

WCGS NEWSLETTER

Washington County Genealogical Society of Texas

www.bluebonnetgenealogy.org

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Information

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link to email

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2017-18 Officers

President:
Jan Kelm

Vice-President:
Geraldine Johnson

Secretary:
Vanessa Smith

Treasurer:
Lu Hollander

Newsletter Editor:
Susan Lake
genealogy@susanlake.net

What You Missed

WCGS met May 7, 2018 at the Blinn College Student Center. There were 19 members present and no visitors.

Program

Susan Lake selected one of Washington County's World War I soldiers and demonstrated the use of several free and subscription genealogical databases to find out more about him. She selected from Dr. Dietrich's list a young man named Ignac Jonkowski.

The databases discussed were:

ancestry.com-the world upgrade costing about \$300; the US version is less

newspapers.com-costs about \$110 dollars per year; coordinates with your Ancestry subscription in that you are able to save the clippings to your trees; You can see also who else has clipped the record and contact them. Susan highly recommends this subscription

genealogybank.com-has newspapers but not the same ones as Newspapers.com-cost is about \$50 per year

www.fold3.com-costs about \$50 per year; military records
familysearch.org-free; has some resources the others don't; i.e. it had a copy of Ignac Jonkowski's military record

<http://texashistory.unt.edu>- The Portal to Texas History is free; has a broad selection of many Texas newspapers and other sources for searching

edoctecinc.com- free; allows a partial name search; has county documents for some counties including Washington County.

Although the young soldier was only 19, by using the above resources, Susan was able to find out the names of many of his close relatives, determine that he was single, that he could not write his name, his cause and place of death (Florida-pneumonia), and see that his tombstone has a

Looking Forward

We will be taking our summer break. The next formal meeting won't be until September, but committees will continue to work.

Family History Fair Links



[Details](#)

[Flyer](#)

[Forms](#)

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.](#)

Polish inscription--all information that would add to depth to his story and enable one to write a brief biography of his life.

Business Meeting:

The minutes were read by Secretary Vanessa Smith and approved. The Treasurer's Report was presented by Lu Hollander. Ending balance was \$13, 601.48. The Adopt-a-Cemetery now has funds of \$3700.00.

Committees

Adopt-a-Cemetery: Jan Kelm. We met but we are not actively working on a project right now.

Camptown Cemetery: Eddie Harrison-Auburn University will be sending ten students this summer. They will interview us to find out what we need help with and then make a report.

Cemetery Tour: Geraldine Johnson. We are waiting on a report from a meeting with one of the Prairie Lea board members for further action.

Executive Committee: Jan Kelm. We had to cancel the trip to Clayton Library until the fall, as we were unable to get enough people to fill a bus. We are discussing the use of a smaller vehicle for a future trip.

Family History Fair: Geraldine Johnson showed a sample flyer that will advertise the 2018 Genealogy Fair that will be held at the Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library. [See details in left column.] It is co-sponsored by WCGS and be open to students in two age groups: 11-14 and 15-18. Three instructional classes will be held at the beginning of the summer and workshop sessions will follow to help students to prepare their entries for cash prizes to be awarded in October. The students' projects will be displayed in the library. The three categories for the entries are: Family Tree, Family History Video, and Washington County Fair Memories. The participants and those interested in genealogy are invited to the Genealogy Lock-In program at the Library on October 19, 2018. A WCGS informational table display will be set up in the library to explain who we are and what we do. The students' projects will also be displayed in the library. Volunteers are needed to help with the classes, workshops, judging, for setting up the WCGS table on the Genealogy Lock-In night. If you can help, contact Geraldine Johnson.

Comments:

Eddie Harrison- mentioned that there is a need for genealogy research help for adults too. General discussion proceeded on the arrangement of the conference rooms used tonight. Comment that there is no microphone, the viewing screen is smaller and the room was a bit warm. But many liked the intimacy of the smaller room. We may try a different table arrangement. We may go back to beginning the meeting at 7:00PM if we stay in the smaller room.

Jan Kelm- We are still working on contacting the person who will tell us more about the digitization of local records project.

Vanessa Smith- Wanted the group to know that she will donate three books to the genealogy room: *German Seed in Texas Soil*, and volumes one and two of the *Catalogue of the Spanish Collection of the Texas General Land Office*.

Queries From Visitors to our Website

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

May 9

I am related by a couple family lines connected to Washington County and Brenham. It began when my ggg grandfather John N. Spears moved to Washington County sometime between 1864 and 1867. He came from Columbus Mississippi where he was in the tin business. He came with his wife Julia Ann, and their children Laura, Ione, and Robert. Ione married William H. Hiestand in Washington Co. on Nov. 6, 1867. They were my gg grandparents.

John N. Spears died in Washington County sometime between Sept 1867 and Jan. 1869. He may have died as a result of a yellow fever epidemic. I recently found a letter written by him that was donated by a grandchild of his to the University of Texas Austin History Center in 1963. The letter was written Sept. 16, 1867 from Brenham to his wife who was apparently out in the country somewhere with the children. He stayed in town to help with the victims of the epidemic. Here is a transcript of the letter as best I could make it out.

