



West Houston Area Genealogy Society



April 2021

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Presenting Virtually!

Speaking to WHAGS at our April meeting is Cari Taplin, CG. Her topic is **"Using Lists to Find Proof."** To meet the Genealogical Proof Standard our research must be thorough and have corroborative evidence. Cari is going to share her tips to help us use lists to make sure our research efforts bear fruit.

Join us as we learn her methods and tips for examining lists and creating them to prove the identity of our ancestors.

Save the Date!

April 8, 2021

The meeting opens at 12:30 and the program will begin at 1:00 pm.



Register at

www.whags.org

to attend.

"A Hundred Suspicions Don't Make A Proof" by LH

I suspect Fyodor Dostoyevsky had a totally different topic in mind when he said, "a hundred suspicions don't make a proof," but isn't it applicable to genealogy?

It is easy to make

mistakes, to buy into someone else's mistakes, to overlook clues, and in our efforts to miss something really important in our research.

With this in mind, I began searching for

information that would help the experienced researcher and the novice. Coincidentally, FamilySearch (FS) has a "Rookie Mistakes" page. They also have a page entitled, "Evaluate the Evidence." *Cont. on pg 3*



Greetings,

The past 12 months have been trying times. Is it too early to see the extreme cold weather and pandemic in our rear view mirrors? I hope not. I trust you and your family successfully managed the cold weather and have already received your COVID vaccines or are on a list to get them. In spite of the tough events in our lives, I encourage you to spend time reflecting on the many things you can be grateful for.

The following are a few of the things I am grateful for. Our genealogy society is moving ahead because of your many contributions! You are:

- Writing articles for the newsletter.
- Contributing submissions to the website.
- Providing inputs to our surveys.
- Attending our special business meetings as we make decisions on how the society is managed.
- Actively participating in our various events.

Some of the ways we are moving ahead include:

- We voted unanimously at the March 11th Special Business Meeting to send the request to the Texas Secretary of State to approve our new name, West Houston Area Genealogy Society (WHAGS).
- As soon as we receive the approval from Austin, we will forward paperwork to the IRS. Around June 1st, we will legally be West Houston Area Genealogy Society!

The President's Note....

- The Nominating Committee is hard at work identifying candidates for our three open board positions... president, director, and secretary. Job descriptions for the positions are on the website.
- You are sending in your votes for the topics, workshops, and trips you want the Society to sponsor for the 2021-2022 program year.
- By the time you read this note, you will have received a request for input on which meeting days and times work for you as we approach changing when our regular monthly meetings are held.

My tenure as your president is winding down. The next President's Note in the May issue of the newsletter will be the last time I'll share with you in this capacity. Certainly, I will say it again next month, but I owe each one of you huge thanks for supporting our work as we transition the society into a dynamic and growing organization. I am grateful for every contribution you have made to ensure our society continues to be seen as a rising star in the genealogy world! We have had repeat visitors from as far away as New York, and we continue to add new members. All thanks to you for choosing to contribute and participate. I appreciate every one of you and your willingness to volunteer time, effort and thoughts!

Stay tuned as we work to bring you more exciting adventures in finding your roots!

Jenny Sharrer, President

Contact me at
jennysharrer@sbcglobal.net

“A Hundred Suspicions Don’t Make a Proof” *cont’d from pg 1.*

Let’s first discuss a few “rookie mistakes.” FS considers this page a “self-improvement checklist.” It’s a list that many experienced researchers need to read, too. Refresher courses often shine a light on something that has been waiting in the dark eager to be redefined.

According to FS, rookies make some common mistakes. These include: are poor note keepers, have vague research goals, jump around in their research (guilty), and avoid documenting contradictory research.

Poor note keepers need to “document as they go.” Write the info and the sources and keep research logs. Create an organization system and use it. It will yield big benefits in your research goals and results.

You should begin with the end in mind. What do you want to learn from your research? FS suggests you pick a person and something you want to prove. Of course, you may come up with zilch after an exhaustive search. Create a goal for someone else in the family. When you come back to this person — look at your detailed research log and where that left you. Try to stick with the family for awhile and avoid jumping around between families. Connections often become evident when sticking with one family.

Importantly, don’t be afraid to share your research, to have it questioned, or to have it validated. It stinks to think you solved your greatest family query only to hear, “not so fast.” Be gracious and kind when enlightening others and

be grateful when someone is reaching out to help you. You don’t want to go down the wrong rabbit hole.

FamilySearch, of course, has many thoughts on how to “evaluate the evidence.” One of the most important criteria, in my opinion, is “who created the record.” I’ll insert my opinion here. If the record is a marriage record that someone created without a real source to validate it, I don’t use it. If a church record exists, a government record, a newspaper announcement, the family Bible entry, then share that source and provide a picture.

