San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

www.srvgensoc.org

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Vol. XLII No. 5 November - 2026

November Meeting **Tuesday, November 17, 2026 at 10 am**

Writing the Stories We Don't Want Lost (via Zoom)

Sharon Duda



As an author with a recently published book, Sharon now has the experience to share insight into the publishing process as it is so complex. Sharon will cover the how and why to get started on writing the family stories we don't want to lose, turning your research into a story and, finally, the examination of the publishing process: self vs traditional and hybrid publishing.

Sharon is a first-time author who lives in Danville, California, with her husband and two teenagers.

A 2005 college graduate, Sharon holds two teaching credentials and is a certified handwriting specialist. She has dedicated many years to education, most recently as the Lead Pre-K Teacher and Curriculum Developer at a local preschool. Before that, she worked as an elementary substitute teacher, paraeducator, and English Language Learner instructor for the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, where she was able to combine her passions for teaching and storytelling. Earlier in her career, Sharon worked in finance. She is also a special-needs advocate and volunteers her time on various school committees. In addition to writing, Sharon enjoys sewing, gardening, and genealogical research. She joined the San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society in the fall of 2025 and loves connecting with others who share her interest in genealogy. Through her writing, Sharon blends her love of family and her life experiences with her desire to inspire and engage her readers.

Sharon's book, "Autumn Leaves: A DNA Memoir", is a deeply personal project that captures her journey through the highs and lows of her DNA discovery. She chose to share her story in hopes of helping others who carry a similar burden, reassuring them that they are not alone.■

A link to the Zoom meeting will be sent out to all members a few days prior to the meeting. If you have any friends or family that would like to attend, have them contact Scott Hefner at president@srvgensoc.org prior to the meeting for the link. If you have any Zoom questions or issues, please contact Scott at 925-765-7184 or Bill George at williamcgeorge@gmail.com.

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President's Message

By Scott Hefner



I recently returned from a 12 day visit to Portugal. It was a trip that was on our bucket list and we had a wonderful time, great food, nice people, beautiful scenery and buildings. I would highly recommend it to everyone.

I have no Portuguese heritage that I am aware of and don't know of anyone who is researching their Portuguese ancestors. But as we toured ancient churches, monasteries, museums and monuments it was impossible for me to not start thinking about that complicated history and how it would relate to genealogical research. Portugal has a long and fascinating history: part of the Roman empire (largely Christian), then belonged to the Germanic Kingdoms. The Iberian Peninsula was largely conquered and ruled by the Muslims around 700 A.D., until the Christian kingdoms pushed the Muslims out and established the kingdom of Portugal in 1249. Portugal established a vast empire in the 1400's in Africa, Asia, and America (notably Brazil).

Portugal was ruled briefly by the Spanish, was invaded by Napoleon, and experienced civil war, revolutions, and a military coup before becoming a stable constitutional republic in 1974. In summary, while the area we know as Portugal today has been in existence geographically for nearly 800 years, the people living there have seen enormous political and cultural shifts during that time. For a genealogist, this history presents a number of challenges and opportunities. For one thing, the ethnic and religious mix of the population naturally changed over time as different subgroups came to prominence. While Portugal is ostensibly a Catholic nation, the population of Portugal is a conglomeration of pre-Roman Iberians, Romans, Germanic groups, Muslims, Christians, and Jewish groups. DNA testing can show North African, Mediterranean, Jewish, or Northern European ancestry, but connecting these findings to specific documented ancestors may be difficult. Portugal has had a long tradition of record keeping, most notably in Catholic parishes, although as we often find it isn't always easy to identify our ancestors in these records due to a number of factors: older records are handwritten in archaic Portuguese, surnames may be spelled differently by different priests or may be changed over time.

Two major events that are critical in researching Portuguese genealogy are known as the Expulsion, and the Inquisition. The Expulsion occurred in 1496-1497 and was intended to expel all of the kingdom's Jews from Portugal. However, many Jews chose to convert to Christianity and stay in Portugal; this group was known as Cristãos-Novos (New Christians) or conversos. Likewise, many Muslims were pressured to convert to Christianity or leave, and many chose to convert. As part of the conversion process many families changed their surname to traditional Christian names such as Silva or Rodrigues, and of course tracking an ancestor through these name changes can be a challenge.

