

# BAY AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

December 2023  
Volume 23  
Issue 12



## BAGS Holiday Luncheon

Saturday, December 2, 2023  
at 12:00pm

*South Shore Grille*

2800 Marina Bay Drive  
League City, Texas 77573

The BAGS Holiday Luncheon will be held Saturday, December 2nd, 12:00pm to 2:00pm at the South Shore Grille in League City. Reservations are required. Members will cover their own luncheon tabs and gratuities.

Be sure to mark your calendar for our in-person January 27<sup>th</sup> meeting at University Baptist Church. This is our annual January luncheon to welcome the New Year and celebrate with fellow members! Our guest speaker will be Irene Walters from the Family History Research Center (FHRC) at the Clayton Library Campus. Her topic is entitled *Oral Histories: Remembering the Stories*.

*The BAGS officers and board members would like to take this opportunity to wish each and every one a blessed holiday season!*

*Please check this newsletter calendar or the BAGS website for all December events.*



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# MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2024

**It's time to renew your membership** with the TX Bay Area Genealogical Society (BAGS)! The new membership year starts January 1, 2024. You can renew your membership anytime between November 1, 2023, and February 29, 2024, without any loss of membership privileges.

## **Why should I renew my membership with BAGS now?**

- ✓ BAGS is now able to include genealogy experts from outside the Houston area to speak at our virtual monthly general meetings. This provides you with the benefit of national speakers and a wider range of genealogy topics. We have also worked with other regional genealogical societies to give you access to their resources and presentations.
- ✓ Our private Facebook group is highly active with regular postings about webinars and expanded online resources (many of them free) to help you with your research.
- ✓ Members Helping Members sessions are expanding and include both virtual and in-person meetings. You can join in the group sessions or request an individual, one-on-one session. These sessions can help you with "how to" questions about using Ancestry.com, FamilySearch, Family Tree Maker software or other tools. These sessions can also help you learn how to analyze the info you already have and show you how to research new sources.
- ✓ Participate in our Special Interest Groups. (currently German only)
- ✓ Free bus trips to the Clayton Library's Family History Research Center.
- ✓ Special in-person events are planned for the upcoming year and include awesome guest speakers plus door prizes, drawings, and delicious food!
- ✓ 4 monthly in-person General Meetings (BBQ buffet or potluck) and a Holiday Luncheon.
- ✓ Free access to all past publications (Quarterlies, Journals and monthly Newsletters).
- ✓ A listing in our Membership Yearbook.
- ✓ The opportunity to serve the Society by joining one of our committees.

## **Renew your membership NOW – 2 options:**



**ONLINE** – You can fill out a membership form online and make your payment via PayPal with a credit or debit card, or a PayPal account, if you have one. To renew online, [click here](#). You will be directed to the "Membership Application Page" at the BAGS website. After filling out the form online, click the **Submit** button at the bottom. This will take you to PayPal where you will make your payment. You do not need to have a PayPal account to complete the transaction.

**Paper form and check** – If you would rather pay by sending a check through the regular mail, you can fill out a printed membership form. [Access the form here](#). This will open a PDF file which you can print and fill out. Mail this to the address on the form along with your check made payable to "BAGS."

If you have questions on the registration process or if you want to verify your membership status, please contact our Registrar via email, [registrar@txbayareagen.org](mailto:registrar@txbayareagen.org).

