



News & Views Newsletter

www.tgstopeka.org

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Volume 33 No. 12

December 2025

What's Happening at TGS?

Library - We're making slow but steady progress! We have completed pulling and boxing items requested by Midwest Genealogy Center, and are currently working with them to make arrangements for the materials to be transferred. The Kansas Historical Society Archives has taken the Daughters of the American Colonists lineage books that we had. Next step: we are planning to open the library **January 12-16, 2026** to TGS members and representatives from smaller local libraries and historical societies, to allow them to select and purchase items that they are interested in (for more detail, see the separate article below). After that, we will be ready to offer all remaining items to Internet Archive (they have already committed to accepting the Shawnee Co. Naturalization, Probate and Tax books; all remaining school yearbooks; and all remaining City Directories), and negotiating the process for getting the items packed up and transferred to them.



*The Stack is Growing!
Boxes of Books, Ready to Go to MGC!*

Digitization of the Columbian Title Abstract Books by FamilySearch is progressing nicely, and is expected to be completed in February of 2026. We are looking forward to having access to these unique records on the FamilySearch website! The original books will be transferred to Internet Archive, and digitized images will also be available online on their website.

With the onset of 2026, we will have some **changes in our leadership team**. I will be ending my term as President, and Cindy Cruz will be taking on that role. I will continue to serve on the Board as Past President, and will continue to lead our efforts in finding new homes for items from our library collection as well as my other responsibilities as webmaster and Chair of the

Records Preservation Committee. Eadie Flickinger (Past President) will be retiring from the Board, and will be developing new plans for welcoming and orienting new TGS members. Ellen Horn will be retiring from the Board as Recording Secretary, and Theresa Wilson will be joining the Board in that capacity. We are looking forward to some new perspectives and energy to help lead us forward.

2026 will also be a special year for the United States, as we will be celebrating our **250th Anniversary**. For many of us, this fits in nicely with our genealogical interests, and TGS will be hosting various learning opportunities and projects related to the celebration, as well as sharing information about opportunities being hosted elsewhere. Watch for this logo in our newsletter for more information as the year progresses.



As always, we thank our member readers for your support through membership. To our non-member friends, we appreciate your interest in our work and invite you to consider supporting us by becoming members. Joining our organization is simple – just see the “Membership” page on our website, at <https://tgstopeka.org/membership/> . (Note – some people who have preferred to mail in their membership and payment have had difficulty locating the downloadable membership form on our website. It is at the bottom of the general membership page (<https://tgstopeka.org/membership/>) – make sure to scroll to the bottom of the page.)

Barb LaClair, President

We're Looking Forward to a New Year!



It's hard to believe, but 2025 is almost over. We are just a few days away from the end of this year. 2025 has been a busy year at TGS, and we expect that the work will continue into 2026. We will continue to work on dissolving the library collection and clearing out the contents of our building, working toward becoming a virtual organization.

We have lots of ideas and plans for new indexing, transcription and digitization projects. If you enjoy that type of volunteer work, stay tuned for more details coming soon. Lots of great new monthly programs are also in the works.

We're looking forward to the opportunities and challenges that are certain to come with the New Year, and to beginning to see the results of our efforts to transform our organization and create a bright future!

Elephind is Back!



If you like to search digitized newspapers for info about your ancestors, you will be excited to know that a new and improved version of Elephind is once again available online.

Elephind is a free online search engine that searches across numerous online newspaper collections, all at once! Check it out at <https://www.elephind.com/> .

Free Intro to Genealogy & Family History Class- Jan 24, 2026

Are you, or someone you know, interested in learning more about your family history but not sure how to get started or where to look next? We are offering a free “Intro to Genealogy & Family History” class on **Saturday, January 24th, from 9am – 12:30pm**. Class will be held at the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library. The class is free, and open to the public but we are asking that those who plan to attend register in advance so that we can be sure to have enough space and materials for everyone. See the event listing on our website to register.

