



# San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society



www.srvgensoc.org

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXX No. 9 May - 2015



**THIS MONTH – May 19, 2015**  
**“Online Family Trees”**  
**Presented by: Janet Brigham**



**J**anet will be discussing online family trees and how best to use them to your advantage.

Janet Brigham is vice-president of the Silicon Valley Genealogy Computer Group, and is a family history consultant. A former journalist and an editor, she has been editor-in-chief of the award-winning SVC GG monthly newsletter, *PastFinder*. The newsletter has been named best in the United States for three consecutive years.

Janet has worked professionally as a research psychologist and applies decades of research skills to genealogy research, with an emphasis on Internet research, technology, and research accuracy. ■



**From the April Meeting**  
**“Tips for Breaking Down Brick Walls”**

**Speaker: Lisa Gorrell    Reporter: Russ Erickson**



**L**isa provided a finely presented talk outlining distinct steps to overcome a genealogical “brick wall”, when you cannot answer a question, find an ancestral maiden name, or seek an ancestor in an historical event. Hers was Ireland (a common problem).

1. Check your old notes; if doing genealogy for many years, you might have answers long ago that you did not then realize. Scrutinize the documents you collected. Did you really obtain all the data from a census or other source? Reread the record; reread obits, etc.

2. Reorganize your research; patterns might

show; use tables, lists, spreadsheets. Use charts for land records, check land descriptions, maps and distances from neighbor’s homes. (Those closer are more likely related). Check locality of churches for ones most likely to hold data.

3. Check timelines. WRITE about what you know, starting with the timeline. Write about your problem.

4. Broaden your research; check siblings and their children. Keep track of neighbors in census records and in land/tax records. Record all residences of the family and of collaterals over the years. Keep track by dates and places. Search ►



(Photo by Nancy Alexander)

## Lisa Gorrell

neighboring counties. Try new record groups, for example, court, probate, land, criminal, armed forces, city directories, newspapers and pensions. In newspapers, note items on the community.

5. Did you cause your own brick wall? False assumptions? Not flexible in surname spelling? Not familiar with the record and why it was created? (FS wiki and Cyndi's List helpful here.) Take classes on record sets. Was the ancestor hidden--remarried, children under stepfather's name, used initials only (especially in the south), not in the index, but perhaps in the original?

Further tips:

- Get organized, use research logs. Family Tree and Ancestry both have downloadable logs.
- Frustrated? Work on another line for awhile, or take a break. Have someone else look at your data or hire a researcher to get a fresh look.
- Try new strategies by first names, ►

locations. Start broad and narrow or reverse that. Sometimes, you need little pieces of evidence put together; indirect evidence.

- SOURCE everything well!

Also note where you looked and did not find anything. Note negative evidence; write down the books and databases explored and dates--especially if doing research for others. ■



## President's Message

*By Russ Erickson*

Genealogy related items continue to grow in the internet as search engines accumulate more and more data throughout the world. Last month I mentioned YouTube and the many elements it holds. There is also the WayBack Machine, Archives.org, JSTORR, Google Scholar, An Ancestors Public Library, Sources, Memory.loc.gov, worldcatalogue.org, FHLcatalogue wiki, Genforum, USgenweb.org, archivegrid.org, and many other exotic sources that we, myself included, have likely not explored. It is a strange new source world for us mostly "old timers" intrigued by a search for ancestral information.

This month, I explored <archives.org> which contains ebooks with sources including the University of Toronto, California digital library, Library of Congress, European library, Boston Consortium and Public Library, Allen county public library, Columbia University library, Universities of Illinois and Florida, New Hampshire, Alberta, Mississippi, and Pittsburg. Even the National library of Scotland. In addition, this site has connections to the wayback machine, live music archives, audio archives, moving image archives, and registered data providers. Items from NASA, the national agriculture library, and medical heritage library are included.

Exploring each of the above items is a major undertaking. For instance, under European library are a myriad of countries, from England, through Europe, to India, in a number of languages. "Community texts" likewise contains dozens of varied items (most do not relate to genealogy), ►

in several languages. A start in genealogy can lead one to a broad education when frustrated after wandering down a long alley to find the right open door to an ancestor (alley sounds more promising than beating against a brick wall).



### May 2015

- 5 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting was held at the home of Frances Lloyd in Danville.
- 19 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.

### June 2015

- 2 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board will be held at the home of Frances Lloyd.
- 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.

## SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

**NOTE:** For San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Special Interest Group contact information and schedules, you may also visit the web site at <http://srvgensoc.org/sig.htm>. Please **note** some activities take place early in the month, before our newsletter is issued. Be sure to check with the SIG coordinator if you have a particular interest.



**ANCESTRY/FAMILY TREE MAKER** – This group focuses on how Family Tree Maker interacts with Ancestry.com. This group will have met **Monday May 4<sup>th</sup> (the first Monday) at 1:15 pm at the Danville** ►

**Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Road.** Susan Rush is the coordinator for this group.



**FAMILY SEARCH/FAMILY TREE** - This Special Interest Group will meet **Monday May 11<sup>th</sup>** (the second Monday) at **1:15 pm at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road.** The topic for the meeting will be, "Tips on Searching for Sources." This group learns step by step procedures for using the many features of Family Tree on the FamilySearch web site. Bill George is the coordinator and contact person for this group



**IRISH** - This special interest group will meet **Wednesday May 13<sup>h</sup>** (the second Wednesday) at **10:00 am., at the home of Russ and Patty Erickson** in Pleasant Hill. Patty Erickson is the contact person for this group.



**LEGACY SOFTWARE** – This is a **genealogy software** users group. This group will meet **Monday, May 18<sup>th</sup> from 1:15 to 3 pm, one week early, due to the Memorial Day Holiday at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road in Alamo.** If anyone is interested in joining this group, please contact Sharon Clay, the group coordinator.



**PUBLISHING** – The publishing group will meet **Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup> at 10:00 am at the home of Frances Lloyd** in Danville. This informal Group invites you to monthly third Thursday meetings. Members will offer advice, encouragement, suggestions and guide you to publishing sources as you develop your project, big or small. Members share their writings as their progress to a finished project. Society members interested in joining should let Francie, the group coordinator, know that they plan to attend.



**GERMAN** – The German Group will meet **Wednesday, May 27<sup>th</sup>** (the fourth Wednesday). **at 10:00 am., at the home of Bob Venter.** The coordinator for this group is Helen Odegard. Please contact Helen if you plan to join the group. ■



## CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

- 11 May Monday 7:30 pm** The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society will hold one of its regular meetings at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court in Pleasanton. Anne Gillespie Mitchell will be the speaker. Search Successfully to Record Your Ancestors Story on Ancestry.com, will be the subject. The web address for the society is: <http://www.l-ags.org>
- 15 May Friday 1:30 pm** The Mount Diablo Genealogical Society will hold one of its regular meetings at the Creekside Clubhouse meeting room #3 in Rossmoor. Speakers for the meeting will be Karla Henderlong & Madeline Yanov whose subject will be "*The Taxman Found Your Ancestor - Can You?*" Not many genealogists talk about or use tax records, but they can be vital to the search for your ancestor. They meet on the third Friday of each month.
- 19 May Tuesday 6 pm** The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will hold one of its regular meetings in the Margie Edinger Room of the Santa Clara Central Park library, 2635 Homestead Road in Santa Clara. Mary Boyle will tell about the latest in the Central Park Library Genealogy and History Collection. You may also visit [www.scchgs.org](http://www.scchgs.org) for further society information.
- 20 May Wednesday 7:30 to 9 pm** The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will hold a regular member meeting at the Grace Lutheran Church Hall, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo. A talk by Mike Casey will center on the lives of Wyatt Earp and Josephine Marcus, separately and as a couple. It will discuss the opinion of some historians that their romance led directing to the gunfight at the OK Corral. Also, it will explain how Wyatt came to be buried in a Jewish cemetery ►

in Colma. Mike Casey is a native San Franciscan. Even in retirement, he has been a historical re-enactor during Victorian Days at the San Mateo County History Museum since 2003, and has hosted "**San Mateo County History Stories**" on PenTV for the last two years. The society web address is: <http://www.smcgs.org/>

- 11 June Thursday 7 pm** The Contra Costa County Genealogical Society holds their regular meetings on the second Thursday at the LDS Building, 1360 Alberta Way in Concord. James Smith will speak about Lost Landmarks of San Francisco.
- 17 October Saturday 8:30 am to 4 pm** An all-day seminar will be held at St Andrews Presbyterian Church, 1601 Mary Drive in Pleasant Hill. The Contra Costa County Genealogical Society will be sponsoring an all day Fall Fling seminar. The theme is: *Back to the Future: Bring Back the Past with tools from the 21st Century.* There will be 2 speakers, Kathryn Marshall and Jim Baker. Registration will begin in July. Gladys Warr is the seminar coordinator. ■



## EDUCATION

*By: Kathy Javdani*

May is the perfect month to hone our learning before summer comes.



