



Genealogy Friends News

Genealogy Friends of
Plano Libraries

February 2006

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

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~txgfpl>

<http://www.geocities.com/genfriendsghl>

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~txcolli3>

Email Address: genfriends@comcast.net

Newsletter: Barbara Coakley bjc1620@sbcglobal.net

Saturday Seminars, Field Trips & Lock Ins

Mark your calendars now for the exciting Genealogy Friends events in 2006:

March 18, 2006—Nygil Parker, an Archivist from the Southwest Regional Branch of the National Archives, will speak to us about the resources available at their facility in Ft. Worth. Come to the lecture to prepare for our field trip.

April 1, 2006—Field Trip to the Southwest Regional Branch of the National Archives. Look for details in next months newsletters.

April 15, 2006—Dr. Colleen Fitzpatrick, author of *Forensic Genealogy* will discuss what can be achieved by applying the investigative techniques of forensic science to genealogy. Her book will also be for sale at the seminar.

May 20, 2006—To be announced.

June 17, 2006—Jennifer Pitts will share her knowledge of Adobe Photoshop Elements - learn to perfect, transform, organize and share your photos like a pro.

July 7, 2006—Lock In—Little Used Sources. See the article on page 2.

July 15, 2006—Learn about 19th Century Funeral Customs from Carol Taylor, the head of a genealogy library who has been researching her family history for over thirty years.

August 19, 2006—To be announced

September 16, 2006—All Day Seminar—Lloyd Bockstruck will be speaking on Colonial Topics.

October 21, 2006—Thinking about joining a lineage society? Representatives from the Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Sons of Confederate Veterans, Daughters of the Republic of Texas, Colonial Dames of the 17th Century, and more will tell us about their societies and answer our questions.

October 27, 2006—Lock In—Using Computers in Genealogy. See article on page 2.

November 18, 2006—Richard Preston will talk to us about Migration Patterns.

December 16, 2006—Annual Show and Tell.

2007 Research Retreat to Washington DC

Genealogy Friends will be sponsoring a trip to Washington DC in October 2007. You will have an opportunity to research at the National Archives, Library of Congress and the Daughters of the American Revolution Library. Orientation sessions will be held at each institution. If you are interested please contact Barbara Coakley at bjc1620@sbcglobal.net. More information will be available at a later date.

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

Collin County Historic Photographs Web Site

Members of GenFriends are contributing photographs of Collin County to the newest Gen Friends web site *Collin County, Texas Past Finders Photo Collection*.

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~txcolli3>. The web site now contains over 3,400 photographs. Categories include Cemeteries,

Churches, Schools, People, Places, and Tombstones. If you would like to contribute photos of Collin County subjects, contact Joy at jfarrgo@comcast.net.

History & Genealogy Web Site

Members of Genealogy Friends are contributing to a new web site—History and Genealogy for the Active Researcher located at <http://www.geocities.com/genfriendsghl>.

The goal is to expand the knowledge of those researching in Collin County and North Texas.

Check out the timeline—a daily calendar of events in Collin County through the years.

Microfiche Readers for Sale

ELECTRIC READERS FOR SALE: C.O.M. 1200 Micro Design Microfiche Reader, good condition: dual lens, with high, magnify, low viewing. DuKane Explorer 14 microfilm reader, in good condition, with high, medium, low viewing Both were used for indexing projects. \$200 each. Phone Brenda Kellow, 972-941-9280, or email TraceRoots@comcast.net

Publications For Sale

The following are available from Genealogy Friends:

NEW 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

Tracing Our Roots Column

The "Tracing Our Roots" column by Brenda Kellow appears in Plano Star Courier, Star Community Newspapers and DFW Community News weekly.

The column and an archives of past columns are also available at <http://www.geocities.com/TracingOurRoots>.

Book Exchange

Genealogy Friends would like to exchange Collin County books with books from other societies.

If you have an area or society you would like us to try and exchange with, please contact Joy Gough at jfarrgo@comcast.net.

Collin County Bits — 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.

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.

Continued on Page 7

New Additions to the Genealogy Collection, Gladys Harrington Library

The following books, CD's and microfilm are now available in the library:

