Saturday Seminars

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events in 2009 and 2010. 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:

November 21, 2009—Tresa Tatyrek will be speaking to us on Using the Internet for researching your Genealogy.

Future Topics:

December 19, 2009—Show and Tell, come and share your Ancestors' stories with the group.

January 11-17, 2010—Research trip to Salt Lake City. Join us to research at the largest genealogy library in the world. Our trip coincides with the Utah Genealogy Institute, you can sign up for evening classes taught by some of the best genealogists in the country. Don't wait too long to sign up. See page 2 for more details.

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

GenFriends Research Retreat

Save the date and start getting your research plan ready—our next Research Retreat to Salt Lake City has been scheduled for January 11-17, 2010. This is a great opportunity to visit the largest genealogy library in the world with fellow researchers.

Rooms are being held at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel adjacent to the library. Room Rate is $85.00 per night with one night free. Call them at 800-366-3684 and tell them you are part of the Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries group to reserve your room.

There is a seminar on planning a research trip on November 7th, 10:30-12:00 at Haggard to help you get ready to go.

The cost is $80.00.A professional genealogist will be available to help with your research and we'll have an orientation to the library at 2:30 on Monday to help you find your way around the library.

Check out the flyer on our website for more info.

The dates of the trip coincide with the Utah Genealogical Societies 2010 Salt Lake Genealogy Institute. They have evening classes taught by prominent genealogists for $10.00 each. If you are interested in attending refer to their website http://www.infouga.org/index.php?option=2010SLIGevening

New Website

Thanks to our webmaster, Jennifer Pitts. She has moved and updated our website. It is a work in progress so check back often to see what is new. It has a great new look—check it out:

http://www.genealogyfriends.org

- You can find our schedule of events, past issues of the newsletters, etc.
- Collin County History
- Genealogy Research and Education
- Genfriends Blog

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.

Her columns are also available in the column archives at http://tracingourroots.weebly.com/2009-index.html

Genealogy Friends Logo Shirts—New Colors & Styles

Be one of the best-dressed genealogists in town.

In addition to the ever popular Gen Friends logo t-shirts and sweatshirts, we now have Henley's and polo style shirts available. The shirts have a 3" dark green logo printed on the left chest. All shirts are available in toddler through XXXL.

T-shirts (white, neutral, ash, light blue, pink, yellow and sand) are $15.00

Sweatshirts (white, neutral, ash, light blue, pink, yellow and sand) are $20.00

Henley's (white or ash) are $20.00

Polo Shirts (light blue, pink, yellow, or sand) are $20.00

Websites

Do you have a woman inventor in the family? Check out this finding aid on the Library of Congress website.

http://www.loc.gov/rr/scitech/SciRefGuides/womeninventors.html

The Library of Virginia has launched "Virginia Memory." The website includes the Chancery Records Index—this is equity cases heard at the circuit court.

http://www.virginiamemory.com/

There is a website that contains information about counties that no longer exist.

http://barusa.tripod.com/ghostcounties/

Microsoft has developed a new search engine, Bing. This site gives you the results from both Bing and Google for your search.

http://www.bing-vs-google.com/

Massachusetts Archives has online databases of vital records, passenger manifests and more on their website

http://www.sec.state.ma.us/arc/arcsrch/SearchWelcome.html

Ancestors in Maryland—check out the Archives of Maryland Online

http://aomol.net/html/index.html

Connecticut History Online has photographs, drawings and prints about Connecticut history

http://www.cthistoryonline.org/cdm-cho/index.html

Family Search has added a lesson series to their website. They are downloadable .pdf files you can read at your lesiure

http://www.familysearch.org/eng/default.asp?page=home/welcome/site_resources.asp%3FwhichResourcePage=fhlessonseries

Looking for death records in Michigan check out the links on this site

http://www.deathindexes.com/michigan/index.html

Legacy Users Group

The Legacy Family Tree users group meets the fourth Tuesday of each month at the Haggard Library in the Program Room from 10:30 to 12:30.