The other critical event, the Inquisition, was established in 1536 to investigate and punish heresy, particularly among the "New Christians". It resulted in countless investigations, trials, imprisonments and even executions, and eventually expanded to include not only Jewish beliefs and practices, but also Protestant, Islamic, witchcraft and more. The Inquisition continued until 1821 and had a major negative impact on Portuguese society, particularly the non-Catholic population. In a strange twist, however, the Inquisition also provided a treasure trove of information for genealogists, with records kept related to investigations and trials holding invaluable information such as names of parents, grandparents, and spouses, places of birth and residency, occupations, migration information, and testimony from relatives and neighbors.

In short, while we may not be researching Portuguese ancestors ourselves, it is interesting to learn about the unique nature of Portuguese history and records, and since many Portuguese emigrated to other countries, it's entirely possible we may find ourselves tapping into those records for our own research. ■

October Speaker Notes

"Hidden in Plain Sight: Using Image-Only Record Collections & Full-Text Search"

Katy Bodenhorn

By Caren O'Donnell



How fortunate we are to have had the opportunity to learn from Katy Bodenhorn's expertise in navigating image-only record collections -- historical records that have not yet been transcribed or indexed and therefore cannot be searched by name. As Katy put it, searching these collections is "the microfilm experience, but on your computer!"

Many of these valuable resources can be found on FamilySearch, as well as on Ancestry.com and the websites of historical and genealogical societies. Katy walked us through the process of accessing sample records and explained the symbols that help identify the types of images available. But the excitement didn't stop there! Katy also introduced us to an amazing new research tool (which some may already have tried): FULL-TEXT SEARCH.

Available in FamilySearch record collections, this AI-powered feature uses transcribed text to let researchers search for words and names throughout a document -- not just the names or subjects traditionally indexed. What a promising new way to uncover those elusive ancestors and "brick walls"!

Katy Bodenhorn is a freelance genealogist and owner of Katy Bodenhorn Genealogy Research, LLC. She formerly served as Genealogy Director for the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and holds a B.A. in Family History & Genealogy from Brigham Young University.

Missed the presentation? The recording and detailed handout are available in the Member Login section of https://srvgensoc.org/ until November 20, 2026. Don't miss this opportunity to explore these valuable research techniques! ■

Proposed Amendment to the SRVGS Constitution and By-Laws - Article IX – Nominations and Elections

The SRVGS Board of Directors is proposing an amendment to Article IX of the Society's Constitution and By-Laws to allow for the election of officers by voice, written, or electronic ballot, including voting through the Society's website.

This revision will provide greater flexibility, encourage broader membership participation, and streamline the election process. Members will be asked to vote on this proposed amendment at our January 19, 2027 General Meeting. Your participation and vote are important as we work to keep our Society's governing documents current and responsive to the needs of our membership.

See the proposed changes on the following page.

►

ARTICLE IX — NOMINATIONS AND ELECTIONS

Section A. Elections

1. Elections of Society officers and directors shall be conducted every two years, in accordance with the election schedule established by the Society's Standing Rules.

2. Elections shall be conducted at the Annual Meeting, which may be held in person or by Zoom.

3. Voting may be conducted by voice vote, written ballot, electronic ballot, or other secure electronic voting method approved by the Board of Directors, including voting by email or through the Society's website when used in connection with the Annual Meeting.

Section B. Nominations

1. The Nominating Committee shall report a list of at least one nominee for each office or position being vacated to the Board of Directors at its March Board Meeting and shall present the list to the general membership at the regular April meeting.

2. Additional nominations may be made by members at the regular April meeting, provided each nominee is present and gives verbal consent to serve, or has provided written or electronic consent to serve if elected.

3. The nomination period shall close before ballots are distributed or voting begins at the Annual Meeting.

Section C. Voting

1. **Eligibility.** All members in good standing, whose dues are currently paid in full, are entitled to vote in Society elections.

2. **Voice Vote.** When there is only one candidate for each office or position, voting may be by voice vote unless a written or electronic ballot is required by these By-Laws or applicable law.

