



San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society



www.srvgensoc.org

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XXVII No. 2 July - 2011

THIS MONTH – July 19, 2011

" Genealogy Ink: Getting your thoughts together to put your history on paper "
Presented by: Frances Lloyd/Chairman and Moderator

Several members of our SRVGS Publishing Group will tell us how to assemble our genealogy data so we can write a family history.

Frances is a Past President of the San Ramon Genealogical Society, a renowned Genealogy lecturer and a member of the examining board of the DAR , Daughters of the American Revolution.



June Meeting

"Joseph Adcock Wilkes, Danville's Own Civil War Soldier "

Speaker: Dave Stephenson

Reporter: Lee Schlenker



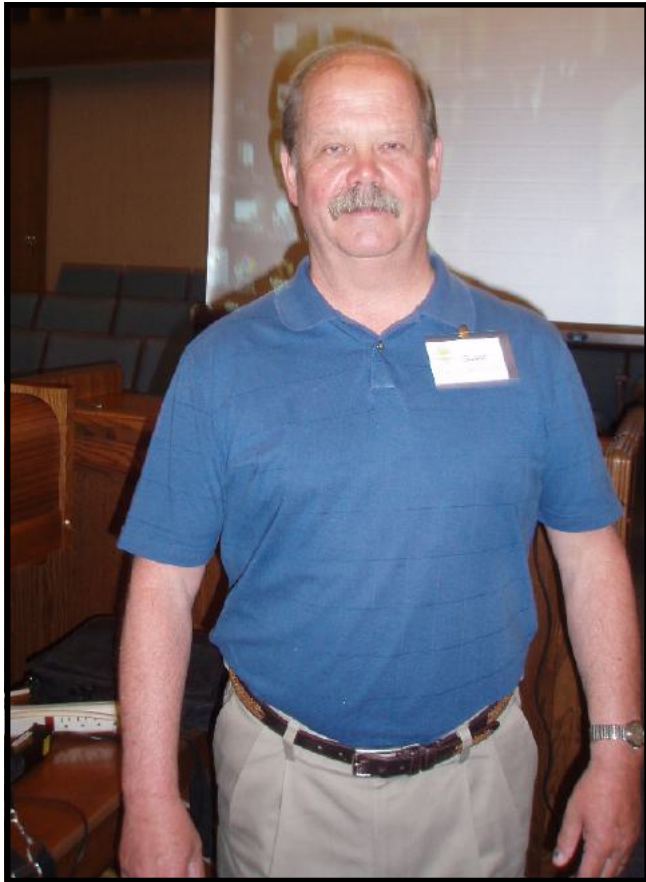
Dave Stephenson, a native of San Ramon Valley and retired Navy intelligence officer is now currently a high school history instructor. History just seems to be a passion with him. Beverly Lane from the Museum of the San Ramon Valley (in Danville) posed a question "do you think anyone from Danville served in the Civil War?" during their "Abe Lincoln – Self Made America" exhibit. This got Dave to thinking and one thing lead to another and he began a quest to find out the answer.

San Ramon Valley was very sparsely populated in the 1840s but by the 1860s Enlistment Records were available and they indicated a man by the name of Joseph A. Wilkes was enlisted. He was born in 1846 in Missouri and died in 1937 in Los Angeles, CA in a retirement home.

Dave's strategy: check *everywhere*. And he sort of had to work backwards in the records.

He checked Norton's Record of California Men in the Great Rebellion (1890) which identified soldiers enlisting in Contra Costa County and compared the individual names. Then he researched the San Ramon Valley genealogy files and came up with a J.A. Wilkes. Dave managed to find his name on a manifest for a Union Rally in San Francisco in 1860. It seems that from the 1850s to the 1870s, Danville seemed to be a hot bed of sympathizers who voted against Abraham Lincoln in 1860. He found that name on the internet and in a literature search on related topics. This information found that J.A.Wilkes lived in the Tassajara Valley. Dave found him in the 1860 U.S. Census in Township #2 along with a Susan Wilkes listed at the end of the family census as a Black woman. So there were slaves in Danville back in 1860s!

