



# Kansas Council of Genealogical Societies

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Newsletter

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January 29, 2017

Good afternoon,  
I missed December so this newsletter is for both the end month of 2016 and the beginning month of 2017

The KCGS board met in Emporia yesterday to work on plans for our June conference and I promised in November. Our speaker will be Billie Stone Fogarty, and the conference will be held at the Grace Community Activity Center in Newton, Kansas. The date is June 10th.

Ms Fogarty has a website which you can check if you like. She comes highly recommended and you will not want to miss this opportunity. More information and registrations forms will be in the mail and in our publications, as well as on our website very soon. Do save the date and plan to attend.

Our membership chairperson reminds anyone who has not yet paid 2016-17 dues to get them to her ASAP She needs to bring our records up to date. Contact [membershipchair@kcgs.us](mailto:membershipchair@kcgs.us) to see if yours are not yet paid.

Darren reminds us of the Presidential Award for volunteering is available. If you have people who are doing a lot of the society's work, please fill out a little paperwork and present them with an award.

We will want to recognize them at our annual meeting in June.

Do you know of local genealogical societies which have or are going to disband and close their libraries? If so, KCGS would be happy to take their as yet unpublished materials and publish them in our own Kansas Review and Newsletter. That way they will also be included in the State Archives. Let us know if we can help.

I have been reading:

**The Manhattan Public Library** has greatly increased the amount of material that is available online for those who hold a library card with them. It is becoming easier to get access to some of the databases nationally than ever before. Societies should check with their own public libraries as well as those nearby to see if they are doing the same. These are sources of great interest to genealogical researchers and often we do not know about them.

From Sumner County:

## **Dennis Metz Talk – January 23, 2017**

One day, when Dennis Metz was just a young man, he was helping his Granddad Owens take care of the Oxford Cemetery when he ran across a stone that said "Dennis Metz."

Seeing his name on a tombstone brought him up short. He wanted to know more about the man with his name, and it began his interest in his family's heritage.

He learned that when his great-great grandfather, farmer and gambler, Clint Metz, rode into Sumner County in 1870, he had just buried his pregnant wife and returned from taking his not-quite-two-year-old son, Charlie, back to Missouri to live with his parents.

On July 5<sup>th</sup>, 1870, Clint traveled to the land office in Wichita where he became one of thousands to file on a 160-acre homestead using the Homestead Act, signed into law in 1862, by President Abraham Lincoln.

Nearly 150 years later, that land is still in the Metz family and owned by Dennis' son, Jason Metz.

Dennis said that Clint didn't have it easy. During the Civil War, Clint was shot in the leg.

"He walked with a limp his whole life," Dennis said.

Clint also liked to gamble, and that put him in danger more than once. Dennis said that faced with one card too many in Wichita, Clint ordered a sandwich, and chewed up the card right along with the sandwich.

It was kind of a lawless time, Dennis said, as he shared the story of the time when Clint was playing cards on a farm south of Oxford, when several riders came onto the farmstead and went right for the barn.

Dennis said that the farm owner warned them to sit still, and don't get up or look out the windows or they will shoot you through the window. After the group rode out, the farmer told them that that was the Dalton gang, getting fresh horses.

To prove up the homestead, Clint had to live on the land for five years, grow crops, and build a home.

"They built a small claim shack and later turned it into a grain bin," Dennis said.

Settlers in Kansas faced hot summers, cold winters, not-enough and too-much rain. They faced hunger, drought, and, occasionally, outlaws, and Indians.

"When he rode into the country, grass was up to his stirrups," Dennis said.

Growing crops was backbreaking work. They worked all day with a team of horses and a small fourteen-inch plow just to turn over the ground in grass nearly as tall as a man and with roots so tangled that they fought the plow.

There were very few trees in Sumner County in 1870, so when Clint homesteaded, he brought hedgeapples to Kansas to plant. And with few trees in Sumner County, there was no firewood, so they burned whatever they could find and afford, cow or buffalo chips, even grass, to cook and keep warm with.

"Charlie said that he burnt twisted grass when he first got here," Dennis said.

Some died young. Some left for greener pastures, and some went back to where they came from.

And some, like Clint Metz, stayed and helped the next generation get started.

"They [ancestors] went from Kentucky to Illinois, to Missouri to Kansas," Dennis said, "I've often wondered why they left Illinois."

Dennis added, "Usually they left because:

1. They wanted to make money
2. They were poor farmers and they went broke
3. Maybe they thought 'I can see my neighbor so I am moving.'"

