



TEXAS RESEARCH RAMBLERS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Bryan-College Station, Texas

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www.texasresearchramblers.org

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LAST MEETING

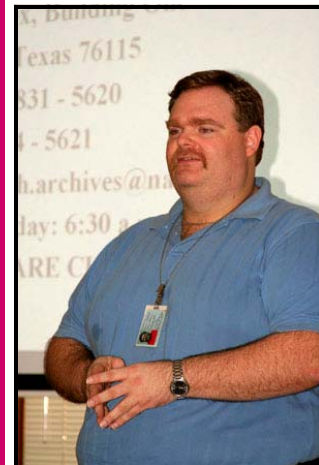
On 28 March 2007, President Dan Castillo called the meeting to order. Sue Foy reported that as of 3/28/07 the total Rambler funds are \$6,677.84. Then, we voted on an amendment to section 3 of the by-laws, which would effectively have a continuum of veteran officers. The motion to accept the amendment passed. Our business meeting ended and the program began.

Jim Boone introduced our speaker, Aaron Holt from the National Archives Southwest Division located in Fort Worth, Texas. Mr. Holt explained that the archives holds records of historical importance of 150 federal agencies. It does not hold birth, death, or marriage records as these are located in county records. He showed us examples of archive holdings, such as Passenger Lists for New Orleans, Galveston, Houston, New York, Philadelphia, and Baltimore. Possibly there are lists from the West Coast and the East Coast, but your best bet is the check the holdings ahead

And how to do that? Go to www.archives.gov. If possible, know your ancestor's port of arrival and approximate time frame of his arrival. Crew Lists are possible too. Prior to being labeled passengers up to the mid-1800's were listed as part of the cargo of your visit.

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Another example he showed us was a Declaration of Intent. Wouldn't that be a dream come true if we could find one of those for our ancestor?

He also showed us some items at the Archives that have been of popular interest, such as when Elvis Presley and Richard Nixon met. Also, there was a suit filed by Madalyn Murray O'Hair on the government because one of the astronauts quoted from Genesis on the 1969 NASA Space Flight.

If you have an inquiry, send your request along with a self-addressed stamped envelope along with \$10 to:

National Archives Southwest Region
501 W. Felix, Bdg. 1
Fort Worth, TX 76115

Or send your questions about the procedure for a particular topic to:

inquire@nara.gov

Or phone them 1-817-831-5620

Or e-mail ftworth.archives@nara.gov

Or visit them Monday-Friday 6:30 am-4 pm

Mr. Holt provided several types of brochures describing the many NARA services as well as requisition forms for us to send to the archives.



Thank you, Mr. Holt for a thorough, informative, and entertaining presentation. I bet the "wheels" were spinning for everybody in the room thinking about the next step to find that Illusive One.

NEXT MEETING AND DATE

Dan Louis reported that on April 25th Lanita Clay, resident genealogist of the Texas Heritage Museum-Confederate Research Center, will be our presenter. Also known as the Harold B. Simpson History Center, located on the campus of Hill College, the Research Center was founded in 1963.

For its efforts in preserving and promoting Civil War history, Hill College was awarded the United States Civil War Centennial Commissions Bronze Medal Distinction, the only educational institution in the Southwest to win the award.

Ms. Clay will talk to us about what we can or cannot find at the Research Center.

FUTURE SEMINARS AND TRIPS

Every **3rd Wednesday** of the month: Computer Genealogy Users Group will meet at the Exit Teen Center, 1600 Rock Prairie Rd., at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to eat at a local restaurant after the meeting.

Mark your calendar: April 18, 2007.

Every **last Wednesday** of the month: Research Ramblers will meet at the Annex Fellowship Hall of the A&M United Methodist Church, 417 University Dr. in College Station at 9:30 a.m. Everyone is invited to eat at a local restaurant after the meeting. **Mark your calendar: April 25, 2007.**

Every **4th Monday, Roots Magic Users** will meet at the Bryan Public Library on the second floor from 9:30-11:00 a.m. **Mark your calendar: April 23, 2007.**

NOTE: This will be the last meeting until September.

For workshops around the state go to www.rootsweb.com/~txgenweb/ which will give you the full information on seminars/conferences, such as,

1. On **April 14, 2007**, The Genealogical Society of Kendal County in Boerne, TX, is presenting a workshop. More details at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~txgskc/>.
2. On **April 27-28, 2007**, the Texas Czech Genealogical Society in Caldwell, TX, is presenting a seminar. More details at www.txczgs.org.
3. On **May 5, 2007**, the Austin Genealogical Society in Austin, TX, is presenting a seminar. More details at www.AustinTxGenSoc.org.

