



Keys To The Present

Newsletter of the Genealogical Society of Kendall County, Inc.

GSKC To Hear Key to Land Grants

Volume 2, Issue 6

Researching land granted in most states after the Colonial period, is relatively simple, as the land was granted to the first owners, by either the state or the federal government. The land was given to any person wishing to settle on the land who made application, and paid a fee; or to veterans of various wars as a reward for service.



categories of grants, the head right classes, and the many different kinds of loans and scripts offered by Texas; as well as to ask questions about online research possibilities.

September, 2008
Boerne, Texas

Researching land grants in Texas is much more complex, as there are Spanish grants and Mexican grants as well as those made during the Republic of Texas and after Texas joined the United States. A staff member from the Texas General Land Office will speak at the Sep 6 meeting of GSKC to help members and guests understand how to best search the Land Office Archives, according to Don Evans, program chairman.

a variety of associated materials, these records make up the Spanish Collection, which constitutes the primary source of documentation for land distribution in Texas prior to 1836. GLO also houses records of the land available under the Republic of Texas through headrights and military land grants. After annexation by the United States in 1845, Texas retained control of its public domain land, unlike other western states, and continued to distribute its land.

Evans to Preside

Don Evans will preside over the September GSKC meeting in the absence of President Mary Alice Dell.

In addition to the program on Texas land research, plans for the fall will be discussed.

The members of the 2008 Nominating Committee being appointed by President Dell will be announced. Their report and election of 2009 officers will be held at the November meeting.

Members will have an opportunity to learn about the different

Upcoming Events

Saturday, September 6

GSKC Meeting
10 am, BPL

Monday, September 8

Comfort Heritage Foundation
Picnic (see Page 2)

Thursday, September 18

Computer Genies
2 pm, BPL

The Texas General Land Office (GLO) is the repository of original Spanish and Mexican land titles in Texas. Along with

Cemetery Photo Project Underway

GSKC's project to photograph all the tombstones in the Boerne Cemetery got off to a good start this spring, according to Cathy Schwarz, who has been posting the pictures to the Kendall County website. "At last count there were 1134 posted" reported Cathy. "Summer heat and vacation time slowed down the project.,

but it will resume in the fall.". Anyone interested in participating should contact Chairman Erle Adrian for instructions and plot assignment. Pictured at right is Gwyn Adrian illustrating one way to comfortably take a picture with the camera at the same level as the tombstone.



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“Two Bits” from the President

.Summer vacations are over...at least for most folks although there are still a few of us who are dragging our feet about returning home. Early fall has some attractions that lure us to linger longer in other parts of the US.

As you read this, Harry and I will be in Salt Lake City for our bi-annual visit to that treasure house of genealogical records called the Family History Library. Every time I visit there I am again grateful to the LDS for sharing this with all of us.

Meanwhile, “back at the ranch” we are leaving the September meeting in the capable hands of Don Evans.

As I write this we are enroute from Washington to SLC, so my news collection has been done at long distance. I am trusting Don to cover anything I have overlooked at the meeting

Don will be announcing the names of the members of the 2008 Nominating Committee which I will have appointed. I encourage you to submit to any one of them, the names of the people you would like to see as GSKC officers in 2009; or let them know if you want to be considered for an office. Don't be shy!

The Boerne Cemetery Photo project got off to a good start this spring, but summer's heat and vacation have taken a toll

on its progress. There are still close to 3000 graves to be photographed, so if you were not able to volunteer before, please consider doing so this fall. Contact Erle Adrain and he will give you instructions about taking the pictures and assign a cemetery section to photograph. It really is easy to do and will be appreciated by family members over all the country.

If you are considering attending the Texas State Genealogical Society annual conference at Abilene this fall, I recommend you make your hotel reservations now. (see story elsewhere) I have heard Tom Jones, the speaker, and can recommend him. He will be discussing problem solving, examining evidence and using negative evidence as well as how to trace common surnames. We look forward to seeing GSKC receive recognition for some of its publications by members, as we have entries in three areas this year.

And while you are thinking of increasing your knowledge, be aware of two events in San Antonio this fall, the DRT seminar featuring Lloyd Bockstruck in September and the San Antonio Historical and Genealogical Society seminar in November featuring Dick Eastman, editor of a genealogy blog. .

We will back in late Sept and look forwarding to seeing you all at the October meeting.

