

Kerrville Genealogical Society Messenger

Newsletter of the Kerrville Genealogical Society, Kerrville, Texas

Volume 12 Issue 1

Founded in 1970

January 2023

2023 Kerrville Genealogical Society Board

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Find us on the Internet

Our blog:

- kerrvillegenealogy.blogspot.com

Check these for future events:

- kerrvillegenealogy.wordpress.com
- www.facebook.com/KerrvilleGenealogicalSociety/

Next Issue:

April 1, 2023

Deadline for submissions:

March 20, 2023

Send to: leslie.vandrask@live.com

Address changes:

If you need to make a change to your e-mail or postal address, let us know by sending an e-mail to kgs@hctc.net or by phone, 830-315-1836.

President's Message



We end this year with a fond farewell to the year that was extremely hard! But we start this new year with hope and lots of plans for the future. Our newly elected board seems ready to get started with new ideas already put into place with some. Left over from this past year is the Gift Certificate we offered for the Christmas holidays for an annual membership to our KGS. This was the new thing added to our benefits and we hope to keep it available throughout the year for birthdays or anniversary gifts. You will be able to obtain one at the KGS library after the first of the year and when they are installed.

The end of the year was not here yet when someone started asking about a Christmas party! The room was obtained and plans began! On Wednesday, December 14th, the gang came in with all the goodies. Games were played! Carols were sung! AND...a lot of great food was consumed! Everyone enjoyed the social gathering and plans are being started for another one sometime this year. If you are interested in joining the group that is planning it, please let me know! Maybe even a SPRING FLING!

New ideas came up at the planning meeting for the Board when we met at the McLarry home before Christmas. After the great meeting with lots of discussion, we enjoyed a lunch and a lot of socializing. It looks like we have a great Board for 2023. Let's start this year out with lots of energy and try to give a little more of yourself to this great organization to make it even better than it is. It is going to be a great year!

There is a lot of sickness going around right now. I am just getting over strep throat that attacked me on Christmas Day. I understand that a bunch of our friends and neighbors are not doing well either. I send them all a wish of "Get Well Soon" and I send to all of you "A Very Happy New Year!"

I hope to see every one of you well and at our first meeting on January 18, 2023.

Nancy McLarry, President, KGS

Upcoming Meetings

Our meetings are held at 2:00 p.m.
Guadalupe Basin Natural Resource Center
Upper Guadalupe River Authority Auditorium
125 Lehmann Drive, Kerrville, TX 78028

January 18

Mark Stone: *Restoration and Research of Historic Buildings*



Mark and Linda Stone enjoy fixing up old buildings and honoring their past. They are responsible for the restoration of the San Antonio & Aransas Pass Train Depot built in 1915 (now Rails a Café at the Depot), the Beitel Lumberyard built in 1889 (now Rails Events Hall), and the Dietert Mercantile built around 1884 (now the Shops at Depot Square). Mark will discuss the process of restoring these buildings and their history.

Mark was born in Corpus Christi and graduated from Tivy High School. He made his career in Kerrville building custom homes and learning all aspects of construction. He now has a studio where he enjoys his any trades: builder, carpenter, luthier, musician, artist, and craftsman. Mark transforms the antique wood harvested from restoration projects into beautiful tables, display cabinets, and more. He puts his soul and spirit into his work.

February 15

The information about the February speaker will be sent to members via email; also check Facebook and our website.

March 15

The information about the March speaker will be sent to members via email; also check Facebook and our website.

On the Shelves at the KGS Research Center & Library

Harriet M. Chesl, Collections



- ❖ *A Real Book – “A Southern Past in Double Vision”*
- ❖ *Colonel Amasa Turner – The Gentleman from Lavaca and Other Captains at San Jacinto*
- ❖ *Early Settlers of Rowley, MA*
- ❖ *Families of Louisiana*
- ❖ *Genealogists Handbook for New England Research*
- ❖ *History of Newbury, MA 1635-1902*
- ❖ *History of Newburyport, MA 1764-1905, Vol. 1-2*
- ❖ *History of Shirley, MA*
- ❖ *History of the Lackawanna Valley (PA)*
- ❖ *Hudgins: Virginia to Texas*
- ❖ *Index of French Neutrals of MA 1755-66*
- ❖ *Irish Relatives and Friends*
- ❖ *Maine Families in 1790 – Vol. 1-8*
- ❖ *Musselman – Powell and Bowling Families of Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties, Virginia*
- ❖ *Padre Down Under*
- ❖ *Pape Family Story*
- ❖ *Pathways of the Puritans 1630-1930*