# BAGS INFORMATION

## 2023 BAGS OFFICERS

### President

*Teresa Rundell*

[president@txbayareagen.org](mailto:president@txbayareagen.org)

### First Vice President

*Jane Martin*

[vicepresident@txbayareagen.org](mailto:vicepresident@txbayareagen.org)

### Second Vice President

*Becky Jones*

[vicepresident2@txbayareagen.org](mailto:vicepresident2@txbayareagen.org)

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[treasurer@txbayareagen.org](mailto:treasurer@txbayareagen.org)

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[registrar@txbayareagen.org](mailto:registrar@txbayareagen.org)

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### County Coordinator

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### Social Media Administrator

*Kathleen Williams*

[socialmedia@txbayareagen.org](mailto:socialmedia@txbayareagen.org)

## CONGRATULATIONS

### to the 2024-25 Officers

*for the*

### Bay Area Genealogical Society

The official board nominees were presented at the November general meeting for the following positions. The slate of officers were elected by acclamation per BAGS bylaws. Congratulation to:

**President**

**Teresa Rundell**

**1st VP**

**Jane Martin**

**2nd VP**

**Becky Jones**

**Secretary**

**Kitty Olson**

**Treasurer**

**Todd Roberts**

**Registrar**

**George Porterfield**

**GREAT NEWS!** If you missed November's presentation, *Introduction to US Church Records by Sunny Morton*, the entire presentation along with several handouts are available in the *Members Only* section of the [BAGS website](#), under "Handouts and Videos." Be sure to check these out soon! Sunny's presentation will only be available until December 17th!



#### Statement of Activity as of November 1, 2023

Checking Account	\$1,335.40
Saving Account	\$11,875.17
PayPal Account	\$48.51
Total Monetary Assets	\$13,385.08

#### Additional points of contact:

Don't know the Members Page password?

[registrar@txbayareagen.org](mailto:registrar@txbayareagen.org) — George Porterfield

Research questions or to provide research assistance:

[education@txbayareagen.org](mailto:education@txbayareagen.org) — Kathleen Williams

Have an article or idea to share with the Society?

[newsletter@txbayareagen.org](mailto:newsletter@txbayareagen.org) — Cindy Austin

Submit information for the Journal:

[journal@txbayareagen.org](mailto:journal@txbayareagen.org) — Todd Roberts

Ideas on where or how to advertise BAGS:

[publicity@txbayareagen.org](mailto:publicity@txbayareagen.org) — Terri Myers

Submit your pedigree chart to share with membership:

[pedigreecharts@txbayareagen.org](mailto:pedigreecharts@txbayareagen.org) — Sharon Boeger

Not receiving emails?

[emailcoord@txbayareagen.org](mailto:emailcoord@txbayareagen.org) — Fred Roe

# MEMBERS HELPING MEMBERS & SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



## BAGS German Special Interest Group

### **No December Meeting – Frohe Festtage!**

The next regular meeting of the BAGS German SIG will be on **January 10 at 7pm** via Zoom.

This Special Interest Group meeting is open to all BAGS members. To join this group please complete the [German SIG Interest Survey!](#)

Wärmste Wünsche from the German SIG moderators and group members; enjoy your holidays!



## Members Helping Members (MHM)

### Online Research - Session #1 & 2

**#1 Mondays from 10:00am to 12:00pm**

with hosts Renee Ball & George Porterfield

**#2 Mondays from 7:00pm to 9:00pm**

with host Kim Zrubek and friends

Need help with your family tree or a genealogical brick wall? BAGS members can join the virtual MHM sessions via Zoom. Participants may share their screens and demonstrate recent research discoveries. Details are on the [Members Helping Members page](#).

*If you'd like practice connecting to Zoom or have questions, contact Kim Zrubek at 281-992-2636.*

Bay Area Genealogical Society  
is proud to be members of:

National Genealogical Society,  
Texas State Genealogical Society,  
Clayton Library Friends,  
and  
International German  
Genealogy Partnership



## Members Helping Members (MHM)

### Focused Research - Session #2

**#2 – Mondays from 7:00pm to 8:00pm,**  
Kim Zrubek, moderator, and friends

The Monday evening MHM session, after a general meeting (via Zoom or in-person), will focus on the topic from the previous general meeting. These focused sessions will provide a more detailed overview of specific topics from the general meeting to allow participants to ask additional questions about the presentations. The group will utilize information and techniques presented in a hands-on approach to participants' actual experiences. The next focused session is:

**Monday, January 29th; Follow-up Topic:**  
**Oral Histories.** (presentation 1/27/23)

Details are on BAGS [Members Helping Members page](#).



