

Genealogy Friends News

Genealogy Friends of
Plano Libraries

Genealogy Friends News
January 2024

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.

February Events

February 1, 2024—Round Table Zoom Discussion Group— Zoom meeting from 7-9 pm

February 3, 2024—Research At The Library—In Person at Haggard Library 10:30 am-1 pm

February 13, 2024—DNA Special Interest Group—Hybrid —7 to 8:30 pm

February 17, 2024—Hybrid Meeting—”The Fair Court: Records of the Chancery Court” by Judy Russell

Future Events:

March 16, 2024—Hybrid Meeting—”A New Strategy for Brick Walls” by Kim Richardson

April 20, 2024—Hybrid Meeting—”The Value of Transcribing Historical Records” by LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson

May 11, 2024—Research At The Library—In Person at Haggard Library 10:30 am to 1 pm

May 18, 2024—Hybrid Meeting—A Foundational Step in Research Strategy-What is the Research Question?” by Emily Richardson

June 15, 2024—Hybrid Meeting—”AI and Genealogy” by Thomas MacEntee

Check out the events on our Website— <https://www.genealogyfriends.org>

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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.

Gen Friends 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.

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

Genealogy Friends of Plano Libraries, Inc

PO Box 860477

Plano, TX 75086-0477

Research At The Library

This event will be held each quarter from 10:30-1 at WO Haggard Library, 2501 Coit Road, Plano, TX

February 3, 2024

May 11, 2024

August 10, 2024

November 9, 2024

- Bring a research project to work on. The library is a FamilySearch affiliate library where you can access restricted records you can't get from home.
- Experienced genealogists will be on hand to help with your research questions.
- Bounce ideas for knocking down a brick wall off fellow researchers
- Use the large format scanning equipment.

Local Genealogy Events—Save the Dates

Gen Friends All Day Seminar—September 21, 2024—”Research: From Planning to Writing” Speakers include Mark Lowe presenting “Ready-Set-Plan! Developing a One-Step Research Plan.” Watch for more information coming soon.

Dallas Genealogical Society 2024 Seminar Series:

- April 13, 2024 “Genealogy Jackhammers: Methods for Breaking Brick Walls” with Tom Jones
- July 27, 2024 “The Legacy of Forced Removal: Finding Formerly Enslaved & Indigenous Kin” with Nicka Sewell-Smith
- September 28, 2024 “Autosomal Analysis: Tools for Finding Your Ancestors” with Blaine Bettinger

Happy Birthday Ellis Island

Ellis Island opened 1 January 1892 welcoming immigrants. Over the next 62 years more than twelve million people were processed.

When Ellis Island opened the makeup of immigrants was changing. There were fewer arrivals from northern and western Europe and more coming from southern and eastern Europe.

The ship's passenger list was filled in at the port of departure. This document was used by the legal inspectors to interview the immigrants. Interpreters of all major languages were employed to assist with the interviews.

The immigrants were also examined by doctors to ensure they were healthy. If there were no issues the experience took three to five hours. About two percent of the arriving immigrants were excluded from entry, most had contagious diseases or were likely to become a public charge.



In the 1920s increasing restrictions on immigrants were implemented with the passage of the Emergency Quota Act of 1921 and the National Origins Act of 1924. This reduced the number of immigrants to the U.S. After World War I, U.S. embassies were established in countries all over the world where the necessary paperwork for immigration was completed replacing the process at Ellis Island. Between 1924 and 1954 only passengers who had problems with their paperwork or were refugees or displaced persons needing assistance were brought to Ellis Island.

Records that are available for immigrants include:

Passenger Arrival Records—Ships Passenger Lists were completed at the port of departure. The NARA records begin approximately 1820 and end in 1970 but there are gaps in the extant records. They are arranged by port of arrival. The records might provide the immigrants place of birth, ship name and date of entry, age, height, eye and hair color, profession, place of last residence, name and address of relatives they are joining in the U.S., amount of money they are carrying, etc. Later records contain more information than the earlier records. The original records were microfilmed and records over 75 years old are publicly available and many have been digitized and are available on *Ancestry*, *FamilySearch*, and *Fold3*. There is a list of NARA records available on each site <https://www.archives.gov/digitization/digitized-by-partners>.

Naturalization Records—The process by which an immigrant becomes an American citizen. Naturalization was not required. Before 27 September 1906 any court of record (city, county, state, or Federal) could naturalize someone. Beginning 27 September 1906 the process was transferred to Federal courts only. The transition took time so there may be naturalizations after the change date in local courts. NARA has naturalization records from Federal courts. <https://www.archives.gov/research/court-records>

Passport Records—Applications for passports contain information about citizens, especially those that were foreign-born. NARA has passport applications from October 1795 to March 1925. These records have been digitized and are available on *Ancestry*, *FamilySearch*, and *Fold3*. Applications from April 1925 to present are in possession of the State Department.

Alien Files—Created by INS beginning in April 1944, the files can include visas, photographs, affidavits, and correspondence leading up to an alien's naturalization, permanent residency, death, or deportation. The records are located at the National Archives at Kansas City and San Francisco.

Bias—Are You Considering All The Possibilities?

