



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

www.srvgensoc.org



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

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THIS MONTH – January 15, 2019

**"How Genealogists can use Freedom
of Information Laws"**

Presented by: Brooke Schreier Ganz



Tired of being told by archives, libraries, and government agencies that the genealogical records you want are "unavailable"? Ms. Ganz was too, so she figured out how to do something about it. She is part of *Reclaim the Records*, a new not-for-profit activist group of more than 5,300 genealogists, researchers, historians, and journalists. They use Freedom of Information (FOI) laws – and sometimes even lawsuits – to obtain copies of previously inaccessible archival record sets, which they then put online for free public use.

This presentation will explain how they accomplished this, as well as the history and legal basics of FOI laws, and will teach researchers how to file requests for any records that may help their own family tree research.

Brooke Schreier Ganz is the founder and president of *Reclaim The Records*, and the first genealogist to successfully sue a government archive for the return of records to the public.

Her personal genealogical interests include Poland, Ukraine, Moldova, and New York City — the last of which was (surprisingly) the most difficult one from which to get basic genealogical records or even just the finding aids! This frustration led to her founding *Reclaim The Records* as a personal project in January 2015.

A computer programmer, Brooke is also the creator of LeafSeek, a free open source records management platform that won second place in the 2012 RootsTech Developer Challenge. ■



From the November Meeting
**"Ferreting Out Obscure Sources
Using FamilySearch"**
Presented by: Ralph Severson
Reported By: Russ Erickson



Genealogy without sources is mythology. Always find a SOURCE and attach it to your family history. Be tenacious--never give up, note details and gather clues a la Sherlock

Holmes and Columbo. Family Search is the largest and broadest online search tool. Proceed in logical fashion: 1. Search family trees. 2. Search genealogies and books. 3. Search the catalog. ►



(Photo by: Nancy Alexander)

Ralph Severson

4. search records. 5. Search the research wiki.

In family trees, user input is OPINION unless sourced. There are over 1 billion sources in family trees! Plagiarize them. Trees form an excellent tool for collaboration with links to all digitized records on FS, Ancestry, Finding My Past, My Heritage, and soon a link to Genealogy Net (French and European). There is also DPLA-digital public library of America) which collects Bibles and other unusual data. Review all sources, even duplicates. (2 million of 2.4 to 2.7 microfilms are now indexed - more to come). For family trees, periodically check end of the ancestral line as others might have extended a family. Keep a database and always copy all sources found.

Go to the search function on Family Search and click "genealogies". It gives original databases, has IGI original sources cited. (Note also "Guild of One Name Studies" on internet is well sourced.) One can store a FIXED tree in FS that can never be changed. If you wish your tree to be one (remember, even you cannot change it ►

in future), email <rfseverson@gmail.com> who can tell you how to do it.

FS has over 300,000 books digitized from Salt Lake City, Houston, BYU, and Allen county libraries. If a book is copy right, that can be transferred to LDS and then can be read by many on the internet as e-books. Using CTRL F or Command F (Mac), one can find and attach a book item.

Search catalog; it searches FS collections, is underused. One can do a broad search, then use "filters" such as location, time, topic, to narrow a search. If a red note appears, the item is digitized. Check a thumbnail icon for the big picture. (side note: 23 and Me has a large span of African study for DNA).

When searching records, keep it simple at first, adding too many items in initial search can lead to blanks found. Then use "filters". Do not use indexed sources initially-use "browse all collections" for more results possible.

