

DCGS News

PATTI GILLESPIE’S “COURTHOUSE RECORDS” ON TAP FOR OCT. 10TH



Wonderful stories of individuals and families are told in documents found in courthouses. Birth, death, and marriage certificates, probate, wills, land, court case documents, and guardianship papers are part of these stories.

The benefits of courthouse research will become clear to the researcher not familiar with these documents in **Patti Gillespie’s** presentation, “Courthouse Records: One-Stop Shopping for Family Secrets,” at the October 10th Denton

County Genealogical Society meeting. Attendees will gather in the meeting room of the Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland Street, Denton. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with a brief business meeting and program at 7 p.m. Visitors are welcome.

Patti Todd Gillespie brings energy and humor to her classes. She is a believer in lifetime learning and inclusive presenting. An avid hobby genealogist for 30 years, Patti formed Family Lines & Stories, her own research company, nine years ago. She researches for clients and speaks to groups, small and large, both inside and outside Texas. She has presented at RootsTech, and for the Utah Genealogical Association virtual conference, the Federation of Genealogical Societies, and the TxSGS Family History Conference, as well as for local societies in Ohio and across Texas. She continues as fifth term president of the Wise County Genealogical Society while waiting for a willing soul to step up. She watches genealogy webinars and South Korean and Chinese television shows when not attending to her husband, children, grandchildren, landscaping, and rescue dog. Eventually Patti plans to continue her blog for the 25 avid readers she treasures.



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Photo: Jones Photographic Studios of America, Studio No. 1, Fireworks at the Denton County Courthouse Celebrating the End of World War I, 1918-; digital image, *The Portal to Texas History* (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph12494/m1/1/>; 2 May 2023); citing Denton Public Library.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Announcement of new officers!

Marian Carroll has resigned as treasurer to accept appointment as membership chair effective October 1, 2024. I appointed Linda Lane to serve the remainder of the term as treasurer, effective October

1, 2024. Please help me welcome our new officers at our next meeting. I am very happy to have both the treasurer and membership chair positions filled as both are very important to the administration of DCGS.

Explanation of Dues Increase

At the last meeting, I announced the recommendation of the Executive Board to increase dues by \$5 for each membership category. This proposal will be decided by your vote at the October meeting. The Executive Board recommended the increase because our expenditures for the past two years have been

more than the amount of funds received for those years. This is primarily due to an increase in the cost of obtaining quality speakers for our meeting presentations, often more than double the expense previously. It is worth noting that excellent programming is a primary factor in attracting new members and keeping current members interested. This expense increase poses no immediate risk to DCGS since the treasury fund balance is sufficient to handle the increased cost in the short term. However, it is a path that is not sustainable in the long run. So the recommendation to increase dues is designed to solve a problem before it happens. The effective date of the proposed dues increase is June 1, 2025. I thank you for your support of the recommendation of the Executive Board.

—Robert Lane, President
presidentdcgs@gmail.com

2024-25 DCGS OFFICERS

- President**.....Robert L. Lane, presidentdcgs@gmail.com
- Vice President** Stacie Briggs, vicepresidentdcgs@gmail.com
- Secretary** Eileen O’Neill, secretarydcgs@gmail.com
- Treasurer** Linda Lane, financedcgs@gmail.com
- Librarian**Laura Douglas, librariandcgs@gmail.com
- Membership**.....Marian Carroll, membershipdcgs@gmail.com
- Webmaster****Volunteer Needed**, Chris Strauss (outgoing), publicitydcgs@gmail.com
- Hospitality** **Volunteer Needed**, socialdcgs@gmail.com
- Newsletter Editor**Nancy Gilbride Casey, newsletterdcgs@gmail.com
- NGS Delegate**Robert L. Lane, presidentdcgs@gmail.com
- TxSGS District C Representative** Emily Coffman Richardson, districtC@TXSGS.org



Find us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyGenealogicalSociety>

Society Website:

www.genealogydentontexas.org

SEPTEMBER 2024 MEETING MINUTES

*Denton County Genealogical Society, Inc.
September 12, 2024 Minutes*

President Robert Lane called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance. Linda Lane, assistant membership chair, welcomed all. Total attendance was 39: 27 members present (23 in person and 4 on Zoom), and 12 visitors, seven of whom came for a special presentation and five additional who were there for the meeting. Beth Leggieri introduced the visitors, including Diana White, our first president 45 years ago when the society was formed. Diana White was invited to make a few remarks. President Lane presented Diana with a DCGS tote bag and note pad as a special thank you.

