

DCGS News

“WRITING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY,” FOCUS OF OCTOBER MEETING

Writing our stories and those of our ancestors is truly a key result for a 21st-century genealogist. We must break the habit of being “hunters ‘n’ gatherers,” and learn to assess and compile our research to begin to write the stories we find.



“Writing Your Family History: Learning to Assess and Compile Your Research” will be presented by Emily Coffman Richardson at the next Denton County Genealogical Society meeting, Thursday, 12 October 2023. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with the program at 7 p.m., in the Emily Fowler Central Library meeting room.

Emily Coffman Richardson, Ed.D, is a professional genealogist and lecturer who lives in Denton. She began her genealogical research working with her mother in courthouses and cemeteries to find records for her Ohio and Pennsylvania ancestors. In 2019, she retired from higher education, moved to Texas, and opened up [Kinsearchers](#)—the original name of her mother’s genealogy business.

Emily serves as secretary of the Texas State Genealogical Society and oversees production of TxSGS’s podcast, [Lone Star Family Trails](#). She is also programming chair of the Robson Ranch Genealogy Club advisory council. Emily teaches genealogy courses for the [Osher Lifelong Learning Institute](#) (OLLI) at the University of North Texas, and speaks to numerous Texas genealogical societies on a variety of topics.

Emily has participated in the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, the Institute of Genealogical Studies, the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research, and ProGen34. She has published articles in TxSGS’s journal *Stirpes* and book reviews for other journals. Combining her passion for both education and genealogy, Emily provides learners of all levels with a thorough understanding of genealogical research.



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Photo: Jones Photographic Studios of America, Studio No. 1, Fireworks at the Denton County Courthouse Celebrating the End of World War I, 1918–; digital image, *The Portal to Texas History* (<https://texashistory.unt.edu/ark:/67531/metaph12494/m1/1/>; 2 May 2023); citing Denton Public Library.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Legal records provide a wealth of information that may be of great value. When researching ancestors be sure to consider if they were named in legal records as an estate executor or administrator, a guardian, a trustee for mortgages, or as a party to land sales or purchases. Explore court

records to determine whether a plaintiff or a defendant in a case had a business relationship with your ancestor. Other legal records include probate records and deed records. (Note: DCGS member Linda Jonas will present on the genealogical value of deeds at the March 2024 DCGS meeting. Do NOT miss this presentation!)

But don't stop there. Also consider the records of churches, fraternal organizations, military units, school groups, and professional societies that your ancestor may have belonged to. In fact, take a good look at the cemetery to check who may be in the same plot as your ancestor or in a nearby plot.

Be sure to comb census records completely and carefully. They are genealogical treasures. I found my father's siblings who were previously unknown to me in the 1930 census. Look in neighborhoods for family connections. My maternal grandmother married a neighbor's son who lived only a couple of houses away. The discovery provided several names of her husband's close relatives for additional research.

Thorough exploration of these records may yield valuable research results. Yet this is indeed a small sample of documents to explore.

My point is that there may be several connections within any one document—legal or otherwise. So, be sure to look for more than just the one name you seek. That name may well be important to your research, but KEEP LOOKING. Investigate fully.

—Robert L. Lane, President
presidentdcgs@gmail.com

2023-24 DCGS OFFICERS

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Society Website:

www.genealogydentontexas.org

SEPTEMBER 2023 MEETING MINUTES

*Denton County Genealogical Society, Inc.
September 14, 2023 Minutes*

President Bob Lane called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. and led the Pledge of Allegiance to the flag. Linda Lane, assistant membership chair, welcomed visitors Mikel Curry, Brittany Milton, Jada Gilbreath, Tara Anderson, and Pam Spooner. Total attendance was 32: five visitors, 23 members present at the Emily Fowler Library, and 4 members on Zoom.

Minutes of the May 11, 2023 meeting were approved with no corrections as printed in the newsletter. There were no questions about the Treasurer's Report as printed in the newsletter, and it was filed for audit. Treasurer Marian Carroll reported that the treasurer's reports for the 2022-2023 year passed the audit. Anyone who wants to join DCGS can pay dues to Marian.

Reports by Board Members

Social/Hospitality—Eileen O'Neill thanked Chris and Kathy Strauss for replenishing supplies in May. A sign-up sheet for snacks for the October, November, and January meetings is available at the hospitality table.

Librarian—Laura Douglas highlighted the Lunch Break Genealogy and the Connections: Genealogy Discussion Group meetings at the Emily Fowler Library. The Genealogy Lock-In is scheduled for October 20, 2023 at Emily Fowler Library.

New Business

There was no New Business.

