

Kerrville Genealogical Society Messenger

Newsletter of the Kerrville Genealogical Society, Kerrville, Texas

Volume 6, Issue 2

April 2017

President's Message



We welcome all new and renewing members for 2017. If you are receiving this newsletter and haven't paid your membership, please do so. We will cease to exist without member support. Introduce yourselves to me and the other board members if you are new or have renewed after a long absence. We want to get to know you. Everyone is invited for social time and refreshments immediately after the monthly meetings in the snack area adjacent to the lecture hall. After all, where else will you find friends who share your passion for genealogy and whose eyes don't glaze over the minute you start talking about dead people?

Kerrville Genealogical Society Research Center & Library enters the third year in the location at 125 Lehmann Drive. We are a little off the beaten path and the UGRA building does not scream out our existence for all to see. But, by word of mouth, advertising, Facebook and kind assistance with directions from the Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library, visitors are slowly finding our little "Gem in the Hill Country." Your board of directors continuously works to make visiting the center a pleasant and productive experience. In case you haven't heard, we have increased our internet speed making web searches faster. We have wi-fi in both the research center and the lecture hall for those who wish to bring their laptops for convenience and to use our internet subscription sites Ancestry, Fold3, and American Ancestors.

Your board of directors feels it is important to provide interesting seminars and programs for our members and the public. Please contact

Rebecca Kuykendall, any board member, or e-mail kgs@hctc.net if you know of someone you think could provide an interesting program for the society. March was an especially good month of learning provided by Susan Ball, our seminar speaker and Martha Boye our program speaker for the March general meeting. Ms. Ball always shares a wealth of genealogical knowledge and research tips. I hope you learned from her and found her information useful to you. Martha Boye gave a very informative presentation at the March 15th general meeting on all the varied resources that can be utilized at www.familysearch.org. In case you missed it, Martha introduced Debbie Knoebel who is the contact volunteer for the LDS Family History Center here in Kerrville at 202 Coronado Drive. Debbie is usually there Sundays 1pm to 3pm, Mondays 1pm to 3pm, and early Wednesdays 6am to 8am. She is willing to meet researchers there at other times. Call her at 830-997-8871 to arrange a meeting time at the Center. Or, you may wish to use the LDS Family History Center in Fredericksburg or Boerne. Remember, you can order microfilm from home on the website www.familysearch.org and have the film sent to the center of your choice for viewing.

Lastly, a reminder that we will have two more monthly meetings - April and May. There are no meetings in June, July and August. Meetings resume September, October, and November. However, the Kerrville Genealogical Society Research Center & Library is open all year except for major holidays. So, plan to visit the Center for your research needs this summer during our usual hours 10am to 4pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

Cordially,

Sharon Ashley

German Genealogist Visits Kerrville Genealogical Society

by Sharon Ashby



Petra Kuehne of Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany and KGS member Jeannie Berger

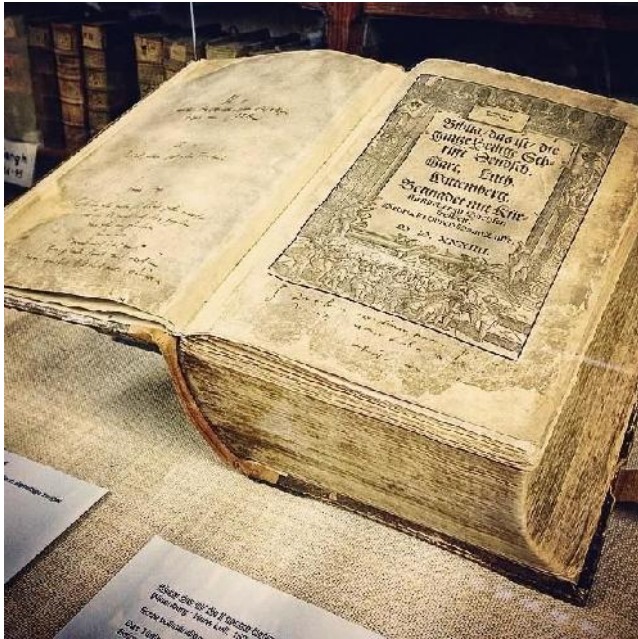
I recently had the pleasure of visiting with German genealogist, Petra Kuehne, and her friend and hostess KGS member Jeannie Berger. Petra has been doing some research in Germany on Jeannie's ancestors there. Jeannie has four lines of ancestors from Germany who settled in Gillespie County in the 1840s and 1850s. Once Petra had been introduced to the German settlement in Texas through researching Jeannie's Grona family, she decided she wanted to come see the area for herself. This is Petra's first trip to America. So far, she has been to Fredericksburg and Comfort, and in her remaining two weeks has many more excursions planned. She also wants to make more visits to the Kerrville Genealogical Society's research center. On the day I met Petra there, she had found an immigration record for an uncle who had come to the US from Germany.

