

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-0305

President: Millie Freitas
Editor: Betty Vail

Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tuesday of the month
(except August & December)
Danville Women's Club House
242 W. Linda Mesa Avenue
Danville, CA

Vol. XI No. 3

September August 1995

NEXT MEETING: SEPTEMBER 19, 1995
PROGRAM: STEPPING STONES TO SCOTLAND

Peg Frazier, a charter member of SRVGS with a special interest in the United Kingdom, will discuss the numerous resources in the Bay area and Scotland which she has used so successfully to trace her ancestors. Whether you need to start from old family records, early census records, or the International Genealogical Index (IGI), Peg will help you to reach the next stepping stone in your research. She will cover aspects of research such as sasines (deeds), service of heirs, old parochial records (OPR's), many of which may be found on microfilm/fiche at local libraries.

Peg is the right person and this is the right program to get you started on the best steps for your research this year. Be sure to attend and make 1995-1996 a good genealogy research year for you.

Bea O'Rand

LAST MONTH

Mary Williams, Library Director of the Flora Lawson Hewlitt Library, discussed the Library's valuable resources for genealogical research. The Library is located at the Graduate Theology Union (GTU), a consortium of seminaries located on "Holy Hill."

GTU combines the resources of three Roman Catholic Orders (Dominican, Franciscan, Jesuit) and five mainline denominations (Baptist, Episcopal, Luthern, Presbyterian, Unitarian-Universal) and a non-denominational seminary.

Since a large part of the Library's collection is devoted to denominational materials representing northern European and United States religious traditions, it is of most value to genealogists interested in these areas. The collection includes

denominational histories, directories, yearbooks, and conference or annual meeting proceedings. The collection does not have archives of individual churches but can often direct people to the proper source.

Information about elusive ancestors can be found in such unusual places as an individual minister's notebook, a list of contributions to a church, or a record from a sailors' home established in a distant port to fight alcoholism among the seamen.

The Library can also provide a context for family histories--family groups, migration patterns, hints of economic status. Ms. Williams provided examples of questions she has helped people solve. How could slave holders reconcile this practice with their faith? Why had an ancestor chosen to belong to a Brange instead of a church? What part
(continued on page 19)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER



SRVGS EVENTS

- 12 Tuesday 10:00 Southern Interest Group (see p. 19) Note new location.
- 13 Wednesday 10:00 a.m. Irish and California Interest Groups. (see p. 19)
- 19 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. SRVGS Meeting. Peg Frazier will speak on sources and resources in Scotland; 12:30 p.m. ROOTS IV User Group; German Interest Group (see p. 19)
- 21 Thursday 9:00 a.m. Macintosh Computer Group (see p. 19)
- 25 Monday 1:30 p.m. United Kingdom Interest Group, Francis Lloyd's, 210 Town & Country Dr., Danville.
- 26 Tuesday SRVGS Library Trip to LDS Library (see below)

OTHER EVENTS

- 14 Thursday 7:30 p.m. Contra Costa Co GS meeting, City Council Chambers, Parkside Drive, Concord. Jane Knowles Lindsey, a member of the Mayflower Society will address the more humorous aspects of genealogy.
- 18 Monday Beginning genealogy class (see p. 23)
- 24 Sunday Writing Your Life Story: A Gift for Your Children and Grandchildren (see p.23)

OCTOBER



SRVGS EVENTS

- 3 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. SRVGS board meeting at Frances Lloyd's. ALL MEMBERS WELCOME.
- 10 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. Southern Interest Group (see p. 19).
- 17 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. SRVGS Meeting Ann Marks will speak about Evolutionary Stages in the Maintenance of Things Treasured; 12:30 p.m. ROOTS IV User Group; German Interest Group (see p. 19)

OTHER EVENTS

- 12 Thursday 7:30 p.m. Contra Costa Co GS meeting, City Council Chambers, Parkside Drive, Concord. Bernard Freeman will speak about Ellis Island and the Largest Human Migration in History.
- 14 Saturday Concord/Walnut Creek Stakes "Digging for Your Roots" (see p. 23)
- 21 Saturday Livermore-Anador Genealogical Society and the LDS Church one-day seminar/workshop. (see p. 23)

NOVEMBER

- 14 Tuesday Because of Thanksgiving, the general meeting will be a week early!