- ❖ *Probate Records of Essex County, MA 1675-1681, Vol. 1-3*
- ❖ *Records of Littleton, MA*
- ❖ *Shirley, MA Upends and Intervals; Annals of a boarder town of Middlesex, MA with some Genealogical Sketches*
- ❖ *The Adams Family*
- ❖ *The County Maps of Old England*
- ❖ *The History and Antiquities of Every Town in MA*
- ❖ *The Kothmanns of Texas*
- ❖ *The Rays Look Back*
- ❖ *Towns of New England and Old England (Ireland and Scotland)*
- ❖ *Vital Records of Dunstable, MA to the End of the Year 1849*
- ❖ *Vital Records of Pepperell, MA to 1850*
- ❖ *William Beal, Bucks County, PA*

Membership News

Janet Dugart, Membership Chair

As of December 31, 2022, we have 129 members. For 2023, we have 34 renewals and four new members.

If you have not renewed your membership, please renew soon.

**RENEWAL
REMINDER**

There is a form at the end of the newsletter for your convenience.

Welcome our new members:

Jarell and Rose Baker
George and Judith Eychner

Did Your Ancestor Enter Texas Through Port Jefferson?

By Sharon Ashby

I was recently talking "genealogy" with a childhood friend. One of her ancestors settled in Greenville, Texas, having entered the state through Port Jefferson. I had never heard of Port Jefferson which is now Jefferson in Marion County on a northeast edge of Texas. I had to investigate knowing one of my husband's ancestors from Tennessee settled very early in Coffeetown just 30 miles west of Port Jefferson.

We've all heard the tragic tale of the demise of Indianola which had been a major port into Texas second only to Galveston from the mid 1840s to 1875. However, I did not know Port Jefferson had become the largest inland port during those same years. A steamboat could make the trip to Port Jefferson from New Orleans in 4 to 5 days by way of the Red River to Shreveport, Louisiana and then through Caddo Lake and up the Big Cypress Bayou to Port Jefferson in northeast Texas. Jefferson was at a bend in the bayou large enough for the steamboats to turn around. By 1845 the steamboats were arriving with up to 130 passengers each trip. By the 1870s Port Jefferson saw as many as 250 boats a year. It became a leading commercial and distribution center into the Northeast part of the state and a primary entry point for immigrants and supplies from the East.

Ninety percent of these migrants were from the Deep South and Tennessee, Arkansas and Missouri. The flood of settlers took paths and trails to points west through Greenville (where my friend's ancestor settled) to Dallas and beyond. They went north toward Paris, Texas, and southwest toward Tyler. Trammel's trace ran north and south through Jefferson from Fulton, Arkansas, to Nacogdoches, Texas (a trail travelled by Davy Crockett). Port Jefferson's economy was thriving and it became a major place for travelers to restock supplies.

During the Civil War, Port Jefferson became a vital manufacturing and supply depot for the Confederate States. Next to the banks of Big Cypress Bayou in Jefferson is a small brick building built by the Confederacy in 1863 to store gunpowder. It is the last ordnance magazine standing of 3 that were in the state of Texas. Many men from Jefferson joined the Confederate cause. The Jefferson Oakwood Cemetery is filled with hundreds of both Confederate and Union veterans. After the war, Port Jefferson thrived as a commercial and passenger port until 1873. At that time the U.S. Corps of Engineers removed huge natural log jams on the Red River which released water and lowered the water level on the Big Cypress bayou making it unnavigable for the larger

boats. This began the decline of travelers through Jefferson, Texas, by boat simultaneously with the completion of the Texas and Pacific Railway all the way to Dallas bypassing the town of Jefferson.