Dennis said that each generation helped the next get started.

Clint's son Charlie "Hog" Metz, gave his four sons land, and he gave his three daughter's money.

And Dennis' great-grandfather Charlie passed the land down to Dennis' grandfather, Orvil, and Orvil to Dennis' father, Loyd, who was a dairyman.

"At one time, we milked 150 cows three times a day.

"When I came out of college he gave me a dairy," Dennis said, laughing, "I ought to have sued him for child abuse."

*The Sumner County Genealogical and Historical Society meets monthly from August to May, [usually] on the fourth Monday. Upcoming programs of the society include Jordan Poland, "Kansas Mascots: The Common the Classic, the Quirky", Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup>; Leo Oliva "Women Writers of the Santa Fe Trail" on Sat., Mar. 18; and Jim Bales speaking about the Chisholm Trail Museum in May.*



*Thanks to Sherry Kline for this summary of a really good program. If anyone would like to send me something about their society programs, I will put them in the newsletter as long as they are still timely. People like to read of other researchers' successes. J*

## **668,000 Pittsburgh, PA Cemetery Records Now Online**

**Including neighboring communities throughout the Allegheny County area.**  
**from Eastman**

San Diego, CA, January 21, 2017– Interment.net, an online cemetery records archive serving genealogists since 1997, recently added over 668,000 records from 29 cemeteries located in the greater Pittsburgh, PA area. These records have dates of death from the 1750s to present day.

The public is welcome to browse them by visiting: <http://www.interment.net/us/pa/allegheny.htm>

These records cover the cemeteries of the Pittsburgh Catholic Diocese, the National Cemetery of the Alleghenies, the African American Military Cemetery, Allegheny Cemetery, Homewood Cemetery, and several others in the communities of McKeesport, Versailles, Bridgeville, Elizabeth, and Bethel Park.

During the America's industrial revolution of the 1800s, the steel mills of Pittsburgh attracted a diverse group of ethnicities, including Italians, Poles, Irish, African Americans, Germans, Greeks, and Dutch. Thus, these cemetery records are a valuable resource to many genealogists.

Records for most of these cemeteries were acquired directly from the cemeteries themselves, already in digital format. Records for other cemeteries were transcribed from tombstone inscriptions.

Genealogists can expect to find dates of birth, death, burial, and plot locations, as well as brief histories of each cemetery.

Since 1997, Interment.net has assembled an archive of cemetery records that covers cemeteries across the globe. With millions of records now searchable, Interment.net is a free service supported by sponsors.

## **Second Armenian Genealogy Conference to Take Place in Detroit March 17-19**

Last year, the first ever Armenian Genealogy Conference was held in Watertown, Massachusetts. Last year's event was a sell-out. Within days of announcing the conference, the organizers were forced to close registration due to the large number of registrants and the size of the hall originally reserved for the event. Photographs and videos from the first conference can be found at <http://westernarmenia.weebly.com/armenian-genealogy-conference-2016.html>.

One good success deserves another! A second annual conference will be held this year on March 17-19, in a much larger facility in Detroit, Mich.

The weekend-long conference will be sponsored by the Armenian Research Center at the University of Michigan-Dearborn. Conference details and registration can be found on the website <https://www.armeniangenealogy-conference.com>.

## **New U.S. Budget Blueprint May Affect Genealogists**

from Eastman

Madge Maril, Associate Editor of Family Tree Magazine, has written a brief article in the magazine's blog that warns of the proposed loss of one of genealogy's major tools: the free Chronicling America newspaper search website, used by many genealogists to find information about ancestors and other relatives in local newspapers.

The Chronicling America web site is a service of the National Endowment of the Humanities (NEH), an independent federal agency funding humanities programs in the United States. Madge Maril points out the new administration's federal budget blueprint proposes elimination of the National Endowment

for the Humanities. If that passes, the Chronicling America newspaper search website probably will go offline.

You can read Madge Maril's article in the Family Tree Magazine Blog at: <https://goo.gl/0b0Zlz>.

## **7 Facts About Your Ancestors Found in Obituaries and Death Notices:**

1. Date of death, name of cemetery, date and place of the funeral and burial
2. Name, place, and year of birth
3. Names of children, where they lived, and their position in the family's birth order
4. Names of the towns and how long they lived in each one
5. Age of spouse at death and how long ago that was
6. Details on the longevity of parents and grandparents
7. Count of descendants, by generation

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