



Roots 'n' Branches

Your Award Winning Newsletter

Monthly Grand Prairie Genealogical Society Newsletter

P.O. Box 532026 Grand Prairie, Texas 75053-2026

www.gpgstx.org

Thursday, January 7, 2010

John V. Wylie

Family History on the Cheap

This presentation demonstrates real world tools and tips for cutting the cost of researching your ancestors. John Wylie serves the Association of Professional Genealogists as Secretary. He serves his church as chair of the Information Technology/Audio Visual Committee and as a member of the History Committee. From 2000 through 2004 he served on the Board of Directors of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He is the 2004 recipient of the Dallas Genealogical Society Lloyd Bockstruck Distinguished Service Award. He and his wife, Barbara, hosted 35 researchers on the Dallas Genealogical Society's 2006 Research Trip to the Family History Library in Salt Lake City. One of GENTECH's founders, John was an active participant in the Genealogical Data Model Working Group and served on the NGS Computer Interest Group Committee in 1999 and 2000. John and Barbara have taught genealogical courses at Mountain View College and to church and Boy Scout groups. He has a deep interest in records preservation and enjoys teaching genealogists how to use computer technology and computer users how to do sound genealogical research.

6:30 PM

Grand Prairie Memorial Library
901 Conover Drive, Grand Prairie

Visitors Are Always Welcome

Cynthia Jones
Vice President of Programs

You Tube Genealogical Videos

Our friend Minnie Pitts Champ (North Collin County Genealogical Society) has e-mailed recommending 'YouTube' online videos by Danny Bishop. Danny Bishop grew up in Collin County and attended Finch Elementary School in McKinney. He has his own highly-successful company, Sudalegi Creative, and has just completed a project for Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. His genealogical video works are masterpieces. Below is the link for Danny's videos. If you look to the right on the page it says view all (or 12 uploads).

<http://www.youtube.com/user/naturalistnotebook>

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From the Gavel

Grand Prairie Genealogical Society President Barb Wiley had long postponed back surgery in December and due to complications is still away from her computer. Barb is recovering well and hopes to be back in full swing before our February issue is published.

*Editor Richard G **Waller** for
Barbara Brixey **Wylie**
President*

Member News

GPGS Vice President of Programs Cynthia Jones is proud to announce that her new grandson, Enis Longoria IV, arrived in December 2009. He wasn't supposed to be here till March 7, 2010. See his picture below.



*Some family trees have beautiful leaves,
and some have just a bunch of nuts.
Remember, it is the nuts that make the
tree worth shaking.
~Author Unknown*

Financial Report

The Grand Prairie Genealogical Society Finance Report that will be presented at our November meeting is as follows:

Bal @ 12-01-09	\$1785.70
Deposits	35.00
Expenses	<u>(109.24)</u>
Bal. @12-31-09	\$1711.46

John Cockrum
Treasurer

Name That Person

Can you name this Grand Prairie Genealogical Society member?



Last Month's photo:
David R. Waller

The Folks Who Made Grand Prairie

Charles Hiram Leonard

Charles Hiram Leonard was born October 1, 1898, in Flomaton, Alabama (Escambia County). He was the eldest of three children born to Charles Anthony Leonard and Lillie Eugenia Roberts. His father worked for the L & N Railroad in Atwood, Alabama where he met Lillie Roberts.. Due to his poor health, the railroad transferred the young family to San Antonio, Texas which has a drier climate.

Charles Hiram Leonard graduated from public school and completed two years of college in San Antonio. After serving 90 days in the U.S. Army at the end of World War I, he worked as time keeper for a construction company. He went to Atlanta, Georgia on a job. While there, he met Kate Belle Rembert and they were married June 24, 1924.

They came to Dallas, Texas, and purchased a home in Oak Cliff. They attended Brandon Avenue Methodist Church. Charles drew the plans for Brandon Avenue's first church which was built in 1926. It was a small simple church and the members, including Charlie and Kate, were a very active group.

Life went well for the Leonard family until the Great Depression. Charles lost his job and then they lost their home. He constantly searched for employment, taking any odd job he could find. When he couldn't find a job, Kate found work at a dress manufacturing company, Nardis of Dallas. She made dresses on a commercial sewing machine and he stayed home with their daughter Jean.

Every summer they looked for a house that had cheaper rent. In seven years of elementary school, Jean attended five different schools.

