

# The Genie

*To inspire interest in family history through education, preservation and service.  
We're in the family business.*



PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY

ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

P. O. BOX 4463  
SHREVEPORT, LOUISIANA 71134-0463

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## ARK-LA-TEX GENEALOGICAL ASSOCIATION, INC.

P.O. Box 4463  
Shreveport, Louisiana 71134-0463

The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association is a Section 501 (c) 3 non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Louisiana.

The purpose of this organization is:

- To collect, preserve and make available genealogical documents and records
- To encourage an interest in genealogy and to sponsor educational programs for its development
- To promote the Shreveport/Bossier City area as having significant resources for genealogical and historical research
- To compile and publish a quarterly publication, *The Genie*, composed of records of genealogical and historical importance, helpful research information, and ancestral queries.



The Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association meets on the second Saturday of each month from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm at the Broadmoor Branch Library, 1212 Captain Shreve Drive, Shreveport, LA

The membership year is from January 1 through December 31 and dues are \$20.00 annually for individual or same household family memberships. Dues for those members joining in the last half of the year (July 1 - December 31) are \$10.00. Membership renewals are due by January 31 at the "whole year" annual rate. Payment may be made online through PayPal, by regular mail, or at regular meetings. Refer to our website: [altgenealogy.com/join.htm](http://altgenealogy.com/join.htm) for details.

**Statement of Publication:** *The Genie* is published on a quarterly basis and distributed electronically as a pdf document to members and subscribing institutions that have provided an email address. The Association also participates in an exchange agreement with other organizations that publish similar genealogical publications. Those publications that are received are donated to the Broadmoor Branch Genealogy Department of the Shreve Memorial Library.

We welcome family history and genealogy research articles and records, especially those that are likely to be of an interest to others. Some examples are family pedigree charts, cemetery surveys/records, family and community histories, and transcribed courthouse records. We also accept articles describing a genealogical "brick wall," as well as queries. All submitted material should be typed or very plainly written and sent to our mailing address above or emailed to our editor at [thegenie.editor@gmail.com](mailto:thegenie.editor@gmail.com). Please note that *The Genie* cannot be responsible for errors or inaccuracies, but will hasten to publish correction.

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## The President's Message First Quarter 2020

*Contributed by Leonard Gresens*

The first quarter of 2020 has felt like a nightmare game of **musical chairs**.... and someone keeps moving the chairs.

**January's chair** was pulled out from under us with a change in our regular start time. The library scheduled another group at our time, causing us to start an hour and a half later, but we began the new year with business as usual. New board members were introduced, while it was noted that we still need a recording secretary. Other volunteer positions were announced, and a plea to get involved was made. After some brief announcements, our first guest speaker was introduced. Leigh Scott Lewis presented "The Orphan Train: The Story of Two Riders," a story of her great-grandparents, who both were orphaned and placed with families during the time the trains delivered children to those families willing to take them in. This story was related to Leigh's thesis "Orphan Trains – Mass Transplanting of Orphaned and/or Abandoned Children."

After the presentation, we broke for refreshments provided by our hospitality committee; then Sonja Webb informed us about a new guide to Scandinavian genealogy available on *Family Tree*. She also let us know about Cornell University Library's site with information on copyright issues.

The Hornbook session was presented by Glenn Moore on the topic of "Effective Use of DNA." He showed a video on DNA Painter, which is a free tool allowing you to begin with known matches then comparing with a target person and determining the likelihood of which match is most likely.

**The second musical chair** was pulled out in our February meeting. Due to a library scheduling conflict, we had to move our meeting to another location. Cedar Grove library hosted our African American History month themed meeting. Introduction of guests and announcements were given. Our new recording secretary, Barb Fuller, was introduced, and our program for the day was underway.

Our presenter was Chandra Lester, whose topic was "My Military Ancestors." A few members of her family were in the Civil War, and with the use of military records, she was able to add details to her research. Chandra then answered a few questions.

After refreshments, Margrett Ford, with the help of Jim Johnson, shared her recent visit to the Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington D.C. In her own style, Margrett had a story for each slide presented on the screen. Not only did she share some of the history, but her own personal story came out. Margrett always has a story.

With a little more time available, Sonja Webb shared about Louisiana's emancipated slave records available on *Ancestry.com*.

Everything was supposed to be back to normal for our March meeting. **Then the third chair** was pulled out from under us. Two days before our meeting, I received a call that the library was cancelling all meetings at every branch due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only was our regular monthly meeting cancelled, but the DNA Workshop scheduled for later in March needed to be put on hold. The library will be unavailable for meetings until further notice.

**A fourth chair** has since been pulled out also. Our April meeting happens to fall on Easter weekend, but the library will be closed for that whole weekend. Another location is secured as of this writing if this pandemic is short-lived. Stayed tuned to next quarter's *Genie* for more of our musical chairs saga.



## A Family Project of Cleaning Headstones

An article written and shared by member, Ms. Isabelle Woods, of presentations at the Family History Club, Bastrop, LA.

Volume 3, Issue 9

### LINEAGE

#### A FAMILY PROJECT OF CLEANING HEADSTONES

Since 1998, the Family History Club has been well-known in the genealogical community for its membership's compilation of cemetery readings in several Louisiana parishes and Arkansas counties. Thus, when Mrs. Sharon W. Wallace spoke on "A Family Project of Cleaning Headstones," on September 18, 2015, to members and guests of the Family History Club, Bastrop, at the Snyder Museum, she had a captive audience. They gathered to learn how a family member or friend may have taken the time for researchers to easier read many of the headstones.

Mrs. Wallace explained that her interest in cleaning headstones began in the Spring of 2015. After the passing and burial of her mother in the Causey Cemetery at Bastrop, she and her sister, Lorna, discovered their grandparents' headstones were in a poor condition. They wanted to preserve them.

During a phone call, Mrs. Wallace learned

Lorna had acquired some information.

experience preserving headstones from a community service project. While managing a hotel in New Orleans, Lorna had participated in a headstone cleaning and/or preservation project with Save Our Cemeteries (SOC).

Lorna contacted Ms. Emily Ford, a restoration consultant at New Orleans, for guidelines. The sisters then formulated a family project to clean their grandparents' headstones.

When sharing her

Mrs. Wallace also circulated a mini-album of photographs of their work. The photographs were gradations between the before-and-after views of several headstones. Her photographic evidence of the extent to which a headstone can be cleaned was impressive.

Her message is very clear: You gain a lot of satisfaction from a project of cleaning a headstone. If you begin by taking photographs of a headstone before you clean it, you



Above from center, then right to left:

Tools—soft brushes, bucket, jug of water, gloves, wooden popsicle stick atop a wooden paint stick, face mask, and *Simple Green All-Purpose Cleaner*®. Toothbrushes and a spray tank are not shown.

knowledge with the group, will marvel at your Mrs. Wallace prepared a results. One, three or six handout and photographic months later, you will proofs of their results. Her really see a remarkable clarity in the headstone's appearance.

listed the tools needed, Mrs. Wallace outlined a few steps to take before cleaning a headstone:

clean a headstone, and (1) Obtain the permission to clean a respective



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headstone from the closest kin to the person on the headstone.

(2) Study the pros and cons of each type of headstone to choose the best cleaning method for your chosen headstone.

(3) Determine the headstone's condition before you clean it. Can it withstand a cleansing? Is it stable or is it deteriorating (flaking, cracking, leaning, etc.). "If you can lightly touch the stones and a sugar-like substance sticks to your finger, ...the stones are actively decaying and should not be cleaned," she said.

(4) Learn the best time of year, of day and of conditions which favor cleaning a headstone. For example, a headstone saturated by a recent rainfall is easier to clean.

(5) Assemble your tools, then proceed with caution cleaning the headstone.

She defined the difference between cleaning and restoring a headstone. You clean a headstone with solutions and tools to remove dirt or debris by rinsing with water or by lightly brushing the headstone. You restore a headstone to return it, as much as possible, to its original condition before the affects of weathering, damage, improper cleansing or other acts of deterioration. You can decrease the presence of a headstone by damaging it with solutions and tools. Or you can preserve its condition for posterity as a headstone pleasing to view and easy to read.

A rule of thumb: A monument may not need cleaning, if its inscription is legible. Most biological growth and soil are not particularly harmful. Over cleansing or using poor cleaning practices are more harmful to a headstone. The more gentle the process applied to a headstone, the better. Tools and cleansers around your home will likely do irreparable damage. These items may deteriorate and disintegrate a headstone. Descendents, therefore, will less likely know the location of the gravesite of an ancestor without a headstone.

From her research Mrs. Wallace learned cleaning methods have improved over time. However, she was aghast to see a video of a man using huge tractor and a pressure washer to clean headstones in a local cemetery. Although you can use a pressure washer on granite, it is advisable to proceed with caution as you risk damaging a headstone.

She recommends reading, "Cleaning A Grave-stone," ([www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ncpendip/cleanstonescem.htm](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~ncpendip/cleanstonescem.htm)) before attempting this project. The article explains why certain solutions, methods, and tools should not be used. Avoid acids, bleaches, ammonia, sand-blasters, high pressure washers, power tools (grinders, drills), and wire brushes or metal scrapers.

Sharon and Lorna wore protective gloves. They preferred a 100% non-toxic, biodegradable, liquid called *Simple Green All-Purpose Cleaner*® (\$3.50 at Bastrop Feed and Seed and other hardware stores). Between a twenty-to-sixty-dollar price range, you may also use non-ionic soaps or a detergent, D2, biological solution, or *Kodak Photo Flo*,<sup>2</sup> (a liquid used in photography).

Arriving with a lot of water, they filled jugs and used a tank of water with a sprayer. A bucket, toothbrushes, and thin implements (a wooden popsicle or a paint stick, a skewer, or cuttlebone from a pet store) comprised their other tools. The wooden implements were used to clean the engravings.

Taking their own advice, they visited the cemetery after a rainy day. They thoroughly wet their grandparents' headstones and kept them saturated throughout this process.