<https://tgstopeka.org/events/#!event/2026/1/24/introduction-to-genealogy-and-family-history-class>



Notice of Price Increase- Optional Printed & Mailed Newsletter

We hate to do it, but like everyone else our costs for some services have increased and we must adjust the price that we pass along to you. Most of our readers receive our monthly newsletter as an email attachment, and we do not charge anything for that service. A few of you, however, have been paying \$10/year to receive a printed copy of the monthly newsletter in the mail. As we reviewed our 2025 expenses, we realized that the \$10/year is no longer covering our costs for printing and postage, and have made the decision to increase the cost for receiving the monthly newsletter in printed & mailed form to \$25/year. The e-publication will continue to be free.



The additional charge for printed and mailed newsletter delivery is entirely optional, but it seems only right that those who select this option pay the additional costs that we incur for this service.

This change will be effective with all memberships or purchases received on or after January 1, 2026.

Pay it Forward and Learn About Every-Day Life During the Revolutionary War Era – Volunteer to Help



AMERICA America's 250th Anniversary celebration is coming up in 2026, and we've all been getting some great historical perspective with six-part “*The Revolutionary War*” documentary that has been airing on PBS. (If you missed it, it is still available to livestream at pbs.org.) If you have been watching and it has piqued your interest in learning more, there is a great win-win opportunity available with the Library of Congress. With their “*By the People*” project, volunteers can help to transcribe various Revolutionary-Era documents that will shed light on daily life at the time, as well as to help to improve access to the information. To learn more, see the project website, <https://crowd.loc.gov/topics/american-revolution/>.

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!

- Eugina Michelle Baer-Witt – Topeka, KS
- Kristen Manley – Long Island City, NY

Help us continue to grow our membership by telling your friends about us, and inviting them to check us out. Word of Mouth is the best advertising!

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

Updates and new content are added to our website on an ongoing basis. So that you don't miss anything, here are highlights of changes and new additions in the past month.



- **New program recordings** added (in the Past Programs section):
 - November Foundations of Family History SIG – Newspapers, by Barb LaClair
- **Resources** – none added this month

There are now more than 50 recordings of past TGS programs and presentations 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!



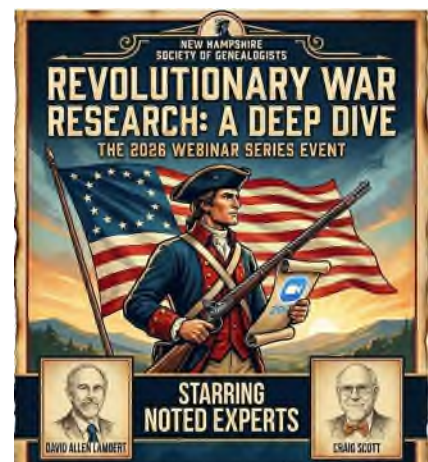
The New Hampshire Society of Genealogists' upcoming 2026 special virtual programs by noted experts David Allen Lambert and Craig Scott are just one of the benefits of NMSG membership. Join for access to all this year's webinars for \$25. For details see

<https://www.nhsog.org/webinars>

All webinars will take place at 7pm (Eastern Time), via Zoom.

Programs included in this series, and their dates:

- January 12 – “Colonial Wars in New England,” by David Allen Lambert
- February 9 – “Records Created by the War,” by Craig Scott
- March 9 – “Pensions,” by Craig Scott
- May 11 – “Bounty Land,” by Craig Scott
- September 14 – “Loyalists and Hessians,” by Craig Scott
- November 9 – “Lineage Societies,” by David Allen Lambert



Help Wanted! - Newsletter Editor



We are still looking for a volunteer to take responsibility for compiling and editing the monthly *News & Views* newsletter. This job would mostly involve collecting information from a few TGS leaders and copying event information from the TGS website. Additional genealogy news articles may be included as new information becomes available. The newsletter is currently being created and edited in MSWord, so no special software familiarity is needed. Strong writing and grammar skills, and an eye for detail are important. Time commitment: 4-5 hours per month, dependent upon content availability and editor's comfort and skill level.