3. **Written or Electronic Ballot.** Voting may be conducted by written ballot or electronic ballot, including email or a voting system provided through the Society's website, when used as part of the Annual Meeting.

4. When more than one candidate is nominated for an office or position, voting shall be by written or electronic ballot.

5. A written or electronic ballot shall:

   a. Be provided or made available to each member entitled to vote who is participating in the Annual Meeting;

   b. Identify each office or position to be filled and the nominees for each;

   c. Provide reasonable instructions for voting and submitting the ballot;

   d. Provide a method reasonably designed to verify that each ballot is submitted by an eligible member and that no member votes more than once; and

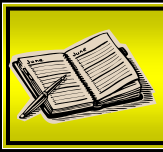
   e. Be conducted in a manner that permits the Society to retain an appropriate record of the election and its results.

6. **Quorum.** Twenty percent (20%) of the members entitled to vote shall constitute a quorum for the conduct of the election. Members participating either in person or by Zoom shall be counted toward the quorum.

7. The Board of Directors may establish reasonable procedures for voice, written, and electronic voting, including procedures for voting by email or through the Society's website during the Annual Meeting, provided such procedures are consistent with these By-Laws and applicable law.

8. Unless otherwise required by these By-Laws or applicable law, a majority of the votes cast for an office or position shall elect.

9. The results of the election shall be announced to the membership and entered into the minutes or other permanent records of the Society. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

November 2026

17 Tues-10am, the November General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. Sharon Duda will present **Writing the Stories We Don't Want Lost**.

24 Tuesday-10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom. All members are welcome.

December 2026

1 Holiday Party and Cookie Exchange, details forthcoming as the date approaches. Note this is a new date!

22 **No Board Meeting this month.**

January 2027

19 On Tues-10am the January General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. Pamela Brigham will present **Where We're At and Where We're Going - Changes in Genealogy, Access to Records On Line and AI .**

26 Tuesday-10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom. All members are welcome.

February 2027

16 Tues-10am, the February General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. Sylvia Tracy Doolos will present **Hook 'Em and Reel Them In. How to Get DNA Matches to Respond.**

23 Tuesday-10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom. All members are welcome.

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President: **Scott Hefner**
president@srvgensoc.org

1st Vice President:
Karen LaDuca

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Karen LaDuca
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Julie Basel
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Treasurer: **Jill Zollinger**

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Caren O'Donnell

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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editor@srvgensoc.org

Calendar Coordinator:
Bill George

Education Coordinator:
Kathy Javdani

Webmaster: **Bill George**
webmaster@srvgensoc.org

March 2027

16 Tues-10am the March General Meeting will be held via Zoom Link. Glenn York will present **Practical AI for Genealogy Transcribing Historical Documents Research Avenues**

23 Tuesday-10am The Board Meeting will be held via Zoom. All members are welcome.■

Special Interest Groups for November, 2026

By: Bill George, SRVGS SIG Coordinator

In November, 2026, three of our six Special Interest Groups are meeting at their normal dates/times, The Italian and German SIGs have adjusted their schedule to avoid conflict with the Thanksgiving holiday and the Irish/Scottish SIG has graciously adjusted their schedule to avoid a collision with another SIG on the same day. Bill George, leader of AI SIG has stepped down as host and so its meetings have been suspended pending a new leader stepping up to host it. All SIG members receive emails from their leaders prior to their meeting. Guests are welcome and if you want to attend a SIG for the first time, contact the SIG leader listed .



FamilySearch SIG, Monday Nov. 9th, (the 2nd Monday) **from 1-3 in a Zoom meeting.** Learn the many aspects of this free, comprehensive genealogy web site. You may contact SIG Leader Bill George at williamcgeorge@gmail.com.



Irish/Scottish Research, Thursday, Nov. 12th, (usually the 2nd Wednesday) from **10:30-12 Noon in a Zoom meeting.** They share information from the internet, journals, DNA and books. Leslie Stewart is the SIG leader**.** You may contact Leslie Stewart, SIG Leader, at lwvleslie@gmail.com.



Italian SIG, Wednesday, Nov. 11th, (usually the 3rd Wednesday) **1-3pm in a Zoom meeting**. Share and learn new techniques for researching your Italian ancestors. Please contact Karen LaDuca at kblquilts@comcast.net to be provided the Zoom link to the meeting.