After spraying the headstones with *Simple Green*®, they visited other gravesites to allow the cleaner to sit for about fifteen minutes. With wet, soft, natural-bristle brushes moving in a circular motion, they

cleaned from the bottom and worked upward and around the headstones. Then they immediately rinsed the headstones.

They used most of their water supply to clean by spraying water and scrubbing the more difficult areas.

They removed a black substance found within the crevices of the carvings with wooden sticks. Before gathering their tools for a departure, they again thoroughly



A. April 2015,  
Condition of Headstone of  
Austie Bell Cain (1918-1945)



B. Let cleaner sit. Clean headstone moving in a circular motion from bottom, then upward, and around a headstone.



C. Headstone's First Rinse



## LINEAGE

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D. Headstone brighter and more legible six months later

carefully upright their grandfather's headstone, which was leaning to one side. With Lorna's help pulling and holding the headstone at the cemetery, John used a lever to raise and to fill sand under the base of the headstone. He allowed the ground underneath the base to settle and cleaned the area around the headstone. When she visited her grandfather's gravesite six months later, Mrs. Wallace found the headstone still standing tall.

During her research, she also discovered why the headstone of her grandfather,

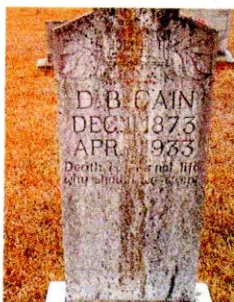
rinsed the headstones. No such uses, or the use of trade name, is intended to convey endorsement or other affiliation with this article.

Her array of photographs vividly spoke volumes of why Sharon and Lorna were pleased with accomplishing a task easily done.

Mrs. Wallace's brother, John, has shown her how to

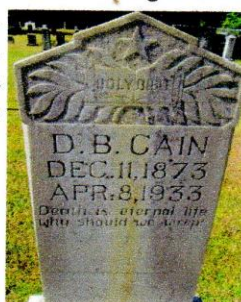
(1) Ms. Emily Ford of *Save Our Cemeteries* (SOC) encourages all to contact this organization if you have any questions at [restoration@saveourcemeteries.org](mailto:restoration@saveourcemeteries.org). *Save Our Cemeteries* is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization at New Orleans, Louisiana. Mission: To preserve, protect, and promote the historic cemeteries of New Orleans through restoration, education, and advocacy.

(2) Mrs. Wallace recommends viewing this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VEVzUo26ANY>



E. Headstone of D. B. Cain (1873 - 1933)

D. B. Cain, had a huge



F. Six months later, headstone of D. B. Cain after proper cleaning.

streak from top to bottom. Someone had cleaned his headstone with a bleach, like Clorox.

Mrs. Wallace's presentation was an excellent primer on how to undertake the task of cleaning a headstone. Her handout and visuals complemented her speech well.

Now each person has the tools and resources to bring his/her headstone cleaning project from the back burner to the front. Everyone implementing this project will also be elated with the amazing results.

#### Notes:

<sup>1</sup>, <sup>2</sup>, and <sup>3</sup>: These product names are registered trademarks of their respective companies. They are used in editorial fashion only and for the benefit of such companies.

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#### Credits:

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Photograph of Steeple and Cross of the Washington Chapel United Methodist Church, Bastrop, LA,©2015 by Mrs. Susan Holley, Bastrop, Louisiana.

Photograph of Washington Chapel United Methodist Church, Bastrop, Louisiana©2013 by Mrs. Isabelle Woods,

## The Wild South

*Contributed by Snoopy Conly*

Written by Bill Conly Sr.

(Editor's note: Bill is Snoopy Conly's father who died in 2016.)

Many stories have been told about the Wild West, but it is not too often that the South has earned the title of "wild." Since I have ancestors from both the "South" and the "West," I believe I am qualified to say that the "South" is equal to the "West" when the subject under discussion is "wild."

The Conly side of the family includes other family names: Hall, Davis, Wimberly, Giddens, and many others.

James Isaac Hall joined the Confederate Army early on after the war began. He was at the siege of Vicksburg from the very beginning. The siege lasted many months and was still going when springtime came and planting time had started. With a large family to support, he realized that he had to see that planting was done so that they could make it through the next year.

James crawled through the Yankee lines. I don't know how he crossed the Mississippi River, but he obviously made it, and I guess he acquired a horse since it was about 200 miles from Vicksburg to Bienville Parish. Letters from him and his wife show that he succeeded in getting the crop planted. After he completed it, he returned to Vicksburg and later died in the Battle of Holly Springs, Mississippi, where he was buried. The Southerners at that time had an abundance of principles and guts.

The War Between the States was followed by one of the most corrupt times that the South had had to endure, and that was the system that became known as the "Reconstruction." Under this system, the Yankee government saw to it that very few white Southerners could vote. All voting was done by ex-slaves who didn't know how to vote, so the Yankee carpet baggers told them who to vote for, which naturally turned out to be those same carpet baggers. This system caused more hatred and hard feelings than the war itself.

The Yankees were in such total control that they could take any land that they wanted simply by having the tax assessor charge the present owner more than he could possibly pay. The Yankees would pay a small amount of the taxes and have it for themselves.

Obviously, it was merely a matter of time before hell was going to break loose. One day a large group of Southerners swarmed into the Coshatta Courthouse and surrounded the Yankee sheriff, tax assessor, and other officials. They demanded that the office holders sign resignations, and after they had done so, a group of men put them on horses and started leading them across the Red River on the way to Shreveport. The plan was to put them on a train northwards never to come back.

Those who were in charge of protecting the Yankees gave witness that a large group of men overtook them, killed the Yankees, and left with their horses. There were some pretty strong suspicions that the ones doing the protecting were in on the whole scheme.

This is the point where my ancestors enter the picture. My grandmother told me that her grandfather (my great-great grandfather Martin Davis) was absent from home for a few days during this period.

My grandmother heard from her mother that Martin Davis finally showed up with a beautiful snow-white horse that they had never seen before. He refused to inform his family where the horse came from, but he built a corral far back in the middle of the woods where no one could easily locate it. The Yankee troops searched for information from all over but were never able to make an arrest.

An interesting fact was that a man named John Carr was the leader of the group who was supposed to protect the Yankees, and he was a very close friend to Martin Davis.

This leads directly into another story about these same two people. A few years after the carpet baggers were killed, Martin Davis and John Carr were drinking in a saloon near Love Lake Bottom. The two men got into an argument; Carr told Davis to get a gun, and they would settle the conflict. Carr already had a gun; Davis had to go to a house next door to borrow a gun. As Davis (like most Davises, feisty and hard-headed) stepped out of the house onto the porch, Carr was hidden behind a wood-pile and shot him down before my ancestor had a chance.

My Aunt Doris always liked to keep track of family history, but she was subject to change our history if it tended to make the family look bad. So naturally, her version was that Carr was shooting at someone else and accidentally killed Martin Davis. Oh well, her version is OK, but witnesses told a different story.

My grandmother, who was born a Davis, had three sisters and one brother. Their father died when he was in his 30s, so she, her mother, sisters, and a kid brother had to farm and maintain the crops in order to survive. In those days (1880s), there was no welfare, and the only charity to be had was between neighbors.

Her brother (Uncle Bud) was like most Davises, a little bit on the contentious side. Most of the physical portion of the farming was left up to him, even when he was only about 14 years old, but he did his best to keep his mother and sisters with a roof over their heads and food.

Uncle Bud had an uncle with whom he could not get along. This was Uncle Zeke Wimberly, who was even more contentious than Uncle Bud. Zeke would make occasional visits to his sister and spend most of his time criticizing Uncle Bud's farming. It usually was remarks that Uncle Bud was stupid, did a lousy job of farming, and he was going to cause his mother and sisters to go to the poor house. The day that was the final straw happened outside as Uncle Zeke pulled up in his wagon. After a long tirade about Uncle Bud's failings, Uncle Bud said, "You old son-of-a-bitch, I'm gonna get my shotgun and kill you." This alone may not have spooked Zeke, but Uncle



Bud came out of the house with a shotgun, and it took all of Uncle Bud's sisters and his mother to hold him down while he kept trying to get up and kill Zeke. This ended the problem with Uncle Zeke.

Fairly early in life, my grandmother (Willie) married Bert Conly. Uncle Bud married Aunt Jeffer; Aunt Louella married Henry Giddens; and Aunt Alice married Joe Reagan. This left the oldest daughter, Aunt Berta as an old maid. I don't know the age at which she finally married, but just leave it to say that she had earned the title of "old maid."

Aunt Berta finally married a man named Bailiff from Jamestown, which was a long, long way from her home (probably about 13 miles). She seldom ever got to see her mother and sisters because of the far distance and because they couldn't stand Bailiff, who was poor as a snake but had an idea that he was the smartest man alive. His arrogance alone kept the rest of the family from visiting, but Aunt Berta is the one who suffered from this situation.

Bailiff had a large family of children from a previous wife. He married Aunt Berta primarily to be his cook and housekeeper. She lived an unhappy life, which caused her to whine, but unfortunately, because of the distance, she had to do it by mail.

I read one letter that Aunt Berta sent to her mother, and it was sad enough to make you cry. In this letter she told her mother that Oliver Giddens (Aunt Berta's nephew) stopped by and visited with her; she said Oliver told her that he would bring her mother by to visit her the next Sunday. In the letter she said, "I was so proud that you were coming, I pulled the last chicken in the yard, and then you never came."

I have not used Bailiff's first name because I never knew it. Aunt Berta never called him anything other than Mr. Bailiff. Even though he himself had a poor standard of living, he looked down his nose at the rest of our family because of the differences in religion. He was a "Hard Shell" Baptist (as opposed to Southern Baptist). If you think that there would be very little difference between the two, you have a lot to learn. The difference is almost as much as Catholic to Islamic.

My great-aunt Irene Conly married Simon Leon Manning. His father, Benjamin Manning, was sheriff of Bienville Parish from 1884 to 1888. He was one of the few from the western side of the parish to be elected to the office of sheriff. He served in the Confederate Army with pride and distinction. He died in 1918 and is buried in Providence Cemetery.

