Genealogy Friends News

Saturday Seminars

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events in 2008. Meetings are held in the Program Room at the Haggard Library, 2501 Coit Rd., Plano, TX from 10:15 to 12:30:

Today's Topic:

August 16, 2008—"Beginning Genealogy" by Barbara Coakley. Whether you are truly a beginner or just want a "back to basics" refresher, this class is for you.

Future Topics:

September 20, 2008—"Convict Ancestors from England" by Dr. Steven Butler. Dr Butler spoke to us last year about the Mexican War, we are excited to have him back to educate us on another really interesting topic.

October 18, 2008—Dr. Jacob Blosser will speak to us about the History of Religions in America. Dr Blosser is an Assistant Professor of History at Texas Women's University.

October 25, 2008– Learn In—There will be two sessions focusing on using the internet for genealogy. See page three for more information.

November 11-16—Research Retreat to Salt Lake City (See Page 2 for more details.)

November 15, 2008—Bryan Lean, the curator of Collections and Exhibits at the North Texas History Center will be speaking to us about the collection.

December 20, 2008—Show and Tell—Bring all of your Genealogy Successes and share them with the group.

If you have suggestions for programs please submit them to Jean Funk at jeano25@aol.com.

Sixth Annual Research Retreat—Salt Lake City

Join Gen Friends members on our Sixth Annual Research Retreat to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City for the opportunity to use the vast resources of the largest genealogical library in the world—microfilm, microfiche, books, and CDs from all over the world. The book collection of the Family History Library does not circulate, you have to visit Salt Lake City to use the huge collection of family histories, county histories, maps, reference books, and published records. If you haven't been there this is a great way to learn your way around. If you have, you can research in the company of fellow genealogy enthusiasts.

November 11-November 16, 2006

The $80.00 Retreat Fee includes:

- Pre–Trip Seminar on August 9, 2008 from 10:00-12:00 at Haggard Library on Research at the Family History Library and Planning Your Research

- Library Orientation by FHL Staff at 2 pm November 11th

- Seminar from a Professional Genealogist in Salt Lake City

- Block of Hotel Rooms has been reserved at the Salt Lake Plaza

- Individual and Group Consultations with Experienced Genealogists

Registration Deadline is October 15, 2008. If you have questions, please email Barbara Coakley at newsletter@genealogyfriends.org.

Genealogy Friends Logo Shirts

Be one of the best-dressed genealogists in town. Order your Gen Friends logo t-shirt or sweatshirt now. The shirts have a 3" logo printed on the left chest. Shirts are available in white, natural, or ash gray with a dark green logo.

T-shirts are $12.00 for toddler through XL and $14.00 for XXL and XXXL

Sweatshirts are $17.00 for toddler through XL and $19.00 for XXL and XXXL

Florida State Census Online

The Family History Library is adding digitized images to their website. The latest addition is the Florida State Census from 1885, 1935, and 1945. Check out the records at http://www.familysearchlabs.com/. There are records from Germany, France, UK, Norway, Spain and other countries in addition to US records.

Publications For Sale

The following are available from Genealogy Friends:

Public Land Survey Systems $5

Plano Star Courier Index 1904-1910 $20

Plano Star Courier Index 1911-1917 $20

Cemeteries of Collin County, TX $40

Collin County, TX Voter Registration
 Index 1867 $20

Place Names of Collin County, TX $10

Railroads in Collin County, TX $10

Military Investigations: Red, White & Blue $10

Colonial Ills, Brews & Concoctions $10

Library 101: Using Dewey Decimal Sys $10

Compiled Newsletters with Index $15

Education Opportunities

The following opportunities are available for you to continue to learn more about genealogy:

Gen Friends Learn In

Remember the Lock Ins we used to have? They have been replaced with Learn In's. The first one will be on Saturday, October 25th in the Genealogy Section at the W.O Haggard Library from 10:30 to 12:30.

We will be offering two classes that focus on using the internet to find your ancestors. Jennifer Pitts will be teaching a class on using Ancestry.com the first hour. During the second hour you will have a choice. If you would like to apply what you learned in Jennifer's class by using the computers in the Genealogy Section there will be volunteers standing by to help you. Or you can attend another class; Barbara Coakley will be teaching a class focusing on other genealogy sites that you can access using the libraries computers.