Jeannie has been studying her own German family lines for some time. Her great-great grandfather, Hermann Ferdinand Grona, his wife Augusta Wulst, and their two-year-old son, Max, arrived in the Gillespie County settlement in 1857. As an adult, Max Grona moved to Kerrville and resided at 328 Jefferson Street. That house is now the office of the Kerrville Board of

Realtors. Jeannie had been able to find only one other generation back in Germany, Hermann's father, Joseph Theodor Grona. Her research had even included a trip to the LDS Library in Salt Lake City, Utah. Jeannie didn't find what she was looking for in German records there, but they did tell her to write to St. Mary's library which is located adjacent to St. Mary's church in Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany, where Hermann Grona was born. This library called Marienbibliothek is Germany's oldest and largest Protestant church library founded in 1552, and now holds 36,000 ancient volumes of reference material dating back to the 11th century including original material owned by Martin Luther and where his Bible is on display. Jeannie says, "I was put in touch with Petra, who has found several generations of the Grona family as well as the ancestors of Joseph Theodor's wife and of Augusta Wulst."

Jeannie's ancestor, Hermann Grona was baptized in the Roman Catholic All Saints Chapel in Halle. Petra provided Jeannie with photos of the All Saints Chapel and the residence where the Grona family lived which is still occupied at Kleine Klausstrasse 7 in Halle.

(German Genealogist continued on Page 3)



Martin Luther Bible displayed at St. Mary's Library

(German Genealogist continued from Page 2)

Petra Kuehne is a free-lance genealogist who works as a volunteer at the Marienbibliothek (St. Mary's Library) in Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany. She first became interested in genealogy when she was 13 years old after finding the marriage and birth certificates of her ancestors from the time her grandparents expressed their intention to marry during the Third Reich in Nazi Germany, when Aryan legacy had to be proved for three generations back.

Later, Petra studied history at the Martin-Luther-University Halle/Wittenberg and she learned how to read the old German script, which is called Kurrente. As a student assistant, she worked on a project for a professor who wanted to know if

the church records of the Marienkirche (St. Mary's Church) contained information about the lives of people in the 18th century. She transcribed almost 50,000 church book entries from the old script into modern German.

Wanting to put this knowledge to use, she decided to concentrate on genealogy and since then has been doing work for a number of clients. She is happy to assist anyone in America who is searching for ancestors in Germany.

If you would like Petra to translate a will or letters written in German or do research in Germany you can contact her at petra_kuehne@mail.de.



All Saints Chapel, Halle, Saxony-Anhalt, Germany

Upcoming KGS Programs

UGRA Auditorium, 125 Lehmann Drive, Kerrville, TX 78028

April 19, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

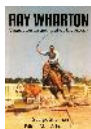
Irene Van Winkle will present: *"In Search of Ancestral Echoes, My Ukrainian Journey"*

A Texan with Ukrainian roots, Irene Van Winkle was actually born in Innsbruck, Austria and immigrated to the United States as a young child. She grew up in New York City, graduated from Marymount Manhattan College, and then married a Texan, so she notes, "I got here as fast as I could."