Research Wiki is a road map to sources and URLs; a source of sources anywhere on line in genealogy. Research by key words, not sentences. ■

SRVGS — Intro to DNA and Genetic Genealogy class

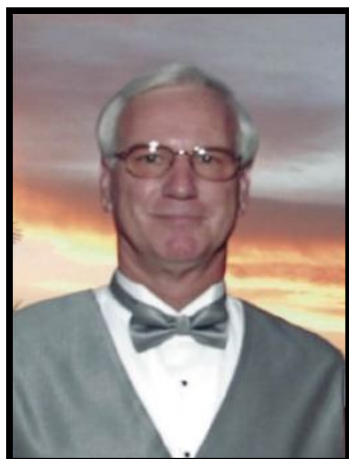
Mark McLaren would like to determine the interest level for having another Intro to DNA class this Spring. It would be for 6 weeks starting the 1st week in March through the 2nd week in April. Classes will be for 2 hours and potential meeting times would be either early afternoon on Wednesdays or Tuesday evenings. If you are interested in attending, please contact Mark at greatscot@earthlink.net or 925 -838-8175 before February 7, and let him know your availability for each proposed time slot. The class has a minimum size requirement. If that isn't met for either time option, then a possible Fall class will be explored later this year.





President's Message

By Steve Watty



Graveyard, cemetery, family-plot, memorial park, and bone-yard are just a few names for our final resting place. As family historians, these ancestral locations and associated records can sometimes provide countless amounts of information. Finding a well-documented

burial location can lead to the cemetery record, funeral home record, death certificate, obituary and many times spouse, parents, children and siblings. To say the least, burial locations can house a treasure trove of information.

Of course, on-site visits to known ancestral graveyards are preferred but this is not always possible. Many internet graveyard sites exist and some continue to grow with our help. Find-A-Grave.com and BillionGraves.com are two of the largest "Free" sites. Both sites use volunteers to photograph and transcribe headstone information. My main go-to portal is Find-A-Grave.com. This site is easy to navigate when researching an ancestor and simple to record a new headstone and life details as a memorial volunteer. Pictures, obituary, bio and links to relatives are some of the edit items available with a memorial. As a memorial manager you have control over the content associated with your ancestor. Photo requests can also be made through this site and a volunteer near the graveyard will take a headstone photo, if a headstone exists, document the request and report back with the results.

Sign up as a memorial manager and start adding content to existing memorials and documenting new found cemetery and headstone information. Memorial managers are usually willing to transfer the management of a memorial to family members, so reach out and gather your ancestor's memorials. The process is easy, fun and your descendants and other researchers will appreciate your hard work. ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

January 2019

- 3 Thursday - 10:00 am** A Board meeting was held at the home of Frances Lloyd.
- 15 Tuesday - 10:00 am** The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo.

February 2019

- 5 Tuesday - 10:00 am** A Board meeting will be held at the home of Frances Lloyd.
- 19 Tuesday - 10:00 am** 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 refer to your Society Handbook. For schedules, visit our web site at: <http://www.srvgensoc.org/sig.html>.

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.



Irish/Scottish Research - Wednesday January 9th (the 2nd Wednesday) 10 am – 12pm, at the home of Russ and Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Patty

Erickson is SIG Leader. You may contact Patty at russpat@comcast.net.



FamilySearch - Monday, January 14th (the 2nd Monday) 1:15 – 3 pm at the

Danville Family History Center. Learn how ►

to search records and study family trees on the FamilySearch.org web site. **Bill George** is the SIG Leader at: williamcgeorge@gmail.com.



Publishing – Thursday January 17th (the 3rd Thursday) from 10 am – 12 pm, at the home of **Francie Lloyd in Danville**. This informal Group shares advice, encouragement, and suggestions to preserve their genealogy project, big or small. Members share their projects as they progress to a hoped for completion. Society members interested in attending should let **Francie Lloyd**, the SIG Leader, know they plan to attend, at: frances_lloyd@comcast.net.



DNA - Monday January 21st (the 3rd Monday) 1:00 - 3:00 pm, at the **Danville Family History Center**. 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.



German Research – Wednesday January 23rd, (4th Wednesday) 10 am – 12 pm, at a member's home. Please contact Cathy Tanaka at: cathytanaka622@gmail.com if you plan to attend the meeting.



Legacy Family Tree – Monday, January 28th (the 4th Monday) from 1:15-3 pm. The group discusses how the Legacy genealogy program works and is for beginners as well as experienced Legacy users. **Sharon Clay** is the SIG Leader and can be contacted at: sharonclay@comcast.net. ■

Reminder – Intro to Genealogy “Bag Lunch” Session Tuesday, January 15, 2019.