The one thing about him that is most memorable is what happened as he lay on his death bed. His mind went bad at the end. He left this life crying and screaming that the people that he had killed were on the end of his bed tormenting him. Some of these ghosts were from those killed in the war and some were those killed during his term as sheriff.

My father was born in 1901 to Bert and Willie Conly. He had one brother, Etoyle, and three sisters, Theo, Doris, and Willie Bert. My father, Ruel, and all of his siblings were very



strong-minded, which they obviously inherited from their mother, Willie. Their father, Burt, was a very gentle, good-hearted man, not a person who would run over anyone. Mama Willie's strength of mind showed in the names she gave to her children. Ruel, Etoyle, Theo, and Willie Bert were odd names to be sure. Willie Bert hated her name and insisted that she be called Billie. Aunt Doris was the only one with a normal name, but her ways were far from normal. Aunt Theo was the only one who inherited Granddad's (Bert) gentle ways; the rest of the siblings had the Davis feistiness. I have always been happy that the family showed strong will in every way.

When my father finished elementary school at the old Lee Schoolhouse, my grandmother was determined that all of her children would get an education, so she made arrangements for my daddy to go to high school in Ringgold. In order to do so, he had to spend weekdays living with Wimberly kin and helping them with chores. On the weekends, he would ride a bicycle the 10 miles back home and help with the farming there.

After completing high school in 1918, he did something that no young North Louisiana boy usually did at that time. Most young men worked at farming until they had saved enough to buy their own farm, never living more than 10 or 20 miles from where they were born. My daddy decided that he wanted to see the world and that it could be done by working his way round the western part of the USA.

He worked for a while at sawmills, wheat harvests, oil well drilling, and oil leasing. In between times, he went to colleges and increased his education. He later started teaching school in different places out West.

He met my mother in High Rolls, New Mexico. He was principal of the school there, and she was a student at the school. On the day that they married, he was holding down several different jobs: school principal, railroad depot agent, semi-pro baseball player, and owner-operator of a dance hall.

He and my mother left High Rolls to return to Louisiana so that his family could meet his new wife. At that time (1924), it took five days to make the trip by automobile. When dark came upon them, they would find a barn near the road and pay a farmer twenty-five cents for a place to sleep overnight. Usually there would be other tourists staying in these barns, so the farmers could pick up some extra cash.

My mother said that on one of these nights the barn was full of drunks making a lot of hell-raising noise. She said Daddy asked them nicely to quieten down several times, which they continually ignored. The next time, Daddy fired several shots in the air with his .45 caliber and yelled "shut up!" This worked.

When they made it back to Louisiana, they discovered that Daddy's grandfather, Thomas Eugene Conly, had died and that Daddy's family was going to sell the farm. Daddy bought the house and farm and never returned to New Mexico except to visit.

Nothing changed in Daddy's work habits. He taught school at Lee School, farmed, and sold Aladdin Lamps at night. Due to his hard work, he was able to buy more land, which he continued to do most of his life. Four years before I was born (1934) was a fierce, exciting time in the Bienville Parish area. Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker were killed by local lawmen on the northeastern part of the parish. Uncle Joe Regan killed his son-in-law in Ringgold, and a lynching took place about a mile north of Ringgold.

Uncle Joe was the husband of Aunt Alice, one of the Davis sisters, or to be more specific, my grandmother Willie's sister. Uncle Joe, like my grandfather, was a very gentle, hardworking man. Aunt Alice and Uncle Joe ran the Ringgold Hotel. The entire Regan clan was made up of good people, but their daughter, Inez, married a mean, drunken bum named Joe Smith. All of our family hated Smith because of the beatings that he dished out to Inez.

Inez and Smith lived for a while next door to my grandparents. Our family had a real close relationship among all of the cousins, and they expected that one day Smith would kill Inez. He would point a gun at her and threaten to kill her every time that he was drunk, and that was usually followed up by a beating.

One day while there, Daddy and Uncle Etoyle heard Smith shoot. Etoyle said, "Well, I guess he finally killed her." As Etoyle went out on the porch, Smith was coming around his yard with a shotgun. Etoyle started cussing Smith, who started re-loading his shotgun. Smith had not shot anyone, but no one knew that at the time.

Smith started pointing the gun at Etoyle; Daddy (with that same .45 caliber) started aiming at Smith with full intention of shooting him. "I had no intention of letting him kill my brother." As Smith looked up, he saw that he was looking down the barrel of that huge pistol. Smith looked up and said, "Hi, Ruel" and walked back to his own house.

I think that it was only a few months later when Inez ran into Uncle Joe's hotel crying, with bruises all over. Smith ran in shortly after with a pistol. Meek, mild-mannered Uncle Joe fought Smith and took the gun away from him. Smith left swearing that he would return with another gun. This is exactly what he did, but poor Uncle Joe had had enough. As Smith came in fully armed, Uncle Joe was prepared with a shotgun. Uncle Joe killed him as he entered.

There was no arrest and no trial. Everyone was glad that Smith was dead. That's the way life was back then. Law counted for a lot, but common sense counted for more. Things seem to be the opposite these days.

During that same bloody year, the murder of Joe Batchelor, the president of the Bank of Ringgold, occurred.

Mr. and Mrs. Batchelor were asleep that night when a young black man woke them with a pistol in their face, demanding that they take him to the bank and give him money. Mr. Batchelor tried to explain that the money was in the vault with a time lock. The thief didn't

understand time locks and marched both the banker and his wife to the bank in their night clothes.

At the bank they showed him over and over that the vault could not be opened. After he gave up, he started marching them north on the railroad tracks. After about one mile up the track, he started beating Mr. Batchelor with a hammer. While the beatings were going on, Mrs. Batchelor started running and made it to the house of a black couple.

After being wakened, the couple left for Ringgold to get the police. Mrs. Batchelor hid between mattresses while the couple's children stayed to help protect her. Sure enough, the murderer came to the house and asked the children if a white woman was there. These children told him that they had not seen anyone, and he left shortly afterward. Mr. Batchelor had been beaten to death, but Mrs. Batchelor lived because of these brave children.

By the time that the sheriff's crew got together, daylight had broken, and they went up the railroad and found Mr. Batchelor's body. A huge posse was formed, but rain had started and there was no sign of tracks. The rain lasted all day, so the posse split up with some going north and some following roads headed west.

My daddy, Uncle Bud Davis, and a man named Homer Waters drove toward Minden to Yellow Pine in order to catch the railroad farther north. Daddy and Homer went north along the track, and Uncle Bud followed it to the south. Not far from Yellow Pine, Uncle Bud came across a black man wearing nice clothes that were soaking wet from the rain.

Uncle Bud asked him what he was doing out in this terrible weather. The man told him that he was trying to find a horse that he had lost. The dress clothes that he wore didn't look right for something you would wear while looking for a horse in the rain. It turned out that he had put on Joe Batchelor's clothing.

Uncle Bud asked him if he knew what time it was, and the man pulled Joe Batchelor's watch out of his pocket and told him the time. Uncle Bud told the man that there were a lot of people out looking for a murderer, and he had better let him take him to a safe place. Since Uncle Bud had a shotgun, and the black man had thrown away the pistol, he didn't have much choice but go with him.

Uncle Bud and the man arrived back to the car about the same time as Daddy and Homer Waters. Uncle Bud explained to them that they had the killer, so they kept a gun on him while they took him back to Ringgold.

In Ringgold, the man confessed to the sheriff while a large ugly crowd was gathering. My daddy stayed in the store where the sheriff and his deputies were holding the killer. Daddy said the crowd reached large numbers, all of them shouting for a lynching. The sheriff at Caddo Parish arrived and told them that they were going to lose the prisoner to a lynch mob. The Caddo Sheriff said that if they cleared the crowd out, he would take the prisoner to Caddo Parish where he would be safe.

Daddy said that the sheriff went outside and addressed the crowd. He told them that they had caught the wrong man and he wanted the posse to go back and start looking again for the murderer.

Daddy said some of the posse left but not enough. He said the sheriff gave up and announced that he was going to take the prisoner back to the railroad and make him show them where he left the pistol that he had.

After a very short distance up the tracks, someone took the sheriff's pistol and told him to go back to Arcadia, and that is exactly what he did.

Beside the railroad tracks near the spot where Joe Batchelor was murdered, the lynching began. Some knifing took place before the hanging occurred. Daddy said that it was horrible to imagine. He said that from that day on, he was always ill at ease any time he was around a crowd. He said that he honestly believed that if anyone said, "Let's burn Ringgold to the ground," they would have done it because their minds were operating only as someone else told them.

Uncle Etoyle was one of those who believed the sheriff when he told them that they had the wrong man. He was one of the few who went back to look for the killer. When he realized that he had been snookered, he said that he ran all of the way to the lynch site and fought his way to the front so that he wouldn't miss anything. He said that the minute he saw the lynching, he fought all of the way back since he had seen something that he never wanted to see again.

I have covered my grandmother's brother and all of her sisters and their husbands except one, Aunt Louella, whose husband Henry Giddens was well known as a rogue. I have written many stories about wild things Uncle Henry did in his younger days. I remember one of his scandalous tricks that he pulled after he was far along in age.

Aunt Louella had died and none of Henry's kids wanted to take care of him, so they took him (against his will) to a nursing home in Pineville. At that time Pineville was about the only place for nursing homes and insane asylums.

Uncle Henry kept his walking cane with him at all times. After he was placed in bed, he put the cane under his sheet and waited for the nurse to come by. When she appeared, she immediately started telling him how proud they were to have him. Uncle Hendry said, "Well, I'm kind of surprised that y'all allowed me here." The nurse said, "Why Mr. Giddens, why wouldn't we be happy to have you?" Uncle Henry said, "I thought that after I killed that nurse at the last place, you wouldn't allow me." The nurse said, "Oh, I'm sure that's not true." Uncle Henry slid the sheet back exposing the walking cane. He said, "I eased the sheet back like that when she leaned over, and I beat her to death with this stick."