New Scholarship—Nancy Gilbride Casey presented information about the Diana Pearson White Continuing Genealogical Education Scholarship. For this year, the amount of up to \$200 will be awarded to a member who has fully paid their dues by October 10, 2024, and who has applied for the scholarship to be reimbursed for a genealogy class registration or fees. It can be for TxSGS, RootsTech, or an online course related to genealogy, for example. DCGS will make the award on November 14, 2024. The recipient will provide a receipt for the course taken and, after attending, a short report on what they learned.

Reports by Board Members

Secretary's Report—Minutes of the May meeting were distributed in the newsletter and approved with no corrections. In the absence of a membership chair, the acting secretary introduced visitors not introduced by Beth Leggieri.

Treasurer's Report—There were no questions about the treasurer's report and it was filed for audit.

Social/Hospitality—The president thanked everyone for helping to set up the refreshments and thanked Beth Leggieri for the anniversary cake. He asked for a volunteer to be appointed hospitality chair. Absent that, the goodies table will no longer be offered at meetings.

New Business—A motion was made to establish the Diana Pearson White Continuing Genealogical Education Scholarship as an annual award. Passed by acclamation.

Announcements

- ◆ Dues increase of \$5 proposed by the Executive Board to be voted on at the October meeting. Increase needed to cover increase in speaker fees, which is out of our control. If passed, it will be effective for June 1, 2025.
- ◆ Vacant officer positions: Membership chair may become filled with a small shift. Hospitality chair is still needed. Webmaster imminently needed to replace Chris Strauss. Position descriptions are available to anyone wanting to see one.
- ◆ *Denton City Death Records* published by DCGS - copies available to all.
- ◆ There will be a field trip on October 5 to Roselawn Cemetery. Be prepared to clean some stones.
- ◆ The next DCGS meeting is October 10, 2024.

Tonight's Program is presented by Stacie Briggs: "Find a Grave, BillionGraves, and the Stories in the Stones."

At the conclusion of the program, President Lane asked for assistance in clearing and storing the tables and chairs to return the room to a condition for library use. He gave his "Last Word" and adjourned the meeting at 8:45 p.m.



—Respectfully Submitted by Linda
Lane, Acting Secretary

Image by [rawpixel.com](https://www.rawpixel.com)

SEPTEMBER MEETING RECAP

By Kathy Lawrence

Stacie George Briggs simply hates the thought of anyone being forgotten. She makes it her mission to document as many graves as possible via online sites, and discussed the main differences between Find a Grave and BillionGraves with attendees at the Sept. 12th DCGS meeting.

In a presentation entitled, “Find a Grave, BillionGraves, and the Stories in the Stones,” Stacie walked attendees through the process of setting up accounts, searching for graves, and adding memorials to the sites. Her handout included a list of the various types of stone materials used for headstones during different time periods, information about many of the symbols found on markers and their meanings, and details about the proper way to clean headstones.

For a fun visual aid Stacie brought along her “cemetery kit,” which she uses as part of the process of photographing and documenting graves. The kit enables her to expose and clean the markers.



Arguably the highlight of Stacie’s presentation was photos of numerous interesting grave markers, many of which included meaningful symbols or other touching images and descriptions.



Diana Pearson White (left), first president of the Denton County Genealogical Society, attended the September 12th meeting as the society’s celebrates its 45th anniversary this year. In fitting tribute, the society voted to establish the Diana Pearson White Continuing Genealogical Education Scholarship in Diana’s honor. The annual scholarship will provide up to \$200 to one or more recipients who will use the funds to gain new skills at a local, regional, or national genealogy education event. Diana’s family and friends, along with DCGS members and visitors, celebrated the event with cake, refreshments, and fellowship.



TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance—August 15, 2024		\$3,391.04
Deposits		
4/13/2024—dues	\$40.00	
Total Deposits		\$40.00
Disbursements		
9/12/2024—speaker	\$75.00	
9/12/2024—cards	\$11.00	
9/12/2024—cake	\$24.99	
Total Disbursements		\$110.99
Balance—September 19, 2024		\$3,209.96
<i>—Respectfully Submitted, Marian Carroll, Treasurer</i>		

Help Needed for Annual Lock-In

We are looking for individuals who would like to help with the Lock-In on October 18. We need people to take one hour shifts to help monitor the classes. You do not have to stay for the entire day, times are flexible. Contact Laura Douglas if you would like to volunteer.