Be aware that discrepancies happen. The family Bible may have one birth or baptismal date, and the church may be off by a day or two weeks. If the dates are relatively close, you have corroborating evidence. Document both and keep looking for evidence to reconcile the dates if possible. Seek to be consistent with your facts. But realize, “even a source recorded close to the time of the event may have errors.”

As a family historian and genealogist, our goal is to have “clear and convincing evidence.” Genealogical proof is the “accumulation of acceptable evidence.” Frankly, there is no point in doing your family history, if what you are recording are many false records.

I encourage the novice and the experienced researcher to take a look at the FS resources to learn and to refresh. The sources for this article include:

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Rookie_Mistakes#See_also

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Evaluate_the_Evidence#Establishing_Proof

"Using Information to Create a Research Timeline"

By Thomas Woltz ©

When deep in the throes of genealogy research, at times it can be difficult to organize the bits of information you have. I have found timelines to be highly effective. Here are the basics of how I use information to create bullet points and to form my timelines. I am going to use as my example, my Grand Aunt Blanche. She was my grandfather's sister, one of two. She seems to have been the rebel of her generation. She married at least four times that I am aware of.

I started with what little I knew of her. I was aware she moved around the country quite a bit. Two things occurred that have assisted me in my research. First, while I was doing inventory of my Dad's many photographic slides, I started finding many pictures of Blanche. Second, I made contact with a cousin in California through findagrave.com. Angela, my second cousin, had been contributing pictures of several of our ancestors to Findagrave. In reading through the stories in Blanche's diaries from the mid-forties, I have found various facts including dates of events and visits from relatives. With both these resources, I was able to fill in some dates on my timeline of Blanche.



I have also been scanning my many letters, kept in six, 3-ring, 3-inch binders. Any notation about Blanche was read carefully to determine whether a visit to Ohio happened or was just discussed. Another great resource was the hundreds of family letters within these binders from my Aunt Betty Jo Woltz Weiser. She had been our family historian for decades. All her letters were dated. Therefore, I could view the appropriate letter for corroborating evidence.

Despite four documented marriages, Blanche was hard to track. I still don't have the dates for all four of them. What I do have I entered chronologically on my timeline. In addition, I tried to confirm with each document the time and place. Surprisingly, she only had one child considering the period in which she lived.

Another research issue was the fact that she lived in several different states during her adult years including Ohio, Texas, New Mexico, California and finally Colorado. To date, this is all I'm aware of. The good thing was that she made trips back to Ohio often. I have information about trips from her father, siblings and my parents with enough documentation to list them with a date and location on the timeline.

For the last few months, I have been trying to place pictures, articles, death certificates and marriage records in my timeline. This timeline will be used in a book of stories that Angela is writing based on material she received from Blanche in her later years. She has been waiting to write until we could get as much data as possible

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organized by date. Organizing the information correctly on the timeline is imperative to writing Blanche's story.

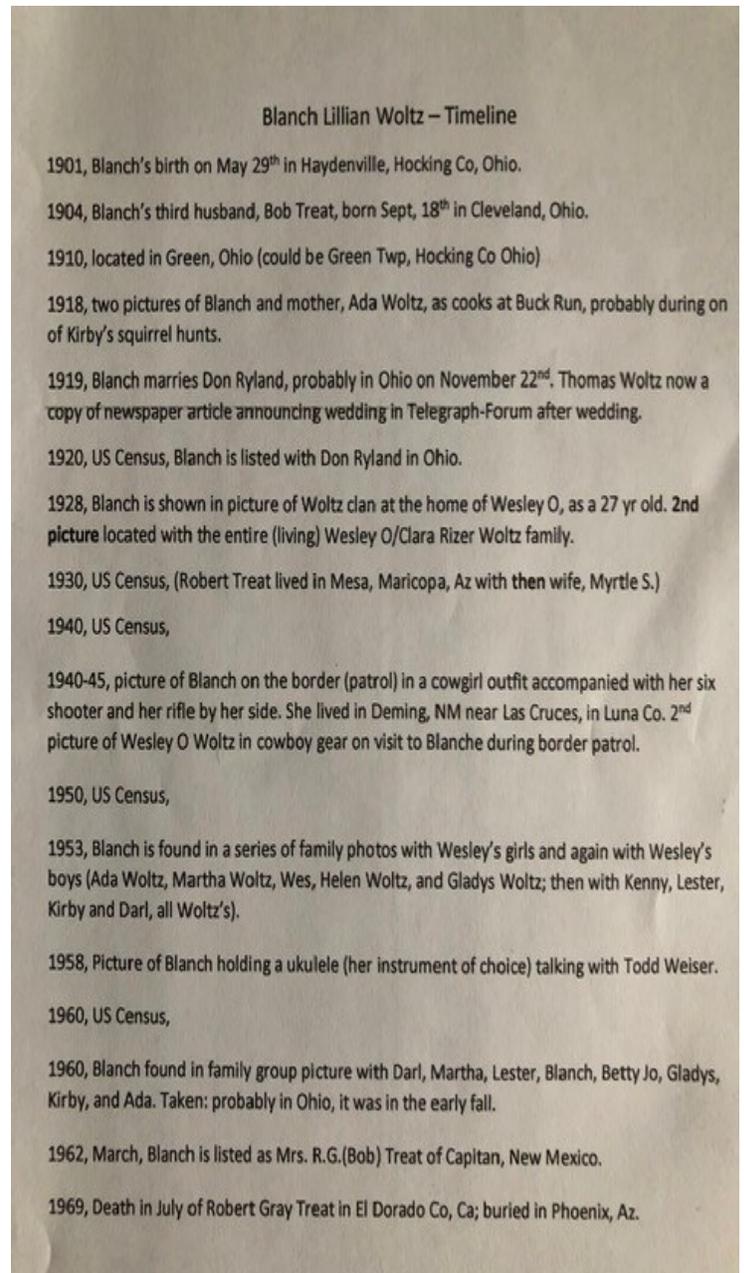
I have used FamilySearch to verify many of the dates. I am also asking all living relatives to share any information of their past encounters with Blanche. This is proving difficult as most relatives with personal knowledge of Blanche have passed away as Blanche died in 1992.

