

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 305

Diablo, CA 94528-0305

President: Ed Mason

Coord. Editor: Bob Venter

Meetings: 10:00 a.m.

3rd Tuesday of the Month

(Except August & December)

Danville Family History Center

Stone Valley & Smith Rds., Alamo

<http://srvgensoc.org>

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXIII No. 7 February - 2008



THIS MONTH – February 19, 2008
“Your American Freedoms: Protect Them or Lose Them”
Presented by: Fred LaCosse



Fred LaCosse, former San Francisco TV broadcaster, carries on conversations with many of our founding fathers: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Patrick Henry, Sam Adams, James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, Ben Franklin, Thomas Paine, John Adams and his wife Abigail.



Together, they tell the story of that incredible period in American history [1763 to 1789] when our Founding Fathers came together sharing their passion for liberty, won a revolution and created a government that works better than any government in history to protect individual rights and to prevent tyranny. They also define the responsibilities we 21st century Americans have to nurture, sustain and protect our American freedoms so that we don't lose them.

January MEETING

"Airplanes, Bananas and Sugar Roots."

Speaker: Nilda Rego Reporter: Lee Schlenker

Nilda Rego writes a column for the Contra Costa Times entitled “*Days Gone By*.” She does not profess to be a historian nor a genealogist, but claims she can tell a good story! And that she did for us at our January meeting.

She started with her mother who was the 13th child of the Jacuzzi family. Yes, that same family who invented the Jacuzzi whirlpool bath later on in the U.S. Her mother told Nilda stories of the “cabin monoplane” which was way before the whirlpool. As time went on Nilda found these stories were not quite correct since they were written by people who expounded on the original

story.

That story goes a little like this: Nilda’s grandfather was born in northeastern Venice into a family of 7 brothers and 6 sisters. He ran a newspaper agency out of the local railroad station and all the sons delivered the papers. The bicycle always fascinated him. So he started to tinker with ideas that would make the bicycle go faster. He was finally drafted into the military. Being in the military gave him access to all kinds of books on aerodynamics which he studied endlessly. The brothers migrate to the U.S. hoping to farm the good earth in the States. And by 1911 Jacuzzi goes to Milan with multiple flying ideas but didn’t

find too many takers except by a man named Remington. He is encouraged to come to the U.S. By 1914 war breaks out. With 3 to 4 years of not much of an income he hears about the Pan-Pacific Exhibit and quickly designs the "toothpick" propeller from his plans. This propeller is constructed with strips of thin wood layered on top of each other and it's light in weight. Well, the whole deal "flies" and by 1917 he starts manufacturing propellers in Berkeley, CA. The entire family gets into the making of propellers, he then expands the business and buys property at 1440 San Pablo Ave. But when the war ends the need to manufacture those propellers is no more. The brothers take outside jobs to earn money and keep things afloat. But the idea of building an airplane (aka the Mosquito) was still in the back of grandfather's mind. And by 1920 the "cabin monoplane" was built which he wanted to sell to the post office department to haul mail. He wanted \$14,000.00 for the plane and the post office department told him, "No, it was far too much." In 1921 this plane was flown from Reno to Oakland at 90 mph then modified to fly at 105 mph. The plane flew from the Yosemite Valley floor (which was the largest plane ever to be on the Valley floor) to Modesto (a two hour trip) but crashed. It was written to have plowed into power wires but an eye witness tennis player said he saw the first wing fold back and fall off and then the other wing folded and fell off. The end of the cabin monoplane and the end of the **airplane** saga! By 1950 the deep well water pump was very popular and invented by Jacuzzi.

Now, on her father's side of the family: Nilda's grandmother didn't quite understand or know where California was located so she assumed it was in Canada, or at least she put it on the 1890 U.S. Census. It was finally figured out that her father must have crossed by train in Detroit into the U.S. But while onboard he was served a banana (which he had never seen before) and started to eat it with the skin on it. A man on board showed him how to peel the banana and eat the inside flesh. Another learning lesson was eating prepared pancakes using butter and syrup on them. He truly enjoyed this dish! But upon his arrival at the border he didn't have enough funds to pay his entry fee. A very nice man on that train

lent him the \$15.00 to get him into the U.S. which he promptly paid back after his crossing. Thus ends the **banana** part of Nilda's story.

