



News & Views *Newsletter*

www.tgstopeka.org

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What's Happening at TGS?

It has certainly been an interesting month! Between Holiday activities, record-setting snows and a nasty respiratory virus that has been running rampant, we have slowed down a bit over the past few weeks. But, despite all of those things working against us, our work does continue and we are making steady progress. Here are a few highlights:

Library Closure & Dissolution: We have been working with our contacts at FamilySearch to figure out the logistical details for digitization of the Columbian Title Abstract books. The books will be packed and shipped to a 3rd Party vendor in Texas for digitization. After digitization is complete, the physical books will be shipped to a warehouse location at Internet Archive. Eventually, searchable digital images of the books will be available both on FamilySearch and Internet Archive! Internet Archive will also be accepting the original Shawnee County Naturalization and Probate books from our Library collection, and probably other items as we work our way through the decision processes. Although we are a long way from knowing the eventual destination for each item in our Library collection, we do have an overall plan for how decisions will be made, and will be sending that out to our members within the next few days to ask for their approval for us to move forward and begin transferring items to the recipient organizations. Members, watch your email, and please read the proposed plan carefully and then submit your vote and feedback!

2025 Educational Programs and Events: As you can see from the list of upcoming events included in this newsletter, we have lots going on and a lot of great programs coming up. Thanks to Cindy Cruz for leading our Education Team, and to others who help to lead or organize various aspects of our programs and activities!

If you participate in the Brick Wall or DNA Special Interest Groups, or would like to, we are making changes to process by which you register to obtain the Zoom links. We think that this

process will be simpler for everyone. If you would like to participate in a meeting of either of these groups, find the event listing in the events calendar on our website, and click on the “Register Now” button at the bottom of the event description. You should automatically receive a confirmation email which will contain the Zoom link information.

Membership Renewal: Renewals have been rolling in, and we extend our Thanks to all who have renewed. We have received numerous inquiries from members who mailed in their payment by check and did not see that the check had cleared the bank, or their membership account had not been updated soon thereafter. We apologize for the delays – our internal system for receiving and processing mail is painfully slow, and recent snows have contributed to further delays. We are working on it! In the meantime, if you have questions about the status of your renewal, feel free to contact me (email to tgstopeka.president@gmail.com) or our membership chair Paula Smith (membership@tgstopeka.org) – we will investigate and let you know what we find.

Records Preservation Projects: We have a number of projects in various stages, and will be enlisting volunteers to help with the work. Some may involve work that can be done remotely, while others will require that the work be done on site. Right now, we are enlisting help with our Pedigree Charts Project – see more detail elsewhere in this newsletter.

As I think you can see from the summaries provided here, we are not resting on our laurels. Big changes are in the works, and we are working hard to juggle priorities and activities to keep everything moving forward.

To our members, we thank you for your support and involvement through your membership. To our non-member readers out there, we invite you to become members! Joining is easy – just see the Membership section of our website (tgstopeka.org) for more detail.

- *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!

- December – Holly Zane, Topeka, KS
- December – Judy Bates, Peoria, AZ
- December – Lois Herr, Carbondale, KS

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 – Handout for January Foundations of Family History SIG program, **“Exploring SteveMorse.org” (no recording of the program for this month)**
- Resources – none this month
- New databases – none this month – several are in the works!
- Events calendar – addition of regional events, adding details to upcoming TGS events, changes to registration process for Brick Wall & DNA SIG virtual meetings



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

Our new **Speakers Bureau** offerings are getting us noticed! Since we first announced our new Speakers Bureau, we have had several requests and have presented to a number of community groups, including the Ward-Meade Anniversary Celebration, Lexington Park Assisted Living, two chapters of the Topeka Garden Clubs, and an upcoming session with the Newton Public Library.



We have three prepared presentations that we are offering, and customized programs may be available by request:

- **Get to Know Your Ancestors** – A general presentation encouraging audience members to take interest in learning about their ancestors.
- **Preserve Your Family History: 10 Easy Steps You Can Start Today** – Simple steps that anyone can take to preserve their family history and memories, without having to become a genealogy researcher.
- **Researching Your Family History: How to Get Started** – Brief session outlining the research process and records that are commonly used as first steps in researching.

If you know of a group or organization that would be interested in one of our programs, have them fill out the request form on our website, at <https://tgstopeka.org/speakers-bureau/#!form/Speaker>.

Get Help with Your Lineage Society Applications!

WHEN: January 25, 2025, 9am - 6pm

WHERE: Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library (upstairs - Menninger Room in AM, Hughes Room in PM)

COST: FREE!

WHAT TO BRING: Documentation for your first 3 generations - birth certificates, marriage records, death certificates



A group of local genealogists will be available to answer your questions, help you in completing lineage society applications, or to accept your completed applications and documentation. Representatives will be available to assist with applications to the following groups: Mayflower Society, National Society of Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Daughters of the Civil War, Sons of the Civil War, Daughters of the American Colonies, Daughters of 1812.

Help Wanted! Help Us Index & Digitize Pedigree Charts



For many years, before we had the option of sharing our family trees online, TGS members submitted paper copies of their pedigree charts plus index cards with the ancestor's names from the charts, as a way to share family tree information with other members and library patrons. That information has been available in print format in our library. Now, we are working to get it all digitized so that we can share it more widely online.