Announcements

- ◆ Our next meeting will be October 12, 2023.
- ◆ The Genealogy Society Leadership Forum is September 30, 2023. Registration is required for this Zoom meeting, with presentations by Tony Hansen and David Rencher (Chief Genealogical Officer at Family Search). Anyone can register.

Program—Beth Leggieri, vice president, thanked Program Committee members Nancy Gilbride Casey and Laura Douglas for their help in arranging programs for DCGS. Beth Leggieri then introduced Laura Douglas who presented "The Public Library: A Treasure Trove for Genealogical Research."

President Lane closed the meeting with his last word from an African proverb. An announcement was made by Greg Bell thanking the library staff for their assistance with a project he completed for his father. There were no other announcements, and the meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m. Following the adjournment, Laura Douglas invited the members and visitors to a scavenger hunt in Special Collections to uncover some of its treasures.

*—Respectfully Submitted by Sandra
Robertson, Secretary*



DCGS Memberships

are now due. Join or renew today.

\$20 Individual, \$30 Couple

Questions? Email

membershipdcgs@gmail.com.

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY: YOUR LOCAL GENEALOGY TREASURE



DCGS members and guests searched for treasures in Denton Public Library's Special Collections during the September meeting. Attendees learned about the library's genealogical resources and how to use them during the presentation led by librarian Laura Douglas. (Photos by L. Douglas)

by John Windsor

As genealogists, we often ask ourselves, "Where do I go from here?" The answer is: "To the library!"

"The Public Library: A Treasure Trove for Genealogy Research" was presented at DCGS's September meeting by Laura Douglas, who leads the Special Collections area at the Denton Public Library. She quickly walked attendees through the mechanics of using the physical library resources (e.g. Dewey Decimal System, subject call numbers, card catalog, etc.), and then discussed the library's many resources.

The library's in-house resources include a Special Collection of 13,860 (at last count) books on "How To..." family histories, land and tax records, vital records, ethnic research, photos, military uniform identification, and more, for Texas and beyond.

While the in-house resources are impressive, the online resources are a major benefit to genealogical researchers. With a library card, researchers have access to FamilySearch, HeritageQuest, Fold3, Newsbank, Newspaper Archive, WorldCat, the Portal of Texas

History, and Heritage Hub, all from their home computer. Additionally, in the library you can get access to the New England Historic Genealogical Society's AmericanAncestors.com, Historygeo.com, and Ancestry.com library edition.

All these resources come with the knowledgeable support of reference librarians who are available to assist you in your research efforts. Staff can also provide training and access to the DPL's Legacy Lab. Lab equipment can convert almost all analog media (8mm film, 35mm slides, old photos, and documents) to digital format. The lab also has a book scanner to create pdf images of pages of books that cannot be removed from the library (emailed for free, printed for a small fee).

Laura ended the program by sending attendees into the genealogy collection for a scavenger hunt. I found a record of my first known ancestor in North America and his marriage in 1675 in Maryland.

Let the Denton Public Library be the next step in your genealogical journey, and find treasures right in your own backyard.

WAR OF 1812 PENSION FILES ON FOLD3

by Donna Spears

The digitizing of some 7.2 million pages in War of 1812 pension files began in 2010. Digitization was about 83% completed when COVID-19 hit and all work on the project stopped.

Fold3 has announced that Ancestry.com and the National Genealogical Society have finalized a contract with the National Archives and Records Administration to resume digitization of these very important files. As of May, files for surnames beginning with R were being completed; the project will then move on to surnames beginning with Sj to U. That phase should be complete in about one year.

The War of 1812 pension files can reveal significant details about military service as well as vital genealogical information. This collection includes full pension application files for soldiers, sailors, and their widows and children.

Access to these pension files is **FREE**. Follow these steps:

- ◆ At **fold3.com** (<https://www.fold3.com/>), scroll down and click on “War of 1812 (United States).”
- ◆ Under “Publications,” enter “War of 1812.” Scroll and choose “US, War of 1812 Pension Files, 1812-1815,” from the list.
- ◆ Choose “Browse” on the red menu bar. In “State/Organization,” enter the desired state. Choose or click the state name.
- ◆ In “Soldier Surname” enter the desired surname or scroll and select as needed.

WAR OF 1812		
NUMBERS	SOLDIER <i>Robertson James</i> [5]	BOUNTY LANG
<i>Sur Orig 25604</i>		42894-80-50
<i>Sur Cert 15755</i>	WIDOW	35180-80-55
	SERVICE <i>Capt Robert Carson's Co</i>	
	<i>Term mil</i>	
	ENLISTED <i>8 Feb. 1814</i>	DISCHARGED <i>18 May 1814</i>
PLACE OF BIRTH	<i>1851 Dyer County, Tennessee</i>	REMARKS
	<i>1865 New Madrid County, Missouri</i>	
	<i>1871 Washington County, Texas</i>	
PLACE OF BIRTH	<i>1883 Milam County, Texas</i>	
NAME	<i>DESPIMONA DEMENT</i>	
DATE OF MARRIAGE	<i>WIFE 22 March 1822; Rutherford Co., Tenn.</i>	
DATE OF DEATH	<i>SOLDIER 2 or 3 September 1883 near Devilla, Texas.</i>	

This War of 1812 pension index card shows the wealth of genealogical information that can be included in pension files.

