



## **TEXAS RESEARCH RAMBLERS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER**

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### **OFFICERS for 2005-2006**

President: Daniel Castillo  
Vice-President: Mary Elizabeth Dresser  
Secretary: Georgianne Bigam  
Treasurer: Sue Foy  
Corresponding Secretary: Helen Wolf

***In Memoriam:*** Sue Foy's mother Alyce H. Bouffard Swann passed away August 29, 2006.

Graveside services were held in Midland, Texas.

## LAST MEETING

Dan Castillo called the meeting to order. After introducing guest, Violet Gibbs, and members, Charlotte Neill, and Rhoda Haynes, Dan discussed the success of the DNA Workshop.

A round of applause also goes to some more new members, Ruth Cozart, Lorne Dunham, Joe Ellison, Nori Perez-Hernandez, Sharon Jasper, Mervin Peters, and Joel Watkins.

Dan announced that the Texas Research Ramblers Genealogy Association has been approached by the Brazos Genealogical Society for a possible merger of the two groups. He suggested that the Rambler membership research and review the pros and cons of such a merger. There will be a limited time for discussion at the September meeting and then a vote will be taken at the October meeting.

If you are not familiar with the Brazos Genealogical Association, you may visit their web site at: <http://www.brazosgenealogy.org/>. This will give you an overview of the history and make-up of this group as well as their focus on genealogy.

We then moved on to our program, presented by Marc Hamlin, District Clerk of Brazos County.

Mr. Hamlin covered a vast array of responsibilities of his office, which was punctuated by thought-provoking questions from the audience. Some of those responsibilities include handling misdemeanor cases, such as DWI's; felony cases from 3<sup>rd</sup> degree to 1<sup>st</sup> degree capital murder cases; the court of inquiry, such as the cases of Judge Davis and D.A. Bill Turner; civil cases, such as speeding tickets; and child support cases, which are now being standardized country-wide based on his office's practice of fee collection from "dead-beat" mothers and fathers.



**Divorce cases:** Because of the sensitivity of the case, the final decree is a copy of a "white-out" copy.

**On-line information:** Because the same information is provided from 8-5 at the courthouse, on-line information is also available at this website: [www.justiceweb.co.brazos.tx.us](http://www.justiceweb.co.brazos.tx.us) Bryan Public Library now has the old records in an environmentally safe place while electronic documentation from 1926 onward is kept at yet another place. No flood or fire will get our information!

**Adoption:** Because the law protects the name of the biological parents, the cases are sealed. However, health issues have prompted people to file suits to have those sealed records opened.

**Indexes to Divorce, Marriage, Legal Guardianship, and Naturalizations** papers are available to the public at his office.

**Child Sexual Offenders:** To see if you have such a person in your neighborhood, go to the State of Texas website and there is a place to type in your address, which will give you the results of their search.

**Destroying sensitive documents:** His office has been given the responsibility to “bury, burn, or shred” sensitive documents when necessary. One method is to bury some documents in the landfill.

**Repetitious summons for jury duty:** Because the database may have a variety of identifications for the same person, such as M. Smith, Mary A. Smith, Mary Ann Smith, and Mary Jones Smith, then that person has more “opportunity” to be summoned for jury duty. If this happens to you, write a letter to the District Clerk’s office apprising it of your situation, and they will remedy it.



We enjoyed the entertaining and informative session of responsibilities of the District Clerk. Thank you, Mr. Hamlin, for helping us understand the intricate workings of your office.



**FYI:** In reference to Marc Hamlin’s remarks about the records being kept at Bryan Public Library, Nan Ross, Head Librarian of Carnegie, said Carnegie has 9 file boxes containing about 1,000 cases available for the public to view under supervision. An index for the cases is also available for the cases which range from 1871-1884. Criteria for allowing the cases to be placed in Carnegie include there be no criminal cases and no cases involving children.

#### **TREASURER’S REPORT**

Sue Foy reports the ending balance as of 9/1 /2006 was \$ 12,682.40, which included \$3,031.29 of available funds and \$9,640.07 of travel funds by members for Salt Lake City.