Blanche wore many hats during her years on earth, among them ukulele aficionado, family counselor, a border patrol collector, to name a few. She had a heart of gold and was impulsive. Often, not even taking into consideration any danger that might be involved in her action. She was a pioneer in many ways, living primitively in several rural areas of New Mexico. Her adventures will make for interesting reading.

Census records are additional resources I have just started using to scratch the surface of her moves around the country. I can add several bullet points from US Census records to my timeline. The biggest problem is trying to determine where she was between census records. To fill in this information, city directories, employment records, income tax, and other local records will be needed.

I've got a long way to go but my current timeline on Blanche is growing all the time. I treat each event, picture, marriage record as a bullet point on my timeline. But I need all the help modern technology can provide. DNA results can add a layer of information.

Angela, my cousin, has a father and he has two living brothers who can all test. I am still turning over stones, looking for clues, dates, additional records, etc. And, the beat goes on...



"David Abraham's House" by Alan Leeds ©

One of my favorite ancestors is my 3rd great grandfather, David Abraham (1824-1894). David, son of Abraham, was born somewhere in Poland, but he moved to London by the early 1840s, probably with his parents. My first record of David is his 1843 marriage to Esther Julian. My 2nd-great grandmother, Phoebe, was born soon afterwards (actually, very soon afterwards). This marriage connected me to the well-documented Sephardic community in London, giving me known ancestors back to the late 1600s.

After two more children, the family moved to Brooklyn in time for the 1850 federal census. Brooklyn must have been too quiet since, in the mid-1850s, they moved to San Francisco to join the gold rush economy. David graduated from Capmaker in London and Brooklyn to Hats and Caps in San Francisco, then to General Merchant, and eventually Hotel Owner, Store Owner, Mining Claims, etc. By 1864, there were eight children (see photo).

Esther died in 1865, and wanderlust set in again. By 1869, they were in Las Cruces, New Mexico and then moved to El Paso in time for the 1870 census and the local tax rolls. But with new silver and copper discoveries in New Mexico, the family headed for Silver City. Silver City must have met their excitement requirements. A history of the Silver City schools shows David as one of the contributors to the first school. It also shows a roster including not just David's children but one William Bonney, later known as Billy the Kid. I still have to look at any new biography of Billy to see what they say about the Abraham family.

David was involved in the copper discoveries leading to the town of Clifton, Arizona. He lived for a while in Clifton with family members taking care of the hotels and other businesses in both Clifton and Silver City. In 1880, he married Amelia Fritz Scholand, herself a major figure in the Lincoln County Range Wars, and giving me another link to Billy the Kid.



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They moved back to Silver City, where David had a large brick house built for the astronomical sum of \$10,000. I first learned of the house from a photo in the University of New Mexico digital collection (see photo).

While the house was eventually sold outside the family, I decided to look up its current status. The current owner was using one of the outbuildings as a Bed & Breakfast. It was obvious where to stay on my visit to Silver City.

When I made my reservations, I told the owner why I had picked her B&B. She immediately called the local newspaper. We first visited the Silver City Museum which had photographs of the Abraham properties and an indexed collection of newspapers.

The archives in the library had David's will. The cemetery was well maintained and full of family members. At the Murray Ryan Visitor Center, the director described his own experiences playing in the Abraham house as a kid. He also called the newspaper.

On Wednesday, we got a tour of the house, accompanied by the owner, a reporter, and a photographer. I don't know if the house is haunted, but it was easy to feel David's presence. The newspaper came out on Saturday with a half-page article. My son's reaction sums it up best. "Wow! The front page above the fold. It must have been a slow news day."



The David Abraham Home 1883. Photo courtesy of Alan Leeds.

