



Board of Directors
2013-2014

President Mary Torres
 V-President Toni Garza
 Secretary Irene Silva
 Treasurer Annie Barrera
 Board Members
 Carlos Cantu
 Hilda Flores
 John Ramirez
 Ex –Officio
 Ofelia Olsson
 Newsletter Editor:
 Ofelia Olsson

Inside this issue:

Early Towns in Tamps.	2
Meeting Dates	2
Conference	2
Where's your Research Going?	2
Verifying Info	3
Google Tip	3
Research Tip	3
Estimate dates	3
Queries	3
Searching in Parish Records	4
Timeline	4
GenealogyBank	4
Down Memory Lane In Old Brownsville	5
Down Memory Lane In Old Brownsville, Con'd	6

RIO GRANDE VALLEY HISPANIC GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Volume 4 Issue 3

15 July 2013

President's Message

The month of July is special for us as it marks our sixth year as a genealogy group and the third year as an incorporated society. Congratulations to all for achieving this milestone! This is indeed a great accomplishment at a time when societies in Texas and all over the country are struggling to retain their members. Thanks are due to our founding members, Ofelia Olsson, Frances Saucedo, Santos Canales and Irene Silva, for it was their foresight, dedication, careful planning and hard work that created this society and laid the groundwork to ensure its success.

The society has been very active since its inception and we can all be proud of these achievements, but much still remains to be done. I challenge each and every one of you to become an active participant in our future growth and continued success.

MaryTorres

Books for Sale

BOOKS FOR SALE

Cameron County Marriages –Grooms
 1848—1943, A-L, \$40.00 +Shipping
 Cameron County Marriages—Grooms,
 1848-1943, M-Z, \$40.00 + Shipping
 Cameron County Marriages—Brides
 1848-1943, A-L, \$40.00 + Shipping
 Cameron County Marriages—Brides
 1848-1943, M-Z, \$40.00 + Shipping
 Mas Antes—a book of family stories, \$40 + shipping
 El Soliseño Cemetery— \$10 + shipping (complimentary
 dvd of present day El Soliseño included)
 Journal 2011
 Journal 2012
 San Fernando, Tamaulipas, MX, Baptisms, 1856
 (visit our website for order form or call Annie at 956-454-9419)
www.rgvhispanicgenealogicalsociety.com

Personal Ancestral File (PAF) is Discontinued

Beginning **July 15, 2013**, PAF will be retired and will no longer be available for download or support. (Information from the Family Search newsletter)

“Texas Before the Alamo”

Mary Torres and I went to Austin to view the premiere of “Texas Before the Alamo” in May. We were excited because of what we heard during the conference. I was disappointed, however, with what I saw. Because I only viewed a small part (I understand it will consist of six episodes), this cannot be a true review. However, the showing did not live up to the title of the film. I saw several isolated scenes and then a lengthy reenactment of the efforts of Adina de Zavala to preserve the Alamo in the early 1900s. What I saw was a documentary of “Texas **After** the Alamo”. I hope that the documentary, when it is complete, will truly tell the History of Texas and will take place **before** 1836.

"Have you considered where all your research and books are going after you are gone?"

Early Towns in Tamaulipas and Founding Dates

It's useful to know when towns were founded in Tamaulipas, Mexico when researching. Here is a list of selected towns and founding dates:

Reynosa (Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe de Reynosa)	1749
San Fernando (San Fernando de Llave)	1749
Tula (San Antonio de Tula)	1617
Burgos (Nuestra Señora de Loreto de Burgos)	1749
Matamoros (Congregacion de Nuestra Señora del Refugio De los Esteros)	1793
Cd. Guerrero (Revilla) (San Ignacio de Loyola de Revilla)	1750
San Carlos (Real de San Carlos Borromeo)	1766

Where's Your Research Going?

Have you considered where all your research and books are going after you are gone? Hopefully you and your books and work are not going to the same place. My daughter recently asked me what she was supposed to do with all my "stuff". To date, my work is not sufficiently organized, so that's the first order of business. The books I have purchased are another story. My brothers are urging me to get all my "stuff" printed and to share with them. I guess that's the next order of business. As to the rest, I need to think about it and tell my daughter.