The next session of the *Intro to Genealogy* series will be held **after** the general meeting at the Danville Family History Center. Bring any family information and questions. Assistance will also be available to help with the Family History Center Library if needed. Anyone interested in genealogy is welcome to attend these free sessions. So bring your bag lunch, stay after the general meeting and pick-up some tips to aid in your genealogy research. ■

EDUCATION

By: Kathy Javdani

Happy New Year!! There are lots of learning opportunities this year. So, let's get started.



As usual, the month begins with the California Genealogical Society (CGS) www.CaliforniaAncestors.org For all the following activities, register online:

- On Sat., Jan. 5th **Intro to Genealogy** will meet from 10:15-12:15.
- Also on the 5th the **DNA Study Group** will meet from 1-3:30 pm.
- On Sat. the 19th from 10 am – 12:30 pm, the **San Francisco SIG** will meet.
- Also the 19th the **Family Tree Maker SIG** will meet from 1-3 pm.
- On Sat., Jan. 26th there will be a **Computer Basics for Everyone (Dummies Included)**.
- On Sat., Feb. 2nd the **Intro to Genealogy** class will meet from 10:15 am-12:15 pm,

For more upcoming events from Santa Cruz to Sacramento check the CGS “San Francisco Bay Area General Calendar” at: <http://sfbagenealogy.blogspot.com>



In January the Oakland Family Search Library, [https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oak-](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library)

[land California FamilySearch Library](https://familysearch.org/wiki/en/Oakland_California_FamilySearch_Library), offers the following support: (See website for registration details.) Pre-register for classes at: fhcoakland@gmail.com or at 510-531-3905.

- On Thurs., 10th, 17th, 24th, and 31st, from 10 am—4 pm, Beryl and Wade Olofson will provide individual help with **Swedish research**.
- On Fri., the 11th from 10:30 am --12 pm, Ms. Perrone will discuss **FamilySearch Basics #1- Getting Started**.

- On Tues., the 15th, from 7-8:30 pm and again on Fri., the 18th from 10:30-12 noon, the class on **FamilySearch Basics - #2- Sourcing & Attaching Records** will be held.
- On Wed., the 16th at 11 am, Sue Severson will teach the **RootsMagic Beginning Class**.
- On Tues., the 22nd from 7-8:30 pm, and again on Fri., the 25th from 10:30 am - 12 noon, the class on **FamilySearch Basics-#3- Using Memories & Uploading Photos** will be held.
- On Wed., the 23rd at 11 am, Sue Severson will teach **Roots Magic, Part 2**.
- Also on Wed., the 23rd from 6 -8 pm, Alvis Ward will lead the **African American Research Workshop**.
- On Wed., the 29th from 7-8:30 pm, Ms. Jefferies will discuss **FamilySearch Basics - #4- Finding & Merging Duplicates**.
- On Wed., the 30th at 11 am, Mr. Perro-ne will present **HistoryGeo Class – Newest Premium website**.

You can check the Family Search website <https://familysearch.org> for tutorials, wikis, discussion forums, and webinars. June's numerous webinars are listed at: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Family_History_Library_Classes_and_Webinars

Enjoy learning more from home?



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

- On Sat., Jan. 5th at 10 am, Lisa A. Alzo will share **Make Those Skeletons Dance: Exploring Your Family's Dark Side**.
- On Wed., Jan. 16th at 6 pm, Jean Wilcox Hibben will discuss **Pandemics & Epidemics: issues of Politics, Economy, and Religion**. ►

- On Sat., Feb. 2nd at 10 am, Paul Woodbury will present **Looks Like We're Cousins – Tips for Genetic Genealogy Collaboration**.

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

- *Microfilm Catalog, Archival Databases and Guides National Archives* ► Website 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 Illinois State Genealogical Society, ilgensoc.org, continues its webinar series. The initial presentation of each webinar is free to the public.

- On Tues. Jan. 8th Peggy Clemens Lauritzen will discuss the **FamilySearch Hidden Gems in Wiki**.

