

# **Kerrville Genealogical Society Messenger**

*Newsletter of the Kerrville Genealogical Society-Kerrville, Texas*

Volume 5, Issue 4

November 2016

## **President's Message**



Thank you to the members of the Kerrville Genealogical Society for your support. At the September general meeting the membership voted and approved a recommendation to raise dues beginning with 2017 membership from \$15 to \$25 for a single membership and from \$20 to \$30 for a family membership. Don't forget that KGS has a lending library of 200 books for members only.

By the time you read this newsletter, the Open House at the Research Center & Library will be past history. We had volunteers available all week to demonstrate how to use online genealogy websites. Genealogy related

handouts, refreshments and a free beginning class were also offered. Now, in our endless effort to raise funds to support the KGS Center, we turn our energy to our booth at the November 5<sup>th</sup> Hill Country Swap Meet, 3785 E. Hwy 27 in Kerrville. We appreciate the items donated by our members. There will be items from estates, some new or slightly used items, nice Christmas décor, jewelry, small appliances and much more all at garage sale prices. We hope you will support us by coming out to purchase a bargain.

The Kerrville Genealogical Society Research Center & Library will close the week of Thanksgiving and the last two weeks of December while everyone prepares for the holidays and enjoys time with family. But, if you are that efficient person who has shopping and decorating already done, the center will be open all other Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays from 10am to 4pm for your research needs.

2016 has been a successful year for the society and the research center. Here are some highlights. We've moved our general meetings to the more comfortable and convenient UGRA auditorium located in the same building and down the hall from the KGS library. We've had some wonderful programs and the seminar with Susan Ball was well attended with positive feedback. We've offered beginning genealogy classes and Open House with website demonstrations. The KGS center has 3 subscription genealogy websites for all to use. And, we established an extensive lending library for our members.

Your board of directors is already making plans for an even better 2017. But, KGS belongs to all the membership. We welcome ideas and suggestions and encourage member participation. Getting to know KGS members has enriched my life and research. I hope to get to know more of you in 2017. I think this quote from an anonymous participant of the Lambert Genealogy Study sums it up: *"Genealogy attracts men and women equally and it offers opportunities to socialize, enjoy friendships, share research knowledge and work together. Strange, but I've noticed that when genealogists gather socially, they usually discuss a variety of topics that have nothing to do with their main common interest. Obviously, many of them have a wide interest range. In summary, genealogy has a value for me that cannot be measured in dollars, but intangibly and joyously it fills my soul."*

*Happy Holidays, Sharon Ashby*

## **My Visit to the Allen County Library In Fort Wayne, Indiana**

*Deborah Gaudier*

In August while attending the National Scrabble Championship I had the chance to visit and do research at the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, Indiana. The ACPL has the second largest genealogical collection in the world, and the largest of any public library. The records are not just from Indiana, but from every state and internationally.

They have more than 350,000 print volumes and more than 510,000 microfiche and microfilm items. It also holds the largest English-language genealogy and local history periodical collection in the world, with more than 10,000 titles. The ACPL is the library that produces PERSI (the Periodical Source Library). It is open seven days a week for research, as late as 9 PM, Monday through Thursday. I attended my event during the day and researched in the evenings.

Located in the historic downtown across the street from the convention center, the library is one of the most important tourism destinations in northeastern Indiana. Some local hotels offer packages that include breakfast and parking. If you go be sure and ask about the genealogy package. Since there is a Dunkin Donuts at the library entrance that offers sandwiches, it is possible to spend the entire day inside, never leaving the building!

There are comfortable seating areas scattered throughout the library building, an art gallery, meeting rooms, and other amenities that create an inviting space.

The building itself fills a city block, and I estimate that the genealogical center occupies about a quarter of the second floor of the library. Similar to the KGS collection, the books are organized beginning with Allen County, then Indiana, the rest of the United States, then other countries. The KGS organizes the books alphabetically by state, the ACPL geographically east to west (more or less). Like KGS, at the ACPL the family history books are in a separate room and the periodicals kept together.