After living in Dallas for about 9 years, where she worked at the *Dallas Times Herald*, she and her family (husband and two sons) eventually came here in 1990. Irene has been a writer and photographer at *West Kerr Current* for 12 years. She has worked in various other media outlets in Kerr County, including the *Kerrville Mountain Sun*, *The Kerrville Daily Times*, KITE Radio, KERV/KRVL radio, and HTV television. She launched the Sesquicentennial series of family histories at the *West Kerr Current* in 2006, and to date she has written nearly 340 stories which include narratives about families, places, and events. They range from Indian captives, to German immigrants, Texas Rangers, and Bible-

toting preachers to famous events such as the Battle of the Nueces and how the historic Buffalo Soldiers fought to save Major John Bullis. They still appear every other week ... mostly.

Although she traveled across Europe just after graduating from college, she had always dreamed of visiting her ancestral homeland, Ukraine, in Eastern Europe. This dream finally came true in the summer of 2016, when she flew over to the capitol, Kyiv (how Ukrainians write it, not Kiev), and spent three extraordinary weeks finding the places where her family had made their mark including a 100-year-old church her grandfather built and the Carpathian Mountains where her uncle performed underground masses while evading the KGB during the Communist era. She will share not only the photographs from her trip during her talk, but will bring some of the embroidery, pictures of her family, and other information on Ukraine, its culture, people and long history.



May 17, 2017 at 2:00 p.m.

George Sharman, author of *Ray Wharton, Champion In and Out of the Arena*, will give a presentation about his book and research about cowboys in the Kerrville area.

We Are Always In Need Of Volunteers

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

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

**Contact Nina Dalla at
njdalla@ktc.com or phone 257-6241**

WHERE CAN ADVENTURE AND EXCITEMENT BE FOUND?

THE FAMILY HISTORY ROOM AT THE KGS CENTER AND LIBRARY

Her Name is Ann

by Annie Mae Morriss

PROLOGUE

"Auntie, you are the worst spoiled old woman that I ever saw in my life," declared Mrs. Stewart, who had come from Del Rio to visit her aunt. "You have one grandchild fanning you, and one on each side of your chair, bless my soul, here comes another one with a glass of water.

Grandma laughed. Her niece, Ida Stewart, had always been the privileged member of the family; she could say anything and never offend. Grandma might not have enjoyed the remarks coming from anyone else, but when Ida teased, she was amused.

Grandma, then seventy-nine, had lost her husband of sixty-one years. Grandpa, a Southern gentleman in the truest sense, had been her

attentive, devoted squire from the day he began courting her until his death.

Who was this grandmother who ruled her family so autocratically, yet withal so benignly? Well, she was born Ann Thompson, daughter of Edward and Emily Gilmer Thompson, of Columbus, Mississippi. They moved to Texas in 1848, when Ann was three years of age. The mother dying enroute and the father two years later, Ann was reared by an aunt. Ann was educated at Petersburg Academy, taught in private and later public schools. She married Abnear McWhorter Morriss, and bore five sons and one daughter. In 1879 the family moved to Kerr County, Texas.

Dear Whoever

by June Bissell Ryan

Dear Whoever:

At last they were at sea! John Bissell and many others had stood on deck for as long as they could see any tiny strip of land which was England. As things went from bad to worse economically and spiritually in England, he began to think of transplanting himself and his family to America. It was finally decided that he should go to America and that the rest of the family should come at the earliest opportunity.

Part of the FOREWORD to this book.

June Bissell Ryan, the author of *Dear Whoever*, was my beloved wife for almost fifty-two years. Before her death on April 3, 1986 she had spent almost six years writing this book. She finished it just a few weeks before she died.

