



WAKE GENEALOGY WATCH

News from the Wake County Genealogical Society

Vol. 5, Issue 4

Summer 2022

WCGS Spring Schedule

Jun 28

Wachovia: Moravians, EPs & the Confederacy

Dr. Larry E. Tise

July 26

Preserving Family Heirlooms

Adrienne Berney

Aug 23

In Her Own Words

Diane L. Richard

Sep 27

Discovering Mixed Race Heritage

Dr. Arwin Smallwood

[Full details at wakecogen.org](http://wakecogen.org)

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Go big or go home!

Are we talking about the sheer size of this newsletter or the full and exciting schedule WCGS is offering members and other interested parties this summer? Both are record setting. I cannot recall a time that WGW ever exceeded the usual ten to twelve pages. This one fills a hefty seventeen pages!

As for our summer calendar, we have our regularly scheduled monthly virtual meetings (listed at left), *and* we have two additional special events - our WCGS information table at Dix Park Juneteenth Celebration and our "Day with Dana Leeds" - both in person events on Saturdays this summer. Visit the [WCGS events page](#) for details, updates, and to volunteer. We have been offering summer meetings for only a short while. We seem to be gathering momentum. Just a few short years ago WCGS shut down from May until September. I find this schedule much more fun and interesting.

Looking ahead to the Juneteenth Celebration, we are on track to have the first pass of the [Wake County Cemetery Survey, c. 1978](#) complete and online by the event. Eighteen of the twenty townships are currently up and running. There are still some supplemental files to be added and the GPS and cemetery site links to be gathered, but much progress has been made. Visit the website and have a look at what we have accomplished since January 2020.

For those having difficulty navigating the Zoom process, we have added a file to the homepage within the current event description to help you. Look for the "[Important Zoom Tips](#)" link. I have also written an article on page 14 that shows exactly where to find that "Pesky Passcode." Just find a safe place to save that code and meeting link. Then, you are all set for a fast, easy entry into the next meeting!

Members can access Presentation handouts and videos by logging into the website. On left side bar, within the "[Member Area](#)" there is a link for "[Recorded Presentations](#)" where the videos are kept. You will find the handouts in the "[Meeting and SIG Files](#)" tab. Open the tab called "[Current Year Handouts](#)"

Watch our webpage and media channels for a request from George Thomas to share info and photos of family heirlooms and artifacts in preparation for our July 26 presentation with NC Archivist Adrienne Berney. Contact George, programs@wakecogen.org, if you have something you would like to share.

We have some great contributor articles for you. Cynthia Gage has some tips for finding foreign language newspapers within American communities. Linda Hames shares her special interest in the Historical Method Community and Oak Grove Cemetery. We shine our member spotlight on Jack McGeachy who was recently recognized by NC Archives for his enduring work transcribing North Carolina records. He has shared some wonderful tips on the process and art of transcribing. Enjoy this big issue!

Planning for the Future: Who is our next President in Training ?

A message from the WCGS Nominating Committee:

As genealogists, we are always planning for the future and legacy of our research. As members of the Wake County Genealogical Society, we too are planning for the future and legacy of the Society. As the Society's 40th anniversary approaches, we are looking forward to the next 40 years.

In May of each year, about half of the positions on the Board of Directors are scheduled for election/re-election. In 2022, those positions are as follows:

- President
- President-in-Training
- Recording Secretary
- One of the two Director positions

Currently, we have three incumbents who have agreed to serve again:

Carla Stancil – President

Barbara McGeachy – Recording Secretary

Ed Webb – Director

The Nominating Committee's primary responsibility this year is to seek candidates to fill the position of President-in-Training.

Members can nominate other members or themselves. The newly elected member will become familiar with the role of President by shadowing the

current President. This path to leadership has served well in the past with Board members usually serving for a minimum of two years.

If you are interested in serving in this capacity or helping in any other way, please let us know.

Nominations can be given to the following Nominating Committee members:

Carol Kimball Stahl, Membership Chair – membership@wakecogen.org

Saundra Cropps, Volunteer Coordinator – saundracropps@gmail.com

George Thomas, Program Chair – geothos@bellsouth.net

Kathy Ruse, Past President – kathleen.ruse@gmail.com

The Board of Directors looks forward to welcoming new members to our team. Through these “interesting times,” we have survived and even thrived. We all came to serve on the Board simply as members who wanted to ensure the future of the Society. Although initially unknown to each other, we brought unique insights and perspectives to build a stronger Society. We want you to consider joining this team. And we all agree that shadowing Carla would be a wonderful opportunity for anyone!

Who will be our next President in Training? I hope you will consider this request from the Nominating Committee. I can promise you won't regret it. The years I have spent working with the WCGS team have been most entertaining and rewarding. We can't wait to welcome you to the team! - CD

Mark Your Calendars! - A Day with Dana Leeds - August 6, 2022

Wake County Genealogical Society is proud to host A Day with Dana Leeds, the creator of the Leeds Method of DNA Match sorting.

This is a hybrid event - Live, in-person and on Zoom. Advanced registration and a nominal fee are required.

Saturday, August 6, 10:30am - 3:00pm ET

Where: St. Raphael Catholic Church, 5801 Falls of Neuse Road, Raleigh, NC. Offered live in-person and Virtual.

Dana will offer 2 presentations on this Saturday :



The Leeds Method of Organizing Your DNA Matches - Dana will introduce participants to the nuts and bolts of her “Leeds Method” during a morning session.

One Man, Multiple Names: An Unexpected DNA Discovery - In addition, Dana will provide an exciting afternoon presentation on an application-based case study aimed at solving a **Bedingfield family mystery occurring in early Wake and surrounding counties.**

We will tour the Bedingfield Family Cemetery adjacent to the church during our mid-day lunch break, so bring your walking shoes! [Details](#)

Seeking Content Curator!

We have an exciting opportunity for a volunteer to fill the role of **Content Curator** from our Wake Treasures Journal editor, Donna Shackle.

Are you interested in history and family stories? Do you enjoy the thrill of the hunt? Do you love hanging out in libraries, archives and other repositories of local historical lore? If so, we have a volunteer opportunity for you.

The Content Curator will work closely with the WCGS journal team. This person would canvass libraries, repositories, and other sources for Wake centric and Wake adjacent content for the journal. They don't need to worry about transcription, although that's a bonus. Our journal requires content be focused on Wake County unless a neighboring county lacks a genealogy society and material must be previously unpublished.

We have a curated list of local historical societies in and around Wake County to get you started. By reaching out to local groups with hidden historical and genealogical treasures, we help them preserve their treasures with a digitized copy and fulfill part of our mission statement to preserve and educate! It is a win/win. Join the WCGS team.

