

WCGS NEWSLETTER

Washington County Genealogical Society of Texas

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Information

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2017-18 Officers

President:
Jan Kelm

Vice-President:
Geraldine Johnson

Secretary:
Vanessa Smith

Treasurer:
Lu Hollander

Newsletter Editor:
Susan Lake
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What You Missed

February 2018

WCGS met at Blinn College Student Center on February 5, 2018 at 7:15.

Business Meeting

Thirty-six members have paid dues. Current balance is \$13,270.28. No committee reports. We welcomed four new board members: Linda Jurecka, Charlene Voskamp, Gary Rothermel, and Mary Kubeczka. The next meeting will be on Monday, March 5, 7:15 at the Student Center, Blinn College. The speaker will be Don Allphin with a talk on "Oral History Techniques and Examples."

Program

Eddie Harrison began his talk with a powerpoint presentation about the story of the Special 369th Regiment, who were known as the "Harlem Hellfighters" of World War I, and spoke of their valor and honor while serving our country. A special draft was instituted to help to fill vacancies in the colored 93rd division with many men coming from Central and Southeast Texas, later to be sent to New York. One of these men was Mr. Harrison's father, Joe E. Harrison, who served in a machine gun unit during the War. The 369th was sent to France and assigned to the French Army and fought alongside the French in the trenches; they were shelled and gassed. Some of them died and were buried in France, like James Ford and Jesse Emerson. Mr. Emerson was from the Brenham area but was later reinterred in Arlington National Cemetery. More investigation into his war record may reveal that he was some kind of a hero, as not very many soldiers were given this treatment. Two other soldiers: Sgt. Henry Johnson and Needham Roberts so distinguished themselves on the field, that they each were awarded the highest French War

Looking Forward

The next meeting will be April 2 at **7:15 P.M.** in the Blinn Student Center. The program is going to be given by Gary Rothermel on Arabella Harrington

Meeting Time

Our meeting time has been adjusted to 7:15 (from our previous 7 pm) to allow the class using the room ahead of us to leave and to allow time for our speakers to set up.

New Members

If you know of someone with a genealogy interest, tell them about us. They can join at any time.

Memberships

Texas State Genealogical Society

Washington County Chamber of Commerce

Dues Reminder

Please give Lu Hollander your 2018 dues or mail them to 2211 South Day St. Suite 105 Brenham, TX 77833. The cost is \$12 for a single person or \$18 for a couple living at the same address. [Click here for the 2018 form.](#)

medal, the croix de guerre. When they returned from the war, the 369th was welcomed in New York City with a tickertape parade as their band played and marched through the city. Mr. Harrison suggested a comparison of the war records of the 369th with other units may reveal theirs an impressive contribution to the conflict and final victory.

Tidbit

Vanessa Smith began by saying that she loves, “Weird Genealogically Related Coincidences” and began to tell of one such odd coincidence. She displayed an old ladder-backed, rope-seated chair and related the history of its coming into her household and to Washington County. Belonging to her great grandparents in Lee County, Texas, the chair can be approximately dated between 1891-1902, making it 116-127 years old. When her grandmother Minnie was alive, she told Vanessa that it was made in a chair factory near Blue, Texas in Lee County. Vanessa inherited the chair and brought it with her when she moved from Houston to Brenham. While researching the history of her property on Highway 105, she learned about the Isaac Jackson family, owners of the league and part of Austin’s Old Three hundred. Tragically, Isaac Jackson died in a blizzard in 1831 and is buried somewhere near New Years Creek. His family left in the Runaway Scrape and later moved to Lee County. Last year, while Vanessa was labeling the chair with a tag to identify her family as its previous owners, she got the idea to look in a history book of Lee County to see if anything was mentioned about a chair factory. To her great surprise, it seems that “The Chair” was made in the chair factory that was begun by one of the sons of Isaac Jackson, William! Weird coincidence, but she said that it feels like she has brought “The Chair” home.

March

WCGS met at Blinn College Student Center on March 5, 2018 at 7:15.

Program

Linda Jurecka introduced the evening’s speaker, Don Allphin, whose topic was “Oral History Techniques and Examples.” Mr. Allphin stated that there are two benefits that result from taking an oral history; First, is the historical connection of the subject of the interview and

Of Interest

The **Texas Czech Genealogical Society (TCGS)** is hosting a Genealogy Research Workshop at the Caldwell Civic and Visitor Center, 103 Texas Hwy 21 W., Caldwell, Tx April 20-21, 2018, 10:00 am-4:00 pm. This workshop is open to anyone wanting to research their family history, learn how to use internet sources, translate documents, use research books emphasizing Czech immigrants and Czech Republic maps, including Cadastral maps, search for ancestors in the Czech Republic Archives, get individual help with genealogy questions, dating old photos and much more.

