

WCGS Newsletter

Washington County Genealogical Society

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March 2019

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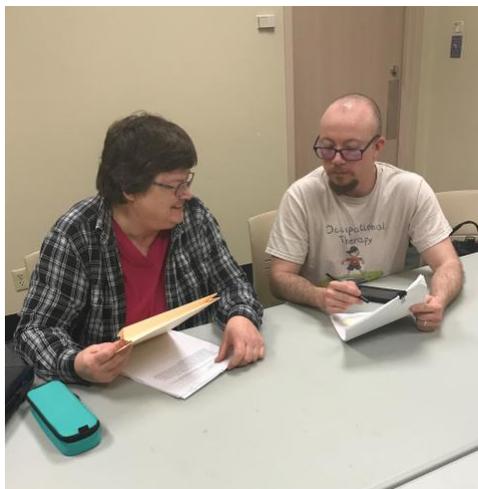
Newsletter Editor:

George Zemanek

From Our March Meeting

Jan Kelm presented "Early Schools of Washington County, from the 1830s –mid 1900s". Her expertise on the subject began when she assisted her mother in compiling the book *Common School Districts of Washington County, 1909-1967*. Her presentation covered the locations, histories, dates of operation, and names of teachers in the numerous Washington County schools.

Getting Involved



WCGS Communications Committee is pictured left to right Trish Cooke and George Zemanek while working on the Newsletter. Committee member not pictured is Susan Lake.

Washington County Genealogical Society's purpose and mission is to promote interest in family history and genealogical research and to preserve Washington County history. The Society collects, records, preserves, and publishes material and records of Washington County. (story continues on page 3)

New Members

We would like to welcome our newest members:

Tina B. Henderson
Patsy McLaughlin
Rebecca Graeber
Michael Addicks
Lillian Sechilski

If you know of someone with an interest in genealogy, tell them about us! They can join anytime.

Dues Reminder

Please give Lu Hollander your 2019 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 2019 form.](#)

The WCGS is a proud member of the Texas State Genealogical Society and the Washington County Chamber of Commerce

April Program

“The History of Independence, TX”

Fred Coles Kettrick (pictured) and Phil Hassell will be presenting at our April meeting. Fred is a descendent of Judge J.P. Coles, who was an agent of the impresario Stephen F. Austin and one of the old 300 settlers and Lt. Colonel John McCrock, who fought at the Battle of San Jacinto. Phil Hassell is the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Independence and the Texas Baptist Museum .



Upcoming Events

Tomball German Heritage Festival will be held on March 29 - 31 .
<https://www.tomballgermanfest.org/>

Fort Bend County Library 8th Annual Genealogy Workshop April 27, 2019, 9:00am – 4:00pm
<https://www.fortbend.lib.tx.us/event/fbcl-eighth-annual-genealogy-workshop>

Getting Involved (cont.)

The Communications Committee plays a large part in the organization's mission by producing a monthly newsletter, maintaining a website, being active on social media as well as promoting the organization and its programs through local media.

Individuals interested in family history and genealogical research as well as Washington County history are encouraged to check our online sources. Go to our website www.bluebonnetgenealogy.org which is maintained by committee member Susan Lake. This site provides copies of our newsletters and documents on the county's history. The website will lead you to birth, death, marriage and land records as well as some obituaries. Also included is information on newspapers and how to access them. Of particular importance is the information about the Washington County Cemeteries. Efforts have been made to clean old cemeteries and repair broken gravestones. Information on cemetery names, locations and pictures are available on the site.

The committee is working to make the public aware of resources that are available and to welcome the public to our meetings on the 1st Monday of the month at 1 PM in the Nancy Carol Memorial Library.

Washington County Genealogical Society Calendar

Apr 1 WCGS Meeting	1:00 PM	NCRML*
Apr 9 Executive Committee	10:30am	NCRML*
Apr 23 Advisory Committee	1:00pm	NCRML*
May 6 WCGS Meeting	1:00 PM	NCRML*

*Nancy Carol Roberts Memorial Library in Brenham, Texas



Judy Nivens was researching the family of William and Elizabeth (Eaton) Welch. Possibly William and Elizabeth married in Washington County in 1834.