Contact **Donna Shackle** via email - Journal@wakecogen.org

In Remembrance

of

Lynne White Belvin

Feb. 11, 1938 - Sept. 27, 2021

Lynne was an avid genealogist and a founding member of the Wake County Genealogical Society. Our condolences go out to her family and friends.

Lynne was buried at Montlawn Memorial Park in Raleigh. Her obituary can be read at this [link](#).



Visit Wakecogen.org

WAKE COUNTY
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY



Shaw University

Resources

[Wake Cemetery Survey](#)
(work in progress)

[Wake Research Resources](#)

[Wake History Resources](#)

[Other Links and Resources](#)

Events

[WCGS events](#)

Member Content

[Log in for member content](#)
including SIG info, Surname List,
recorded presentations and
more

Publications

[Wake Treasures - Journal](#)

[Wake Gen Watch - newsletter](#)

[WCGS Publications for Purchase at Lulu.com](#)

German Newspapers at Chronicling America: Search and Translate Tips

By Cynthia Gage

If you had German ancestors who lived in America, don't miss out of the great finds which might be hiding in German-language newspapers. There are about 86 German-language newspapers digitized on the [Chronicling America \(CA\) site](#). The number of issues in each paper range from 1 (Wilmington, Delaware) to 16,700 (Baltimore, Maryland). (You can also find on-line German-language newspapers at The Ancestor Hunt.) On CA, your first step is to check whether there are papers in the state where your ancestors lived. Do this by searching for German language papers on the "[All Digitized Newspapers](#)" tab. (See Figure 1.)

You can then scroll through the results looking for the state of your interest, and then review the timeframe covered by the available issues to identify if the coverage coincides with your ancestor lifetime. Be sure to check states where your ancestors may have had relatives as these papers may also contain articles about your ancestor.

Figure 1: All Digitized Newspaper Tab on CA.

Search Pages | Advanced Search | **All Digitized Newspapers 1777-1963** | US Newspaper Directory, 1690-Present

Show All Digitized Papers 1777-1963 (3,518) | Download Complete List (also includes LCCN, ISSN)

State: All States | Ethnicity: All Ethnicities | Language: German

GO

If there are states and issues which cover your ancestor's lifetime then perform an advanced search for your ancestor. Using the "Advanced Search" tab, select the state you wish to search, narrow the timeframe to cover your ancestor, select "German" in the language box, and enter your ancestors' surname in the "any words" box. Figure 2 shows the information I entered for my ancestor (Charles) Kuehnle who lived in Iowa until his death in 1906.

Figure 2: Advanced Search of German-language papers for Kuehnle in Iowa.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS | ASK A LIBRARIAN | DIGITAL COLLECTIONS | LIBRARY CATALOGS | Search | Search Loc.gov

The Library of Congress > Chronicling America

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES | CHRONICLING AMERICA | Historic American Newspapers

Search Pages | **Advanced Search** | All Digitized Newspapers 1777-1963 | US Newspaper Directory, 1690-Present

Select State(s):
Idaho
Illinois
Indiana
Iowa
Kansas
Kentucky
Louisiana
Maine

Or Select Newspaper(s):
All newspapers
The Abbeville banner. (Abbeville, S.C.)
The Abbeville bulletin. (Abbeville, S.C.)
The Abbeville messenger. (Abbeville, S.C.)
The Abbeville press and banner. (Abbeville, S.C.)
Abbeville press. (Abbeville, S.C.)
Abbeville progress. (Abbeville, Vermillion Parish, La.)
Abendblatt der Illinois Staats-zeitung. (Chicago, Ill.)

Select Year(s)*
Newspaper pages are available for newspapers published between 1777-1963*
from 1777 to 1906

Or Date Range
from to

Limit Search: ☐ only front page or Specific page

Language German

Enter Search
...with any of the words: Kuehnle
...with all of the words:
...with the phrase:

German Newspapers at Chronicling America - cont'd

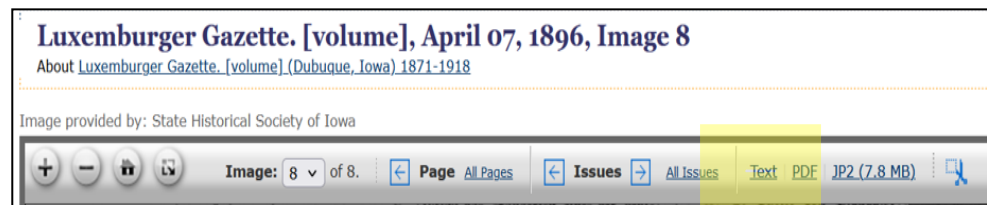
Todesfälle.
— An der Mount Pleasant Str. starb
verfl. Woche Mittwoch Frau Johann
J. Schwent im Alter von 62 Jahren
nach einer Krankheit von mehr als
einem Jahre. Die Verstorbene, eine
Deutsch-Amerikanerin, war in Süd-
Carolina geboren, wohnte aber schon
30 Jahre in Dubuque.
— In Chicago starb Mittwoch Frau
Brandt, Gattin des Herrn Benjamin
Brandt von Anamosa. Das
Begräbnis fand von der Wohnung
ihrer Tochter Frau Johann Waters hier
in Dubuque, Ecke der 5. und Birch
Straße aus, nach dem Center Grove
Friedhofe, statt.

Kuehnle. — In der Wohnung
ihrer Tochter, Frau Anna Schmidt,
1654 an der Clay-Straße, starb am
Mittwoch Frau Kuehnle, Gattin des
Herrn Karl Kuehnle von Waterloo, im
Alter von 71 Jahren. Sie war aus-
gegangen, als sie plötzlich vor dem Va-
den des Herrn Wm. Duggan bei der
Stadthalle von einem heftigen Unwohl-
sein befallen wurde und Herrn Duggan
bat, sie zu ihrer Tochter zu bringen.
Dieser hob die Kranke in den Wagen
und als er am Hause anlangte, mußte
die Frau ohnmächtig hineingetragen
werden wo sie bald darauf trotz der
hingugerufenen ärztlichen Hülfe ver-
schied. Die Verstorbene hinterläßt
ihren Gatten und sechs Kinder: Frau
Schmidt von Dubuque; Karl Kuehnle
Anwalt in Dennison, Ia; Frau Köhler
von Traer; Frau Miller von Inde-
pendence und Frau Zeigig von Wa-
terloo.

The search returns five results from the Luxemburger Gazette published in Dubuque, Iowa. The first result published in April 1896 mentions the names of several of his family members, so this article is of interest. In the article the Kuehnle name is highlighted in red. German newspapers, such as this example, are typically printed in a font style known as Fraktur.

In order to translate this article, I need to copy it as it appears in the OCR format. OCR is optical character recognition, which is what the CA site uses when searching in the Fraktur font for words typed in English font. The OCR version of the article can be seen by selecting the “text” format at the top right of the newspaper window (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Top Menu after opening a Newspaper Image.



