



News & Views

Newsletter

www.tgstopeka.org

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What's Happening at TGS?

It has been another busy month! The days fly by, and I can't believe that Thanksgiving is just around the corner. Here are a few of the things we've been working on at TGS:

Library Closure – Our library has permanently closed as of the end of October. We're continuing to work out the details of plans for dissolution of the TGS Library collection. We are slowly making progress. Staff at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library are combing through our Library Catalog, trying to prioritize and identify items that they would like to receive. Staff at Midwest Genealogy Center are standing by, waiting for lists of what is still available after the Topeka Library makes their selections. We are working on an agreement with Family Search for digitization of the Columbian Title Abstract books. We hope to soon be able to provide enough detail about our plan that we can submit it to our members for a vote of approval.

Building repairs continue to be a major concern. For now, we have agreed to monitor the roof over the south section of the building for new leaks, and hope to be able to get by with sealing small leaks for while longer. More recently, the furnace that serves the south half of the building has quit working – we are trying to get a service person scheduled to look at it and determine the extent of the problems.

Outreach and Promotion – Since we formally announced our new Speakers' Bureau a few months ago, we have had several requests for presentations to community groups. We also participated as an Exhibitor at the recent IdentityQuest event, and talked to many people while we were there.

Programs and Education - Cindy Cruz and others on the Education Committee have been working on lining up our educational offerings for 2025. Cindy has a great start on the Monthly Programs. There will be a few changes coming with the Special Interest Groups. We're considering a few new classes for next year.

There's more, but this should be enough to give you an idea of what we have been doing. We're all volunteers, and none of us work full-time for TGS, so it sometimes seems as though things move very slowly. We're peddling as fast as we can, and we appreciate your patience.

- *Barb LaClair, President*

Welcome, New Members!



We want to extend a warm welcome to new members who have recently joined our organization. We hope that you will take full advantage of everything that we have to offer, and don't hesitate to let us know if we can assist you in your family history quest!

- October – Tama Guffey-Morgan, Topeka
- November – Michele Luska, Topeka
- November – Gerald Hall, Denver, CO
- November – Bobbie Mason, Topeka

Welcome, and we look forward to getting to know you better!

New on Our Website : <https://tgstopeka.org>

We update and add content to our website on an ongoing basis. So that you don't miss anything, here's a short list highlighting changes and new additions in the past month or so.

- New program recordings added - October Monthly Program, ***“Ask a Genealogist Panel Discussion”***
- Resources – none this month
- New databases – none this month – several are in the works!



We hope that you are taking full advantage of all of the resources and information available on our website. Access to some content is restricted to members. To gain full access, we invite you to visit the membership page on our website, and become a member today!

Want to see more website content being added in a more timely fashion? Volunteer to help us in managing recorded content or working on getting datasets cleaned and ready for upload to the website!

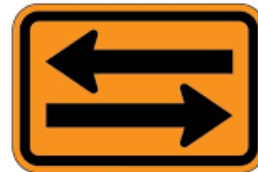
TGS Out and About



About twenty TGS members participated in IdentityQuest 2024 on November 16th. IdentityQuest is a free genealogy event, hosted by the Topeka and Shawnee County Public Library. TGS helped to support the event by hosting an outreach table in the Exhibit Area and presenting three of the nine breakout sessions that were offered throughout the day. We enjoyed talking with event participants at our Exhibit table, and participating in the event.

If you missed it, the presentations have been recorded and are available for viewing. View the recorded sessions and download the handouts at: <https://tscpl.org/genealogy/identity-quest/past-idquest-presentations>

TGS Membership – A Two-Way Street



The Topeka Genealogical Society is a membership-based, all volunteer, nonprofit organization. *What does that mean?*

It means that we operate a bit differently than an organization that you might join or subscribe to just to gain access to something that they offer. Although we do offer membership benefits like access to some restricted resources and member discounts, we also rely upon our members to become involved in our work as volunteers. Our business model depends upon engaged members who participate not only as consumers but also as volunteer workers. The more that our members step up to help with the work, the more that we will be able to accomplish and to offer.

So yes, we are hoping that our members will sign on for more than just to gain access to something that we offer – we hope they will also become engaged and involved in our work. We have lots of varied volunteer opportunities, to fit almost any schedule and skill set.

We're asking you to help, but we are also offering you opportunities to learn, expand your current skills, get to know other members and to lead our organization into the future. Many volunteers would tell you that they feel as though they have gotten more out of their volunteer experiences than what they have given. We hope that you will consider how you might get involved in our organization and contribute your skills and talents to help us build a strong and vibrant organization.

Membership Renewals



It is that time of year again. For our members who had joined prior to our website transition this past summer, your memberships were on a calendar-year basis and would expire on December 31st unless renewed. With implementation of the new website in June, we transitioned to a rolling-12 months membership cycle. If you have joined as a new member since June of this year, your membership will expire 12 months from the date that you joined us. A few of our members have received renewal notices with expirations dates prior to the end of this year – that is something we did not anticipate, but appears to be due to an entry in the “join date” on your member profile, or a change that has been made to your membership type sometime during the year. We apologize for any confusion that this is causing.

At any rate, renewing your membership is simple. To renew online, just go to our website (<https://tgstopeka.org>) and sign in with your email and password. You should automatically see a message there about renewal and a link to renew if your membership is nearing its expiration date. You can view your expiration date in your membership profile.

If you prefer to mail in your renewal with a check, there is a link to download and print the a membership form at the bottom of the membership page on the website (<https://tgstopeka.org/membership/>), or you can download a membership form by clicking the link below.