"Why I Started Working on Genealogy" by Gary Tober

Perhaps it all started when I found myself being interested in history. We had a really great American History teacher in High School, Mr. McDonnell. I was fortunate enough to be in his Honors class, which excluded the usual clowns. He loved teaching us and did a great job.

The first inkling of the genealogy of my family came when my mother relayed information from my paternal grandfather in May, 1951, the year before his death. He told her that originally the Tobers were from Switzerland, and there was a "land Baron" in our line. I was 15 when I heard that.

Well, that was interesting, but I did nothing about the news. I went off to the Maritime College at Ft. Schuyler in the Bronx. We were restricted to the school until weekends when those of us who lived in the NYC area went home. Being from Buffalo, I usually socialized in Manhattan on Saturdays and on Sundays occasionally went to sights: museums, Grant's Tomb, places like that.

In my Senior year, I decided to go to the NYC library in Manhattan to dig a little. I went to the place where one could ask for books regarding your area of interest, and put in the topic "Tober." About 10 minutes later, back came a book from Switzerland about the landholders of Schwyz Canton. It was in German, of course, but no problem, since even my two years of high school German sufficed. We Tobers were prehistoric in that little village just south of William Tell's home. I almost got thrown out of the library when I took a picture of the Coat of Arms. Remember they had no computers then, but the indexing and delivery system at the library was astounding!

So, I immediately did absolutely nothing about it.

Later, though, about 40 years later, I attended my first genealogy lecture at our Slidell, LA library. Still, I did absolutely nothing about it.

Then, when our daughter started having grands for us, we moved to Katy to be closer. I picked up the schedule of events in the Bear Creek Community Center, took some Tai Chi lessons, and eventually joined the Bear Creek Genealogy Society in about 2007, which was renewing itself as most of the members were aging out. The beginners information packet which Janie Cain provided was my kickoff point, and I never looked back.

It's interesting that when my Swedish bride-to-be and I discussed our family backgrounds, she relayed that she thought that Americans had a mongrel mix of ancestors. I said, "Well my ancestors were mostly German." How wrong I was! Swiss, Dutch, Austrian, Huguenot, German, and Czech. Of course I found Swedish, Walloon (probably Huguenot), Finn, and Sami in her ancestry. It's been interesting.



The Schwyz Valley with town in foreground.
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Canton_of_Schwyz

“Getting to Know Your Genes” by Mark Winzenburg ©

You have taken the Ancestry DNA test and are looking at the results. Now what?

Most people will first look at the ethnicity estimate, what Ancestry calls the “DNA Story.” Mine is part right, part wrong. Unless it shows more than 10% of a completely unexpected population - in my case, more than 10% Asian, African, American Indian, or Jewish - I’d just ignore it. Variations in European population percentages are not worth worrying about.

Your main DNA page also has a section relating to ThruLines. This is an important set of hints but will be covered later.

The most important part of the test is the DNA Match List. Ancestry measures how much DNA you share with other test takers. The strength of the DNA match is measured in centiMorgans (cM). 3500 cM is an exact match (identical twin), about 2600 is a sister, 1740 is an aunt, etc. DNA cM values range widely around these averages. See this site for more: <https://dnainter.com/tools/sharedcmv4>.

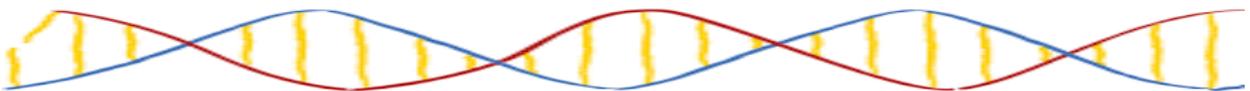
Ancestry puts your DNA Matches into groups and calls them “Cousins.”

- Shared DNA less than 20 cM is called a distant cousin
- Shared DNA above 20 cM is called a 4th cousin
- Shared DNA between 20 cM and 90 cM is called a 3rd cousin
- Shared DNA between 90 cM and 200 cM is called a 2nd cousin
- Shared DNA between 480 and 1300 cM is called a 1st cousin

While the cM values for each match are accurate, the Cousin assignments are a guess by Ancestry, so don’t put too much stock in them.

When you look at your list of DNA matches, you should see some people you know - children, parents, aunts, 1st cousins, etc. I suggest that you click on each of these known people and make them a “Starred Match.”

Look at the Shared Matches for each of these Starred Matches. The people on the Shared Match list may have a common ancestor with you and the Starred Match. Also look at the Profile of each Starred Match. You may find all kinds of useful genealogical information.



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If you don't already have one, create an Ancestry family tree, public, if you can, with all your direct ancestors as far back as your 4th great grandparents if possible. Then add each of your known Starred Matches to this tree. You can find a link to your Starred Match's Ancestry family tree, if any, on the DNA match page and on their Profile page. Then, use your genealogy skills! Adding DNA matches to your Ancestry tree will teach Ancestry how you are related. Ancestry will use this tree knowledge to recognize other DNA matches and generate Common Ancestor Hints and ThruLines. I'll cover these in a future column.