Unfortunately, the text conversion will apply to the entire newspaper page. There is not a way to convert only a specific article to the text format. Figure 4 shows a partial screenshot of the text (along with a thumbnail of the original newspaper page) which is generated. This text format is the OCR version of the article. It is how the newspaper “appears” to the search engine when performing the search. Now I need to search the text, i.e. OCR interpretation, for my ancestor’s name to locate the article of interest.

Figure 4: Text (OCR) Format of the Page



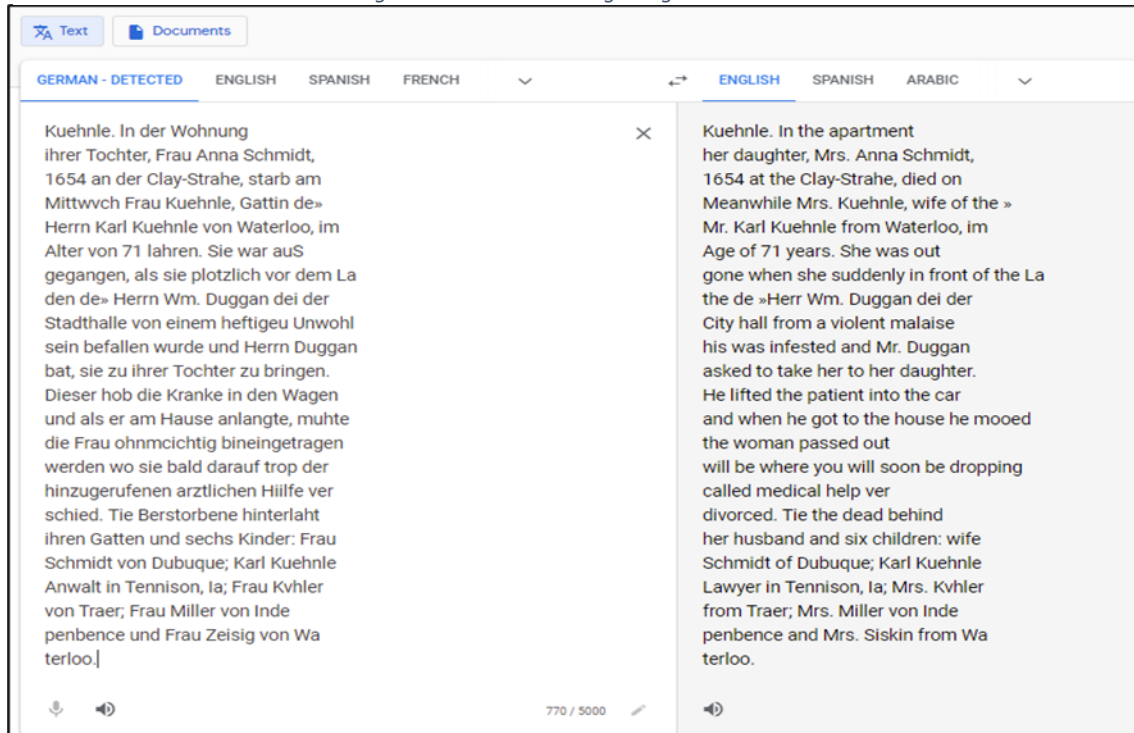
To find his name, I will use the “Find on this page” tool. It can be accessed using the “Ctrl+F” keystroke or through the drop down menu (“Open Application Menu”) found under the three bars on the right of the search bar at the top of the page. The search box will open on the bottom of the page as shown in Figure 4. To find his name, I type “Kuehnle” in the box and press enter. The up and down arrows will let me maneuver through the page if there are more than one instance of his name.

Once the article is found, copy the area and paste it into a translation app such as [Google Translate](#). Many apps will detect the language inserted into the left side box and perform the translation automatically into English. Otherwise, you can choose both the language of the original text and the language desired for the translation. Note that some apps limit how many characters can be translated at one time.

Free apps, such as Google Translate, will do a word-by-word translation while for-fee apps, such as [DeepL](#), will analyze the context of the words to provide a more accurate translation. Figure 5 shows the results from pasting the Kuehnle article into Google Translate.

German Newspapers at Chronicling America - cont'd

Figure 5: Translation using Google Translate.



As you read the translated version of the article it is clear there are areas which don't make sense. These errors occur for several reasons. First the OCR process is hindered when the original newspaper has been damaged by ink smears, tears, creases, fading, or other flaws. OCR can have difficulties identifying the foreign characters and choosing the correct English character. In addition, OCR doesn't recognize hyphenated words and will treat each part as a separate word.

Fraktur Font

The following chart shows letters in a typical Fraktur Font, along with the letter in Latin script:

A a	Ä ä	B b	C c	D d
E e	F f	G g	H h	I i
J j	K k	L l	M m	N n
O o	Ö ö	P p	Q q	R r
S s final s	ß (ss)	T t	U u	Ü ü
V v	W w	X x	Y y	Z z

The following letter combinations often appear as fused letters in Fraktur font:

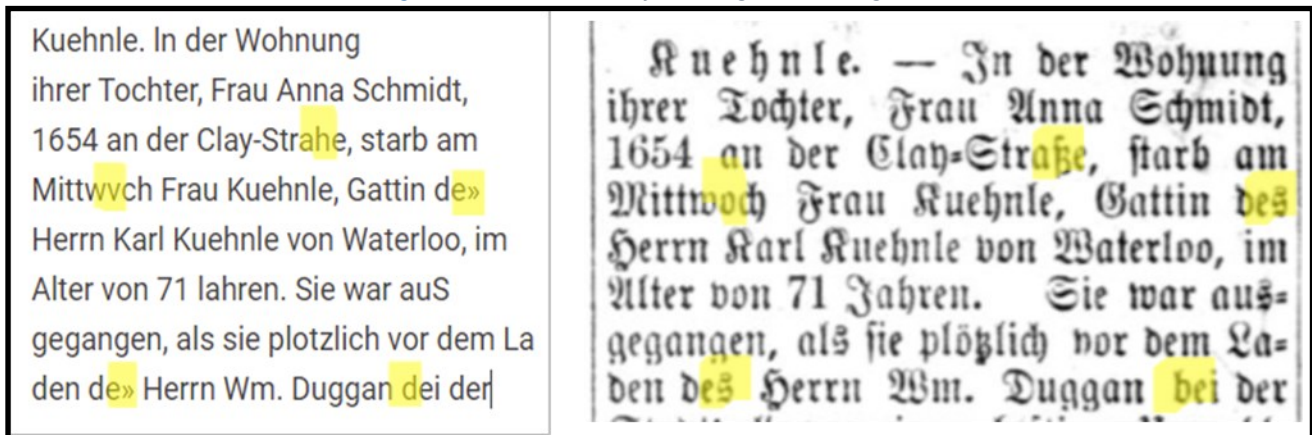
ch	ck	sch	ss	tz
----	----	-----	----	----

To fix the errors I need to review the Latin characters chosen by the OCR reader for the Fraktur fonts. For this I use a chart such as this one which can be downloaded from the Family Search Wiki ("[Fraktur Font Help](#)"). Here is my process. Starting with the first few lines of the translations, I look for incomplete translations or words out of context. See the highlights in the text.

