



Bay Area Genealogical Society Newsletter

November 2025
Volume 25
Issue 11

BAGS General Meeting
Friday, November 21st, 7:00pm
Carl Smith presents: *Gen Z +
Genealogy – Getting the Next
Generations Interested in Research*



In an era dominated by technology and instant gratification, it seems challenging to pique the interest of GenZ in genealogy. However, understanding one's roots is an invaluable journey that can greatly enrich their lives. By leveraging modern tools and approaches, we can successfully engage the next generation in the exploration of their heritage.

Carl Smith's passion for family history research began as a child growing up and listening to stories that his grandparents shared. A native of Mesa, Arizona, Carl received his bachelor's degree in Family History/Genealogy from BYU and Masters of Library and Information Science from Syracuse University.

Prior to his position with The FamilySearch Center at the Clayton Library, Carl was the Genealogy Librarian for the Montgomery County Memorial Library System in Conroe and Branch Manager for the Aldine Branch Library in Harris County. His research interests include Southern USA, Mexico, Brazil, and Scandinavia. He's also passionate about digitization and record access, and library advocacy.

When he's not working and doing genealogy Carl enjoys hiking, camping, singing with the International Voices Houston, playing piano, and spending time with his family. Check the BAGS website for [Zoom registration!](#)

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Special Points of Interest

Social Media Links
BAGS Partnerships
Clayton Library Partner Links

BAGS OPPORTUNITIES

BAGS HOLIDAY LUNCHEON

December 14th @ 2:00pm

South Shore Grille

*2800 Marina Bay Drive,
League City, TX, 77573*

RSVP here to attend!

This event is "Dutch-treat."

Spouses/significant others are welcome to attend!

Lost in Ohio? *by Kathleen Williams*

Clayton Library features a great resource titled **Ohio Wills and Estates to 1850: An Index**, by Carol Willsey Bell (Call number: B433 OHIO). This publication provides an extensive index to probate records from Ohio before 1850. While the book may appear unremarkable as it is solely an index, it can be instrumental in overcoming genealogical research obstacles pertaining to Ohio.

My Hoopinger ancestors resided in Ohio during the early nineteenth century. After thoroughly reviewing all possible spellings, I located a single pertinent entry:

Hoopinger, John W1835 TU wb1234 p69; ad p105,152

According to the abbreviations list on page vii, this entry refers to a will from 1835 in Tuscarawas County. The first citation is for will book 1234, page 69; the second references administration dockets on pages 105 and 152.

Having identified these citations, my next step was to consult the original records. By searching Tuscarawas County, Ohio in the FamilySearch Wiki, I located additional information about available probate records. Both Ancestry and FamilySearch contain relevant probate documents for this county, with some accessible via Full-Text Search.

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

2025 Meeting

November 17th

2026 Meetings

January 26th

February 23rd

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

Follow BAGS on Facebook!

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

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



txbayareagen.org/

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE GROUPS

RESEARCH ASSISTANCE – MONDAYS

Session #1 10:00am to 12:00pm

with [Reneé Ball](#) & [George Porterfield](#)

Session #2 Mondays, 7:00pm to 8:00pm

with Kim Zrubek & friends

Need assistance with your family tree or a genealogical brick wall? BAGS members can participate in Research Assistance via Zoom. Participants can share their screens to demonstrate research finds. Details for connecting to a Zoom link are available on the [Research Assistance page](#).



Genealogy Writing Special Interest Group



The BAGS Writing Special Interest Group meets **virtually, via Zoom**, on the **1st and 3rd Thursdays** of each month, **1:30 – 3:30pm** with an in person option, on the 3rd Thursday. Registration details are on the BAGS website or contact Becky Jones at vicepresident2@txbayareagen.org for more information and location directions.

Family Tree Maker – *by Appointment Only*



If you would like help using /installing Family Tree Maker or need to ask questions about how the software works and interacts with other genealogical sources, you can now make appointments directly with our FTM guru, [Reneé Ball](#). Help with technical concerns, such as software upgrading and exporting files, is also available. Connection details are available on the [Research Assistance page](#).

Need Extra Help?

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



NATIONAL
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY*

MemberConnects!

