

DCGS News

“SOLVING A FAMILY MYSTERY WITH DNA” WITH DIANA ELDER



Noted genealogist Diana Elder, AG, will present **“Solving a Family Mystery with DNA,”** virtually, at the next Denton County Genealogical Society meeting, Thursday, 8 February 2024. Meeting social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with the program at 7 p.m., in the meeting room of the Emily Fowler Central Library, 502 Oakland St., Denton.

Attendees will learn how combining traditional research with DNA evidence revealed an unknown grandfather in Diana’s compelling case study. Follow the project from the beginning steps of creating an objective to writing the conclusions. Discover the importance of a research log and careful tracking of sources. Finally, see how Y-DNA and autosomal DNA used in tandem with the documentary sources solved this family’s mystery.

Diana is a professional genealogist, teacher, author, and speaker. She has twenty years of research experience and holds a credential for genealogy research through the International Commission for the Accreditation of Professional Genealogists (ICAPGenSM). Diana is accredited in the United States Gulf South Region, which includes Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. She serves as a commissioner for ICAPGen and works with a team teaching about the accreditation process through webinars, classes, and a series of YouTube videos.

Diana graduated from Brigham Young University *magna cum laude* with a bachelor’s degree in education. She is the author of the bestselling book *Research Like A Pro: A Genealogist’s Guide*, co-author of *Research Like a Pro with DNA* (along with Nicole Dyer and Robin Wirthlin), and creator of the Research Like a Pro study group and e-course. Diana co-hosts the *Research Like a Pro* podcast with her daughter, Nicole Dyer, and writes regular articles on their website, FamilyLocket.com.



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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



Many people have not yet experienced the joy of finding information about ancestors! Could you help others get started in genealogy?

Often, the major obstacle is that the job seems too big to tackle. Helping a friend or family member discover small bits of ancestral

history may be the way to get started.

Here are some activities to spark interest:

- ◆ Learn something about your ancestor's language(s).
- ◆ Learn something about your ancestor's occupations (s).
- ◆ Check out genealogy webinars on your favorite research website, or by Googling "genealogy webinars."
- ◆ Discover the meaning of family surnames and given names.
- ◆ Learn how many ancestors shared your given name. Was an ancestral surname used as a given name in later generations?
- ◆ Discover the population of the town, state, or country when/where you were born compared to current population.
- ◆ In a family group setting, share stories. Do others have different versions of the same story?
- ◆ What places have YOU lived (when and where)? What places have your ancestors lived (when and where)?
- ◆ Look at photos of ancestors to see which current family members resemble them.

Make genealogy fun and you will make a new genealogist—and maybe a new DCGS member!

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

2023-24 DCGS OFFICERS

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DentonCountyGenealogicalSociety](https://www.facebook.com/DentonCountyGenealogicalSociety)

Society Website:

www.genealogydentontexas.org

JANUARY 2024 MEETING MINUTES

Denton County Genealogical Society, Inc.

January 11, 2024 Minutes

Vice President Beth Leggieri called the meeting to order at 7 p.m. Chris Straus led the Pledge of Allegiance. Beth Leggieri welcomed everyone in the absence of Bob and Linda Lane who were Zooming tonight while Bob recovers from illness. Total attendance was 37: 25 members in person at the Emily Fowler Library and two members on Zoom. There were ten visitors: Judy Bell, Bill Gebhardt, Missy McCormick, Shaun Treat, Alton Taylor, Kay Trietsch, Jerry Vela, Anne Vela, Jackie Barnes, and Judy Klein.

Minutes of the November 9, 2023 meeting were approved with no corrections as printed in the newsletter. There were no questions about the Treasurer's report and it was filed for audit.

Reports by Board Members

Social/Hospitality—Eileen O'Neill thanked Cheryl Cypert for refreshments and reminded members to sign up to bring refreshments at upcoming meetings. There is a donation cup on the refreshment table.

Newsletter—Editor Nancy Gilbride Casey reminded members to answer the Ancestor Question of the Month about weddings. There will be a survey about tonight's program to be completed by members. She also asked for article suggestions for TxSGS's journal *Stirpes*.