Kuehnle. In the apartment
her daughter, Mrs. Anna Schmidt,
1654 at the Clay-Strahe, died on
Meanwhile Mrs. Kuehnle, wife de »
Mr. Karl Kuehnle from Waterloo, im
Age of 71 years. She was out
gone when she suddenly in front of the La
the de »Herr Wm. Duggan dei der

German Newspapers at Chronicling America - cont'd

Figure 6: OCR Version on left and Original on the right.

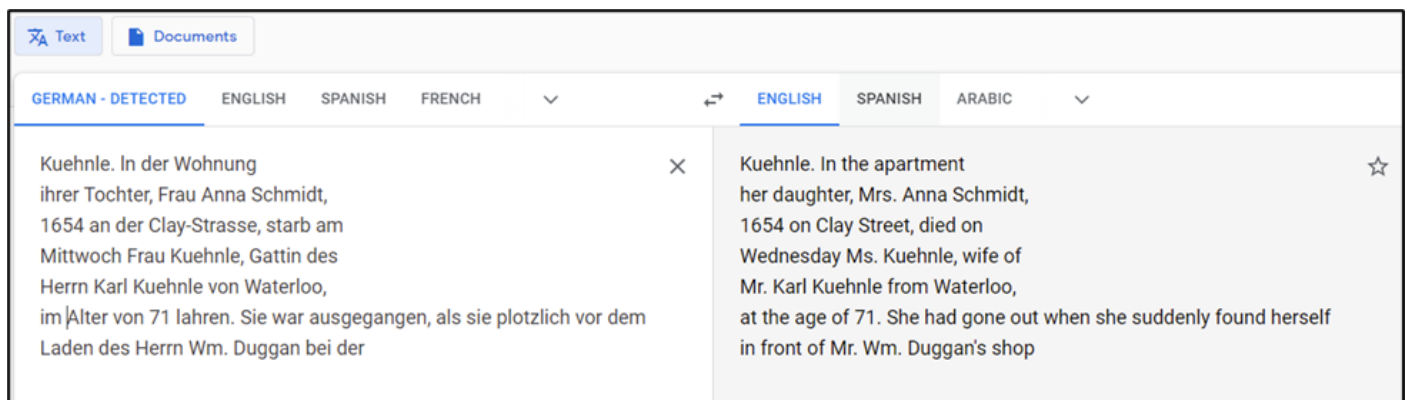


For words with problems, I look back to the character as read by OCR. For example, on row 4, the “v” should probably be a vowel. I then look to the corresponding character in the original article and find that character in the Fraktur Font table to make sure OCR converted the Fraktur character to the correct English (Latin) character. In the example in row 4, the Fraktur Font should have been read as an “o”. Where errors such as this are found, correct the text side (left side) of the Google translate tool, and let Google retranslate.

Comparing the OCR to the original for Figure 6:

- On line 3, the Fraktur character has been converted to h, but should be ss.
- On line 4, the Fraktur character is o not v. The last character should be s.
- At the end of line 6, there is a hyphen. The word must be joined to be translated correctly. Same for the hyphen at the end of line 7.
- Line 8, the characters should be s and b, respectively.

When the changes are made to the OCR side of the box, the translation is corrected as shown below.



While this article has focused on German newspapers, the same process can be used for any article written in a foreign language. All that is needed is a chart for the language showing the English character equivalents for the language's special characters and a copy of the article as it appears in OCR. Then with Google Translate or similar tool and a little bit of reviewing and correcting, you can learn what has been printed about your ancestor in the foreign-language newspaper.

WCGS Member Spotlight - Jack McGeachy

WCGS member, **Jack McGeachy** was recently featured in *History for all the People*, the blog of the State Archives of North Carolina. Jack and several others were recognized for their long service and contributions to the North Carolina enduring record as In-Person Transcribers. As differentiated from those who transcribe from online sources, these gentlemen are those who not only invest significant portions of their time devoted to the art of transcription, but also make the journey down to the archives to practice their calling. Their contributions are immense. The blog post can be viewed at this [link](#).

It is worth noting that Jack is truly accomplished in the transcription field. He received two awards from North Carolina Genealogical Society - in 2014 for Primary Source Material (New Hanover P&Q volumes) and in 2018 - for Original North Carolina Record (Wilkes P&Q volumes).

We are especially fortunate that Jack agreed to answer several related questions for this newsletter. Many thanks to Jack for his openness in sharing his process and thoughts with us! - CD

What got you started with transcription?

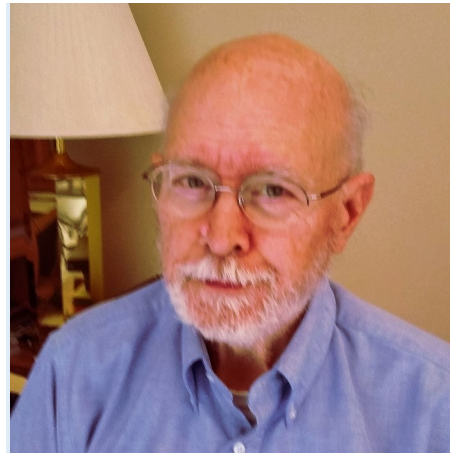
While I was working as a government documents librarian at NC State, about 1998 I began to take two college courses per year. Perhaps a year later I enrolled in NCSU's Public History Program, still taking one class per semester. Two of those classes led me to begin transcribing old documents.

First, for a North Carolina history class I wrote a paper describing what it was like to be a raftsman on the Cape Fear River prior to the Revolution. This topic interested me because it is family lore that our immigrant ancestor, Alexander McGeachy, came into Wilmington, and worked as a raftsman on the Cape Fear before he was able to purchase land in Robeson County in 1793. While looking for primary sources for that paper I visited the UNC-CH's Southern History Collection, and chanced upon a manuscript called "Cape Fear Sketches." I became fascinated with it, and used "Cape Fear Sketches" material for three papers in the Public History Program.

The second influential class I took was one on Documentary Editing. For that class paper I

transcribed stories from the "Cape Fear Sketches" that dealt with Revolutionary War incidents. The father of the anonymous author of the "Sketches" had been an officer in the War. He was at Valley Forge and in 1781 he took part in the resistance to the British occupation of Wilmington.