EVENTS SCHEDULED IN 1996

OFFICERS to Contact

President: Millie Freitas 837-2483
 Vice-Pres.: Irma Dotson 820-8344
 Membership: Diana Hancock 820-1424
 512 Zephyr Circle.
 Danville, CA 94526
 Annual Dues: Individual \$15.00
 Family \$20.00
 Membership year: June 1 to May 31

NEWSLETTER

Editor: Betty Vail
 824 Moraga Road
 Lafayette, CA 94949
 283-3596

Mailing: Barbara Dittig 735-9610
 Lucy Carver: 837-3146

The newsletter is published each month except August & December

The Utah Genealogical Association has announced the first Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy to be held January 15-19, 1996, at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Salt Lake City. Students will take one course of instruction for an entire week, attending 20 or more related classes. In addition to classroom instruction, teachers will provide study and research assignments as well as feedback to the students on the completed assignments.

Tuition for all five days will range from \$220.00 to \$260.00. Special room rates from the hotel

are available, with rooms (up to quadruple occupancy) for \$65.00.

The early application deadline is October 15; the final deadline is December 1, 1996. For a brochure contact Salt Lake Institute of Genealogy, Utah Genealogical Association, P.O. Box 1144, Salt Lake City, UT 84110.

* * *

The California Genealogical Society has set the 11th annual Family History Fair for the 8th and 9th of March 1996 at the San Francisco Concourse Exhibition Center, 635 Eighth Street.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

CALIFORNIA - Meets with the Irish Group (see below).

GERMAN - Meets at Barbara Johnson's (837-2153) every other month after the SRVGS meeting. Next meeting:

IRISH - Meets at 10:00 a.m. each second or third (announced) Wednesday at Patty Erickson's, 10 Ridge Pl., Pleasant Hill, 229-0889.

MAC COMPUTER GROUP - To be announced. Contact Barb Dittig 735-9610.

PUBLISHING - Meets on the last Wednesday 10:00 a.m. when needed. If you would like help with a publishing project, contact Jane Steiner 283-0867.

ROOTS USERS - Official Comsoft ROOTS III/IV User's Group - Meets 12:30 a.m. on Tuesdays following the general meeting at Ruth Pfeiffer's, 59 Mariposa Ct., Danville, 837-5160.

SOUTHERN - Meets 10:00 a.m. each second Tuesday at Mary Helen Ewing's, 1033 Upper Happy Valley Rd., 283-1304. NOTE THE CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

UNITED KINGDOM - On the fourth Monday every other month at 1:30 p.m. Check the calendar for the next meeting.

(LAST MONTH continued from page 17)

had an ancestor played in the Underground Railroad?

NEW AT SUTRO

Two-thirds of the Library collection is housed in open stacks, but the remainder is in storage. If you plan to do research at the GTU library, Ms. Williams requests that you call about a week before your visit to allow the staff time to look through the material not found in the stacks. The number is 510-649-2400.

The Library is located at 2400 Ridge Road. To reach it pass the UC Stadium and Greek Theater, turn left on Hearst, then right onto Euclid. At the next corner, turn left onto Ridge Road. The Library will be on your left at the crest of the hill. It is open 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday, and 2:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. on Sunday. There is a tour of the Library at 11:30 a.m. on the first Thursday of every month.

NEW FROM CGS

RESEARCHING SAN FRANCISCO ANCESTRY by Kathy Beals, Research Director for CGS, cites useful sources to replace vital records destroyed in the 1906 earthquake. These alternate sources include cemetery records, newspaper notices, directory listings, census records, land records and many indispensable indexes.

INDEX TO SAN FRANCISCO MARRIAGE RETURNS 1850-1858, also by Kathy Beals, is an extraction of some 2,000 marriage returns found in the San Francisco General Indexes, volumes 1-11. These indexes deal mostly with land records. Both brides and grooms are indexed and newspaper references for many of these marriages are abstracted.

Sutro Library is initiating a new series of their "New Arrivals" list. List #1 of the new Series 5 includes all books received at Sutro during the fall, winter and spring of 1944-1945. The new index is for this list only. The Library requires separate requests for each volume of a book and for each reel of microfilm.