The Rego family (Nilda's husbands family) started in the Azores. Manuel Rego came to Hawaiian Islands in the 1880's because the Azores orange crop was suffering from a blight and the crops were being decimated. Therefore, work was scarce, so Manuel Rego went to Kauai in 1883. He signed a contract to work the sugar cane fields for 3 years. This gave him shelter, food and a small garden to work. But they had to work 26 days per month, 10 hours per day. There were 11,000 Portuguese who ended up migrating and by 1888 this migration had ended. His contract was up but he remained another 21 years in Hawaii raising his family. One of his daughters couldn't tolerate the Hawaiian climate due to a health problem so Manuel moved the family on to San Leandro, California. Here he ended up opening a beer garden. He died in 1915 and his wife followed in 1916. But on a tombstone was the name "Daisy" and when seeing this Nilda and Dan weren't too sure who this person was. So delving into the Portuguese Archives, by phone (located in Honolulu) they unearthed the fact that both relatives had Americanized names: Philomeno was now "Phil" and Theresa was now "Daisy." They received stacks of papers documenting Dan's Rego family in Hawaii and newspaper article regarding the ship coming from the Azores from the Portuguese Archives. So this ends the saga of the **sugar roots**.

Dan has since joined the Portuguese Society in Hawaii. And Nilda continues to write her wonderful stories!

Special Notice!

Coming in March: **CHANGE OF LOCATION!** Our General Meeting will be held at the Oakland Family History Library. Margery Bell, Assistant Director of the Oakland Regional Family History Center will give us an insider's look at the exciting online advances coming soon to your computer. After, you can take advantage of the libraries vast resources. Be prepared to discuss arrangements for carpooling at our February meeting.



President's Message

By Ed Mason

As we get back into high gear after the holidays our Society has many things going on. Our February 19th speaker will be Fred LaCosse, a veteran newscaster and public speaker, who will give a historical presentation in keeping with February being President's Month. His presentation comes highly recommended by those who have heard it.

Although I await Board approval, it looks like our March 18th meeting will move to the big Family History Center in Oakland and that we will organize car pools to get there. You will hear more about this. The speaker will be Marge Bell and she will update us on all of the new rapidly expanding Internet search capabilities. A new team at FamilySearch is working to develop new tools for genealogists to make their work easier. I have seen a Beta version of one of the databases, Ohio Deaths. The access was easy and a variety of search parameters were very well executed. We can expect great things as this project progresses. How do you explore the latest tools they are working on? Visit <http://labs.familysearch.org/>

In an effort to reach out to our surrounding communities and to increase the awareness of SRVGS, Sandra Burns has prepared a more comprehensive brochure that will be distributed to about ten different locations, such as Museums, Community and Senior Centers, Historical Societies, etc. Our website is prominent in these handouts and we are looking to add a SRVGS explicit email address as well. In the meantime Lisa Cooke and Sandra are hoping to offer an Introduction to *Genealogy* seminar at the San Ramon Community Center / Sr. Center.

On January 28th we met with a reporter of the Danville Times. Watch for a front-page article about our Society, which will appear on February 8. The Danville Times is a Friday insert in the San Ramon Valley Times.

At the Danville Family History Center, Linda Bailey and Ron Frye are working on a way for us to enable our speakers to access the

Internet. When ready, this will allow the presentation of live Internet demonstrations to our members.

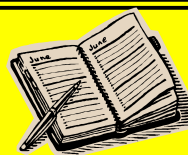
We hope soon to be able to add a page to our website listing the publications of our members. I think that you will be surprised to see how extensive it is. Two of the most recent examples are

Barbara Samper's recently published book, *A Gift to My Descendants*, which is getting rave reviews by the New England Historical and Genealogical Society.

Lisa Cooke is selling her book, *Genealogy Gems: Ultimate Research Strategies* from Season One of the *Genealogy Gems Podcast*

We hope that those of you who have authored articles, books, DVD's, etc., will want to include them on the list regardless of whether you wish to have them accessible to others.