As usual the California Genealogical Society (CGS) starts the first Saturday of each month with its...

- **Introduction to Genealogy** class from 1-3. This month the class will meet on Sat., May 2nd, and next month on Sat., June 6th. Please register on line. Also note that CGS permits non-members to use its library resources for free on the first Saturday of each month from 10 am to 4 pm.
- Also on June 6<sup>th</sup> Ron Madson will be presenting **Using Adobe Elements for Family History** from 1 - 3 pm. Bring your laptop. Class is limited to 12 people. Register on line
- On Sat., May 16<sup>th</sup>, the **San Francisco SIG** will meet from 10 – 11:30 am. This SIG always meets on the third Saturday of each month. This month there will be a showing of a film on the cemeteries of San Francisco. Check the CGS website for location and registration.
- On Sat. May 30<sup>th</sup> from 1-3 pm, Jeff Vaillant will present **Lies, Lies, and Damn Lies: Can DNA Solve My Paternal Lineage**. Register on line.

For more upcoming events from Santa Cruz to Sacramento check the CGS “San Francisco Bay Area General Calendar” at: <http://sfbagenealogy.blogspot.com> or their home page at: [www.CaliforniaAncestors.org](http://www.CaliforniaAncestors.org)



In May the Oakland Family Search Library, <https://familysearch.org>, offers:

- On Wed., May 6<sup>th</sup> at 10:30 Janice Seller will present **Read All About It – Using Online Newspapers**.

Pre-registration is required for all classes. ►

In addition, you can check the Family Search website <https://familysearch.org> for tutorials, wikis, discussion forums, and webinars.



At 10 am on May 16<sup>th</sup> at the Concord Family History Center, 3700 Concord Blvd., Jan Siddoway will teach the class **Family History is not a Dead Subject**. For further information contact Jackie at 827-4729.

### Enjoy learning from home:



The Southern California Genealogical Society (SCGS) [www.scgsgenealogy.com/webinar/overview.html](http://www.scgsgenealogy.com/webinar/overview.html) continues to offer free webinars. Register in advance on line. This month it will be presenting:

- Sat., May 2nd, from 10 -11 pm “**Around Brick Walls Sideways: Using Collateral Lines to Further Your Genealogical Research**” by Gary M. Smith.
- Wed., May 20<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 pm “**The WPA Era: What It Created Genealogists**” by Paula Stuart-Warren.

SCGS also offers the following webinars at their website for free to the public.

- “**National Archives Website Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides**” by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- “**Military Records at the National Archives**” by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- “**How to Get the Most Out of a Genealogy Conference**” by George Morgan.



The Illinois State Genealogy Society ([ilgensoc.org](http://ilgensoc.org)) has also started a webinar series. The initial presentation of each webinar is free to the public.

- On May 12<sup>th</sup> Jean Wilcox Hibben will present “**Need Direction? Try City Directories**” at 8 PM Central. You can find enrollment information at the society’s website: [ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=234](http://ilgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=234) or go <http://>

[attendeegotowebinar.com/register/818988314583145839699201](http://attendeegotowebinar.com/register/818988314583145839699201).



The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) [www.Americanancestors.org](http://www.Americanancestors.org) has a growing Online Learning Center that offers educational resources for both guest users and NEHGS members. It contains subject guides on a variety of genealogical topics, informative videos, webinars, online courses, and more. If you have questions or feedback, contact Online Education Coordinator Ginevra Morse at [gmorse@nehgs.org](mailto:gmorse@nehgs.org). EDUCATION

Unable to attend the live broadcast? A recording of the event will be posted to their website the following day.



Ancestry.com has recently launched FREE courses at the **Ancestry Academy**. More than a half a dozen courses are FREE, while others require a subscription.