Head back to your DNA match list and add a note to each of your Starred Matches indicating what you know about them. This is my Note format, using my 2nd cousin Angela I as an example.

DALY -- 2C1R -- Timothy Daly & Mary Dunn > John C. Daly > Anna Julia Daly > Roger Carr > Angela Carr (m. Monte I)

The screenshot shows a DNA match page for 'You and Angela I'. The predicted relationship is '3rd-4th Cousin' with 154 cM of shared DNA across 8 segments. A note is visible on the right side of the page, containing the text: 'DALY -- [154/10] -- 2C1R -- Timothy Daly & Mary Dunn > John C. Daly > Anna Julia Daly > Roger Carr > Angela Carr (m. Monte I)'. The note is highlighted with a red circle.

In this example, DALY is the family name of our most recent common ancestor. Angela is a 2nd cousin once removed. The rest shows her descent from Tim and Mary Daly, my great grandparents. I find adding this detail here prevents multiple trips back to the tree to recall how we are connected. YMMV - "your mileage may vary." :)

Once the Notes are in place, add a color dot and custom name to each Starred Match as suits you. I use one Group/Color for each paternal family name, so the DALY group is used for Tim and Mary Daly, 2nd great grandparents John and Johanna Daly, and 3rd great grandparents James and Betty Daly. This is a compromise because Ancestry only allows us 24 groups.

The next step is to look again at the Shared Matches that you share with your known (Starred, Grouped) DNA matches. For each of these Shared Matches, add a Note showing the Group that they are linked to. I do NOT give these folks a Star, nor assign them Group, since their connection is not yet proven.

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The final step is to look at the unknown DNA matches, those without Stars. Start with the strongest connections first. Look at their family trees. Look at the Notes you have added when they were Shared Matches. Using traditional genealogy can you identify who they are? If so, put them on your Ancestry tree, give them a Star on the DNA Match list, and add them to the appropriate Group (or create one, if necessary). In the example below, I do not know my match Colleen D. She did not post a family tree. When I look at her Shared Matches, I see many members of the DALY group. I do not promote Colleen to that group yet, but I do add DALY to the Note field.

You and Colleen D
 Predicted relationship: 3rd-4th Cousin
 Shared DNA: 124 cM across 9 segments

Message

Add to group
 DALY -- [124/10] -- probably from

Trees Ethnicity **Shared Matches**

Filter by: Unviewed Common ancestors Messaged Notes Trees Groups Search Sort

3rd Cousin			
	Connie M	3rd-4th Cousin Shared DNA: 191 cM across 9 segments	No Trees Add/edit groups DALY -- [191/9] -- 2C1R -- John Daly & Johanna Jane Nolan > Joh...
	Angela I	3rd-4th Cousin Shared DNA: 154 cM across 8 segments	No Trees Add/edit groups DALY -- [154/10] -- 2C1R -- Timothy Daly & Mary Dunn > John C. D...
	Pat S	3rd-4th Cousin Shared DNA: 131 cM across 5 segments	No Trees Add/edit groups DALY -- [131/6] -- 3C -- John Daley & Johanna Jane Nolan > James...
	Julie E	3rd-4th Cousin Shared DNA: 108 cM across 7 segments 6 People Common ancestor	Add/edit groups DALY -- [108/9] -- 3C -- John Daly & Johanna Jane Nolan > Cathel...

I've identified over 440 of my Ancestry DNA matches, added them to my family tree, given them a Star, and added them to a family Group. All of my 4th cousins or closer have a Note that shows which Group appears in their Shared Matches. When I get a new DNA match, I can look at their Shared matches and easily see where they might fit.

The number of DNA Matches you study is up to you. I have looked at all of my "4th Cousin or Closer" matches and a few hundred "distant cousins." I will look at a "distant cousin" match only if they have a family tree and have a Shared Match in a known Group.

As always, please write to me at mlwinzenburg@gmail.com if you have any questions or comments.

Mark

"Tom Thumb Weddings" By Edie O'Brien ©

Have you ever heard of a Tom Thumb Wedding? Such "weddings" were popular in the late 18th and early 19th century as pageants and fundraisers. According to Melanie Benjamin, a contributor to HuffPost and author of "The Autobiography of Mrs. Tom Thumb," they were based on Lavinia Warren and Charles Stratton's elaborate wedding, a gift from P. T. Barnum, celebrated on February 10, 1863, at Grace Cathedral in New York City. It was newsworthy enough to "knock all the news of the Civil War off the front pages." P. T. Barnum had made Charles famous as General Tom Thumb, and the nation must have been ready for something lighthearted.