DNA SIG, Monday Nov. 16th, (the 3rd Monday) from **1-3pm in a Zoom meeting.** This SIG assumes a basic knowledge of Genealogical DNA testing and therefore is only open to those who have completed the SRVGS Intro to DNA class or successfully completed Mark's Basic Skills Quiz. You may contact SIG Leader **Mark McLaren** at greatscot@earthlink.net.



Publishing SIG, Thursday, Nov. 19th (the 3rd Thursday) from **10:30am - 12 Noon in a Google Meet meeting.** Contact Kathy Javdani at kjjsc@aol.com for info on how to join the meeting. Share information and ideas on how to publish and preserve your research. **Francie Lloyd**, is the SIG Leader and can be reached at frances_lloyd@comcast.net.



German Research SIG, Wednesday, Nov. 18th, (usually the 4th Wednesday) **from 1-2:45** at the Danville Family Search Center, 2949 Stone Valley Rd. Alamo. If you would like to attend, please contact SIG leader **Karen LaDuca** at kblquilts@comcast.net to sign up and receive details.



AI SIG, has been suspended until further notice unless/until we have a volunteer to lead the group. No more meetings are planned at this time. ■


SRVGS
JINGLE & MINGLE
HOLIDAY GATHERING
& COOKIE EXCHANGE
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 1, 2026
10:00 AM - NOON
The Church of Jesus Christ
of Latter-Day Saints
2949 Stone Valley Road
Alamo, CA
Re-connect with Genealogy Friends
Enjoy Light Refreshments
and Cookies to Share!



EDUCATION

By: Kathy Javdani



It's November – a time for family and giving thanks. And, of course, it's an opportunity to learn more to share with and about our loved ones.

The California Genealogy Society Library, www.californiaancestors.org, has moved to its new location at 1841 Berkeley Way in Berkeley. It will be open at its usual times: 10 AM – 2 PM Thursday through Saturday. Visit the society's website for access to available recordings and videos. Please note any fees for activities. CGS Members are no longer required to register for most events but can continue to do so at the CGS website under Education and Events where non-members can also register for most events. Members can log into the CGS website, and find Zoom, handouts and survey links directly before the event. The speaker may not have handouts ready until the evening before the event.

- On Sat. Nov. 7 from 10-12, in a hybrid format the **Intro to Genealogy** class will discuss **Vital Records**.

- On Thur. Nov. 12 from 10:30-12:30, Jane Lindsey will lead a CGS members only **field trip to the Oakland FamilySearch Center.** For further information contact Jane at jlindsey@californiaancestors.org.

- On Sat. Nov. 14 from 10-12, Sandra Huber will lead the **San Francisco SIG** online meeting. Contact sfsig@californiaancestors.org for more information.

- On Sat. Nov. 14 from 1-2:30, in a hybrid meeting Joanna Shear will discuss **Exploring Resources for California Genealogy**.

- In addition, on the 15th from 1-3, Ron Madson and Karen Halfon will host a hybrid session of the **FamilyTree Maker SIG**. Register at the http://-ftm-sig.org or contact Ron at 650-576-4495 or Karen at 415-922-225 for further information..

- On Sat. Nov. 22 from 10-11:30 Craig Siulinski and Laura Bajuk will lead an online meeting of the **Eastern European SIG**. Register under the Events and Education section on the CGS site.

- On Mon. Nov. 23 from 7-8:30, the **DNA Skills SIG** with Mark McLaren will meet online. Contact Mark at greatscot@earthlink.net for details.

- On Wed. Nov. 25 from 6:30-8, the **RootsMagic Users Group SIG** with Keith Montgomery will meet online. Contact Keith at kmontgomery@californiaancestors.org to register.

- On Sat. Dec. 5 from 10-12, in a hybrid format the **Intro to Genealogy** class will discuss **Organizing Your Family History Work**.

- The Mayflower Descendants SIG is no longer meeting. Contact Robert Trapp at rtrapp@californiaancestors.org for help with Mayflower ancestry and how to join The Society of California Mayflower Descendants.