[Download Membership Form](#)

Talmage Edward Dawson, WWI Dough Boy from Topeka, Kansas

Brian Kaess from Las Villas, Dgo., Mexico has generously shared with us an article that he wrote about his ancestor Talmage Edward Dawson and his experience as he served during World War I. To read the full article, [click here](https://tgstopeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Talmage-Dawson-story-with-images-edited.pdf). (<https://tgstopeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/Talmage-Dawson-story-with-images-edited.pdf>)



GIVING
TUESDAY

**Tuesday, December 3, 2024 –
Join the Generosity Movement**

“Giving Tuesday” is a global day of giving back, celebrated this year on December 3rd. It follows Thanksgiving, Black Friday, and Cyber Monday as a time to consider giving back to your community and charitable causes.

The Topeka Genealogical Society, our board, leadership team and volunteers work hard all year to carry out our mission statement: *To promote, encourage and support interests in genealogy and family history.* We operate on a very modest budget, with income coming primarily from membership dues, grants and donations.

If you believe that our mission is worthy of your support, there are many ways that our members and readers can give back to TGS by a gift donation (tax deductible as a 501 c3 charitable organization):

- **Make a direct online donation** to TGS at <https://tgstopeka.org/donate/#!/form/Donate> .
- **Mail a check** in any amount to us at PO Box 4048, Topeka, Kansas 66604-0048 with “Donation” in the memo field.
- If you have a **Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)** from your retirement account that you do not need to cover your living expenses, consider asking your fund manager to direct all or a portion of it to the Topeka Genealogical Society as a Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD). Donations made directly to us in this manner may help to reduce your income tax by lowering your adjusted gross income.
- **Designate TGS a beneficiary** of your estate, life insurance proceeds, or retirement account assets as a legacy gift, or as a donation recipient in lieu of flowers at a funeral.

We Thank You for your support, consideration, and care.

Help Wanted!

We are an all-volunteer organization. That means that nothing gets done unless someone volunteers to do the work. We always have many different ways in which volunteers can help, but here are a few areas where we especially need help at the present time:



Newsletter Editor – Gather, compile or write brief articles about TGS activities or genealogy news, and organize and fit them into the established monthly newsletter templates. We are currently using MailChimp to create and distribute our monthly newsletter. This work can be done remotely.

Research Assistant - Review requests for research assistance submitted by our clients, carry out the requested research, compose a reply including summary of findings, and use established TGS systems to log and maintain records of research conducted on behalf of TGS. Some requests involve simple record retrieval (often from the Kansas Historical Society Archives in Topeka); others may be more complex. Should be an experienced genealogist, familiar with Shawnee County resources, and local to the Topeka area.

If you think that you might be interested in volunteering in any of these roles, please contact Barb LaClair at tgstopeka.president@gmail.com.

Upcoming TGS Events and Programs

There is always something happening at TGS. Check the events calendar on our website (<https://tgstopeka.org/events/#!event-list>) frequently to get more details on what's coming up and how you can participate!



SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGs):

These informal groups meet virtually (on Zoom) on a monthly basis for information sharing and learning around a topic or area of shared interest. Participation is free, and open to the public. Refer to the events listing on our website for information about how to register and participate.

- **Foundations of Family History SIG** (2nd Tuesday evening, 7pm, via Zoom) – **December 10, 7pm** via Zoom
- **Computer & Genealogy Software SIG** – **no meeting in December, group is being discontinued for 2025**
- **Brick Wall Problem-Solving SIG** – (3rd Tuesday morning, 9:30am) – **December 17th, 9:30am**
- **DNA and Genetic Genealogy SIG** – (3rd Friday morning, 10 am) **no meeting in December.**

MONTHLY DINNER GATHERING/ FUNDRAISER

(We gather informally at a designated local restaurant prior to the monthly program for an opportunity to socialize. A percentage of total sales at the restaurant will be donated to TGS.)

- Arrangements for January are pending. To be announced at a later date.

MONTHLY PROGRAMS – 4th Thursday of the month, 7pm at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library. Attend in person, or watch online via Zoom. Participation is free, and open to the public.

REMINDER – NO MONTHLY PROGRAMS IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER

- **January 23, 2025** – “*Military Records Decoded*”, presented by Sergeant Major Jeremy Byers
- **February 27, 2025** – “*Shawnee County Poor Farm*,” presented by Devin Cooper
- **March 27, 2025** – “*Roots in East Friesland, Lower Saxony, Germany*,” presented by Kevin L. Groenhagen

MORNING JOE & JAW – (1st Monday morning each month, 9:30am at Perkins Restaurant, Topeka)
Monday, December 2, 2024, 9:30-11am.



This is a new opportunity for some socializing and networking with other members. Meet us at Perkins Restaurant, 1720 SW Wanamaker, for some lively conversation while you enjoy a morning coffee, pastry, or breakfast. No need to register – just drop by to say hello!

2025 ANNUAL TGS CONFERENCE – April 26, 2025 – SAVE THE DATE!

We're returning to a simpler format in 2025. Conference will be one day, with 4 presentations by our featured speaker **Michael John Neill**. Watch for more details as they become available.



UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS

Midwest Genealogy Center Seminar – March 29, 2025.

“From Ship to Shore: Uncovering Immigrant Origins”, led by renowned genealogist **Rich Venezia**.



Event Highlights:

- **Date:** March 29, 2025
- **Location:** In-Person at the Midwest Genealogy Center, Independence, MO
- **Key Topics:** Discovering immigrant origins, navigating ship manifests, and understanding alien registration records.
- **Interactive Session:** Attendees will also have the opportunity to participate in an **Immigration Records Roadshow**, where they can present their personal research challenges for expert advice.