A few years ago, one of my cousins sent me the photo below of such a pageant. It took place next to our grandmother's home around 1910, in Belzoni in what was then Holmes County, Mississippi. As you can see, none of the children look the least bit happy about participating, including my father's two oldest sisters. The oldest one May Evers, born in 1898, is standing fourth from the right. She favored my grandfather with her dark hair and eyes and is looking accusingly at the photographer. His second oldest sister, Iva Evers, born in 1900, is the girl with long curls in a short dress to the right of the "groom" looking away from the camera. She favored her mother more, as I also do. My father had three older brothers, as well. My guess is that they successfully resisted being in the pageant.



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Wedding participants later in life.



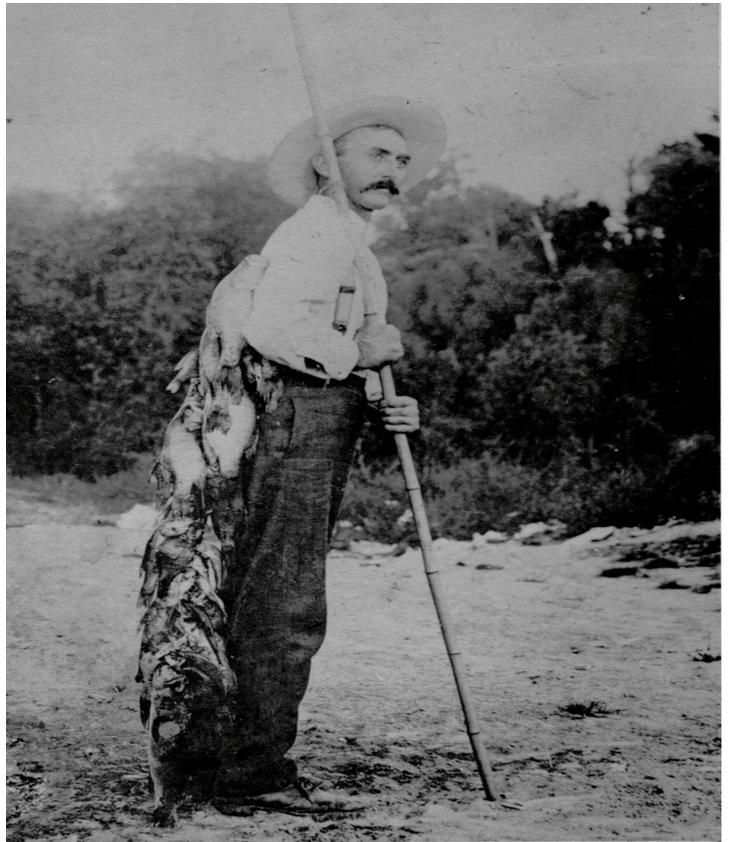
Iva Evers with a friend.



May Evers circa 1918



Ida McGiboney, 4th great grandmother



David Wesley Evers, 5th great grandfather

Spotlight Member: Ron Ware

Ron Ware joined our genealogy society back in 2019. We are so fortunate to have him. As 2020 opened our eyes to a host of changes, Ron was right there to help. His talents and contributions have been immense. We wanted to recognize this relative newcomer for getting involved and helping us grow as a society. Let Ron tell you a bit about himself.

I am writing this account, at my desk, not more than one-hundred feet from where I was born. Except for a stint in the army and a short residence in town, I have lived on what was my great grandparents' farm near Fairbanks – then a small village fifteen miles northwest of Houston - my entire life.

I graduated from Cypress Fairbanks High School in 1964. I am an old "Bobcat". I had no other choice as that was the only high school in the CFISD. Upon graduation, I attended college for two years and then did something stupid. Tired of being broke all the time, I left school to beef up my bank account. That was in 1966 and the Vietnam War was changing lives. Uncle Sam gave me a job that did not help my savings account but gave me an incredible opportunity to see the world.

Fortunately, I ended up in a transportation company. It was a time when France pulled out of NATO and wanted the U.S. and Britain out of their country – and to take all our stuff with us. Everything from ammo to refrigerators had to be relocated to Belgium, Germany, and England. So, just before boarding a flight for the far east, our orders were changed. The next thing my buddies and I knew, we were landing at Orly Field in Paris.

Stationed at NATO headquarters at Saint-Germain, I spent the next three months hauling stuff into the above-mentioned countries and on my days off, seeing the sights of Paris. With the job completed, twelve of us were sent to England and stationed at an ammo storage site in the village of Ditton Priors. It was there, in the gorgeous English Midlands, that I met my sweetheart of 43 years.

During high school and college, I had worked summers at the YMCA. Upon returning home, I took what I thought would be a temporary job there. One position led to another and I retired as the Vice President of Facilities (33 branches and 3 camps) 43 years later.

I became interested in Genealogy when, in 1976, Alex Hailey published his book, "Roots." I was fascinated by his story and the following TV series. I was hooked. I do remember telling one of my aunts about my interest. Her response was, "Oh, you don't want to do that. You will learn things you don't want to know!" Her comment piqued my interest and there was no turning back.