On the first day I started by walking through the collection to get oriented. I was fascinated by what I saw and asked the librarian the history of the genealogy center. It turns out it dates back over a century. As early as 1903 the local DAR chapter was granted shelf space for its collection of lineage books and other historical works. During the Depression there was little money available to expand the collection, so the librarians visited used book stores and estate sales, bringing back books that were often on local history topics. These books formed the core of the genealogical collection when it was established in 1961.

The library director, Fred J. Reynolds, was not a genealogist but he saw the value in studying family history. He formed an unusual partnership with the Newberry Library in Chicago. Reynolds would borrow a station wagon load of books at a time from the Newberry, and then hired college students to work day and night copying the books. The library in Fort Wayne kept and bound a copy of each book and Newberry received a bound copy, plus the original. Some 30,000 of Newberry Library's books were duplicated this way. Other partnerships have been formed since. The collection is now named the Fred J. Reynolds Historical Genealogical Collection in his honor.

Back to my visit: It's important to stay focused and have a plan. Since I am currently mostly researching the Sullenberger/Solleberger name, I decided to start by looking at some family history books (organized alphabetically). I tried to stay focused on that one name, but it was tempting to go off on other topics! Focus! Focus! After that I alternated between using the databases and the local histories from the areas of Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Tennessee where they had lived.

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Their on-site databases (free to use in the library) include Archives Unbound, Slavery and anti-Slavery, [Ancestry.com](http://Ancestry.com), PERSI, Fold3, [Newspapers.com](http://Newspapers.com), and several others. These databases have a fee-for-use outside the library. In addition there are a number of free databases you can access from home at <http://www.genealogycenter.org/Databases/FreeDatabases.aspx> .

I located several hundred vital records on the Sullenbergers including mother's maiden names, marriage records, birth records, and death records. All in all it was a successful visit. If you ever find yourself in the area, plan to include a visit to the Allen County Public Library.

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## **Upcoming KGS Program**

**November 16, 2016**

**Deborah Gaudier will present: "What's At the Courthouse!"**

Have you ever done research in a courthouse? Most of us know we can find birth, marriage, and death records there, but there is much, much more. Most of these records are not on-line, but the information in them adds much to the story of your ancestors. The records vary some from state to state. The County Clerk's Office here contains records such as cattle brands, records of animal tattoos, copies of military discharge papers, and deputation books. Come hear about some of the lesser known records in the courthouse and be inspired to get off the computer and over to the courthouse.

**Meeting Place-UGRA Auditorium, 125 Lehmann Drive, Kerrville, TX 78028**

**This meeting will be at 2 PM**

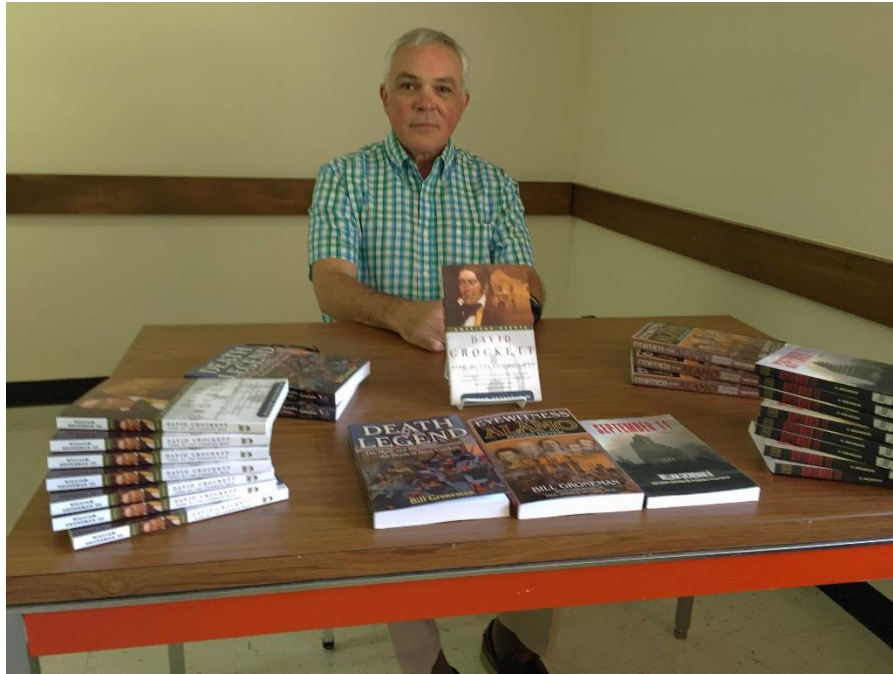
**Some long-time members recently passed away:**