- Creating Family Newsletters GEN 646.78 FLO
- The Banville Diaries: Journals of a Norfolk Gamekeeper, 1822-44 GEN 942.6 BAN
- Like Some Green Laurel: Letters of Margaret Johnson Erwin, 1821-1863 GEN 929.2 ERW
- Keeping Hearth and Home in Old Texas GEN 640.9764 PAD
- Growing Up in the 1850s: The Journal of Agnes Lee GEN 929.2 LEE
- 7500 Marriages from Ninety-six and Abbeville District, S.C., 1774-1890 GEN 929.375735 PUR
- Spafford: Onondaga County, New York GEN 974.765 COL
- Diary of Elizabeth Dick Lindsay, Feb. 1, 1837-May 3, 1861 GEN 929.2 LIN
- Serving Women: Household Service in Nineteenth-Century America GEN 305.4364 DUD
- A Chesapeake Family and Their Slaves GEN 975.256 YEN
- Oh, Grandma, You're Kidding: Memories of 75 years in Lincoln GEN 929.2 DOU
- Motherhood in the Old South: Pregnancy, Childbirth, and Infant Rearing GEN 306.8743 MCM
- The Last Foray: The South Carolina Planters of 1860: A Sociological Study GEN 975.7 DAV
- The History of a Village: Ridgewood, New Jersey GEN 974.921 HIS
- Hunt County, Texas Cemeteries, Vols. 1, 2, & 3 GEN 929.3764272 ING
- Starting from Pyron GEN 976.4731 RUS
- A Dangerous Woman: New York's First Lady Liberty GEN 973.2092 COO
- Deaths & Marriages, 1850-1860 From the Files of The Syracuse Chronicle, The Daily Standard, & The Madison Observer
GEN 929.374764 KEL
- Early families of Otsego County, New York, Vol. 1 GEN 929.374774 REA
- Otsego County, New York: Geographical and Historical GEN 974.774 BAC
- A Collection of Abstracts from Otsego County, New York Newspaper Obituaries, 1808-1875
GEN 929.374774 BAR
- The Southern Lady: From Pedestal to Politics, 1830-1930 GEN 305.40975 SCO
- From Mississippi to California: Jackson Thomason's 1849 Overland Journal GEN 978 THO
- Monongalia County, (West) Virginia Records of the District, Superior, & County Courts, Vols. 6: 1805-1808, 9: 1813-1817,
10: 1815-1819, & 11: 1819-1822 GEN 929.375452 ZIN
- Inhabitants of Cecil County, Maryland, 1649-1774 GEN 929.375238 PED
- Tell Me About That Time - - - GEN 929.2 GRE
- Mistress of Evergreen Plantation: Rachel O'Connor's Legacy of Letters, 1823-1845 GEN 976.317 OCO
- Founders of Early American Families: Immigrants From Europe, 1607-1657 GEN 929.20973 COL

(Continued on page 5)

New Additions to the Genealogy Collection, Gladys Harrington Library

(Continued from page 4)

- Free African Americans of North Carolina, Virginia, and South Carolina from the Colonial Period to about 1820, Vols. I & II GEN 929.375 HEI
- Federal Land Series, Vol. 1 1788-1810; Vol. 2 1799-1835; Vol. 3 1810-1814; Vol. 4, Parts 1 & 2 GEN 333.16 SMI
- Piedmont Plantation: The Bennehan-Cameron Family and Lands in North Carolina GEN 975.6 AND
- Collin County Telephone Directory, 2004 GEN 384.625 COL
- The Plano Book Telephone Directory, 2005 GEN 384.625 PLA
- Lake Cities Telephone Directory, 2003 GEN 384.625 LAK
- The Huguenot, 1977-1979 GEN 284.5 HUG
- Oklahoma Educational Directory, 1935-36 & 1937-38 Descendants of Samuel Spencer (c.1774-c.1835) and Ancestors of Some of Their Wives, 3rd ed. GEN 929.2 SPE
- 1805 Georgia Land Lottery: Persons Entitled to Draws GEN 929.3758 GRA

Thanks to Lynn Day for providing the information on new genealogy materials.

The State & County Archives of Florida

By Brenda Kellow, B.A., CG

Florida became a territory in 1824 and a state in 1845 at which time Tallahassee became the capital. Early settlers were primarily Irish, and later Greeks who came to harvest the sponges off the coast. After it became a state, it was settled by people coming from Georgia and the Carolinas.

The first counties of Florida were created in 1821, and a few months later it became a territory. It was then divided into four counties: two in west Florida were called Escambia and Jackson; two in east Florida called Duval and St. Johns. On March 3, 1845, Florida was admitted to the union. Those searching early Florida will need to check for the formation of their counties of interest and the mother county.

Each of the 67 counties of Florida are assigned a number. These numbers are assigned to each volume of records and they are arranged alphabetically. The entries have the following arrangement: title of record, dates for which available, quantity and labeling of volumes or containers, various titles, description of the contents of each record, arrangement, indexed, nature of recording, size of records and location of each.

The inventory of the county archives, available at the county courthouse, contains bibliographies compiled by the Historical Records Survey of the WPA. These compilations were done in 1935-1936. Most records are open to the public except vital records. You must check current laws to determine if any vital records are open and whether they can be copied. A genealogical copy of a document may still be issued with proper identification.