INTERNATIONAL GERMAN  
Genealogy Partnership

## Family Tree Maker

### MHM Session #3

**#3 – Thursdays from 7:00 to 8:00pm**

Renee Ball moderates this MHM group.

Family Tree Maker MHM focuses on helping members take advantage of the many features and options of **Family Tree Maker** software. Help with technical concerns, such as software upgrading and exporting files, is also available.

Details are on BAGS [Members Helping Members](#)



## Still Need Help?

Complete the [BAGS Help Desk Form](#) and email it to [Kathleen Williams, Education Chairman](#). She will respond to discuss your research needs!

This newsletter is a monthly publication of the Bay Area Genealogical Society, a non-profit educational organization dedicated to the people of Harris and Galveston counties, Texas, who are interested in genealogy. Articles on genealogy are welcome. Inclusion is based on space available and is subject to editing. Please include permissions with copyrighted material submissions. Questions or comments about the BAGS Newsletter should be addressed to the Editor at [newsletter@txbayareagen.org](mailto:newsletter@txbayareagen.org). All rights reserved.

# DECEMBER LIBRARY UPDATES



## Friendswood FamilySearch Center

**In-Person MHM Research Session**

**January 17, 2024**

**9:30am to 11:30am (for BAGS Members only)**

The Friendswood FamilySearch Center is located at **505 Deseret Dr**, in Friendswood. The entrance to the building is on the side furthest from the street. This MHM session is open to BAGS members ONLY for research. The center is also open to the public for research during the listed visitor hours below.

**Tues, Thurs, & Fri      10:00am – 2:00pm**

**Tues evening              7:00pm – 9:00pm**

*This center has access to the FamilySearch Center Portal page, which gives free access to premium family history software and websites that generally charge for subscriptions.*

## League City FamilySearch Center

The League City FamilySearch Center is located at **4655 South Shore Blvd**, in League City. The entrance to the FamilySearch Center is on the SE corner, at the back of the building, away from the street. Use the first entrance off of South Shore Blvd.

The League City FamilySearch Center is open to the public for research:

**Tuesday                  7:00pm – 9:00pm**

**Saturday                10:00am – 12:00pm**

*This center has access to the FamilySearch Center Portal page, which gives free access to premium family history software and websites that generally charge for subscriptions.*

## Clayton Library Friends Events

**Genealogy Face2Face – Presented by Clayton Library Friends**

**Thursday, December 7, 2023**

**12:00pm - 7:00pm**

**In-Person only** at Clayton/Garwood meeting room

**Topic:** Looking for that one document to share over the holidays? Join the F2F Program Committee and the Clayton Library Friends as they gather to do research together. Additional details pending and subject to change.

Activities include but not limited to:

- Introductions and networking
- Optional orientation refresher by library staff
- Research
- Donated duplicate book sales

Registration is required for in-person attendance. You do not need to be a member to attend the meeting. *(Online Zoom access will not be available for this event.)*

**[Register here for in-person attendance](#)**

# Holiday Genealogy

## Holiday Heritage Hunt:

### 12 Days of Fascinating Genealogical Treasures

*Find your ancestors in the records of the holidays they celebrated! Seasonal holidays generate many Christmas genealogy records you can use to find your ancestors.*

The holidays are upon us. We are shopping, baking, wrapping presents, traveling and more! Despite all the season's business, Christmas (and holidays in general) is a fantastic time of year to research your family history!

Surprised? I was, too, initially, but it makes sense. Religious holidays such as Christmas create records and their traditions. These traditions can be handed down through the generations.

Have you considered what traditions and associated records can tell you about your ancestors? And how do you track your ancestors? If not careful, we, family historians, can miss their meanings entirely. We can lose out on valuable records and resources to find our ancestors. Christmas and holiday records are absolutely "[out of the box" genealogy records](#)!