Genealogy Class Collin College

Genealogy III will be offered Monday nights from September 15th to October 20th. This class will include techniques for Breaking Down Brick Walls and a class project.

Legacy Users Group

Joanne Corney started a Legacy Family Tree users group. The group will meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Haggard Library in the Program Room from 10:30 to 12:30. Contact Joanne at ptxlegacyug@verizon.net for more information.

Tracing Our Roots Column

The "Tracing Our Roots" column written by Brenda Kellow appears each Sunday in the 'PULSE' or ENTERTAINMENT' section of the Plano Insider newspaper, and in Star Community newspapers throughout North Texas.

Visit the Plano Insider web site is http://www.planoinsider.net/ and click on either PULSE or ENTERTAINMENT to read the weekly column. Each column is posted for one week only. The column and archives are posted at http://www.geocities.com/TracingOurRoots.

National Conferences

The Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference will be held September 3-6, 2008 in Philadelphia, PA

http://www.fgsconference.org/index.php

The National Genealogy Society 2009 Conference will be held May 13-16, 2009 in Raleigh, NC

http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/hotel.cfm

Collin County Bits—Unique Place Names

By Joy Gough

My grandmother always said she was born in Hard Scrabble. What a wonderful name! I always thought that was better than the more common place names like Buffalo or Charleston. I doubt that you could find Hard Scrabble on an Ohio map today.

One of the first things settlers did when moving to a new location was name it. Sometimes they named places after where they came from. Other times the communities were named for geographic or physical features. Other times the communities were named for early residents or family members.

Every once in a while a community was given a unique, oddball name. Collin County had its fair share of odd names, no Hard Scrabble, but strange just the same. Here are some of them.

Altoga - Altoga is located northeast of Princeton. The community applied for a post office with the name "All Together." The name was rejected and "Altoga" was suggested instead. Altoga was a thriving community as one time with a bank and movie theater, a doctor, a school and stores.

Backbone - There was a school and cemetery with this name located east of Culleoka. No idea why or how the area got that name. It is on the banks of Lake Lavon today.

Boxtown - Boxtown was in the vicinity of Fairfield. It was so named because the houses were built like boxes with the wood planks vertical instead of horizontal.

Brakebill Hill - This was a hill on the Gray Branch west of McKinney that was difficult for the horses to climb and descend.

Button - Button was near Prosper and was named for the acorns from the oak trees.

Climax - The *Dallas Morning News* ran an article recently on where the name came from. I believe the answer was "no one knows." The residents of this area were mostly from Illinois and wanted to name it that. There was another community named Illinois, so they chose "Climax." It is located slightly northeast of Princeton on the way to Farmersville.

Cowskin - Cowskin is sometimes called Cowhide. There was also a Cowskin school and a Cowskin Creek. It was located between Nevada and Farmersville almost on the Hunt County line. One story says so many panthers were killing the cattle that the people started hanging the skins outside in hopes of scaring the panthers away. Another story says cattle rustlers took cattle to the area to skin.

Culleoka - This sounds like a unique name, but it was actually named for Culleoka, Tennessee. Supposedly it is Indian for sweet water.

Desert - This community is located on SH121 where it leaves Collin County and enters Fannin County. The story goes that some early settlers built a camp fire near here. They went hunting and left one person to watch the fire. He heard noises and "deserted" the camp. When the hunters got back, they found out that Indians had been in the camp. Everyone pronounces this like Mojave "Desert," when in reality it should be pronounced "Dessert."

Dog Drop - Dog Drop Road is still on some maps of the Wylie area. It got its name because dogs were dropped there.

Dump - Dump was located north of Wylie and west of St. Paul. It had a school and a post office. Supposedly the postman just "dumped" the mail there.

Fillmore - Plano originally was named for President Millard Fillmore. Some residents did not like the political implications and the name was changed. Aren't you glad they did?

Unique Place Names (continued)

Freegrass - In the days before pastures were fenced, grasslands were free to cattleman. The community was located east of Blue Ridge.

Frog Not - This is one of my favorite odd names. Frog Not was located east of Blue Ridge. There are a couple of stories about the name. One story says the residents killed all the frogs and it became known as Frog Not. Another story says some boys brought frogs to school and the school adopted a no-frog policy. A few people say the name is actually Frog Nod because the frogs sing when you are nodding off to sleep. It had a school and a Frog Not store.