Joseph's father was Albert Galatin and his mother was Lucy Jane Adcock Wilkes born in Missouri. Albert earned money by making money off the California miners and he also had ►



(Photo by Nancy Alexander)

Our June speaker, Mr. Dave Stephenson

lumber interest in the Philippines (where he died during a Philippine uprising). But he had saved enough funds to turn around and buy 1,000 acres out in the Tassajara Valley. He built his house there and raised his family, including Joseph. Albert also built the Tassajara school house in 1868.

It appears that Joseph enlisted in the Army at the age of 17 years. He was in the 6th Infantry, Company K (there are old pictures of Company K at the Benicia Barracks located in the SRV Museum). After the war Joseph was given a ship, the P.M.S.S. Golden City, originating in San Francisco and running up and down the Pacific coast. When Joseph's father dies in 1880 he inherits enough money to buy land for ranching and raising horses in the Greenhorn Mountains in King County, CA. There he marries for the second time and has two girls.

Dave found a living relative, George Wilkes Peabody, in Placerville, CA. He tried to get more information from him. George W. ►

Peabody was pretty talkative at first until the question was asked about Susan Wilkes and who she was. George claimed she was a volunteer from Missouri who came with the family to California, but after *that* question was asked, information became very vague from George.

So, Dave was able to find an Antonia Martin, who is the great granddaughter of Susan Wilkes, now living in Southern California. There was no actual concrete proof that J.A. Wilkes had fathered a child with Susan Wilkes, it came only through oral history. George Peabody claims there was going to be a DNA test done; but, somehow, the Oprah Winfrey Show got wind of the test, wanted to publicize the whole thing and since the family didn't want it to be that public the test was cancelled. At the time Hollister seemed to be a center of Afro/American people.

Joseph married a third time to Laura Ellen Backett, an abolitionist, and they moved down to Orange County, CA. They lived in the Joaquin Serrano Adobe for many years then built a home in Santa Ana. But Joseph forgot to pay his taxes in Santa Ana and lost this house. He still loved racing horses and did so along with his brother Thomas. He finally moved into town in Santa Ana; then later, came to live at the National Soldier's Home in Sawtelle in southern California.

Dave found his cemetery maker - but not in any military cemetery - it was at Forest Lawn and not near his wife's marker -- kind of odd.

George Wilkes Peabody claimed he had visited the Tassajara site in the 1980s and walked the property. The original 1,000 acres had been divided into parcels and sold to two different families in 1870. The original wood house on the original 1,000 acres was wood from the state of Maine which came around the "horn" and has since been torn down. There is a crude drawing of the Tassajara property as it once was, which Dave showed to us. And a picture was found of Joseph Wilkes and George Wilkes Peabody in the 1930s when George was about 12 years old.

All this super-sleuthing got Dave Stephenson pretty much what he set out to find - with just a simple thought and question, "do you think anyone from Danville served in the Civil War?" Funny where things can take you in genealogy! ■



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

July 2011

- 5 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** A Board meeting was held at the home of Carol Huvane in Walnut Creek.
- 19 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From the I-680 Freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 1/2 miles.

August 2011

Our Society does not hold meetings during the month of August. Enjoy the summer break and look forward to meeting again in September. The next Board meeting is to be held on September 6 at the home of Sandra Burns,

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP UPDATE

By: Bill George

In July, 2011 we will have a full month of Special Interest Group (SIG) meetings. And... our *Publishing* SIG will be the presenter at the July General meeting. On our web site we have a list of all SIGs at <http://srvgensoc.org/sig.html> for you to consider. Our SIGs are all free to members and cover most topics you might need to learn about in your genealogy quest. There is also a SIG calendar on the web site at <http://srvgensoc.org/calendar.html>. If you click on "Agenda" it lists all the meetings for the month, that's very convenient to print out.

If you click on "Full Size" it's a lot easier to read. ►

There is interest in a monthly *DNA Special Interest Group*, so I'm letting you know in case you want to get in on the "ground floor". A first exploratory meeting will be announced in the upcoming months. In the meantime we're looking for a place to meet and a leader. There are four people interested so far. Sharon Clay, Bill Hewitt, Bob Venter and myself.

The *Master Genealogist* group will begin meeting in September. JoAnn Garlington, who helped with the *Southern Research* SIG is still willing to hold meetings if enough people are interested. Please contact JoAnn at chie-fjoret@gmail.com if interested.

As most of you know, we take off August and December. With no General Meeting and no SIG meetings you finally have time to catch up on some family research.