I love research in courthouses, archives, and libraries. Genealogy has taken me to a dozen states as well as England and Ireland. I have documented my maternal line back to my third great-grandparents where I arrived at my brick wall. I have spent years trying to breach that wall without success. But that is ok. The hunt is what keeps it interesting.

I retired in 2009 and now split my time between genealogy and wildlife photography – sometimes feeling guilty that I lead such a fun life. But like the rest of us retirees, I earned it, and plan to pursue those

Spotlight, cont'd

interests with vigor, as long as possible.

Ron not only pursues his genealogy research but has been active, for most of his membership, in helping the society pursue its goals. With covid, we saw a need to have a greater online presence and to be virtual. Ron has been most helpful with both venues. As one who is technological-ly oriented, he helped with early changes to the website and with establishing our virtual presentations. Currently, he serves on the website committee, the newsletter committee, and the bylaws committee. He also writes for the newsletter. Not only does he offer his skills, but he brings great ideas and thoughtfulness to the discussions. We are fortunate to have Ron as a member of our society.



Resources to Broaden Your Knowledge

Often, the conditions of travel for most early immigrants from Europe were awful. For the **Irish** poor being forced to leave their homeland during the potato famine, it was a deadly voyage for many. Use these links to read more about “**coffin ships**” and the immigrants who came during the mid-1800s.

<https://www.irish-genealogy-toolkit.com/coffin-ships.html>

<https://irishstudies.sunygeneseoenglish.org/2018/11/26/coffin-ships/>

<https://www.historyplace.com/worldhistory/famine/coffin.html>

https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Ireland_Emigration_and_Immigration



www.irishcentral.com

If you are searching for an Irish immigrant, who got on a vessel, but there is no record of arrival, they may have perished and was buried at sea. See the last site listed for information about potential records.

“America was
and is the
Immigrant’s
Dream.”

Don DeLillo

American Essayist

"Bylaws Revisions—Part Deux" by Neal Scott

In February, the membership gave their approval to the first set of Bylaws revisions presented by the Bylaws Committee. That set of changes focused on several matters needing immediate attention to get the ball rolling for officer nominations and elections at the May meeting.

But that wasn't all that the Bylaws Committee is working on! We've continued to meet, reviewing every article and paragraph of the document. We are getting close to making a second proposal to finalize this year's efforts. When the Committee has completed its work, the changes will be presented to the Board of Directors for comment and endorsement. The final proposal will go to the full membership for approval. We expect to present them at our April business meeting, and to vote on them in May.



<https://alda.org/about-alda/alda-bylaws/>

Here is a brief recap of areas we are working on and expect to present:

- Replace the lengthy "Purpose" with a briefer "Mission Statement"
- Rename the "Board of Directors" to simply "Board"
- Bring the fiscal year and the dues year into agreement, from June 1 to May 31
- Establish three types of Membership (all have the same benefits):
 - Individual (same as current membership, \$20/year)
 - Family (all members of a single household, \$30/year)
 - Honorary Lifetime (not new, but a re-naming of the current "Life Member")
- Establish three levels of Donor recognition:
 - Contributor: \$20+
 - Benefactor: \$50+
 - Patron: \$100+
- Review the monthly meeting day and time. Possibly give the Board the authority to set the day, as well as the time and place, rather than it being dictated in the Bylaws
- Add the "Website Committee" to the other established committees listed in the Bylaws
- Review and revise the Officers' duties
- Review and revise the Committee definitions and duties
- Other minor changes for clarity, grammar, and consistency

My thanks to the members of the Bylaws Team — Gail Colby, Jenny Sharrer, and Tom Woltz! It's been a great pleasure to work with them, and while we've had some disagreements, we've never failed to work it out amicably.

If you have thoughts or comments on any of these or have any suggestions for other areas to review, please send them to me! You can use the e-mail

Bylaws@whags.org.

“What Can You Find at the National Archives?” By LH

As one might suspect, a LOT!!

Start by going to this page:

<https://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy>

This page provides links to how to research the archives, how to get started with your research, tools you can use, and articles about researching specific

topics. For example, do you think your ancestor, a marine, served in the early 1900s? He may have served in China during the Boxer Rebellion as the U.S was becoming more imperialistic. There are articles about U.S. involvement and how to research some

1200 men who served in China.

There are finding aids, books that state the meaning of military branch codes, information on how to request records for specific things like Merchant Vessel Documentation.

You want to learn more about naturalization records?

Search the Archives. The website will tell you what they have and how to find it.

Their cache of records is enormous. It can be overwhelming. I suggest taking a record type — one at a time and learning slowly. After all, Rome wasn't built in day.

Editor's Corner: Wow! It's been a year!! By Linda Hudson

Who knew? Who knew at this time last year what we would experience in 2020? What we would adapt to? What we would miss?

We've done an amazing job of adaptation. Virtual presentations, zoom meetings, a new website, a new newsletter, new members, and more interested minds in genealogy research. You joined our "gensoc." We are happy to have you. You have

helped us grow. Hopefully, we have helped you. That is our mission, our goal!