The nursing home called his daughter and said, "You come get this old son-of-a-bitch and I mean today." Uncle Henry returned to Ringgold. He was a rascal, but a sharp old rascal.

## *Ruth Remembers*

### FIGHT AT THE CHURCH ALTAR

©2017 by Ruth Roberts Frank Berlin

Here we were, the remnants of the Roberts family, gathered together in the first Methodist Church at Denton, Texas, for the funeral service of Uncle Standlee Roberts' widow, Margaret. We had mounted the many steps leading to the church's outer doors, then proceeded through the vestibule and down the aisle to the area reserved for family members. The sanctuary is beautiful! It has a dome in its center and the choir loft is high and behind the pulpit. Flowers from friends and family now filled the area in front of the altar rail. Aunt Margaret was truly loved by the people of Denton. Now, Aunt Marion and Uncle Pat were the last ones of that generation left living in Denton.

Aunt Marion, Uncle Henry Ector Roberts' widow, was seated between Marilyn and me. She had made her home available to the out-of-town family members. Marilyn and I would be sharing the blue bedroom in her home while we were there. While we sat quietly waiting for the service to begin, Aunt Marion whispered to us, "Do you girls have any idea what I am thinking about?" We both suppressed giggles and nodded a "Yes," with our heads.

After the funeral, the family gathered at Aunt Marion's home to visit together. Someone had heard her whisper to Marilyn and me in the church and they wanted to know to what family story Aunt Marion had referred. She was delighted to tell the story of how, at the altar of that church, Ruth and Marilyn had maintained the reputation of the Roberts for being outstanding fighters. The story went something like this:

Hattie Ruth and Ben Roberts were living in Vernon, Texas, where Ben was the principal of the Parker Street Sixth Grade School. He had attended the College of Industrial Arts (now North Texas University) in Denton off and on through the years but had never completed his baccalaureate degree. Uncle Standlee, the only bachelor left in the family of eleven children, insisted Ben complete his degree. He helped to make it possible. For two summers, Ben, Hattie Ruth, and the little girls lived with Uncle Standlee in Denton. Standlee bought the groceries for the group. Ben went to school and completed his degree.

The Roberts boys, eight of them, were known as fighters who defended themselves well. **The first child of the six married Roberts boys and two married Roberts girls were brown-eyed, brown-haired boys.** Then Ben married and his children were both blond-haired girls. Standlee was crushed and chided Ben often for having girls and not boys. Standlee wondered how the Roberts' fighting reputation would be continued with two girls. Of course, Standlee had no way of knowing, at the time, that his only child would be a little girl with big blue eyes and lovely blond hair.

Ben loved to sing. The entire Roberts family loved to sing. Ben continued his singing in the college glee club and in church. So, the summers Ben's family lived in Denton, Ben naturally sang in the choir of the Denton First Methodist Church.

One summer Sunday morning when Marilyn was about eighteen months old and Ruth was three, the family made its Sunday trip to the Denton church. Hattie Ruth, Ruth, and Marilyn were sitting on the back pew so that the girls would not distract others in the congregation. As the choir members entered the sanctuary and choir loft, Marilyn spied Ben in the group and struggled to run to him. She managed to escape Hattie Ruth and toddled right on down the long aisle toward the choir, calling, "Da-da, Da-da," to the delight and amusement of the congregation.

Then Hattie Ruth, in an effort to get Marilyn to return, sent Ruth to get her. Ruth ran down the aisle and caught Marilyn at the altar of the church. They had a magnificent knock-down-drag-out fight that continues to be heralded among old-timers in the church. The fight was so loud and embarrassing that Hattie Ruth ran out the back of the church. Ben, with a big grin on his face, and his brown eyes twinkling, came down out of the choir loft, separated the girls, picked them up, and carried them to the choir loft with him. Ben was so proud of his girls! Brothers Standlee, Ector, Pat, and John who had witnessed the brawl, were very proud of their nieces! They were Roberts' fighters for sure!

A little later, when Hattie Ruth had regained her composure, she signaled Ben to bring the girls to her in the choir ante-room. After that, Hattie Ruth kept a tighter rein on Marilyn when they were in church.



## Exiles, Immigrants, and Pioneers

*Contributed by Ken Shively*

When I began doing ancestral research, I wondered why people left their native lands to cross an ocean in wooden sailboats to go live in a land they often knew little about. Of course, many were made to leave, but many others came here for more farmland or to escape political turmoil. Much of the information here, I found in "History of Bienville Parish Vol. I," "Wimberly Family History," and "Red River Parish Our Heritage." Also I found some distant cousins through Facebook sites, such as "Living Histories of North Louisiana," who had information I could use.

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Robert Kenney, my third great-grandfather, arrived in Charleston, South Carolina, around 1791, when he was nine years old. His parents, John and Margaret Kenney, were from Antrim County, Northern Ireland, and they settled in Edgefield County, South Carolina, a wild and violent area then. The Kenney family was part of a large group who had once been exiled from Western Scotland to Northern Ireland by the King of England, who wanted a body of water between him and them. They hated taxation on land and favored the French and American Revolutions, and as Presbyterians, they didn't mix well with the Irish Catholics. Large numbers sailed to America for more farmland and freedom; they became referred to as Scotch-Irish.

Robert married Mary Gallman, whose family had emigrated from Zurich, Switzerland, and they would spend the rest of their long lives in Edgefield. But one of their sons, Dr. Benjamin G. Kenney, would move his family in the 1830s or 1840s to Red River Parish, Louisiana, searching for cheap fertile farmland. Benjamin and his son, James E. Kenney, would farm, pilot a riverboat on the Red River, and be involved in local politics.

By the 1840s, the Shively family would settle in Bienville Parish not far from the Kenneys. My great-great-grandmother, Catherine Shively, was born in Bayern, Germany, in 1808, and in 1829, she married Cornelius Sebastian Shively, born in 1790. They settled in the Baden/Württemberg area of Germany, near the Rhine River. In 1830, their first child, my great-grandfather, Amos Shively, was born, and he was followed the next few years by two other boys. Probably around 1836 when their boys were still small, the family sailed from Hamburg, wanting more land and trying to get away from the rising political turmoil there in Germany. They arrived at Baltimore Harbor and rode a river boat down the Mississippi River planning to go to Texas, where more Germans had formed a farming community. But while traveling through Bienville Parish, Louisiana, several family members became ill, so they decided to stay there and settle. In 1914, my father, Frank Shively, would be born near there, his parents being Jeff Shively and Varie Kenney Shively.

During the 1600s, John Lawson served King Charles I of England as "Captain of Horse." He and his family were exiled to Ireland when the Cromwell government took over and Charles was beheaded. According to facts I found, John disinherited his oldest son, John Roger Lawson, for marrying a Protestant. John senior was a Catholic Royalist and considered Protestants to be enemies to the Crown. When Charles II took the throne back, John senior was invited back to England by the king, but in 1727, John Roger Lawson and his brothers, Roger and Hugh, sailed

to the colonies on the ship "The George and Anne." As close as I can tell, their main reason for leaving was to find more opportunity in the New World.

From all accounts they did well. Hugh, my direct ancestor, did well as a planter near Salisbury, North Carolina. Several male descendants of his would serve in the American Revolution in the North Carolina and Georgia Militias, the War of 1812, and the Seminole Wars. Lucy Lawson would marry William Wimberly, whose family had deep roots in England also. A John Wimberly, born 1635, in London, shows emigration from England around 1672 for a grant of 400 acres of land as payment for bringing over with him eight other people.

William and Lucy would move in wagons from Georgia to Louisiana and settle in Bienville Parish. Their son, John Lawson Wimberly, would serve in the Confederate Cavalry. As time went on, they farmed and worked in law and state politics. I vaguely remember my great-grandmother Missouri Wimberly Hicks from my mother's side of the family.

So many of my relatives on both sides lived for generations in close proximity to each other after they had migrated at roughly the same time across the South to Northwest Louisiana. The main incentive for moving west was cheap fertile farmland. The reasons for coming to this country were many, but mainly they wanted to get away from problems at home, to experience new opportunities here, and to gain more land to farm. As for other ancestors I've researched, the Hicks family, the Halls, and the Lightsey family have roadblocks going back to when and where they came over. That's my next project.



Lord, help me dig into the past  
And sift the sands of time,  
That I might find the roots that made  
This family tree of mine.

Lord, help me trace the ancient roads  
On which my father's trod,  
And led them through so many lands  
To find our present sod.

Lord, help me find an ancient book  
Or dusty manuscript,  
That's safely hidden now away  
In some forgotten crypt.

Lord, let it bridge the gap that haunts  
My soul when I can't find,  
The missing link between some name  
That ends the same as mine.

-- Author Unknown

# Highlighting Our Members

*Contributed by Johnnie Covington*

Bob Sanderlin is a native Shreveporter who graduated from Byrd High School then attended Centenary College for two years before transferring to USL in Lafayette. He graduated with a degree in radio and television communications, which, Bob said, was a new field at the time.

Bob likes to attend estate sales and is always on the lookout for items for his Asian artifact collection. He has statuary including Buddhas and larger pieces of furniture in his collection.

For the last six (plus) years, Bob has been a volunteer at The Highland Center for Volunteers of America. When he's not volunteering, Bob can often be seen at local theatrical productions including musicals. He is a regular at Shreveport Little Theater and the Shreveport Symphony. Bob also enjoys opera and films at Robinson.

Bob would like to know more about the names Sanderlin, Kendrick, and Taylor.



Dr. Nat Richie, from Chatham, Louisiana, graduated in a class of twelve in 1959 from Chatham High School. He then attended Tulane in New Orleans and the LSU School of Medicine. Nat was an intern at what was then called Confederate Memorial in Shreveport, and he did his residency in Topeka, Kansas, at the Menninger School of Psychiatry. This was during the War in Vietnam, so he joined the United States Air Force and treated military personnel and veterans in Wichita, Kansas. For five years, Nat taught at the School of Medicine in Shreveport, then had private practices in Monroe and Shreveport, and finally retired after 50 years.