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" program. **They will meet again in September.** Barbara Johnson is the contact person for this Group. You may contact Barbara by phone, 837-2153 or e-mail bcj616@earthlink.net



MacGen - MACINTOSH GENEALOGY GROUP - The MacGen group will meet Wednesday July 20th at 10:30 a.m. in the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. This SIG specializes in the uses of the Macintosh by genealogists. If you have a Mac laptop, please bring it, so you will be able to follow along with the examples. They will discuss the Reunion Address Lists, Logs and Treetops. These are lesser-known but very useful features of Reunion. Bill George, Special Interest Group Coordinator, is the contact person for this Group. You may contact Bill via e-mail, william-cgeorge@Gmail.com or phone (510) 538-2449. You may also visit the following web site: <http://www.macgen.org> ►



ENGLISH – Members with this special interest may set aside any Thursday morning of July from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to be at the

Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. Suzanne Johnston will work with you on research in England and Wales. If you are interested in getting some help with your English research, gather the material you have about your family line, and bring it on a Thursday morning. Contact Suzanne by phone, 552-5920 or e-mail, gjohnston3@comcast.net



GERMAN – The German Group will meet Wednesday July 27th (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 am at the home of Bob Venter in

Livermore. They plan on having their Oktoberfest luncheon in September. The contact person for this group is Helen Odegard. If you are interested in joining this group, please contact her via e-mail, shodegard@att.net or phone 932-6796 for more information.



IRISH - This special interest group will meet **again in September** (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 am., at

the home of Russ and Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Patty Erickson is the contact person for this group. You may contact Patty via e-mail, russ-pat@comcast.net or phone 229-0889.



LEGACY SOFTWARE – The Legacy group will meet Monday, July 25th (the fourth Monday) at 10:00 a.m. in the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. This is a genealogy software users group. The theme will be How to enter data into Legacy. In particular we will be covering material on the Learning CD volume 1, CD 2 on how to enter names, dates and places into Legacy. Bill George is the contact person for this Group. You may contact Bill via e-mail, williamcgeorge@Gmail.com or phone (510) 538-2449.



PUBLISHING – This is a group of a few members that are interested in sharing their interest in Publishing their genealogy and family history data. They often meet at 10:00 am on the third Thursday at ►

the home of Frances Lloyd in Danville. Interested members should let her know ahead of time that they plan to attend. For further information, contact Francie at 837-9382 or e-mail, frances_lloyd@comcast.net



SCANDINAVIAN - Members with this special interest may set aside a Wednesday afternoon of July between 1:00 pm. and 3:00 pm. at the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. A few members are usually there to provide help with research for Swedish, Norwegian and Danish genealogical information. Phone (925) 552-5920 to confirm that they are there or e-mail Linda Bailey, baileylin-da100@Gmail.com for further information.



THE NEXT GENERATION of Genealogy Sitebuilding® ("TNG") – A group is being organized for the purpose of mem-

bers to share their interest in creating their own web site from which their family history data can be found and shared. Their next meeting will be held at 10:00 am. Tuesday July 26th at the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. They will learn about the TNG concept of a "Root" person and how to populate the Web Site template as they set up a new TNG web site. They will begin using a projector in the meeting. TNG is a powerful way to manage and display your genealogy data on your own web site, all without generating a single page of static HTML. Instead, your information is stored in MySQL database tables and dynamically displayed in attractive fashion. Contact Bill George, Special Interest Group Coordinator, via e-mail, williamcgeorge@Gmail.com or phone (510) 538-2449, for further information. ■



CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

- 16 July Saturday 10:30 am.** The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will hold their regular monthly meeting at Grace Lutheran Church Hall, 2825 Alameda de las Pulgas in San Mateo. Nancy Peterson will present some of the highlights of her book, *"Raking the Ashes: Genealogical Strategies for Pre-1906 San Francisco Research"*. Peterson's highly praised guide to circumventing the enormous record loss in the 1906 San Francisco earthquake and fire has now been substantially updated and expanded to include newly released records and necessary information on post-earthquake resources. The inclusion of a wide and detailed body of sources and emphasis on casting a much wider net than is customary makes this guide useful not only for anyone doing research where critical records have been lost or destroyed, but also for those seeking to create a fuller, richer family history.