There is so much to be thankful for. I want to thank you for your participation, your contributions, your interest in preserving your family history for your close descendants and those that follow. If we can research and preserve our history during challenging times, just think of what we can accomplish when the old normal is the

new better reality. Only MUCH better.

I think about what is to happen in the new program year for our newsletter. I hope you will think of how you can contribute to making our newsletter more educational, more entertaining, and more enlightening — our website, and our meetings too.

There is a place for each of you to offer your opinion, to engage your skills, and to help others in their research pursuits.

Think about it. Plan to be a part of it. If

you have an idea, or a concept, that will make a difference to our members or a skill to contribute, contact me or a member of the Board. "We got our ears on." "Breaker, Breaker" :) LOL "Okay — I'm dating myself."

All my best,
Linda



Houston West Family Genealogy Society

The Only Genealogy Society in West Houston, Katy, and Cy-Fair

www.whags.org

2020-2021 Sept-May Calendar of Events

Everyone researching for ancestors...*Novice to Expert*...is invited to participate virtually until further notice!

2020	2021
<p>August</p> <p>6 1-3 PM Kick-off & Virtual Ice Cream Social</p> <p>13 1-3 PM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>17 HWFGS Membership Applications sent</p> <p>September</p> <p>2-5 Federation of Genealogical Societies Conference The conference will be virtual—www.fgs.org</p> <p>10 12:30 PM Gail Colby - "DNA Results!? Now What?!"</p> <p>23 10 AM-12 Noon HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>October</p> <p>6 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>8 12:30 PM Caroline Pointer – "10 Tech Tools to Help You Collaborate with Family for Your Research"</p> <p>29 12:30 PM Elizabeth O'Neal—"Using Digital Libraries: Search Strategies for Family Historians"</p> <p>November</p> <p>1 <i>Daylight Savings Time Ends - Fall Back!</i></p> <p>10 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>12 12:30 PM "Maximizing Your Use of FamilySearch.org"</p> <p>13-15 TSGS 2020 Family History Conference - Irving, TX - www.txsgs.org (virtual)</p> <p>28 10 AM Members Helping Members</p> <p>December</p> <p>10 12:30 PM Holiday Party & Members' "Show & Tell"</p> <p>12 10 AM Members Helping Members</p>	<p>January</p> <p>7 4 PM Members Helping Members</p> <p>12 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>14 12:30 PM Jeanie Smith - "Organizing and Preserving Your Stuff"</p> <p>16 10:00 AM DNA Special Interest Group (SIG)</p> <p>23 9:00 AM Members Helping Members</p> <p>February</p> <p>9 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>11 12:30 Susan Kaufman - "Researching Our Ancestors in Libraries, Archives & Repositories"</p> <p>25-27 RootsTech Connect FREE info@rootstech.org (virtual)</p> <p>March</p> <p>9 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>11 12:30 PM "Maximizing Your Use of Ancestry.com"</p> <p>14 <i>Daylight Savings - Spring Forward!</i></p> <p>April</p> <p>6 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>8 12:30 PM Cari Taplin – "Using Lists to Find Proof"</p> <p>17 10 AM DNA SIG</p> <p>24 10 AM Members Helping Members</p> <p>May</p> <p>11 10 AM HWFGS Board Meeting</p> <p>13 12:30 PM "An Approach to Recording Your Finds: Writing as You Go" 2021-2022 Board Elections</p> <p>15 10 AM DNA SIG</p> <p>19-20 National Genealogical Society 2021 Virtual Family History Conference https://www.ngsgenealogy.org</p> <p>June, July & August - We are off for the summer</p>

Good to Know! Beginner Tips!

Did your ancestors come from **Scotland**? When researching the **British Isles regions**, it is very important to understand the land political divisions of the region. Most counties were formed by the 1300s. The youngest Scottish county borders were established in 1633. Counties may also be called shires. These entities maintain not only religious records, but government based records such as: taxation, road building, education, and poor relief. They will also have records of BMD. Be aware that over time civil parishes and parochial parishes developed.

Names of these entities may have changed. A gazetteer will be helpful when researching the area as it will show border changes over time. Research administrative divisions for your time period.

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MORE TO KNOW

For other events

Pretty Cool website

I found this googling upcoming genealogy conferences. A link is on our website.

<https://conferencekeeper.org>

They have a listing and links to conferences and workshops from all over the world. Did you know The Mid-Atlantic Germans are having a full day event Apr 10th for \$45 for non-members? Or, on Apr 17th the Scottish Association of Family History Societies is hosting a conference for free? History, Genealogy, contacts — get your Genealogy in high gear. Check out this great resource.

National Genealogical Society Conference

<https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org/ngs-2021-on-demand/>

This past year's conference had a lot of great lectures. There is still time to register. You can purchase to watch programs "on-demand."

Dates: **View beginning June 15, 2021**

See their website for registration information.