



# San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society



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Celebrating 25 Years!

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXVI No. 4 October - 2010



**THIS MONTH – October 19, 2010**  
**"Solving Family Tree Mysteries with Google Earth"**  
Presented by: Lisa Louise Cooke

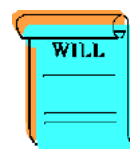


Google Earth is a 360 degree 3 dimensional way to view our ancestor's world. Lisa Louise Cooke will tell us how to unlock mysteries in our research, from unidentified photographs to migration patterns. Google Earth has the power to geographically document our ancestor's lives, and lends itself very well to collaboration with other researchers. Google Earth is one of the best online genealogical tools available and best of all it's FREE. Lisa will show us how to download the free software and navigate the program.

Lisa L. Cooke is the Producer and Host of the Genealogy Gems Podcast, an online genealogy audio show at [www.GenealogyGems.com](http://www.GenealogyGems.com). She is the author of the book *Genealogy Gems: Ultimate Strategies* and the DVD: *Google Earth for Genealogy*, a national conference speaker, and writer for Family Tree Magazine.



**September Meeting**  
**"Land & Property Records"**  
Speaker: Susan Goss Johnston    Reporter: Lee Schlenker



At last month's meeting we had a very knowledgeable speaker in Susan Goss Johnston. She took us through her travels in locating her ancestor's land. Her extensive biography can be found in our newsletter of September.

Land records, not only deeds and mortgages, are the purist proof of lineage because they stayed in the blood line - even without a will they should still be traceable.

Land records can help prove migration, chains of title, divisions of estates, marriage, relationships and place names, life style (through bills of sale of articles, slaves or deeds of gift).

Susan tells us that our country is divided into *state land* states, the original thirteen states,

plus VT, KY, TN, ME, WV, TX, HA and *federal*, or *public domain*, *land states*, the remaining thirty. Land transactions have a step-procedure: 1) application (request), 2) warrant (an order for survey), 3) survey (measuring, marking), 4) return of survey (written warrant, survey including purchase price and paid fees), 5) patent (final deed passing ownership to purchaser).

She says we may never see the original deed because not all land records have been recorded since it takes money to do this task. A deed book may only be indexed by "grantor" or "grantee" so it's wise to scan each page by page. Susan's ancestor's land was located in three different counties, as the state changed county ►



Our September speaker: Susan Goss Johnston

boundaries three times. So, you have to be diligent in your search. First transfers of land from proprietor or colony to an individual are usually found at respective state archives or historical society. Land transactions were recorded in the county courthouse, *in the county where the land was located at the time the land transaction occurred*. Remember deeds could be recorded many years after the land sale, so they usually will be found in the county where the land was located at the time of the recording.

Susan suggests you start your search with USGenWeb searching for online land record indexes and abstracts in your county of interest. Also, Library of Congress Catalog or WorldCat for published transcripts and abstracts. Another great source is the Family History Library in Salt Lake City holding many microfilmed land records. First, visit the Family Search website, perform a Place Search in the Family History Library Catalog. If the microfilm exists, order the index volumes first and copy all surnames of interest, including surnames of all known in-laws. Then, or-

der all volumes of interest. If the county or town books haven't been microfilmed, you may have to visit or write to that county courthouse. Follow the land from the time it enters your family until it leaves the family. Note the date of deed signing and of recording. Figure out the discrepancies if any. And read the deeds surrounding the one of interest to you. Look for other records mentioned in the deed and follow that trail also.

Federal records document only the *first* transfer of title to land from the U.S. to another party. These land entry case files are part of **Record Group 49, Records of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM)** and are not located at NARA in Washington D.C. as well as the Headquarters' *Tract Books* for the Western states. Tract Books for the Eastern states are held by the BLM in Springfield, VA. *Land entry case files* prior to 1908 are organized first by **state, then land office, type of land entry, and final certificate number**. You will need all of these to obtain a copy of the original case file. For case files created after July 1908 you must provide the ►

state and patent number, with the name of entryman for confirmation. BLM - [www.glorerecords.blm.gov](http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov) (for BLM - Eastern States only). For Western States - you will need a certified copy of the patent certificate providing you the necessary information. There will be an e-mail contact at this BLM site for your request.