Librarian—Laura Douglas announced upcoming library events: Connections-Genealogy Discussion Group and other genealogy programs.

Vice President—Beth Leggieri noted programs for the current year are listed on the website and in the Library's *Classes and Events* publication for January-April 2024. Registration is open for the online, no-cost annual RootsTech, February 29-March 2, 2024.

There was no Old Business or New Business.

Announcements

Beth Leggieri shared:

- ◆ DCGS is a partner society of the state-wide Texas State Genealogical Society (TxSGS). Member Emily Richardson was elected a TxSGS statewide director-at-large and will

continue her oversight of District C, which includes DCGS. Librarian Laura Douglas was elected TxSGS secretary.

- ◆ The December issue of *Stirpes*, the quarterly TxSGS journal, will be late and released in January. This issue's theme is "Cultivating Your Personal Archives." The issue includes articles written by DCGS members Nancy Gilbride Casey and Emily Richardson, and an editorial under my name that includes new member Sally Austin's letter about "why" she writes and publishes genealogy research on social media.
- ◆ *DCGS News* received a TxSGS state-wide writing award: First place in the newsletter category. Guests may view all the newsletters on the website.
- ◆ Newsletter editor Nancy Gilbride Casey also was awarded "best blog" for her *Leaves on the Tree* by Texas State Genealogical Society.
- ◆ A Nominating Committee is being formed to identify officer candidates to fill the positions of vice president/program chair and secretary. These persons will be elected at the May meeting. Position descriptions will be available for the committee's use. To volunteer, email Bob Lane or talk to Beth Leggieri after this meeting.

Vice President/Program Chair Beth Leggieri introduced Kim Cupit of the Denton County Office of History and Culture who presented "German Communities in Denton County."

After the program, Stacie Briggs announced she had placed three handouts on the sign-in table: Monthly Family History Classes, Genealogy Mystery Readers Book Group, and Family History Discovery Day, "Finding My Family" on March 23, to be held at the FamilySearch Center at 3000 Old North Rd., Denton.

Linda Jonas left books on the sign-in table that are free for the taking.

There were no other announcements, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:30 p.m.



—Respectfully Submitted by
Sandra Robertson, Secretary

Image by rawpixel.com

GERMANS IN DENTON COUNTY, TX PROGRAM INSIGHTFUL

by Kathy Lawrence



Kim Cupit presents at the January DCGS meeting. (Photo by L. Douglas)

Kim Cupit of the Denton County Office of History and Culture presented “*German Communities of Denton County*” at the January 2024 DCGS meeting. Kim researched the topic specifically for the program and her enthusiasm for all she learned was evident. How many of us can state that our families have remained on the same land for over one hundred years and still reside there? As Kim discovered, that is the case with several of the original families. The biggest surprise, arguably, was having several of those descendants in attendance at the meeting! Trietsch and Klein descendants spoke about their families at the conclusion of the program.

Many are aware that large groups of Germans settled in the Texas Hill Country. It is a lesser-known fact that groups of Germans created communities in other portions of Texas, including three groups within Denton County.

In the 1840’s, revolutions in Europe led to the first wave of Germans emigrating to Texas and they became the largest European ethnic group in Texas. After the U.S. Civil War, Texas publicized itself as a “Land of Opportunity” and programs were established to bring Germans to Texas, leading to a second wave of immigrants.

Who were these German immigrants? To answer that question, Kim shared a quote from the *Handbook of Texas*. “The Germans who settled Texas were diverse in many ways. They included peasant farmers and intellectuals; Protestants, Catholics, Jews, and atheists; Prussians, Saxons, Hessians, and Alsatians; abolitionists and slaveowners; farmers and townfolk; frugal, honest folk and ax murderers.”