Graybill - The Graybill community and school were located northeast of Westminster. The local doctor had a gray horse named Bill.

Happy Hollow - The community was started after Farmersville banned saloons. It had a couple of saloons and a store.

Hominyville - Located about 1/4 mile northeast of the current downtown Plano area, this was another name the town. The mill in the area did not grind the corn very fine. A branch of the Butterfield stage line went through this community.

Jungle Bottom - The area along White Rock Creek near Preston Road and Springcreek Parkway had thick undergrowth and was thought to hide wild animals and bandits.

Ketch Any - A man in the area east of McKinney and north of Milligan had two different kinds of chickens - fancy and common. When he asked his son to catch a chicken for dinner, the son asked, "Which kind?" The father answered "Ketch Any."

Lazy Neck - The Lazy Neck community was located near Lucas. No idea where the name came from.

Lick Skillet - Evidently this was a common name for stage coach stops. The story is that the food was so good at the stage coach stops that the riders would lick the skillets. Another story says the panthers and bears would enter camp at night and lick the skillets. One community was located northeast of Anna and another one was located at Pilot Grove in Grayson County.

Lick Springs - The Lick Springs community and school were located about 5 miles southeast of McKinney. The animals would lick large holes in the creek banks for the salt deposits.

Long Neck - This community was located about 1 mile northwest of downtown Princeton and predates Princeton. No idea how it got its name.

Monkey Run - Children would throw rocks at travelers on the roads and then run away. Someone supposedly said, "Look at the monkeys run" and residents said they lived "down where the monkeys run." There were 2 communities with this name in the county.

Nickelville - Nickelville was the original name for the Wylie area. When the community applied for a post office, someone said "No one in the area is worth a plug nickel." The name stuck. Another story says it was no bigger than a nickel. There is a Nickelville Road in Wylie.

Possum Trot - As strange as this name is, Collin County had 4 communities so named. Possum Trot was named for the opossums that trot by at night looking for food.

Pot Rack Creek - This creek flows north/south between Desert and Blue Ridge. Some say pot racks for

Unique Place Names (continued)

cooking were put on trees along the creek for the settlers that came through the area. Others say the early travelers to the area found sticks that Indians had used to support their pots over a fire.

Rawhide - This was the name of 3 different schools in the county, so named because the buildings had rawhide doors.

Roland - This area south of Weston got this name because the store owner was a great admirer of the old stories of knights and Charlemagne.

Rough & Ready - The Rough & Ready school near Wylie got this name when a huge crowd gathered to celebrate the completion of the building and a fight broke out

Speckled Pup - This community and school were located 4 miles west of Plano. Supposedly a Spanish family camped next to a creek where their dog drowned. When the residents found the dead puppy, they named the area "Speckled Pup" or "Spanish Pup."

Squeezepenny - This area northeast of McKinney still carries this name. The local miller was very tight with his measuring of the corn. The rock used to build the old courthouse and jail came from a quarry at Squeezepenny.

Sugar Hill - Sugar Hill was the original name for Farmersville. A couple of stories exist about the name all involving sugar and a general store. One story says at one time the store was out of everything except sugar. Another story says the store was adding sugar to some sour whiskey.

Swayback - Swayback, one of Collin's oldest communities, was located south of Rhea Mills. The name came from the church building which was built without a center beam for the roof. The roof sagged in the middle and the community and school were named Swayback.

White Elephant - This was a school about 2 ½ miles northwest of Prosper. No idea where the name came from. The school house was moved to Prosper.

Who'd a Thought It - The story goes that the people of the Parker/Lucas area ran out of money to build a church. They held a dance to raise the money for the church. Who'd a Thought It?

Each county probably has unique names like these for some of its communities. It makes genealogy interesting for find out the stories behind the names. A search on the internet for the meaning of Hard Scrabble says the word describes how hard the settlers had to work in the fields, especially on poor farm land.

New Guide to Researching In Kansas

Mary Douglass, CG has written a new book, *A Guide to Genealogical & Historical Research in Kansas* . You can order the book from Historical Matters, check out their website for more details. http://historical-matters.com/blog/a -guide-to-genealogical-and-historical-research-in-kansas/

Thanks for Research Help

Joy Gough helps people who contact Gen Friends looking for assistance with research. Recently she helped librarian Cheryl Smith who made a donation to Gen Friends. Thanks Joy for your contributions to Gen Friends.