Check the website of Oakland Family Search Center, www.familysearch.org/en/centers/oakland_california/classes, for a long list of free in-person and hybrid classes and SIGs. The FSC offers classes and research groups on a variety of family history topics. Some are led by individuals who are members of partner organizations, such as the California Genealogical Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Mayflower Society, and others.

- On Wed. Nov. 4, 11, 18, and 25 from 2-2:15, a staff member will offer the **15 Min. Weekly Tip: AI Use for Genealogy** on Zoom.

- On Wed. Nov. 18 from 1-2, Jared Weaver will lead the **Danish SIG**. In person.

- On Wed. Nov 18 from 1-2, Esta Weaver will lead the **Norwegian /Swedish SIG**. In person.

- Also, on the 18th from 6-8 the **African American Workshop** will be held in person.

- On Wed. Dec. 2 from 2-2:15 a staff member will offer the **15 Min. Weekly Tip: AI Use for Genealogy** on Zoom.

Visit www.familysearch.org/en/centers/oakland_california/learning-resources for a wealth of other genealogy research support.

The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), www.americanancestors.org/education/online-classes, has a growing online series of presentations, library, and more. These include their on-demand previously aired courses and presentations. If you have questions or feedback, contact Online Education. Register for webinars on the society's website.

- On Tue. Nov. 3, 10, 17, 24 and Dec. 1 from 3-4:30, David Lambert, Melanie McComb and Ian Saxine will lead the online series **Conflict and Community in Colonial New England: A genealogist's Guide.** $150

- On Thu. Nov. 5 from 3-4, Nina Sankovitch will discuss her book, **Not Your Founding Father: How a Nonbinary Minister Became America's Most Radical Revolutionary.**

- On Fri. Nov. 6 from 10-11, Will Palin will examine **Waking a Sleeping Giant: The Rescue and Repair of the North Wing at Bartholomew's Hospital**.

- On Sat. Nov. 7 from 5:30am – 2pm, there will be a hybrid symposium with Puritan scholars on **Puritans in the 21st Century: Politics, Myths, and the Future.** Paid and free options.

- On Thur. Nov. 12 from 12-1 David Lambert will explore **The World Turned Upside Down: New York in the Revolution**. $15

- On Thur. Nov. 19 from 3-4, there will be a lecture on **The Turn of the Century in the North End: Jewish Immigrants and Their Neighbors**.

- On Fri. Nov. 20 from 1-2:15, Benjamin Clark will share **Inking History: Charles Schulz's Peanuts and the American Revolution**.

- On Sat. Nov. 21 from 11-12, Melanie McComb will present **No Battlefield Service Required: Uncovering the Patriotic Service of Your Ancestors During the American Revolution**. $15

- On Mon. Nov. 23 from 3-4:15, Richard Bell will share his new book, **The American Revolution and the Fate of the World**. $15, $48 with book.

- On Wed. Dec. 2 from 3-4:15, Anna Harwell Celezena will discuss his new book, **On the Record: Music That Changed America**. $15, $48 with book.

Unable to attend the live broadcast? A recording of the free events will be posted on the NEHGS website the following day. Many courses with fees are available on demand following their initial presentation.

Legacy Family Tree Webinars offers numerous free webinars every month. Go to https://familytreewebinars.com to register for presentations for this month.

- On Wed. Nov. 4 at 8:30. Nicole Dyer will examine **Uncovering Daniel Arnold's Parents Through Autosomal DNA, Probate Clues, and Geographic Proximity**.

- Also, on Wed. Nov. 4 at 9:45, Sharon Hoyt will answer **How Did You Find That?! Discovering the Stories in Your Family Research (A Case Study).**

- In addition, on Nov. 4 at 11, Warren Bittner will share **Pity the Poor Pfuhl: Proving an Immigrant Identity**.

- Finally, on the 4th at 12:30, Michael Lacopo will present **Advanced Genealogical Problem**

Solving: A Case Study.