Hannah Grenia Death

GSKC lost another member with the passing of Hannah Ellis Grenia, age 72, on May 28, 2008. She was the daughter of Reverend and Mrs. E. C. Ellis, a Methodist minister. Hannah had only been a member for a short time, but had been supportive in donating funds for the purchase of books about the Orphan Trains for the Library even before joining GSKC. She was also an active member of the George W. Kendall chapter of NSDAR.

She taught elementary school, worked with scouting and girls clubs, volunteered her time with the Cancer and Heart Funds, and was active in many Federated Women's clubs throughout the years. She loved animals and was a members of the national SPCA and actively supported the National Equine Rescue Project.

She was preceded in death by her husband James D. Grenia, in 2003 and by her daughter, Cynthia, in 2007. She is survived by her son, James E. Grenia, daughter-in law, Susan Grenia, and three grandchildren: Samantha, Sarah, and James of Boerne.

GSKC Members Invited to Comfort Foundation Picnic

GSKC members are invited to join the Comfort Heritage Foundation members at a picnic being held at their meeting, Monday Sept 8 at 6 p.m. The picnic will be held at the Brownsboro Churchyard on River Bend Road next to the Brownsboro Cemetery.

“Bring a chair, a friend, and a salad or side dish to go with the fried chicken that is being furnished”, invited Ruth Kiel, President of the Foundation. Here is an opportunity to see the restored Brownsboro Cemetery, which was recently

awarded a Texas Historic Cemetery Marker. Approximately 60 people attended the dedication of the plaque on June 14th.

If you need instructions to find the Brownsboro Church, contact Ruth at skyl133@hctc.net

At right is a picture of the new gate that has been erected at the cemetery which was established in 1870. For names of known burials there, consult the list on the Kendall County GenWeb site. .



Fall Genealogical Events

The DRT Library will present their Eighth Family History Seminar on Saturday, September 20, 2008 at the Alamo Complex.

"Bursting Through Brick Walls" and will be presented by Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck. The cost is \$35.00 per person. Seating is limited and pre-registration required.

Printable registration forms are available online at www.drtl.org/PublicProgram/Online_Reg_Form.pdf

The Texas State Genealogical Society 2008 Conference will be October 24-24, 2008 in Abilene at MCM Elegante Suites. . The conference speaker will be Thomas W. Jones, co-editor of the National Genealogical Society Quarterly. Special hotel rates apply until September 25.

In addition to the awards banquet and general meeting, there will be four sessions of genealogical lecturers.

For more information visit TSGS at www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txsgs/

Computer Genie Meeting

The first fall meeting of the Computer Genies will be held Thursday, September 18 starting at 2 p.m. in the meeting room of the Boerne Public Library.,

Members discussed writing their family histories at the last meeting and decided to begin them during the summer. Progress on these histories will be reviewed at this meeting, according Irene Page, Computer Genie Chairman.

New web sites discovered by members and other computer genealogical data is exchanged at these meetings. Bring your laptop and explore the Internet with fellow genealogists.

Minutes of the May 3, 2008 Meeting

The GSKC met at 10:00 A.M. Saturday, May 3, 2008, at the Boerne Masonic Lodge. President Mary Alice Dell opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance to the United States Flag. One guest, Selma Looney, was present. No minutes were written for the April 5th meeting as the Society visited the Comfort Heritage Foundation and no business meeting was held.

Don Evans, acting Treasurer in the absence of Terri James, reported \$4,295.17 in a checking account and \$2,061.08 in the savings account for a total of \$6,356.25.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Library Committee: Librarian Lucy Croft reported the Genealogy Library has 1804 books and that 93 came from the Fredericksburg Genealogical Society which has disbanded.

Library Volunteers: Chairman Jack Charles announced that we currently have 21 volunteers with 19 volunteers serving each month. He commended Edna Felps, who was recently hospitalized and who was attending the meeting, as a library research volunteer. Volunteers contrib-

uted a total of 1468 hrs in 2006, 1428 hours in 2007, and 774 hours in the past 6 months. Six new volunteers will be trained at a volunteers' training session on May 9, by Mary Alice Dell.

Seminar Committee: Chairman Christy Kestler an-

nounced the seminar will be on February 9, with speaker Dr. George Schweitzer. She will begin calling people in August for more planning help. The response to her question, as to the group's preference for the location of the Friday night banquet was in a hall like the Masonic Lodge, rather than a restaurant.

Tombstone Photo Committee: Erle Adrian, chairman of the group photographing all of the tombstones in the Boerne Cemetery to put them on the Internet. He reported that 536 tombstone photos have already been taken and posted on the Kendall County Genweb site by Cathy Schwarz. Fifteen people



have signed up to take the tombstone photographs. He mentioned that the best photographs were obtained on an overcast day and in the morning.