Nat never took much interest in genealogy until after retirement. He knew that his grandparents had converted to Mormonism while living in rural Jackson Parish. They said they were Mormons, but there were no other Mormons nearby and no Mormon meeting places. The family was interested in genealogy, but they could get no information on the name Richie.

Nat became interested in DNA and he, too, found a brick wall around the name Richie. Nat's research and DNA have led him to a Quaker family named Pierson, who lived in Ireland. According to a rumor, this Pierson got into some sort of trouble in Ireland, fled to the United States, and

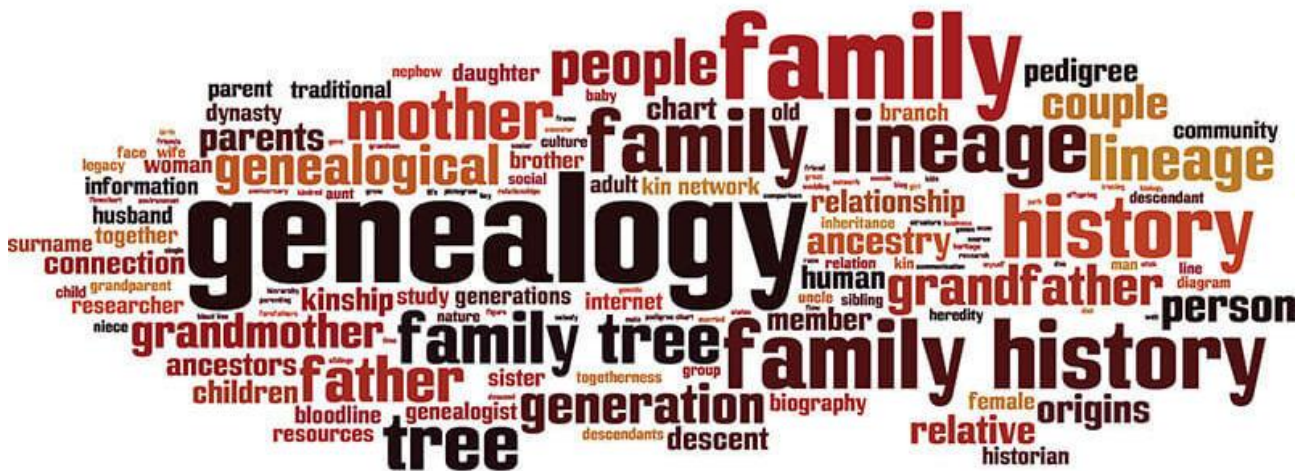


changed his name to Richie. There's a rumor about a half brother and sister marrying and having children and maybe being shunned by the Quakers.

Nat is interested in learning more about these family names: Richie, Richey, Pierson, Pearson, Person, McCary, Campbell, Broadhead, Massey, and Petty.

Nat is a widower and has four grown children. His oldest daughter is the city attorney in Waco, Texas. Another daughter is a dental hygienist in Knoxville, Tennessee, and is about to start a small business. One son is involved in the movie industry and lives in New York City and New Orleans. The youngest son attended Centenary College and is doing graduate work at LSUS.

When he was younger and in better health, Nat traveled extensively to places including England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Switzerland, Egypt, and Israel. A Mediterranean tour to Greece and Turkey followed the travels of the Apostle Paul. Nat has also traveled to Australia, New Zealand, and Central and South America, which included a cruise down the Amazon.



# A Stone Can't Talk

*Contributed by Elaine Johnson*

To the Great-Grandchildren of Susan Belle Arts:

You don't know me, but I am your great-great-aunt Elaine (Arts) Johnson. Everyone in the family knows that I love genealogy and have worked on it for years. I started in 1985 with your great-great-great-grandmother, Florence Fretter Mecum.

My two sons have always been uninterested in what I do, but I have told them many times, "That's OK, I'm doing this for my great-grandchildren." Unfortunately, I am the only person in the family (other than Michael, who has never married) that does not have grandchildren, much less great-grandchildren. Because of that, your great-grandma Susan always told me that she would share her grandchildren with me. So I feel sure she would have shared her great-grandchildren, too.

It is so hard for me to comprehend that my sister is your great-grandmother; that my mother (Clara Belle Arts) is your great-great-grandmother; my grandmother (Florence Fretter Moreland Mecum) is your great-great-great-grandmother; and my great-grandmother (Amanda Roush Fretter Crary) is your great-great-great-great-grandmother. How time flies. I always wanted to know about those that came before me. So hopefully you will find this interesting.

Someday you will be big enough to see the stone that is in her rock garden. And you will see that it says, "Susan B. Arts, Dec. 7, 1953 – May 7, 2011."



But a stone can't talk and tell you all the things that I know and remember about her. So I want to pass on a few of my memories of her. This is really just a mixture of memories and not really a story, but I have tried to make it somewhat chronological. She was born Susan Belle Arts, on December 7, 1953, in Riverside, California. She was the third daughter of James David Arts and Clara Belle Moreland. Dad wanted a son so badly, and because of this, she always felt unwanted by him.

While Dad may have felt that way, she was the pampered pet of the rest of the family. She was so little and so cute with her dimples. When she was little, we called her “Susie Q.” Your great-great-great-grandmother Florence ALWAYS referred to her as “our dear little Susie.”

One of my first memories of her is when we went to Disneyland in California. She was probably about three or four years old. I was about five or six. We were riding in a boat on a jungle ride, and one of the electronic hippos popped up out of the water with its mouth wide open. She was sitting on Mama’s lap, and you could hear her screams all around the park. She told me much later in life that she remembered that day and how terrified she was that it was going to get Mama.

Riding in the car always made her car sick. Every time we went somewhere, she always got to ride up in the front seat with your great-great-grandma Clara – I was so jealous!! That was something she never outgrew. She always had to ride in the front of a car.

In 1961, our parents were divorced, and in June 1963, we moved from California to Arkansas. The oldest, David, was married and stayed in California. The property in Arkansas is where your grandpa Dean lives now. When we moved there, it was our mother Clara Belle Arts, six children, a dog, and a parakeet. Our grandmother (Florence Mecum) and great-grandmother (Amanda Crary) were already living there. Within a year, the two oldest children (Robert and Judy) had left home, and only the youngest four remained (Elaine, Barbara, Susan, and Michael). At that time there were four generations living on the property.

At the time we moved to Arkansas, the property had 17 acres of land with a creek and woods. The four of us each had a special spot in the woods and another special spot on the creek that we considered “ours.” Your great-grandma’s spot in the woods was back behind where your great-great-uncle Robert’s property used to be, by what we called the Spring Tree. The tree is gone now, but the spring is still there. She loved to play out there. I remember that there were a lot of wild African violets in the woods. Many years later when she was grown, she told me that as a child she truly believed that there were fairies in the woods.

Because Susan tended to get sick a lot, Grandma (Florence Mecum) always babied her. Grandma used to doctor her with “buttered aspirins” so they wouldn’t upset her stomach – or comfrey tea. I used to tease Susan about that, and she would say, “Do you know how nasty buttered aspirins are??” We would always laugh about it. But she actually liked the tea.

Speaking of tea, Susan was the one that spent a lot of time with our great-grandmother (Amanda Crary). Grandma Mater (as we called her) had a collection of little wooden animals, and Susan loved to play with them. So she would go up to Grandma Mater’s house, and Grandma Mater would make tea for her, and she’d sit at the table, drink her tea, and play with the little animals. Grandma Mater had an old can that she kept her tea leaves in. After Mama passed away, Susan got the tea can. After Susan passed away, I got it. Someday that should go to one of her descendants because she had more history with it than the rest of us.

When she reached the seventh grade (following after me and Barbara), the teachers asked her if she was like Elaine (who was quiet, a bookworm, and loved to study and made great grades) or like *BARBARA!!* (who was boy crazy, hung out on the smoking porch at school, and gave the teachers a hard time). Your great-grandma said, “I was mortified because I wasn’t like either one of you. I was Susan.”

She loved to write. I have a lot of poems and other “writings” by her. These are her words talking about your great-grandfather (Grandpa Dean’s father):

“I found the love of my life when I was 10 years old, I was in the fourth grade and he was a senior in high school. To say the least he did not notice me, but, I lived for the day that he would and he did when I was sixteen. His niece called and asked if I would like to go swimming with him (and her). You bet I wanted to go, I don't even remember if I asked my mom I was so excited. He drove up in his orange and black Camaro, with his mirrored sun glasses he looked like heaven to me. He didn't say two words to me but it didn't matter to me, I cared enough for both of us. We were engaged before he even kissed me and then we got married - dreams do come true. I had two boys and I thought life was perfect - till he told me there was someone else. Crushed doesn't even begin to describe the pain and disillusionment. He fell right off his pedestal and he never could get back on it.”

Even though the marriage failed, and he eventually got custody of the two boys, your great-grandma Susan told me later in life that in the end it all worked out OK. They remained friendly, and she got to see the boys frequently. She said they would have been different men if she had gotten custody of them. She said your great-uncle Robert never would have been allowed to fish and hunt (his greatest love in life) and Grandpa Dean would have turned out so differently.

She eventually married a second time, but that marriage also ended in divorce. That’s when she and Sam moved back to our property in Arkansas. Her second husband married another “Susie.” When your great-grandma Susan started getting the medical bills of the other Susan (same name and same husband), she went to the court house and officially had her named changed back to her maiden name. That is why she became Susan Arts again.

As a young woman, she threw the best parties for the kids and made the best cookies and decorated fun cakes. Living in the country didn’t provide many opportunities for getting together with friends. She was so creative and loved to cook. So she threw great birthday and Halloween parties for her children and all the nieces and nephews. At that time there were quite a few of them.

Because she was so young when she married your great-grandfather, she did not finish school. She did not want your grandpa Dean to think she was stupid, so she got her GED before he graduated from high school.

