

DCGS News

JIM THORNHILL TO PRESENT “MIGRATIONS THROUGH THE SOUTH,” MARCH 13TH



Jim Thornhill

Why did my ancestors leave their homes? What did they experience traveling to where they settled?

Jim Thornhill will answer these questions and more in “Migrations Through the South,” to be presented at the Denton County Genealogical Society meeting, Thursday, March 13, 2025. Attendees will gather at the Emily Fowler Central Library meeting room, 502 Oakland St., Denton. Social time begins at 6:30 p.m., with a brief business meeting followed by the presentation at 7:00 p.m. Visitors are welcome.

Thornhill will cover what motivated our ancestors to come to America, what they found when they got here, and how travel developed in the United States, with a focus on the south. He'll also cover how researchers can use that information to identify the path their ancestors might have taken to get to where we live today.

Jim Thornhill has been researching his family's history for 20 years—five of those as a professional genealogist. Jim is chief researcher for Heroes of the Past, a company that seeks to delight clients, provide context in our ancestor's lives, and show how we all have Heroes in our Pasts.

Jim is a graduate of the ProGen professional genealogy course, the Genealogy Proof course, Texas Institute of Genealogical Research, the Trans-Mississippi South course at the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research, and countless webinars and local and virtual genealogy presentations. Jim is an active member in the Association for Professional Genealogists, the Texas State Genealogical Society, and the Rockwall County Genealogical Society.

Jim is a native Texan whose third great-grandfather arrived in Jasper County in 1850. He has lived in the Dallas area his entire life. Both his and his wife's families came to Texas in the same ways he talks about in his presentation.



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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/metapht12494/m1/1/>; 2 May 2023); citing Denton Public Library.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Computers and genealogy programs are wonderful assets for genealogical research. I certainly would not want to go back to the times without them. But I also recognize that there are *many* books that are not digitized and, therefore, are not available for internet search. So, I still enjoy the pleasure of looking through books to see what I may find. In fact, this is how I recently found an ancestor that fought in the Revolutionary War. I was delighted since I had not found this connection previously.

When I pick up a book in the Genealogy Collection at the Emily Fowler Central Library, I first go to the index to see what names may be of interest to my research. It's not too often that I find a name that will help my research but it is indeed delightful when I do!

A few days ago, when I had some time at the library, I looked through a few more books in the Genealogy Collection. The first one I reviewed was *Mayflower Families Through Five Generations*. This book was the general index of over 20 volumes of Mayflower information. I found the following names that may be of interest to DCGS members: Anderson, Austin, Bell, Briggs, Carroll, Douglas, Green, Jonas, Lane, Lawrence, McCormick, Reed, Richardson, Robertson, Shurtleff, Spooner, Stinson, Tate, Williams, and Windsor.

This is not a list of Mayflower passengers, but rather, a list of names that may be descendants of *Mayflower* passengers. Check the book index for the names of interest. The index cites the Silver Book volume and page where more information can be found. Then you can confirm that name as an ancestor or follow with more research.

—Robert Lane, President
presidentdcdgs@gmail.com

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Society Website:

www.genealogydentontexas.org

FEBRUARY 2025 MEETING MINUTES

Denton County Genealogical Society, Inc. February 13, 2025 minutes

President Bob Lane called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. and led the members in the Pledge of Allegiance. There were 23 members in attendance, 6 members attended through Zoom in addition to our speaker, and 5 visitors for a total of 34.

Reports by Board Members

Membership—Marian Carroll, chair, introduced the visitors; two arrived a bit late and missed the introductions.

Secretary—Minutes taken by Eileen O'Neill at the meeting of January 9, 2025, were presented in the newsletter. There were no corrections or questions so the minutes were approved as published.

Treasurer—The report by Linda Lane was presented in the newsletter. There were no questions or comments so the report will be filed for audit.

Social (Hospitality)—Joan Anderson brought the treats for the evening. There is a sign-up sheet for volunteers to bring treats to the next meeting as well as a cup for cash donations.

Librarian—Laura Douglas mentioned there were journals on the back table that had been donated to the library but can't be used. Please take any that you might find useful. Laura mentioned that usage of genealogy books has dropped so members should make a point of coming into the library to keep up attendance. Please do not re-shelve books because that enables the librarians to count usage.

On Feb. 28, at 11:00 a.m. "Connections: A Genealogy Discussion Group" will meet in the library to discuss an article from *Stirpes*. Be sure to sign up in advance.

There was no new business.

Announcements

President Bob Lane asked everyone to consider answering the Ancestor Question of the Month; the answers to this month's question were really interesting.

The next DCGS meeting will be March 13, 2025.

The Society still needs another volunteer to serve on the Nominating Committee. Please consider volunteering.

