop in 2015 featured topics on writing a family history by John Colletta. Michael D. Lacopo shared his expertise in Swiss research and blogging in the Spring Workshop in 2016. HGF sponsored a sold-out six-week Genealogy Class led by Marje Harris. A new website highlights HGF

activities and initiatives. In the coming 2016-2017 year, HGF is exploring a Speakers' and Writers' List to provide HGF members the opportunity to speak and write about their genealogical research and share their expertise within the group.

The **Texas City Ancestry Searchers** celebrated their 40th anniversary in March with a banquet and proclamation from the Texas City mayor. One of the two surviving charter members, Susie Moncla, traveled from Louisiana to share with banquet attendees her memories of the beginnings of the society. Jean Laffite, aka Jim Nonus, entertained the group in full costume. Excellent monthly programs include "Show & Tell," featuring members sharing mementos and photos of their ancestors. A continuing series of free workshops, "Lost Bones," features guest speakers presenting various genealogical topics.

The **Humble Area Genealogical Society** hosted a very popular Salt Lake City research trip for members and other genealogists, along with trips to Clayton Library, a DNA lab, the Funeral Museum, and Olivewood Cemetery. Excellent programs are featured at monthly meetings. THAGS also supports a genealogy library at Lone Star College North Harris on the second floor of the library, 2700 W. W. Thorne Drive, Houston, TX 77073.

District 6:

The **Chaparral Genealogical Society & Library** recently relocated their library from Tomball to Magnolia and had a grand opening in their new facility. Along with its Tomball and Montgomery County collections, the society expanded its library collections to cover more of Texas and Louisiana. Staffed by volunteers, the library is a research facility that is open to the public.

Learn more about the Chaparral Genealogical Society & Library on their new website: <http://www.chaparralgensoc.org/>.

In 2015, the **Montgomery County Genealogical & Historical Society** awarded a grand total of \$700 to the following local organizations: the Genealogy Department of the Montgomery County Memorial Library in Conroe, Texas; the Heritage Museum of Montgomery County; and the Montgomery County Historical Commission. MCGHS also has a new publication in the works covering the county's history and obituaries.

Serving College Station, Bryan, and the Brazos Valley, the **Texas Research Ramblers Genealogical Society's** volunteers lend support to the Carnegie Center of Brazos Valley History. Earlier this year, they held a free 4-week Genealogy Workshop. The Ramblers maintain Brazos County index listings on their website for the public and periodically publish new ones there (<http://www.texasresearchramblers.org/>).

The **Washington County Genealogical Society** is currently focusing its efforts on transcribing burials within the county, helping to maintain Washington County cemeteries, and in assisting researchers — from near and far — with burial locations. They also maintain customized Google Maps of Washington County cemeteries as well as the Washington County cemetery memorials on Findagrave.com. Along with the cemetery information on their website, WCGS maintains church information, local history, obituaries, marriages, and more at: <http://www.bluebonnetgenealogy.org/>.

District 7:

In April, the **East Texas Genealogical Society** hosted an enthusiastically received DNA Seminar led by national DNA expert

Debbie Parker Wayne. The 16th annual Family History Fair co-sponsored with the local Family History Library drew over 100 attendees and featured Dr. Deborah Burkett from the Cherokee County Historical Commission.

For Historic Preservation Month in May, the **Smith County Historical Society** and Smith County Museum hosted a traveling exhibit and pictorial essay from Humanities Texas, "The Way Things Were: Texas Settlers and Their Buildings, 1860s-1930s." Bill O'Neal, state historian, was the featured speaker at the annual May Ice Cream Social. Slated July 5th, an encore presentation of the Spirits of Oakwood Cemetery Tour will be provided in air-conditioned comfort at the SCHS meeting. As the oldest cemetery in Tyler, Oakwood Cemetery embodies a rich history with many notable Texans buried within its boundaries.

In addition to hosting monthly meetings, members of the **Timpson Area Genealogical and Heritage Society** stay busy organizing their relatively new genealogy library. TAHGS maintains a computerized obituary and cemetery index for the area surrounding Timpson; genealogy library volunteers are willing to do look ups. In 2015, TAGHS applied for and received a Tocker Grant for digitizing local newspapers for the University of North Texas' Portal to Texas History; more details about digitization grants and records preservation will be highlighted in the next issue of *Stirpes*.

