



Keys To The Present

Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Kendall County, Inc.

2008 Seminar Registration Opens

Registration is now open for the Fourth Annual Hill Country Seminar to be held January 26, 2008 at the Boerne Community and Convention Center. Megan Smolenyak, popular nationally known DNA lecturer, will be the speaker. The early registration cost for the seminar is \$35.00 for members and \$40 for non members. Those registering after the January 14th deadline will pay \$50.00. Morning and afternoon snacks and lunch are included.



The seminar will start at 9 a.m. with doors opening at 8:15. Bob and Pat Gordon, of Books and Things, will bring their genealogy books to fill the side room of the auditorium. If you wish a certain book, you can email them in advance at rag2@flash.net, and you can then purchase it at the Seminar.

Megan will also speak at a pre-seminar dinner on Friday night at a catered dinner to be held at the Community Center. Only those registered for the seminar and their spouses (whether registered or not) may attend the dinner. Cost of the steak fillet dinner, to be catered by Hungry Horse is \$25.00. A vegetarian dinner may

be ordered at registration. Wine will be served at the social mixer prior to the dinner.

DNA matching by descendants of a common ancestor has become the latest tool for genealogical researchers in proving their family lines. Smolenyak, a dynamic speaker, will explain the process and the benefits of using this new tool. She will also discuss Reverse Genealogy and the techniques used to find today's cousins when you only know your ancestor. And lastly, she will talk about finding obituaries on the Internet

Registration forms are available in the Genealogical Library or can be downloaded from GSKC's site www.rootsweb.com/~txgskc.

Volume 1, Issue 9

December, 2007
Boerne, Texas

Upcoming Events

Nov 29 2007

Computer Genies

ABC's of DNA

Dec 1 2007

GSKC Meeting

Ancestry.com

January 5 2008

GSKC Meeting

Awards and Planning at December Meet

GSKC will be holding its first ever monthly December meeting on Saturday, Dec 1, as the result of the change in monthly meeting time from the 3rd to the 1st Saturday of each month, when the By-laws and Standing Rules were amended. Previously, November was the last meeting of the year.

This will be a meeting where we review the successes of 2007 as committee chairman make their annual report; and one that will look to the future as the membership discusses the direction it wishes to move in 2008 and in the future.

A survey asking for input from members about future activities, programs, and events has been sent to members.

The 2007 Rachel Morgan Betz and the Volunteer of Year awards will given. See additional story on the awards on page 3.

In November, the membership voted to once again pay for free access at the Library to the Internet genealogy database, Ancestry.com. GSKC members fund this through donations and not from the GSKC treasury. Donations can be sent with your mem-

bership renewal or later.

In view of this decision, the Dells will give a presentation on using Ancestry at the December meeting. They will discuss the "free" features on the Ancestry web site, as well as techniques for finding and using the databases on the Library Version. Even if a member does not have access at home to looking at the database, it is possible to look at the database titles and search the contents of the database later at the Library. The presentation will follow the business meeting which starts at 10 a.m.

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“Two Bits” from the President

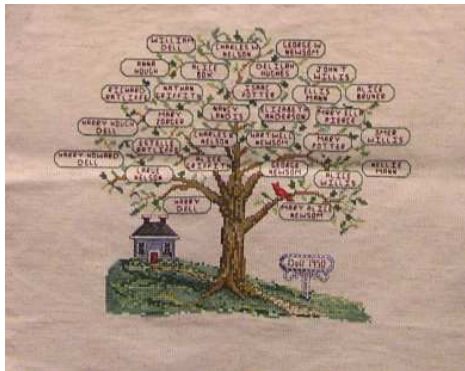
It's been a long time since January! And it certainly has been a year with changes for GSKC. A new office, Librarian, was created! A new meeting time was selected! Revised bylaws and standing rules were adopted! A new format for the monthly newsletter called *Keys of The Present* was initiated. And a May membership brunch at June Kiphart's, and a silent auction were a huge success.

The new broom did not sweep every thing out, as we retained our enjoyable Annual Hill Country Seminar featuring popular John Colleta; the successful First Family Project awarding certificates to our new recipients; and continued to provide volunteers in the Genealogical Library to help visitors.

Now, we look forward to 2008 which will start with a bang: the Fourth Annual Hill Country Seminar and pre-seminar dinner with national speaker, Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak. What else happens in 2008 will be decided by members at the December meeting as potential programs and activities are discussed. Be sure to complete the survey that accompanies this newsletter. Bring it to the meeting or email it to me before the meeting so your voice will be heard.

Harry Dell will be the guest speaker at the Nov 28 meeting of the Kerr County Genealogy Society at 2 p.m. at the Kerrville

Library. His topic will be *20th Century Research on the Internet.*



Pictured above is our family tree done by Terri James in cross stitch. Terri has offered to make these for members as a fund raising project. The proceeds, after her costs, go to the GSKC treasury. On the sign under the tree is the year of our marriage, my line, through my great grandparents, is on the right and Harry's is on the left. Cost of the tree (without frame) is \$25.00, and with frame \$40.00. Contact Terri if you are interested in having one made. She will have ours for you to see at the December meeting.