I spent 10 years transcribing the "Sketches" text and researching its contents. UNC-CH has only a microfilm copy of the manuscript and a printed copy derived from the microfilm. I located the original manuscript in the Alabama Archives in a collection of papers by Waddy Thompson of Greenville, S.C.



Here's a link to [Jack McGeachy's Public History papers](#), including a description of "Cape Fear Sketches," and a (soon to be updated) list of transcriptions of New Hanover and Wilkes County Pleas & Quarter Sessions Court Minutes.

Reading through copies of Wilmington newspapers from the 1840s and 50s I found that many of the stories contained in the "Sketches" had appeared in three different newspapers under the byline of ten different pseudonyms. I read through New Hanover County Pleas & Quarter Sessions Court Minutes and transcribed entries containing information about 8-10 surnames I had begun to focus on. I concluded that the author was John D. Jones (1789?-1854) of Wilmington.

I finished work with "Cape Fear Sketches" in 2014, and self-published my research. Having transcribed 10-15% of the New Hanover P&Q Minutes, I then turned to completing transcriptions of those documents. Next Barbara asked that I work on Wilkes County where she has ancestors. I have ancestors in Warren County, which is why I'm now working on that county's P&Qs.

How many works have you transcribed to date?

Forty-one.

Cont'd next page

WCGS Member Spotlight - Jack McGeachy - Cont'd

New Hanover County Tax Lists, 1782 Tax Lists (2008) 1 v.

Cape Fear Sketches (2014) 1 v.

New Hanover P&Q volumes, 1809-1868, between (2013-2017) 23 v.

Wilkes County P&Q volumes, 1798-1868, between (2017-2019) 10 v.

Warren County P&Q volumes, 1823-1844, between (2019-2022) 6 v.

Do you have a favorite record that you have transcribed?

What was the most difficult record you encountered?

What was the most unusual record you encountered?

"Cape Fear Sketches" is the answer to each of these questions.

As for an individual record in the Pleas & Quarter minutes, I recall a Wilkes entry, 5 August 1812, "William Hampton, Sheriff, came into Open Court & made Oath that he lost his Saddle Bags in the Yadkin River & lost a Number of County & Superior court papers as per Affidavit filed in the County Court Clerk's Office."

What traits in a person contribute to becoming a successful transcriptionist?

Patience

Persistence

Attention to detail

Willingness to devote a great deal of time to projects

Inquisitiveness, desire to solve problems presented by ambiguous spellings encountered

Good grasp of cursive writing and its 19th century variations; ability to observe individual writers' cursive styles

Do you have any tips for the occasional transcriptionist?

1. Transcribing names is the most critical, and difficult, element in such projects.

Names written in P&Q records are usually made by

the county clerk; almost never will you find an individual's signature in them. Different clerks may spell a name in different ways. Name spellings may also change over time. I once transcribed a volume and found a surname had been spelled in nearly two dozen different ways. One is faced with a dilemma between transcribing names exactly as written, (a literal transcription) or finding a way to choose a single spelling to record in the transcription (an expanded transcription). I've adopted the method of transcribing a name as found and then following that word by adding the [chosen uniform spelling] in square brackets.

You can look through the material you've transcribed from the present, and earlier, volumes for multiple instances of a name.

The trick here is to have transcribed a large number of records in order to have multiple instances of a name to compare, in hopes that you'll see a spelling that has been used more frequently than others. This technique is also useful when you have a surname you can't read clearly - you can search the transcribed text for personal name and middle initial and, if lucky, that way you can determine the identity of a person with an illegible surname.

2. Take time to proof your typing.

I read what I've typed at least twice. For the last two years I've used FamilySearch's online microfilm copy as my source. After transcribing a P&Q page I compare the online text with what I've typed. Later I create an index by starting with a copy of the transcribed text, and deleting the text that I'm not going to use in the index. That gives me an opportunity to read the complete text a second time.

I once watched another transcriber copy out material from a source, and not bother to proof-read what he had typed. It's very easy to omit a paragraph while transcribing a page, particularly if the texts of sequential paragraphs are very similar. Proof-reading is insurance that you have not omitted one or more entries on a page.

3. Indexing is as important as the transcription.

I've used some indexes that are pretty bad. The worst of them are those with only a surname and a page number. One can waste considerable time looking for a name on a page containing hundreds of words. Even those transcribed volumes where the editor has used ALL CAPS to highlight surnames are not much better.

WCGS Member Spotlight - Jack McGeachy - Cont'd

The more information you can put into an index, the more useful the index will be for users. The indexes I create have full names - surname, first name, initial, suffix (as full as is found in the texts). I'll add a geographic reference if the person does not reside in the county I'm working in. I add elements like admor of, apprentice, child of, estate, exor of, heir of, trustee of, ward, widow of, will of, to help identify and differentiate persons with very similar names.

Would you articulate what you see as the enduring value of transcription in a world where more and more records are brought online via digitization? How do you see transcription evolving alongside digitization?

It's become easy to scan a document and put images of it up on the Internet. It's a much bigger challenge

to create digitized transcribed text from the document's images. I think that machine-produced digitized text, particularly of cursive handwritten text, has a long way to go. You need only to look at the 1950 census to see the problems of machine digitization of surnames.

I don't think there will be major, well-financed, large-scale projects to create digitized products of this type of material. Maybe the best we can hope for are projects from motivated and talented individuals, like David McCorkle and his [NC Land Grants](#).

I have learned a thing or two and certainly appreciate Jack's attention to detail and willingness to share. I will keep this article of file for my future transcription adventures. How about you? - CD

Historic Method Community and Oak Grove Cemetery - Then and Now

By Linda Hames, WCGS Corresponding Secretary



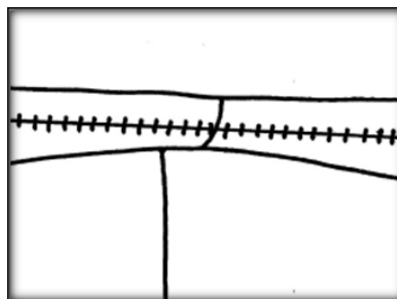
"The history of Method became a fascination for me in May, 2019, and I still have a long list of places and events yet to be explored." - Linda Hames

In 1865, virtually all of what is now Wake County was made up of farms or plantations, depending on the definitions used. Before the war, in 1860, North Carolina had 331,159 persons who were "owned" by other persons. Most of them were farm workers. In 1865, they were freed, and they soon began to form

Freeman's Villages.

Those who could afford to do so, moved into the city where the population grew rapidly. In the Raleigh 1870 census, out of a population of 7,790, there were 4,094 Blacks (53%).

Maps and other records show us the location of at least 13 new Black communities that formed within what is now the City of Raleigh. Most of those areas are no longer recognizable because of development and urban renewal projects. One exception is Oberlin, but the landscape there is changing as multi-story buildings are rapidly replacing historical homes. A second exception is Method, where there has been only a small amount of modernization, and



many descendants of the original settlers still live there. The map at left shows what Method looked like in 1865 – a few gravel roads and the Southern Railroad.