The annual **Van Zandt County Genealogical Society** genealogy seminar slated 24 Sep 2016 features Don Raney. For more information, watch their website at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txvzcg/vzgs.htm> In 2016, VZCGS applied for and received a \$33,100 Tocker Grant for digitizing local newspapers for the

University of North Texas' Portal to Texas History; more details about digitization grants and records preservation will be featured in the next issue of *Stirpes*.

District 8:

Expanding the Lamar County Deaths and Cemetery Records online database is a focus for the **Lamar County Genealogical Society**; the database is currently approaching 100,000 entries. More than just basic information, the database includes obituaries in addition to links to headstone photos, researched biographies of the deceased, newspaper articles, and more. The database also allows submissions by non-members.

The **Red River County TX Genealogical Society** has a well-deserved reputation for excellent, well-attended programs. Vice-President Johnie Lee researched and compiled the meticulously researched 2015 Grand Prize award winning book, *Red River County in 1890: The Year of the Missing Census*.

District 9:

Seminars with speakers Glenn Kinkade and Kelvin Meyers highlighted the past year for the **North Texas Genealogical Association**. Both seminars were sold out and attendees continue to comment on the quality of the presentations. Programs and workshops enjoy high attendance due to the quality of speakers featured. Excitement is building for the September seminar featuring Lisa Louise Cooke; NTGS invites everyone to join them for this event on September 10, 9 a.m. in Wichita Falls.

District 10:

Every second Thursday except during a summer hiatus, the **Cedar Hill Genealogical Society** gathers at 6:30 p.m. at the Cedar Hill Library for a meet-and-greet social time followed

by a membership meeting and program at 7:00 p.m. CHGS recently published their first book, *Gone with the Wind, the 1856 Cedar Hill Tornado*. Featured in a March article by the *Dallas Morning News*, a team of six genealogists from CHGS led by Dave Klauck researched the tornado, its victims, and the town prior to destruction by the tornado to create a definitive narrative of the twister that devastated Dallas County's first community.

As the longest continuously running genealogical society in the state of Texas, the **Dallas Genealogical Society** celebrated in May 60 years of genealogical leadership in Dallas County and Texas. The DGS annual Summer Seminar brings Denise May Levenick, The Family Curator, to Dallas, Friday and Saturday, July 29 – July 30; the topic is "Preserving and Sharing Family Treasures." Curt Witcher from the Allen County Public Library (Indiana) is featured in the Fall Seminar slated September 17, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. DGS supports the Dallas Public Library with monetary and materials donations. In April, DGS partnered with MyHeritage in a pilot project to photograph Pleasant Mound Cemetery for BillionGraves.com. DGS is also partnering with the Portal to Texas History to digitize and preserve Dallas County Records.

The **Grand Prairie Genealogical Society** has recently completed an inventory of over 13,000 graves in every cemetery in Grand Prairie except one. In most cemeteries, the cemetery committee was granted access to cemetery records and prepared a database, then took photos of the gravestones. Even those burials without gravestones were included in the inventory and mounted at Find A Grave. The Cemetery Committee just received permission to inventory the lone remaining cemetery. The Grand Prairie Library

renovation is nearing completion and will reopen the 1st of June. GPGS volunteers have been working with library staff on organizing the new, larger genealogy “Roots” room.

District 11:

The **Arlington Genealogical Society** donated \$5,000 to the Arlington Public Library capital fund for the new library building. The Arlington Public Library is under construction with expected completion in late 2018. In the interim, AGS meets at the Arlington West Police Service Station, located at 2060 W. Green Oaks Blvd. in their Community Room.

The **Johnson County Genealogical Society** hosted a well-received beginning genealogy workshop in the fall with many visitors in attendance. The society holds interesting and educational programs on the second Thursday of each month at the Cleburne Public Library, 302 W. Henderson.

Mid-Cities Genealogical Society launched its new website in May—they invite genealogists to visit www.txmcgs.org to experience their new online presence. Monthly meetings continue throughout the year on the first Thursday of each month. The public is invited to attend the 6:30 p.m. “Meet & Greet” followed by a program at 7:00 p.m.; meetings are held at the Mary Lib Saleh Eulless Public Library. On October 8, MCGS is hosting a one-day seminar with Sunny Morton on “Discovering Your US Ancestors.”