Harry and I attended the Texas State Genealogical Society Conference in Tyler recently. Kendall County won no awards as we did not enter the competition this year. We heard two interesting speakers,

George Morgan and Drew Andrews, The Genealogy Guys, who do a weekly podcast you can download onto your computer. They spoke on different ways to use the Internet in your genealogical research. We will be talking about some of this at the December meeting and much more at future Computer Genie meetings.

This month's Family Historian column in the Boerne Star is about land records and downloading the Texas State Land Grant records. Check it out.

Our good wishes for a successful knee operation go out to Jim Boyd, our recent past president, who will have surgery Nov 27th. We look forward to seeing you dance a jig at a meeting in the near future.

We hope you all can count a successful research year among your blessing, as you celebrate the upcoming holiday. Have a Happy Thanksgiving.

Computer Genies to Hear ABC's of DNA

As preparation for the January Seminar, Mary Alice Dell, Project Administrator for the Familyreedna Newsom Project, will introduce the basic vocabulary of dna matching; and show related websites that may help researchers at the Nov. 29 meeting. The meeting starts at 6:30 p.m. and will be held at the Boerne Public Library.

alexismarkert@yahoo.com and she will send one to you.

2008 Officers Win in Landslide election

The candidates presented by Nominating Committee Chairman Irene Page won by an unanimous vote of the membership at the November meeting. Mary Alice Dell will again lead the Society as President and Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Don Evans will join the GSKC Executive Committee as Vice President in 2008, replacing June Kiphart. Don served as Treasurer in 2003 and 2004. Also returning to serve GSKC for another year will be Gwen Adrian as Recording Secretary,

Alexis Markert as Corresponding Secretary, Terri James as Treasurer, and Lucy Croft as Librarian.

Membership Renewal Due Now

If you have not yet paid your dues for 2008, it is time to send in your renewal. Please fill out the renewal form so your name and address will be correct in the new Membership Directory. Forms will be available at the December 1 meeting for this purpose, or you can email Membership Chairman Alexis Markert at

Condolences

Our sincere condolences go to Cathy Schwarz and family upon the loss of her husband, Edgar, on Nov. 3. The Schwartz family was recognized as a "First Family of Kendall County" by GSKC in 2006. Edgar was a lifelong resident of Boerne and City Administrator of the City of Boerne for 30 years. In 2003 he was recognized by the National Weather Service for 35 years of service as a weather observer.

GSKC Volunteer Recognition Award Started in 2002

Annual awards recognizing service of volunteers were initiated in November 2002. The highest award for Outstanding Leadership was named the Rachel Morgan Betz, honoring our "Founding Mother" who in 1981 advertised for anyone interested in genealogy to meet with her. She became the first president of the Society. A Volunteer of the Year Award and one, called the Genie Award, recognizing a new member for substantial service during their first year were also given. Nominations for the awards are open to the membership, but the Executive Committee makes the final decision as to the recipients from those nominated.

The first recipient of the Betz award was Kate Skinner-Klee, a charter member, past president, and still to this day an en-

thusiastic committee chairman, for her "inspiring, superior and sustained performance". Harry and Mary Alice Dell were given the first Volunteer of the Year awards and Terri James the Genie Award.

In 2003, Joyce Behr, long time editor of the Key to The Past, was honored with the Rachel Morgan Betz award and Sharon Wolff as Volunteer of the Year for her services as chairman of the 1880-1890 Tax Book Extraction project.

In 2004, Cathy Swartz, cataloguer of the GSKC library and webmaster of the award winning Kendall Co. Genweb site was the Betz Award recipient and Rosemarie Schneider the Volunteer of Year for her work in the library.

The 2005 recipients were Edna Felps, president of the Society for four years;

and for her work in publishing the award winning Society cookbook. June Kiphart was recognized as Volunteer of the Year for her work with the revamped Keys to the Past.

In 2006, two Rachel Morgan Betz awards were given: the first was a special award given at the 25th Anniversary celebration to Clara Johnson for her years of works as the Memorial Chairman. The 2006 Executive Committee award was given to Regina Adam for her service as a member of the Kendall County First Family Project and years as treasurer. Lucy Croft, co-chairman of the Library Volunteer Committee and Jack Charles, a Library Volunteer who had clocked the most hours since its inception in 2004, shared the Volunteer of the Year award.

Minutes of the November 3, 2007 GSKC Meeting

The GSKC met at 10:00 A.M., Saturday, November 3, 2007, at the Boerne Public Library meeting room.