Journal Report: The 2007 Fall/2008 Spring combined Edition of the journal *Keys to the Past* was available to members to pick up at this meeting. Editor Don Evans acknowledged the help of Mary Alice Dell and Christy Kestler in the journal preparation. Those not picked up at the meeting will be mailed.

Evans also reported that GSKC had received a \$1000 donation from the Hotel Occupancy tax last year for seminar assistance and preservation; and he had just completed the application for 2008 funding for the historical preservation. He also asked members to submit ideas for speakers and programs and to contribute articles for the fall 2008 edition of the Journal.

Computer Genies: Chairwoman Irene Page reported that 21 attended the April 17 computer Genies workshop. She announced that the next meeting would

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Don Evans, Vice President
Gwen Adrian, Recording Secretary
Alexis Markert, Corresponding Secretary
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Lucy Croft, Librarian

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Boerne Star Genealogy Column Wins Award

The Family Historian, a monthly column published in the Boerne Star, written by Mary Alice Dell, was named the winner of the 2008 Excellence in Writing Award for best newspaper column by the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors, May 14 in Kansas City MO. The award was announced at the annual ISFHWE banquet, held during the National Genealogical Society Conference. She entered three columns that had appeared in the Star, in the annual Excellence in Writing contest and won based on her November 2007 column *Land Ho!* The annual competition began in 1989 to encourage high standards in genealogy journalism. Categories are judged by professionals in the field of journalism and genealogy.

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be on May 16, at 1:00 p.m. at the library. The topic will be writing your memories. Attendees should bring any family history they may be fortunate enough to have.

Martha Boye, who works with the Boerne LDS Family History Center, encouraged us to use the center. She gave the phone number – 830 981-9626 – and said the center was open 10 hours a week, including Monday, 1:00 -3:00 p.m.; Tuesday, 6:00 to 9:00 p.m.; Wednesday, 10:00 to 12:00 a.m. and 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.; and Thursday, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

President Mary Alice Dell reported on the Genealogy Course that ran from March 6 through April 10, 2008. Forty-eight people signed up for the course. Two came only once and two officially withdrew. Thirty-nine certificates were awarded, 13 with gold seals indicating these individuals had attended all sessions and completed all of the homework. She awarded a certificate to Bertie Reynolds whose only absence had been the last meeting when the certificates were awarded to other attendees. There were two follow-up workshops; one on finding census records and the other on computer tricks and PAF.

Members were told to get their Journal from Christy Kestler. Genealogy course members were advised to take a copy of the April 10, Boerne Star donated by Bill and Ann Davenport, which contains class photographs.

The next GSKC regular meeting will be Saturday, September 6, 2008, and will be conducted by Vice President Don Evans.

After the break, Author, historian, genealogist and storyteller, David Bowles presented an informative program on writing your family story as creative nonfiction, more commonly known as historical fiction. He also made suggestions about the editing and publishing of a book. His first historical fiction book about his ancestors is entitled Spring House and involves the Revolutionary War Battle of Guilford Courthouse in North Carolina in 1762.



Continued from May Newsletter

South Carolina Wills, 1670-1853 or Later by Mary B. Warren [GEN 975.7 Warr SC]

Texas, Goal of German Emigration in the 19th Century by Beate Rese [GEN 976.4 Rese TEX]

Union County South Carolina Will Abstracts, 1787-1849 by Brent H. Holcomb [GEN 975.7 Holc SC]

Vermont's First Settlers by Jay M. Holbrook [GEN 974.3 Holb VT]

Virginia Heraldica Being a Registry of Virginia Gentry Entitled to Coat Armor with Genealogical Notes of the Families edited by William Armstrong Crozier [GEN 975.5 Croz VA]

Vital Records of Alford, Massachusetts, to the Year 1850 [GEN 974.4 Vita MASS]

Vital Records of Barnstable, Massachusetts by Leonard H. Smith [GEN 974.4 Smit MASS]

Vital Records of Raynham, Massachusetts by Margaret Stover [GEN 974.4Stov MASS]

Vital Records of Yarmouth, Massachusetts to the Year 1850, Vols. 1 & 2 compiled by Robert M. Sherman [GEN 974.4 Sher MASS]

The Watson Family [GEN 929.2 WATSON]

Welsh Family History by John Rowlands (this a second copy) [GEN 941.2 Rowl WALES]

West Virginia Estate Settlements by Ross B. Johnston [GEN 975.4 John WVA]