



MTGS Messenger
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Jim Long, Editor

This month's MTGS meeting will be virtual-only, on **Saturday, January 15th, 2022 at 1:00pm Central**. It's time for our special show-and-tell meeting: "**Ancestors, Antiques, and Artifacts.**" Everyone who has an interest in all things genealogy-related is welcome, whether a member or not.

Attend and see how some of our members became interested in genealogy. Share your own family history by sharing photos, artifacts, or heirlooms from your ancestors. We enjoy seeing photographs, clothing, jewelry, family history books or other books that talk about your family history.

This is an exciting get-together because we never know what items will be presented. Don't be shy! Bring something to share or just join to see what others are sharing. Since the meeting will be virtual, we will take turns sharing our items and/or stories on-screen.

The Zoom link for this meeting is <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84850762754>



2021 Genealogy Seminar A Fine Success – What's next for 2022?

Thanks to everyone who attended our 33rd Annual Genealogy Seminar with Tina Beaird. We were very pleased with the speaker, programs and attendance! The sessions were recorded and are available to MTGS members in the [Members area of the MTGS website](#).

We are already planning our 34th Annual Seminar for this November. As is our custom, we intend to have local speakers for this year's Seminar. If you have suggestions of local speakers for us to consider, please let us know.



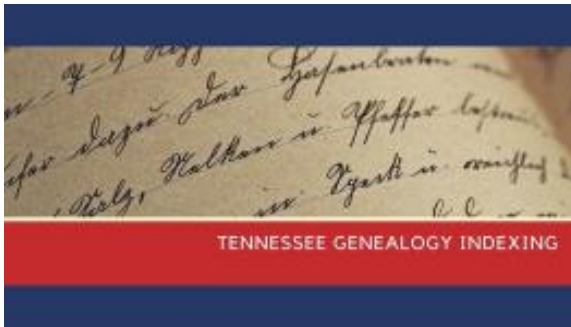
2022 MTGS Program Ideas

Got a suggestion for speakers/topics for this year's MTGS meetings (March, May, July, September)? Please let us know about that, too!



RootsTech 2022

RootsTech 2022 is coming! And like last year, it's 100% virtual and 100% free. The online event will take place March 3-5, and will include keynote speakers and over 1,500 lecture sessions. Register for free by visiting <https://www.familysearch.org/rootstech/next/>



Indexing Project for Tennessee Newspapers

The TNGenWeb Project is a 25+ year-old collection of volunteer-maintained Tennessee genealogy websites. A new Special Project of TNGenWeb is to crowd-source the indexing of historic Tennessee newspapers, so that the newspapers are online and freely searchable.

The effort is being led by Taneya Koonce, MSLS, MPH, an incredible genealogy advocate, longtime TNGenWeb leader, and former MTGS Board Member. Orientation sessions on how the indexing will work (via the FromThePage site) are starting, and one is coming up on Wednesday, January 18 from 6:30pm-7:30pm Central Time. To register for the free January 18 orientation session, visit <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAqd-GvrjorEtzEldkq7Cn5yxzffmei38ZE>

Need more information about TNGenWeb and the many free genealogy websites it hosts? Visit <https://www.tngenweb.org/>. I'm proud to share that I've been the caretaker of the [Montgomery County TNGenWeb site](#) for 7 years, and of the [Stewart County TNGenWeb site](#) for 22 years.

The graphic above is the logo of a new Facebook group focusing on this indexing project. Look for the Facebook group "[Tennessee Genealogy Indexing](#)," by the TNGenWeb Project.



Here Comes the 1950 Census!

The 1950 Federal Census will be made public in April. Do you remember the [MTGS project in 2012](#) to help create an index for the 1940 census? My, how time flies...

The National Archives is reporting that the 1950 census, when released, will **already be indexed**, using OCR and machine technology. A mechanism for reporting indexing errors will purportedly be part of the website. For more information about the release of the 1950 census, read [this blog post from the Archivist of the United States](#).

A Harmonious Ending to "When Harmony Keeps Your Family out of Lineage Societies"



In the July 2021 newsletter, I lamented about the plight of the descendants of Revolutionary War veteran Shadrack Byrd of Stewart County, who were being denied membership into the SAR because of the “lack of proof” of their descendancy from Shadrack Byrd. I had attempted, in vain, to help by writing an attestation letter explaining Tennessee land laws, showing how the Byrd descendants had inherited their family land automatically at Shadrack’s death, with no deed needing to be recorded, that inheritance being sufficient proof of kinship.

I’m happy to report that both of the Byrd descendants whom I was trying to help have now been accepted into the SAR, thanks in part to my use of Tennessee land laws to prove the kinship!



Finding Land Records in Tennessee – Many Places to Look!

In the Tennessee counties where I do most of my research, I’ve read the county’s Deed Books forwards and backwards many times over the years, content that I had learned everything there was to learn about land transactions in that county. Some of my ancestors had received state land grants, and those grants were recorded – as they were *supposed* to be – in the deed books of the county where the land lay. **Nothing else to find, right?**

Thanks to [Tennessee’s state land grants being accessible for free on Ancestry to Tennessee residents](#), I decided to double-check the state land grant books against the county deed books, just to make sure all the grants in my county were recorded in the county deed books.

Want to guess what percentage of the state land grants were actually recorded in the county deed books for Stewart County? There were 1922 state land grants in the county, and only 447 of them were recorded in the county deed books, for a **lousy 23% coverage**.

If you aren’t checking the State Land Grant books for your people and counties of interest, you may be missing a lot of information! If you’re a Tennessee resident, use the handy link above (which takes you to the Tennessee Electronic Library – TEL) to search for names/counties of interest. Of course, the State Land Grant books are accessible at the [Tennessee State Library and Archives](#). There are indexes in the Reading Room that make it easy to jump into the microfilmed original grant books.

Where else might you find land records that should have been recorded in your county’s deed books, but weren’t? Consider these sources:

- **North Carolina** issued land grants in much of what is now Middle Tennessee, as payment for its Revolutionary War veterans. While some of that grant information is accessible in the link provided earlier, the most-complete set of land grant information is the collection at the Tennessee State Library and Archives called **Mf. 1177 (North Carolina Secretary of State Land Grant Office. Warrants, Surveys, and Related Documents (in the Tennessee territory) 1735-1957)**, consisting of 45 microfilm reels of records from the North Carolina Land Office. A great TSLA web page explaining both North Carolina’s and Tennessee’s land grant processes is <https://sos.tn.gov/tsla/guides/early-north-carolina-tennessee-land-grants-at-the-tennessee-state-library-and-archives>

- Check the **parent county/counties** of your county, in case a land transaction (grant or deed) was recorded prior to the formation of your county. The TNGenWeb project has an interactive [County Formation Map page](#) that lets you see when each county was formed, and from which parent county/counties.
- **Kentucky** issued land grants in Tennessee for vacant land that lay north of 36 degrees, 30 minutes, as part of its 1820 compromise with Tennessee over the disputed state boundary line (“Walker’s Line”). These Kentucky land grants are in a series known as the South of Walker’s Line grants. They were indexed in 1925 by Willard Rouse Jillson, in a book titled *The Kentucky Land Grants: A Systematic Index to All of the Land Grants Recorded in the State Land Office at Frankfort, Kentucky, 1782-1924*. Jillson’s book is viewable/searchable on [Google Books](#).
- Deeds weren’t always registered in the county deed books in a timely fashion. If you have explored your county’s deed books only for the time period that your family lived there, be sure to **check the later deed books** in the county, in case the deed was recorded years after-the-fact.