



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society



www.srvgensoc.org

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

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THIS MONTH – September 18, 2012

“Using Local and Family History Records in Your Research “

Presented by: Dean McLeod



Dean McLeod is a professional genealogist and founding Board Member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He has served for 10 years on the Board of Directors of the Contra Costa County Historical Society and is currently a Board Member of the Bay Point Historical Society.

Aside from privately printed family histories researched and written at Brigham Young University in the 1980's, he has written two books published by Arcadia Publishing: Images of America: Bay Point and Images of America: Port Chicago. He has some 35 years of speaking experience related to genealogy. He spent the first 10 years of his career specializing in Scottish and English resources. However, for the last 22 years his focus has been on Bay Area records.



From the July Meeting

“Looking for and discovering our missing links ”

Speaker: Various Society Members Reporter: Lee Schlenker



The introduction to these five member speakers was done by our own Patty Erickson. Patty was the first speaker herself. She had been trying for years to find the family name of Conkling (parents of her 4-great grandfather). Josiah Conkling, she knew, was born in Long Island, NJ about 1721. She finally found a Josiah Conkling (the son of Josiah) born in 1754. Patty found Josiah had fought in the Revolutionary War through N.J. records and was wounded in Springfield, IL. He possible was married to Susannah Freeman. A Jacob Lewis and his wife, Catherine Freeman, were the parents of Susannah. Josiah (the son) and Susannah had a daughter whom they named Catherine. So, Patty continued to hunt and found a John and Ananias Conkling and their families coming to Salem in the 1630s as glass

makers and by 1640 they had moved to NY. Patty found land and church records both pertaining to them. She also came across a book written regarding the families from Easthampton which included her ancestors. Patty had done so much research and searched in so many various places always keeping bits and pieces of her information that in the end she was able to piece together the family's tree.

Our second speaker was Sharon Clay regarding her Swedish ancestors. She had found much of her information through Swedish Database Computer Genealogy. She had found both sides of her mother's family. On a trip to Sweden she was privileged to view the original probate records and started to write what she could read of the Swedish writing. The gentleman helping ►



(Photos by Nancy Alexander)

Our July Speakers (l to r): Patty Erickson, Sharon Clay, Jean Hunt, Diane George and Susan Hanck

her said, "I'll send you a copy of these records" – which showed up all in Swedish for Sharon. She had found immigration records showing there was a sister who had come to the U.S. along with Sharon's great grandfather. Sharon's own mother had found a letter in 1917 in the pocket of the great grandfather with information. Immigration records showed they went to Chicago but Sharon couldn't find them in Chicago. Had the last name of Nielson been changed to Nelson? So, on a search in Salt Lake City Sharon did a "blind" search using only the first names, birth dates and the children's names. Sharon got results. The results were that two people within her search could be traced – one born in 1881 in Kansas and the other born 1895. Then, while writing her family story, she figured that it was too open-ended and she still needed to search for more. She found a Gail Wilson (her third cousin) whose father was born and Gail's grandmother had died shortly after giving birth. Sharon and Gail were both interested in genealogy and the pedigree charts. So before they met they traded information and charts and Sharon found out that Gail Wilson was the wife of former Governor Pete Wilson.

Jean Hunt was the third speaker on her "ah-ha!" moment and she posed these questions "Who's right? Your relatives? But were they *there*?" She had two uncles who seemed to feel they were right. Their father's grandmother was in Salem during the Salem witch trials and that was true since *their mother said so!* The older uncle had information of the Civil War and the younger uncle, Walter, had newspaper articles providing names of an Emily and D.D. Mather. What did the D.D. stand for? Did the D.D. stand

for Dwight David? A found picture provided a listing of the children's names only and a census provided the D.D. to be Daniel D. Mather. Middle name not solved. On a trip to Sutro Jean picked up 1883 information on the family and found another book to read. Then in a newspaper obituary it stated Emily was married to a D.D. Mather, so the name problem still wasn't solved. Jean sent away for his pension record and within that record was a burial request which included the question, "what is the deceased's first name, middle, last names?" The answer was Daniel Davidson Mather. Name solved!