★ **Last Call for dues payment in order to be included in the Rambler yearbook/ directory and continue to receive the newsletters and MailServ communications.** If you have not paid your dues for the 2006-2007 year which started on September 1st, please mail your check immediately to Sue Foy, 804 Vine St., Bryan, TX 77802-4349. Anyone who has not paid their dues by **September 15th** will not continue to receive the benefits of membership. Anyone is always welcome to attend the meetings and may join or re-join Ramblers at any time.

#### **NEXT MEETING DATE AND PROGRAM**

We will meet at the College Station Utility Service Center, located at 1601 Graham Rd. in College Station, on September 27, 2006, at 9:30 a.m. The speaker at that meeting, Mr. Buddy Winn, will discuss his responsibilities as the Brazos County Tax Assessor-Collector.

## FUTURE SEMINARS AND TRIPS

- Every **2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday** of the month: a trip to Clayton Library in Houston. Meet at Sam's Club Parking Lot prior to 6:45 a.m. \$7.50 to your driver. Sack lunch. Contact Bliss Wolfe, 696-0170 or (even better) cell ph# 255-2429. **September 13, 2006**
- Every **3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday** of the month: Computer Genealogy Users Group, will meet at the Exit Teen Center, 1600 Rock Prairie Rd., at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to eat at a local restaurant after the meeting. **September 20, 2006.**
- Every **last Wednesday** of the month: Research Ramblers will meet at College Station Utility Service Center at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to eat at a local restaurant after the meeting. **September 27, 2006.**
- Every **4<sup>th</sup> Monday**, Roots Magic Users will meet at the Bryan Public Library on the second floor from 9:30-11:00 a.m. The **Roots Magic Study Group** will resume the monthly meetings on the **4th Monday, September 25th at 9:30 a.m. at the Bryan Public Library meeting room** (not Carnegie). Jim Boone will bring his Roots Magic data and everyone who has a laptop is encouraged to bring it so that they can share in the discussion. If you are not a current user of Roots Magic and would just like to investigate this genealogy software, you are welcome to attend the meeting.

For workshops around the state: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~txgenweb> , which will give you the full information on seminars/conferences around the state.



## SUCCESS STORIES

The Education Committee and all those responsible for the August 23, 2006, FamilyTreeDNA workshop need a round of applause for their success in bringing an interesting and informative session to us. Before the Rambler meeting, Mr. Blankfeld, Jane Cohen, Dan Castillo, and Dean Duncan met with personnel at KBTX for an early morning show.

Then, Mr. Blankfeld presented a program on Family Tree DNA for Ramblers and guests.

Max Blankfeld, Vice-President, Operations and Marketing at Family Tree DNA (FTDNA) in Houston, gave us a brief history of his company that has worked closely with the University of Arizona since its inception in April of 2000. Starting out testing 10 persons a month and now testing 6,000 people a month, FTDNA works with National Geographic on a Genographic Project to trace ancestral migrations through mankind's history.

Mr. Blankfeld then gave us a basic DNA 101 course. We learned that through testing clients can determine common ancestors. Since a surname follows the male line and the Y-DNA is passed down the paternal line, Surname Projects are based on tracking and analyzing the Y-DNA.

*So, what if you are interested in your mother's line?* To know the DNA of your great grandfather's mother, you have to find her brother. Then, from her brother, follow the line forward through the male line.

Another area Mr. Blankfeld discussed was the actual testing process. He demonstrated scraping the inside cheek (*of the mouth*) and placing the swab in a container to be mailed to FTDNA.

While the 12-marker test can be of value to discard a family connection, or for people that have a unique set of markers, most of the times, a 12 marker test will yield many matches with different surnames, which points to a common ancestor prior the genealogical time frame – i.e. when surnames were adopted. **Therefore, the 25 or 37 marker tests will be better and more recommended to narrow down the matches to the relevant ones.** A 67 marker test is for verifying a family split and the mutations corresponding to the split.

It's possible not to get a match even if you have the same surname because of a non-paternity event (adoption or out-of-wedlock) or one had the same surname by coincidence. If you are fortunate to get 37 of 37 markers to match, you can trace a relative within 5 generations. These statistics make us realize how close we can come to genetically finding a family member.