For more information, visit their web site: www.smcgs.org

- 19 July Tuesday** The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will hold a regular meeting at 6:30 pm. at the Santa Clara Central Park Library, Cedar room, 2635 Homestead Road in Santa Clara. This program will be presented by Ron Arons. He is an entertaining and well-respected genealogy speaker. His topic will be: "Putting the Flesh on the Bones." Find out how to go beyond the Who, What, Where & When of genealogy. By piecing together various aspects of their lives, learn to think about "Why" your ancestors behaved as they did. He is the author of two books, *"The Jews of Sing Sing"* and *"Wanted! U.S. Criminal Records: Sources and Research Methodology."* For further details, visit their web site: www.scchgs.org ►

- 7 thru 10 September Wednesday thru Saturday** The Federation of Genealogy Societies will hold their conference in Springfield, Illinois. The theme will be *"Pathways to the Heartland."* For further details, visit their web site: www.fgs.org

- 18 thru 25 September Sunday thru Sunday-** The Swedish American Genealogy Workshop will be held in Salt Lake City. They bring experts from Sweden. They can help with reading the old Swedish Script. Elisabeth Thorsell also brings databases that are not available here. She takes requests for these ahead of time, so you can buy them for your use at home. If you are interested, you may contact Sharon Clay for further information. sharon-clay@comcast.net

- 7 & 8 October Friday and Saturday** A Northern California Family History Expo will be held at the San Mateo County Event Center, 2495 S. Delaware Street in San Mateo. For further details, visit their web site: <http://www.familyhistoryexpos.com/viewevent.aspx?eid=36>

EDUCATION

 Up-coming classes / presentations at the **California Genealogical Society & Library**, 2201 Broadway, Suite LL2, Oakland. www.CaliforniaAncestors.org

- **Friday, July 8th, 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm**, class, *A Few of My Favorite Things* and *Sharpen Your Genealogical Tool: the Research Log*, Virginia Kysh. (Register online)
- **Saturday, July 9th, 1:00 pm**, membership meeting, *So Many Books, So Little Time! Demystifying the California Genealogical Society Library*, Barbara Hill and Laura Spurrier.
- **Saturday, July 16th, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**, class, *Mapping Madness*, Ron Arons. (Register online) ►

- **Saturday, July 23rd, 11:00 am – 3:00 pm**, class, *Finding Your Ancestors Through Latino / Hispanic Genealogy, Part I*, Sheila Prader. (Register online)
- **Saturday, July 30th, 1:00 – 4:00 pm**, class, *Chinese Genealogy Research for Beginners*, Doug Joe (Register online)



San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society holds workshops every other month from February through October. Workshops are held on Sunday afternoons from 12:30 pm – 4:00 pm.



Up-coming classes at **NARA, the National Archives** at San Francisco, 1000 Commodore Drive, San Bruno.

- **Friday, July 8th, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm**, *Federal Land Records*, Rose Mary Kennedy.
- **Friday, July 22, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm**, *Freedmen Bureau Records*, Deborah Osterberg.
- **Friday, July 29th, 9:00 am – 1:00 pm**, *Preserving Your History*, Rose Mary Kennedy. To register contact Rose Mary Kennedy at 650-238-3488 or send her an e-mail at rosemary.kennedy@nara.gov

Fees for each class are \$15, payable in advance. www.archives.gov/pacific/archives/san-francisco/workshops.html



Up-coming class sponsored by the **Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society** held at Central Park Library, 2635 Homestead Road, Santa Clara. www.scchgs.org/main/classes.html

- **Saturday, July 23rd, 1:00 pm – 4:00 pm**. *Beginner's Seminar, Part 3*. This part covers census research and choosing a computer genealogy program. ■

Tri-Valley History Council

www.l-ags.org/HistoryCouncil

By: Kathy Javdani

As many of you may know our society is a member of the Tri-Valley History Council. The Council is a network of local history centers, historic sites, libraries, museums and genealogical societies whose fields of interest include the eastern part of Alameda County and the southeastern part of Contra Costa County, California.

At the group's recent quarterly meeting on May 24th a number of local events were announced. From May 14 – July 16th, the **San Ramon Valley Museum** is presenting the “Remember the Ladies” exhibit, which celebrates the centennial of woman's suffrage in California. From May 26th – July 17th the **Museum on Main** in Pleasanton is showing the “Bear in Mind: The Story of the California Grizzly” exhibit. Tours of **Eugene O'Neill's Tao House** continue to be free on Saturdays without reservations. Tours are also available on Wednesdays thru Fridays and on Sundays. For more information visit www.nps.gov/euon.