When our dad got sick and was in the hospital in San Antonio, Texas, she and Barbara went to see him. Even though he had always treated her like she didn’t matter, Susan still thought she should go. The first words out of his mouth when she got down there were, “Where’s Michael?” She said she turned around and walked back out of the room. It’s too bad he treated her like that. He didn’t know what he was missing because she was really special. She was always the one that looked out for other people. Michael and I didn’t even bother to make the trip. That should have told Dad something.

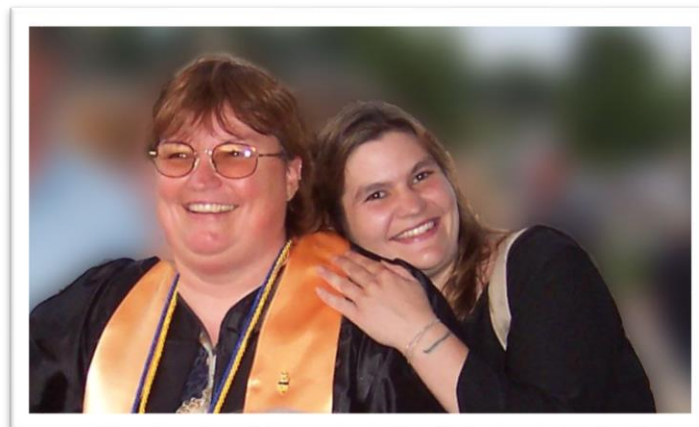
She loved to play checkers with me, probably because I could never win. It didn’t matter how much I studied the board, she was always a couple of steps ahead of me. She was so good at it.



She was probably in her 40s when she had surgery on her neck, but I still smile when I think about it. There are two things you would have to know about her to appreciate this:

(1) Whenever she woke up from anesthesia, she never remembered what she said or what had been said to her. (2) She hated being compared to Barbara. Susan had lived in Glenwood since she was young, and Barbara had come back after being gone for a few years. They had a similar body type and hair style. Susan said she used to go into Glenwood, and someone would speak to her, and it wasn't very long before she would realize that they thought she was Barbara. She hated that. She would ask me, "Why if I have lived here all my life, do they think I am Barbara?" Anyway, back to her neck surgery. After she had the surgery, Mama and I were in her room. I thought she was sleeping. I was looking at her with her neck brace, and I told Mama, "I can kind of see why people think she looks like Barbara." Susan never opened her eyes or moved her lips, but said, "I heard that." Mama and I both cracked up. And do you know, out of all the things that I wanted her to forget, that was the one thing she remembered!! She never let me live it down. But it still makes me smile because it was so funny the way she said it.

When she was 48, she lost her job because the plant closed down, but they offered to pay for further education. So she went to college and got a two-year degree in Office Administration. She graduated Phi Theta Kappa. I was so proud of her. She didn't want to attend the graduation, but we kind of made her. She was glad in the end that she went. The pictures below are a couple of my favorites from that night. This is your great-grandma Susan, your great-great-grandma Clara, and Susan with her daughter, Samantha. I love how happy she looked in these pictures. Susan was 50 years old at the time.



Because she did not graduate from high school, she never got to take a senior trip. So for her graduation present, I gave her a camera and took her on a trip. We had the best time. We started in Arkansas and went to Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. In Kentucky and Ohio, I did some genealogy work. While we were still in Ohio, we saw what we thought were llamas in a field. We stopped at the farm and found out that they were alpacas. The lady at the gift shop was so kind. She took us on a golf cart out to the barns where we could see all the alpacas, including the mamas with their babies. Alpacas make the coolest noise, kind of a humming sound. It was so much fun and one of the highlights of our trip.

After that we continued through Pennsylvania. We had to go over some mountains while it was rainy and foggy. I don't think either one of us was that crazy about that part of the trip. We continued on to Washington D.C. While there, I wanted her to ride the subway. She was, at first, very reluctant to do that. She was so afraid it would make her sick. In the end, I won out, and she said it actually wasn't that bad. We went downtown, and I wanted to take her picture at different places, and she almost always refused. But when it came to the White House, I told her, "Stand there. I am taking your picture. You don't want to come all this way and not have any proof!" So I did get a photo.



When we were finished in Washington, D.C., we went to Richmond, Virginia. Paul Johnson, (my son and your grandpa Dean's cousin), was living there at the time. We stopped and visited with him, then went to the Hollywood Cemetery, a beautiful cemetery in Richmond that I had been to before. It's more like a park than a cemetery. We walked around it for a long time, and your great-grandma loved it. Richmond has many monuments and interesting buildings. Susan was snapping pictures right and left. She found the old buildings and architecture so interesting. I think her favorite was the "painted ladies," old Victorian style houses that were painted many different colors.

From there we drove back through North and South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Mississippi, and back to Arkansas. The following photo was taken at a rest stop. This is the ONLY photo she requested. Most of the time, I was the one wanting pictures, and she almost always said no. But she actually asked me to take this one. We had such a great trip.



I think the reason she wanted the photo above was because of the photo below. She was so artistic and creative. This was an old child's rocking horse that she salvaged and decorated. She had it in her living room for a long time and really loved it. I thought it was so cool. I'm sure the horse above made her think of hers (AND the painted ladies).





By the time your great-great-great-grandmother died in 1999, there were 7.5 acres left of the original 17 acres. Part of it had been sold to your great-great-uncle Robert and part of it had been sold to another family. Anyway, your great-great-grandmother had 7.5 acres, and in September, 2005, she decided it was time to make arrangements for it. Your great-grandma Susan and great-great-aunt Barbara were living on the property. All the rest of us had our own homes away from the property. It was decided among the family that it made sense for the property to go to Susan and Barbara. Two and a half acres were deeded to your great-grandma, which included the house where she was living, plus she was put on the deed with your great-great-grandma for an additional 2.5 acres that included the house where your great-great-grandma lived. It was understood that when your great-great-grandmother passed that Susan would also have that property. Two and a half acres were deeded to your aunt Barbara, which included the house she was living in.

Susan had the primary responsibility for taking care of your great-great-grandmother and also the property. Shortly after she graduated from college, she had been working at First Step and was around children quite a bit. During the winter, she kept having bad colds and pneumonia. She finally went to the doctor and was diagnosed with congestive heart failure because of a virus. That eventually put a stop to her working, and she easily qualified for Social Security Disability.

Because Susan was living on the property and had the primary responsibility for your great-great-grandma and the property, she made an agreement with your grandfather and deeded her 2.5 acres to him. He and his family moved onto the property and took care of things for her and your great-great-grandma. So it was once again four generations living on the property. It's odd how life often repeats itself.

After her diagnosis, I spent even more time with her, trying to cheer her up. We spent much of our time together watching movies. She always said that I was so uneducated when it came to movies (because I rarely had time to watch them), but she made it her goal to get me educated☺. We would watch movies, eat popcorn, laugh, and talk. She still liked to cook, and every time I came to visit, she'd always make me potato salad. Sometimes she'd make a lemon meringue pie – she knew those were my favorites. I miss those days more than I can say.

Then in June 2007, in her words below, it got even worse for her:

“Well as life goes it is full of surprises for it had more in store. You know sometimes you would think things would get better or at least say enough – but no – can't have that can we? Friday I went to the hospital because I thought I was having a problem with my heart. Then when I could think I thought maybe it was a stroke. My chest hurt, my left arm and leg felt numb and funny feeling. The right side of my face felt like it was sliding down and my speech was slurred. They sent me home with water pills. Monday I was in the hospital in Little Rock with doctors taking MRI's and different tests they found out I had a brain tumor and set me up for surgery. Boy when it rains it pours. They cut my head from ear to ear across the top. My hair came back in curly. I am more forgetful and have a hard time finding the words I want but hey I am still here trying. I stay tired and can't do things for long periods of time. I don't seem to enjoy the things I once did.”

The night before her brain surgery, she and I sat up. She was writing her will “just in case.” I was so worried that I could not argue with her. But she didn't want her children to see it,



” in case”everything went well. Luckily, everything turned out OK. The surgery lasted ten hours, but she survived it and was shortly back home. The tumor was benign. She claims she never felt the same after the surgery, but it really did not show that much.



In October 2007, we made our first trip to Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Susan LOVED Christmas. She loved everything about it – decorating, shopping, the music, and cooking, so in October, we cranked up the air conditioning (making it feel like Christmas) and played Christmas music all the way up there. We had so much fun. The town has a European feel to it, kind of hilly, with little shops up and down the main street. She loved going in and out of the shops, especially the little crafty shops.

She had a lot of wind chimes. At home, she had them hanging all over her porch. It was funny because your grandpa Dean used to come out and tie them all together so they wouldn't make any noise. He claimed he hated them. I never knew if he really did or if he just liked to tease his mom. Anyway, in Eureka Springs, there is this HUGE wind chime, billed as the largest wind chime in the world. Of course, Susan needed to see that. So we drove to it and took pictures. She said she wished she could take it home. That would really get Dean's

attention. We got a good laugh out of that.

Probably the thing that everyone remembers the most about Susan was her love of fairies. Everyone in the family knew how much she loved her fairies. She had them all over her house and out in her rock garden. She always said that as a child, she truly believed there were fairies out in the woods. She would laugh and say she let the cobwebs stay in her house because they were the fairies' dressing rooms. She also let everyone know that dragonflies were “fairies in disguise.” That is why she has a dragonfly on her memorial rock.

Even though your grandparents took care of the property, Susan was still the one that primarily took care of your great-great-grandma. She always checked on her in the mornings and made sure she had what she needed. During the night of December 26, 2010, she said she woke up several times during the night and saw that Mama's light was still on. She thought she was having a bad night. The next morning she went up about 7:00, and the door was still locked, and the curtains were still down. Great-Great-Grandma would always open the curtain and unlock the door to let Susan know she was up. Because the door was still locked and the curtain wasn't open, Susan thought she was still sleeping, so she just went back out to her house. Around 9:00, the door was still locked, so she went back to get her key to the house and discovered your great-great-grandma in her chair. It appears that she had had a stroke sometime during the night. She was taken by ambulance to the hospital where she died a few days later.