ANCESTOR Q OF THE MONTH: HISTORICAL EVENTS & YOUR ANCESTORS

The October Ancestor Question of the Month was “What major historical event did an ancestor live through? Describe their experience and how it impacted their life.” Here are three DCGS members’ stories. Enjoy!

Sandra Robertson writes, “The Great Depression was at its worst in 1933 with about one-fourth of the civilian labor force unemployed. But Chicago hosted a world’s fair in 1933-34 which emphasized technology, progress, and hope for future prosperity. Nearly 40 million persons attended the fair.

In 1933, my parents, Arbie and Willie Mae West Dockrey were two of those attendees. They had married in October, 1932. Fortunately, my parents were employed. In Chicago, my parents stayed in a private home, and the host took them to and from the fair. A glass paperweight was my parents’ prized souvenir, which I now have.

“Waste not; want not” and rationing became a way of life after the Depression and during World War II. My parents—and probably other parents of that generation—raised their children to take care of possessions and finances, and to have a strong work ethic. The current throwaway culture is very different from the one my parents lived in.”



Arbie & Willie Mae West Dockrey



NOVEMBER ANCESTOR QUESTION OF THE MONTH

Why were you given your first name? Is it a family name?

Tell us about it in 100 words or so, and your answer will be published in the November **DCGS News**.

Click [HERE](#) to submit the Google Form (easiest), or email newsletterdcgs@gmail.com by October 19th.

Image by rawpixel.com.

MORE HISTORY & ANCESTORS...

“My great-grandfather, George R. Allen, enlisted in the Confederate Army in April 1861, in Gonzales, Texas,” writes **Kathi Coatney**. “He signed up for a cavalry unit that became part of the 8th Texas Cavalry, commanded by General John B. Hood—popularly known as “Terry’s Texas Rangers.” This unit was known for its toughness and tenacity and was often given the assignment of rear guard when the army was withdrawing or retreating.

Great-grandpa George was badly wounded in the knee in a skirmish near Rome, Georgia, in 1863. He was nursed by a woman named “Coloma” until he was healthy enough to be shipped home. He always said she saved his life. Unmarried at the time, he promised her if he ever was fortunate enough to have a daughter, her name would be Coloma. He spent the rest of the war recuperating in Gonzales; that wound never fully healed.

After the surrender, he headed to Arkansas to his sister's home; his only possessions were his saddle, bridle, saddlebags, and mule. Somewhere near present-day Texarkana, someone stole his mule. He walked the rest of the way. He staked a homestead, farmed, built his own home, married twice, had eight children, buried his first wife and three of his children, and died in 1903 at the age of 71. The fall before he died, he was still working his land. And, yes, he kept that promise—one of those children was named Coloma. She was my grandmother.”





Maria Rosa Arriaga

Arthur Medrano writes: “My paternal, great grandmother Maria Rosa Arriaga, a Mexican citizen, served as a nurse caretaker with the “Northern Division” of Pancho Villa's army during the Mexican Revolution. Her children lived with family in El Paso, Texas, while she served on the ‘troop trains’ which were used by the Villanistas Army as a method to move soldiers across the expanses of Northern Mexico. She was an eyewitness to one of the first ‘modern’ wars of the 20th century.

Her experiences of living through the Revolution, and the years leading up to it, impacted her and her children greatly. After the Revolution, full trust of the Mexican government never completely returned within the family. So much so, that her children (including my paternal grandmother), never returned to live in Mexico after the war. In 1928, my paternal grandmother (Irene Navarro Arriaga) married my paternal grandfather (Manuel Medrano) in Las Cruces, New Mexico, which led to the birth of my father, Arturo Medrano, in El Paso, Texas, in 1931.”

VIRTUAL! **2023 TxSGS Family History Conference**

#TxSGS2023 **www.txsgs.org**

What will take your genealogical research to the next level? Discover the tools you need to answer your questions. The 2023 TxSGS Family History Conference **Roots and Branches: Climbing Your Family Tree** promises learning opportunities on a variety of tracks: DNA; ethnic research including African American, German, Hispanic, Irish, and Native American; methodology; records and resources; military; storytelling; and technology. With 29 speakers presenting 46 topics, and three different registration packages, you can individualize your conference experience to meet your needs.