**Hint:** Your ancestor's holiday traditions generated records! Understanding your ancestor's religious and secular celebrations of Christmas is important in understanding where to find holiday-themed records. I should note that while most of these records revolve around the Christmas holidays, your ancestors of a different faith would have generated similar records based on their specific religious holidays and customs.

**Genealogy Tip:** Learn what holidays and customs your ancestors celebrated. You will then be prepared to search for the records!

### 12 Days of Christmas Genealogy Records

Now let's explore 12 types of Christmas genealogy records and resources. I've got 12 "out of the box" Christmas genealogy records and resources to explore this holiday season.

#### 1. Oral Histories

The holidays are a popular time for gathering oral history and creating oral history recordings. Family is gathering, telling stories, and re-living earlier days. Don't rush this! A cup of coffee is often your best genealogy tool in the toolbox! You may be surprised at what you learn.



Additionally, ask your family members if any oral history recordings or videos in your family exist. If so, take them out and listen/watch. Make your oral history recordings. Today's smartphone technology makes it easier than ever. Learn more about [interviewing family with memory loss](#).

#### 2. Christmas Cards and Letters

Love them or hate them, Christmas cards and letters have been around for a long time! Image my excitement when I discovered several Christmas cards in my grandmother's photograph boxes. Some were family, and some were not.



Why? Christmas cards place family members in time and often in place. Be sure to check any envelopes for return addresses and postmarks. You can track your ancestor's location through the postmark.

Photograph Christmas cards are even better! These can be the only photograph you have of an ancestor. Those holiday letters provide family details and stories that let you get to know your ancestors.

## Board Meetings

All BAGS Board Meetings are virtual [via Zoom](#).

Members are welcome to attend. If you would like to attend a meeting, request a link from [info@txbayareagen.org](mailto:info@txbayareagen.org)

### 2024 Meetings

Jan 22

Feb 19

March 25

Board meetings are on Mondays at 6:30pm. Board meeting minutes are available on the Members Page of the BAGS website.

Follow BAGS on Facebook!

[Facebook Group \(members only\)](#)

[Facebook Page \(public page\)](#)



[txbayareagen.org/](http://txbayareagen.org/)

## 12 Days of Christmas Genealogy Records – *continued from page 6*



### 3. Address Books

Before smartphones, we once stored all our important numbers and addresses in the family address book. I remember watching my grandmother and mother write Christmas cards and use their address books. Do you, or someone in the family, have an old address book? Carefully go through the old family address book. Make a note of family member addresses and any extra notes by name.

### 4. Christmas Ornaments

Does your family have special heirloom ornaments? What is the story behind those ornaments? Are they unique to a specific culture? Do you understand the family culture and how it impacts your research? Ask! You can learn the important [social history](#) of your family.



### 5. Special Recipes

What does your family eat for Christmas dinner? Are there culturally specific dishes that you have each year? Do you know the history of these dishes and why they are important to your family? Research any special foods and dishes to see what you can learn about how and why your ancestors celebrated with these foods.



### 6. Church Pageant Programs

Who remembers being a part of a church Christmas pageant? Your ancestors likely did, too! Seek out those old Christmas programs that were saved either in your family or in the church archives. Find your ancestors and also collateral families and friends. Use these records to place ancestors in locations and time periods.

### 7. Church Newsletters

Church newsletters are full of church family activities at Christmas. Often, [female ancestors](#) will be found in these newsletters, and they organize programs and charity-type events. These might be tucked in old family photo albums, the family Bible, or the church archives. *Tip:* Check with the church historian. It is worth your effort!

### 8. School Programs

What parent does not save some of their child's school artwork? School programs? Like church programs, school Christmas and holiday programs provide information on the community and place families and children in time and place. If you find a school program tucked in the family memorabilia, [seek other school records](#) for your genealogy research.