After your great-great-grandma died, the house became Susan's. I started spending every weekend up there, helping to clear out the house and getting it ready for Susan to move into. At first Susan didn't think she could do it. She said it would “always be Mama's house.” And while that was true, it was now Susan's.

After we got things pretty much cleared out, we spent time painting, repairing floors, and adding new counter tops. Susan felt bad because there really wasn't much she could do, but your grandpa Dean, your great-uncle Robert, and I were just about ready to finish it up.

Then I had to travel for my job. So the last weekend that I was up there, I told Susan I couldn't come the next weekend. She said that was OK, that Samantha wanted her to come visit, so she would just go there for a week or so. We talked quite a bit that weekend about everything and she said, "This is really going to happen, isn't it?" We were almost finished, and I assured her that it was happening and that everything was going to be OK. The last thing she said to me was, "I love you. I'll see you in a couple of weeks." She was smiling and waving at me as I drove away.

A week later, she was rushed to the hospital. It appears that she had an allergic reaction to something. We never did know what. But like your great-great-grandma, she spent a week in the hospital. At the hospital, they induced a coma and lowered her body temperature to try to reduce any swelling of her brain. They told us they wouldn't do any more tests until Friday, so we sat with her and the whole time I was so sure she would be OK. She had had so many bad things happen to her and had survived them all. But after they did the MRI on Friday, they told us that her brain was so swollen that there was no chance she could survive. The whole family knew that she would not want to be kept alive by machines, so the next day we had to let her go. She died five months and seven days after Mama had died.

The whole family was so distraught and Grandpa Dean said, "We don't even know what she wanted done." That is when I remembered the "will" that she had written when she had her brain surgery. I was able to get it from her computer, and they used that to divide things up. She had requested to be cremated, and she also wanted a stone in her rock garden with a dragonfly on it. That is the stone that is there now.

Losing her was the hardest thing I have ever had to go through. As much as I missed my mother, losing my sister was 1,000 times harder. She was my sister and my best friend. Even though I have other brothers and sisters, there is no one that can ever take her place.

After she died, I saw dragonflies absolutely everywhere. They would come up to my car and brush up against my windshield. It made me feel like her spirit was there with me. Maybe they were there before, and I just never noticed them. But to this day, I never see a dragonfly or a fairy without thinking about her.



So to Susan's great-grandchildren:

I am so sorry that you will never get to know her. She would have loved you so much. But I hope that when you look at her stone, these memories will cross your mind, and you will feel that you knew her - at least a little.





This is a scrapbook page I did of Susan a couple of years after she died.  
In the photo she was standing in front of her rock garden.



# Genealogical Seminar

Presented by  
Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association



**Saturday August 8, 2020**

Speaker  
**Patti Gillespie**

Patti Todd Gillespie brings energy and humor to her presentations. She is a frequent speaker at local, state (Texas), and national events, including RootsTech in 2019 in Salt Lake City. An avid genealogist for 30 years, Patti formed *Family Lines & Stories*, her own research company in 2010. She earned her Bachelor of Arts and master's degrees from University of North Texas. Patti is a founding member and third-term President of the Wise County Genealogical Society. She serves on the faculty at the Texas Institute of Genealogical Research and also serves on the FGS 2020 program committee. She is past president of the Lone Star Chapter of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

**Seminar Location**  
**Broadmoor United Methodist Church – Pearce Activity Hall**  
**3715 Youree Drive, Shreveport, LA** (Parking lot is on east side on Albany Avenue)

### Schedule and Topics

- 8:00 a.m. Doors Open - Registration
- 9:00 a.m. Opening Remarks / Introduction
- 9:15 a.m. Census Sense: Clues & Conundrums for Intermediate Researchers
- 10:45 a.m. 16 Death Records That Will Bring Your Research to Life
- 11:45 a.m. Lunch
- 1:00 p.m. Chasing the Children to Find the Father's Lineage: A Strategy with Stories
- 2:20 p.m. Brick Wall Busting Strategies: Hammering at the Wall

**Early Registration Recommended • Door prizes & more**  
**Cost of Seminar - - - \$40.00 - - - Includes lunch if registration received by August 4, 2020**  
PayPal accepted: [www.altgenealogy.com](http://www.altgenealogy.com)  
Seating limit: 75 For information send email to [jjohnson747@suddenlink.net](mailto:jjohnson747@suddenlink.net)

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To Register: Make your check payable to Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Association. Mail with this form to:  
**Ark-La-Tex Genealogical Assn Seminar P.O. Box 4463, Shreveport, LA 71134-0463**

Please PRINT the names of registrants (including surnames being researched) separately for each person attending.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

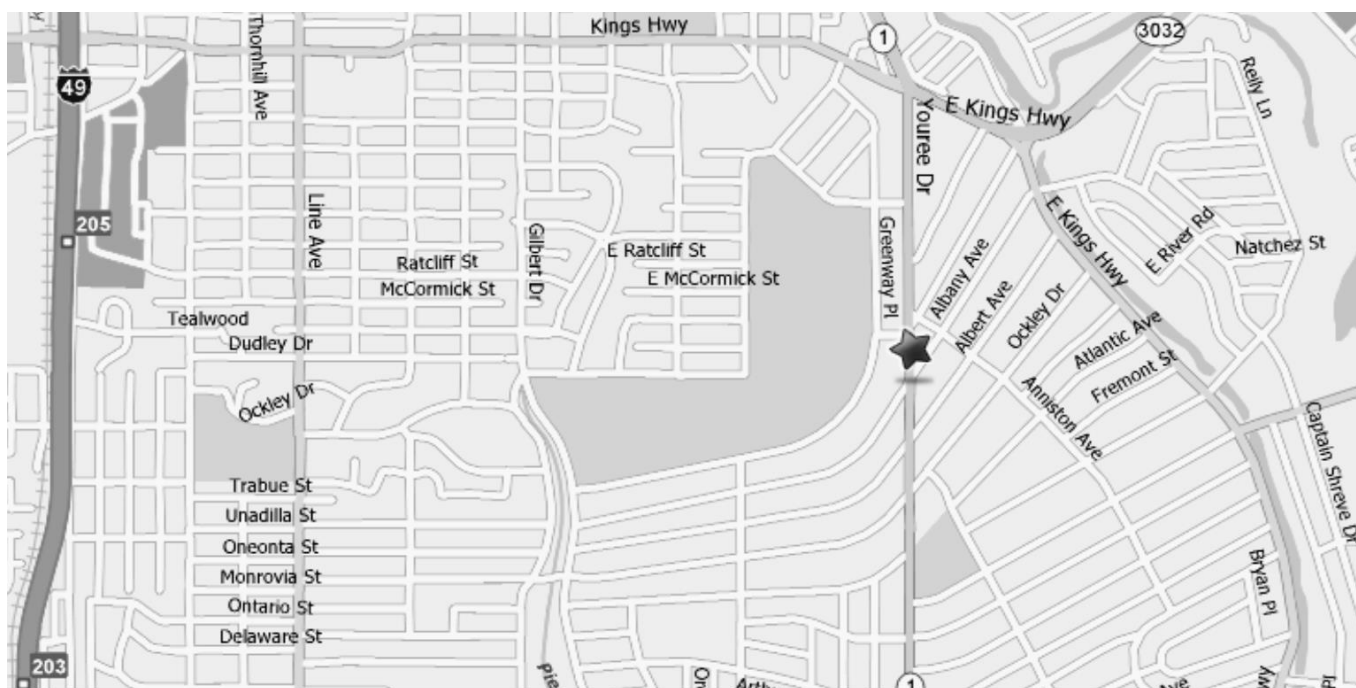
List 4 surnames you are researching (*each*). If received prior to **August 4, 2020**, your surnames will be included in the seminar handout.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_



## Seminar Location



Broadmoor United Methodist Church, 3715 Youree Drive, Shreveport

If traveling I-20, take exit 19A south on LA 1 (Market St. becomes Youree Drive) - distance 3.4 miles. Then at north end of church, turn left onto Anniston Avenue, and go one block (Note: Parking/entrance on east side of church on Albany Avenue).

## Lectures

**Census Sense: Clues & Conundrums for Intermediate Researchers:** This presentation focuses on federal census headings and codes, alternate federal censuses, state censuses, and their use in our research. The partnership between the national census website and the use of state censuses in revealing information about our ancestors is demonstrated in story form. The value of a research timeline is also demonstrated.

**16 Death Records that Will Bring Your Research to Life!** Knowing where to look can sometimes be the most difficult part of research. This presentation is filled with stories and examples of the often unknown, unfound, and unused death documents.

**Chasing the Children to Find the Father's Lineage: A Strategy with Stories:** When a straight line pedigree is interrupted by a disappearing ancestor, there are several strategies that can help us in our search. This presentation will demonstrate these proven alternate strategies with fascinating stories and amazing information.

**Brick Wall Busting Strategies: Hammering at the Wall:** This is a fun presentation with strategies, sources and a variety of documents that just might hammer down that frustrating brick wall. Examples of brick walls broken down are demonstrated by using vital records, military records, census, prison, land records, newspapers, passenger manifests, and divorce records, including a complicated story tracking a woman whose name changed three times in public records.

## My Love of Museums

*Contributed by Leonard Gresens*

One of my favorite television shows is a series called *Mysteries at the Museum*. I can watch it for hours. Even watching the reruns doesn't bother me. I love how the show features small, out-of-the-way museums from all over the world and shares the mystery of interesting and obscure items in their collections. Now that's entertainment!

But better than sitting in the recliner and watching someone else is getting out and visiting a museum yourself. One of the first things I do when researching a travel destination is find out what museums are in the area, and I've found my fair share of treasures.

On a trip to Omaha, Nebraska, I hit the jackpot. The Durham Museum turned out to be a great find. Not only is it housed in the beautiful old Union Station train station with its massive waiting room, it also embodies the story of the western expansion of the United States. Across the station's expansive walls are displays of the city's and region's history. There is an old streetcar that once traveled the streets of Omaha and a restored Mack flatbed truck from the Bekins Moving & Storage Company. And what would an old train station be without trains? Permanently parked on the old loading platform is a steam engine, a pullman car, lounge car, and caboose.

