

Genealogy Friends News

Genealogy Friends of
Plano Libraries

Genealogy Friends News
August 2023

P.O. Box 860477, Plano, TX, 75086-0477

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Schedule of Events

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events. Saturday seminars are held at W.O. Haggard Library, 2501 Coit Rd, Plano, TX from 10:15 to Noon.

August:

August 19, 2023—Hybrid Meeting—”30 Types of Maps Useful in Genealogy,” by Margaret Kapustiak

Future Events:

September 7, 2023—Zoom Meeting—Genealogy Round Table— We are a group of genealogy enthusiasts who get together to share information and help each other on the first Thursday of each month. Email newsletter@genealogyfriends.org for zoom link.

September 12, 2023—In Person—DNA Special Interest Group

September 16, 2023—Virtual All Day Seminar— Our speaker will be Cheri Hudson Passey. More info on page 7.

October 21, 2023—Hybrid Meeting—”After They Are Gone: What Probate Records Tell Us,” by Barbara Coakley

November 18, 2023—Hybrid Meeting—”Researching Graphically: Expanding Your Research With Timelines, Charts, Spreadsheets, and Diagrams,” by Ari Wilkins.

Check out the events on our Facebook page for more info on the topics and speakers for each months program—<https://www.facebook.com/GenealogyFriends>

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Genealogy Friends

Purpose: To educate members and library patrons in doing genealogical research and to support the Genealogy Center of W.O. Haggard, Jr. Library through donations.

Goal: To expand the library collection to meet the needs of this genealogically diverse community.

Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible.

Like and Follow us on [Facebook - Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries](#)

The annual membership meeting is held each October.

Genfriends Membership

Our membership year runs from October 1 to September 30. Individual memberships are \$30 a year and family memberships are \$50.

The money we raise is used to pay for programs and to purchase materials for the Genealogy Section at Haggard Library.

Download the membership form on our website <http://genealogyfriends.org/news/> send it in with payment to

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DNA Special Interest Group

The DNA Special Interest Group meets on the second Tuesday of each month in the Genealogy Section of Haggard Library from 7-8:30 pm. The August meeting will be on Tuesday, August 8th.

We are using Diahn Southard's book *Your DNA Guide the book* to guide our discussions. We are working on pages 28-44 which are about choosing your research goal.

We are learning together about using DNA to further our genealogy research.

The Topic for the August Meeting will be mtDNA.



Volunteers Needed

Genealogy Friends is a volunteer led organization. We have a dedicated board of directors who keep things running. Our fiscal year begins October 1st. Current Volunteer Opportunities:

Secretary—the main duties are taking notes at our board meetings, keeping a list of members, and updating the email lists.

Photographer—take pictures at events—you can use your phone.

Social Media—post events on our Facebook page

If you are interested in helping out please email newsletter@genealogyfriends.org

Local Genealogy Events—Save the Dates

Children's Genealogy Program at Haggard Library—September 9, 2023 at 10:30 am.

Gen Friends All Day Virtual Seminar—September 16, 2023 More information on back page.

Dallas Genealogical Society Fall Seminar—Michael Strauss, “ The Twentieth Century Wars: Military Records and Research” September 23, 2023 <https://dallasgenealogy.org/meetings-events/seminars/2023-fall-seminar/>

Library Lock In will be October 20, 2023. Stay tuned for more information.

Great Family Search presented by the Family History Center in Plano will be held on October 28, 2023.

Research At The Library will be on December 9, 2023. Experienced members will be available to help with research planning and answer questions. Join us at W.O. Haggard Library from 10-1.

Proceed to the Buffalo Bones

By Joy Gough

Deed research is one of the fundamentals of genealogy. All of us want to know if our ancestors owned land, how much land was owned and where it was located. The United States uses two very different systems to describe parcels of land in deeds.

When the United States was formed, the original 13 colonies were allowed to keep their lands. Any unsettled land in other parts of the country became property of the federal government and was called Public Land. Parcels of Public Land are described by ranges, sections and townships. A deed will read something like "in the SE 1/4 of the NW 1/4 of Section 5, T3N, R1E, 3rd PM." Translated, this says the southeast 1/4 of the northwest 1/4 of Section 5, township 3 north, range 1 east, the 3rd principle meridian. In this system, the state is divided into squares, which are divided into smaller and smaller squares. A range and township map of the area is necessary to find a parcel of land in this system. This works well for rectangular holdings but is a bit cumbersome for irregularly shaped parcels. The location of the land is precise, but there is no additional information in the description.