Source—Linda Hames

Historic Method Community/Oak Grove Cemetery - *cont'd*

Historic Method Community

Confederate General and plantation owner, William Ruffin Cox, sold 69 acres (1872) to Jesse Mason and Isaac O'Kelly who parceled it into small lots allowing many newly freed Black families to build their own slab houses (one-room log houses with a dirt floor.) As it grew, the name became Mason Village, and



Source—Linda Hames

finally named “Method” as one of the stops on the railroad.

The map above shows what the area looks like today, positioned nicely between Raulston Arboretum and Neomonde restaurant.

Berry O'Kelly

Berry O'Kelly was extremely important to the success of the Method community. Born in Chapel Hill about 1864, he arrived in Method as a teen. He worked at the General Store and by age 28 owned the store. It became the Method post office, and he was Postmaster for 25 years.



Source—NCPedia



Source—Culture Town book

The photo top of next column shows Berry O'Kelly in front of the store/post office (ca. 1930). The new Method post office operates at that same location today, but the train no longer makes a stop there.

Berry O'Kelly expanded the store to offer meat, fish, shoes, and clothing. He also operated businesses on East Hargett St. known as Black Mainstreet. He became wealthy and was a prominent person in Wake County and state-wide.

The Berry O'Kelly School

In the post-Civil War South, enslaved persons were free, but the rule of the land was Jim Crow and “separate but equal.” Blacks were not allowed to attend white schools. Realizing that injustice, Berry O'Kelly donated land (1894) for a black school in Method. In the beginning, it was a boarding school with students from Apex, Fuquay, and Zebulon. In



Source - NC Division of Archives and History

Historic Method Community/Oak Grove Cemetery - *cont'd*

1920, the school became the first fully accredited black high school in the state of NC. It served as a model for other schools. Graduates interned at Shaw University and became teachers throughout the state.

This main building had 11 classrooms, a library, and an auditorium. The Berry O'Kelly school was one of the thousands that was partially financed by the Jewish philanthropist Julius Rosenwald.

Integration became the law in 1954 – Brown v. Board of Education. William Campbell (1960) was the first to integrate an all-white school in Raleigh (Murphy School.) Six sophomore girls from Berry O'Kelly High School were forced to integrate Cary High School in 1963.



Source unknown

Raleigh annexed Method in 1960, and also took control of the Berry O'Kelly school. It was closed in 1966. All buildings were demolished except for the Agriculture Building and the gymnasium.

Historical designations have been awarded to the Berry O'Kelly Historical District, which is 8.4 acres and the Oak Grove Cemetery.

Oak Grove Cemetery

Oak Grove Cemetery was established about 1870 soon after the Method community formed. In 2016, a grant paid for a ground-penetrating radar survey which identified 403 graves, 152 with markers. The cemetery is still being used today.

THE BATTLES – Method residents were forced to negotiate with the City, the County and the DOT in order to survive.

The original plan for 440 would have passed through the middle of Method, but it was eventually moved slightly to the west. Twice since then, parts of Method have been lost due to the widening of 440.



Source - Linda Hames

At present (2022) the tunnel from Method to the Oak Grove Cemetery is blocked while a bridge is being built for Ligon St. to pass over 440. The designation as a Historic Place saved the cemetery from being devastated.

FIND OUT MORE

Wiki article about [William Ruffin Cox](#)—The Confederate General who sold the acreage.

Culture Town: Life in Raleigh's African American Communities, by Linda Simmons-Henry and Linda Harris Edmisten is available in the closed stack of Olivia Raney Library or [on Amazon](#).

Method Boys to Men Fellowship - Website for the group of volunteers who work toward the welfare of Method residents. [website](#)

[Oak Grove History and Burials](#) by Ruth Little includes the history and a list of stones and inscriptions.

[“Beltline construction disturbs historic cemetery,”](#)
News & Observer May 18, 2021

Walter Magazine - March 2021, [“A Legacy of Generosity: The History of Method”](#)

Take the **self-guided tour** of Method, RICH Park and Oak Grove included on the next page.

Self-guided tour of Method and Oak Grove

A Self-guided Tour of RICH Park and Method, NC – By Linda Hames, May 2022

Drive to the **Method Post Office** 3919 Beryl Rd.

This was a country store in 1873, and became a P.O. about 1890.

Continue west on Beryl Rd; Take the first left onto Method Road.

Take the first left onto Richward Place to a parking area; From the drive you will see many 1 and 2-story brick buildings on your right. There are 100 apartments.

THIS IS **RICH PARK**! (“RICH” stands for Raleigh Inter Church Housing. In 1967, 5 churches created a corporation, secured a HUD loan, and built this 100-units of affordable housing. It still thrives today.

Take Richward Place to leave and cross Method Road.

Enter **Method Community Park**.

It is a part of Raleigh Parks and Recreation Park your car and take a walk to find:

Plaques on the office building designate Raleigh Historical Landmark and National Registry of Historical Places. Main building contains the **original gymnasium**.

An old brick building called **the Agriculture Building** – 1926 – is the only building that remains from the **Berry O’Kelly School** near the picnic shelter.

St. James African Methodist Episcopal Church; Raleigh Historical Landmark; Founded 1866.

Berry O’Kelly donated the land for the St. James A.M.E. church on Method Road. Burial place of Berry O’Kelly; Died March 14, 1931. - near the church

Across the street - Offices of RICH Park.

TO THE CEMETERY

Until very recently, you could drive west on Ligon St.

and come to a one-way tunnel, and then see the cemetery on your left. The very quaint tunnel is now blocked off and you will now need to take this longer route....

From Blue Ridge Road, drive east on Hutton until you reach Ligon Street.

From Ligon, you will see the **Oak Grove Cemetery** on your right. Now (May 2022) you can see the blocked off tunnel and you can see the beginnings of a new BIG bridge that will carry Ligon St. over 440.

Oak Grove is on the National Registry of Historic Places.

It needs lots of work.

A grant provided for a ground-penetrating radar (GPR) in 2016.

The survey identified approximately 403 graves, 152 with markers.



Oak Grove Cemetery - [Source](#)

THE METHOD COMMUNITY

Slaves freed from nearby plantations began to form this community in 1865.