Registration is \$20 per person for one or both days (please register by April 13th). For more information contact Carolyn Holub, 2741 Falcon Way, Midlothian, TX 76065-4713; phone 214-577-0029, cholub1088@gmail.com. To register by mail: print a registration form from the Texas Czech Genealogical Society (TCGS) website (<http://txczgs.org/>). To register by credit card: <https://squareup.com/store/TXCZGS/item/registration>. Lunch is on your own. You do not have to be a TCGS member to attend.

[Link to Texas German Society Convention 5 May 2018](#)

second, is the value to the family of the person who is questioned. He proceeded to discuss some steps to successfully complete an oral interview for the individual and for his family:

1. Make a list of people to be interviewed.
2. Get a personal contact, who is acquainted with your subject, to accompany you. This will make the visit more comfortable and relaxed.
3. Have blank CD-Rs, and preferably a Roland CD recorder. This recorder costs about \$500.00 but you can record and burn the CDs on this one device. You will be giving the interviewee two copies; one for himself and one for his family.
4. Have a set group of questions to ask. You can vary the list and adjust them to the specific purpose of the interview. (Mr. Allpin shared a handout with sample questions). You may wish to leave the list of questions before the interview so that your subject may consider his answers.
5. State the name of the person, date and time of the interview. Be sure to ask if it is still all right to continue before beginning.
6. If the person strays off the topic, stop the recording for the moment and redirect before beginning again.

Business Meeting

The Minutes and the Treasurer's Reports were previously send out by email and were approved as sent. Vice President Geraldine Johnson announced that the Cemetery Tour Committee will be meeting on March 12, at noon at Yumm's to discuss our goals, ideas and perhaps a new direction. Treasurer Lu Hollander presented the 2018 budget and it was approved.

Don Allpin announced that the San Felipe Visitor Center will have their grand opening on April 27, 1-5:00 PM. The Old Washington printing press has been relocated there.

It was mentioned that Independence Historical Society will have a tour of their cemetery on Saturday at 10:30.

President Jan Kelm, stated that the Board will meet again in March to further discuss existing and future projects.

Tidbit

President Kelm read an amusing account of what it was like to have Sunday dinner when guests came to visit in the olden days from the point of view of a child: chicken plucking, skinny-dipping, shooting competitions, late lunches and chicken and dumplings.

Queries From Visitors to our Website

If You Can Help With any of These, email us and we'll send you details.

I am looking to see if there may be a grave or other documentation for a relative of mine in your county. In 1880, Nancy M. Escoe was enumerated with her son, T. J. (Thomas Jefferson) Escoe. She was 79 and blind, deaf and bedridden. She was also listed in the 1880 Schedules of Defective, Dependent, and Delinquent Classes as blind and deaf. Based on deed research, T. J. Escoe and his immediate family moved out of Washington County between 1886 – 1887. Most likely, Nancy M. Escoe died while she was in Washington County and is buried there. I was hoping to find evidence of that. Douglas Rutherford
[Jan Kelm had no information on this person.]

I am looking for information of John R Pafford. He was listed on the censuses of 1880 for Washington county. My family history shows he was born in 1843 in Tennessee and may have died in 1885, location unknown. His family helped settle Del Rio, Texas in early 1860's. His father was Randolph A Pafford. I cannot find what happened to John. According to my family history John R Pafford was never married and had no children. The information is very reliable based upon a court document in the 1930's. This John was a son to Randolph Pafford of Del Rio (settled there in 1864). Any help would be appreciated. Glen Pafford Waxahachie, TX
[Jan Kelm consulted the census and sent correction information.]

I have been doing some research on my distant (Spross)relatives who lived around Brenham in the late 1800's and early 1900's. One child is buried in the Rocky Creek German Methodist Episcopal Church Cemetery near Independence. I found a picture of her headstone on "find a grave" and the headstone has been knocked over. I located the cemetery on a Google aerial map and the it looks to be on private property and not being maintained. Do you know if it is possible to gain access to the cemetery? And if so, how. Also, is there anything you can tell me about the history of this cemetery. I would appreciate any information you may have.
Thank you, Fred Spross
[Jan Kelm sent information on the cemetery.]

My name is Teresa Kahle and I am a member of the Larimer County Genealogical Society (Fort Collins, Colorado).

I am researching the death of John R Joynes, a sometime resident of Brenham, who died in Rockdale 11 June 1881. I'm working on a Colonial Dames application for my 90 year old mother in law and am in a bit over my head. I need to prove his date of death and the only I have is a Galveston News death announcement. I am searching for anything else that might record his date and I've exhausted the usual sources. Too early for death certificate, died intestate, no obit in the Rockdale or Brenham papers, etc.

I focused on Rockdale, as the announcement said that's where he died, but because he is in Brenham in 1880, I think I need to look there too. I saw a book references called Cemetery Records of Washington County that is at your local library. Can anyone take a minute and check it for John R. Joynes?

[Susan Lake did the look up she requested finding no reference.]