Looking back on 25 years of
commercial DNA testing with
Bennett Greenspan, founder of
FamilyTreeDNA

HOSTED BY MATT MENASHES,
NGS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Zoom Event

5 November 2025, 8:00 p.m. ET

Register at <https://bit.ly/NGSMemberConnects5Nov25>



SCAN ME

SUPPORT YOUR BAY AREA GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY!

Time to renew your membership with BAGS!

TX Bay Area Genealogical Society

The membership year starts **January 1, 2026**. You can renew your membership anytime between **November 1, 2025**, and **February 28, 2026**, without any loss of membership privileges. Renew your membership online or via regular mail. If you paid your membership fee after November 1, please disregard this reminder.

How to renew your 2026 membership:

- * **ONLINE** – You can fill out a membership form online and make your payment via *PayPal*. You do not need a PayPal account. You can pay via PayPal with a credit or debit card, or your PayPal account if you have one. [To renew online, click here:](#) or go to the homepage of the BAGS web site and click on the link that says, “**Membership Application Page.**” 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.
- * **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](#) or go to the homepage of the BAGS website and click on the link that says “Membership Application – PDF.” This will open a PDF file which you can print and fill out. Mail it to the address on the form with your check made payable to “BAGS.”

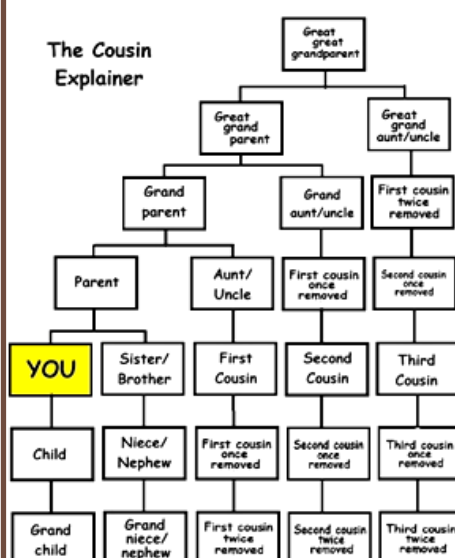
If you have any questions on the registration process or if you want to verify your membership status, please contact our [Registrar](#) via email, registrar@TxBayAreaGen.org.

BAGS Presents: **WE ARE FAMILY**

[BAGS display presentation](#) at the Freeman Library is **DECEMBER 2025**.

Do you have a story that can be told with pictures or documents? Do you have memorabilia (*photos, clothes, letters, etc.*) to attract attention to the display? YOU CAN HELP!

Create a poster or send photos/memorabilia to Polly Swerdlin, at 281-814-4606 or webeditor@txbayareagen.org, and let her know when and where to pick up your part of this project.



NOVEMBER RESEARCH | LIBRARY UPDATES

Friendswood FamilySearch Center

In-Person Research Session

TUESDAYS: Nov 20th Dec 16th

10:00am to 12:00pm

Now meeting the 3rd Tuesday of each month! This MHM session is open to all BAGS members for research. The Friendswood FamilySearch Center is located at **505 Deseret Dr**, in Friendswood, TX. The center is also open to the public for research during the listed visitor hours:

Tues, Thurs, & Fri 10:00am – 2:00pm

Tuesday evenings 7:00pm – 9:00pm

The center has FREE access to the FamilySearch Center Portal page, with premium family history software.

League City FamilySearch Center

The League City FamilySearch Center is located at **4655 South Shore Blvd**, in League City and is open to the public for research:

Tuesdays and Wednesdays 7:00pm – 9:00pm

Saturdays 10:00am – 12:00pm

OTHER FAMILYSEARCH CENTERS

Alvin FSC, 2700 Lehi Ln, Alvin, TX, 77511

Wednesdays 10am – 12pm

Baytown FSC, 1010 Birdsong Dr, Baytown, TX, 77521

Wednesdays 10am – 12pm

Kingwood FSC, 4021 Deerbrook, Kingwood, TX, 77339

Wednesdays 7pm – 9pm

Pasadena FSC, 4202 Yellowstone Dr, Pasadena, TX, 77504

Wednesdays 7pm – 9pm

Sugarland FSC, 602 Eldridge Rd, Sugarland TX, 77478

Wednesdays 10am – 5pm

These centers have FREE access to the FamilySearch Center Portal page, with premium family history software.