The original 13 colonies used, and still use, metes and bounds to describe parcels of land. One of Texas' stipulations about becoming part of the United States was that Texas land remained Texas land. It did not become the property of the federal government and the public land system. Texas also uses metes and bounds. It has a few of the old Spanish measurements in its land descriptions too.

Metes and bounds is defined in THE CONCISE LAW ENCYCLOPEDIA as "a surveyor's description of a parcel of real property, using carefully measured distances, angles and directions....Such a metes and bounds description is required to be recorded in official county records on a subdivision map and in the deeds when the boundaries of a parcel or lot are first drawn." Metes and bounds give the exact shape of the land and possibly some details about the terrain and neighbors, but the location can be approximate.

Metes and bounds can be very informative, and even hilarious, in describing land. A deed will read something like "N 25 W 15 rods to an elm tree 6 inches across marked X, N 8 degrees E to the middle of the creek, follow the creek south with its meanders to a burr oak 8 inches in diameter, return to the place of beginning, containing X acres, more or less." This describes the land well. It was wooded and had a creek.

To locate land in Collin County you need a map of the county showing the headrights or surveys. The surveys are still listed by the name of one of the original land owners. The deeds will say "being part of the Jesse Gough survey No. ___." Many times the number is left blank. The county clerk's office has a listing of the surveys by name giving the corresponding survey number. Using that number, the survey can be located on the county survey map. The surveys on the west side of the county, which were part of the Peters Colony, are generally 640 acres or 320 acres. The surveys on the eastern side of the county are of various sizes.

All of the land descriptions start with "on the waters of ___ Creek." This does not mean that the land is located on the banks of the creek or that the creek flows through the land. It means the land is in the watershed of that creek. For a small creek such as Panther Creek, this can pinpoint the location. Pilot Grove Creek, on the other hand, covers a large area, almost the whole east side of the county. The exact location is harder to pin down. I had one lady tell me that according to the census, her ancestor lived in Millwood. And according to deeds, he lived on Pilot Grove Creek. I was able to tell her that these two facts do not agree. Millwood was not on the waters of Pilot Grove Creek. However, in the 1850 census, Millwood was the precinct for the whole southeast quadrant of the county and would have included the area around Copeville, which is on the waters of Pilot Grove Creek.

Metes and bounds always gives a starting point. I read one deed that said, "Starting at a point 80 yards west of Grandma Brown's front porch, an oak tree." I am glad to know my ancestor had such close neighbors, but who was Grandma Brown and where was her front porch and which oak tree?

The next line would read S20W 4 chains 8 links to a bois d'arc that is the northeast corner of John Alexander's 320 acres. Continue west along John Alexander's north boundary line 100 varas to a large rock. Proceed N20E 4 chains 8 links to a bois d'arc 8 inches in diameter. Proceed to the point of beginning, containing X acres, more or less.

Right away you know your ancestor had wooded property and John Alexander's property was on the south. A chain has 100 links and is 66 feet long. Four chains is 4 X 66 feet or 264 feet and 8 links is 8 X 8 inches, or 64 inches. One side of the property is 264 feet 64 inches or 269 feet 4 inches.

Proceed to the Buffalo Bones, continued

By Joy Gough

A vara is a Spanish measurement. It is a different length in Texas than in Florida and other parts of the southwest, which were also Spanish properties. A Texas vara is 33 1/3 inches. 100 varas would be 100 X 33 1/3 inches or 3333 inches, which is 277.75 feet.

This property was 269.33 feet by 277.75 feet, more or less. This would be a relative small piece of land of about 1 1/2 acres.

The descriptions of the property in metes and bounds' deeds can be quite informative but very frustrating. The surveyor did not seem to consider that 20 or 100 years later the trees and neighbors will have changed. The topography will change and the creek will change course. I have one deed for my husband's ancestor that says, "Proceed to the mound in the prairie." Where is that? The prairie was not flat. I am sure there were several "mounds in the prairie." One deed read, "Proceed to the buffalo bones." Of course, those are gone. We have not had buffalo around here in 150 years.

