



PIONEER TRAILS

Newsletter of the Birmingham Genealogical Society



November 2023

BGS October/November Meetings

The BGS Board met at 1:00 PM on Saturday, October 28, 2023 online via Zoom. Three Board Members were present. We did not have a quorum. Therefore, no action was taken on the approval of the August and September Minutes or the August and September Treasurer's reports. The members present discussed the future of our website. The results of our votes for Board Officers and Directors were announced by BGS Board Secretary, Patrick Henry. There were six "Yes" votes and zero "No" votes. The nominated Officers and Directors were elected to serve for the years 2024 and 2025.

No General Meetings or programs are planned for November and December as the dates fall on holiday weekends.



Meet Our Newest Board Member --- Terri Hicks



Terri Hicks is a local historian who received both her bachelor's degree and master's degree in history from the University of Alabama at Birmingham. Her thesis was on Early Birmingham, 1871-1913.

Terri has spent many years as a volunteer for Oak Hill Cemetery, Arlington Historic House and Gardens, The Lyric Theatre, The Alabama Theatre, Birmingham Museum of Art, Birmingham Zoo, and Vulcan Museum. Currently, she is the Jefferson County and St. Clair County Representative for the Alabama Cemetery Preservation Alliance. She had an article published in the Alabama Heritage Magazine in 2013 on "The Cahaba Bridge Train Wreck, December 27, 1896" and wrote the article on Oak Hill Cemetery for the Encyclopedia of Alabama website. Terri is also asked regularly to speak to various community groups and television programs on early Birmingham history.

Terri is employed full time as Senior Project Coordinator for Kratos SRE in Homewood. She is also employed part time as personal assistant to General Charles Krulak, 31st Commandant of the United States Marine Corps.

Terri has served on the BGS Board for the past year during which time she presented two great programs at our June and September General Meetings. In the BGS October election, she was elected to serve as our 1st Vice President (Programs) for the 2024/2025 term of office. We are so pleased to have her as a member of the BGS Board of Directors.

--- Caroline Thomas, BGS Board President

--- November is Native American Heritage Month ---

Allen County Public Library (Indiana)

The Allen County Public Library Genealogy Center has a large and free offering of videos concerning **Native American history** on their YouTube channel. Go to <https://acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy>. You can also visit their "**Native American Gateway**" to learn how to begin your Native American Research.

The Cost of Free Land: Jews, Lakota, and An American Inheritance

Monday, November 6, 6:00-7:00 p.m. ET (5:00 - 6:00 p.m. CT) --- Free

Presented by Rebecca Clarren

Moderated by Rachel King, Executive Director

Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center

Join the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center and American Inspiration for a program with Rebecca Clarren, discussing her remarkable new family history, *The Cost of Free Land*. An investigative journalist, Clarren explores the entangled history of her Jewish immigrant ancestors' land in South Dakota and the Lakota who were forced off that land. Clarren's great-great-grandparents fled antisemitism in Russia at the turn of the 20th century and settled on a South Dakota homestead, eventually becoming an American immigrant success story. But at what cost? In *The Cost of Free Land*, Clarren melds investigative reporting with personal family history to reveal the intertwined stories of her family and the Lakota, and grapples with the personal and national consequences of this legacy of violence and dispossession.

Award-winning journalist Rebecca Clarren has been writing about the American West for more than twenty years. Her journalism, for which she has won the Hillman Prize, an Alicia Patterson Foundation Fellowship, and 10 grants from the Fund for Investigative Journalism, has appeared in such publications as *MotherJones*, *High Country News*, *The Nation*, and *Salon.com*. Her debut novel, *Kickdown* (Sky Horse Press, 2018), was shortlisted for the PEN/Bellwether Prize.

Co-sponsored by the American Inspiration Author Series and the Wyner Family Jewish Heritage Center at American Ancestors.

Two Great Programs From the Birmingham Public Library

Presented by Paul Boncella



The Plain Truth about Native American Genealogy: Emphasis on the Five Civilized Tribes

You may have a family tradition of Native American ancestry, but do you know how to explore a possible connection to that population? Paul Boncella sets forth the best practices for genealogy, points out essential record types, and takes a hard look at what they can and cannot tell you about an ancestral link to the Five Civilized Tribes.