Our next speaker was Diane George. She started out with small but significant steps and not so much that "ah-ha" moment. Her great grandmother, Maria Vargas, at the age of 13 years, came to the U.S. in 1873, married in 1892. She lived in San Leandro with her older sister who had migrated earlier. But with Maria being very young, records were sketchy. There were no 1890 census records and no city directories. So Diane started with her parents - Antonio who came from the Faial Azores, married to Anna in 1851 and were in the States by 1874. The passenger list showed Antonio, Anna, Maria and Manual with the adult's ages being not quite correct, but the children's ages were correct. The last name of Vargas had not been indexed and there were other discrepancies; one being that they were headed to Massachusetts. Diane found them in the 1910 census. Newspaper articles from 1887 to 1910 had referenced Maria in organizations, at parties, galas, etc. And Antonio, at the age of 72, was referenced as a "capitalist" although he had been a farmer for the most part of his life. ►

Our last speaker was Susan Hanck and when she was a “new-bee” to genealogy found her first cousin, Mary, happy to share her own research. She sent Susan a marriage license (which turned out to be a gold mine for Susan). Susan was looking for her grandmother, Genevieve Britton’s, maiden name. This marriage license was for Susan’s father’s parents but contained Genevieve Fuhs (maiden) name as well as Genevieve’s mother’s maiden name of Woltering (an ah-ha! moment) and also the city of Harlen, Iowa. Susan found her in the 1800 census. But she couldn’t locate any family in Harlen, Iowa. So, Susan sent an application to the Social Security Administration which sent back the name, address, birth date, but born in the city of *Harper, Iowa and not Harlen, Iowa*. The other ah-ha! moment. This changed the picture – she found that Genevieve’s father was a grocer, a real estate agent and notary in Harper. Census records now differed from her original search. Susan visited the Baden cemetery in Iowa (now part of Harper) where her great, great grandfather, along with second wife, was buried. Next to the cemetery was a section of land which they had owned and farmed. ■



President's Message

By Dick Finn

It seems that all of us have gained so much from our genealogy studies. Not only have we learned about our own families but we have learned about the far away countries our ancestors came from and what life was like for them in the old country as well as the new land they came to. We have learned about the economies our ancestors faced over the centuries, how occupations changed from 90% of the population living on farms to occupations that our ancestors could never have dreamed of.

I think it is time for many of us to give back. Give back in ways that help others get interested in genealogy and help them get as much enjoyment and knowledge as we have over the years. We can do that in a number of ways. We can help at events we are planning like Ask Granny and Heritage Happenings. We can ►

volunteer to be genealogy docents at our local libraries. We can help research local families and get that information out to the public in print and electronic form. We can give talks on family history research at retirement homes, churches, and senior centers. We can help arrange trips to regional libraries that contain so much useful information. Were do you want to fit in and help? Please let me or any other Board member know. Thank you for reading so far! ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

September 2012

- 4 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting was held at the home of Russ and Patti Erickson in Pleasant Hill.
- 18 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.

October 2012

- 2 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board will be held at the home of Jan Mangold in Diablo.
- 16 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

By: Bill George

The **September, 2012 DNA SIG** should be a good one. Doug Mumma, long time L-AGS member and DNA enthusiast, will present DNA results from 18 people who are directly related to his daughter. He used Autosomal DNA tests. This nicely shows how much DNA appears and how well the FTDNA algorithm predicts ►

relationships or doesn't find matches at all.

A survey was taken of the attendees of the General meeting on July 17th. People were asked how they recorded their genealogy and were asked that they choose only one answer. Of the 59 people who filled out the form, 17 chose 2 or more answers. So the numbers below include those multiple answers. Some clear winners did emerge, however. Family Tree Maker and Ancestry seem to be the most popular way of tracking ancestors with six people using both FTM and Ancestry. Six of the nine people that use paper also indicated that they also used a genealogy program. Here are the top 8 answers.