The Sutro Library is now accepting interlibrary loan requests via the Internet (from public or university libraries only). Their Internet address is sutro@library.ca.gov.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8, p. 158)

CALIFORNIA VITAL RECORDS ACCESS

Remember last year's assembly bill that would limit vital records access? A new bill, AB161-Vital Records Security Act of 1966 has been introduced. This bill has a provision allowing for the purchase of certificates stamped "Not Valid for ID." Tougher requirements have been added for identifying an applicant requesting a certificate including presenting a driver's license or state identification card. There is also an amendment that will allow grandparents, grandchild, and a spouse to obtain an "official certificate." (San Mateo County Genealogical Society, Vol. 3, Issue 8, p. 137)

* * *

John Carlin has been chosen to be the National Archivist. He has been a Governor, has taught graduate courses in public administration at Wichita State University, has started a trade consulting company, and has served as president of Midwest Superconductivity, Inc. He has also served on the National Archives Board.



SRVGS MEMBERSHIP NEWS



A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Board realized recently that we need a "telephone tree," a quick means of contacting members. We need someone to set up the tree, using the new handbook. Please call me at 837-2483.

I also need someone to come fifteen minutes early to help put up the chairs.

Don't forget to put your "dumb or not so dumb" questions in the box when you pick up your name tags.
Millie Freitas

A FAREWELL TO BEA

At the farewell luncheon, Bea O'Rand was presented with a plaque and a life membership. She reported that their new house in North Carolina is near a golf course, a horticultural garden, a junior college and a genealogical group. Because of the hurricanes that have struck the coast this year, Millie Freitas gave Bea an umbrella. Bea said, "I can see myself in Wellingtons." We will miss Bea, especially her delightful English accent.

SOME SUCCESS STORIES

Jerry Sturgeon, chairman of the cassette library, loaned a record-breaking 28 tapes for July-August. Jerry attributes it to the introduction of his new program which encourages members not only to take out tapes but also to return them on time! Jane Steiner applauds his plan too. She was rewarded with a basket of pasta, sauces, and salad dressings.

The "dumb question" box proved to be a success too. The first question, inquiring whether any of our members could translate a French letter, led to volunteers who could translate not only French (Diane Anderson) but German (Ron Skilton's daughter) and Russian (Judy Onopchenko's husband). Each stressed that the material should be short—no books please—and that the service is limited to members of SRVGS.

THE SOCIETY LIBRARY

The library committee, Alice Romero, Ardith Steger and Barbara Abbott, devised the form attached to the newsletter. Please fill it in, fold it in thirds, staple it together and return it to Alice at 129 Sanoma Ct., San Ramon 94583-1421. Indicate if you would prefer to have the books used in your home only. The committee plans to generate a list of available material for SRVGS members.

HELP!

We would like to make it easier for our guest speakers to present their programs. Do you have (1) a large blackboard, (2) an easel that will hold a blackboard or a large pad of paper, or (3) a screen suitable for showing slides? If you do and would be willing to donate it to the society, please call Millie Freitas at 837-2483.

1995-96 SCHEDULE FOR TRIPS TO LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES

DATE	DAY	DESTINATION
Sept. 26	Tuesday	LDS Library, Oakland
Oct. 24	Tuesday	National Archives, San Bruno
Nov. 28	Tuesday	California State Library, Sacramento
Dec		NO TRIP
Jan. 23	Tuesday	Sutro Library
Feb. 27	Tuesday	Stanford University Library (Provisional)
Mar. 26	Tuesday	Santa Clara County Central Library
Apr. 23	Tuesday	U C Bancroft and Doe Libraries Berkeley
May 27	Monday	Mayflower Library
June 15	Tuesday	National Archives, San Bruno
Jul./Aug.		NO TRIP

SEPTEMBER LIBRARY TRIP

We begin this year with a visit to that all-important source of general information, the LDS library in Oakland. Attendees will meet to carpool at 9:00 a.m. in the rear parking lot of the Lucky's supermarket on Diablo Road, Danville, and, for those living closer to Oakland, at the Orchard Nursery upper parking lot in Lafayette. Bringing a brown-bag lunch is advisable. Questions? Call Manny Lindner at 837-4444.

