



Keys To The Present

Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Kendall County, Inc.

Saturday's Meeting at Community Center

If you had ancestors who made the arduous trip from their homeland to the new world in the 19th century, you will want to hear Ed Mergele, well-known local historian, when he speaks Saturday, May 21 before the Genealogical & Historical Society of Kendall County. The meeting starts at 10 a.m. at the Boerne Convention Center, 820 Adler Rd. Ed will tell the story of the journey some of his ancestors made from Alsace, France, to Texas, in 1844. Signed copies of his book, "Alsace to Texas" will be available. Proceeds of the sale are being donated to the Society by the author. Mergele is not only a well-known author of books on Robert E. Lee, and of many military and historical books, articles, and short stories, but knowledgeable on the history of Kendall County. He has given numerous lec-



tures and talks about early Texas and Southwest History to university, library, social, etc. groups and enjoys question and answer type discussions. His favorite topics are the European immigration to Texas, the United States Mexican War, and the pre-Civil War in Texas. Ed is the oldest still living County Commissioner.

Both Ed and his wife, Mary Lou, volunteer as genealogists at The Family History Place, the library of the Genealogical & Historical Society, located at 725 Main St.

Both are sixth generation Texans.

Although Ed was raised in New Braunfels, he has an early tie to Boerne though the John and the Segunda Ruede Schertz family who settled here in 1852. The Schertz came to the Republic of Texas in the early 1840's with their parents and their Mergele clan. The families first lived in San Antonio right after the fall of the Alamo. John helped in the interment on the site of the Alamo of his mother, uncle, sister, and brother from a cholera epidemic while they were camped on those hallowed grounds. Then the families moved over to New Braunfels as first founders of that town in 1845. Mary Lou's ancestor was Judge Burney from Kerr County, who authorized to the State of Texas the petition to form Kendall County that John Schertz had signed.

Volume 5, Issue 5

The Family History Place
725 N. Main St. Ste. 3
Boerne, TX 78006

Upcoming Events

"Alsace to Texas"
May 21, 2011

10 a.m.

Boerne Convention Center

June 9, 14, 16

Treehugger Family History
Camp

Watch for Announcement
Of Bookcase Dedication
In Early June

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Treehugger's Family History Camp for Kids

Have you had your younger children or grandchildren ask about when you were a kid; or shown other interest in family history? If so, the GHSKC summer Treehugger day camp is the place for them. Thursday, June 9 is the first day during which kids will learn the basics of family history research and be given forms and instructions on getting information from family members. The following Tuesday and Thursday will be spent searching the Internet, compiling a Family History notebook

and about using a Library. The camp is free and open to kids who will be in Middle or High School in the Fall. Registration forms are in The Place and on the Society website.

Journal Ready for Pick-up Saturday

The Spring Summer issue of *Keys to The Past* can be picked up at the meeting Saturday, or at The Family History Place next week. Email madel35@gvtc.com today to reserve a printed copy if you do not want to receive the electronic version.



Gwen's Gems

By President Gwen Adrian May 2011

- Greetings, GSKC Members,
- I hope you are enjoying life in the Texas Hill Country, as I am. I know of no place that I would rather live. Sometimes we do not think about the challenges the early settlers faced after they decided to leave their homelands and come to Texas. Some of them settled in the Texas Hill Country, and they and their descendants developed the towns and counties we cherish today. One of those descendants is Ed Mergele. Ed is a writer, a historian, a GSKC Director, and a long-time, highly esteemed Kendall County resident. At our Saturday, May 21st meeting, Ed will take us through the journey some of his ancestors made from Alsace, France, to Texas, in 1844. They were some of the first European emigrants to settle in the New Braunfels area. Ed has gathered an amazing amount of information on these families and published it in a book called *Alsace to Texas*. I read the book and found it most interesting. From Ed's talk and the book you will learn about Ed's family, and you will also gain a greater appreciation of the challenges faced by many other brave people who were leaving homes in Europe where their families had lived sometimes for centuries to come to the Texas frontier. Ed's book will be on sale at the meeting, and I highly recommend it.
- As you know, in April, fourteen of our members traveled to Salt Lake City, Utah, to visit the Latter Day Saints' Family History Library. The group was welcomed by our friends and former members Martha and Brooks Boye who are currently serving a mission at Temple Square and the Family History Library. Trips to the Family History Library with its very accessible and best-in-the-world genealogical resources are always a wonderful experience for genealogists. Martha and Brooks took the time to make our trip even more special; they arranged a special lecture to teach us about the wonderful resource Familysearch Wiki; they joined our "pie social" one evening; and they introduced us to the delightful Garden Restaurant on top of the Joseph Smith Building, the former grand Hotel Utah. I think all of us who made the trip enjoyed it greatly, and since we did not knock down all of our brick walls, we are ready to return next year. Reservations have been made again for rooms in the Salt Lake City Plaza Hotel that is next door to the Family History Library. If you are interested in going, please let me know so we can be sure to have enough rooms. The dates for the **Second Annual GSKC Salt Lake City** trip are May 20 – May 27th.
- As usual, the May 21st meeting will be our last regular meeting until summer. GSKC will remain active though throughout the summer. Our wonderful volunteers will keep the Family History Place open five days a week, a Family History Tree Hugger camp for young people will be held in June, and the Kendall County First Families project will accelerate with applications due July 1st. Additional good news is that the new GSKC Financial Advisory Committee is meeting; they will help guide our fund-raising efforts and future long term planning. We appreciate very much their agreeing to help in this way. Very best wishes, Gwen Adrian