Jan Kelm's response: I checked any possible records in Washington County and Austin County (some early records are there) and found nothing regarding the marriage.

Washington County Genealogical Society,

Minutes, 4 March 2019

WCGS met on Monday, 4th of March 2019 at the NCRML. President Geraldine Johnson opened the meeting by leading our group in the pledges to the U.S. and Texas flags. There were 17 visitors and 29 members present. The visitors were welcomed and stood for recognition. President Johnson welcomed the new members that have joined since January by reciting their names.

Vice President, Mary Kubeczka introduced the afternoon's speaker, Jan Kelm, whose topic for the day was, "Early Washington County Schools, from the 1830s—mid 1900s". Mrs. Kelm is a past president of our society and life-long area resident, graduating from Brenham High School in 1961. Her expertise of the subject began when she assisted her mother in compiling the book, Common School Districts of Washington County, 1909-1967. Jan continues to be a collector of early school histories and has been active in a project to GPS those school locations, and she adds them to a Google Map, when found. This project is ongoing. During her talk, many school histories, dates of operation, names of teachers, and their specific sites were shown to our audience on a county map. Some of the locations of the schools were approximate.

Business Meeting

The minutes from the last meeting were published within the Newsletter and there were no corrections. A clarification was made by President Johnson regarding the use of donated funds. Donated funds, unless designated for a specific project by the donors, will go directly into the general treasury.

President Johnson gave the Treasurer's Report. The beginning balance was \$14,006.78. We had an expense of \$99.00 for the e-conference on DNA and an additional \$36.55 spent to print the accompanying booklet. With our dues income, the current balance is at \$14,237.23.

New Business: A motion was made to add scanning of the Banner-Press obituaries to our list of 2019 projects. Vanessa Smith gave a summary of the location of obituary holdings on various websites and at the library. The NCRML has received a grant to digitize the Banner-Press microfilm copies and ultimately the digitized paper will be added to the free Portal to Texas History website. But as there is no indication when this project will start, or what exact coverage of the paper will be, the executive committee decided to continue our digitizing of local obituaries for our website.

President Johnson took a straw poll of the members to see if they were interested in continuing our WCGS activity during the summer months. The majority agreed that

would be a good idea and if anyone has a suggestion on an excursion or activity, please let us know.

Library Volunteer Project: Vanessa Smith stated that we are nearly finished with indexing the names in the first book and read the names of the remaining titles to be done. If anyone is interested in joining the team, they will be welcome.

Tidbit: Kenneth Kettler and Mike Bronikowski, of St. Stanislaus Catholic Church, explained their method of location of new grave sites. They began by mentioning that in earlier days, people were buried chronologically (in the order that they died) and not with their families. It wasn't until the 1950s that family plots were offered for sale. The plots at the church are of a specific size and depth. If the casket is not in a vault, it has to be buried with more dirt above it. The location of the plot is then marked by ribbon for the grave digger, who uses a machine to make the hole. Other cemeteries and churches may have different regulations than theirs.

Announcements: Geraldine Johnson stated that members are invited to contribute to the tidbit and program portions of our meetings. She announced that the society will be producing an explanatory brochure that can be left at various venues. This brochure would give information about our society and what we do; perhaps some of our membership may want to take this brochure to gatherings such as the Chamber of Commerce events to network for our organization.

Calendar:

April 1. Regular WCGS meeting at 1:00 PM at the NCRML. The program will be presented by Phil Hassell and Fred Coles Kettrick on the History of Independence. Mr. Kettrick is a descendent of Judge Coles, who was one of the old 300 settlers. Pastor Hassell is associated with First Baptist Church of Independence and the museum.

April 9. Executive Committee meeting at the NCRML at 10:30. Evaluation of our progress of the first quarter of this meeting year.

April 23. Advisory Committee meeting at the library at 1:00. (Members: Teddy Boehm, Jan Kelm, and Bill Thane).

Meeting adjourned. Submitted by Vanessa Smith, Secretary.