Land surveys were done by two methods: 1) *metes and bounds* - individual parcel of land described and bounded; 2) *rectangular survey* - started in 1784 and used in public land states. Land was divided into townships of 6 miles squares consisting of 36, mile square sections (640 acres) numbered in ranges east/west of a designated principal meridian and north/south of an associated base line.

Search tract books for bounty land warrant numbers, pension records or unindexed bounty land warrant application files.

City families frequently rented their homes and may not be found in the county or city deed books. Use city directories or *Internet Archive*, *Ancestry.com*, state archives or university library web sites. Using Google Maps then "My Maps" feature will allow you to plot family's moves; the "Street View" feature may give you a photo of that home. You may find the city tax assessor maintains an official database. Some of these databases may contain historical information.

Susan gave us a 4-page handout with the following websites which she uses:

American Memory:

<http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html>

Bureau of Land Management:

<http://www.glorerecords.blm.gov/>

DeedMapper 4.0:

<http://www.directlinesoftware.com/>

Topoquest: <http://www.topoquest.com/>

Tract Plotter: <http://tractplotter.com/>

And then her own - *Get Serious About Your Family's Heritage* website located at:

<http://freepages.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mdtmgug/education/land.htm> ■



## President's Message

*By Barbara Dittig*

While sitting at the airport waiting for my flight. I took the opportunity to start on my president's message. Didn't know what I was going to say, but at least I'd get started with something. Suddenly I saw a familiar face approaching, her arms extended and an excited smile anticipating our greeting. Oh my gosh – she was my best friend 15 years ago!! What's her name?! My brain frantically scanned the alphabet – A, Alison, no; Annie, no, B, C and on down the alphabet.

Was she a genealogy buddy, an airline friend or a neighbor of long ago??

I was having what is now called "A Senior Moment" where short-term memory has deteriorated into a mass of "fuggedaboutit". Theory suggests I'm not suffering from mid-life losing it disease, I have simply run out of storage space.

My brain has been clogged with getting our house ready to put on the market to sell by the end of the month. The stager said to clear out and store in the garage items to make the rooms look larger. The first items she spotted were my genealogy 4 drawer filing cabinets and any other personal items such as pictures of ancestors and other treasures that I was sure I was going to need before settling in our new home – wherever it was. J – is it Joyce? No!

Preparing for my trip to Nashville, TN to attend an airline convention was a challenge. The house was cluttered with painters, contractors, phone repair men trying to figure out why we were unable to call out or receive calls. 1<sup>st</sup> priority was wardrobe selections – what to wear during those 4 days of activities in Nashville. Next, to finalize my report to be given at convention and attempt to solve a computer program glitch needed to start the new year's membership data. Oh well, I'll think about that tomorrow!

Oh yes, and then I realized that my president's article for SRVGS is due – Oh dear!

My brain is on "overflow" I used to be able to handle multi-tasking – what has happened? ►

The psychologists would say that it isn't that my brain power is weak, but that my mailbox is full! I have now learned that there is a new software for this memory problem called "Brain Housekeeping 101", a program to empty the mental hard-drive of everything that is defunct or useless such as trivia for who won the World Series in 1935. These items can be moved to a disk - or - push the button for delete.

Regardless of cost, I want this program!

### News from the Danville Stake Family History Center

*By Janet Broderick*

FHC hours have returned to normal times. For future reference, in November we will be closed the whole week of Thanksgiving and in December, the last 3 weeks, closing on Monday, December 13 and reopening on Monday, January 3, 2011.