- On Fri. Nov. 6 at 11, Bonnie Mucia will discuss **Navigating the New England Region: Strategies and Resources for ICAPGen Accreditation**.
- On Tue. Nov. 10 at 11, Kate Howard & MyHeritage Webinars will present **DNA Matches on MyHeritage: From Chaos to Clarity**.
- On Wed. Nov. 11 at 11, Michael Straus will explore **Following the Armies: Researching Military Maps**.
- In addition, on the 11th at 5, Andrew Redfern and Fiona Brooker will examine **From Data to Dialogue with AI 4 of 5: Presentation-Ready – Reports, Talks and Videos**
- On Fri. Nov. 13 at 11, Janet Few will discuss **Researching in Devon**.
- On Wed. Nov. 18 at 11, Karen Stanley will explore **DNA in Action 6 of 6: Writing about Complex Results.**
- Also, on Wed. Nov. 18 at 5, Andrew Redfern and Fiona Brooker will present **From Data to Dialogue with AI 5of 5: Keeping Your Voice – Collaborating Creatively with AI.**
- On Fri. Nov. 20 at 11, **Taking a Deep Dive into Mexico – U.S. Border Crossing Records**.
- On Tue. Dec. 1 at 5 Maggie Gaffney will explore **Tracing Property in England – from Domesday to Present**.

The Allen Public Library's Genealogy Center offers many webinars. Go to www.acpl.lib.in.us/genealogy to register online. Also, explore the Genealogy Center Videos at https://acpl.lib.in.us/explore-genealogy/our-services. Recorded Genealogy Center programs can be found on the Genealogy Center section of the library's YouTube channel.

- On Tue. Nov. 3 from 11:30-12:30, there will be a presentation on **Tracing Crime Through Time: Genealogical Methods for True Crime**.
- On Tue. Nov. 10 from 11:30-12:30, Sara Allen will share **Stories of the Final Chapter: What Death Records Reveal**.
- On Sat. Nov. 14 from 7-8, there will be a hybrid **DNA Student Panel**.
- On Tue. Nov. 17 from 11:30-12:30, Logan Knight will examine **Digging into Military Records: Genealogy Research with Fold3**.
- On Wed. Nov. 18 from 3:30-4:30, the **AI Special Interest Group** will meet online.

The State Historical Society of Missouri has produced nearly 100 On Demand programs through its virtual program series and past events. Freely available through the Society's website, https://shsmo.org, on demand topics include genealogy, art, scholarship, signature lecture series, and more.

Here are some other webinars, blogs, and podcasts that are available.

- Auntiejenstrees.blogspot.com
- Extreme Genes: Family History Radio https://extremegenes.com/blog
- The Genealogy Guys Podcast www.genealogyguys.com
- The Genealogy Squad www.facebook.com/groups/genealogysquad
- Lisa Louise Cooke's Genealogy Gems https://lisalouisecooke.com/podcasts
- Thomas MacEntee's www.genealogybargains.com
- Judy Russell's www.legalgenealogist.com
- Family History Fanatics www.familyhistoryfanatics.com/blog
- Connie Knox http://genealogytv.org
- Www.amyjohnsoncrow.com

And there's more….

The following are sites with large amounts of valuable information:

- The National Archives- www.archives.gov/

research/genealogy offers a genealogy tutorial, genealogy research topics and a variety of charts and forms.

- The DAR Library – www.dar.org/national-society/genealogy provides help on the variety of genealogical topics. Also see the upcoming events schedule at www.dar.org

- The Sutro Library hosts the Bay Area Genealogy Calendar, www.library.ca.gov/sutro/genealogy/calendar This calendar provides information about events throughout the Bay Area.

- ConferenceKeeper.org lists conferences, events, calls for papers, contests, grants, volunteer opportunities, tours and more. To sign up to receive *Tami at Conference Keeper* which lists events that have been recently added, go to mail@sendfoxmail.com.

- The Sacramento Public Library Genealogy Program has a YouTube channel. Visit its playlist at https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLwtrWl_IBMJszRsNrcDauSLtHwGWXeQ6

