



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

www.srvgensoc.org



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXXVI No. 2 Jul - 2020

This Month's Presentation:

July 21, 2020

FINDING YOUR CIVIL WAR ANCESTORS

Presented by: Jeffrey Vaillant
(This will be via ZOOM video)

Jeff Vaillant will be discussing the basics of how to start researching your Civil War Ancestors. He will also be giving the steps to find information from the National Archives Civil War Pension Files.

Jeff is working towards his professional genealogical certification and is a member of the Association of Professional Genealogists, the National Genealogical Society, past President and Director of the California Genealogical Society 2009-2015 and most recently 2019. Jeff has served as President of the Sonoma County Genealogical Society. He is also a member of Sons of Union Veterans of California and Pacific. His ancestor is a Union soldier from the 10th Iowa.

Jeff has a B.A. in History with an English minor from the University of Redlands, and Graduate studies in American Studies (History, Literature, Art History) at the University of Delaware. His genealogical background includes 8 years at the Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, as well as numerous national, regional, and local conferences.

Jeff had an extensive professional career in federal and state government, financial institutions, and research organizations. He lives in Novato with his wife, Janice, with whom he has six children and eight grandchildren

Information about our ZOOM video

Once again, this speaker will come to us via a ZOOM video presentation. As before, look for additional details regarding this meeting and a link to connect online to be provided a few days before the meeting via the blast email system to all SRVGS members. For last-minute help, call Steve Watty at 925-766-6706 or e-mail Bill George at: williamcgeorge@gmail.com ■

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Notes on Last Month's Presentation:

INTERVIEWING YOUR FAMILY

Presented by: Grant Din

Reported by: Russ Erickson

Mr. Din has 40 years of genealogical research, especially Oriental, and has a family history back 20 generations on one side and 36 on the other! He is prominent in the Angel Island Foundation: his handout is on the SRVGS website. He recommends checking the UCLA, Smithsonian, and Oral History Association websites for suggestions on obtaining a good family history. "An Oral History" on Amazon is a book with 120 pages of interview guide. Prioritize what you desire to know at the start, have a list of questions, and leave possible contentious points to later in interviews. Be prepared to go in other directions and to return to your desired points. Watch your time; do not overly tire elders. Research your family or friend's lives when possible ahead of your interviews. Photos can help to jog memories. At family gatherings, bring your smart phone or recorder to take advantage of contact opportunities. Video where you can. Try not to interrupt interviewees when they pause, as it can cause memory loses. If a story contradicts things you know, let it slide for people often have different memories of events. Ask your kids and grandkids what they would like to know. If using videos and audio equipment, check that they work ahead of time! For set interview times, especially with elders, bring water and Kleenex and pick a quiet place and keep to 20-minute times. Put interviews online, computer and cloud or other backup. If video use, watch lighting.

Mr. Din presented an interesting interview with an elder woman who came thru Angel Island at age 8 with her mother who HAD to then be her "auntie", as US law forbid Chinese businessmen from importing their wives--a visit by an "aunt" or "sister" with children was OK! The child had to remember her story at the time and later taught school in the east bay for 25 years. A second interview with a Filipino 99-year-old gentleman by video was shown, noting his early years coming to the USA and some World War II events. Another video interview of a grandchild and his grandfather revealed the latter ►



Grant Din

coming to the USA, working in his father's laundromat, then a grocery, and turning down a free plane ticket for a trip where the plane crashed at Tahoe, killing all aboard. Turning down a free trip meant the grandson was there to interview. The grandson's mother and grandmother had been in China for 15 years when the grandfather worked to support them and finally was able to bring them here.

Mr. Din notes his family was "Gong" with name change during immigration events; very common. In Chinese marriage, men could also change their names. Many Chinese families have books of extended genealogy, allowing tracing many generations of ancestors. The Communists, under Mao, destroyed many as "old ways must change", and families hid their books until his regime passed. Many Chinese families have addition of a generation name, a convention with a poem involved. ■



President's Message

By Steve Watty



Thirty SRVGS members met June 16, 2020 for the first virtual Zoom General Meeting and presentation. After a few short announcements by myself, Karen Olynger provided an update to our Schedule of Speakers in the coming months. Bill George gave a status report of the Special

Interest Groups (SIGs) with are now using or planning to use Zoom conference meetings. Following the business portion of the meeting, our speaker Grant Din provided a presentation on "Interviewing Your Family" with many helpful hints supplemented with videos produced during his research. Many positive comments were received after the meeting suggesting that in the "New Normal" other options are available to stay connected as a society. We hope to add a link to a recorded version of this meeting to our website. An announcement via the Blast Email System will be, if it has not already been, sent to the membership when the recording is available. [Editor's note: That ink is now available at "[Meeting recordings](#)", after you log-in.]

We are planning that the July 21, 2020 General Meeting will use the same Zoom meeting format as we anticipate that large gatherings will still not be allowed. Jeffrey Vaillant will present information on the Civil War, so mark your calendars and join other SRVGS members for the meeting from the safety of your own home.

Remember, August is "Summer Recess" for the society, no newsletter or meetings are scheduled. Our website will be updated with any news about the society and future speakers, so check the site regularly.