And if you are interested in checking out the "future" of FamilySearch, go to <http://beta.familysearch.org>. You will start with a search for ancestor page. Put in the name of an ancestor and the basic information and you will get a list of sites that include that name. I put in John Vorley Adams, my g-g-grandfather that came to the US from England. At the top of the list was his Utah death certificate.

The "learn" button will put you into the Research Wiki for research helps. For example, I search for "Raunds, Northampton, England" where my above g-g-grandfather was born. The results included an small overview article, the Probate jurisdictions if I needed to find a will, a list of Methodist Circuits for parishes and information about the Northamptonshire Census. All are valuable.

If there is information you know about an area that is not in the Wiki - please submit it!! The Wiki will be as valuable as we all make it.

Eventually, [beta.familysearch.org](http://beta.familysearch.org) will be merged with the current FamilySearch.org. So, it might be a good idea to get familiar with it!! ■



## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

### SRVGS CALENDAR

#### October 2010

- 5 Tuesday – 10:00 am.** A Board Meeting was held at the home of Sandra Burns in Danville.
- 19 Tuesday – 10:00 am.** The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/2 miles

#### November 2010

- 2 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting is scheduled to be held at the home of Ed mason in Alamo.
- 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



#### THE MASTER GENEALOGIST INTEREST GROUP

This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their focus on the use of The Master Genealogist. This group typically will meet at someone's home after a General meeting. They will meet again on October 19 at the home of Barbara Johnson in Danville. Barbara Johnson is the contact person for the group. For further information, contact Barbara by Phone 837-2153 or e-mail [bcj616@earthlink.net](mailto:bcj616@earthlink.net) ►



### MacGen – MACINTOSH GENEALOGY GROUP

This group specializes in uses of the Macintosh by Genealogists. A meeting will be held Wednesday,

October 20 at the Danville Family History Center, 2949 Stone Valley Rd in Alamo from 10:30 am-12 noon. This meeting is free and is sponsored by the San Ramon Valley Genealogy Society (SRVGS). It is expected that if a non-member attends more than three of these Danville meetings, that they will join the SRVGS. It is hoped to have enough attendees to sustain a monthly meeting at this location.

The topic for the meeting will be: "How to dress up your Reunion Genealogy Charts with pictures, backgrounds and graphics". It is recommended that each person bring their laptop and have small headshots of all the people they intend to add to their database. The pictures make the family history come alive. There will also be a question and answer session to address any topic of particular interest.

Bill George is the contact person for this group. Phone: (510) 538-2449 or e-mail: [williamcgeorge@Gmail.com](mailto:williamcgeorge@Gmail.com).

Also refer to the MacGen web site at: <http://www.macgen.org>.



**ENGLISH** - We will be starting a new English Research Group to meet on Thursday mornings from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. It will be led by Suzanne Johnston, and will

work on research in England and Wales. If you are interested in getting some help with your English research, gather the materials you have about your line leading to your current research project, and bring it on a Thursday morning. It will be an open research time every Thursday morning. Please join us if you are interested in English research. Come prepared to do some research. Phone 552-5920 or e-mail Suzanne Johnston: [gjohnston3@comcast.net](mailto:gjohnston3@comcast.net)



**GERMAN** – The German Group will meet Wednesday, October 27<sup>th</sup> (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Fran and Bob Schweitzer in Wal-

nut Creek. The contact person for this group ► is Helen Odegard. If you are interested in joining the group please contact her at 932-6796 or e-mail [shodegard@att.net](mailto:shodegard@att.net) for more information.