Contact Joanne Corney at ptxlegacyug@verizon.net for more information.

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

Join Genfriends

Time to Renew Memberships! Or if you aren't a member, please consider joining Genfriends. The money we raise is used to purchase materials for the Genealogy Section at Haggard Library.

Individual memberships are $30 and family memberships are $50.

Dues year runs from October 1 to September 31.

Utilizing Internet Family Histories

By Brenda Kellow

Collecting family history is more than just finding someone on the Internet who is passing along information that has been circulated over and over without any documentation or taxing of the "little gray cells," as the Belgium detective Hercule Poirot calls the thought process. Receiving a family history Internet collection from a fellow researcher can provide many names and a few teasers to get your interest, but in essence has no genealogical value because it does not provide documentation for marriages, births, deaths, military service, or other information so much desired. Nevertheless, these collections are of some value.

A good detective would take the clues from the material and try to document all the events in each generation. For instance, I just received such a database containing several generations and some interesting collateral lines—not bloodline. The first thing I did was to import it into a genealogy database program *after* giving it a new file name. Never import it into an existing family file to insure it doesn't corrupt your previous work.

Starting with the most recent generation, I began to compare the new compilation with my documented files. Right away I found some blatant errors in the new file. After marking each of the errors in the first five generations of the new material, I made a research log of events to verify on my next trip to the library. After the verification is completed I can transcribe or abstract the information gleaned from primary records and enter the new information into my permanent database. I expect it to take several research trips. Next, I'll complete research reports noting all the problems, documentation found or not found, new sources encountered, etc. I filed the hard copies and followed this by double-checking electronic filing systems for accuracy.

Do you follow a similar procedure for handling undocumented family history? Do you know how to establish a verification procedure and a filing system for handling the volume of undocumented material? If not, read on to find two publications you should consult for following and developing such a procedure.

First, for perfecting genealogical methods I suggest Texan Emily Anne Croom's "Unpuzzling Your Past." It was the first book I bought on genealogy. Actually, it was the first book I found in 1983 that I felt answered my questions or offered suggestions for correcting my errors. Croom's later editions are even better. Pairing this with her other book "The Sleuth Book for Genealogists" can certainly benefit your research and become a foundation for your personal library. It is only $18.99 and available at your local bookstore. I paid $7.95 at Taylor's for her first book.

Secondly, for identifying and maintaining those precious family heirlooms we collect and place in boxes and drawers, Bev Kirschner Braun has many suggestions in her book "New Ideas for Crafting Heritage Albums." The illustrations are in color and are indicative of items I have collected over the years such as embroidery; gold rim eye glasses; jewelry; marriage records, tablecloths; etc. I am always impressed with her creativity. Her book is a magnet for attracting genealogists interested in saving our collections.

Utilize those undocumented databases so prolific over the Internet. Be conscientious about incorporating only factual information into your working databases, and use citations liberally. Learn to properly use the unproven material to your advantage without destroying years of documented research.
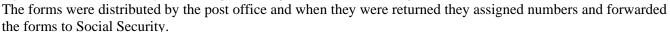
Social Security Records

By Barbara Coakley

There are two records available that can help fill holes in your genealogy left by missing or non-existent birth information.

Background Information

The Social Security Act was passed in August 1935. It created a social insurance program to pay a monthly income to retired workers age 65 and older. Workers were registered by January 1, 1937. After that they would begin earning credits toward old-age insurance benefits. The forms were distributed by the post office and when they were returned they assigned numbers and forwarded the forms to Social Security.

FICA taxes were deducted from paychecks beginning in January 1937 to fund the payments. From 1937 to 1940 payments were a lump sum—the average payment was $58.06. These payments were for people who were contributing but wouldn't be in the program long enough to qualify for benefits. Monthly payments began in 1940. The act has been amended many times through the years.