It is gratifying to have so many of our members contributing in ways that benefit all of us.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

February 2008

- 5 Tuesday** – 10:00 am. A Board Meeting was held at the home of Lee Schlenker in San Ramon.
- 19 Tuesday** – 10:00 am. The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/2 miles

March 2008

- 4 Tuesday** – 10:00 am. A Board Meeting will be held at the home of Lisa Cooke in San Ramon.

18 Tuesday – 10:00 am. The General Meeting will be held at the LDS REGIONAL FAMILY HISTORY CENTER ON LINCOLN AVENUE IN OAKLAND. CARPOOLING WILL BE ARRANGED. Further details will be forthcoming.

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP

(The Master Genealogist) -- This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their focus on the use of The Master Genealogist. This group will meet Tuesday, February 19, after the general meeting at about 12:30 pm at the home of Bruce Garner in Danville. Please bring a bag lunch. Peggy Dearman is the contact person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail pdearman@earthlink.net.



FAMILY TREE MAKER GROUP

This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their focus on the use of Family Tree Maker. This group will meet February 28 (the fourth Thursday of the month) from 10:00 am until noon. They will meet at the Danville Family History Center in Alamo. Gail Roche Van Wye is the contact person for the group. Phone 253-1096 or e-mail gailrvw@aol.com.



GERMAN – The German Group will meet February 27 (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Marilynn Tanner in Moraga. Please contact her if you can not attend. Phone 376-6733 or e-mail MNJTanner@comcast.net. Helen Odegard is the contact person for this group. For more information, please contact her at 932-6796 or e-mail shodegard@aol.com.



IRISH – This special interest group will NOT meet in February. They plan to meet March 12th (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 am. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Phone

(925) 229-0889 or e-mail russpat@comcast.net for further information.



SOUTHERN – This group will meet February 12th (the second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 am. at the home of Dorothy Humpal in Danville. This group will also meet March 11th at the home of Nancy Alexander in Danville. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton; Phone 820-3757 or email dpstant@hotmail.com. New persons interested in attending should contact Dorothy Stanton for information.

NEWS VIA EMAIL - Ed Mason is the coordinator for the sending of group emails. This extends our group communication ability beyond the monthly newsletter. In addition, about half of our members have chosen to receive their monthly newsletter by email, the advantages being; faster delivery, a much prettier presentation in full color, substantial savings for the Society and for the environment. Ed keeps an email address list of members. He will distribute messages a minimum of once a month. Members wishing to share news may send it to Ed. If it is deemed appropriate, it will be distributed. Members always have the option to Opt-Out of the email distribution. Notify Ed Mason at: edmason@sbcglobal.net

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

12 February Tuesday 7:30 pm
The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society will hold a regular meeting at Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court in Pleasanton. "Ancestry: review and What's New" will be the subject of the presentation by Kay Speaks.

19 February Tuesday 7:00 pm
The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will hold a regular meeting at the Santa Clara City Public Library, 2635 Homestead Road in Santa Clara. "Genealogy for NSDAR Lineage

Proofs” will be presented by Diana Claussen, Registrar for the Los Gatos Chapter of the National Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR).

29 March Saturday 9 am - 3 pm

The San Mateo County Genealogy Society is sponsoring a spring seminar at the First Presbyterian Church, 25th and Hacienda in San Mateo. The featured speaker will be Stephen P. Morse. Other speakers will be Steve Danko, John Gleed, Chris Green and James Smith. “*Your Immigrant Ancestor, by Land and Sea*” will be the theme for the seminar. Registration fees are \$22 for each member; \$25 for a non-member; or \$27 at the door. A lunch is optional for \$8. For additional information, visit www.smcgs.org.

25 & 26 April -Friday eve and Saturday

The Sacramento German Genealogy Society is sponsoring 25th anniversary Fest and seminar. From 8 am to 4 pm on Saturday, the all day seminar will feature Roger Minert and Marion Wolfert as presenters. Choose a seminar topic that will interest you. The Saturday seminar will be held at La Sierra Community Center, 5326 Engle Road in Carmichael.

Beginning at 5 pm Friday evening there will be a Gala event with German style food and music. You must be pre-registered to attend on Friday evening. There is no additional cost to attend this special event at the Sacramento Turn Verein at 3349 J Street.