**IRISH** – This special interest group will meet October 13<sup>th</sup> (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 am. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Patty Erickson is the contact person for the group. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail [russ-pat@comcast.net](mailto:russ-pat@comcast.net)



**PUBLISHING** – A few members that are sharing their interest in publishing their genealogy and family history data, will meet on October 21 (the third Thursday) at 10:00 am. at the home of Francie Lloyd in Danville. Members are welcome to attend. For further information, contact Frances Lloyd at 837-9382 or e-mail: [frances\\_lloyd@comcast.net](mailto:frances_lloyd@comcast.net)



**SOUTHERN** – The Southern Interest Group will meet at 10 am on October 14<sup>th</sup> (the Second Thursday of the month) at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. Nancy Alexander and Jo Ann Garlington are the new co-chairmen. If you have questions before the meeting call or e-mail either Nancy Alexander at (925) 820-1593, [lxnancy@aol.com](mailto:lxnancy@aol.com) or Jo Ann Garlington (925) 689-2458, [Chiefjoret@gmail.com](mailto:Chiefjoret@gmail.com).



**SCANDINAVIAN** – Members with this special interest may set aside a Wednesday afternoon between 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, to be at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. A few members are usually there to provide help to do research for Scandinavian genealogical information. They will answer any questions and will help with Swedish, Norwegian and Danish research. It might be best to call to make sure they are there. For further information, please call (925) 552-5920 or e-mail Linda Bailey: [baileylinda100@Gmail.com](mailto:baileylinda100@Gmail.com).



## CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

- 12 October Tuesday 7:30 pm** The Livermore-Amador Genealogy Society will have one of its regular meetings at Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court in Pleasanton. Susan Goss Johnston will talk about The life of Uriah Stone - no papers, Revolutionary War Pensioner.
- 12, 19, 26 October Tuesday 7 to 8:30 pm** The Oakland Regional Family History Center (ORFHC) and the California Genealogical Society (CGS) are offering free genealogy and computer use classes held each Tuesday through May. Register by telephone (510) 531-3905 or for further details go to <http://www.oaklandfhc.org> and click on free classes. Information is also available at <http://sfbagenealogy.blogspot.com>
- 16 October Saturday 8:00 am to 4:30 pm** The Concord Family History Center will sponsor its annual fall seminar at 1590 Denkinger Road in Concord. **Please note the change of location.** Six class periods will begin at 9:15 am. There is a \$25 registration fee which includes a complete syllabus; or a \$7 fee for Seminar only. Register prior to September 30 to guarantee a syllabus. Bring your own lunch, only snacks and drinks will be provided. Watch for registration forms at your FHC. For additional information, call Jackie Hein at (925) 827-4729.
- 23 October Saturday 1:30 pm** Meet Mac Genealogy enthusiasts from all over Alameda and Contra Costa Counties. Meetings are held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Saturday at the Oakland Regional Family History Center Conference Room, 4766 Lincoln Ave., Oakland, CA. The topic will be: Reunion's very useful index feature. It is used for much more than just locating families in the database. <http://www.macgen.org> Bill George is the contact person for this group. Phone: (510) 538-2449 or e-mail: [williamcgeorge@Gmail.com](mailto:williamcgeorge@Gmail.com).
- On Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> (2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday), at 7 pm they will have their regularly scheduled monthly workshop with free-form question and answer sessions at this same location.
- 26 October Tuesday 1 to 3 pm** The Sacramento German Genealogical Society will hold its regular monthly meeting at St. Mark's United Methodist Church, Lusk Drive and St. Marks Way in Sacramento. "Cantefable," a traveling German troupe (Nancy Thym, voice and harp; Thilo Viehrig, Baroque violin) Title: "Jetzt ist Zeit und Stunde da" (Now is the time and hour): 19th century emigrant tales, in story and song This German troupe travels to the U.S. each October, with performances geared to medieval and traditional programs. The songs and stories, performed in period costumes, tell of the *Seelenverkäufer* (sellers of souls), who recruited people to emigrate to America.
- 6 November Saturday 9 am to 3 pm** The San Mateo County Genealogical Society is sponsoring a fall seminar. The theme is "Using and Interpreting Records." Four lectures will be presented by Michael John Neill. The seminar will be held at the Menlo Park LDS church, 1105 Valparaiso in Menlo Park. Prior to October 24, the non-member registration fee will be \$38. John Michael Neill is the author of, "Casefile Clues", a weekly online genealogy newsletter focusing on genealogy research, methodology and interpretation. "Genealogy Tip of the Day" is his daily online tip for genealogists. Since 1995, Mr. Neill has written genealogy columns for both Ancestry and Eastman's Online Newsletter. Mr. Neill is an Associate Professor of Developmental Mathematics at Carl Sandburg College in Illinois. To copy the registration form and see more information, go to <http://www.srvgensoc.org>



## German SIG Holds Annual Oktoberfest



The **German Interest Group** enjoyed their annual Oktoberfest luncheon on Sept. 22nd.

