

## Genealogy Library Board Report January 2013

The Genealogy Department has been busy over the last year. We have done over 500 searches just from e-mail and phone requests. We have also assisted many people who come into the Library to use our resources. One lady came in the day after Christmas – braving the snowy streets. She is from Midland and was visiting relatives in McKinney. Visiting our Genealogy Department was one of her goals for her visit and she wasn't going to let the weather stop her! She was here from opening to closing on that day and the next searching through our books and microfilm.

I've assisted a lawyer searching for information on the start of a certain plant in Frisco in order to enable him to check on the laws at the time the plant was opened. One patron asked me to find the name and any other information on a musical group that was performing in the 1950's in McKinney. Unfortunately, he only knows the vocalists first names, so this one is taking a while to accomplish.

One of our e-mail correspondents is from Oregon. He has been very satisfied with our service and has made many monetary donations to the Library because of this. This past year, he wrote to the author of a book on Todd Warden (a marshal from McKinney) in order to donate a copy of the book to us. One of our more interesting requests was for the weather report and TV listings for 1999. Stephanie Harrison assisted with this request. The person requesting it was very grateful for her quick response as they were using this information to help exonerate a person wrongfully accused of a crime.

I continue to learn about Genealogy and how to assist our patrons. I have taken a webinar on finding relatives, attended a program at the University of North Texas (UNT) on the Digital Frontier in order to find out what is coming for Genealogy technology, attended programs at the ALA midwinter meeting and at the Texas State Genealogical Society Conference. Besides learning about Genealogy, I was able to network with area Genealogical Societies and Historical Groups. Most of these groups publish Genealogical information on Texas, which I will be adding to our collection.

For our Outreach programs, this past year I have represented the Library and our Genealogy department at a Lock-In at the Haggard Library, have spoken to the Genealogy Friends of Plano and the McKinney Newcomers about Genealogy and our resources. I've given tours of the Genealogy section to the Genealogy group from the Country Lane Seniors Community and, in conjunction with the Children's department, a group of Boy Scouts. I've sponsored programs held in the Library by the Daughters of the American Revolution, Collin County Film Round-Up training, and the Sons of the American Revolution.

We have worked with the Collin County Genealogical Society and UNT's Portal to Texas digitization project. This project is digitizing older newspapers. We were their only source of one reel of McKinney Democrat microfilm. This project is a great asset to our Genealogy patrons and those interested in what life was like in the 1800's and early 1900's in Texas as it is accessible to all through the Portal To Texas History website at <http://texashistory.unt.edu/> This year, we will be working with the Plano Public Library in getting our older yearbooks (1914 – 1950) digitized. These will be viewable at the Plano Public Library Genealogy page and we will also be receiving a DVD with the images for our patrons to view in the library.

Another of my assignments is the Coordinator of the English as a Second language (ESL) program for adults. We have had a great response to this program. The students range from no English skills to those who just need to build their confidence in using the English they know. They come from all over the world. We have had students from Russia, Ethiopia, Denmark, India, Vietnam, Korea, Dominican Republic, as well as other Spanish-speaking countries. These classes are taught by our dedicated volunteers twice a week. We have been fortunate to be able to have classes this past summer and added new sessions this past fall and this spring. The classes are free and we provide the books used in class. This summer, we are going to change the program a bit to Conversation Groups. This will allow the students to practice the English they have learned in a more relaxed atmosphere.

This past summer, in addition to my genealogy and ESL librarian responsibilities, I also served as temporary Circulation Supervisor for the Hall Library. While I was happy to assist in this capacity, I am glad to once more be able to focus on collection development for Genealogy and Spanish and other collections, cross-training all staff on the use of the microfilm/fiche machine and the Genealogy resources in order to better serve our patrons when I am not available and inviting guest speakers and conducting a Genealogy 101 program.

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