The biggest surprise for me inside The Durham Museum was the Bryon Reed Gallery. Mr. Reed was a real estate agent in Omaha in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Besides investing in real estate in the city, he put together a stunning collection of coins, books, documents, maps, and other items of historic interest. When he died in 1891, his collection was donated to the city of Omaha and is now a permanent exhibit of The Durham Museum. One display case is called the "Treasure Cabinet," and it houses some of the rarest coins of the collection. One coin is the 1804 dollar or Bowed Liberty Dollar, one of only 15 known to exist. The gallery also features a great collection of tokens.



Imaged by Heritage Auctions, HA.com

Meanwhile, here locally, the Ark-La-Tex has some of the finest and most interesting museums to be found; you don't have to travel the country to discover the mysteries of the past. Recently I took my grandson to the Louisiana State Museum in Shreveport for one of our Saturday adventures. It was his first visit to this museum. I told him that I was

about his age, seven years old, when I first visited this museum. I have taken many trips back over the years.



As you enter through the front doors, you are greeted by a historic fresco created during the construction of the building in 1938. The entrance used to be open with the frescos exposed to the weather, but they are now enclosed inside the portico. The four-panel fresco was created by Conrad Albrizio, paid for by the U.S. Government as a part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA)

established by President Roosevelt. Albrizio, an LSU art professor at the time, created many frescos around Louisiana. A bucket-list item for me is to see as many of his frescos as possible. His work is found all over the South; on a recent trip to New Orleans, I stopped in the Union Passenger Terminal where I saw four large Albrizio frescos.

The Louisiana State Museum was also a part of the WPA and was built during the war and opened in 1939. The building itself is a museum piece. Built as a rotunda, you begin the journey and end where you began. My favorite exhibits are the dioramas. These scenes capture Louisiana agriculture, industry, and natural history from the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century. All 18 dioramas were designed by teams of artists between 1939 and 1942. They are encased in the wall of the outer circle of the building and give you a stroll through historic North Louisiana. Each is constructed of beeswax and look the same today as they did when I first saw them approximately 50 years ago.





Other exhibits are of regional history, each having their own stories. The West Wing has grown over the past few years and depicts the Caddo Nation's history. There are many artifacts of pottery, arrowheads, and other archaeological finds. Another diorama shows a Caddo Nation encampment, depicting the history of the original occupants of this land. The largest exhibit is a 1,000-year-old cypress dugout canoe measuring 30 feet, 8 inches long that was found on Red River in the Gilliam area and was excavated and preserved. What a find!

Don't plan a trip to the Louisiana State Museum on a weekend. They are open only Monday through Friday. (I've never understood why you wouldn't have a museum open on weekends. I'll step off my soapbox now.)

The oldest known building in downtown Shreveport houses another museum I'm fond of. The Spring Street Museum is small, but it's packed with local history. Now a part of the LSUS Foundation, it houses many exhibits from Shreveport's history. The building was originally Tate Bank and later E & B Jacobs Bank; some say Ed Jacobs is still there. E & B Jacobs Bank was the first nationally chartered bank in Shreveport.

Later, the building would house First National Bank of Shreveport. Construction of the two-story New Orleans style building began before the Civil War and still has its original decorative iron work. Stepping into this treasure, you'll see the original bank vault and many display cabinets full of artifacts telling the story of who we North Louisianians are and how we got here.

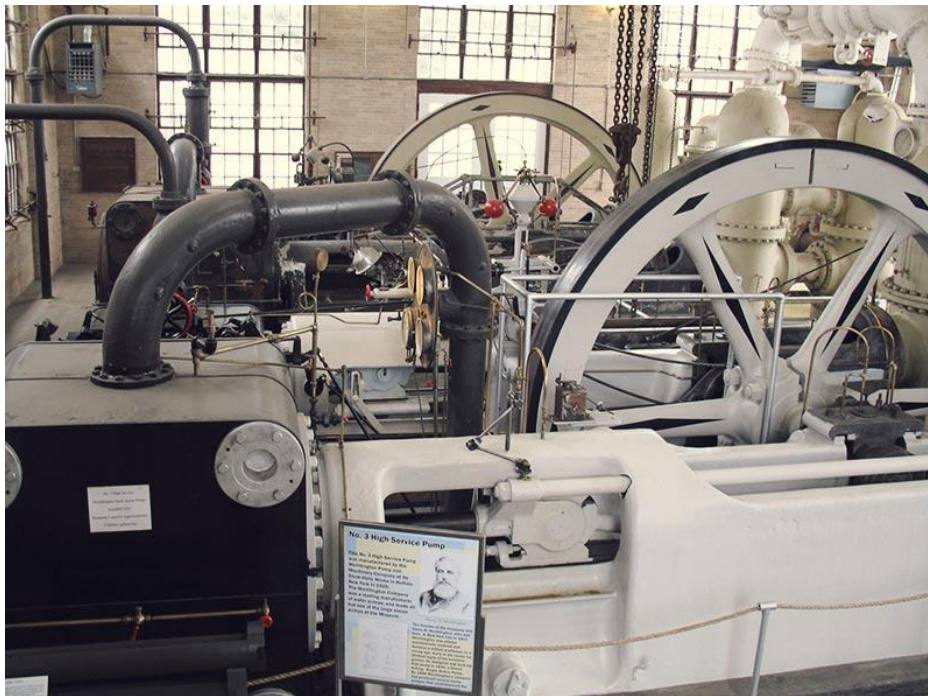
Fortunately, now that it is no longer a part of the Louisiana Secretary of State museum program, it is open on Saturdays. Hours run from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday.

Located just north of downtown Shreveport on Commerce Street is the Water Works Museum, also known as the McNeil Street Pumping Station, which is designated as a National Historic Landmark by the National Park Service. It is also designated as a National Historic Civil Engineering Landmark by the American Society of Civil Engineers. Take it from me, this place is COOL. This Victorian-era marvel is celebrating 130 years of history. Built in 1890, it was one of just a handful of plants across the country that





filtered water, and when it was retired in 1980, it was arguably the oldest steam-powered plant in the U.S.

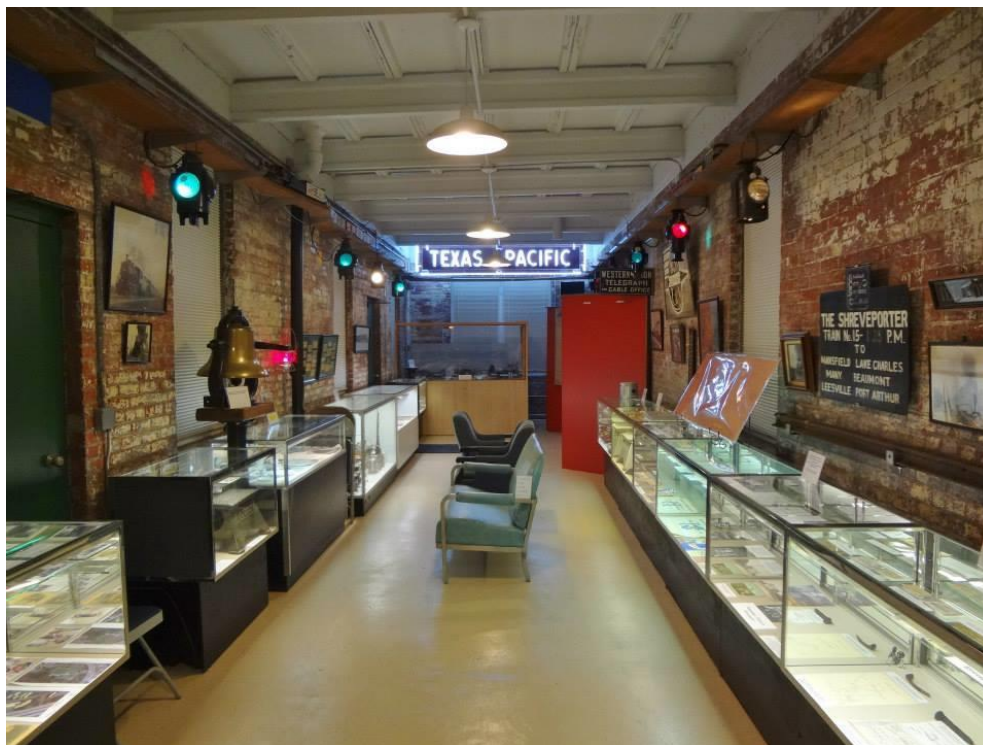


With a handful of volunteers who maintain the original equipment, some of which is still operational, viewing the plant is like stepping back in time. For nearly 100 years, its equipment kept Shreveport safe with sanitary drinking water and a way to fight the fires that regularly engulfed downtown.

Since its retirement, the McNeil Street Pumping Station has been recognized many times for its historic and technological value. The Historic American Building Survey and the Historic American Engineering Record surveyed and recorded the site and its equipment in 1980, archiving the information in the U.S. Library of Congress. That same year, museum curators from the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., visited and investigated the facility and considered portions of its pumping machinery probably to be the last remaining examples of their types and especially significant because they are still operable and in their originally installed locations.

Hidden on the campus of the Water Works Museum/McNeil Street Pumping Station is a small but very interesting part of Shreveport history. Red River Valley Railroad Historical Society maintains its museum in one of the buildings on site. It offers historic railroad artifacts from North Louisiana railroads. At one time, Shreveport was a key player for the rails. Three major railroad depots were a part of the downtown landscape that brought passengers in from all over the country. The museum has many exhibits with plans to one day bring its rolling stock onto the campus. One of those pieces is the steam engine that now sits in Ford Park on Cross Lake. The museum's hours are 10 a.m.

- 4 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and 12 - 4 p.m. on Sundays. Ark-La-Tex Genealogy Association will hold its April 11<sup>th</sup> monthly meeting at the Water Works Museum.



My goal is to make this an ongoing series. I visit a lot of museums and would love to share them with you. Look for more museum stories and finds in later editions.