Here's a few statistics—Benefits paid by year

Year	Individuals	Amount Paid	
1937	53,236	$1,278,000	(lump sum payments)
1938	213,650	$10,478,000	(lump sum payments)
1939	174,839	$13,896,000	(lump sum payments)
1940	222,488	$35,000,000	
1950	3,477,243	$961,000,000	

Application Records

The application for social security number forms are SS-5 and are available from the Social Security Administration under the Freedom of Information Act. The forms were submitted with proof of age. The forms have changed over time but asked for the following information:

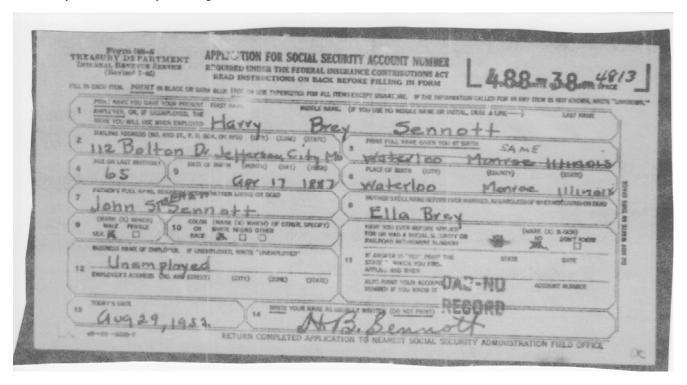|	
Applicant's Name—First, Middle and Last	Mailing Address
Age at last Birthday	Date of Birth
Place of Birth	Full Name Given You at Birth
Father's Full Name	Mother's Full Name (Maiden Name)
Sex: Male or Female	Color: White, Negro, or Other
Name of Employer	Employer's Address
Have you ever applied before?	If yes, provide state where applied & number assigned
Date of Application	Signature

As you can see, the application can provide important information—remember, this is not a primary source. It is

Social Security Records

the facts as the individual knew them. Chances are good that the information is correct.

You can obtain an application by sending a request to the Social Security Administration, OEO FOIA Workgroup. If you know the Social Security Number the fee is $27, if not the fee is $29. If you locate your ancestor in the Social Security Death Index, you can generate a letter to submit.

Social Security Death Index (SSDI)

The SSDI is a listing of individuals generated from the Social Security Death Master File. It is available on the following sites:

- Roots Web   http://ssdi.rootsweb.ancestry.com/
- Genealogy Bank   http://www.genealogybank.com
- Ancestry   http://www.ancestry.com
- World Vital Records   http://www.worldvitalrecords.com
- Family Search   http://www.familysearch.org
- NEHGS   http://www/newenglandancestors.org

You can search the SSDI at Steve Morse One Step Search website as well—http://stevemorse.org/ssdi/ssdi.html

Not everyone who had a social security number is listed. Some reasons why an individual may not be listed are:

Social Security Records

Not everyone who had a social security number is listed. Some reasons why an individual may not be listed are:

- Their death was not reported to the Social Security Administration
- Their death occurred before the Social Security Death Master File was maintained on computer (most of the deaths in the index occurred after 1962).
- The person did not participate in the Social Security program
- Benefits are still being paid to a spouse or dependent
- Human error

Using the SSDI

The different websites have different search fields available. If you don't find your ancestor on one, check out the others. Don't forget to try alternative spellings and use wildcards in your searches.

What information you might find:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Date of Death—some entries include a V (date of death was verified with a family member or someone acting on behalf of a family member) or P (SSA saw the death certificate).
- Last Residence—this may or may not be where the individual died. This is the address the SSA had on file for the individual.
- Last Benefit—where the lump sum death benefit ($250) was sent, usually to the spouse.
- SSN—Social Security Number
- Issued—The state of issuance, this is not necessarily where the individual was living when they applied for a Social Security Number.

Social Security records can provide clues to lead you to birth records, death records and parents.