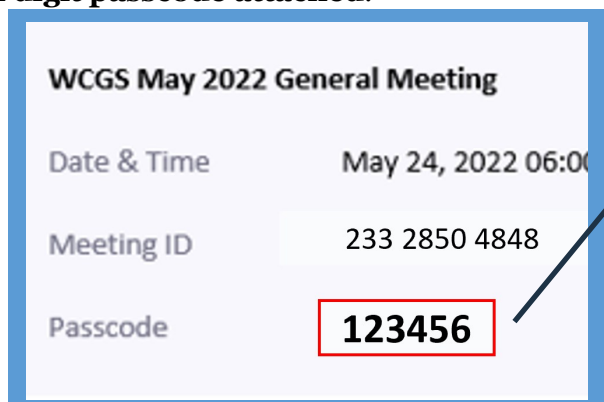
Linda’s passion and research has made it possible to include a good record of Oak Grove Cemetery in the Wake County Cemetery Survey project where none existed. The cemetery had been neither reported or surveyed at the time of the original project. Linda’s work allows us to provide history, names and inscriptions and add this cemetery to the permanent record of Raleigh despite its vulnerability to progress. Thank you Linda! - CD

Zoom Sign up - Save that Passcode!

We want to help you access our monthly Zoom meetings as quickly and smoothly as possible. Every meeting, there are several people scrambling for access because they have lost or simply didn't notice that a passcode is required. We hope this little tip will help you settle in easier. - CD

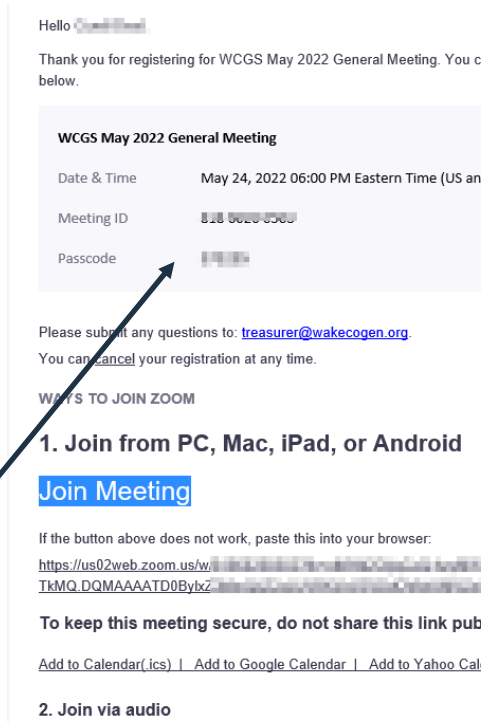
As always, the first step is to navigate to the [Wakecogen Events page](#) to register for the latest meeting. If you are coming from Facebook, the Blog, or other publicity page, a link will lead you to the Event page. The registration link is attached to the upcoming meeting only.

Register with Zoom as always and watch your inbox. Very shortly after registration you will receive an email with the special code you must use to enter. When you open the email and read it, you will notice **a shaded box with the meeting details and the six digit passcode attached.**



Below that you will see a large blue block/meeting

link that says "Join Meeting." I bet most folks are so excited to get settled into the meeting that they miss the lightly shaded box with the "golden ticket." Click the link, add the code and you will be in. Easy, peasy!



It is helpful to save the email to your calendar event on your computer, or print out the email and save with your note on your paper calendar. For more tips to get the most out of your Zoom time, see our [Important Zoom Tips](#) at our website.

Juneteenth - WCGS will host a table at Dix Park Celebration



Capital City Juneteenth Celebration

Date: **Saturday, June 18**
1:00 – 5:00pm ET

Where: **Harvey Hill and the Chapel Event Center at Dix Park, 1030 Richardson Drive, Raleigh**

Join Us for the Celebration!

Enjoy the afternoon's festivities and make sure to stop by and visit the **Wake County Genealogy Society** table to learn about two county cemetery projects inclusive of early African American burials. Meet others who share your interest in

family history. Get involved, volunteer for the day and learn how your participation in the Wake County Genealogical Society can help with your own exploration of family past. Remember, the [Capital City Juneteenth Celebration](#) represents more than only black history; it is part of our collective American history.

Visit the [Wakecogen Events](#) page for more details of the afternoons events as they develop.

If you are interested in helping with our table for a spell on this day, please contact [Saundra Cropps, our volunteer coordinator](#). Network with fellow genealogists! Pursue our common interests.

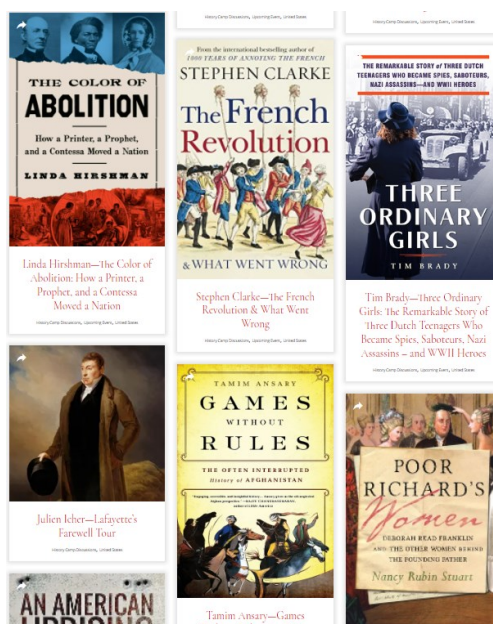
History Camp: Take a Deep Dive into Historical Context

We genealogists are always looking for historical context clues. I am really impressed with [History Camp](#), a recently discovered website that will provide you with clues aplenty! Until you feel like venturing out into the world, how about checking out their massive body of archived content or putting one of the upcoming author discussions on your calendar?

History Camp has been in existence since 2014, when the first Camp was staged in Boston. Since then, camps have been presented in person yearly in various parts of the United States and that tradition continues for the future as the pandemic allows.

"History Camp is produced by The Pursuit of History, the non-profit organization that engages adults in conversation about history and connects them with historic sites in their communities and across the country through innovative in-person and online programming."

History Camp America 2021 was a purely online event. Like the in-person events that preceded it, it was fee-based with access to the video until mid July of 2022, very similar to the Genealogy Conference model we have come to know in the past couple years.



A sampling of offerings from the History Camp Archive. More than 100 recordings await you! And new live discussions weekly.

The features that interest me most are the weekly author discussions and the huge collections of videos that are free to view in the archive.

Their featured weekly author discussions on Thursday evenings are free and include authors sharing their books on historical subjects from all eras, events and countries. Their upcoming events schedule can be viewed on the website and include such topics as Michael Holzman's Spies and

Traitors, Ben Raines' The Last Slave Ship and Michael Meyer's Benjamin Franklin's Last Bet. [The event schedule is viewable here.](#)

If you can't find anything that interests you in the list, [check out the Archive](#). As sampled to the left, there are so many titles and topic covered. I am sure you will find something to enlighten your historical curiosity and while away a bit of time.

Another offering from History Camp that I would really love try is their History Camp Outings. These outings explore historical homes, sites and museums at various localities. The fees for the outing seem very reasonable. The outings scheduled for May were around \$15 -20. I hope I get to try one at some point.