**Dr. Lawrence Huff died June 24, 2016**

**Robert "Bob" Goldsborough died September 13, 2016**

**Arnold Herman Bohn, died September 16, 2016**

**We extend our prayers and condolences to their families.**



Author William Groneman spoke at the KGS September meeting about his Alamo and David Crockett research.



KGS members and authors Frank and Ruth Kiel from Comfort brought their family history books that were the result of many years of research.

## TRIP OF A LIFETIME

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*BY IRENE VAN WINKLE*  
*KGS member*

From the dizzying heights of the Carpathian mountaintops, endless walks in search of ancestral footprints, flying thousands of miles, visiting hundreds of places and encountering the most wonderful people anyone could be honored to meet -- the trip of a lifetime to my Ukrainian homeland often felt like it was guided by an unseen hand.

This was more than a shopping trip or cheap tour. I believe the core of it, or certainly a major influence, revolved around my paternal grandfather, Justin Hirniak (1877-1958). Throughout, I felt a certain presence that led my steps, often to just the right place or person. What I brought back were treasured memories, connecting my homeland in ways I could not have dreamed. Having taken this Journey, I cannot imagine my life without it.

I rode the railroad, saw magnificent painted golden churches and cathedrals (St. George in Lviv, and St. Sophia and the Pechersk Lavra monastery cave complete in Kyiv). I went by bus to the Carpathian Mountains and saw tiny country churches that dot the land everywhere. My hotels ranged from rickety walk-ups with few amenities to a couple of fancy places with buffet breakfasts. Tasting along the way were two amazing experiences - Lviv's famous hot chocolate (like a liquid warm Hershey bar in a cup), and sweet cherry liqueur aged in glass bottles like mama used to make.

Ancient edifices, magnificent sculptures and monuments and the freshest mountain waterfalls all were part of this precious landscape. Everything grew or was painted in glorious brilliant colors.

As I flew east for hours across the ocean, my heart yearned for discovery. My friend, Tanya Prytuliak, a friend of Barbara Vorhes of Hunt, met me at the Borsipol airport outside the bustling cosmopolitan capitol, Kyiv (most Ukrainians prefer not to say Kiev), where I saw a mixture of old and new. The first order of the day was to eat at a restaurant that served varenyky (pierogies to you) and that lovely soup, borscht. From there on out, the trip became a saga of exploring dozens of churches, museums, architectural and natural wonders. But I needed to reconnect with a family history that I had only heard from all of my relatives, without any real point of reference or understanding of what and where these places were, and their context.

Before August 24, at the big Independence Day parade at Maidan Square, Tanya and her family hosted me at her mother's country "dacha," in a little village where I enjoyed such hospitality. For nearly an entire week before the Independence Day parade on August 24, there were continual rehearsals in and around the huge Maidan Square, over which the golden winged statue, Berehynia (Protectress), stood watch. Below it, to the left, are a series of memorials to what is called The Heavenly Hundred, civilians killed at the square during the 2014 turmoil that ended in the ouster of then-president Yanykovich, a crony of Russian President Vladimir Putin.