District 12:

Waco area genealogists benefit from the excellent working relationship shared by the **Central Texas Genealogical Society** and the Genealogy Center of the Waco/McLennan County Library, which

strengthens both the society and the library through co-sponsored events and research opportunities. CTGS has recently embraced digital distribution of their quarterly to control the escalating costs of publishing and mailing a printed publication. Interesting and informative programs are featured at each meeting, helping members improve research skills and learn how to find elusive ancestors.

Returning original unclaimed marriage licenses to family members is a joint project of the **Hill County Genealogical Society** and the Hill County Historical Commission. An index of over 8,000 unclaimed marriage licenses is available at the Hillsboro Public Library. Out-of-town researchers may request an index search by sending the name of the bride and groom and the approximate year they married (if known) to Bill and Mollie Stinson at P.O. Box 1134, Hillsboro, TX 76645 or call (254) 582-3242. Inquiries should be accompanied with the name, mailing address, and phone number of the requestor plus one dollar to cover postage and handling. Descendants of early Hill County pioneers can apply for a First Families of Hill County Certificate. Details are available on the HCGS website at <http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txhcgsl>.

District 13:

The annual writing competition held by the **Austin Genealogical Society** awarded prizes to many authors highlighted in the 2015 publication of the *AGS Quarterly*. The 2015 AGS seminar featured Judy G. Russell speaking to an enthusiastic crowd. In May, Thomas MacEntee brought his high-tech genealogy acumen to Austin for the annual four-session seminar. AGS supports records preservation in Texas through donations including a sponsorship for records preservation at the Texas

General Land Office.

The **Genealogical and Historical Society of Caldwell County's** quality publication, *Plum Creek Almanac*, continued its winning ways with 3rd place in 2015. GHSCC supports the Nichols Memorial Library in Luling, which features family surname files, original marriage licenses, numerous pictures of the families of Caldwell County, and many other research tools.

An exciting new partnership has developed between the **Genealogical Society of Kendall County's** research library, the Family History Place (FHP), and the Family History Center (FHC) of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (LDS). After closing their library, the FHC brought their computers and a microfilm reader to the FHP, greatly increasing FHP research resources. Trained volunteers are available at all times and hours have expanded to include two evenings. GSKC also partnered with the Patrick Heath Public Library (PHPL) to co-sponsor successful workshops, training, symposiums, programs, a children's class, and exhibits. A community celebration for First Families of Kendall County is slated for the fall. Recent events include the popular Spring Seminar that featured Michael Lacopo and the May meeting with speaker Bruce Shackelford, Director of the South Texas Heritage Center at the Witte Museum.

The Admiral Nimitz Foundation and the Nimitz Education and Research Center sponsor a genealogical society, **Sons and Daughters of World War II Veterans**, to honor our “Greatest Generation” who served during World War II. Society membership is open to relatives by birth, adoption or marriage to anyone who served in the United States military in World War II. A Memorial membership is also available for unrelated friends of a qualifying veteran. Memberships require the veteran's proof of

service between December 7, 1941 and December 31, 1946. Society members receive a numbered and dated certificate bearing the member's name and the name of their World War II veteran ancestor. For more information, visit <http://www.sonsanddaughtersofww2veterans.org/>.

The **Williamson County Genealogical Society** hosted a very successful annual seminar in March featuring Curt B. Witcher from the Allen County Public Library (Indiana) who presented four lectures on methodology, military records, immigration, and unique Internet resources. The WCGS quarterly publication *The Chisholm Trail* features a variety of articles from members. The society's growing library collection is housed at the Round Rock Public Library.

District 14:

The **West Texas Genealogical Society** meets every 2nd Thursday at the Rose Park Activity Center; meetings are geared toward learning new techniques in genealogy research. WTGS is currently exploring a series of summer workshops for beginners and beyond, focused on computer research. For more information on meetings or the workshop, contact WTGS at wtps59@yahoo.com.

The second Thursday of every month, the **Comanche County Genealogical Society** meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Comanche County Museum in Comanche. In true West Texas tradition, President Henry Adcock assures that refreshments are available at each meeting. In July, CCGS hosts an annual potluck with good food and conversation among genealogists. The society is currently photographing every cemetery headstone in the county and researching death certificates. The photographs and death certificates are collected in

books available at the Comanche County Museum; contact (325) 356-5115 for lookups. Volunteers are also posting the cemetery information to findagrave.com. Volunteers from CCGS serve on the museum board and volunteer to work at the museum, which houses CCGS materials such as cemetery information, many family history books that individual families in the county have created, and more.



