



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society



www.srvgensoc.org

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

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THIS MONTH – July 17, 2012
“Looking for and discovering our missing links “
Presented by: Society Members



Have you had a breakthrough in YOUR genealogy research? We all hope for the unexpected but welcome any piece of information that moves our story to the next level.

This month some of our members will share their A-Ha moment with us. Their solutions may be the trigger YOU need to find your own breakthrough.



From the June Meeting
“Clues leading to Ancestral Villages”
Speaker: Patrick Lofft Reporter: Lee Schlenker



Our own member, Patrick Lofft, presented our program. He has been working on his research for some 50 years and didn't realize hobbyists around the nation had developed standard forms for family group sheets. He claims he has gone from his #2 pencil and his pink-pearl eraser to the much more sophisticated ways of maintaining records! He and his wife have traveled to many countries looking for clues to ancestral homesteads and families.

His questions to us were, “Do you know where your ancestor's village was? Are you still looking? Which resources would give clues to the name of an ancestral village in the old country?”

First off, he found that the last name of Lofft was Irish. He then found the name Moynihan, Ireland written in his baby book. He sent for and received information from the Irish Heritage Center in Ireland showing the last name was

spelled differently – James Lough. Now, how did it get from Lough to Lofft? Through a ship's manifest Patrick found James Lough had arrived in N.Y. in 1873, but his name was spelled Loft on the manifest. Later James' wife and children arrived and the City of Brooklyn manifest spelled the name as Loft. It turns out that James was illiterate and could only sign his name with an “X”. So, any spelling was close enough.

Patrick, still looking for clues, says to look in the attic and through papers a relative might have stored and forgotten about. He found a letter dated 1864 regarding the pension rights in PA from an ancestor's wife. She had to write back and forth to Ireland (which went by ship back and forth slowly) to get the church records of their marriage - which turned out to be a Roman Catholic marriage.

Check the IGI (International Genealogy Index) for clues. The Mormons had taken a ►



(Photo by Nancy Alexander)

Our June Speaker: Patrick Lofft

church book and turned out a chart listing ancestors. Both sides of the family were identified - Joseph Eltges (born in Germany) to James Lough.

On a visit to a relative, Patrick found a paper regarding Eugene Heckman born 1851 with stamps from Prussia - even though he was born in Alsace, France. While Patrick and his wife were in Germany they went through the phone book and listed out every Heckman they found and started knocking on doors trying to locate the "homestead." They found it! Their relatives had old pictures of ancestors which had been sent from NY once upon a time. Patrick found a Graduation Certificate of Good Conduct which listed more names of more ancestors. They proceeded to Duttlenheim, Germany where they decided they needed a map for some help. Stopping at a little market they asked for a map - no map available, but a nice man said to follow him. He just so happened to have the key to the small town hall and allowed Patrick to search records for clues. He found some church records and obituaries for a

relative from Russia and from Kirshburg, Germany. The obituary said this person was born in Koblenz, Germany. The obituaries alone were not enough and the church records alone were not enough. But, when Patrick put them together they held other clues.

With still another ancestor, Patrick found a ship's manifest stating the family arrived in the U.S. in 1882 (husband, wife and three sons) but a Naturalization Declaration in 1884 didn't say much. They were hard to find in the census since they rented the majority of the time, but they rented very close to a parish church. But from the census it stated that both had been married before 1911. So, more clues and more digging. There had been 10 children born into the family but 6 had been buried in Bavaria. Patrick wrote to the church for baptism record and found his ancestor was baptized in the town of Welkendorf, Bavaria. Visiting Welkendorf village he and his wife found the grave markers of his deceased ancestors.

Patrick says when searching look for that village name in an American record. And you must be patient when e-mailing or writing a letter. Research carefully for your prominent information - i.e. baby book, Civil War pension records, IGI, family papers, newspaper obits plus church registers, church marriage records, ship manifests, U.S. Customs and Immigration Service (USCIS), the Census and professional help (if need be). Search for that village name, always.