Register at:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2211404150786424322>



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

- On Thurs., Jan. 17th from 3-4 pm, Todd Pattison will present **Preserving Your Family Treasures**. ►

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/events offers a Genealogy Tutorial, Genealogy Research topics and a variety of charts and forms.



Ancestry.com has many courses at the Ancestry Academy. Some 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>



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

- On Wed., Jan. 9th at 5 pm, Cyndi Ingle will share **Maintaining an Organized Computer**.
- On Tues., Jan. 15th at 5 pm, Margaret Fortier will present **Visualizing Information for Genealogists**.
- On Wed., Jan. 16th at 5 pm, Pamela Boyer Sayre will answer **What Would You Do If You Had Five Days in Washington, DC ?**
- On Wed., Jan. 23rd at 11 am, Tessa Keough will discuss **Using OneNote With Your Genealogy**.
- On Fri. Jan. 25th at 11 am, Elissa Scalise Powell will present **Patriot or Not ?: Using the Genealogical Proof Standard on a Closed DAR Line**.
- On Wed., Jan. 30th at 11 am, Thomas MacEntee will share **You Can Do This: Photo Organizing and Preservation**. ►

- On Tues. Feb 5th at 5 pm, Jill Ball will present **Six Feet Under Down Under – Cemetery Records in Australia**.



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

- 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



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

Save the date:

- On Thurs., Jan. 10th from 7-9 pm, the Contra Costa County Genealogical Society, <https://cccgs.net>, have its monthly at the LDS Bldg., at 1360 Alberta Way, Concord from 7-9 pm. Adrienne Tomkins will examine **the Great Scottish Migration to America**.
- On Sat., Jan. 12th from 9-11:30 am, the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group, www.svcgg.org will meet at 875 Quince Ave., Santa Clara. Topics to be announced.
- On Mon., Jan. 14th at 7:30 pm, the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society, www.l-ags.org, will meet at Congregation Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court, Pleasanton. Christine Bell Green will discuss **British Genealogy on the Internet**.
- On Tues. Jan. 15th from 6:45-8:30 the Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical ►

Society, www.scchgs.org will hold its general meeting at the Santa Clara Central Park Library, 2635 Homestead Rd., Santa Clara. Marcia Holstrom will discuss **Finding Ethel: Utilizing Local and Regional Resources**.

- On Fri. Jan. 18th at 10 am, the Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society (www.mdgs.webs.com) will meet at the Rossmoor Creekside Clubhouse. Adrienne Tomkins will explore **Scottish Migratin to the United States**. ■

UPCOMING SPECIAL EVENTS!

By: Kathy Javdani

- ⇒ The **Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy** will take place in Salt Lake City from Jan. 13-18th, 2019. Registration now open at: SLIG.ugagenealogy.org
- ⇒ **RootsTech 2019** will be held from Feb. 27th – Mar. 2nd in Salt Lake City. Register at: <https://www.rootstech.org/>
- ⇒ The **National Genealogical Society 2019 Conference** will be from May 8th - 11th in St. Charles, MO. Register at: <https://conference.ngsgenealogy.org>
- ⇒ From May 30th – June 2nd the **2019 Jamboree** will be held in Burbank. Go to: genealogyjamboree.com.
- ⇒ From June 15-17, 2019 the Second International German Genealogy Conference will be held in Sacramento. For information visit <http://iggpartners.org> ■

COMING UP AT SRVGS!

Your society Program Committee is pleased to announce that the following speakers will be appearing in the coming months:

- In February: **Mark McLaren** will be presenting “*Scotland & N. Ireland Research*”.
- In March: **Karen LaDuca** will be presenting “*Italian Research*”

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

- President:** Steve Watty
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- Education Coordinator:**
Kathy Javdani
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- Mailing:** Mary Tom

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 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.

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

Phone: 925-552-5920

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

and 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Closed on Holidays, the month of August
and Thanksgiving week.**FHC Director:**Chris Engstrom: cechocolatego@prodigy.net**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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