- 20 - Family Tree Maker
- 15 - Ancestry
- 9 - Paper
- 7 - Legacy
- 6 - Reunion
- 4 - The Master Genealogist
- 3 - The Next Generation of Genealogy
- 3 - Roots Magic

What I conclude from this is that a Family Tree Maker/Ancestry SIG would be very well attended. Since Family Tree Maker syncs with Ancestry, it makes sense that they would be grouped together as one SIG. So, I need a volunteer to head up such a group. If someone volunteers, I will volunteer to attend all the meetings and set up a projector and sound (if needed).

The 1940 Census became totally searchable by name in the middle of August. So it took only 4 ½ months to complete this project, nation wide. This is amazing! SRVGS had a dedicated group of 7 people that indexed over nineteen thousand names. The top 5 indexers were Verne Segelke (4,960), Jo Ann Garlington (4641), Diane George (3,225), Avonia Dondero (3000) and Phil Seelinger (2,800). Congratulations to all of you!

From Suzanne Johnston: "Now that the 1940 Census has been so successful and completed months early, I hope that SRVGS will continue on with their indexing project. FamilySearch is taking a new approach, and that is to continue on with indexing projects such as the 1940 census. I believe they are currently working on the Immigration records and naturalization ►

papers. I hope you will encourage everyone to be a part of indexing. It is a way of giving back to those who have already transcribed and indexed the records we use every day."

The TNG SIG had to be cancelled due to low of interest. If anyone would like to see a new SIG started, please contact me and I'll make arrangements. We want to make it easy to start a new SIG and stop ones that don't get good attendance. Your participation in a SIG will greatly improve your genealogy knowledge and allow you to get to know others in SRVGS. ■

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS



DNA - This Special Interest Group will meet **Thursday September 13th, 10 am (second Thursday)** at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. This will be a good meeting to attend.

Doug Mumma, long time L-AGS member and DNA enthusiast, will present DNA results from 18 people who are directly related to his daughter. He used Autosomal DNA tests. This nicely shows how much DNA appears and how well the FTDNA algorithm predicts relationships or doesn't find matches at all. 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.

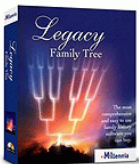


GERMAN – The German Group will meet **Wednesday September 26th at 10 am (the fourth Wednesday)** at the home of Fran and Bob Schweitzer in Walnut Creek. Phone 935-5744 or e-mail franschw@pacbell.net. The coordinator for this group is Helen Odegard. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact her via e-mail, shodegard@att.net or phone 932-6796 for more information. ►



IRISH - This special interest group will meet **Wednesday September 12th** (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 am., at the home of Russ and

Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. They also plan to meet on October 10. 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 September 24th** (Fourth Monday) from **1-3 PM** at the FHC in Alamo. At the September meet-

ing they are going to be Organizing your Digital Genealogy Files. **This group will very likely NOT meet in October. 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 September 20th 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 ■

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

13 September Thursday 7:00 p.m. The Contra Costa County Genealogical Society will hold one of its regular monthly meetings at the LDS Church – 1360 Alberta Way in Concord. Dean McLeod will speak about what he has learned over the past 37 years. Dean McLeod has been a full-time professional genealogist since ►

January of 1975, and was a founding board member of the Association of Professional Genealogists. He is a former staff researcher for the Brigham Young University Family History Services, and spent his first ten years specializing in Scottish and English research.