Jefferson, Texas, is now a thriving town that draws tourists to historic homes, antique shops, restaurants, museums, ghost tours, and hiking trails. Jefferson has more than 135 state and nationally recognized historic structures including

the Excelsior House Hotel continuously hosting guests since 1856 and said to be haunted. The town offers historic shuttle and bike tours. Marion County has a genealogy and history society, a historical commission, and a Jefferson Historical Museum. For available records in Marion County go to: www.familysearch.org/en/wiki/Marion_County_Texas_Genealogy

Unschooling? What is that?

By Jean Nunnally

As a genealogist, I appreciate reading anything and everything I can find about my ancestors. Besides the vital records I'm able to dig up, I occasionally find a story about someone in my tree. Those stories are golden, because they add color and personality into what is otherwise a black and white history.

One of the reasons for writing my book, *Success Without School, Unschooling My Children From Birth to College* (Kalindi Press, 2022), was to document the unusual educational path I took with our two children, providing them with a written account of our story. This was a way to leave a legacy for my kids that no one else could provide. The book gives a bit of my own background and the ups and downs of raising kids outside the conventional school model. Both children choose to attend college, and both were admitted to their first-choice schools.

Unschooling? What is that? Unschooling is a unique form of homeschooling that differs greatly in philosophy from conventional homeschooling. Rather than viewing education as something applied to or imposed on children by parents or teachers, unschoolers believe that the strongest and most sustainable learning is self-directed. I allowed our children to play as much as they wanted, viewing play as the surest path to discovery and long-term learning, while preserving their spirit and our relationships.

We are born curious creatures. Curiosity serves our ability to learn and adapt to the world. It's what has enabled us to survive and thrive for millennia. We come wired to learn and if there is any doubt in your mind about that, just spend some time around

a baby or, better yet, a four-year-old. One study found that four-year-olds ask as many as 200-300 questions per day. But that doesn't continue forever. The same study also noted that questioning doesn't just taper off as kids enter school, but "falls off a cliff". Why? Could it be because questioning isn't encouraged in the classroom? In fact, it's sometimes barely tolerated.

Children allowed the freedom to explore what they are interested in and given the time to delve deeply into subjects and projects of their own choosing, are happy and fulfilled. Learning in this context is a byproduct rather than a goal, happening naturally and easily. As they grew, my kids used a variety of resources for learning: books, self-selected courses—both in person and on-line, and hands-on experiences.

As genealogists, you are personally acquainted with the power of curiosity. If the idea of self-directed learning intrigues you, I invite you to read my story and see if it might be helpful to the parents of kids or grandkids you know. The book is available through the library in Kerrville and from Amazon and major book retailers. There's even an audiobook version for those who prefer to listen rather than read. Find out more at my website, www.successwithoutschool.com, or my Facebook page www.facebook.com/SuccessWithoutSchool.

Editor's Note: Jean Nunnally is our KGS Secretary and has given her presentation locally about unschooling at the Kerrville Public Library. Because of her background, she is a great genealogist and researcher. If you want her help with your research, she also volunteers at the Research Center and Library.

The Sunny Side of Genealogy

If we aren't counting dollars, accomplishments, calories or pounds, we're counting ancestors.

Searching Vital Records

By Leslie VanDrasek

Have you ever wondered why you cannot find an ancestor's vital records? The following chart provided by Harry and Mary Alice Dell in their 2015 workshop to KGS lists the dates when states began keeping records of births, deaths, marriages, and divorces. It may be that the information you are seeking is simply not available from the state.

STATE	BIRTH/DEATH RECORDS	MARRIAGE RECORDS	DIVORCE RECORDS
Alabama	January 1908	August 1936	January 1950
Alaska	1913	1913	1950
Arizona	July 1909 ¹	See Note 5	See Note 5
Arkansas	February 1914	1917	1923
California	July 1905	July 1905	See Note 5
Colorado	1910	None 1940-1967	None 1940-1967
Connecticut	July 1897	Index July 1897	1947
Delaware	1861-1863; 1881+	1847	1935
Florida	January 1917 ¹	6 June 1927	6 June 1927
Georgia	January 1919	9 June 1962	9 June 1962
Hawaii	1853	1853	Jul 51
Idaho	1911	1947	1947
Illinois	1916	1962	1962
Indiana	B-Oct 1907; D-1900	Index 1958	See Note 5
Iowa	July 1880	July 1880	1906
Kansas	July 1911	May 1913	July 1951
Kentucky	January 1911	June 1958	June 1958
Louisiana	July 1914 ²	See Note 5	See Note 5
Maine	1892	1892	1892
Maryland	August 1898 ²	June 1851	1961
Massachusetts	1841 ²	1841	Index 1952
Michigan	1867 ²	April 1867	1897
Minnesota	January 1809	Index 1958	1970
Mississippi	1912	1926-July 1938 & 1942	Index 1926
Missouri	1910	Index July 1948	Index July 1948
Montana	late 1907	July 1943	July 1943
Nebraska	late 1904	1909	1909
Nevada	July 1911	Index January 1968	Index January 1968