Kate was raised on a farm in Georgia and realized all the hard work involved in running a

farm but Charlie always dreamed of having a farm. The closest he came to that was when they lived on Clarendon Drive in Dallas. It was just outside the Dallas city limits. A dairy farmer gave them a male calf. Male calves were of no use to the dairy but, when old enough, could provide meat for the table. Charlie and young Jean fed the calf with a baby bottle and nipple until he could eat oats. They named the calf Amos and, as he grew, eight-year-old Jean became attached to Amos. When it was time to take Amos to Ft. Worth for slaughtering, she didn't understand what was happening. Charles brought the meat home; Kate canned the meat; and Jean finally understood the enormity of the situation. From the first time they sat down to a meal where Amos was served, Jean refused the meat and said, "Poor Amos." When the last can was served, Charlie said, "Thank God! Jean has not allowed me to enjoy one bite of Amos." The family began to raise rabbits but, not wanting another Amos, Jean was given two for pets and not allowed to go into the far back yard where the other rabbits were caged. Then they got chickens under the same rules.

In 1936, the WPA (Works Project Administration) constructed Fair Park to house the Texas Centennial celebration of Texas independence. (Fair Park is now registered as a National Historic Landmark.) Charles Leonard was hired as a carpenter's assistant. In addition to on-the-job training, he went to the Dallas Public Library on Saturdays and read about carpentry, writing notes in a binder. He also bought a set (4 volumes) of books *Audels Carpenters & Builders Guide #1* to study modern-day construction. He learned his new trade well and eventually became a small business contractor himself.

While working at Fair Park, he paid \$10 down and \$10 a month on a lot in Burbank Gardens just outside the Grand Prairie city limits. After he paid it off, he started buying small amounts of lumber and stacking it on the lot, covering it with a tarp. When he had enough lumber to frame a house, he dug holes for foundation piers, poured the concrete piers, and framed the house. Next came the roof, siding, and flooring. Charlie and his family moved into this house in August 1937. Evenings and

Saturdays he worked on the sheetrock interior walls. Kate and Jean helped. This house is now 609 MacArthur Street and it is still occupied.

As time went by, they bought the vacant lot next door. Later, when Grand Prairie took Burbank Gardens into the city limits (increasing the city's population to 1500) Leonard Street in Burbank Gardens was named after Charles.

During World War II, Charles worked for a contractor who built Army bases all over Texas. He was pleased when the contractor began to build commercial buildings in Dallas. This meant he was home with his family more and able to support Grand Prairie High School's sporting events—he even watched the Gopher football team work out when he was available. Charlie started ushering at the Dallas Sportatorium on Tuesday nights at the wrestling matches and got in free.

The Leonards were members of First Methodist Church-Grand Prairie. When they didn't have transportation for the three mile trip to the Methodist Church, they walked to Bowles Baptist Church in Burbank Gardens.

Mickey, a friend who sometimes worked for Charlie after he started contracting on his own, was married and had seven small children. Mickey was working for another contractor on a job in Waco but his boss owed him for two weeks' labor. After several weeks of broken promises to pay, Mickey made yet another trip to Waco to collect his back pay. A few days later, Mickey sold some tools to Charlie, saying that his children were hungry and there was no food in his house because the boss in Waco had, once again, failed to pay. Some weeks later, a Deputy Sheriff brought Mickey to Charlie's house to tell him that the tools he'd bought had been stolen from Mickey's boss in Waco. Mickey was sentenced to two years in prison. Despite the deception, Charles told Mickey not to worry about the children getting food during his imprisonment. For the next two years, the Leonards bought three or four bags of groceries weekly and took them to Mickey's family. When

Mickey had served his time and returned home, Charlie hired him to work with him again.

Charlie was an honest, hard-working, Christian man, who always provided food for the table during really tough times. The Great Depression forever changed him. If he didn't have the cash to pay in full at the time of purchase, Charlie and his family didn't buy it. The only exception was the lot in Burbank Gardens. He never had a new car, always a used one. He bought Jean a used piano to practice on when she took lessons. He bought her a used bicycle when she was a junior in high school, and a used watch when she graduated from high school.

Charles Hiram Leonard died at home on March 4, 1959, at 61 years of age of a massive heart attack. He never got to retire and enjoy his hobbies of hunting and fishing, though he did fulfill one of his dreams by going on a big hunting trip to British Columbia. He lived each day to the fullest. He loved and enjoyed his two grandsons. He did what he could to help his fellow man.

*Submitted by:
His daughter, Jean Leonard Arnold-Simpson*

Donate Your Print Cartridges

Think Green

Do you have an empty ink cartridge? Staples has an ink cartridge recycling program; \$3 for each ink cartridge up to ten per month. If you would like to generate money needed to purchase ink for printing brochures and other items for the society, please bring an empty ink cartridge to the next meeting. We can be earth friendly plus reduce our printing expenses.