HPL Clayton Library for Genealogical Research | FamilySearch Center and Clayton Library Friends (CLF) Events

The **FamilySearch Center** at the **Clayton Library Campus** is open for research! Staff members are available to help you get started and to assist in locating books, microfilms, periodicals, and databases to further your research.

CLF Book Sale & Scanning Saturdays – **Nov 1st, 11:00am–3:00pm**, Visit the Clayton Library Friends donated duplicate book sale held each 1st and 3rd Saturday of the month. Call 832-393-2600 to reserve your spot to scan photos and documents. Bring a flash drive to save all your scans!

Hoe to Use Sanborn Maps, **Nov 6th, 4:00pm–5:30pm**, Join us for an engaging workshop where you'll learn how to read and interpret these historical survey maps that once assessed fire insurance risks and now serve as powerful research tools for historians, genealogists, and curious minds alike. [More Info](#)

How to Reopen and Work a Genealogical Cold Case, **Nov 15th, 10:30am–12:00pm**, Become a genealogical detective in this vital session. You'll learn to track ancestors like a criminal cold case detective, sniffing out holes in your research and getting missing information on the record with cutting edge technology. This is a hybrid meeting with the CLF business meeting preceding. [More Info](#)

Orientation to the Family History Research Center at the Clayton Library – **Nov 8th, 10:00-11:30am**, Curious about your family history? Clayton offers a monthly orientation to the Family History Research Center where you can learn about the history of the Family History Research Center at the Clayton Library Campus, the resources we provide, and how to uncover your ancestors' stories [More Info](#)

Clayton Library Friends Partner Societies | [The Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society](#) | [Texas Bay Area Genealogical Society](#) | [The Baytown Historical Preservation Association](#) | [Galveston County Genealogical Society](#) | [The German-Texan Heritage Society](#) | [The Greater Houston Jewish Genealogical Society](#) | [Hispanic Genealogical Society of Houston](#) | [The Houston Genealogical Forum](#) | [Houston History Alliance](#) | [The Humble Area Genealogical Society](#) | [League City Historical Society](#) | [The Matagorda County Genealogical Society](#) | [Texas Research Ramblers Genealogical Society](#) | [West Houston Area Genealogical Society](#)

Family History Research Center @ the Clayton Library, 5300 Caroline Street, Houston, Texas 77004

BAGS BUSINESS | INFORMATION

These are the nominations for the following Bay Area Genealogical Society officer positions (2026-27) by the Nominating Committee.

President	<i>Teresa Rundell</i>
1st VP	<i>Rebecca Briggs</i>
2nd VP/Programs	<i>Becky Jones</i>
Secretary	<i>Louise Kidder</i>
Registrar	<i>George Porterfield</i>
Treasurer	<i>Todd Roberts</i>

All members are encouraged to attend the November general meeting (Zoom), on Friday, November 21st at 7 p.m. to vote for the new officers. The online ballot link will be provided at the meeting. The results will be announced in the December newsletter and on the BAGS website. Other positions and committees are board appointed by the officers



**KEEP
CALM
AND
RENEW YOUR
BAGS
MEMBERSHIP**



Statement of Activity as of November 1, 20225

Checking Account	\$2,936.45
Savings Account	\$2,176.35
CDs	\$10,067.98
Undeposited Funds	\$2.00
PayPal	<u>\$81.83</u>
Total Monetary Assets	\$15,264.61

Additional points of BAGS contact:

Don't know the Members Page password? registrar@txbayareagen.org — George Porterfield

Have an article or idea to share? newsletter@txbayareagen.org — Cindy Austin

Submit information for the Journal: journal@txbayareagen.org — Todd Roberts

Ideas for BAGS advertising: publicity@txbayareagen.org — Terri Myers

Not receiving emails? emailcoord@txbayareagen.org — Fred Roe

Research questions or provide research assistance: education@txbayareagen.org — Kathleen Williams

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. All rights reserved.