Registration fees are \$30 for members, \$35 per couple; or \$40 for non-members, \$50 per couple. Fees must be received by April 19. A lunch for Saturday is optional for \$8. To register, contact Milt Kelly at mekelly4143@comcast.net. For additional information, visit www.sacgergensoc.org

A note from Linda Bailey at the

Danville Family History Center

As you all probably know, the LDS church has been asking for community volunteers to help index various records that are of genealogical value. The response has been phenomenal. To see what databases are currently being indexed, go to <http://www.familysearchindexing.org> and select the “PROJECTS” tab at the top of the homepage. You can then view “Current Projects” or “Upcoming Projects” or “Completed Projects.” The lists are pretty impressive!

Once the cataloging, indexing and quality control is complete, the projects will eventually be available as searchable databases on familysearch.org. However, in the meantime, you may get a sneak preview of (and even search through) some of the completed ones at the interim website, <http://labs.familysearch.org/> Under “Current Projects”, select “Record Search.” After a simple (and free) registration, you will be directed to the list of searchable databases. There are about 25 completed databases, including such things as: census, vital records, land records, passenger lists, etc. Have fun and explore!

By the way, you may want to investigate some of the other projects that familysearch.org programmers are experimenting with. Back at <http://labs.familysearch.org/>, look through the list of projects. Especially interesting is one near the bottom called “Life Browser.” It is a tool that allows you to share maps, photos, document images, stories etc. about your relatives.

Enjoy your explorations!

Obituary:

Donald R. Gotthold: died on January 31, 2008.

Don was an active Society member for a number of years as well as a member of the German Special Interest Group.



Who's Who in Our SRVGS Society

Carol Huvane

I've been a member of SRVGS since the mid-90's. I've worked on Hospitality (a high point was helping with the SRVGS 10th Anniversary sit-down celebratory luncheon!), Calendar and Education committees. Currently, I'm finishing up my second year as Recording Secretary.

My recent Mini-Ed presentation told of my family history of three and four generations back in San Francisco, city of my birth and upbringing. My earliest interests in family history were peaked by having access to a most wonderful neighborhood library. In those days city directories, telephone books for major cities nationwide and some newspapers were accessible from the branch library. Thus, tracing by surname became a real interest at an early age.

It is such a "plus" to have an uncommon surname. When I finally had time to pursue my interests in genealogy in the 1990's, I initially visited the Family History Center in Oakland. That first afternoon using the IGI provided me with a wealth of information to later verify. The IGI was especially helpful to me since all four sets of my great-grandparents arrived in the United States from Europe in the second half of the 19th century. I now pursue family lines in Switzerland, Prussia, and Ireland.

My great grandmother who arrived in San Francisco in the 1860's, already married and with one child, did NOT have an uncommon surname. All of her records listed Westphalia, Prussia, Germany from time to time, but her birthplace remained an enigma...until last fall. I happened to read in the Immigrant Genealogical Society's newsletter that the Library of Congress had an ongoing project to digitize newspapers. So far the *San Francisco Call* has been digitized from 1900-1910. To my great surprise I discovered my great grandmother listed as "beloved sister" in a 1905 obituary naming a birthplace for her brother, and

also naming his four married children. The wonder of computers when one has time! I researched this unknown San Francisco family group by census and social security records. Finally, a family in Lafayette seemed to stand out as a possible lead to contact. This family carries an uncommon name with only two entries in the Contra Costa County phone book.

When I presented my Mini-Ed talk I had not yet made contact with this Lafayette family. Three weeks ago I did mail an inquiry, and I received a phone call from the 88 year old wife of my "discovered" distant cousin. Unfortunately, her husband was deceased, but she responded so quickly to my inquiry. She has sent it on to her daughter back east and I'm hopeful to make a connection.

Another problem person was my Irish grandmother who married in SF in 1885. She had been orphaned at an early age in Memphis, Tennessee. Her health remained marginal life-long although she did not die young. Perhaps her early life and later illnesses were tied into the yellow fever epidemics that affected Memphis families so adversely in 1867, 1873 and 1878? Reading a currently popular book, *THE AMERICAN PLAGUE, The Untold Story of Yellow Fever, the Epidemic that Shaped Our History*, by Molly Caldwell Crosby (2006), prompted me to think about this in relation to her history.