Laura.Douglas@cityofdenton.com or
(940) 349-8749

Diana Pearson White Continuing Genealogical Education Scholarship *Application Deadline is October 15th*

Don't miss this first opportunity to apply for up to \$200 towards attending an upcoming genealogical class, course, conference, or other event, to gain new skills and further your research.

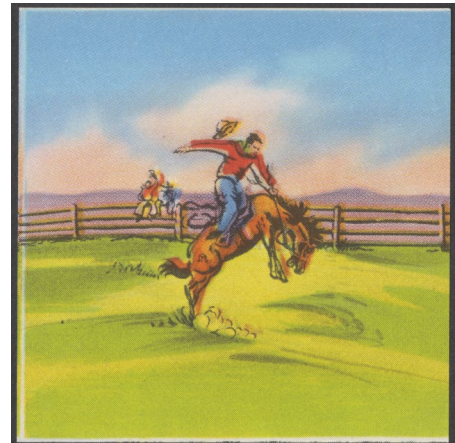
- ◆ All applicants must be current on 2024-25 DCGS membership dues (by 10/10/24)
- ◆ Application and guidelines were sent to all members following the September DCGS meeting. If you did not receive one, email newsletterdcs@gmail.com.
- ◆ Applications are due no later than October 15th.
- ◆ Scholarship recipients will be announced at the November 14th DCGS meeting.

What do YOU want to learn?

ANCESTOR QUESTION OF THE MONTH: SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET!

This month we asked members to submit a story on “skeletons in the closet” discovered in the course of your research. Thank you to Linda Lane for the topic suggestion. Here are this month’s submissions.

Linda Hillyer Lane writes: “Edwin Lawson Hillyer was the youngest son of a preacher. He carried every piece of baggage that title suggested. He did not follow social norms and seemed to run into trouble wherever he turned. He had the good fortune of marrying a neighbor girl; they had a boy and a girl. Eddie had a bit of weakness of the lungs, so he went west to cowboy and toughen up a bit while the wife and kids stayed in Goliad. He and a buddy later traveled to McLennan County where they were arrested, tried, and sentenced to 5 years in Huntsville for horse theft. He tried to run about 2-1/2 years into his sentence. He was shot in the back and died from the wounds in 1881. His son and his widow never spoke of him to anyone. His daughter was too young to know the story, so the next generation had no details.”



Danville Asylum, abt. 1880

“The biggest secret that I uncovered is that my 2nd great-grandmother Catherine Ryan Gilbride was institutionalized in 1877, after she suffered a stillbirth and developed ‘puerperal mania,’” writes **Nancy Gilbride Casey**. “She spent over three years at Danville Asylum in Montour County, Pennsylvania, and died there at the age of 26 in 1881.”

One other big secret was that one of my husband’s ‘paper’ grandfathers was not his biological grandfather! This was revealed by several DNA matches with whom he shared significant amounts of DNA. We could not attribute the matches to any of his known lines. We’ve determined the ancestral family, but there are two possible brother candidates. Neither had other children (who might have later taken a DNA test), so we’ll never know which one is his true grandfather, though one is more likely than the other based on time and place.”



Save the Date for a Field Trip

Come along to explore the **Dallas Public Library’s Genealogy Collection**,
Saturday, November 16, 10 a.m. Details at the October meeting.

ANCESTOR QUESTION OF THE MONTH: SKELETONS IN THE CLOSET (CONTINUED)



Missy McCormick shares, “My maternal grandmother’s brother, Frank Finks, died in his hometown Marlin, Texas, on 8 April 1919, at age 26. His short life was filled with controversy. In 1917, he was charged along with two others with murdering Hal St. Clair on 25 July 1917. Frank was convicted in December 1917, while the other two indictees were acquitted. Through appeal, Frank’s case was remanded by the Court of Criminal Appeals in 1919 and transferred to Williamson County. Unfortunately, he was never able to have his case reheard, because he was shot to death by a former Sheriff C. H. Plott of Marlin on 8 April 1919, while out on bail. Mr. Plott was ultimately acquitted of charges. According to relatives, Frank was a local ‘rebel’ and some authorities disliked him. We cannot know what Frank’s life would have been like if he had not been shot. Could he have been acquitted?”