On April 12 there will be a field trip to the Old Courthouse and the Denton County Historical Park. These are both very interesting places to see and should be a good field trip for us. The field trip to the Dallas Public Library was a splendid day! There were 12 attendees, including one new member. All were enthusiastic and excited to be there. Look for more information about the trip on page 4-5 of this newsletter.

Please check this month's newsletter for information about TIGR (Texas Institute of Genealogical Research). A learning event held biennially, this is scheduled from June 16 to June 20, 2025. Fabulous speakers are scheduled.

Please note that Minna Marinko completed the NGS Advanced Skills Course. Congrats to Minna!

Programming—Stacie Briggs, vice president/programs, mentioned that she will be teaching classes in March at the Family Search Center. Those interested can check with her.

Stacie then introduced our speaker for the evening. Kelvin Meyers joined us on Zoom to present "Why Did Scarlett Make a Dress of Her Mother's Drapes?" At the end of his presentation, Mr. Meyers took a couple questions; then President Lane thanked him for joining us with his interesting topic.

President Lane's Last Word was from the author Michael Crichton: "If you don't know history, you don't know anything. You are a leaf that doesn't know it is part of a tree."

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.



—Respectfully Submitted by
Eileen O'Neill, Secretary



Minna Marinko looks over a Scottish clan map for evidence of the Patrick sept of Clan Lamont.

DCGS Members & Friends Enjoy Dallas Public Library Genealogy Collection Field Trip

By Nancy Gilbride Casey

Twelve DCGS members and friends met at the Dallas Public Library's Genealogy Collection on Saturday, Feb. 8th for a tour and independent research time. Guided by staffer Alex Garza, the group enjoyed an orientation to the library's numerous collections and resources before splitting off into groups and individually to research.

New DCGS member ***Tina Ek*** said of the trip, "I enjoyed the field trip to the Dallas Public Library so much! Their collection was so robust I could have spent days there. It was impressive to learn that their collection is top ten nationally and I could see why they earned that distinction. I was so fortunate to be joined by my son, brother, and father. We made a wonderful discovery on one of our ancestors who migrated from France to Dallas as a part of the La Reunion colony in 1855. The library had his biography and a few pictures of him, his wife, and their house. I discovered that the library is in the process of digitizing their collection, hosted on FamilySearch. You can access it in the books section filtered by the owner Dallas Public Library and it is keyword searchable. I am so glad to have discovered these resources and already planning my next trip there."

Many in attendance remarked that they'd never been to this library before or that it had been many years since they had...some last visited 20-30 years ago! All agreed that they would be coming back to this amazing local resource in the future.

(Continued, p. 5)



Image by pikisuperstar on Freepik.



Joan Anderson (left), **Mary Tate** (center), and **Marian Carroll** (right) pore over books from the Genealogy Collection.



Melissa Sampson scans the Genealogy Collection shelves for a book at the Dallas Public Library.

Photos: Nancy Gilbride Casey

ANCESTOR QUESTION OF THE MONTH

*This month we wanted to learn about your ancestors in 1880 or 1900. Where were they living? What was their occupation? Describe their life. Thanks to **Linda Lane** for the topic suggestion.*

Eileen O'Neill writes, “John O'Neill, my paternal great-grandfather, was born in mid-1850s in County Antrim, Ireland. He came from a poor family and immigrated to the U.S. in 1882, landing in Chicago amidst the large Irish community. There he married Minnie (Mary) Rowland in 1883; they had nine children between 1884 and 1904, one of whom died a year after birth. The 1900 census has him as a naturalized citizen; both he and Mary were literate and they rented their home. It must have been a difficult life. John worked as a laborer, probably as a ‘grain trimmer’ helping load grain onto railroad cars. It was a dirty, dusty job and probably led to his death. His death certificate said he died in 1906 in his early 40s of ‘pulmonary tuberculosis’ with a contributing cause of exhaustion. I think he'd be amazed how far the family has come.”



Immigrants Behold the Statue of Liberty, 1887. Public Domain.



Image: Raupixel. Public domain.

“In 1880, my great-great-grandmother Catherine Ryan Gilbride was institutionalized at Danville Insane Asylum in Montour County, Pennsylvania,” writes **Nancy Gilbride Casey**. “This shocking discovery sent me on a mission to find out more about conditions there. The answer surprised me. The institution was very new when she was committed in 1877 and on the forefront of treatment of people with mental illness. The ‘moral treatment’ theory was that if those who suffered were taken from their homes and given a calm environment, gentle treatments, medical care, good food, and fresh air, that they would recover. Sadly, this was not the case for Catherine, who suffered from what was known as ‘puerperal insanity’ caused by a stillbirth; we might now see her illness as bipolar disease. She spent over three years in the institution, frequently isolated, cuffed, or straight-jacketed to protect her and others from her outbursts. She died of pneumonia at age 26 in 1881, a tragedy which still shakes me.”