### 9. Newspapers

During the holiday season, your ancestors traveled to visit family and friends just as we often do today. Society pages in newspapers often wrote blurbs on who visited and who had visitors. Names, relationships, and locations of families and individuals can be found in these blurbs. These society pages are excellent sources of family information.

### 10. Vertical Files

Vertical files are like a "box of chocolates. You never know what you are going to get." Vertical files can hold various [genealogy-related materials](#), including church histories, town histories, newspaper articles, written family histories, photos, holiday programs, and much more. If you visit back to where your ancestors lived this holiday, visit the vertical files in the local library.

### 11. Photographs



Family photographs hold clues to your family history search. While you may have hundreds of photos on your smartphone, our ancestors did things differently. Photographs were taken on more special occasions like Christmas. Ask your relatives to bring out the [old family photos](#). Nothing sparks a family history conversation like an old family photo!

### 12. Family Reunions

Family reunions, big or small, are the place to reconnect with your family, including past generations. Share your findings and ask your genealogy questions. You never know who has the answer to your burning genealogy question.



I was surprised to learn about a name change at a family gathering. What was common knowledge a few generations ago never made it to my generation, and I never thought to ask. So, share your knowledge AND ask your questions! Take time out this holiday season to find your ancestors and reconnect with your family and heritage.

*Used with permission from Lisa Lisson – "[Are You My Cousin? Genealogy](#)" (edited for space). Links are courtesy of L. Lisson. You can also check out Lisa's YouTube video; [Looking for Your Ancestors in Holiday Records!](#)*



# BAGS - Bay Area Genealogical Society

For the latest news and event updates,  
visit our website at [txbayareagen.org](http://txbayareagen.org)



DECEMBER 2023

## Calendar of Events – 2023/2024

### DECEMBER 2023

2	12:00p	BAGS Holiday Luncheon – at the <i>South Shore Grille</i>
4	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
7	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
11	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
14	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
18	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
21	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3

### JANUARY 2024

8	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
10	7:00p	German SIG
11	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
15	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
17	9:30a	MHM, Friendswood FSC
18	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
22	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	6:30p	BAGS Board Meeting
25	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
27	11:30a	January General Meeting Potluck <i>Irene Walters – Oral Traditions</i>
28	4:00p	Meet 'n Munch at <i>Mia's Table</i>
29	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2 <i>1/27 Focused follow-up: Oral Traditions</i>

### FEBRUARY

1	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
5	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
8	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
12	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
14	7:00p	German SIG
15	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
19	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	6:30p	BAGS Board Meeting
21	9:30a	MHM, Friendswood FSC
22	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
23	7:00p	February General Meeting (Zoom) <i>Shannon Combs-Bennet: Roadmaps Tell You More Than How to Get from A to B: Creating a Research Plan with DNA Testing</i>

### FEBRUARY

26	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2 <i>2/23 Focused follow-up: Creating a Research Plan with DNA Testing</i>
29	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3

### MARCH

4	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
7	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
11	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
13	7:00p	German SIG
14	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
18	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
21	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
25	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	6:30p	BAGS Board Meeting
28	7:00p	Family Tree Maker MHM #3
29	12:00p	General Meeting (Zoom) <i>Cheri Hudson-Passey - Someone to Watch Over Me: Guardianship Records</i>

### APRIL

1	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2 <i>3/29 Focused follow-up: Guardianship Records</i>
4	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
8	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
11	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
12	7:00p	German SIG
15	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2
18	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
20	TBA	Seminar – Virtual/in-person, Friendswood Library – <i>Kelli Berghheimer</i>
22	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	6:30p	BAGS Board Meeting
25	7:00p	Family Tree Makers MHM #3
27	12:00p	APRIL Members Potluck, UBC – <i>Melissa Hayes Cemetery Removal: Where Did It Go?</i>
29	10:00a	Members Helping Members #1
	7:00p	Members Helping Members #2 <i>4/27 Focused follow-up: Cemetery Removal</i>