I wish all our SRVGS members a safe, healthy and relaxing summer. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

July 2020

- 7 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting was held via ZOOM video.
- 21 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** The July General meeting will be via ZOOM video

August 2020

The society does not meet in August! Have a great summer, we will see you in September.

September 2020

- 1 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting will be held in September. It is not known at the time of this publication, but this meeting will probably be via ZOOM video.
- 15 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** The September General meeting is tentatively planned as a ZOOM video. ■

Is Your Society Membership about to Lapse?

Society membership dues were due by July 1st. This is a reminder for those who were just too busy to get their renewal application in on time. If the Society does not receive your membership renewal by the end of July ***you will be dropped from our rolls*** and this will be the last newsletter you will receive. Also late renewals will not be listed in the annual publication of the Society Handbook. If you have misplaced the renewal application we sent you, you can download another from our web site at: https://srvgensoc.org/upload/Membership_Application/srvgs_mem_app_1566609033.pdf

Please take a moment to renew your membership now.

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

NOTE: For San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Special Interest Group contact information refer to your Society Handbook. or at: <https://srvgensoc.org/cpage.php?pt=6>.

For schedules, visit our web site at: <https://srvgensoc.org/eventListings.php?nm=45&page=1&nr=10&ec=2&tf=3>.

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.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

By: Bill George

In July 2020 four SIGS will meet as Zoom meetings and two will not meet formally. All SIG members with Zoom meetings will receive email with instructions on how to join their meeting. Stay tuned for August. Several SIGs may meet with Zoom meetings even though we traditionally take August "off".



FamilySearch - Monday, July 13th (the second Monday) from **1 pm – 3 pm** in a **Zoom Meeting**. Learn the many aspects of this free, comprehensive genealogy web site. **Bill George** is the SIG Leader at: williamcgeorge@gmail.com.



Irish/Scottish Research - Wednesday July 8th (the second Wednesday) **10 am – 12 pm** in a **Zoom meeting**. They share information from the internet, journals, DNA and books. **Patty Erickson** is SIG Leader. You can contact Patty at: russpat@comcast.net.



DNA - Monday July 20th (the third Monday) **1:00 - 3:00 pm**, 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 an approved equivalent. **Mark McLaren** is SIG Leader. You may contact Mark at: greatscot@earthlink.net.



Publishing – Does not plan to meet in person. Members are contacting each other throughout the month during this stay-at-home pandemic. **Francie Lloyd**, is the SIG Leader and can be reached at frances_lloyd@comcast.net.



Legacy Family Tree – Does not plan to meet in person. Members are contacting each other throughout the month during this stay-at-home pandemic. **Sharon Clay** is the SIG Leader and can be contacted at: sharonlclay@comcast.net



German Research – Wednesday July 22nd, (the fourth Wednesday) **10 am – 12 pm**, in a **Zoom meeting**. Please contact **Cathy Tanaka** at cathytanaka622@gmail.com if you plan to attend the meeting. ■

WELCOME — NEW MEMBERS

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

Maurice Turner

Chris Smith

Barbara Wilson

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



EDUCATION

By: Kathy Javdani



Yes, it is summertime, but it's not time to be too relaxed. As genealogists we are always searching for answers and learning how to find them. Many (almost too many) learning opportunities are coming our way as a by-product of sheltering in place.



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

July's numerous webinars are listed at: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars



The Southern California Genealogical Society (SCGS), www.scsgenealogy.com/webinar/overview.html offers free webinars. Register in advance on line. The upcoming presentations are:

- On Wed., Jul. 15th from 6-7 Seema Kenney will explore **Julian to Gregorian: When and How our Calendar Changed.**
- On Sat., Aug. 1st, from 10-11 Christine Cohen will examine **Cousin Baiting and Cousin Stalking.**
- On Wed., Aug. 19th, from 5-6 Cari Taplin will discuss **The Most Prominent Citizens: Using County Histories.**

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

- **Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides National Archives** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- **Neither Filmed or Scanned: NARA Treasurers Await** by Kerry Bartels
- **Military Records at the National Archives** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes. ►

- **The Many Facets of the National Archives Website** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.
- **How to Get the Most Out of a Genealogy Conference** by George Morgan.
- **National Archives Website Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides** by Kerry Bartels with downloadable notes.



The New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS), www.Americanancestors.org/education/online 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. Register online.

- On Tues., July 7th from 1-2 Dr. Elizabeth DeWolfe will share **Women in 19th Century American Bookbinderies.**
- On Thurs, July 9th from 12-1 Molly Rogers will explore **What's New at American Ancestors.org .**
- On Fri., July 10th from 1-2:15 Curt DeCamillo will discuss **The Adam Family: The Scottish Architects Who Changed the World.**
- On Thurs, July 23rd from 12-1 Don LeClair and Rachael Adams will present **Searching the Register on American-Ancestors.org.** ►

- On Thurs. July 23rd from 3-4 Larry Tye will examine **Demagogue: The Life and Long Shadow of Senator Joe McCarthy**
- On Tues., Aug. 11th from 3-4 Gretchen Sorin will share **Driving While Black: African American Travel and the Road to Civil Rights.**
- On Fri. Aug. 14th from 1-2:15 Curt DiCamillo will explore **Speed, Style & the English Country House: Auto, Horse, and Airplane Racing at England's Historic Houses.**
- On Thurs., Aug. 20th from 3-4 Susan Eisenhower will share **How Ike Led: The Principles Behind Eisenhower's Biggest Decision.**

Unable to attend the live broadcast? A recording of the free events will be posted to the NEHGS website the following day.