Is your partner society missing? Perhaps our contact information is out of date. Please contact your District Representative and memberinfo@txsgs.org with current contact data. Societies are encouraged to post society events on the TxSGS online calendar; contact calendar@txsgs.org with event details.

District 15:

The **Pecan Valley Genealogical Society** maintains a genealogy library and research room for use by genealogists in Brownwood and beyond. Their historically focused Facebook page is extremely popular, serving as a resource for historic photos, photos of relics, and documents; some posts have had over 1,000 hits. PVGS member and historian Clay Riley manages the Facebook page. The PVGS Website honors military personnel—Central Texas casualties from various conflicts are noted online with burial location along with awards and service, creating a virtual memorial for the service person.

In 2015-2016, the **San Angelo Genealogical and Historical Society** hosted a Saturday research day at the West Texas Collection featuring webinar presentations by Thomas MacEntee, Saturday seminars on a variety of topics, and a selection of fascinating programs at their 1st Tuesday meetings, September through May. Their publications, *Stalkin' Kin in Old West Texas* and *The SAGHS Newsletter*, received recognition as the best in Texas at the 2015 TxSGS Annual Awards Banquet. After a summer hiatus, SAGHS resumes their genealogy activities with their annual Genealogy Fair on 30 August 2016, 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., in the Stephens Central Library. Open to the public, the Genealogy Fair features over \$1,000 in genealogy door prizes.

District 16:

In February, **Amarillo Genealogical Society** volunteers helped Boy Scouts with their Genealogy Merit Badge, one of many merit badge classes provided at a Merit Badge Workshop at West Texas A&M in Amarillo. President Cindy Wallace reports that 25 young men left the workshop with family trees and all the documentation required for their merit badge. In May, two AGS members, Donna Otto and Elaine Maples, presented a program on their recent trip to Ellis Island and Ellis Island immigration research. During the AGS summer hiatus, Cindy will teach two sessions on Court House research with field trips to the courthouse for research practice. Contact Cindy Wallace at the Amarillo Public Library for more information or visit the Amarillo Public Library or AGS websites.

District 17:

The **Borden County Historical Commission** focused the past several

years on restoring their Borden County Museum, repairing the building and preserving their many exhibits on early Texas Panhandle ranching. The Borden County Heritage Day hosted by the BCHC on 11 Jun 2016 in Gail, Texas, features a look back at many aspects of life on the edge of the Caprock in early years. Lisa Mahler, President of the BCHC, extends an invitation to attend the Heritage Day and be immersed in South Plains history, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., in downtown Gail and the Borden County Event Center.

District 18:

The **Midland Genealogical Society** supports the John & Rosalind Redfern Genealogical Research Center, the largest genealogy library in Texas west of I35. The Redfern Genealogical Research Center is a research destination with Texas, United States, and international research materials. MGS purchases books and research materials for the Redfern Genealogical Research Center with funds from the Rosalind Redfern endowment to MGS. Bill Robinson is the new president for MGS; Marion Stewart is the new program chair for the coming term. Marion is looking forward to a year of fascinating programs sure to entertain and educate Midland area genealogists.

Walter Wilson is the new **Permian Basin Genealogical Society** president, assuming leadership after the previous president passed away in December. The PBGS Annual Workshop is slated 24 Sep 2016. PBGS favorite Pat Gordon is the workshop speaker; she will focus on beginning research in the first session and the following topics will build on that foundation. The April meeting introduced Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts to genealogy for a

genealogy merit badge. PBGS had patches made for the genealogy society to give Scout attendees; the merit badge is awarded by the scouting organizations after completion of merit badge requirements.

District 19:

El Paso Genealogical Society's low-key spring "Eatin' Meetin'" featuring a pot luck and members' "Show and Tell" brought a new member to the society. Ethnic groups, history, and food were highlighted in several recent programs. EPGS is currently making plans for exciting programs and events in the coming year and exploring ideas for Saturday events.