Conference to be held in Victoria on October 11, 12, and 13, 2013

Meeting Dates

- June 23—Letty and Homero Salinas Vera
- July 21—Joe Rivera, Cameron County
- August 18— Sylvia Flores
- September 22— Irma Saldaña
- October 20—Dr. Manuel Medrano

34th Annual Texas Hispanic Genealogical and Historical Conference

The new Hilton Garden on Huvar Street in Victoria will be Convention Central for the 34th State Hispanic Conference on October 11, 12, and 13, 2013. This is the first conference to book with this hotel that will be completed in June. Soon the conference attendees will be able to start booking rooms at Hilton Garden or the Holiday Inn Express (next door and owned by the same person.) The sales manager said we will have a block of 20 rooms at the Holiday Inn Express. She will also (somehow) be setting a page for our attendees to reserve their rooms, at the Hilton, in a couple of weeks. Room rates are supposed to be \$139 at the Hilton and \$119 at the Holiday Inn Express on Navarro Street.
By Sophia Wilson, Victoria

Verifying Your Information

Sometimes as I'm researching I come across a date for an ancestor either for baptism or marriage. I always try to get a copy of the document to verify that the date is correct and even that the names of parents or children are correct. Recently, I came across a baptism where the godparents were named as the parents. Try not to enter information onto your tree before you verify that information. List all sources.

Making your own charts will facilitate your research. Make charts for individuals and/or families. For example, you might want to make a chart of your research in Census records for each person. This way, you won't forget which census you've already looked at. Compose your own charts to reflect the information that you want. Don't rely on memory.

"List all sources."

Google Tip

Let's say that you come across a word in your research and you are not sure of its meaning. For example, you see the word "farmer" and you don't know what it means. Just type the following in the search box:

define:farmer

When you click on the search button, you'll have the answer.

Estimate Dates

Estimate dates of events when possible but include your reason for the estimation. This will aid you in researching. Know that, though, this is a workable estimate. You might be wrong in your estimate. If I find my ancestor in the 1850 census with children not older than 10, I might reasonably estimate that they were not married in 1840. There, I might look for the marriage document after that date. When looking for a baptismal record, it's usual to assume that a person was probably 20 to 25 at the time of marriage. That's not always the case when there was a previous marriage. Keep these things in mind.

Research Tip

Anyone can appear in a newspaper. Don't assume your ancestor would not be in a paper, because "our family didn't warrant any mention." You never know when your ancestor might have been in an organization that caused him to get mentioned, got into legal trouble, received a pension, or any of a number of things that might have caused his name to appear in print. He might have even written a letter encouraging his fellow farmers to grow more winter wheat as the United States approached the first World War. (Michael John Neill, "Genealogy Tip of the Day." <http://genealogytipoftheday.blogspot.com>)

"Anyone can appear in a newspaper."

Queries

Are you up against a brick wall? Do you want to connect? Send your query to orolsson@rgv.rr.com,

Searching in Parish Records

"I was not familiar with the terminology used in these baptismal or marriage documents."

When I started searching in the Mexican Parish records, I was not familiar with the terminology used in these baptismal or marriage documents. The following are useful to know:

Doncella—young lady

Dho— abbreviation for "dicho", - said (or previously stated as in a previous document)

Impedimento—impediment

Also, usually padrinos and testigos are different individuals.

Amonestar— to publish the banns of marriage

Contrayente—betrothed

El mozo—junior

TIMELINE

To get a clearer picture of where you are in your research of a particular ancestor, you might consider filling out a timeline, including all events where you can place your ancestor.

I searched in GenealogyBank.com and was able to get a copy of these records.