“There was a family legend about my mother’s mother, Adeline Chapman,” writes **Laura Douglas**. “Adeline had dark hair and dark eyes and so the story goes that her father, William Henry Chapman who was in the British Royal Navy, brought her home from one of his voyages. We thought it was just a story until I did a DNA test and found that my genetic relation to that line ends with my grandmother Adeline (pictured left). Using cluster research, a kind volunteer and I have been able to identify at least one set of Adeline’s grandparents, but no luck yet identifying which of their children is her parent.”



MEMBERCONNECT: NEWS, TIPS, & RESOURCES

Donna Spears shares, “Angus Baxter, author of *In Search of Your British and Irish Roots*, describes a naming pattern which was popular in England from 1700-1895:

- ◆ The first son was named after the father’s father.
- ◆ The second son was named after the mother’s father.
- ◆ The third son was named after the father.
- ◆ The fourth son was named after the father’s eldest brother.
- ◆ The first daughter after the mother’s mother.
- ◆ The second daughter after the father’s mother.
- ◆ The third daughter after the mother.
- ◆ The fourth daughter after the mother’s eldest sister.

ALL GENEALOGY, ALL DAY: IT'S LOCK-IN TIME

It's October, and that must mean it's time for the annual Genealogy Lock-In. Co-sponsored by the Waco-McLennan County Library's Genealogy Center and the Central Texas Genealogical Society, this event features a full day of genealogy webinars by noted presenters from around Texas and across the country. The event is virtual and freely streamed to libraries across the state.

The 2024 Genealogy Lock-In will be held on Friday, October 18, from 9 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Participants can come and go, stay for the full day, or view the programs from the comfort of their own homes. Eight presentations will be offered throughout the day.

In-person participants will gather in the Emily Fowler Central Library's meeting room, 502 Oakland Street, Denton, to view the webinars. Librarians and volunteers will be available for one-on-one help for those attending in person; tours of Special Collections will round out the day.

At-home participants will receive a link to view the webinars via email prior to the event.

Reserve your spot today for this **FREE** event. Register here: https://library.cityofdenton.com/screens/sc_lockin.html

The event features the following presentations:

9:00 – 9:50 a.m.—U.S. Naturalization: The Records, The Laws and the Impact, with Irene B. Walters, librarian, Houston Public Library's Family History Research Center—Discover the history of United States naturalization laws and requirements, how they affected your ancestors and their naturalizations, and how to utilize naturalization records for genealogical research.

10:00 – 10:50 a.m.—Genealogy Resources at the Texas General Land Office, with Kevin Klaus, Texas General Land Office Research Room team leader and information specialist—The Texas General Land Office holds a wealth of genealogical resources for anyone researching ancestors who received an original Texas land grant. The collection includes more than 35.5 million documents and over 45,000 maps and sketches, dating back to 1561. Explore the Spanish collection and Republic of Texas grants with an emphasis on bounty and donation grants, the Court of Claims files, and Confederate Scrip Voucher files. Learn how to search the free online database.

11:00 – 11:50 a.m.— So You Discovered You Have a Colonial Ancestor. Now What?, with Craig R. Scott, MA, CG, FUGA, president and CEO of Heritage Books, Inc.—Learn how to create a research plan for your colonial ancestor using available records in free and subscription databases. Examine existing laws of the period, the land process, and the probate process, look for muster rolls and payrolls, and learn how to use the state archives to enhance your search.

11:50 a.m. – 12:50 p.m.— Lunch on Your Own

12:50 – 2:10 p.m.— Getting Started with Your Genealogy, with Laura Douglas, head of Special Collections, Denton Public Library—Are you curious about your family history but just not sure how to start? It may be easier than you think. In this session we will discuss the basic concepts and processes of genealogical research, the first steps in gathering information, how to locate and evaluate records, and how to find free or low-cost training to grow your genealogical skills.

2:25 – 3:15 p.m.—Introducing the Retro Tech Lab: Digitally Preserving Family History, with Mark Dellenbaugh, MA, MLIS, genealogy and local history librarian at the Arlington Public Library—Learn about APL's experience of pitching, creating, and operating our new Retro Technology Lab and about personal digital archiving. The session will include a demonstration of some of the equipment and software used for converting audio and video tapes, 8mm & Super8 film, photos, negatives, slides, etc., to digital files, as well as lessons learned. Meet our most memorable patrons and hear their heart-warming moments of family memories preserved.