ANCESTOR QUESTION OF THE MONTH



Barn built in the late 1800's on the Moore Farm on Highway 48 near I-40. It is still standing.

Sandra shared this image of Jesse's barn from a 1981 Moore Family Reunion invitation.

Sandra Robertson shares, "In 1880, my paternal great-grandfather, Jesse Bell Moore, had been living for ten years on a 100-acre piece of land he purchased in Dickson, Tennessee, for \$650 in cash, after moving from Venango Co., Pennsylvania. Jesse was a skilled carpenter and built a house which had a cut-stone fireplace. He built a split-level barn which had sheep pens on the ground floor. Two upper levels had storage for grain and farm equipment. He used dove-tailed joints for locking the logs together. Five of Jesse and wife Cordelia's eight children had been born by 1880. Jesse wanted his family to have a place to worship. He helped to establish the Oak Grove Methodist Episcopal Church, North. Years later, on the back of a picture of her parents and siblings, his youngest daughter wrote the names of her siblings, the birth and death dates of her parents and added 'God Bless Us All,' and signed her name."



TREASURER'S REPORT

Report for Month of January 2025

Balance—December 31, 2024		\$3,170.05
Deposits Dues January	\$120.00	
Total January Deposits		\$120.00
Disbursements		
1/24/25 Speaker's Fee	\$250.00	
Total January Disbursements		\$250.00
Balance January 31, 2025		\$3,040.05
—Respectfully Submitted, Linda Lane, Treasurer		

MEYERS' FEBRUARY TAX PROGRAM INFORMS



By Sandra Robertson

“Why Did Scarlett Make a Dress of Her Mother’s Drapes?”

At the February DCGS meeting, **Kelvin Meyers**, experienced historian and genealogist, answered this question with one word—land! Scarlett needed money to pay her property taxes.

There is a rather sinister saying: “Nothing is certain but death and taxes.” As genealogists, we have all searched for and found ancestors’ death records,

obituaries, and gravestones. To add to this end-of-life information, Meyers described types of information that could be unearthed in a careful examination of tax records.

Meyers discussed what tax records are, what they may mean, and differences to be found in various states. Tax rolls contain information on both real and personal property. A poll tax, at various times, could simply mean that a young man was of an age to pay a tax for simply residing in his state. At another time, a poll tax was required to vote.

It's also important to know which states had tax lists and which states did not. Meyers mentioned that the Texas General Land Office (or GLO) has valuable information for those researching Texas land and landowners.

We may learn ages of a male ancestor and establish relationships between persons in tax records. Tracking our ancestors by ownership of land will help us establish their migrations from place to place. Property taxes can help us learn what was valuable enough to be taxed. These items will give us an insight into our ancestors’ cultural and social milieu. Be inspired to track your ancestors lives through researching tax records.

A large, stylized, blue cursive word "Welcome" with a thick, flowing script. The letters are interconnected, and the overall shape is elongated and sweeping.

to our newest DCGS members

Tina Ek, Titus Ek,

Brad & Carolyn Pittman.

We're glad to have you with us!

LIBRARY NEWS: RESOURCES FOR RESEARCHING WOMEN

Researching the Women in Your Family

Name changes and legal restrictions are just a couple of the challenges that can arise when searching for the women in your family tree. Here are some books from the genealogy collection at the Emily Fowler Library that can help you in your research.

Telling Her Story: A Guide to Researching and Writing About Women by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack (G 929.107 CAR)

Guide and Index to Women's Diaries: Segment I, New England Women (G 929.3 GUI)

Women and the Law of Property in Early America by Marylynn Salmon (G 346.04 SAL)

Female Index to Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England by James Savage (G 974 SAV)

The Hidden Half of the Family: A Sourcebook for Women's Genealogy by Christina K. Schaefer (G 929.1072 SCH)

You may also find these research guides from the Library of Congress helpful:

Female Ancestors: Finding Women in Local History and Genealogy

<https://guides.loc.gov/female-ancestors>

American Women: Resources from the General Collections

<https://guides.loc.gov/american-women-general-collections/home>



The June 2024 issue of TxSGS's *Stirpes* focuses on research techniques to find your female ancestors. It's available in the Special Collections periodicals section at the Emily Fowler Central Library.

WRITING YOUR ANCESTORS' MEMORIES
with Emily

How to Start Writing your
Family History

03/21 & 04/18 10:30 A.M.

Emily Fowler Library

Please register

ABOUT THE SOCIETY

Founded in 1979, the ***Denton County Genealogical Society*** (DCGS) has been serving area genealogy researchers for 46 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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