Contact Mary Elizabeth Dresser if you wish to join the Ramblers on the following trips:

August 12-19, 2007: Ft Wayne, Indiana, Allen County Library

October 14-21, 2007: Salt Lake City, Utah, Family History Library

* **FYI: Orientation for Genealogists:** *
* Two sessions for learning to do research on the computer were held at the computer lab at Carnegie History Center. Attendees found something of interest of *
* their families in census records and other sources. *
* *
* There will be another session on Tuesday, April 17, but the class has already *
* filled up since space at the Carnegie is limited. Attendees will learn to use the *
* microfilm reader/printer and to use printed census indexes and reference books. *
* *



SUCCESS STORY



The indexing of the obituary abstracts from *The Eagle* is completed. The Ramblers who have helped with this project are Sue Foy, Ellen Horner, Jane Horn, Georgianne Bigam, Pat Gunter, Bobbie Middleton, Julie Wasson, Beth Van Cleave, Jane Thompson, and Sharron Currie. This team earned their gold stars. Eventually, Sue will have this information uploaded to our website.



Note: If you are interested in working on a research project, contact Ellen Horner or Sue Foy.



HISTORICAL MOMENT

How good is your memory? Was your first knowledge/memory of telephones a



hand-held, a button, a rotary dial, a candlestick, or a battery-operated one?
www.en.wikipedia.org www.antiquesupply.com

What an evolution of technology! Thanks to Alexander Graham Bell, who invented the telephone on March 10, 1876, we can marvel at what our ancestors knew about even if they did not have a phone.



<http://www.ieee-virtual-museum.org>

This same phone was on display at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition in 1876. One of the visitors, Col. A.H. Belo from Texas became interested. Publisher of the Galveston News and later founder of the Dallas Morning News, Belo was determined to have one of the new instruments as soon as possible. On March 18, 1878, he had a line installed between his newspaper office and his Galveston home. Some say this was the first one installed in Texas and one of the first 1,000 telephones installed nationwide.

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online.html>

When telephone companies began hiring operators, they chose teenage boys for the job, but the companies soon regretted their decision. Although the boys did well in the telegraph offices. They didn't have much patience, wrestled instead of worked and pulled pranks on callers.



www.pbskids.org

In 1878 the Boston Despatch company began hiring women operators instead. Women had pleasant voices that customers—mostly men—would like. Also, women could be paid less and supervised more strictly than men.



To be an operator a woman had to be unmarried between the ages of 17 and 26. Not only did she have to look prim and proper, but she had to have arms long enough to reach the top of the tall telephone switchboard.

The typical operator earned \$7 a week—a small salary even in 1900. She worked 10 or 11 hours a day, 6 days a week. An operator who got married was forced to leave her job.

www.pbskids.org She watched over a switchboard containing over 200 phone lines. Her main job was to plug callers' phone lines into the phone lines of the people they wanted to speak to. But she often acted as the town's information source. Operators were also expected to inform customers of election results, streetcars breakdowns, storms, train arrivals, and much more.

Now, I bet many of you can remember being on a party line. Party lines for non-business subscribers were the rule before WWII, not the exception. In cities and country most people shared a line with 2 to 10 to 20 people. You could talk only 5 minutes or so before someone wanted to make a call. And anyone on the party line could pick up the receiver and listen in on your conversation.

www.privateline.com

Sue Foy remembers a story from her mother's memoirs:

Our first telephone was a battery-operated, crank type which hung on the wall of our "front room." There were about eighteen phones on our party line and our ring was two longs and one short. The emergency line ring (calling any and all on the party line) was three long rings, which was used to call regarding any emergency or to notify the neighbors or a serious illness, birth, death, etc. This ring was also used to announce to all on the line that "a party is to be held at the home of _____ at _____ and you all come" - and they did! Or on Sunday, "There is to be a singing at _____, you all come" - and they did! We gathered around the beautiful foot-operated organ and sang hymns for hours.

Sue writes that her favorite story is “ from our Kerrville days when I was about 8 years old and my little brother was about 3. We had an old candlestick phone and when you picked up the receiver, an operator would ask "number, please." My mother had stepped across the street to visit a neighbor and she came back to the house and heard the phone ringing. She stepped in the door just in time to see my little brother answering the phone and telling the operator, "but I'm just her little boy and I don't know any numbers yet"!

You may have some memories of telephones too. Now is a good time to write them down for your memoirs.

GENQUIP

Only in Texas can bluebonnets grow through asphalt. This photo was taken by Linda Fike near Navasota, Texas, on March 30, 2007.



The Research Rambler Newsletter is published by the Texas Research Rambler Genealogical Society, P.O. Box 11195, College Station, Texas 77842-1195. Comments to Helen Kunz, hkkunz at verizon.net.