There are two aspects to this process: typing information from the index cards into a spreadsheet, and digitizing the actual pedigree chart pages. We need help with both. This work will need to be done onsite in the TGS Library building, and instruction will be provided.

If you think that you would like to help with this project, please let Dave Haslett know by emailing him at tgstopeka.tech@gmail.com.

Roots Tech 2025 is Coming Soon! March 6-8, 2025



RootsTech2025 is almost here! Attend what is probably the world's largest genealogy conference, either virtually (free!) or in person.

The schedule of events is now available for your review, and to create your own customized schedule of the sessions that you want to hear. To see more details or to register:

<https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/schedule?cid=EM-00044530&lid=j2qq1eta6y18&day=2025-03-06>

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 (mostly 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 listings on our website for information about how to register and participate in each group.

- **Foundations of Family History SIG** (2nd Tuesday evening, 7pm, via Zoom) – **January 14, 2025, 7pm (Central Time)**
- **Computer & Genealogy Software SIG** – **NO MEETINGS. This group is being discontinued for 2025**
- **Brick Wall Problem-Solving SIG** – (3rd Tuesday morning, 9:30am. Odd months are virtual, via Zoom. Even months in person at a local research facility) – **January 27, 2025, 9:30am (Central Time)**
- **DNA and Genetic Genealogy SIG** – (3rd Friday morning, 10 am, via Zoom) - **January 17, 2025, 10:00am (Central Time)**

MONTHLY DINNER GATHERING/ FUNDRAISER

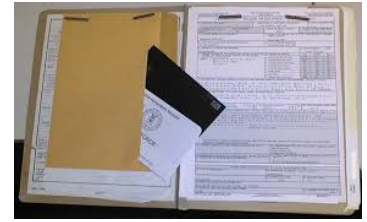
(We gather informally at a designated local restaurant prior to the monthly program for an opportunity to socialize. A percentage of total sales at the restaurant will be donated to TGS.)

- **January 23, 2025 – Panera, 1421 SW Wanamaker.** Join us in person at 5:30pm. Any purchases made between 8am and 8pm will count toward our total if you use the fundraising code or flyer to identify your purchase as part of our group. TGS receives 20% of sales from our group.
- **February 27, 2025 – Red Robin, 6230 SW 6th.** Join us in person at 5:00pm, or order for dine in or carry out any time between 11:00am and 10:00pm. Mention our fundraiser or show the flyer when you place your order, and TGS will receive 20% of sales from our group.



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.

- **January 23, 2025** – **“Military Records Decoded”**, presented by Sergeant Major Jeremy Byers. Have you ever looked at military records, and struggled to understand what all of the abbreviations and terms meant? Help is on the way! Sergeant Major Jeremy Byers from the Kansas National Guard will guide audience members through common notations on military records, and explain their meaning.
- **February 27, 2025** – **“Shawnee County Poor Farm,”** presented by Devin Cooper. Devin Cooper, Recreation Leader at the Shawnee North Community Center, will present a program on the history of the Shawnee County Poor Farm. She became interested in the history of the community center building, which formerly served as a county poor farm for many years. Devin has researched the facility, two nearby cemeteries, and several people who once resided there.
- **March 27, 2025** – **“Roots in East Friesland, Lower Saxony, Germany,”** presented by Kevin L. Groenhagen. Kevin is the editor of the *Kaw Valley Senior Monthly*. He will share his family history research in Illinois and Germany, his trip to his ancestral village in East Friesland, and how he connected with living relatives here and abroad.



MORNING JOE & JAW – (1st Monday morning each month, 9:30am at Perkins Restaurant, Topeka)
Monday, February 3rd, 9:30-11am.



This is an informal opportunity for 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 four presentations by our featured speaker **Michael John Neill**. We have a new venue this year; we will be holding our event at **Washburn Tech's conference center**. Our planning committee will be getting together in January to select the topics for the four presentations, and to work out all of the other details. We anticipate opening registration early in February. Watch the events calendar on our website for more details as they become available.



UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS



Johnson County Genealogical Society Annual Seminar - March 22, 2025

Our colleagues at the Johnson County Genealogical Society are planning another great Seminar, and we encourage our members and friends to support them by attending. (Reminder: due to our reciprocal agreement, TGS members may register at the discounted member rate!)

Cheri Hudson Passey is a professional genealogist, instructor, writer, speaker, and owner of Carolina Girl Genealogy, LLC. She hosts the YouTube genealogy chat show GenFriends and is a genealogical researcher subcontracted by Eagle Investigative Services, Inc., for the US Army Past Conflict Repatriations Branch. She is involved in many genealogy societies and organizations and is on the National Genealogical Society board. Cheri has written the blog "Carolina Girl Genealogy," sharing genealogy tips, methodologies, and family stories for over ten years.

For more details on the event, or to register: <https://www.jcgsk.org/cpage.php?pt=251>

Midwest Genealogy Center Seminar – March 29, 2025.

<https://www.mymcpl.org/genealogy/events/spring-seminar>

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



Event Highlights:

- **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.