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Photographs, candles and offerings lined the street left of the square up a long hill. Other reminders of the terrible events included remnants of broken concrete and cobblestones. A large clock dominates the hill overlooking the street, flanked by signs, "Glory to Ukraine, Glory to the Heroes." There are flowers, ribbons and national flags everywhere. So are peddlers, beggars and gawkers among the everyday people who walk nervously and sadly, wondering if the war with Russian separatists still being fought on the borderlands will escalate or subside.

Well, on the actual day of Independence, the square was packed with security, media, spectators and officials, including President Petro Poroshenko. Unexpectedly, after the big speeches and military show of strength, he began making his way over to the crowds, including one corner where I was positioned and rather pressed against the barricade. As he made his way shaking peoples' hands and talking, I saw he was close and just could not resist the temptation to call over to him, "Mr. President, I came here from America to see my homeland, Ukraine." Hearing me, he walked over, took my hands, and, to the best of my recollection said, "Welcome, so happy to see you. Glory to Ukraine." "Thank you," I answered. "And glory to the heroes." As for a selfie, well, there was just not enough time.

My wonderful trip continued to unfold in the most unexpected unplanned ways. While still in Kyiv, I connected with the story of a great-uncle, Joseph Hirniak, my grandfather's brother. I remember him and his wife, Olympia. As a child, I visited them in downtown east New York City. They told the most remarkable stories about how their plays did not please the Communists, who sent them to Siberia. He was an actor who was well remembered by Nadya Hubenkova, keeper of the history of Ukrainian theater great, Les Kurbas, in whose acting company my great-uncle was a major performer. His photographs are prominently displayed at the research center and he is featured in a book on Kurbas.

Most of my family will agree that my grandfather was a significant figure, and he often was driven to help his fellow human beings. Many sources agree that before and after World War I, the Greek Byzantine Catholic priest, Father Justin Hirniak, strived to rebuild broken parts of western Ukraine in the Ivano-Frankivsk region and several of its villages. To explain how my grandfather could be a priest: Greek Byzantine Catholic priests are allowed to marry, just like Anglican, Episcopalian and other rites, but they are the only Catholic rite that may do so. Unlike Greek Orthodox, the Greek Byzantine Catholic clergy have their own archbishops and hierarchy but still recognize the Roman Catholic pope as their head.

One of the key places to see was my grandfather's church in the village of Yamnytsia. He had built the church nearly 100 years ago, and it still stands today. In fact, the town just built a school to house its 1,000 students. Grandfather's legacy began when he came here riding a bicycle, and was in charge of several small parishes even before World War I, which had no priest. He had been ordained in Lviv in 1899, and later rose in the church but his main achievements were to help rebuild the small towns, establishing many

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organizations and schools, such as scouts. He was forced to flee in 1944 from the brutality of the Russians, but his picture is in the church office, and his name and photograph appear often in a book on Yamnytsia.

Father Bohdan Kuriliv, now the village priest, met me at the church along with other parishioners, including five rather elderly women who said they remembered my grandfather. They were little girls when he was still there. They told stories and remembrances of him, sang songs and presented me with embroideries. I received books and other gifts, but mostly what I received was a lot of love. What a humbling day this was...I had been accepted so warmly not because of what I had done but because of my grandfather's hard work, the living legacy he had left behind.

Yet another honored relative was my mother's uncle, Kost (Constantine) Levytsky, whose extensive biography is found on Wikipedia. A street in the city of Lviv bears his name, as well as in his birthplace of Tysmenytsia. He was a patriot who devoted his life to righteous and intellectual pursuits in government and law. He headed ZUNR (translated, the Western Democratic Ukrainian Republic) in the early 20th century. I found his street in Lviv, along with the building where he lived and visited the cemetery where he is buried among about 700 other soldiers (called Sichovy Striltsy) in a place of honor.

Several days later, in his birthplace of Tysmenytsia, I met the mayor (Stephen Svorak), was interviewed on local television, and got a tour of a museum where Kost Levytsky was featured. Later that day, music teachers from the arts academy down the street greeted me, too, with such sweetness, wonderful songs, gifts of embroidery and a music CD. Before heading further out, I visited the wonderful egg-shaped museum of Pysanky (painted eggs) in Kolomyia.