TxSGS Live! features ten presentations by top genealogy speakers discussing selections from each track on Friday and Saturday, **November 10-11, 2023**.

That's not all! Lectures will be recorded and combined with 36 additional prerecorded lectures from some of your favorite speakers, and well-known presenters from across Texas and the U.S. Even though you won't be able to see them in person, you will be able to access their lectures online through February 10, 2024.

Explore the conference webpages at <https://www.txsgs.org/2023-conference/2023-txsgs-family-history-conference/> to learn about **TxSGS Live!**, speakers and topics, registration packages, and more.

Register now! **Early bird deadline is October 7** – PLUS use the Denton County Genealogical Society TIPS code **DCGS** and earn \$10 for the society. TxSGS will donate \$10 to DCGS for every person who registers at the Standard or All-in-One levels **on or before October 30, 2023**. Support DCGS while expanding your genealogy horizons! (The TIPS code must be entered at the time of registration.)



TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance May 19, 2023		\$2,985.54
Deposits		
June 22, 2023	20.00	
August 7, 2023	20.00	
September 18, 2023	40.00	
Total Deposits		\$80.00
Disbursements		
Total Disbursements		0.00
Balance Sept. 26, 2023		\$3,065.54
<i>—Respectfully Submitted, Marian Carroll, Treasurer</i>		

MEMBERCONNECT: TIPS

Laura Douglas sends a terrific tip that the National Genealogical Society Book Loan Collection, featuring 27,000+ books—including 10,750 family histories—is now available via Inter Library Loan from the St. Louis County Library. Read more about the collection and how to obtain books here: <https://www.slcl.org/research-learn/genealogy/national-genealogical-society-collection>.



Celebrate Family History Month with DPL and the Denton County Genealogical Society, partnering with other libraries and genealogy societies across Texas for the 2023 Annual Genealogy Lock-In, Friday, October 20, at the Emily Fowler Central Library meeting room OR virtually.

Come and go for select workshops, stay for the full day, or view the programs from home. Eight presentations will be streamed during the event. Refreshments will be served, but feel free to bring your own lunch. Librarians and volunteers will be available for one-on-one help, and tours of Special Collections. Sponsored by the Genealogy Network of Texas. The event is free, but registration is required for both virtual and in-person options. **Click here to Register:** https://library.cityofdenton.com/screens/sc_lockin.html

AGENDA

- ◆ 9-10:15 a.m., ***Secrets to Successful Writing & Publishing***, presented by Angela Breidenbach, Executive Director of the International Institute of Genealogical Studies
- ◆ 10:25-11:15 a.m., ***Linking the Generations with Court and Land Records***, presented by Judy Russell, JD, CG, CGL, The Legal Genealogist, Sponsored by the Texas Research Ramblers Genealogical Society
- ◆ 11:25 a.m.-12:15 p.m. ***Visiting the Hill College Texas Heritage Museum***, presented by John Versluis, Dean of the Texas Heritage Museum at Hill College
- ◆ 12:25-1:40 p.m., ***Genealogy Basics: Start Searching for Your Ancestors Today***, presented by Irene B. Walters, Librarian, Family History Research Center at the Clayton Library Campus
- ◆ 1:50-2:40 p.m., ***Tame the Chaos Tiger: Organize Your Records and Research***, presented by Susan Ball, President, Texas State Genealogical Society
- ◆ 2:50-3:40 p.m., ***Uncover Your Family's Story Using the Periodical Source Index (PERSI)***, presented by Elizabeth Hodges, MA, MSLIS, Senior Librarian in the Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center
- ◆ 3:50- 4:40 p.m., ***Placing Your DNA Matches on Your Tree***, presented by Ryan Russell, Genetic Genealogist, Open Door Genetics
- ◆ 4:50 – 5:40 p.m., ***Checking on Czech Immigrants to the United States***, presented by Heather Mecham, Research Specialist for FamilySearch

Please call (940) 349-8749 or email laura.douglas@cityofdenton.com with questions, or for more information.

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1979, the ***Denton County Genealogical Society*** (DCGS) has been serving area genealogy researchers for nearly 45 years, offering classes and events, collaboration, and support, in partnership with the Denton Public Library—a Family Search Affiliate Library.

DCGS is a proud member of the National Genealogical Society and the Texas State Genealogical Society.

The society meets on the second Thursday of the month (September-November, January-May), at the Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland Street, Denton. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., program at 7 p.m. Programs may be in-person, virtual, or hybrid (both in-person & via Zoom). Visitors are welcome.

Membership dues are \$20 (individual) and \$30 (couples). To become a member, contact the membership chair at membershipdcgs@gmail.com.



Denton County Genealogical Society • 502 Oakland St., Denton, TX 76201

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