Neither the Public Land method nor the Metes and Bounds method of describing property is perfect. One describes the precise location of a rectangular piece of property. The other describes the precise shape of a piece of property that is not necessarily rectangular.

I always like to read the legal descriptions of properties in Collin County because they provide so much general information, except the one you want. Where is the land located exactly?

With these land descriptions it is easy to see why Collin, Dallas, Denton, and Tarrant Counties are still arguing about their joint boundary lines 150 years after the counties were formed.

Tarrant County Courthouse

By Barbara Brogdon

Men taking a break from building the Tarrant County Courthouse in Fort Worth, late 1895. They must have done good work, because the courthouse, one of the most beautiful in Texas, is still in use.



Originally published on [Traces of Texas Facebook page](#)



Using Images For Your Genealogy

Images are protected by copyright. When you want to incorporate an image into your work you need to check the copyright restrictions before you use it. This includes the images on Find A Grave, newspapers, etc. US Government images are in the public domain. Here are some places to find images free of copyright restrictions. Always verify there is no restriction before you use an image:

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Some sites that allow use have terms that need to be followed. Before you use an image that is still under copyright reach out to the owner to request the right to use it. Always give credit to the creator of the image even if it is no longer under copyright. For more information on copyright see The Public Domain Sherpa <http://publicdomainsherpa.com/>

475 Drive-in Movie Theaters

By Barbara Brogdon

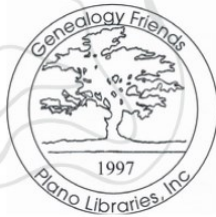
Originally published on [Traces of Texas Facebook page](#)

In 1960, there were 475 drive-in movie theaters in Texas. There were more than 40 in the Dallas-Fort Worth area alone. Texas was actually the greatest state for drive-ins. You could take a drive on, say, Highway 80 from Fort Worth to Abilene and you'd see drive-ins in Weatherford, Mineral Wells, Eastland, Ranger etc... and then, west of Abilene, you'd have Pecos, Big Spring and on and on. All of those towns had drive-ins despite the heat, cold, dust and whatever else mother nature could throw at moviegoers.

Shown here: the Town and Country Drive-In in Abilene. Photo courtesy the rather legendary C.J. "Toad" Leon via the [Abilene Reporter-News](#) .



All Day Seminar—September



Genealogy Seminar

September 16, 2023

Featuring:
Cheri Hudson Passey

Genealogy Friends
of Plano Libraries Presents:

Adding New Tools to Your Research Toolbox

Four Sessions:

- * *What Does That Say? Strategies for Reading Old Handwriting*
- * *5 Elements for Sound Research: A Guide for Applying the Genealogical Proof Standard*
- * *They Lived Where? How to Tackle a New to You Research Location*
- * *Finding the Living: Genealogy in Reverse*

www.genealogyfriends.org

Speaker:

Cheri Hudson Passey, a professional genealogist, instructor, writer, speaker, and the owner of Carolina Girl Genealogy, LLC. She presented at RootsTech and on Legacy Family History Webinars, will teach us about four ways we can become better researchers.

What Does That Say? Strategies for Reading Old Handwriting

Reading old handwriting in documents can often be a challenge. If we can't understand what a record says, how can we glean facts, clues, and other information to help us build our family trees? This session will show some of the best strategies to decipher old handwriting so you don't miss or misunderstand a thing!

5 Elements for Sound Research: A Guide for Applying the Genealogical Proof Standard

Wondering if the GPS applies to you or if it's only for more advanced or professional researchers? This session will show step by step why the standards are for everyone and how to put into practice each of the elements to create a firm foundation for your family history research.

They Lived Where? How to Tackle a New to You Research Location

Finding a branch from our tree that lived in a place we have never researched can leave us clueless about where to begin. Learn methods and strategies for understanding the records, history, and best practices for tackling a new research location.

Finding the Living: Genealogy in Reverse

Locating Cousins, Heirs, Next of Kin, and DNA Matches are just some of the reasons to find living people. Discover the tools and techniques used to find and make the connections you are looking for.

Early Bird for Members before September 6, 2023 \$40 — Regular Cost \$60

Register on our website <http://www.genealogyfriends.org/all-day-seminars.html>