A few websites Patrick used:

- Postal addresses for Irish Heritage centers :
<http://www.kinsella.org/genealogy/research/irhercen.htm> (\$25.00 US fee)
- Free Irish database:
<http://ifhf.rootsireland.ie/search.php>
- Alien Files at NARA (Kansas City):
<http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-kansascity.html>
- Alien Files at NARA (San Francisco):
<http://www.archives.gov/research/immigration/aliens/a-files-sanfrancisco.html> ■



President's Message

By Dick Finn

It sure is difficult to figure out what the weather is going to be from day to day, but one thing we know for sure is there is a lot of energy in the San Ramon Valley Genealogy Society. Look at the number and variety of Special Interest Groups (SIG) we have. A very good number for the size of our organization. How about the great work the 1940 Census folks are doing! They are doing a wonderful job of indexing. And then we have a large number of people who are more or less behind the scenes helping set up for meetings, volunteering at the Family History Center, etc.

One area that perhaps we could be a little better at is all of us greeting new members (this is a task for all of us, not just a few hard workers). Help all members, new and old, feel at home in our group, reminding them of all the SIGs we have, the volunteer opportunities, giving them clues on how to overcome their brick walls, etc.

See you at our next meeting on July 17 and then again when we take up on September 25 after our August break. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

July 2012

- 3 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting was held at the home of Frances Lloyd in Danville.
- 17 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From the I-680 Freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 1/2 miles.

August 2012

Our Society does not hold meetings during the month of August. Enjoy the summer break ►

and look forward to meeting again in September. A Board will be held at the home of Russ and Patti Erickson in Pleasant Hill on Tuesday morning September 4. ■

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



DNA - This Special Interest Group will meet **Thursday July 12th, 10 am (second Thursday) at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road.** The theme will be Haplogroup Test Results, Ancestry Test Results.

Bob Venter is the contact person for the group. Please contact him to express your interest in the group. You may contact him via e-mail, rjventer@comcast.net or phone (925) 454-9919. Bob has a Venter family web site, <http://www.venter.org>, from which you may view family DNA information and from which he wants to gather information for the Venter Surname Study.



GERMAN – The German Group will meet **Wednesday July 25th at 10 am (the fourth Wednesday).** The German group will

meet at the home of Dorothy Baker in Walnut Creek. The coordinator for this group is Helen Odegard. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact her via e-mail, shodegard@att.net or phone 932-6796 for more information.



IRISH - This special interest group will **NOT meet during July or August.** Patty Erickson is the contact

person for this group. You may contact Patty via e-mail, russpat@comcast.net or phone 229-0889.



LEGACY SOFTWARE – This is a genealogy software users group. The Legacy group will meet on **Monday July 23rd** (Fourth Monday) from **1-3 PM** at the FHC in Alamo. They had a wonderful

meeting in June, reviewing the 104 different reports available through Legacy. At the July meeting they are going to delve into Tagging and Searching in Legacy. If anyone is interested in joining this group, contact Sharon Clay at ►

sharonlclay@comcast.net, or 925-462-4518.



PUBLISHING – The publishing group will meet **Thursday July 19th at 10:00 am** (the third Thursday of the month) at the home of Frances Lloyd in Danville. Publishing a book about your family's story need not be a mysterious process. The Publishing Group invites you to monthly meetings where you will learn the ends and outs of publishing. This informal group of members will offer advice, encouragement, suggestions and guide you to publishing sources as you develop your book. Members that are interested in joining should let Francie know ahead of time that they plan to attend. For further information, contact Francie at 837-9382 or e-mail, frances_lloyd@comcast.net



The Next Generation of Genealogy Sitebuilding® ("TNG") –

This group has been organized for the purpose of allowing members to create their own web site from which their family history data can be found and shared. Their next meeting will be held **Tuesday July 24th at 10 am (the fourth Tuesday) at the Danville Family History Center** on Stone Valley Road. "Timeline Events" will be the theme. This is a powerful way to manage and display your genealogy data on your own web site, all without generating a single page of static HTML. Your information is dynamically displayed in attractive fashion. Linda Bailey is the contact person. Her email address is baileylinda100@gmail.com or Phone (925) 552-5920 for further information. ■

