



# PIONEER TRAILS

**Newsletter of the Birmingham Genealogical Society**



**October 2023**

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## **BGS September/October Meetings**

The BGS Board met at 1:00 PM on Saturday, September 23, 2023 in the Central Library's 1st Floor Meeting Room. Four Board Members were present. A quorum was not present so the August Minutes and August Treasurer's report were not approved, and no voting on issues was conducted. Issues discussed were: October Zoom Meeting for the Board, how to increase membership, and *Ask An Expert* as a future program. The Board has requested that a letter be sent to members asking what they would like for the society to do and how the society can help members in their research. Please think about how you would answer.

The September Program was held at 2:00 PM on September 23, 2023 in the 1st Floor Meeting Room of the Central Library. Four Members and three guests were present for Terri Hicks' facinating presentation about her 14th great grandfather --- Little Jack Horner. *Welcome to our newest member, Alexis Miller, who joined us for this program.*

Reminder --- No General Meeting or Program will be held in October due to the library's closure for one day on October 28. Election ballots were sent by email to all members eligible to vote on September 27. They should be returned with your vote by October 21, 2023. The ballots will be counted and the results announced

at the Zoom Board Meeting on October 28, 2023 at 1:00 PM. The results will also be emailed to the voting members after the meeting.

### **--- October is Family History Month ---**

Please check out all of the free and interesting programs available from the Birmingham Public Library's *Southern History Department* at [bplonline.org](http://bplonline.org).

### **--- October is German American Heritage Month ---**

German American Heritage Month honors the contributions made by German Americans, the largest ancestry group in the United States. The first German immigrants came to the United States on October 6, 1683, when thirteen families settled in Pennsylvania. Americans commemorated the anniversary of these families' arrival with National German American Day in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, though the holiday fell out of favor following World War I. President Ronald Regan proclaimed October 6th as German American Day in 1983 to celebrate the 300th anniversary and to strengthen the United States' relationship with Germany.

[diversity.uconn.edu](http://diversity.uconn.edu)

### **The 15th German American Conference October 27-29, 2023 | Cambridge, MA Harvard John F. Kennedy School of Government**

Keynote Speaker: Dr. Franziska Brantner  
Parliamentary State Secretary  
Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action

The German American Conference (GAC) is the largest transatlantic student-led conference of its kind in the United States and provides a unique platform for leaders from academia, business, society, and politics to engage with passionate young minds. We are committed to question the familiar and discuss impulses for action in fields such as society, culture, and technology, as well as business and politics, creating an inclusive space for open, interdisciplinary exchange among curious current and future leaders from both sides of the Atlantic – and beyond.

[germanamericanconference.org](http://germanamericanconference.org)  
Student Tickets: \$60    Non Academic Professionals: \$200

## --- Other Free Genealogy Events in October ---

*Old York Historical Society of York, Maine*

### **Suburbs of Hell: Jail Conditions During the 1692 Salem Witch Trials**

Join historian Marilynne K. Roach on at **5:00 PM (CDT) October 4** for an online talk about jail conditions during the 1692 Salem Witch Trials. Presented by the Old York Historical Society in York, Maine, this talk is free and open to the public.

*Oklahoma Genealogical Society*

**MONDAY    OCTOBER 2, 2023    6:00 PM CDT**

### **Sharing Ancestor Stories: Writing Brief Biographical Sketches**

Speaker: Karen Fortin, Professional Genealogist  
Attend at the Oklahoma History Center or **via Webinar at [okgensoc.org](http://okgensoc.org)**

The speaker for the evening, Karen Fortin is a professional genealogist, member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, and member of the Genealogical Speakers Guild. Karen received a Bachelor's Degree in History and a Master's Degree in Library and Information Science from the University of South Florida. She worked at the Barbara S. Ponce Public Library in Pinellas Park, Florida for 30 years before deciding to focus on genealogical research.

We all have interesting relatives and ancestors whose lives tell the stories of our family's past. This presentation takes a step-by-step approach to guide you through the process of planning and writing these stories in brief, informal biographical sketches that you can share with family and friends.

*Ohio Genealogical Society*  
**ogs.org**

*Two webinars in their library are free to the public at present.*

*"Exploring Ohio's Outlying and Vanished Jewish Communities"*  
*"The 'Other' Censuses: An Intersection of Genealogy and History"*

# **RootsTech 2024 Registration is Open!**

Join American Ancestors experts at RootsTech in Salt Lake City in person or online from February 29 through March 2, 2024. This is a family history event where you can connect with fellow enthusiasts and uncover the fascinating stories of your ancestors. Register at [familysearch.org/rootstech](https://familysearch.org/rootstech).

## **Future Board Members Wanted!**

BGS needs enthusiastic genealogists and family historians to join the Birmingham Genealogical Society Board of Directors. We're looking for two volunteer leaders who are willing to work to help BGS come up with strategic ways to increase membership and build our organization. Our Board is also working toward revising our Constitution and Bylaws, upgrading and maintaining our website, and editing our newsletter. No experience necessary! We have experienced Board Members that can guide you in learning board procedures and gaining the skills that you need to become an effective Board Member. Please send your resume (or LinkedIn contact) to [bgsal@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsal@yahoo.com).

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**Newsletter Editor: Caroline Thomas**

### **2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

<b>Caroline Thomas, President</b>	<b>Barbara Tillery, Director</b>
<b>Vacant, 1st Vice President</b>	<b>Scott Martin, Director</b>
<b>Vacant, 2nd Vice President</b>	<b>Jyl Hardy, Director</b>
<b>Patrick Henry, Secretary</b>	<b>Mary Beth Newbill, Director</b>
<b>Gary Gerlach, Treasurer</b>	<b>Barbara Adams, Director</b>
<b>Melissa Hogan, Director</b>	<b>Terri Hicks, Director</b>
<b>Ann Gilbert, Immediate Past President</b>	

**The Birmingham Genealogical Society, Inc.**  
**P.O. Box 2432**  
**Birmingham, Alabama 35201**

**501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization --- Founded March 15, 1959**  
**Website: [bgsal.org](https://bgsal.org)**  
**Email: [birminghamgenealogy@yahoo.com](mailto:birminghamgenealogy@yahoo.com)**  
**Membership Dues: \$20 Individual \$25 Family**