Thus, I recommend the website and the book as an interesting "read". Be sure to check the newspaper site. So far, newspapers from California, Florida, Kentucky, New York, Utah, Virginia and the District of Columbia have been digitized (1900-1910).

<http://www.loc.gov/chroniclingamerica/home.html>

"Man is physically as well as metaphysically a thing of shreds and patches, borrowed unequally from good and bad ancestors, and a misfit from the start. "

Ralph Waldo Emerson

EDUCATION



There is still room for one or two members in the class "Getting Organized and Where to Go from There." It will be a one-day session on Tuesday, February 26, 10am to 2pm (bring your lunch) at Frances Lloyd's home in Danville. Sign up at the February 19 meeting or contact Dorothy Stanton to be added to the list.

National Family History Survey Reveals Surprising Results

By: Suzanne Bonner

In the spirit of the holiday season, we at Ancestry.com were curious to see how much Americans knew about their own family histories. A national survey we conducted revealed some surprising findings, such as:

- 83 percent of 18- to 34-year-olds are the most interested in learning their family history, compared to 35- to 54-year-olds at 77 percent and Americans ages 55+ at 73 percent.
- One-third of Americans cannot name any of their great-grandparents.
- Four in ten Americans know both of their grandmothers' maiden names.
- Twenty-two percent of Americans don't know what either of their grandfathers do or did for a living.
- Although America is known as a nation of immigrants, 27 percent don't know where their family lived before they came to America.
- Seventy-eight percent of Americans say they are interested in learning more about their family history.
- Fifty percent of American families have never researched their roots.

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HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President:	Ed Mason	925-838-7848
	e-mail: edmason@sbcglobal.net	
1st V.P.	Barbara Dittig	925-648-9364
2nd V.P. Program:	Kathy Javdani	925-736-5464
	Clarice Hart	925-743-9245
	Lisa Cooke	925-831-8537
3rd V.P. Membership:	Patty & Russ Erickson	925-229-0889
	Sandra Burns	925-648-4653
Recording Secretary:	Carol Huvane	925-947-5669
Corresponding Secretary:	Vern Segelke	925-838-8570
Treasurer:	Ileen Peterson	510-651-7728
Parliamentarian:	Virginia Rood	925-937-8659

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Coordinator:	Bob Venter	925-454-9919
	e-mail: rjventer@comcast.net	
Calendar Coordinator:	Vern Segelke	925-838-8570
	e-mail: v.m.seg3@sbcglobal.net	
Mailing:	Lucy Carver	925-837-3146

Deadline to put information in the Newsletter is the Last Thursday of the month.

Members are encourage to submit articles for the Newsletter by mail or email to the Coordinator.

INDIVIDUAL HELP

Do you need individual help in overcoming a "brick wall" in your research? Go to the SRVGS web site at: <http://srvgensoc.org/>, click on RESOURCES, then click on INDIVIDUAL HELP FOR SRVGS MEMBERS.

Want to help someone who is having research problems in your area of knowledge? Call Harry Baggett at 925.837.7960 to have your

Standards For Sound Genealogical Research

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

Remembering always that they are engaged in a quest for truth, family history researchers consistently—

- record the source for each item of information they collect.
- test every hypothesis or theory against credible evidence, and reject those that are not supported by the evidence.
- seek original records, or reproduced images of them when there is reasonable assurance they have not been altered, as the basis for their research conclusions.
- use compilations, communications and published works, whether paper or electronic, primarily for their value as guides to locating the original records, or as contributions to the critical analysis of the evidence discussed in them.
- state something as a fact only when it is sup-

ported by convincing evidence, and identify the evidence when communicating the fact to others.

- limit with words like "probable" or "possible" any statement that is based on less than convincing evidence, and state the reasons for concluding that it is probable or possible.
- avoid misleading other researchers by either intentionally or carelessly distributing or publishing inaccurate information.
- state carefully and honestly the results of their own research, and acknowledge all use of other researchers' work.
- recognize the collegial nature of genealogical research by making their work available to others through publication, or by placing copies in appropriate libraries or repositories, and by welcoming critical comment.
- consider with open minds new evidence or the comments of others on their work and the conclusions they have reached.

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