Nueva Directiva de la Sociedad Femenina "Hidalgo" de Brownsville, Texas

Brownsville, Texas, abril 24.—En la junta extraordinaria celebrada por la sociedad "Hidalgo" de señoras y señoritas de esta localidad el día 11 del presente mes se procedió a verificar las elecciones para renovar la Mesa Directiva, habiendo resultado electas las siguientes personas:

Presidenta, Dolores Gutiérrez; Vice-Presidenta, Gregoria García; Secretaria de Gobernación, Amalia Martínez; Secretaria de Relaciones, Refugio Linares; Presidenta de Sanidad, Estéfana Medrano; Tesorera, Gertrudis M. de Madrazo; Porta Estandarte, Concepción García; Representante, Agustín Nava y Conserje, Carmen Castillo.

EL SR. MEDRANO, DE PUNTA ISABEL, FUE PUESTO EN LIBERTAD

Logró demostrar que las heridas que fueron inferidas a su esposa, fue la consecuencia de un hecho accidental

Servicio Especial para "LA PRENSA"
Brownsville, febrero 10.—Francisco Medrano, quien estaba prisionero mientras se hacían las averiguaciones necesarias, para esclarecer la manera en que su esposa, la señora Manuela Díaz de Medrano fué herida en su domicilio, en Punta Isabel, fué puesto en libertad, por haber comprobado que el suceso fué enteramente accidental, pues que nunca hubo ningún disgusto entre ambos.

Respecto a las declaraciones hechas por Medrano que solamente un tiro se había disparado, aunque la señora sufrió dos heridas, se dió la explicación que tal vez por la nerviosidad y la impresión que le produjo ver a su esposa herida, no se dió cuenta del número de proyectiles que se dispararon.

La señora Medrano, presentaba hoy una ligera mejoría, aunque todavía su estado es grave, pues no ha sido posible extraerle la bala que se le alojó en el cuerpo.

This above (left) is from GenealogyBank.com. It is from the newspaper "La Prensa" from San Antonio, Texas, dated April 24, 1926. The article on the right is Dated February 15, 1926.

DOWN MEMORY LANE IN OLD BROWNSVILLE

By Dr. Lino Garcia

I. The Native-Americans in this area

Several different tribes of Native-Americans inhabited the area now known as South Texas. Scholars indicate that at least thirty-five tribes made their presence in the area later called Texas, all of them different in culture as the geography of Texas itself, in spite of the fact that Hollywood paints all Indians with one brush. They were the: Karankawas, who lived along the coast, and lived as fishermen, and were loosely organized, and enjoyed a primitive culture; the Coahuiltecans, who occupied the Lower Rio Grande region, nourishing mostly by roots, herbs, and cactus, the Pintos, Comecrudos, the Lipan-, Apache were a sub-group of the Apaches, the Caddos who were the most culturally developed, and within this group were the Tejas, who were kind and friendly Indians, and called as such by the early Spaniards, for whom the word for the state is derived, the Comancheros, Mescaleros, the Tonkawas, and others. Some were warlike, some lived off the sea, others farmed, others engaged in hunting, and were as different from each other as night and day. When the Spaniards arrived they wanted to call this land "El Nuevo Reino de las Filipinas", the New Kingdom of the Phillipines, suggesting that present day inhabitants would be called "New Phillipines" instead of Texans or Tejanos.

II. The Age of Discovery

King Fernando and Isabela, La Católica, commissioned Cristóbal Colón, a Spanish subject of the Spanish Crown, to seek new lands and if natives were to be discovered to make them subjects of Spanish Authorities, and to convert them to Catholicism or La Santa Fe. This adventure into new lands was accomplished in 1492 after Spain had terminated its almost eight hundred years Holy War against the Arabs who had invaded their land in 711 A.D.

Explorer Cristóbal Colón wrote in his: "Diario de Abordo"

(Diaries Aboard) detailing his discoveries to the Spanish Crown, alerting them to the great possibilities for new land, gold, and for conversion of thousands of new subjects to the La Santa Fe. Thereafter, the age of exploration began, that also included Texas, and especially this area now known as South Texas.

III. The Age of Exploration

The Spanish King Carlos I or V, then King of Spain and also Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire, authorized certain expeditions that would explore these new lands discovered by Cristóbal Colón. These Spanish expeditions were many times financed by wealthy individuals who hoped to profit from the gold and silver found in "La Nueva España" or New Spain.