3:30 – 4:20 p.m.— I've Found My Irish Immigrant Ancestor. Now What? with Claire Bradley, MA, director of Irish Studies of the International Institute of Genealogical Studies—Are you lucky enough to have identified an Irish ancestor's place of origin? Depending on when the person emigrated, there are several ways to approach your next research avenue. Learn how to find resources available online, as well as where to find offline resources in Ireland, what research can be arranged remotely, and what must be done in person. Explore planning a research trip to Ireland and how to use DNA test results to enhance your work.

4:35 – 5:25 p.m.—Writing Your Family Story: Learning to Assess and Compile Your Research, with Emily Coffman Richardson, genealogist with KinSearchers; director-at-large, TxSGS—Writing our story and those of our ancestors is truly a key result for a genealogist in the 21st century. The stories need to be written with either our voice or our hands. As genealogists we must get out of the habit of being "hunters 'n' gatherers" and learn to assess and compile to write the stories that we are finding. This program will teach the keys behind these components so that you can move towards becoming a researcher and a storyteller.

5:40 – 6:30 p.m.—Proven Methods for Breaking Down Genealogical Brick Walls, with Leslie Tomlinson, MFA, CG—Learn the skills to advance your research and develop strategies to help you get around those roadblocks in your family research, using familiar resources such as the federal census, courthouse records, tax records, and passenger lists.

TxSGS LIVE 2024

Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, 2024

It's a Needle in a Haystack: Slave Research,
by Deborah A. Abbott, CG®

Tracking an Ancestor Through Land and Tax Records, by Diana Elder, AG®

Lesser-Known U.S. Immigration Records for Researching 20th Century Immigrant Ancestors,
by Colleen Robledo Greene, MLIS

Methodologies for Overcoming Brick Walls for Hispanic Research,
by Debbie Gurtler

Following Migration Paths from Texas Civil Court Case Files,
by J. Mark Lowe, FUGA

Reconstructing Pre-1850 Census Families,
by Michael Neill

Enhancing Genealogy with AI: Tips, Tools, and Techniques,
by Andrew Redfern

Follow Your Compass to U.K. Resources & Beyond Benefiting 17th-18th Century U.S. Caribbean Research,
by Diane L. Richard

Breaking Maternal Brick Walls with DNA and Group Projects,
by Katy Rowe-Schurwanz

The Road to Independence: Revolutionary War Research,
by Michael Strauss, AG®



Visit our website to learn more.
www.TxSGS.org

What will take your genealogy research to the next level? The 2024 TxSGS Family History Conference, ***Navigating Your Family Tree***, helps you discover the tools needed to answer your genealogy questions. The TxSGS Family History Conference promises opportunities for learning in a variety of areas, or tracks: DNA; ethnic research including African American, Hispanic, and Irish; methodology; records and resources; military; and technology and artificial intelligence. Whether you choose ***TxSGS Live!*** or the ***TxSGS All Access*** package, there is something for everyone.

On Friday and Saturday, November 1-2, 2024, ***TxSGS Live!*** features ten presentations by some of the top speakers in genealogy discussing selections from each track.

That's not all! These lectures will be recorded and combined ***with 31 additional prerecorded lectures and several bonus sessions*** from

some of your favorite speakers plus well-known presenters from across Texas and the U.S. Even though you won't be able to see them in person, you will be able to access their lectures online through February 2, 2025.

Explore the conference webpages at <https://www.txsgs.org/family-history-conference/> to learn about ***TxSGS Live!***, speakers and topics, registration packages, and more.

Watch our website for information about the Virtual Expo Hall and other conference news!

Register now and save at the early bird price. PLUS – use the **DCGS** code and earn \$10 for our society. Simply register* at the TxSGS All Access level on or before October 30, 2024, and use that code. You'll be supporting DCGS while expanding your genealogy horizons! *Code must be used at time of registration.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1979, the ***Denton County Genealogical Society*** (DCGS) has been serving area genealogy researchers for 45 years, offering classes and events, collaboration, and support, in partnership with the Denton Public Library—a Family Search Affiliate Library.

DCGS is a proud member of the National Genealogical Society and the Texas State Genealogical Society.

The society meets on the second Thursday of the month (September-November, January-May), at the Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland Street, Denton. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m. Programs may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid (both in-person & via Zoom). Visitors are welcome.

Membership dues are \$20 (individual) and \$30 (couples). To become a member, contact the membership chair at membershipdcgs@gmail.com.



Denton County Genealogical Society • 502 Oakland St., Denton, TX 76201

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Denton, TX 76201**