Days later, high up in the magnificent wild Carpathian Mountains, in the town of Yaremche, I found the grave of my grandfather's son, Uncle Osip (Joseph) Hirniak, at a beautiful wooden country church. He, too, was a priest, a living martyr, who stayed behind in Ukraine when everyone else fled, because he had to let people have the presence of God in a godless Communistic environment. Like many others, he held secret Masses in peoples' houses and often paid a terrible price. One of the women who hosted such Masses was a sweet lady, Eudacia Klemiuk Sawchuk, 84, who invited me into her ancient home filled with gorgeous textiles and embroidery on the walls and furniture. Although barely able to walk, she graciously made me raspberry tea and we talked about her. Her family had been living on the same land for several hundred years.

Soon, I was also headed for the heady heights of the Carpathians, finding the cascading water of Huk deep in the woods, to the gloriously sprawling ski resort town of Bukovel. Here, in order to go up into the mountaintops, I took a rather scary ski lift (a bum knee keeps me from clambering uphill) and from a brilliant viewpoint, was able to look across the deep valleys.

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I looked over to Hoverla, Ukraine's highest mountain. It epitomized the achievement of so many highs on my journey - I was exhilarated, in disbelief that I had come so far and seen so much. Having never visited Ukraine before, my goal was to learn, preserve and mark it for future generations in a longer format. It would be my gift to my family and anyone who valued it.

I realize I have big shoes to fill and am trying to do them justice. Chances are I may fall short, but I will do my best to add to the knowledge and instill the desire in other capable descendants to take up that weighty baton.



Visit with Eudacia Klemiuk Sawchuk (left) in her ancient home;  
Irene Van Winkle on the right

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**We are now accepting dues for 2017.  
Attached I at the end of this newsletter is the  
form for your convenience.  
We hope you will continue to support  
the Kerrville Genealogical Society.**



### New on the Shelves at the KGS Research Center/Library

Eighteenth Century Register of Emigrants from Southwest Germany  
Tracing Your Ancestry - A Step-by-Step Guide to Researching your Family History  
Hunt, Texas - The Early Years 1857-1959  
The O'Neils in America from 1790-1998  
W. B. Tull's War Story - Civil War  
Jeremiah White, a First Family of Ohio  
The Daughters: A Dozen Decades of DRT  
Rebel and Yankee: The Fighting Men  
"Order" - sample genealogy charts, how-to on managing data, etc.  
Willow Springs (Missouri) and Surrounding Communities 1869-1969  
Walnut Grove, the Old Town 1835-1925 - Leake Co., MS history  
Women of Navarro County - Navarro County history, Vol. 6  
Going to Palmyra - Sherman Descendants  
Pictorial History of Kerr County, TX  
The Old West - The Gunfighters  
Atascosa County History Thru 1912  
Archer County, TX 1837-2002 Cemetery Census  
Van de Ven Family History - CD format  
Hidden History of the Alamo: Oral History Confirmed  
The Amazing Story of the Millsaps in America  
Teasley Family photos and letters  
Me 'N Tad - a Texas Story  
German Research Companion  
Handbook of Registry of German-Texan Heritage  
Central European Genealogical Terminology  
Cemeteries of Comal Co., TX  
Decipher Germanic Records  
Deciphering the Church Records of Germany  
Genealogical Handbook of German Research, Vol. 1 and 2  
Pape Family History Since the Civil War  
The Civil War  
Alexander Kin, Vol. II (source for Reese, Alexander & Brevard families)  
Polk's Folly - An American Family History  
Lure of the Land, Texas county maps and the History of Settlement  
Soldiers in King Philip's War  
Topographical Dictionary of 2885 English Emigrants to New England 1620-1650  
Pioneers of Massachusetts  
Federation of East European Family History Societies  
***Thank you to all who gifted these to KGS -Harriet M. Chesí, 2nd VP, Collections***

# When the Soldier Boys Left

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One of the most dramatic, heart-wrenching scenes in Kerrville's history took place on the afternoon of September 5, 1917, when most of the town's residents gathered at the railroad station to say goodbye to approximately a hundred newly enlisted soldiers from Kerr County and the surrounding area as they departed for training camp. In some respects, the doughboys' departure was like a funeral procession; in others, it resembled a raucous Fourth of July celebration.