GSKC researchers at the Family History Library spent six busy days looking for records of ancestors. (L.) Irene Page studies microfilm. (Middle) LaVerne Peterson checks FHL catalog on line. (R) Nancy James was busy searching records in books. Many took time out for noon time Mormon Tabernacle Choir rehearsals across the street. For more pictures of the travelers see page 4.

Meet GHSKC's New Members who Volunteer at The Family History Place



Janice Brazil

I was the middle child of my parents and was born in Ft. Campbell, Kentucky. My father was a career soldier. Bouncing around taught me how to live in the moment and enjoy the people I'm with. My husband and I met before my first year in college and we married when I was 19. I have a BA and MA in history from San Jose State University and a teaching degree from UMASS Dartmouth.

While the kids were in grammar school I was a stay at home mom. Because my husband was in the academy, we moved several times. Each move brought new opportunities. I volunteered in many organizations, taught, wrote, and worked on genealogy. I've had some poems and essays published and co-edited a book called, *Risk, Courage, and Women*.

Before we retired to the hill country we lived in San Antonio for ten years while my husband was president of Trinity University. It was a great ride but now

I'm enjoying the peacefulness of the hill country, playing golf, knitting, having time to visit the grandkids, and of course volunteering in the family history library.



Lloyd Shenberger and his wife, Nelda, recently moved to the hill country from the Houston area following his retirement. He was born in York County, Pennsylvania, and moved to Houston in 1978. He

is a Certified Public Accountant. Prior to retirement, he held several financial management positions, the most recent as Plant Controller for Owens Corning.

Lloyd's interest in genealogy began about 20 years ago when he got the bug from a cousin. He is a member of the National Genealogical Society, Texas State Genealogical Society, Clayton Library Friends, Palatines to America, and several other local societies in Texas and Pennsylvania. He is also a trustee for the historic Washington Cemetery in Houston, formerly Deutsche Gesellschaft or German Society Cemetery. His genealogical interest in-

Welcome New Members

Agold, Charles
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cluded 18th century German immigration to Pennsylvania and 19th century German immigration to Texas.

Minutes of the Genealogical Society of Kendall County

10:00 a.m.. Saturday, April 21, 2011

1st Vice President Nancy McLarry called the meeting to order in the absence of our President, Gwen Adrian, who is on the annual research trip for members to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. She led the group in the pledges to the United States and Texas flags. Nancy welcomed visitors who stood and introduced themselves to the group. She thanked our hostesses for the day, Linda Stephens and Judee Archer.

Teri Flack, guest speaker from Austin, gave a power point presentation on researching Texas land records.

Minutes for the March regular meeting were approved as printed in the Monthly newsletter. Harry Dell, Treasurer, is on the research trip also and will have a financial report in May.

Nancy explained fourteen members/researchers are in Salt Lake City. Our Society is organizing next year's trip tentatively for May 20 through 27, 2012.

Ed Mergele and Nancy McLarry reported on a recent meeting of the non-profit groups that brought together both those seeking funding and those who are offering funds.

Plans for the 8th Annual Family History Seminar have begun. The speaker will be Coleen Fitzpatrick. Seminar will be February 4, 2012.

May Society meeting will be on May 21 in the upstairs meeting room at the Community Center on Adler Street. Speaker will be Ed Mergele, GSKC Director and Historian. Subject will be on the trip of his ancestors to Texas.

Respectfully submitted by Gladys Kuebel, Secretary





**The Genealogical Society of Kendall County
Newsletter**

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Left Top - JoAnn Boerner at MF Reader. L. Bottom Bertie Reynolds makes copies. Middle Row No. 1 Tom Page gets microfilm from file cabinet, No. 2 Erle & Gwen Adrian consult on a book. Middle Bottom - Carol Smith loads microfilm onto reader. Right top No. 1 Carol Westermeier reaches for a census index book. No. 2 Joyce Mull checks out an Immigration index. No. 3 Jim Westermeier explores the maps. Right Bottom - Harry Dell stops his work to smile for photographer Mary Alice Dell.