They first arrived in the Caribbean Islands and then ventured along the coast of what is now Texas. One such explorer was Captain

Alonso de Pineda, who sailed the coast of Texas in 1519 but never landed, becoming the first European individual to map the coast of Texas alerting the Spanish authorities of the great wealth, land opportunities, as well as to convert thousands of new subjects to La Santa Fe. On November 6, 1528 a group of Spanish soldiers known as the Pánfilo Narváez and Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca expedition landed on Texas soil, and in effect becoming the first non-Indians to inhabit this state. Plans were then made by the Spanish authorities in "La Nueva España" in Mexico City to settle the Seno Mexicano (as this area was then known) by sending in soldiers, and their families with the idea of procreating, and populating the land and thus extending the Spanish Empire further inland.



Dr. Lino Garcia, Jr.

"On November 6, 1528 a group of Spanish soldiers known as the Pánfilo Narváez and Alvar Núñez Cabeza de Vaca expedition landed on Texas soil, and in effect becoming the first non-Indians to inhabit this state."

Printed with permission

“.MOST OF THE SOLDIERS, AND THEIR FAMILIES ORIGINATED FROM QUERETARO, SALTILLO, LA NUEVA GALICIA, AND NUEVO LEÓN. ”

Dr. Lino García, Jr., is an 8th. generation Tejano, and holds the chair of Professor Emeritus of Spanish Literature at UTPA. He can be reached at: LGarcia@UTPA.Edu

In 1689 Captain Alonso de León, a native of Cadereyta, Nuevo León and his secretary an Italian named Juan Bautista Chiapapria (later changed to Chapa) became one of the first explorers to travel via South Texas, making several excursions into present day South Texas and further north. At the end of their journeys they wrote a book (a copy of which I own):

“HISTORIA DE NUEVO LEON: CON NOTICIAS SOBRE COAHUILA, TAMAULIPAS, TEJAS, Y NUEVO MEXICO- 1689 “

Their book detailing their adventure into Texas and the description of the land and other details further incited the Spanish Vice-Roy in Mexico City to send in settlers, and the man they chose for this excursions was a military man from Northern Spain who had proven himself as a skilled soldier taming the Indian population. That individual chosen was Col. José de Escandón who was born in Soto la Marina, Northern Spain, but who had arrived in “La Nueva España” as a career military man.

In 1749 he initiated seven entrances and founded over twenty villa or towns along the Río de las Palmas, later on the Rio Grande River, one of them north of this river, Nuestra Señora de Laredo in 1755 . Most of the soldiers, and their families originated from Queretaro, Saltillo, La Nueva Galicia, and Nuevo León. Being from the Basque country in Northern Spain, Col. José de Escandón named many of the present day cities along the area in memory of certain towns in his native country: Laredo, Reynosa, Soto la Marina, and others.

Many descendants of these early families , too numerous to mention here, still live in Northeastern México and South Texas and comprised the thirteen original families of South Texas and Northeastern México , and have contributed to the development of present day Brownsville and Matamoros.

THE SPANISH GRANTEES- 1767 AND THE THIRTEEN ORIGINAL FAMILIES OF SOUTH TEXAS AND NORTHEASTERN MEXICO

After Col. José de Escandón’s successful settlements along the Rio Bravo or Rio Grande, the Spanish authorities then decided to grant land (porciones) to qualified individuals who passed certain criteria, such as being full Spaniard, not marrying Indians, procreate, and be loyal to the Spanish Crown. Thus, in 1767, many families, including my own, the Longoria Chapa received huge tracts of land in what is now South Texas from King Carlos III of Spain, later venturing into Northeastern Mexico , in present day Matamoros in 1774, first named Nuestra Señora de los Esteros, then Nuestra Señora del Refugio, and then H. Matamoros, and into South Texas before the Rio Grande divided the area. They ,along with other twelve families from Camargo, Reynosa, and present day Starr County, bought 2.5 million acres of land along the Rio Grande from the heirs of Col. José de Escandón, and established 113 ranching sites, becoming the thirteen original families of South Texas and Northeastern Mexico.

(To be continued)