2025 BAGS OFFICERS

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president@txbayareagen.org

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Second Vice President

Becky Jones

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Genealogy and AI

PRESENTED BY BAY AREA GENEALOGY SOCIETY OF TEXAS



BAGS Membership Appreciation Seminar

with Nicole Dyer

Saturday, January 24, 2026

1:00pm to 5:30pm

Online - Zoom Presentation



Mark your calendar and save the date for our next **MEMBERS' ONLY SEMINAR!** Beginning at 1:00pm, the Texas Bay Area Genealogy Society will host a 3-session online seminar entitled *Genealogy and AI* with Nicole Dyer.

Nicole Dyer is a professional genealogist who specializes in Southern United States research and genetic genealogy. She is the creator of [FamilyLocket.com](https://familylocket.com) and **Research Like a Pro Genealogy Podcast**. She co-authored *Research Like a Pro: A Genealogist's Guide* and *Research Like a Pro with DNA* with Diane Elders and is an instructor for the study groups of the same name. Nicole lectures at national and local conferences and institutes throughout the US. She is a member of the Pima County Genealogy Society and has served as their secretary and publicity chair. Nicole holds a bachelor's degree from Brigham Young University in History Teaching. At Family Locket Genealogists, Nicole is a project manager, editor, and researcher.

Seminar Schedule

12:45p – 1:00p	Set Up – Check your connection before and print handouts 1:00pm.
1:00p – 2:15p	Session 1 – <u>AI Fundamentals and Responsibilities: A Practical Overview:</u> <i>Learn how to select and effectively use leading AI tools including ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, and Perplexity based on genealogical needs.</i>
2:15p – 2:30p	Break
2:30p – 3:45p	Session 2 – <u>Objectives, Analysis, and Research Planning with AI:</u> <i>Discover how Artificial Intelligence streamlines genealogy research, from defining objectives to analysis and planning.</i>
3:45p – 4:00p	Break
4:00p – 5:15p	Session 3 – <u>Transcription with LLMs:</u> <i>This hands-on class teaches genealogists how to use Large Language Models as transcription tools for historical documents.</i>
5:15p – 5:30p	Q and A – Session Wrap-up with time for questions

Registration details and further information will be available at the Texas Bay Area Genealogy Society website, <https://www.txbayareagen.org/>. Registration is free for BAGS members. BAGS membership is only \$25. Join BAGS TODAY!



BAGS - Bay Area Genealogical Society

For the latest news and event updates,
visit our website at txbayareagen.org



November 2025

Calendar of Events 2025 – 2026

NOVEMBER

3	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
6	1:30p	Writing SIG (Zoom)
10	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
17	10:00a 6:30p	Research Assistance #1 BAGS Board Meeting (Zoom)
18	10:00a	BAGS @ Friendswood FSC
20	1:30p	Writing SIG (Zoom and in-person)
21	12:00p	BAGS Members Meeting: (Zoom) Carl Smith – GenZ and Genealogy: Getting the Next Generation Interested In Genealogy
23	4:00p	Meet 'n Munch – Red River BBQ League City
24	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2

DECEMBER

1	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
2	10:00a	Freeman Library Display begins: We Are Family (set-up)
8	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
14	2:00p	BAGS Holiday Luncheon – South Shore Grille , League City
15	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
16	10:00a	BAGS @ Friendswood FSC
22	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
29	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
30	10:00a	We Are Family – Freeman Library Display ends (tear down)

JANUARY 2026

5	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
12	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
15	1:30p	Writing SIG (Zoom and in-person)
19	10:00a 6:30p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
20	10:00a	BAGS @ Friendswood FSC
24	1:00p	BAGS Membership Appreciation Seminar – Genealogy and AI with Nicole Dyer (Zoom)
26	10:00a 6:30p	Research Assistance #1 BAGS Board Meeting (Zoom)
31	12:00p	BAGS Members Meeting Potluck

FEBRUARY

2	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
5	1:30p	Writing SIG (Zoom)
9	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
16	10:00a 7:00p	Research Assistance #1 Research Assistance #2
17	10:00a	BAGS @ Friendswood FSC
19	1:30p	Writing SIG (Zoom and in-person)
23	10:00a 6:30p	Research Assistance #1 BAGS Board Meeting (Zoom)
27	7:00p	BAGS Members Meeting (Zoom)