Events from Local Societies

- On Mon. Nov. 9 from 7-8:30, the **Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society**, www.l-ags.org, will hold its monthly meeting via Zoom. The guest speaker, David Flint, will explore **Finding Your Ancestors in England: Overview of England Genealogy Research**. Preregister at https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/t_POoa5aQ2-hl2p5z2r1dQ
- On Wed. Nov. at 10, the **Sacramento German Genealogy Society**, https://sggs.us, will hold a its **Pennsylvania SIG** meeting via Zoom. Contact Ken Weaver at Kenneth.n.weaver@gmail.com to receive a Zoom link for the meeting.
- On Thur. Nov.12 at 6:30, the **Contra Costa Genealogical Society**, https://cccgs.net will hold its monthly meeting on Zoom. Madeline Yanov, the guest speaker, will present **Marriage By Blacksmith: Gretna Green Marriages**.
- On Sat. Nov. 14 at 10, the **Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group**, www.svcgg.org/meetings.html, will hold its monthly meeting on Zoom. See website for details and to register.
- On Sun. Nov. 15 at 1, the **San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society**, www.sfbajgs.org/calendar.html, will hold a live presentation at the Congregation Beth Ami, 4676 Mayette Ave., Santa Rosa. Vivian Kahn, the guest speaker will discuss **Finding Your Jewish Ancestors in Greater Hungary: Resources and Tips.** Register on the website under Calendar of Events. Everyone is welcome.
- On Tue. Nov. 17 from 6:30-8:30, the **Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society**, https://scchgs.org, will hold its monthly meeting via Zoom. Guest speaker Rhonda McClure , will present **Sharing Family History Beyond Family Tree Software**. See the society's website under events to register.
- On Thu. Nov. 19 at 1, the **Napa Valley Genealogical Society**, https://napagensoc.org, will hold its monthly meeting in the hybrid format. Sylvia Doolos, the guest speaker, will examine **Faith and Founding Fathers: Religion's Role in America's Story**. Register on the society's website. $5 fee for non-members.

Upcoming Special Events

- On Nov. 6-7 the **Texas Genealogical Society**, www.txsgs.org, will hold its hybrid 2026 **TxSGS Family History Conference.** Registration details to follow at www.txsgs.org/2026.
- On Nov. 16 the **Italian Genealogical Group** will host its first virtual conference, **Italian Genealogy: The Boot and Beyond.** For more information, go to https://www.italiangen.org/events/ .
- On Sat. Nov. 14 the **Scottish Indexes** will hold its next full day conference on Zoom. Register at https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/2417898618963/WN_N_1-NvzZQ6i18UP5omZq2A .
- On March 4-6 the hybrid **2027 RootsTech Conference** will be held in Salt Lake City. Register at www.familysearch.org/en/rootstech/registration ■

Knowledge Base article
by Bill George

On our new website, we are working on a "Knowledge Base", a mini-system that lets SRVGS members submit and browse articles that members have submitted. It is not linked from the website yet, but can be viewed at https://srvgensoc.org/knowledge-base. You do have to be logged into our website to see content.

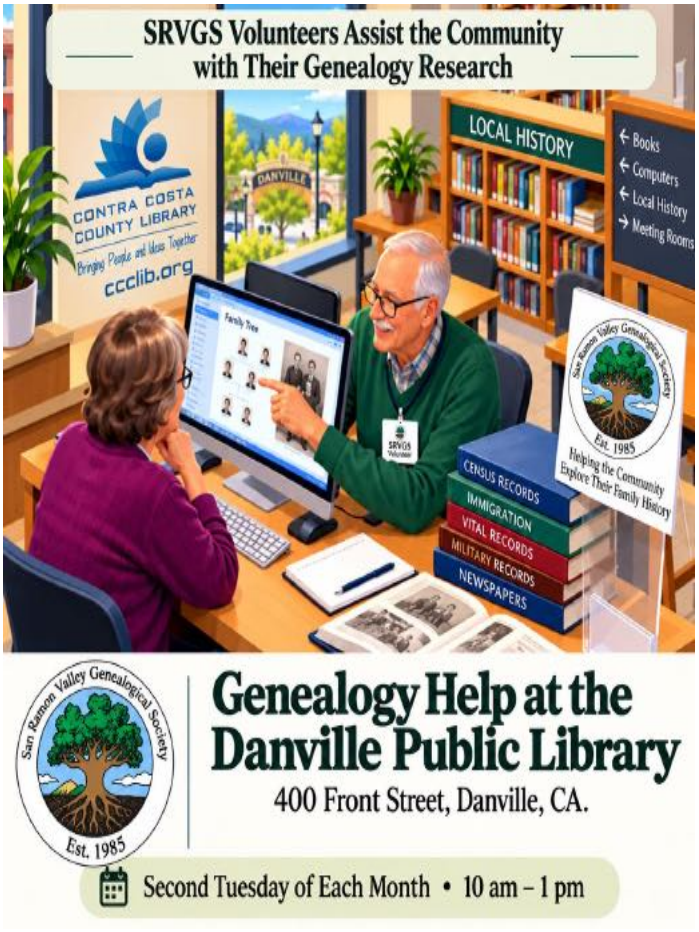
Articles are grouped by categories, that at present, are our SIGs. Added categories might be Windows Software, Mac-OS Software, SRVGS Website and more, as articles are submitted and need to be categorized.