15 September Saturday 10:30 a.m. 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. The speaker will be Janice Sellers. Her topic will be "Following a Family's History through Newspaper Articles" . For more information, visit their web site: www.smcgs.org

25 September Tuesday 1 to 3 pm The Sacramento German Genealogy Society the door will hold its regular monthly meeting at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Lusk Drive and St. Marks way in Sacramento. *Dear Helpdesk: I have German Ancestors- but I Don't know German.* The presenter is a native of Germany and a regular helper at the Elk Grove family History Center to guide patrons along their way with their research problems. Michael Mayer-Kielmann will be the presenter. You may also visit their web site at: www.sacgergensoc.org


10 October Wednesday 10 a.m. The East Bay Genealogical Society will hold one of its regular meetings at the Oakland Family History Center Library meeting room, 4766 Lincoln Avenue in Oakland. Richard Ferman will be the speaker. His topic will be "Researching in Pennsylvania. He has many research books on PA that he is anxious to share. Along with his experience in this area, he will discuss Southeast PA, Pittsburgh and Alleghany County. For additional information, visit their blog spot: <http://caebaygs.blogspot.com/>


13 October Saturday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30p.m., 1020 "O" Street, Sacramento Everybody is invited to the 14th Annual Family History Day at the California State Archives. There will be 24 beginner ►


and basic level genealogy sessions. Each session will be one hour - Topics include beginning genealogy, census, cemetery research, maps, correspondence, forms, German research, Black research, Eastern European research, archives and libraries panel, internet resources panel, and more. Take a class in the State Archives Preservation Lab: State Archives staff will demonstrate how documents are preserved. Take a tour of the State Archives: State Archives staff will guide small groups through the "vault", describing the document storage area not typically open to the public. Visit with exhibitors representing genealogical, historical and lineage societies, and federal, state and local research libraries and archives. Browse in the Root Cellar Genealogical Library: newly reorganized with expanded collections. --Go to <http://fhdnewsline.blogspot.com>.

20 October Saturday 8:00 a.m. to 4:30p.m 3700 Concord Blvd. in Concord The 18th annual Family History Fall Seminar, "Digging for Your Roots" will be presented at the Concord FHC. The donation fee is \$15 per person to get a Syllabus if you register before September 30. The registration fee is \$7 for the seminar only. Registration forms must be mailed to: Concord FHC c/o Jackie Hein 2129 North 6th Street Concord, CA 94519 Watch for the forms at your local Family History Center or phone Jackie Hein 925-827-4729 for further information. ■

computer based, seven classes is \$40 and includes a syllabus. Register online at <http://tinyurl.com/BeginGenSeries2012>. CGS will also be hosting "NEHGS Comes West:2012 seminar" on Oct. 26th. The day includes a seminar, lunch and optional dinner. Register online at <http://tinyurl.com/NEHGSOCT2012>. Pre-Register (before Sept. 24th) to pay \$60 for the seminar and \$50 for the dinner. The event will also offer limited consultations by apt. only on Sat. Oct. 27th.


 In addition to hosting the CGS "Genealogy 101: Getting Started" series, the Oakland Family History Center <https://www.familysearch.org> is the site for other events. **Mac Users Group Workshop** led by our own Bill George will meet on Sept. 12th at 7pm. Bill will also lead the **Mac Users Group** meeting on Sept. 22nd at 1:30 The monthly meeting of the **African American Workshop** will be on Sept. 26th from 6 -8 pm.

 Across the Bay, NARA <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/index.html> will present **Preserving Your History** on Sept. 14th from 9 – 1pm. There is a \$15 fee. To register contact Rose Mary Kennedy at 650-238-3485 or sanbruno.archives@nara.gov.


 Acalanes Adult Ed <http://www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted/> has scheduled two genealogy classes for the Fall Semester. **Genealogy Beginning** will meet on Fridays from Sept. 14th – Nov. 16th from 1-3 pm. **Computers and Genealogy** will also meet on Fridays from 14th – Nov. 16th. Its classes will be held from 10 am – 12 pm. The cost for each 10 session class is \$80 / seniors \$72. ■

EDUCATION

By: *Kathy Javdani*

 September is back to learning month. CGS (California Genealogical Society) www.californiaancestors.org will start the month with a free "Genealogy 101: Getting Started" on Sept. 8th from 1-3 pm. Register online. The Oakland Family Search Library will host CGS's **Fall 2012 Beginning Genealogy Series**. The 7-week course starting on Sept. 18th from 10:30 am - 12:00 pm. Registration for the ►

In Memoriam

 We are saddened by the news of the recent passing away of one of our long time members, **Linda Gibbons Sada**. Our sympathy and thoughts go out to her family.