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

21 July Saturday 10:30 am. The **San Mateo County** Genealogical Society will hold their regular monthly meeting at the Grace Lutheran Church Hall, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo. "**Soldiers, Sailors, Privateers: Records from the War of 1812**" is the topic that will be presented by Susan G. Johnston. Records arising from the War of 1812, our country's "Second War of Independence," are ►

intriguing and varied. Of course, service records and pension applications are very valuable to the genealogist, but War of 1812 combatants were also documented in bounty land records, station records, letters of marque, and prize cases. The stories these records tell may inspire you to delve a little deeper into the lives of your own War of 1812 family members. For more information, visit their web site: www.smcgs.org ■

EDUCATION



The California Genealogical Society, <http://www.californiaancestors.org/>, has a number of opportunities in July. The month's activities begin on July 7th with the

- **First Saturday Free Intro Class** from 1–3:00 p.m. led by Muriel Sonne. Register online.
- The **Writing Your Family History: Start Now!** – Course starts Saturday, July 7, 2012. It includes four 5-hour sessions through October. Register online.
- The Summer Series is a seven week course titled **Best Genealogy Websites: Tricks & Tips**. This series starts on Thursday, July 19th at 6:30 p.m. Register online.
- The discussion **Genealogical Sleuthing: Finding Your Immigrant Ancestor's Home** led by Steve Harris will meet on Thursday, July 5th from 6:30 p.m. - 8:15 p.m.
- The Society's weekly discussion series meets weekly from 6:30- 8:15. The first topic on Thursday, July 12th will be **Searching for Living People**. On Thursday, July 19th the discussion topic will be **German Research** led by Robert Jackson. The final discussion entitled **Stump the Panel** led by the Research Team will be on Thursday, July 26th.

Now is the time to plan for the Society's biennial trip to the New England Historic ►

Genealogical Society in Boston, September 23-30, 2012. For more information, download the tour flier. Register online.



The National Archives (NARA) <http://www.archives.gov/pacific/archives/san-francisco/workshops.html> in San Bruno will present **Military Part II** on July 20th. This session will be taught by Rose Mary Kennedy To register and reserve a space, for both or either session please contact: Rose Mary Kennedy, Phone: (650) 238-3485, Email: san-bruno.archives@nara.gov. Fees are \$15 payable in advance. Please note that a minimum of 12 people must have registered by the week of the workshop. If 12 people have not registered in advance, the workshop will be cancelled and no fees will be charged.



The Northern California Family History Expo www.familyhistoryexpos.com/viewevent.aspx?eid=55 will take place in Sacramento on July 6th and 7th. Check the web-site for presentations and registration. Roots Magic will hold 8 sessions during the conference.

Happy researching!

Indexing Status

Winners of the June Indexing contest were Jo Ann Garlinton 1st (1601), Vern Segelke 2nd (1360) and Avonia Dondero 3rd (1120). Total for month was 5,201. Year to date total is 14,721. Congratulations to our seven indexers.

Survey

We are planning a short survey about your genealogy computer program use at the next SRVGS General Meeting on July 17, 2012. Would you please review and see what version your genealogy software is? We will be passing a clipboard among the audience asking what genealogy program and version you use. Here's a list of the more popular programs.

For PCs

- Family Tree Maker
- Legacy
- Roots Magic
- PAF
- Ancestral Quest
- The Master Genealogist



HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President: Dick Finn 925-447-9652

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Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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Calendar Coordinator:

Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

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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 name added to the SRVGS Individual Help list.

Harry Baggett trvrl@sbcglobal.net

For Macs

- Family Tree Maker
- Reunion

On the Internet

- Ancestry
- TNG
- Geni
- Rootsweb
- My web site

On Paper

- Notes in Folders
- Pedigree Charts
- Other

Thank you so much,

Bill George <http://www.billgeorge.com>

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