Wednesday, November 8 12 – 1pm

Central Library, Computer Lab (LH 4th Floor) and Online at bplonline.org

Registration for online attendance only.

DNA Testing for Native American Ancestry

DNA ethnicity testing may seem a simple and efficient way to identify your ancestral connection to the native peoples of the Americas, but do you know the full range of tests that exist and the types of insights that they offer? Paul Boncella examines the current state of the science, lists the possibilities for Native American ethnicity testing, and explains what the various products actually deliver and why Native American ethnicity may not be reported in test results.

Wednesday, November 15 12 – 1pm

Central Library, Computer Lab (LH 4th Floor) and Online at bplonline.org

Registration for online attendance only.

--- Other Free Genealogy Events in November ---

Alabama's 167th Infantry Regiment, 1916-1919 with Dr. Ruth Truss

Tuesday, November 7, 2023 6 – 7 pm
CENTRAL LIBRARY, GRAND COMMONS (EAST 1ST FLOOR)

Dr. Ruth Truss is professor of history and Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Montevallo and currently serves as President of the Alabama Historical Association. She is the author of several journal articles and book chapters on the Alabama National Guard and the co-editor with Dr. Sarah Wiggins of *The Journal of Sarah Haynsworth Gayle, 1827-1835*.

This presentation looks at the Alabama National Guard during the World War I era and will focus on the World War I period (1917-1919) for the Guard's participation in the events overseas.

Settlement House Research

November 16, 2023 2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Central
Presented by Eileen Curley Pironti ----- Free
americanancestors.org

Settlement houses first appeared in the United States in the late 1880s, modeled after London's Toynbee Hall. Located in neighborhoods largely comprised of poor and immigrant populations, the purpose of these houses was to help improve the condition of area residents, both young and old, by offering educational programs and assisting with social services. Settlement houses quickly became a vital resource for members of these communities in the late 19th and early 20th century. The settlement house movement became particularly popular between 1890 and 1910, when more than 12 million immigrants arrived in the United States from Europe. In this online lecture, we will discuss essential records for tracing your ancestors who benefitted from the services offered by settlement houses, as well as those who worked and volunteered at these centers. We will also discuss the historical and social context of the settlement house movement and how it shaped the lives of your ancestors.

Eileen graduated with a B.A. from Saint Anselm College, and received an M.S. from American University.

Dallas Genealogical Society - Next General Meeting
November 4, 2023 @ 11:00 am CT
In-Person & Virtual Event

Speaker: Retired Decorated Captain Catherine "Kay" Bauer US Navy

Topic: Skies over Vietnam – Oral History Project

Kay Bauer grew up with her thirteen brothers and sisters in St. Paul. She earned her four-year nursing degree from the College of St. Catherine. The Navy Nurse Corps paid for her final year of nursing school, and Kay received her commission upon graduating in 1959. After spending a number of years nursing for the Navy, Kay requested assignment to Vietnam and arrived there in January 1966. She was part of a Forward Surgical Team assigned to a Vietnamese provincial hospital in Rach Gia, in southernmost South Vietnam. She worked closely with her colleagues, both American and Vietnamese, in a hospital that had no running water or air conditioning. She remained in the Navy after she returned from Vietnam in early 1967, dedicating thirty-five years of her life to the military. Kay was instrumental in forming the nurses PTSD support group and is fondly referred to as "the Admiral" by her sister veterans. To join us on Zoom beginning at 10:30 am:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87037645223?pwd=OFItakVRdmtUOHJWaxG5U1k5Q1NBUT09>

Meeting ID: 870 3764 5223

Passcode: 145534

Grandpa's Military File, What and Where Is It - ACGSI Program

Free Webinar --- Allen County Public Library (acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy)

Nov 8, 2023

6:00 PM Central Time

Searching for your grandpa's Official Military Personnel File (OMPF) is confusing to many. Is it at the NARA facility in DC or St. Louis? Or does the Department of Veterans Affairs still have it? Will the OMPF answer all my questions about grandpa's service? And what about that fire long ago that destroyed records? This session answers these questions and gives an overview of grandpa's military file. Patricia Stamm, a Delaware native, now lives in St. Louis, Missouri. Besides her CG®, CGLSM credentials, she has a tested concentration in Genealogical Instruction from the Board of Certification of Genealogists.