Brenham, Sept. 16, 1867

Dear Wife & Children

I could not find a ride to Hickey house in coming in so I thought I would go out to that Blacksmith this morning to see if I could get in but on reflection I think it best for me to stay in Brenham in case I was to get sick. I know I could have better treatment in town than in the country for the good doctor Howard's assistant has sent ---- of the ----- a doctor up to this place to find out all the cases of the deseases and what kind of medicine would be best. He has ordered from Galveston nurses for this place and they will be up on the cars this morning to take charge of the sick. The sick this day required no medicine only to keep the --- in good order and good nursing.

So do not be uneasy about me. I will take good care of myself and if I get sick I will let you know. So you may know I am well by not hearing I am sick. I will write to you every chance I have & you do the same. Get along out there as well as you can. Say but little and think ahead for the least said the best for we can't help ourselves at this time for there is no chance to get in any

place in the country shorter than fifteen or twenty miles. This is a misfortune we can't help ourselves. Keep in good spirits. I will keep you posted about all things as well as I can when I have a chance to do so.

There was two deaths last night, Capt. Walker at the Hotel and one German in the house on the corner by Parsin Hill. That he'd been sick some time & Capt. Walker they say killed himself drinking though he had the fever but a good ---- for it whiskey I think is the chief cause of his death. Today I have 17 cases old & new all doing very well.

I just heard Frederick's wife is dead. He moved out in the country last week. She died with the brain fever the ---- I will send your (clothes) out first chance. Take good care of yourselves and keep Bobby out of the sun as much as you can. Tell him I say so. Write to me when ever you can.

Your loving husband
until death

Jno. N. Spears

His wife Julia was living with her son Robert in Brenham on the 1880 census. I don't know when or where Julia died, her son Robert moved sometime in the 1880's to Archer County TX, then to the Austin area. Ione died in Brenham in July 1886, and William and their children moved some time after. William and Ione's daughter Laura stayed in Brenham having married a Louis Beaumier. Laura died in 1953 and is buried in Prairie Lea cemetery in Brenham. I am related from William and Ione's other daughter Lois who married in Archer County.

If you know of any information on these families I would be interested. I checked your cemetery list but couldn't find Ione or her father John N. Spears. If he died in the epidemic I guess he would have been buried in an unmarked grave if I read that right. I tried contacting the clerk's office about any documents related to the Spears/Hiestand's but they didn't follow up on my inquiry.

James Wood (I live in Spring Valley California)

Jan Kelm and Vanessa Smith Response: We are researching this and will get back to you when we have information that may help in your search.

May 12

I will be visiting San Antonio in a couple of weeks and thought I might do a side trip to Washington County and see what records I could find on some German immigrant ancestors who lived there in the 1880s or there about. Do you have a library, archive center or similar place for genealogy research I could visit? Thank you. Larry Allen

Susan Lake Response: Our library does have a genealogy room. They are currently upgrading its sources, but they will help in any way they can. If you could give us some family names, places, and dates, we might be able to direct you to other places to research.

May 16

For 26 years I haven't been able to locate a death date or burial for Margarethe Charlotte Marten Husemann. The courthouse record shows her husband, Wilhelm Husemann's Declaration of Intent/Citizen has him arriving in Texas October 1875. His son, Bernhard, 2 daughters, one married Louis Eichholt 1873 and one married Priesmeyer, 1880 were living here. I have been

back and forth with Willie Niermann in Wehdem, Germany by emails trying to figure out this mystery. Have narrowed it down to her coming with husband 1875-1879 because he married Engel Schroeder in Dec. 1879. I find no records anywhere in any church of a death or burial. In 1880 the children signed a quit claim to any property that Wilhelm and their deceased mother, Charlotte had obtained. I know there are some records missing at the Bethlehem Lutheran, Wm. Penn back then. I have found no obit either. None of us relatives have been able to locate anything. In Zionsville Lutheran records I found a Margarethe Husemann as sponsor in 1876, but I don't know if it is her because it was the opposite side of the county where the others lived. That is the only record I can find near her name. Something keeps telling me she might be buried in the Eichholt Cemetery, but I don't know where to find a record. I know that everything can't be found on the internet and have personally researched records in libraries, churches, courthouse, etc. I would appreciate any suggestions.

Thank you in advance,

Mell Morrow

Jan Kelm and Vanessa Smith Response: We are researching this and will get back to you when we have information that may help in your search.

Research Opportunity

Below is a link to a flyer for an upcoming research trip to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City sponsored by the Humble Area Genealogical Society. You do not have to be a member to go with them. Vanessa Smith, our WCGS Secretary, has gone several times. She says it is well worth the cost. You get a reduced hotel rate and the the hotel is next door to the library. If you have questions, she will be happy to give you guidance.

Salt Lake City Research Tour: October 17-24, 2018

Help Needed

Geraldine Johnson needs help this summer getting the word out to students about the Genealogy Fair and Competition. Contact her at geraldine@reagan.com or call her at 979-203-3131.

New Website Material

Vanessa Smith's account of Nancy M. Oglesby Pledger Escoe. It's an interesting read.

The Too Short Life of Ignac Jankowski

Additional obituaries scans are currently being added.