Additionally, we send our deepest sympathy to Clarice Hart and her family on loss of her husband, **Walt**. He passed away August 3rd, after a short illness. They had been married for 58 years.

Find that Obituary-on-line

(This is a summary of a Mini-Ed presentation by Russ Erickson, based on an article by Megan Smolenyak-Smolenyak.)

The past 6 years has seen great growth in newspapers on line. National collections are mostly free to search for obtaining a citation, but then pay for the entire article--\$3 to\$5 per article. Annual subscriptions run \$50 to \$200. Articles are in text or digitized (better and more accurate). It is still a patchwork service. Content changes with changes in licensing and what is available now might not be later. Personal vs. library based. Newspapers are digitized from the first and last years toward the middle! (1918-1940)

Genealogybank is the largest service, covering colonial to present. They have historical and obituary sections, and the social security death index is free. If one has colonial roots in the north east, there are many articles indexed. *Newslibrary.com* created *Genealogybank* and you can also use it with a subscription. *Obitsarchiv.com* is a la carte at \$2.95 per article. Ancestry has a historical paper collection with flexible searches. Search the sought locality, but widen, even countrywide as people can pop up everywhere in the news--on trips, etc. "Snagit" can capture a screen. *Archives.com*, just purchased by Ancestry; you can have 10 views a day; costs less than Ancestry.

Newspaperarchive.com is comprehensive, but has less colonial. Many articles from Texas, California and Jamaica. Always watch for genealogy clues in regular articles. Library of Congress is free, slowly chronicling the USA, now from 1836-1922 (1923 begins copyright). Prior to 1836, the type is difficult to pick up with OCR. Google is not putting in more newspapers. Click on news then archives.

International papers: *digitalarchive.com*; In the UK, the Guardian is the oldest extant Sunday paper; articles in 24 hours, high cost. The *Scotsman* covers Scotland well. *Irishnewspaperarchives* is improving for Ireland and the Irish Times goes back to 1859. New Zealand papers are available to 1839 (NZnewspaperspast) Australian papers are free; 1803-1954. The Canada Gazette has been decimated by government fund decrease. *Newspapersarchiveslinks* is done by one individual for varied countries. ►

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President: Dick Finn 925-447-9652

e-mail: president@srvgensoc.org

1st V.P. Russ Erickson 925-229-0889

2nd V.P. Program:

Rae Atwood 925-376-7527

3rd V.P. Membership:

Ed Mason 925-838-7848

Recording Secretary:

Mary Tom 925-376-2756

Corresponding Secretary:

Jan Mangold 925-820-5901

Treasurer: Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

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 name added to the SRVGS Individual Help list.

Harry Baggett trvrl@sbcglobal.net

Utah digital Newspapers covers much. *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* is free on line to 1902. *Fulton History* is a bizarre site with many facts, it covers papers in central NY and the Eagle after 1902. Search via the ADDRESS of an ancestor if known.

Joe Beine's list has newspaper indexes and many other indexes. *onlinenewspapers.com*, *Refdesk*, *wikipedia*, *epodunk.com* can be searched for small papers. Check also any newspaper's site and search regional archives. *Proquest* has historical papers.

The Library of Congress lists 140,000 papers and where they can be located. *Obituary centric*: Ancestry has an obit collection from many small papers. *Obitsarchiv.com* has more contemporary articles. *Legacy.com* is improving and trying to upsell; has archived articles. Their Obituary messenger notifies you when a name you seek comes up. *tributes.com* is like *legacy.com*, but younger and not much yet. Many libraries have local obituary indices. *Publiclibraries.com* and *epodunk.com* list them. Local genealogy and historical societies might also help. *Genlighten.com* is a site where people specialize. ■

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