President Mary Alice Dell started the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag and the Pledge to the Texas Flag. One visitor was in attendance, Sharon Orr from Fort Walton Beach, Florida. She is the sister-in-law of member Irene Page.

Minutes. The minutes for the October 6, 2007 meeting were distributed in the newsletter. There were no corrections so the minutes stand as written.

Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Terri James reported that GSKC has \$4016.06 in the checking account at Bank of America and \$2060.55 in Savings at Guaranty Bank. Terri is checking other banks and may recommend switching the checking account from Bank of America.

Membership Chairman Report. Alexis Markert is collecting membership information, dues, and donations for 2008. She is trying to get an early start on the membership directory since she is also registrar for the Hill Country Family Seminar in January.

Keys to the Past Journal. June Kiphart, editor of the journal is undergoing treatments in the hospital. Bryden Moon is helping her with the 2007 Fall/Winter journal. Copies of Fall/Winter 2006 and Spring/Summer 2007 issues were available at the meeting. Members were asked to check their names off a list when they picked up their journals so they will not be mailed to them.

Hill Country Seminar Report. The Fourth Annual Hill Country Family History Seminar will be on Saturday, January 26, 2008, at the Boerne Convention and Community Center. Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak will be the speaker. Mary Alice described the many steps involved in putting on such a seminar. The process starts almost a year ahead with selecting and contacting a speaker, choosing a program, and arranging a place and date for the seminar. Mary Alice prepared the attached list of the steps required to produce a good seminar. The individuals who have agreed to help with each step are also listed. Five hundred and one flyers prepared by Mary Alice were folded and stamped for mailing last week. Individuals who helped with preparing the flyers for mailing are also mentioned in the attached list as are the general destinations for the mailing. A seminar flyer is attached to the minutes with details of the presentations, registration fees, and dinner cost. Mary Alice asked that each of us take an extra flyer to give to a friend. Associated with the seminar, at 6:30 p.m. on Friday night, January 25, a steak dinner will be catered by



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The Genealogical Society of Kendall County Newsletter

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Edna Felps Honored by BAHPS

Edna Felps, past president of GSKC, was honored at the Annual Membership meeting of the Boerne Area Historical and Preservation Society Nov 14, with the Distinguished Service award. Betty Edmonds, president, presented her with a certificate commending her for her work for the Historical Society. She had served on the Board and as Program chairman.



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Hungry Horse Restaurant at the Boerne Community Center. Ms. Smolenyak will be the speaker at the dinner.

Computer Genies Meeting. Harry Dell presented an interesting and helpful program for the Computer Genies meeting on October 25, 2007. Harry described methods for doing 20th century genealogical research using examples from his own family. The next Computer Genies meeting will be on November 29; Mary Alice Dell will present a program entitled “ABC’s of DNA and Websites of Interest to Researchers”.

Old Business: Election of officers. Irene Page, Chair, Paulette Thompson and Richard Winegar served as the nominating committee. They selected the following slate of officers: Mary Alice Dell, President; Don Evans, Vice President; Gwen Adrian, Recording Secretary; Alexis Markert, Corresponding Secretary; Terri James, Treasurer; and Lucy Croft, Librarian. Mary Alice called for nominations from the floor, but there were none for any office. Gladys Kuebel made a motion that the slate be elected by acclamation; Sandra Olsson seconded the motion; motion passed.

Terri James announced that since she has moved to Fredricksburg, being treasurer is more difficult. So if someone else in the club would consider being treasurer in 2009, she would be glad to train them.

New Business: Ancestry.com. President Mary Alice Dell asked the group if they thought the GSKC should continue paying for Ancestry.com for the library. A one year subscription will cost \$925 in 2008. She stressed how invaluable the program had been for volunteers, both in helping others who come in to the Genealogy/History room and for their own research at the library. Gwen Adrian made the motion that the Society continue with the Ancestry.com subscription for 2008. Gladys Kuebel seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Announcements. Mary Alice said the program for December has not been decided, but the meeting will include presentation of the annual awards; annual reports from committees, and planning for 2008.

Ron Reisinger thanked Harry and Mary Alice Dell for all of the genealogical tips they E-mail to former students. He said he had used it in talks and other occasions and it was most helpful. Sheryl Tierney also thanked the Dells for the tenacity they show in being sure their E-mails get through to the recipients. Mary Alice said she kept addresses to aol.com in a separate list since she had the most trouble getting them through.

Program. Dr. Sandra Olsson presented a fascinating program that illustrated the relationship between history and genealogy. She read from some letters she had found from her great grandfather and his family during the Civil War. She also showed photographs and maps from what was going on in the War at the time in their area. One interesting technique she used to locate her family was to find a grave of one of her female ancestors. She noticed some plastic flowers on the grave and left a message attached to the flowers asking that anyone visiting the grave contact her. A woman did contact her and the contact led to her finding 11 Civil War letters from her ancestor’s family.