Also at the meeting, we were reminded of the valuable resources for genealogists to be found in local history societies and libraries. The Livermore Heritage Guild is a great source of information on local residents. For example, it houses an index of local obituaries from 1872-1920. The Guild is located in the Carnegie Library in Livermore which will soon be celebrating its 100th anniversary. Another example is the Pleasanton Library. Among its holdings are the local jail registers from 1929-1939.

The Council's next meeting will be held on August 23rd at the Dublin Library. At that time more plans will be made for a new event, the *Tri-Valley Heritage Happening*. This will be a month long celebration of the Tri-Valley's heritage, local history and culture. The inaugural event will be held in October 2011. More to come on SRVGS's participation. ■



WORLD WAR I

SPRUCE PRODUCTION DIVISION

FORT VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON

I'm looking for fellow members whose ancestor served in the above operation.

The main processing facility was in Fort Vancouver, but the lumbering operation was conducted in several locations in Oregon and Washington. The entire operation was only six months.

My grandfather served in the 25th Squadron, 2nd Provisional Regiment, from July 2, 1918 until his discharge January 1919. Please contact Pat Levy – palev46@aol.com ■

Do You have Something to Contribute?

Your SRVGS Newsletter is always in need of new material. Do you have an interesting story to relate? Some discovery that you want to share with others? Maybe an unusual experience that could help others in their own research. Anything you think will be of interest to the group. If so, we would be happy to include it in one of our newsletters. Anything in length from a half page to a page and a half of type written text would be ideal. Just write it up and forward it to the newsletter editor (rjventer@comcast.net). ■

Is Your Membership about to Lapse?

Society membership dues were due by July 1st. As a reminder for those who were just too busy to get their renewal application in on time, a **Red Dot** has been placed on their address label of the newsletters that were sent via the U.S. Post Office. For those who receive their newsletters via e-mail a short message was included with the e-mail delivery. If you have received such a reminder, please get your renewal to us by the end of July or you will be dropped from our rolls and this will be the last newsletter you will receive. ■

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President: Sherri Hedman 925-275-8123

e-mail: president@srvgensoc.org

1st V.P. Ed Mason 925-838-7848

2nd V.P. Program:

Elaine Franke 925-831-1989

3rd V.P. Membership:

Phil Seelinger 925-254-1338

Recording Secretary:

Carol Huvane 925-947-5669

Corresponding Secretary:

Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

Treasurer: Tom Draeger 925-9375161

Parliamentarian:

Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Coordinator: Bob Venter 925-454-9919

e-mail: rjventer@comcast.net

Calendar Coordinator:

Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

e-mail: 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 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.

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 trvrlr@sbcglobal.net

Our Society Needs You

Imagine our SRVGS meetings without a steady supply of interesting speakers! Think that couldn't happen? Think again. Unless we find a volunteer for our Program Committee NOW, that may easily happen, beginning in June of 2012. Currently, the two-person committee, chaired by Elaine Franke, is doing an excellent job, however, our essential need is for an understudy who can learn the ropes.

Please let us know that you are willing to support your society. For further information, you may request a copy of the job description by sending an email to Elaine, efranke65@yahoo.com or Ed Mason, edmason@sbcglobal.net

Carol Huvane, our recording secretary, is looking for a person to be a 'back-up' recording secretary when she cannot attend either a board or general meeting -- this only happened twice last year. (20 meetings per year) Can you be of help to her? Contact Carol at: tomcarhuvane@aol.com

IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER:

CALENDAR OF EVENTS	3
SRVGS CALENDAR	3
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS	3
OTHER EVENTS	5
CONTACT INFORMATION	7
EDUCATION	5
IS YOUR MEMBERSHIP ABOUT TO LAPSE	7
LAST MONTH'S SPEAKER NOTES	1
OUR SOCIETY NEEDS YOU	8
THE FAMILY HISTORY LIBRARY CAT.	6
TRI-VALLEY HISTORY COUNCIL REPORT	6
SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP UPDATE	3

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

FIRST CLASS MAIL