Three distinct German communities formed within Denton County:

- **Blue Mound** - Hermann and Mary Bartholdt were the first settlers in 1876. Although many families immigrated to Texas directly from Germany, some families, among them the Bartholdt family, lived elsewhere in the United States for a time before moving to Texas. Many came from the Midwest. The Blue Mound settlers included those with the surnames Ganzer, Linenschmidt, Trietsch, and Klein. The churches they established were the heart of the community and the church services were held in German for many years. Kim enjoyed the time she spent doing research in Blue Mound so much she is planning to return. Additional information about the community may be found at <https://bluemoundumc.org>.
- **Round Grove** - Germans, who had previously been renter farmers in Collin County, moved to Round Grove in 1892 and were able to purchase land. Among the early settlers were the Barfknecht, Ihnfeldt, Lunow, Schreiber, Uecker, Dollgener, Duwe, Thiede, and Wolters families. They erected several buildings, including the Round Grove Church and the Round Grove School. The area was

GERMANS (CONT.)

annexed by Lewisville in the 1970s and sadly, due to development, little remains aside from the church and cemetery. More details about Round Grove may be accessed at <https://rguc.mailchimpsites.com>.

- **Pilot Point** - The town was already established when the Flusche brothers were asked to recruit Germans to the area. A pamphlet in German was distributed to Catholic Churches in the U.S. as part of their recruitment efforts. Herman Boehner was the first to arrive. The Pilot Point settlers included those with the surnames Schindler, Berend, Henzler, and Strittmatter. A number of families came from Lake Heron, Minnesota or other Midwest locales, many arriving by train. Please visit <https://stthomaspilotpoint.org> to learn more.

Two interesting side notes from Kim's presentation: First, large plots of land became available in Texas after the Civil War as descendants of the original settlers, who had received the land grants, began selling off large parcels of land. Second, Kim was fascinated to learn about the Volga Germans, ethnic Germans who settled along the Volga River in colonies established by Russia's Catherine the Great.

Additional resources include:

- ♦ **The German Texas Heritage Society** <https://www.germantexans.org/genealogy>
- ♦ **General Land Office** <https://www.glo.texas.gov/history/archives/forms/files/glo-german-collections.pdf>
- ♦ **Texas State Historical Association, *Handbook of Texas*** <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/entries/germans>

TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance—November 20, 2023		\$2,985.54
Deposits		
November 21, 2023	\$20.00	
December 22, 2023	\$70.00	
January 12, 2024	\$40.00	
Total Deposits		\$130.00
Disbursements		
Jan. 11, 2024 Speaker's Fee	\$100.00	
Total Disbursements		\$100.00
Balance—January 15, 2024		\$3,015.54
—Respectfully Submitted, Marian Carroll, Treasurer		

Registration is open!



Feb. 29–Mar. 2, 2024
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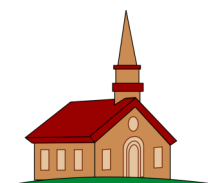
ANCESTOR Q OF THE MONTH: WEDDINGS

This month we asked members to share stories of their ancestors' weddings. "Describe on ancestral couple's wedding. Where was it held? What did they wear? Who performed the ceremony?"

"I have a copy of the newspaper account of my parents' wedding," writes **Charles Robertson**. "Murl Jones and C. S. Robertson were married on Sunday, March 30, 1941 at the Hazel (Kentucky) Methodist Church. My mother wore 'dark blue with white accessories and a shoulder corsage of pink rosebuds.' 'I Love You Truly' was sung. Van Valentine, a friend, gave a violin solo. The article concluded: 'Immediately after the ceremony at the church the happy couple left for a short southern motor trip by way of Nashville. Upon their return they will be at home to their friends in Murray, where the groom is engaged in business.' A helpful aspect of this article is the listing of many relatives and friends of my parents." (Right: Cake topper that adorned the couple's wedding cake.)



Beth Leggieri shares a link to her blog post, "I'm Getting Married in the Morning! An anniversary card to my parents, with love." It includes wonderful photos of her parents Beverly Peel and Myra Kathryn Smith, details of their wedding, as well as a cheeky story about how the couple met. Click here to read it: <https://heirunapparent.blogspot.com/2019/02/im-getting-married-in-morning.html>.