District 20:

In February and March of 2015, the **Kerrville Genealogical Society** held a seven-week genealogy course presented by Harry and Mary Alice Dell, and opened the doors of the new KGS Research Center & Library to the public on 21 Apr 2015. KGS is proud to have successfully accomplished these two big projects simultaneously in the first quarter of 2015. Established in 1970, KGS continues to build on a current collection of over 50 books of Kerr County land records, vital records, and Kerr County obituaries covering the late 1800s to present time. The KGS Research Center & Library is featured in this issue in *Texas Genealogy Backroads: Hidden Gem of the Hill Country*.

With a membership of over 500, the **San Antonio Genealogical & Historical Society** provides a myriad of educational opportunities: regular beginner and intermediate classes, workshops on various subjects of interest, SIGs, monthly Sunday afternoon classes, and more. TxSGS Director of Education, Susan Kaufman, is the featured speaker for

SAG&HS's annual seminar slated 21 Oct 2016. Watch the SAG&HS website at www.txsaghs.org for details. The SAG&HS library boasts more than 15,000 volumes plus over 600 maps; the library catalogue is searchable online. Held 11 Jun 2016, the Annual SAG&HS Founder's Day Luncheon honors the Founders of the San Antonio Genealogical and Historical Society and the descendants of the First Families of Bexar County who settled in the county prior to August 1850. Three new 2016 – 2018 directors will be installed and guest Speaker Linda Beard will speak on "Anne Hutchinson, Witch or Mother of American Freedoms?" For more information, visit the SAG&HS Facebook page or www.txsaghs.org.

The **Castro Colonies Heritage Association** brings together people with a common interest in the Castro colonies of Castroville, Quihi, Vandenburg (New Fountain) and D'Hanis, plus all of Medina County, Texas. Dates, locations and topics for the quarterly meetings are posted at the CCHA website at <http://www.castrocolonies.us/>. On 13 Sep 2015, Barbara Froebel, District Representative for TxSGS District 20, presented the 2014 Grand Prize Writing Award to members of the History Book Committee of CCHA for their recent publication *History of Medina County Texas, Volume I*, reviewed in this issue of *Stirpes*. The History Book Committee, chaired by Laurel Oppelt D'Orsogna and John G. Wernette, included Suann Agold, Amy Jo Baker, Connie Balmos, Shirley Click, Irene Cox, Jack Finger, Carole Harton, Dianne Keeton, Ellen Loessberg, Harry Macey, Loraine Miller, Debbie Payne, Mary Ann Pringle, and Jonell Taylor. ★

Partner Society Roundup

Streamlined for Easier Input

Through *Stirpes*, our blog, Facebook, and more, TxSGS delivers Texas genealogy news to thousands of researchers, hobbyists, and professionals across the nation. Wouldn't you like to get your society news and events publicized among this large group of avid genealogists?

Good news!

Texas State Genealogical Society now has two streamlined methods for Partner Societies and Partner Society Delegates to publicize society events: (1) an event/news item form and (2) a calendar form. Please use both for your society events!

News and Activities

To submit activities and news items for *Stirpes*, the TxSGS blog, the TxSGS Facebook page, or our e-News newsletter, go to <https://tinyurl.com/yclrdp94>.

Stirpes editors, for example, will format submissions for use in the Partner Society Roundup, a review of genealogical events and news from our Partner Societies. The editors recommend that you create and edit your submission in Word or some other text-editing program, then cut and paste the text in the appropriate box on the form. This is an ideal forum for posting press releases.

All entries will be considered for the TxSGS blog, the TxSGS Facebook page, or our e-News newsletter. **Please note: events scheduled for the second**

quarter of 2018 and beyond will be considered for the March 2018 issue of *Stirpes*. These entries must be submitted by 15 January 2018! Entries that occur in the third quarter of 2018 or that are submitted after January 15 will be considered for the June 2018 issue of *Stirpes*.

Each form allows three event or news entries. If you have more than three event or news items to share, please use a new form. You are welcome to submit speakers, seminars, research trips, or any other event your society is planning. If we get overwhelmed with entries, that will be a good thing!

Calendar

To submit information for the TxSGS calendar, go to <https://tinyurl.com/y9fph4va>.

There is no deadline for calendar events. Please provide enough advance notice so that the calendar volunteer has time to get them posted.

You'll notice that the information required for the two entry forms is different—go ahead and submit your event items on both forms. The calendar volunteer doesn't necessarily have access to the event and news form. ★