*Regina Shumaker
President Elect*

Workshops/Conferences

Texas Czech Genealogical Society
January 2010
Let Freedom Ring Conference

<http://www.txczgs.org/>

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Genealogical Society of Kendall County
Saturday, January 30, 2010
Curt Witcher
Allen County Public Library
Boerne Texas Convention Center

http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txgskc/seminar_2010.pdf

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RootsMagic Valentines Cruise

February 14-21, 2010
Royal Caribbean Liberty of the Seas

Come spend Valentines with us on a fun and educational 7 day western Caribbean cruise on one of the newest and largest cruise ships in the world. Enjoy the sun and sand while meeting and learning from some of the most popular speakers in the genealogical community.

<http://www.rootsmagiccruise.com/>

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Clayton Library Friends
Welcomes
Dick Eastman
Saturday, March 27, 2010
Houston, Texas

<http://www.claytonlibraryfriends.org/>

In The Coming Months

February 4, 2010 Bill Covington

The Continental Soldier of the American Revolution

Uniformed as a Continental soldier of the late war period American Revolution, Bill will display, explain, and demonstrate the clothing, arms, and accoutrements with which the common soldier of the Continental Congressional cause fought against the troops of the British Empire. Through his presentation, he hopes to bring honor to the memories of the men and women who lived, fought, and suffered through the dark days that preceded the birth of our nation. Bill Covington is a teacher by profession, having spent 14 years in the Dallas Independent School District as an instructor of both Social Studies and English as a Second Language (ESL), primarily at the middle school level. This was followed by 6 years of teaching as an adjunct instructor for several of the local community colleges. Currently, he is an instructor of Social Studies at the Waxahachie Global High School in Waxahachie, Texas where he teaches World Geography and World History. In addition, he is also an adjunct instructor of U.S., European, and Texas History at Navarro College also in Waxahachie. A native of Ft. Worth, Texas, he resides in Cedar Hill, Texas with his wife and three children.

Cynthia Jones
Vice President of Programs

Websites Of Interest

Online Archive of California
<http://www.oac.cdlib.org/>

Library of Congress
<http://www.loc.gov/index.html>

New York Public Library-Digital Collection
<http://www.nypl.org/digital/>

Executive Board Members

EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS:

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*Grand Prairie Genealogical Society
A Partner Society of the
Texas State Genealogical Society*

Our Library

The Grand Prairie Genealogical Society exists to support family history research and the Genealogical Collection of the Grand Prairie Memorial Library. The genealogical collection is located at the Main Branch, 901 Conover Drive. The library may be contacted at 972-237-5700. The libraries hours of operation are listed below:

Monday	10am to 9pm
Tuesday	10am to 9pm
Wednesday	10am to 6pm
Thursday	10am to 9pm
Friday	Closed
Saturday	9am to 6pm
Sunday	1pm to 5pm

Visit GP libraries online at:

www.gptx.org/library

Volunteer Opportunities

Your chance to volunteer to help with society projects is at hand. Contact Regina Shumaker, Cemetery Project Chairperson. Contact Jan Barrett, Scrapbook Project Chairperson. You may also contact John Wylie about organizing a project of your own.

Extractions

The Grand Prairie Genealogical Society expresses its sincere thanks to society member Ruth Goodman, for her continued extractions from the "Grand Prairie Texan". The following pages are from the February 25, 1910 issue.

*Grand Prairie Texan February 25, 1910***JUDGE J. W. PIERSON**

In this issue, Judge J. W. PIERSON announces as a candidate for County Attorney of Dallas County, subject to the action of the Democratic primary July 23, 1910.

Judge PIERSON has been a resident of Dallas for a number of years, having removed from Rains County where he served as County Attorney and County Judge, and served as First Assistant County Attorney of Dallas County, under Mr. LEWELLING for two years; and upon his resignation of that position on June 14, 1909, the Daily Times-Herald had the following to say concerning Judge PIERSON:

Judge J. W. PIERSON, first Assistant County Attorney under Dwight LEWELLING, resigned his office today and will re-enter the practice of the law with his firm, PIERSON & PIERSON at once. Judge J. W. PIERSON was born Jan. 22, 1879, in Emory, Rains County, Texas. He attended the public schools until 16 years of age and then entered Baylor University at Waco. After finishing his literary education, he attended the Law Department of the State University. He had his minority disabilities removed and began the practice of law at Emory, Texas, at the age of 19 years.

When he reached the age of 21, he entered politics as a candidate for County Attorney of Rains County. He was nominated on the first ballot cast. He was elected and served two terms, making a splendid record as an able prosecutor. Subsequently he was elected County Judge and served one term. Although he had no opposition for a second term, he declined a re-nomination and election in order to remove to Dallas to engage in law practice in the metropolis of Texas. Almost immediately he was recognized as an able lawyer and became an

active member of the Dallas Bar. Entering local politics during the city campaign of 1907, he championed the cause of the Citizens' Association and became one of the leading speakers of that organization.