- You can READ about it at: <https://academy.ancestry.com/academy>
- And at: <https://academy.ancestry.com/academy/courses>
- Also at: <https://academy.ancestry.com/academy/courses/skills>



From an article by Gena Philibert-Ortega, here are some webinars and lectures that are online:

- **Legacy Family Tree Webinars** <http://www.familytreewebinars.com/>
- **Extreme Genes: Family History Radio** <http://extremegenes.com/>
- **The Genealogy Guys Podcast** <http://genealogyguys.com/>
- **Genealogy Boot Camp** [http://broadcast.lds.org/elearning/fhd/community/en/community/thomas%20jay%20kemp/genealogy\\_boot\\_camp/player.htm](http://broadcast.lds.org/elearning/fhd/community/en/community/thomas%20jay%20kemp/genealogy_boot_camp/player.htm) ▶

### Save the Date:

- **Southern California Genealogy Jamboree** from June 5<sup>th</sup> – 7<sup>th</sup> in Burbank. Register at [www.scgsgenealogy.com](http://www.scgsgenealogy.com). ■

### Special Notice for Your President

Susan Hanck has 2 probable volunteers to help with the social snacks at the general meeting; one for May and one for the summer. Neither Susan nor Peggy will be available this summer, with Susan possible for May.

Please contact Susan (phone number and email in the Handbook) if you can and are willing to help. She will give you all the information for this simple service to our members who attend.

For June, Patty and I will bring cakes to celebrate the SRVGS 30th Anniversary (our Pearl anniversary we are told by Bill George!). The mini-ed in June will be a brief flow of events over the past 30 years. We will still need help in setting up, juices, and serving. Be sure to attend in May, our voting month for new Board members, and in June, when new Board members renew us for the coming year.

Russ Erickson, President

### A Gentle Reminder

A new Society year starts on June 1<sup>st</sup>, and annual membership dues are due. For those who have not yet sent in their membership renewal, please take a moment to send in your check, **now**, while you are thinking about it.

“In different hours, a man represents each of several of his ancestors, as if there were seven or eight of us rolled up in each man’s skin,—seven or eight ancestors at least, and they constitute the variety of notes for that new piece of music which his life is. “

Ralph Waldo Emerson

**WELCOME — NEW MEMBERS**

Let's all extend a warm Welcome  
to our newest members

**Robert & Mary Thompson**

**Linda Brosamer**

**Chris Smith**

Please look for these people at our meetings  
and welcome them to our Society.

**COMING UP!**

Your society Program Committee is  
pleased to announce that the following speaker  
will be appearing in June:

- **Richard Rands** will be speaking on:  
*"Mid-West Research"*

**Looking for your ancestors?**

**Could you use a little help?**

**Bring your questions to the**

**Danville Library 10:00 until noon**

**on the fourth Tuesday.**

**Members of**

**The San Ramon Valley**

**Genealogical Society**

**will be available to help**

**you with your search.**

**HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS**

**President:** Russ Erickson

[president@srvgensoc.org](mailto:president@srvgensoc.org)

**1st V.P.** Vacant

**2nd V.P. Programs:**

Suzanne Johnston

Wayne Mortensen

Carol Satterthwaite

[programs@srvgensoc.org](mailto:programs@srvgensoc.org)

**3rd V.P. Membership:**

Gay Scott

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**Recording Secretary:**

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Barbara Shapas

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**Treasurer:** Bill Hewitt

[treasurer@srvgensoc.org](mailto:treasurer@srvgensoc.org)

**NEWSLETTER TEAM**

**Coordinator:** Bob Venter

[editor@srvgensoc.org](mailto:editor@srvgensoc.org)

**Calendar Coordinator:**

Vern Segelke

[srvgs@srvgensoc.org](mailto:srvgs@srvgensoc.org)

**Mailing:** Lucy Carver

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

Members are encouraged to submit articles for  
the Newsletter by mail or email to the Coordina-  
tor.

**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.



**Danville Family History Center***2949 Stone Valley Rd. Alamo*

Phone: 925-552-5920

**Monday:** 1:00pm - 4:00pm**Tuesday:** 7:00pm - 9:00pm**Wednesday:** 10:00am - 4:00pm

and 7:00pm - 9:00pm

**Thursday:** 10:00am - 1:00pm

Closed on Holidays and the month of August

**FHC Director:****Taressa Earl** [jntaress@hotmail.com](mailto:jntaress@hotmail.com)**Subscription Sites Available For Free at FHC:**

- Ancestry.com
- Fold3.com
- Heritage Quest
- MyHeritage.com
- Origins.net
- Proquest Obituary Listings
- Godfrey Memorial Lib.
- Newspaper Archive
- World Vital Records
- Findmypast (UK)

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**San Ramon Valley  
Genealogical Society  
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