As we do research we examine documents and make judgement calls about the information in the source and what the chances are that it is correct. One way to make this determination is to examine the person who provided the information when the document was created. We need to be careful not to trust a source more than we should or discount a source because it doesn't fit with what we think happened. When this happens we are exhibiting cognitive bias.

Bias is a disproportionate weight in favor of or against an idea or thing. There are different types of bias. One of the types is Cognitive Bias defined as the repeated, systematic errors of thinking that occur when information is misinterpreted. Example of this are:

- Confirmation Bias—Favoring or focusing on information that confirms your existing beliefs and preconceptions. A researcher may discount information that does not confirm your bias.
- Attentional Bias—Paying attention to some things while simultaneously ignoring other things. It can help us focus on pieces of information that are most important or cause disregard other information because of biases.
- Anchoring Bias—the tendency to heavily rely on the first piece of information you learn or on one specific trait. The first piece of information you learn will have a more substantial impact on judgement than any other information you learn at a later time.

Think about your research, here are some examples of things to avoid.

1. Don't look for a record because you think it doesn't fit the ancestor you are researching.

Delia Brey was a school teacher in St. Louis, Missouri. Every year in the city directory she lived in a different address—usually a boarding house so I never looked for deed records for her. She died tragically at the age of 34. I never looked for a probate record because I assumed that she didn't own anything material. I was wrong on both counts. While looking for a probate record for her brother I found her probate file. She owned rental property in another part of the city and had a respectable estate.

2. Don't give more weight to the first piece of information you find, it could be incorrect and steer your research in the wrong direction.

John G. Clay was murdered in Chicago in 1928. The first articles I found in the newspaper painted a picture of him as a gangster and thief. I believed what they said without considering that the article might be biased against John for some reason. Later I found a source that praised John for his work with the union he lead and how he had improved the lives of thousands of workers. Another source explained that the newspaper had a long standing feud with union leaders. I researched some of the allegations in the newspaper article and could find no evidence that they were true. Witnesses at the coroner's inquest into John's death made some good points that conflicted with the stories in the newspaper. His probate file confirmed that John's assets were reasonable based on this salary and other sources of income. I realized that I was judging John unfairly.

3. Don't discount conflicting evidence. More research may help you figure out what is correct. Examine the source. When was it created? Why was it created? Who was the informant? Did they have first hand knowledge of the event? Did the source have any incentive to falsify information?

Here are a few things you can do to avoid bias as you are researching:

- Be aware of bias and ask yourself if you are considering all the possibilities.
- Examine your process and talk to others about what records you've looked for, what you found, and your conclusions (our Roundtable Discussion Group is a good place to do this).
- Keep a research log so you have everything related to a research question in one place so it is easy to review.
- Write a summary and construct an argument when you think you have found the answer. It is a great way to identify holes, conflicting evidence, and determine if you proved your hypothesis.
- Be critical of online trees, family stories, etc. Treat them as clues and look for evidence to prove or disproves them.
- Learn about the place, time period and the records you are using to place your research in the right context.

Volunteer Opportunity



Gen Friends Needs Your Help

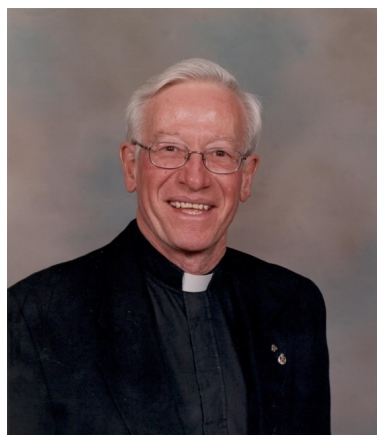
Genealogy Friends is run by all volunteers and there aren't many of us. In order to keep the society active we need more people to step up, help out, and think creatively.

Here are a few opportunities:

- Newsletter Articles—tell the story of an heirloom, your favorite website, history of the area, a sketch of one of your ancestors, a unique record you found that was useful, technology you use, etc. I can help edit the piece.
- Photographer to take pictures at monthly meetings to post on our website.
- Event Coordinator—Plan our annual dinner meeting and quarterly lunches. If you can plan a party you are qualified for this. We'll provide a checklist to follow.
- Board Member—Secretary—take minutes at board meetings. If you can take notes and create a Word Document you can do this.
- Social Media—create events on our Facebook page for Saturday Seminars, DNA Group meeting, and Roundtable Discussion Group. The postings are created all you would have to do is log on and create the events on Facebook. Step by Step instructions will be provided.

The board is very supportive and we help each other so you won't be left on your own.

Fr. Lloyd Morris



Fr. Lloyd Morris, a long time member of Genealogy Friends, passed away 14 January 2024. After serving as an Episcopal Priest, Fr. Lloyd explored the Catholic priesthood and helped found St. Gregory's. He later became a Catholic priest.

Lloyd had a passion for genealogy research. His love for tracing ancestors, discovering their stories, and chronicling his family's military contributions culminated in a book for future generations.

Preceded in death by his devoted wife of 59 years, Frances, Lloyd is survived by his sons Gregory and Grant.

The funeral will be Saturday, January 27th at St. Monica Catholic Church, burial to follow at Calvary Hill cemetery in the Priest Circle.