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 at www.dar.org offers two different types of programming. The Library Lecture Series features authors discussing their historical work and the Genealogy 101 Series offers presentations on a variety of genealogical topics led by the professional genealogists on staff at the DAR or by other experienced genealogists. Both series are held throughout the month on Saturdays and are free to the public. See the upcoming schedule here: www.dar.org/libraryevents



Ancestry.com offers online courses. Some 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> ►



Legacy offers numerous free webinars every month. Go to www.FamilyTreeWebinars.com to register. July's webinars include:

- On Wed. July 1st at 11 Jill Morelli will explore **Finding a Father for Molly – Using DNA.**
- On Wed., July 8th at 5 Carol Baxter will explain **Turning Dry Facts into Exciting Narrative.**
- On Tues., July 14th at 11 My Heritage will share **Connecting the Dots- Introduction to Auto Clusters at MyHeritage DNA.**
- On Wed., July 15th at 11 Sunny Morton will present **On the Record Trail of My LDS Immigrant Ancestor.**
- On Tues., July 21st at 5 Warren Bittner will examine **Elusive Immigrant: The search for Dora Luhr.**
- On Wed., July 22nd at 11 Gena Philibert-Ortega will discuss **50 More Websites Every Genealogist Should Know.**
- On Tues., July 28th at 11 Lisa Louise Cooke will share **Fabulous Photo Discoveries at MyHeritage.**
- Wed., Jul 29th at 11 Craig R. Scott will examine **Researching a Loyalist Soldier.**
- On Tues., Aug. 4th at 7 Helen V. Smith will explore **Tracing Australian and New Zealand World War I Ancestors.**
- On Wed. Aug. 5th at 11 Michelle Leonard will explain **Using DNA to Solve Adoption and Unknown Parentage Mysteries.**
- On Thurs. Aug. 6th at 5 Angela Packer McGhie will share **Preparing a Portfolio: Applying to Become a Certified Genealogist.**



Here are some other webinars and podcasts that are online:

- Extreme Genes: Family History Radio: <http://extremegenes.com/>
- The Genealogy Guys Podcast: <http://genealogyguys.com/> ►

- Lisa Louise Cooke's Genealogy Gems:
<http://lusalouisecooks.com/podcasts/>

Lisa also has an hour genealogy chat on YouTube at 9 am on Thursdays entitled Eleveses.

- Genealogy Boot Camp:
http://broadcast.lds.org/elearning/fhd/community/en/community/thomas%20jay%20kemp/genealogy_boot_camp/player.htm
- Thomas MacEntee's
www.abundantgenealogy.com
- Judy Russell's:
www.legalgenealogist.com
- blog.familyhistoryfanatics.com

And there is more!

American Ancestors,
www.americanancestors.org, is currently providing free access to every one of their Digital Collections. Go to library@nehgs.org

ConferenceKeeper.org,
www.ConferenceKeeper.org, lists conferences events, calls for papers, contests, grants, volunteer opportunities, tours and more. You can sign up at mail@sendfoxmail.com to receive Tami at Conference Keeper which lists events that have been added in the last week.

Save the Date:

On Thurs., July 9th from 7-9 pm the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society (cccgs.net) will have a ZOOM meeting. Gena Philibert-Ortega will present **Celebrating the Vote: 100 Years of Women's Suffrage**. Check website for details.

On Mon. July 13th from 7-8:30 the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society (l-ags.org) will have a ZOOM meeting. Gena Philibert-Ortega will discuss **The Records that Tragedy Left Behind**. For additional information contact: Tom Mathews at program@L-AGS.org

On Sat., July 18th from 12:30 -2:30 the Sonoma County Genealogical Society will have a Chat session and presentation on Zoom. Check website for details. ■

OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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SRVGS is on Facebook!

Click on the link below or go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/>

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS!

By: Kathy Javdani

Please note that some conferences are opting to hold virtual presentations instead of their usual on-site conference. Visit the conference site for registration and updates

From July 31st – Aug. 31st there will be a virtual **Celtic Connections Conference** entitled “*Journey Home*”, <http://celtic-connections.org>. The registration fee is \$99. Go to celtic-connections.org for further details and contact conference@irishgenealogical.org with any questions.

From Sept. 2-5th at Kansas City, the Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS) <http://fgs.org>. As of now this conference, **Blazing Trails In the Heart of America** is still listed as on-site

From Sept. 10-12th at Albany, New York the New York Genealogical & Biographical Society will hold the **2020 New York Family History Conference**. Virtual participation is available. Go to www.newyorkfamilyhistory.org and click on events. ■

GENE TOONS by Wendell Washer

Hot on the trail.

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