"My husband's great-grandparents William Roy Stephen (1886-1971) and Dessie D. Stallings (1890-1966), were married on 18 April 1911 near Fort Stockton, in Ward County, Texas. This photo (left) is one of the only wedding images we have for his ancestors, so it's a treasure," writes **Nancy Gilbride Casey**. "A wedding announcement in *The Dublin Herald* (Texas) noted: 'Mr. Stephen is an Erath County product, but has spent the major portion of the past five years at Ft. Stockton, where his good fortune developed to such a degree as to enable him to win a wife, a winsome young lady who is considered one of the bells (sic) of that section.' William was the grandson of William Franklin Stephen, an early pioneer of Erath County, whose brother John Miller Stephen was one of the founders of Stephenville."

ANCESTOR Q OF THE MONTH: WEDDINGS

Mary Tate shares “My parents eloped to the next county west of Abilene, Texas. Friends Ted and Mary Ellen went with them. Ted paid for their marriage license, and when Ted and Mary Ellen married a few months later, Dad paid for theirs. No one told me why they eloped, but I suspect it was because my mother was only seventeen. My grandfather accepted their marriage, but he told them he was no longer financially responsible for his daughter—her husband was!”



Eileen O'Neill writes, “Essie Matthews and Christopher O'Neill were married Sept. 5, 1945, in the Post Chapel by a priest in Huntingdon, England. WWII brought them both in uniform to England, this unlikely pair—a Florida farm girl and a Colorado lawyer. In 1945, Chris received a commission as a Lt.; Essie was a corporal so they had to get permission for an officer to marry an enlisted. Essie, a Methodist, had to overcome her uncertainty about marrying a Catholic; they had to deal with the rationing that put a terrible crimp in wedding preparations (problems in finding shoes, ingredients for the cake, a wedding dress, etc.); and the wedding, scheduled for Sept. 4, was missing the groom! The JAG Office had sent Chris to France, but his scheduled return to England was delayed due to fog. He couldn't get back in spite of air traffic controllers along the coast of France saying they had to get this guy back for his wedding.

Twenty-four hours late, they were married. Then they were married again in a civil ceremony required by English law.”

Emily Coffman Richardson shares, “This is a picture of my mom and dad getting married on December 5, 1941, in Washington, D.C. Dad was working for the Navy, so it was just the two of them; his parents and siblings came in by train for the event and stayed for the weekend. The couple were married at St. Paul's Church - Rock Creek Parish by Franklin John Bohana, Pastor.

They were ‘on their honeymoon’ in a hotel in D.C. for the weekend, because that was all my dad could get off, but the Navy had to always know where he was. On December 7th, the MPs arrived at the door and escorted my dad away; my mom was left at the hotel and eventually returned to their apartment in the city.

Dad was sent to Hollywood Beach, Florida to help train pilots to land on the ships, due to the grave number of casualties at Pearl Harbor on December 7th. My mother joined him after 30 days, as she could not leave her job in Washington where she was working to ‘break code.’

They talked little about their experiences during those 30 days, as they were not supposed to tell others what they were doing. Obviously, this bump in the road did not hurt their marriage; when Mom passed in 2006, they had just celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary.”



The March **Ancestor Question of the Month** celebrates Women's History Month!

“Describe a day in the life of a female ancestor. What did she do?”

Watch for a link to the survey coming to your email soon.

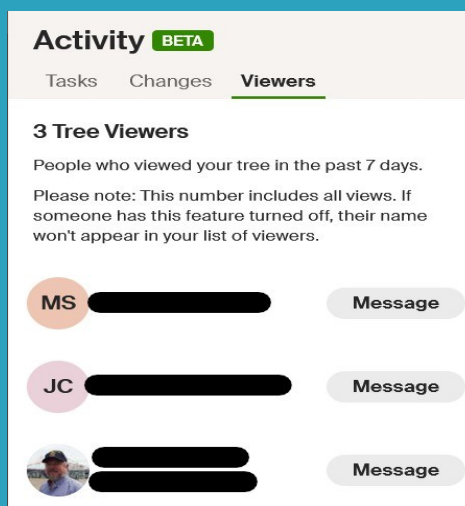


MEMBERCONNECT: NEW ANCESTRY TREE “VIEWERS”

Nancy Gilbride Casey shares: “Have you seen Ancestry’s new Tree Collaboration Tools? The new “Activity” button on the top right of your tree page is comprised of three new features, *Tasks*, *Changes*, and *Viewers*. Users can now make and assign tasks and review recent changes to their tree there. But the tool I’m most excited about is the *Viewers* feature.