Surprises abound for the Florida researcher. For instance: Those who generally expect all the records to be at the state archives in Tallahassee will find it unusual for the vital records to be across the state in Jacksonville. Many of the early records are available in the counties rather than being housed in Tallahassee. Fortunately for Florida researchers, most of the records have been published in book form and/or available on microfilm from the National Archives and the Family History Library.

(Continued on page 6)

The State & County Archives of Florida

VITAL RECORDS

Registration of birth and death records began in 1899 but not mandated until 1920. These records are not at the capitol in Tallahassee, but in Jacksonville and Pensacola. The Office of Vital Statistics in Jacksonville has birth and death records from 1893-1913, and Pensacola from 1897-1916. Most of these records have been microfilmed and available through the FHL. Many of the funeral and cemetery records have been filmed and are also available through the FHL.

MARRIAGE RECORDS AND WILLS

Again, Jacksonville has the marriage records, divorce records, probate and wills at the Office of Vital Statistics from June 1927. Marriage and divorce records prior to 1927 are in the office of the County Judge, usually in the county in which the bride lived. Divorce records prior to 1927 are filed in the Circuit Court Clerk's office in the county in which the couple filed for divorce.

CENSUS

Federal censuses for Florida are extant from 1830 to 1880, 1900-1930. Colonial, state and territorial censuses do exist for 1783, 1786, 1790, 1793, 1814, 1825, 1837, 1845 1855, 1865, 1868, 1875, 1885, 1895, and 1935. Mortality schedules exist for those who died within the year before they were enumerated in 1850, 1860, 1880. The state archives has census microfilm for school age children ages 6-21 from 1896-1924.

ELECTION RECORDS

The county clerk of the circuit court is responsible for the registration of voters. Some of the officers elected by the voters are: justice of the peace, constables, clerk of the circuit court county judge, county commissioners, tax assessors, sheriff, tax collector. Many of the tax records for various counties have been transferred from the mother county to the newly created county. Both territorial and state election records from 1826-1865 are on microfilm and available at the archives in Tallahassee and FHL. Voter Registration records from 1867-1905 are on film and available at the state archives and the FHL.

TAX RECORDS

The legislature mandated in 1828 a tax on all licenses. They taxed occupational licenses; marriage licenses; hunting, fishing and trapping, alcoholic beverages, motor vehicle license plates. Researchers must check the county archives to determine who issued these licenses because there may be exceptions. These may be incomplete for all counties from 1839-1891, but are generally available on film at the state archives and the FHL.

EMIGRATION, IMMIGRATION, MIGRATION AND NATURALIZATION

Most of these have been indexed and published in book form, but some are only available on microfilm. Microfilm of the originals are held by the US District Court and available on film at the National Archives in East Point, Georgia, and the FHL.

LAND AND PROPERTY

The clerk of the circuit court is custodian for records formed within the county. Land and property records are filed with the clerk of the circuit court. The alphabetical indexes are found in volumes called direct and inverse: Direct indexes contain the alphabetical listing by surname of the person selling the land. The buyers are in the inverse indexes. There are separate indexes to mortgages, liens, assignments, and satisfactions and these usually remain with the recorder of the county. Early land records are available in published form and through the FHL. Spanish land grants are at the state archives in Tallahassee.

MILITARY

Service records and pension records are filmed for the most part and available from the state archives, FHL, and or the National Archives in Washington.

ADDRESSES:

Florida Office of Vital Statistics, PO Box 210, Jacksonville, FL 32231

Phone: 904-359-6900

Collin County Bits—Cont'd

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.

2006 Lock Ins

Lock Ins are held at the Gladys Harrington Library. Registration begins at 5:30, the library closes to the public at 6:00. Suggested donation is \$10.00. Pizza, drinks and cookies are served at 7:00 for an additional \$4.00. Lock Ins are a great place to learn in small groups. Participate in classes, get help with a research consultation, or use the resources available to do your own research. A Plano Library Card and Internet Registration are required prior to 5:30 pm to use library computers.

July 7th—Little Used Sources

Classes include Institution and Coroners Records; Using Newspapers for More than Obituaries; Genealogy Journals—They can be useful even if your ancestor isn't mentioned; and Hiring a Professional Researcher.

October 27th—Using Computers in Genealogy

Classes to be determined.

The State & County Archives of Florida

(Continued from page 6)

Florida State Archives

Florida Division of Archives History and Records Management

R. A. Gray Building, Pensacola and Bronough Streets, Tallahassee, FL 32201

Phone: 904-487-2073

Hours: Monday-Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Open Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

Closed: Sundays, state holidays, and Saturdays of Friday or Monday holidays.

Location: R.A. Gray Building (first floor, two blocks west of the State Capitol) 500 South Bronough Street

ACCESS

For more information on the access to records, research help, photocopies, on site research at the archives, and research services, see the archives Web site at <http://dhis.dos.state.fl.us/barm/research.html>.