STATE	BIRTH/DEATH RECORDS	MARRIAGE RECORDS	DIVORCE RECORDS
New Hampshire	1840	1840	1808
New Jersey	June 1878 ³	June 1878 ³	State Superior Court ³
New Mexico	1920 (¹ 1880)	See Note 5	See Note 5
New York	1880 ²	May 1915	January 1963
North Carolina	B-Oct 1913; D-1930	January 1962	January 1958
North Dakota	1920 (² from 1893)	See Note 5	See Note 5
Ohio	20 December 1908	See Note 5	See Note 5
Oklahoma	October 1908	See Note 5	See Note 5
Oregon	January 1903 ²	January 1906	1925
Pennsylvania	January 1906 ²	January 1941	January 1946
Rhode Island	1853	January 1853	State Clerk of Family Court
South Carolina	January 1915 ²	July 1950	July 1962
South Dakota	July 1905	July 1905	July 1905
Tennessee	January 1914 ²	July 1945	July 1945
Texas	1903	January 1966	January 1968
Utah	1905 ¹	1978	1978
Vermont	See Note 4	See Note 4	See Note 4
Virginia	1853-1896; 4 June 1912	January 1853	January 1918
Washington	July 1907	January 1968	January 1968
West Virginia	January 1917	January 1921	Index 1968
Wisconsin	October 1907 ¹	October 1907	October 1907
Wyoming	July 1909	May 1941	May 1941

Notes:

1. Some earlier records or abstracts exist.
2. Records began earlier for at least one large city within the state.
3. Vital records from May 1848 to May 1878 are in state archives.
4. State has a nearly complete index to all vital records.
5. Records are at the county level only (no state records).

As you can see, vital registration is a relatively recent requirement in most states. Fortunately, counties (and towns in New England) often recorded births, marriages, and deaths long before the states began doing so. In some cases, county records dates back to the creation of the jurisdiction, though usually with less complete coverage than that later required by state legislation. After you obtain available state certificates, you can check records in the appropriate county or town.

KERRVILLE GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Membership Application

☐ New ☐ Renewal

Membership Year: January 1 - December 31, 2023

Membership is open to all individuals 18 years and older, libraries, and societies and is pro-rated based on date of application.

Primary Member Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zipcode:** _____

Phone (home): _____ **Phone (cell):** _____

Email Address: _____

Secondary Member Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zipcode:** _____

Phone (home): _____ **Phone (cell):** _____

Email Address: _____

I consider myself: ☐ Beginner ☐ Intermediate ☐ Advanced

I would be willing to: ☐ Contribute to newsletter ☐ Serve on a committee
☐ Other _____

Type of membership: ☐ Student \$10.00 New members and former members (if more than a full year) may join at a pro-rated fee:
☐ Individual \$25.00
☐ Family \$30.00 January 1 - June 30 full-price membership
☐ Patron \$75.00 July 1 - December 31 half-price Individual and Family memberships
☐ Benefactor \$500.00
☐ Donation \$_____ If you can, please consider a higher level of support.

Kerrville Genealogical Society is a tax-exempt, non-profit organization under the Internal Revenue Code 501(c)(3). The Society relies on donations and membership support.

SEND COMPLETED FORM AND CHECK PAYABLE TO:

Kerrville Genealogical Society
125 Lehmann Drive, Suite 102
Kerrville, TX 78028

For KGS use only Date: _____ Check #: _____ Cash: _____ (☐ Send Receipt)

Kerrville Genealogical Society
125 Lehmann Drive, Suite 102
Kerrville, TX 78028

PLACE
STAMP
HERE