Viewers lists visitors to your Ancestry tree within the past seven days, and offers the option to contact them via the Ancestry messaging system.

I check this feature a few times a week to see who has been looking at my tree. (An example of three recent viewers is shown at right.) Since the new tools were introduced, I’ve had 11 visitors to my tree. In each case I have messaged them with a short and sweet: “Hello! I notice you have viewed my Gilbride/Casey Family Tree. Is there something I can help you with? Happy to assist if I can.” I’ve gotten *seven* replies to the eleven messages I wrote—an impressive **63% response rate**.



Three viewers were interested in my family lines, three in my husband’s lines, and one who couldn’t recall why they viewed my tree. Viewers to my lines were interested in my Gilbride line and in DNA matching.

Try out Viewers and message visitors to your tree—they are *already interested in your family lines*. You never know who might have info you need or vice versa.”

PRISON RECORDS, CONNECTIONS & MORE @ THE LIBRARY

Programs on prison records, DNA, writing, and more are on tap this month at the Emily Fowler Central Library. Here's what's in store:

Denton County Genealogical Society Meeting, Thursday, 2/8 (see front page for details)

"Solving a Family Mystery with DNA," presented by **Diana Elder, AG**

Doing Time - Using Prison Records for Genealogy Research, Saturday, 2/17, 3 p.m.

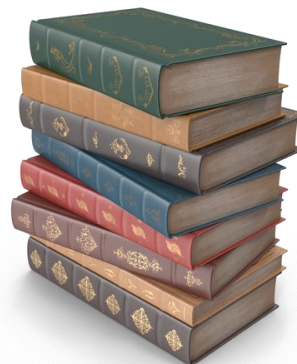
Prisoners in jails and prisons were recorded and documented. Join **Dr. Judy Russell** to learn what records exist, where to find them, and how to use them, in this virtual presentation at the library.



Connections: A Genealogy Discussion Group, dates below, 11 a.m.

Join us to discuss genealogical research methods and historical context using articles published in *STIRPES*, the Journal of the Texas State Genealogical Society, as a starting point. Registrants will be sent the focus article and list of questions for each meeting; registration is required. Check the library website to register <https://denton.bibliocommons.com/v2/events>.

- ◆ 2/23, "Just Imagine: Creating Your Ancestor's Story with Senses and Context," by **Nancy Gilbride Casey** (Issue: Sept. 2022, pages 19-22)
- ◆ 3/22, "Passengers on the Grand Condé to the Republic of Texas from Le Havre France in 1842," by **Karen Stein Daniel** (Issue: Dec. 2022, pages 13-20)



New Genealogy Titles on the Shelves

- ◆ *North Carolina's Free People of Color, 1715-1885*, by Warren Eugene Milteer Jr..
- ◆ *Divorced, Bigamist, Bereaved?: The Family Historian's Guide to Marital Breakdown, Separation, Widowhood, and Remarriage: From 1600 to the 1970s*, by Rebecca Probert
- ◆ *Marriage Law for Genealogists: the Definitive Guide ... What Everyone Tracing Their Family History Needs to Know About Where, When, Who and How Their English and Welsh Ancestors Married*, by Rebecca Probert
- ◆ *A Guide to Norwegian Genealogy, Emigration, and Transmigration*. by Liv Marit Haakenstad
- ◆ *List of Free African Americans in the American Revolution: Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Maryland, and Delaware*, by Paul Heinegg
- ◆ *Archives of Pennsylvania: A Genealogy Research Guide to Records in Archives, Libraries, Colleges, Courthouses, Genealogical Societies, Historic Sites, ... and Museums*, by Denys Allen
- ◆ *Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Orphans' Court Records: 1852-1900*, by Thomas G. Myers

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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