Carol Huvane hosted the event and every member contributed to the menu which included all the usual Oktoberfest food, lots of German sausages, red cabbage, hot German potato salad, German rye bread, cheese, apple sauce and of course German beer.

Dessert was Apple Strudel. All the members agreed it gets better every year.

Looking forward to next year.



### WELCOME — NEW MEMBERS

**Please extend a warm 'WELCOME' to  
our newest members!**

Jan Unser Mangold  
P.O. Box 70  
Diablo, CA 94528

925-820-5901

Nancy Peterson  
70 Alamo Glen Trail  
Alamo, CA 94507

925-984-2972  
[peterston424@comcast.net](mailto:peterston424@comcast.net)

Jane Hart-Smith  
366 Ramona Road  
Danville, CA 94526

925-820-7366  
[bspizzaz@comcast.net](mailto:bspizzaz@comcast.net)

### HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

**President:** Barbara Dittig 925-648-9364

e-mail: [president@srvgensoc.org](mailto:president@srvgensoc.org)

**1st V.P.** Sherri Hedman 925-275-8123

**2nd V.P. Program:**

Elaine Franke 925-831-1989

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

Ed Mason 925-838-7848

**Recording Secretary:**

Carol Huvane 925-947-5669

**Corresponding Secretary:**

Kathy Javdani 925-736-5464

**Treasurer:** Tom Draeger 925-9375161

**Parliamentarian:**

Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

### NEWSLETTER TEAM

**Coordinator:** Bob Venter 925-454-9919

e-mail: [rjventer@comcast.net](mailto:rjventer@comcast.net)

**Calendar Coordinator:**

Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

e-mail: [v.m.seg3@sbcglobal.net](mailto:v.m.seg3@sbcglobal.net)

**Mailing:** Lucy Carver 925-837-3146

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

Members are encourage to submit articles for the Newsletter by mail or email to the Coordinator.

### INDIVIDUAL HELP

Do you need individual help in overcoming a "brick wall" in your research? Go to the SRVGS web site at: <http://srvgensoc.org/>, click on RESOURCES, then click on INDIVIDUAL HELP FOR SRVGS MEMBERS.

Want to help someone who is having research problems in your area of knowledge? Call Harry Baggett at 925-837-7960 to have your name added to the SRVGS Individual Help list.

Harry Baggett [trvlrl@sbcglobal.net](mailto:trvlrl@sbcglobal.net)

## Halloween — Scottish Witches

Maybe no skeletons in your closet, but perhaps Witches in your ancestry?

The memorial at the entrance to Edinburgh Castle esplanade, marks the site where over 300 women were burned to death accused of witchcraft. One of these victims was accused of witchcraft for using a spell to sink the ship carrying King James VI as it arrived at North Berwick.

A very interesting database and electronic resource, The *Survey of Scottish Witchcraft* by Edinburgh University has over 4000 people listed between 1563 -1736. Information about who, where and why they were tried is available as well as their fate: <http://www.shc.ed.ac.uk/Research/witches>

Other useful publications are: The Scottish Witch hunt in Context (Studies in Early European History), by Julian Goodare

Witchcraft in Early Modern Scotland: James VI's Demonology and the North Berwick Witches, by Lawrence Normand

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**San Ramon Valley  
Genealogical Society  
P.O. Box 305  
Diablo, CA 94528-0305**

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