To best take advantage of all History Camp offers, you will want to [sign up for their newsletter](#) which includes details on weekly discussions (online), History Camps (online and in-person), Monthly Outings (in-person), America's Summer Roadtrip, and other updates of interest to the History Camp community.

I am on their list already. See you there. - CD

Search Tip

Wake Treasures Journal Tips - Twenty+ years of Journal content.

[Index](#) (free and accessible to all) - View the subject index at the Wakecogen webpage. Access the index for Vols. 1-25 from the [WCGS Publications tab](#) on the left side bar at the home page.

Full Journal access is provided with your WCGS membership. Members should log in via the [Members Area tab](#) in the left side bar. Choose the **Wake Treasures** link from the member benefits dropdown to access the full twenty years of Wake County content. Content is **searchable** within each pdf file once downloaded.

Summer 2022 Events Calendar

Jun 18

Juneteenth Celebration/WCGS table: Dix Park (Harvey Hill and the Chapel Event Center at Dix Park, 1030 Richardson Drive, Raleigh). Saturday, June 18. Time: 1pm - 5pm. Volunteers, please contact [Saundra Cropps](#). In-person event. [Details](#)

Jun 28

WCGS Meeting: Wachovia: Where German Moravians became Slaveholding Americans and Avid Confederates. Speaker: Dr. Larry E. Tise, PhD. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Jul 26

WCGS Meeting: Preserving Family Heirlooms. Speaker: Adrienne Berney, Ph.D., Outreach Coordinator for the State Archives of North Carolina. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Aug 6

WCGS Special Event: A day with Dana Leeds. Speaker: Dana Leeds, creator of the Leeds Method of Sorting DNA Matches. Saturday, August 6, 10:30am - 3:00pm. Hybrid event - In-person and via Zoom. [Details](#)

Aug 23

WCGS Meeting: In Her Own Words-Live of Women Through Diaries, Journals, Correspondence, and More. Speaker: Lisa Lisson. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

Sep 27

WCGS Meeting: Discovering Our Mixed-Race Heritage. Speaker: Dr. Arwin Smallwood. 6:30pm. Online Virtual Meeting. [Details](#)

WCGS Special Interest Groups: Meeting monthly, most via Zoom. WCGS Members can visit the SIG section of the Member area for information.

Family Tree Maker SIG - 1st Saturday each month
German Ancestry Research - 3rd Saturday each month

Ongoing Workshops thru SeniorTechEd - Genealogy and Tech classes offered online via Zoom. [Details and fees](#)

Take advantage of free content online:

Family History Library Webinars - [Link to upcoming webinars](#)

Conference Keeper.org - Follow the virtual page for a constantly updated list of online events content. [View page](#)

Genealogy Bargains - Follow Thomas MacEntee's blog for tons more free content. [Blog](#) [Newsletter](#)

Legacy Webinar series - webinars are free to attend with registration and for viewing on demand for 7 days afterward. [Schedule and Registration](#).

Also at **Legacy Webinars**, a monthly virtual mini-conference. The conference is free. Viewing is on demand for the specific time period detailed in the link. Topics rotate each month and 4 to 5 webinars are presented. [Monthly Conference details](#)

Family History Fanatics (YouTube channel) - Great record set reviews, and methodology tips. More and more, I am referring folks here for quick access to information covering basic to intermediate DNA and Genetic Genealogy skills. [Watch videos](#).



Genealogical Societies in the surrounding area

North Carolina Genealogical Society: Visit webpage for events, webinars, and announcements. <https://www.ncgenealogy.org/>

Durham-Orange Genealogical Society: 1st Wednesday of Month, 7pm. [Details](#)

Granville County Genealogical Society: 1st Thursday of Month, 6:30pm. [Details](#)

Tar River Connections Genealogical Society: 3rd Tuesday of Month, 6:30pm. Details - TRCGS@Brasswell-Library.org

Johnston County Heritage Center - preserving the history and culture of Johnston County. [Link](#), heritagecenter@johnstonnc.com

Heritage Society of Franklin County: 3rd Thursday of Month. Details - heritagesocietync@gmail.com or PO Box 45, Louisburg, NC 27549

Triangle Jewish Genealogical Society: Meets monthly. See webpage for schedule. [Details](#)

Afro-American Historical and Genealogical Society: Triangle Region Chapter - see Facebook page for details. [@aahgsnctriangle](#)



Check our [webpage](#), detail links, and/or [Facebook page](#) for late additions, schedule changes and updates to the WCGS calendar between issues. This Calendar is accurate as of **May 27, 2022**.



One Last Thing

This issue closes out year five for the Wake Gen Watch newsletter. Who would have thought there would still be enough to say to routinely fill up 10-12 pages each issue. Certainly not me! I did not realize I had so many words in me.

Fortunately, I have had a lot of kind folks add their voices to this issue. I would love to hear your voice too. If you would like to write a piece on a record collection, workflow technique, a quick tip that makes your genealogy process easier or even a success story that you have had in your research or using something you read here in **WGW**, I would love to feature you with your own byline. Contact me. We can make this happen.

As usual, thank you for reading this far. I hope you have found something useful, enjoyable or both within.

Your humble editor -

[Cyndi Deal](#)

Deadline for submissions for the Fall 2022 issue is August 15, 2022.

Ideas? Questions? Feedback of any kind? We love to hear from you. [Drop us a line!](#)



Reminder to Members: Are you missing important event notices and updates from WCGS?

Take a moment to sign into [your member profile](#) to check your contact info. Contact: [Carol Kimball Stall - Membership chair](#) if you need to update.

Contact WCGS

Board Members

President: [Carla Stancil](#)

President-in-training: open

Corresponding Secretary: [Linda Hames](#)

Director: Heather Choplin

Director: Ed Webb

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Past President: Kathy Ruse

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Recording Secretary: Barbara McGeachy

Treasurer: [Stephanie Ernst](#)

Vice President Communications: [Donna Shackle](#)

Volunteer Co-Ordinator: [Saundra Cropps](#)

Webmaster: [Cynthia Gage](#)

Wake Treasures Journal Editor: [Donna Shackle](#)

Wake Gen Watch Newsletter Editor: [Cyndi Deal](#)

Queries: [Saundra Cropps](#)

Please send all other emails to info@wakecogen.org

Postal mail:

Wake County Genealogy Society

P. O. Box 17713

Raleigh, NC 27619-7713

GenQuotes

"I approach my research as tho' it were a movie.

People, places, things. Lots of details.

Long shot = maps. Medium shot = buildings.

Close up = faces.

Photos, city streets, train tickets, old travel posters, automobiles, group photos and close-ups of each person's face.

My goal is to ultimately make slide shows of each family in chronological order by location."

-seen on a gen forum