If you would be willing to help us by filling this role, please contact Barb LaClair, tgstopeka.president@gmail.com.

TGS Library – Member Book Purchase Opportunity

We have nearly completed the process of transferring selected items from the TGS Library collection to the Topeka & Shawnee County Public Library, Midwest Genealogy Center, and the Kansas Historical Society. Before we offer everything that remains to Internet Archive, we would like to give TGS members an opportunity to select any of the remaining books or other items that you would like to have for your personal library. We will open the library from **10am to 2pm on January 12-16, 2026** for members to visit and make their selections. The rules will be simple:



- Anything remaining on the shelves (except courthouse books and possibly a few other items that will be marked) will be available.
- If a member would like to take back an item that he/she donated to TGS and we have documentation of the donation, the item will be returned to the donor at no charge.
- Other books/items may be purchased with a suggested **minimum donation of \$1 each**. (CDs will be free)
- We will also have 3-ring binders and other office supplies available for purchase at nominal prices.
- If you had pre-requested specific items, we will have those set aside for you.

Plan now to stop by the library between January 12th and 16th to pick out some treasures!

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

We are currently doing a bit of re-organizing as we plan for our Special Interest Groups in 2026. Please check the events calendar on our website for more information as it becomes available.

- **Foundations of Family History SIG** (2nd Tuesday evening, 7pm (Central Time), via Zoom). **January 13, 2026** – Topic to be determined
- **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 20, 2026** – details to be announced
- **DNA/ Genetic Genealogy SIG** – Will be re-organized, with new leadership. Schedule and details will be announced soon.

MORNING JOE & JAW – (1st Monday morning each month, 9:30am at Perkins Restaurant, Topeka)
Monday, January 5, 9:30 - 11am



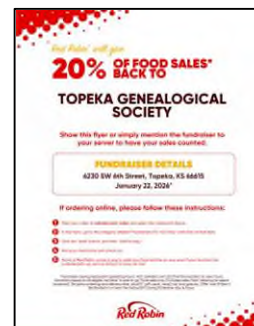
This is an informal opportunity for socializing and networking with other members. Meet us at **Perkins Restaurant, 1720 SW Wanamaker**, for some lively conversation while you enjoy a morning coffee, pastry, or breakfast. No need to register – just drop by to say hello!

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.)

NO DINNER GATHERINGS IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER

January 22, 2026, 5:00pm - Please join us at 5:00pm on January 22nd for our monthly fundraiser at Red Robin for some good food and lively conversation. If you cannot join us then, you have the option of dining anytime between 11:00am-10:00pm, or ordering online or in person for carryout. Mention this fundraiser or show them the attached flyer at the checkout register for TGS to receive 20% of sales benefit. Following dinner, join us at TSCPL at 7:00pm for our monthly program. We look forward to seeing you!



Download the Flyer : <https://tgstopeka.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/11/Jan-2026-Red-Robin-TGS-fundraiser-flyer.png>

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. To obtain the Zoom link to watch online, see the event listing on our website (<https://tgstopeka.org>)

NO MONTHLY PROGRAMS IN NOVEMBER OR DECEMBER

January 22, 2026, 7:00pm - *“Life in Kansas During the Dust Bowl”* by Katie Keckeisen

Black Sunday – April 14, 1935 – is an unforgettable moment in history. The photographs from that day of the dust storm in southwest Kansas made headlines across America. How did Kansans respond to this challenging moment in history? Using eyewitness accounts and photographs, Katie will explore the impact and the legacy of the drought and the “Dust Bowl” on life in Kansas during the 1930s and beyond. This lecture is sponsored by the Humanities Kansas Speakers Bureau.



UPCOMING REGIONAL EVENTS



RootsTech 2026 – March 5-7, 2026. Attend online (Free) or in-person. Registration is now open! See <https://www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/> for details.