What I'd like us to offer is a collection of knowledge SRVGS members could easily sift through for help with genealogy-related topics.

If you have an article you'd like to submit, please send to webmaster@srvgensoc.org.

Articles below are yet to be written but are examples of what we are hoping for:

- Good Genealogy Programs for Windows
- Best Genealogy Research Websites
- How to use Ai to find info on your father (or other relative)
- Explain DNA so anyone can understand it.
- Evolution of our website
- Thumbnail history of the San Ramon Valley
- How AI can help your genealogy research
- How to get responses from other users to your requests for more info on a relative



Lord, grant me:

- *The patience to read old handwriting,*
- *The wisdom to question family stories,*
- *And the luck to find one more record before bedtime.*

To top it off, this ancestor, who caused many groans,
just to give me one more pain, betrothed a girl named JONES

Whoever said, "Seek and ye shall find" was not a genealogist.

Want to Help or Do You Need Help?

We are developing a **New Members Section** for our web site, along with some helpful information for beginning/ intermediate genealogists. We have begun a list of members to be included who have volunteered to assist members:

- Steve Watty - General Research
- Francie Lloyd - Getting Started in an Organized Manner
- Karen LaDuca - Italian Research, Dutch Research
- Kathy Javdani - California Research
- Bill George - FamilySearch.org
- Barbara Thurston - Jewish Research
- Ted Shapas - Polish and Lithuanian
- Cheryl Olson - French, Acadian, Norwegian and Swedish Research—new addition!

If you have an area of expertise and would like to help newer members please contact Karen LaDuca at kblquilts@comcast.net or Bill George at williamcgeorge@gmail.com to have your contact information added. This will be listed exclusively in our members-only section of the https://srvgensoc.org website. Thank you for helping. ■

Genealogy: where every step backward is a step forward

A pack rat is hard to live with but makes a fine ancestor.

Danville Family Search Center
2949 Stone Valley Rd. Alamo
*Phone: (925)552-5920***

** The FSC has been having phone issues that are still not resolved. Contact Kevin Ganschow at (925)209-5489 or gans5@sbcglobal.net if you need to reach the FSC, ask questions, or schedule time at the FSC.

The Family Search Center is open for business. There have been no changes to the hours for 2026. See scheduled open hours below. The FSC contains nine computers (with flash drive slots), scanners, a printer, lots of reference books, Wi-Fi access, and friendly docents to help you along your genealogy path! Digital resources include:

- Alexander Street (US social and cultural history)
- American Ancestors (from New England Historic Genealogical Society)
- Ancestry Institution
- ArkivDigital (Sweden)
- FamilySearch
- FamNet (New Zealand)
- Findmypast (United Kingdom)
- Geneanet (France, Belgium, Netherlands)
- Fold3 (military)
- Geneanet (France, Belgium, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Germany)
- Goldie May (organizing tools)
- MyHeritage Library Edition
- Irish Ancestors
- Newspaper Archive
- Paper Trail (19th century westward American migration documents)
- Puzzilla
- 19th Century British Library Newspapers

Hours are:

Monday……..10:00am – 1:00pm

Note Monday eve hours cancelled due to unavailability of volunteers to staff it.

Tuesday…….. 2:00pm – 5:00pm

Wednesday…..1:00pm – 4:00pm

Appointments outside of normal hours may be arranged by calling (925)837-7010.

The FSC will be closed starting December 21 and reopen on Monday, January 4, 2027 for the Christmas holiday. There are no planned changes for Thanksgiving.