Following the general election of 1907, Judge PIERSON was appointed Assistant County Attorney by Dwight LEWELLING, the County Attorney, and qualified May 22 of that year. On Sept. 1 of the same period, he was appointed Chief Assistant County Attorney and held that position up to his resignation. He was in charge of all cases in the County Court at Law, but appeared in several noted murder cases in the Criminal District Court.

Probably the most famous of these was the Buck WATERS murder case. The latter was defended by Col. W. L. CRAWFORD, Muse & Allen, and Judge R. B. SEAY. The trial was a hard-fought one, resulting in a conviction with the defendant's punishment assessed at 30 years in the penitentiary. Judge PIERSON made one of the addresses to jury in that case for the people, and his speech was pronounced at the time by the local press as being one of the most eloquent and stirring outbursts of oratory ever delivered to a jury in Dallas County.

Judge PIERSON has been identified with the prosecution in the Frank McCUE murder case, tried twice in Tarrant County on a change of venue from this county. Speaking of Judge PIERSON's share in the prosecution, a Panther City paper said: "The speech of Assistant County Attorney PIERSON, of Dallas, was one of the best ever heard in the 67th District Court, in the opinion of old lawyers. He is a young man of corpulent build and speaks with considerable dramatic effect and much eloquence." Judge PIERSON has announced to his friends that he will be a candidate for the nomination of County Attorney before the next Democratic primaries. He was born a

Democrat, raised one and has been one since he had a vote to cast. Prominent in lodge circles, Judge PIERSON is a Mason, K. of P., Odd Fellow and W. O. W. He has been greatly in demand as a speaker for the last mentioned order, having spoken frequent of recent date in various parts of the County, at memorial unveiling, receptions, celebration, etc.

In the resignation of Judge PIERSON, the County Attorney's Office will lose one of the most vigorous, although one of the fairest prosecutors it has ever had. Judge PIERSON was noted for his equity. If he saw even at a remote stage of the case that there was a strong probability that the person being tried was innocent, he would say so to the court and jury. In other words, he desired none but the scalps of the guilty to dangle at his belt. To newspaper men and to lawyers and litigants alike, Judge PIERSON was never too busy to answer questions, and was one of the most popular men that ever held office in the County Courthouse.

No one yet has been named as his successor. Judge PIERSON is a married man, and outside of his profession, is greatly liked in social circles for his exceeding good nature. Judge PIERSON, as Chief Assistant County Attorney, under Dwight L. LEWELLING, had charge of the County Court at Law and made a splendid record in the Court having secured more than 700 convictions in addition to assisting Mr. LEWELLING in several important cases in the Criminal District Court.

In reference to Judge PIERSON's record as a prosecutor, we quote from the Times Herald of date May 23, 1909:

"Judge PIERSON, first Assistant County Attorney, broke all records in the County

Court at Law before Judge HOLLAND, during the week just passed. As is well known, Judge PIERSON has charge of all the prosecuting for the state in the tribunal named. Beginning on Monday and concluding Saturday at noon, the Judge prosecuted in 17 cases. In 15 of them he secured convictions, there was an acquittal and one mistrial. This is a record that has never been equaled, let alone surpassed, in the history of prosecution in the County Court at Law since its creation."

Judge PIERSON is a young man of strong physique and well equipped to undergo the hardships and responsibilities of this office, and he promises in case of his election a rigid enforcement of all laws without fear or favor, and together with his experience and ability as a prosecutor, we commend his candidacy to the serious consideration of the voters of Dallas County.

POINDEXTER CLUB ORGANIZED

In response to the call issued for the organization of a club to further the candidacy of Judge William POINDEXTER of Cleburne for the Democratic nomination of governor, an enthusiastic crowd assembled at the BURGHER Building Monday night and organized with the largest bona fide membership of the several political clubs said to be in existence in Grand Prairie. J. A. MOORE was elected president and Ross SIMPSON secretary. The secretary was instructed to communicate with Judge POINDEXTER's campaign manager and arrange a date for an address. Reception and entertainment committees were appointed to arrange all necessary details. S. B. WITHERSPOON and J. R. CORPIER were appointed to solicit and receive new members. The POINDEXTER followers are getting busy and mean to carry this box for their favorite when voting time comes.

Extractions from the February 25, 1910 issue of the "Grand Prairie Texan" will continue in the January 2010 issue of Roots 'n Branches.