An Introduction to the Committee on Heraldry at American Ancestors


**November 30, 2023 3:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. ET (2:00 - 3:00 pm Central) Free
Presented by Nathaniel Lane Taylor --- americanancestors.org**

The Committee on Heraldry at American Ancestors is the oldest non-governmental heraldic body in the world. Established in 1864, its purpose is to “collect and preserve information in regard to heraldry.” The Committee’s heraldic interests are national in scope, embracing the use of heraldry and coats of arms throughout the current United States and all its colonial predecessors. Join Committee Registrar Nathaniel Lane Taylor to learn more about the history of the Committee, its publications, and how to enroll your arms.

Dr. Nathaniel Lane Taylor, FASG is the Editor and Publisher of The American Genealogist and a specialist in Medieval Europe. He taught medieval and modern history at Harvard and elsewhere for fifteen years, including the social, political, and military origins of heraldry at the time of the Crusades. His genealogical research spans from medieval Spain, France, and Britain to colonial New England and Virginia. He has been on the NEHGS Committee on Heraldry since 2006 and is now its Registrar. He was elected a Fellow of the American Society of Genealogists in 2011 and is Chairman of the Scientific Committee for the 36th International Congress of Genealogical and Heraldic Sciences held in Boston, September 2024.

**A Free
Program on
Voting Records**

Free Event!




**OKLAHOMA
GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY**

Monthly Meeting

Monday, Nov. 6, 2023 at 6 pm CST
In-person & Hybrid

Musser Learning Lab in the Research Library
Oklahoma History Center, 800 Nazih Zuhdi Drive, OKC 73105
or register for GoToWebinar at www.okgensoc.org.

Join us at 5 pm for light refreshments and networking!



**Voting Records:
Genealogy’s Best Kept Secret**
Pam Vestal, Professional Genealogist & Lecturer
Voting records are often overlooked gems that can be packed with genealogical information, and you won’t believe what they can tell us about our ancestors!



Getting the best from the

UK National Archives

Simon Fowler
22 November 6.30pm

FamilyTree 

© National Archive

Getting the best from the UK National Archives: Family Tree Zoom talk with Simon Fowler. **Tickets just £10**, including 7-day access to the event recording. See the webinars section of our website to book --- familytreewebinars.com. **NOT FREE**

March of 2024

**ALABAMA
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY INC.**

MARCH 16, 2024

Drew Smith

A Modern Approach to the
Basics of Genealogy

- Not in the Census? Try Again!
- Archives and Special Collections: An Introduction
- Collaborative Trees: Making Them Work for You
- Facebook as a Tool to Break Thru Brick Walls

REGISTRATION
OPENS JANUARY 15

www.algensoc.org



**Luncheon
Speaker
Heather Falls**



Benefits of Membership

Please consider joining the Birmingham Genealogical Society. Individual membership is only \$20 per year. A Family membership is \$25. Benefits include a monthly newsletter, members only access to past newsletters including articles, programs throughout the year, and help in your research from Board Members.

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 develop strategic ways to increase membership and build our organization. Our Board is also planning a revision of our Constitution and Bylaws, considering an upgrade of our website, and searching for a webmaster for our website. 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.

Newsletter Editor: Caroline Thomas

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Caroline Thomas, President

Vacant, 1st Vice President

Vacant, 2nd Vice President

Patrick Henry, Secretary

Gary Gerlach, Treasurer

Melissa Hogan, Director

Barbara Tillery, Director

Scott Martin, Director

Jyl Hardy, Director

Mary Beth Newbill, Director

Barbara Adams, Director

Terri Hicks, Director

Ann Gilbert, Immediate Past President

The Birmingham Genealogical Society, Inc.

P.O. Box 2432

Birmingham, Alabama 35201

501(c)(3) Nonprofit Organization --- Founded March 15, 1959

Website: bgsal.org

Email: birminghamgenealogy@yahoo.com

Membership Dues: \$20 Individual \$25 Family