We are now accepting dues for 2017.
Attached at the end of this newsletter is the
membership 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

The Politically Incorrect Guide of the Civil War

The Civil War Reader

Civil War Soldiers of Kendall County, TX

Life and Legend of Lawrence Co., Alabama

Be They Remembered - the Ancestry of Craig Woods Smith

American Society Medals

1880 US Census and National Index

Ames is the Name

The Ames in America from 1790-1997

Tracing Your Ancestry

Here's Harper Three (1986-2016) - "The researchers/writers/editors of *Here's Harper Three* are deeply indebted to our Harper "pioneers" who generously gave of themselves to research, write, organize, and publish *Here's Harper* and *Here's Harper Two*. They not only gave us a sense of our heritage; they left for the present writers a historical format that we have largely followed in this book." KGS library has all three of the Harper books.

Thank you to all who gifted these to KGS ~Harriet M. Chesi, 2nd VP, Collections

Some interesting books in the Texas collection at the KGS library:

Marriage Records of Early Texas - 1824-1846

Published by the Fort Worth Genealogical Society

"Of the 254 counties in present-day Texas, some 36 were created and organized in the days of the Republic of Texas, March 2, 1836, to February 19, 1846.

Before 1836, marriage bonds and contracts were issued in the several colonies. It is tragic to note that the records of some of these early counties of the Republic of Texas have been lost by fire, and, too, that some records are just missing--reason unknown."

Early Texas Birth Records - 1838-1878

Compiled by Gracy, Sumner and Gentry

"As of November 1968, the three of us have visited 73 counties, of which 25 counties have the original book, or, as in a few instances, have transcribed these records verbatim into another volume, such as: Road Minutes A or Marriage Record A. But whenever and wherever found, they are unmistakably the birth registrations ordered by the Constitution of 1869 and provided for by the Thirteenth Legislature, because of their form, which is always: child's name; parents' given name or initials and father's surname; date of birth, color, sex. The records for 1873-1878 have the bonus that when registering a child born during one of these years, the parents often would list all of their previous children, so there are many quite early dates included."

The new books are displayed on top of the low bookcase between Room 1 and Room 2; Texas books are located on shelves below.



Kerrville Research Center & Library

125 Lehmann, Suite 102
Kerrville, TX 78028
Phone: 830-315-1836
Office e-mail: kgs@hctc.net

Check the Kerrville Genealogical Society Facebook page at:

www.facebook.com/KerrvilleGenealogicalSociety/

Log in and like us.

We will list KGS events there.

Don't forget to check out our blog, too:

<http://kerrvillegenealogy.blogspot.com/>

If you change your e-mail address or postal mail address, please e-mail us at kgsociety2011@gmail.com to let us know.

2017 Kerrville Genealogical Society Board & Officers

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| President: | Sharon Ashby | Membership Chair: | Pat Weber |
| 1 st Vice President: | Rebecca Kuykendall | Outreach Chair: | Elizabeth Baker |
| 2 nd Vice President: | Harriet Chesi | Newsletter Editor: | Leslie Van Drasek |
| Secretary: | Mary Overton | Volunteer Coordinators: | Nina Dalla |
| Treasurer: | Donna Scofield | | Sharon Smith |



KERRVILLE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Dues for Calendar Year **2017**

☐ NEW MEMBER

☐ RENEWAL

DATE: _____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____

ZIPCODE: _____ PHONE: _____

E-MAIL: _____

Please check type of membership:

☐ Student..... \$10.00

☐ Individual... \$25.00

☐ Family..... \$30.00Spouse's name: _____

☐ Patron..... \$75.00

☐ Benefactor.. \$500.00

\$ _____ Donation - If you can, please consider a higher level of support.

The Society is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3)

I would be willing to: ☐ Contribute to Newsletter

☐ Serve on a Committee

Please make checks payable to:

KERRVILLE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
125 Lehmann, Suite 102
Kerrville, TX 78028

Check No. _____ Amount _____