I think we all left the workshop with ideas of how to use this valuable service for searching our own families. Equally important is following up on the emails that FTDNA will send you once you are matched to some names in their data bank.

After Mr. Blankfeld's presentation, panel members Jane Horn, Dean Duncan, and Jim Boone discussed their success with DNA testing.

Congratulations to our Door Prize winners, Donell Frank, Lois Harrington, and Janice Sills. Also, a big thank you to Max Blankfeld and FamilyTreeDNA, who donated two \$30 discount coupons for DNA testing and a book, *DNA and Genealogy* by Colleen Fitzpatrick and Andrew Yeiser, to the Rambler's Library.



A very successful day it was for all who attended. Many thanks to Mr. Blankfeld for his presentation, which opened up a whole new avenue of genealogy research.

## WEBSITES

<http://www.FamilyTreeDNA.com> is the website to learn more about DNA testing and uses

[www.justiceweb.co.brazos.tx.us](http://www.justiceweb.co.brazos.tx.us) is the website to locate on-line court records

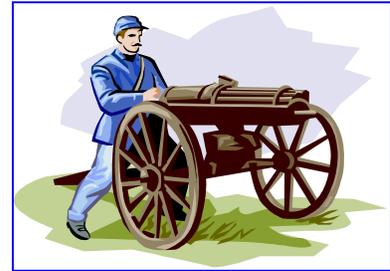
<https://records.txdps.state.tx.us/soSearch/soSearch.cfm> is the website to search for neighborhood registered sex offenders.

## HISTORICAL MOMENT

***How did the Civil War affect Texans?*** Most Texans had a strong attachment to the Union that they worked so hard to join in 1845, and they expressed increasing concern over the attacks upon Southern institutions by Northern political leaders. Although only one Texas family in four owned slaves, most Texans opposed any interference with the institution of slavery.

The die was cast though. On February 23, 1861, voters of the state approved the ordinance of secession, and in March the convention reassembled to declare Texas out of the Union. In one report, approximately 90,000 Texans saw military service in the war. Two-thirds of the Texans, enrolled in the military spent the war in the Southwest, either defending the state from Indian attacks and Union invasion or participating in expansionist moves into New Mexico Territory.

The main Union attack against the Texas coast in 1862 was aimed at the state's largest seaport, Galveston. For a short time the Union controlled Galveston, but they couldn't hold on very long. Also, the Union controlled Brownsville in 1863, but the Union forces were transferred to Louisiana, allowing General Ford to retake most of the area occupied by Union forces.



The large battles of the Civil War were fought beyond the Mississippi River, far from Texas. Outstanding Texans in the war include Albert Sidney Johnston, Gen. John Bell Hood, the First, Fourth, and Fifth Texas Infantry regiments. Another regiment, the Eighth Texas Cavalry, better known as Terry's Texas Rangers, distinguished itself on battlefields in Kentucky, Tennessee, Mississippi, Georgia, and South and North Carolina. Granbury's Texas Brigade saw action in Georgia and Tennessee.



Besides deprivations of coffee, medicine, clothing, shoes, and farm implements brought on by the Union blockade, the war brought other changes to Texas. Farmers planted more corn to meet food needs and requests of the government to reduce cotton production. The women whose menfolk were at war had to find ingenious ways to survive. Salt was so scarce that some Texans dug up the floors of their smokehouses and leached the dirt to recover the salt drippings. Thorns were used for pins, willow-bark extract and red pepper were mixed to substitute for quinine, and pieces of wallpaper served as writing paper.

News of Robert E. Lee's surrender in April 1865, followed by that of Joseph E. Johnston in North Carolina, made further resistance futile. On June 19 (Juneteenth) Gen. Gordon Granger arrived in Galveston with Union forces of occupation. The Civil War had ended.

(from *The Handbook of Texas Online*)

## GENQUIP

Grandma used to set her hot baked apple pies on the window sill to cool. Her granddaughters set theirs on the window sill to thaw.



The Research Rambler Newsletter is published by the Texas Research Rambler Genealogical Society, P. O. Box 11195, College Station, Texas 77842-1195. Editor, Helen Kunz, can be reached at [hkkunz at verizon.net](mailto:hkkunz@verizon.net)