As time approached for the train to leave, virtually all the mothers, wives, sisters and grandmothers had tears streaming down their faces, the men on the train were laughing, shouting and waving from the windows. They seemed excited to be going, but maybe, they were pretending.

For many recruits, the overnight trip of 300-plus miles to Camp Bowie in Fort Worth, via San Antonio, would be the longest of their lives to date. The waiting flag-draped locomotive snorted and rang its bell.

When the locomotive began to pull away from the station, the weeping grew more intense, and some of the women began to moan and pray aloud.

The train was so overloaded with soldiers that the engineer seemed to have trouble getting it to move. It jerked forward and stopped once or twice before it settled into motion. Then, when the engineer blew the whistle, it sounded as if every dog in Kerrville started howling at once.

Despite its heavy human cargo, the train gradually gathered speed as it moved east toward San Antonio. A half-block from the depot, the whistle sounded again as it crossed *Tchoupitoulas* Street, the roadway that would one day bear Sidney Baker's name.

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Excerpt from "The Boys from Kerrville," by Bill Sloan. See photos of the local men who served in WWI on display in the lobby area at KGS research center & library entrance.

## *We Are Always In Need Of Volunteers*

Tuesday-Thursday-Saturday  
10:00-1:00, 1:00-4:00 or all day once a month or more

Please volunteer at the KGS Research Center & Library in the UGRA building.

Contact Nina Dalla at [njdalla@krc.com](mailto:njdalla@krc.com) or phone 257-6241

***Kerrville Research Center & Library***

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Kerrville, TX 78028  
Phone # 830-315-1836  
Office e-mail: [kgs@hctc.net](mailto:kgs@hctc.net)**

Check the Kerrville Genealogical Society Facebook Page  
at: [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and log in and like us.  
We will list KGS events on there.

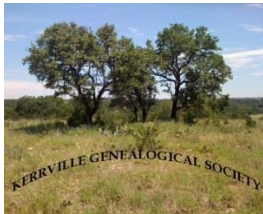
Don't forget to check out our blog too at:  
<http://kerrvillegenealogy.blogspot.com/>

***If you change your e-mail address or snail mail address please e-mail  
us at [kgsociety2011@gmail.com](mailto:kgsociety2011@gmail.com) to let us know.***

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**2016 Kerrville Genealogical Society Board & Officers**

President-Sharon Ashby	1 <sup>st</sup> Vice-President-Rebecca Kuykendall
2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice-President-Harriet Chesi	Secretary-Mary Overton
Treasurer-Donna Scofield	Membership Chair-Pat Weber
Volunteer Coordinators-Nina Dalla & Sharon Smith	
Outreach Chair-Elizabeth Baker	Newsletter-Marilyn Talbot



## KERRVILLE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Dues for Calendar Year 2017

NEW MEMBER \_\_\_\_\_ RENEWAL \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_

Please check type of Membership:

\_\_\_\_\_ Individual \$25.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Family \$30.00--If family, spouse's name \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Patron \$75.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Benefactor \$500.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Student \$10.00

\_\_\_\_\_ Donation-**The Society is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization under the**

**Internal Revenue Code 501 (c) (3)**

**If you can, please consider a higher level of support.**

I can: Contribute to Newsletter \_\_\_\_\_ Serve on a Committee \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to: KERRVILLE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY,

125 Lehmann, Suite 102 ; Kerrville, TX 78028

Check # \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \_\_\_\_\_