HANDBOOKS

Diana Hancock has done a great job preparing the new handbooks. They can be picked up at the September meeting. Handbooks are only mailed to people who live outside the area.



YOUR "FAMILY COAT OF ARMS"??

There is no such thing as a family coat of arms! The "coat of arms," actually a garment worn over a suit of armor, originated in medieval times as a means of identification of a knight in armor. Since the helmet covered the face, there had to be another way to tell who was under all that steel. Originally, the knight's shield was painted in a distinctive design. Later the design was often worked into a surcoat, hence the appellation "coat of arms." Obviously, there would be no identification if all members of a family wore the same mark, and the fact is, they did not.

The companies that sell the so-called "family coat of arms" usually research the highest ranking person bearing a particular surname, then market that to gullible Americans as their own.

It is true that members of a family have similar arms. The colors, and the placement of additional design elements, serve to make each individual's arms distinctive. These arms are then passed down to descendants in the direct male line. Only eldest sons use their father's arms without change, and even then will place an identifying mark on them while their father is still alive. Younger sons and daughters will make a difference (often a colored border) to show their place in the family line. Daughters traditionally use their father's arms (just the shield design) upon a diamond shape until they marry, then a daughter uses her husband's (if he has arms) "by courtesy." Today, many women have their own arms as well.

America's College of Heraldry, headquartered in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, a non-profit membership corporation, registers and publishes arms for individuals and for organizations. The College will register arms from another country borne by an American, assumed arms (unregistered arms used by an individual over a period of time), or will assist a person in designing distinctive and heraldically correct arms for his or her personal use. Persons interested in finding out more about the American College of Heraldry should write them at Drawer CG, Tuscaloosa, AL 35486-2870.

(The Family Tree, Vol. V, No. 1 February/March 1994, p. 12.)



AN IRISH ODYSSEY

Bill Allen may have been looking for his own "coat of arms" this summer in Armagh County, Northern Ireland, the point of departure for his Allen ancestor in 1736.

Bill reports that "Ancestral research throughout Ireland, in the North and the Republic, is getting to be a real money generator for this poor county. . . As our tour bus covered Ulster counties in and around Armagh, I got a good feeling of what the geography and many old buildings were at the time my ancestors lived there. I was hoping for an emotional experience of a 'light from above' to give me a feeling of belonging. Alas, I felt like only resting my tired feet and enjoying a cup of tea with a scone while looking out on the hilly terrain of Armagh."

The Irish Genealogical Project (I.G.P.) has been established to create a comprehensive genealogical database for all Ireland. Each area will have a specific I.G.P. center in which all the relevant civil and church records for that area will be computerized. A special software program has been written to accommodate the needs of the project and store the data. Each center is using a "Digital Microvax" computer system and implementing an agreed common methodology for inputting and verifying procedures. All this ensures that the work is done to the highest possible standards of accuracy and means that, in the future, anyone searching his or her family history is assured of reliable data regardless of which center is approached.

PRICE OF ADMISSION

A relative had our family tree traced back to medieval England. On a trip to Britain, my wife and I visited Goodrich Castle, which bears our name. Near the castle's entrance was a little shed where a woman was taking tickets. I jokingly told her that my name was Goodrich and that I had come from the United States to claim the castle. "Oh, good!" she replied. "You owe us 900 years of back taxes."

(Contributed by Dorothy Stanton)

RESEARCH AIDS

THE UNITED KINGDOM

A free booklet, "Tracing Your Ancestors in Britain," is available from the British Travel Authority. A few weeks later you will receive a "bundle from Britain" containing two maps, one of Great Britain and another of London, plus information for the traveler. Write: British Travel Authority, World Trade Center, 350 Figueroa St. Dept. 3231, Los Angeles CA 90071-1203. Ask for the free booklet and include a legal size SASE.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 6, page. 135)

The British Touring Authority has put together a comprehensive visitor discount program specifically designed for visitors from the U.S. The plan offers discounts to many places popular with tourists. Those planning to travel to London can order London for Less using all major credit cards by calling 1-800-BIGBEN.

(The Family Tree, August/September 1995, p. 24A)

If you have Cornish ancestry, you may want to contact Maria Tanguet, Murdock House, Adult Education Centre, Cross Street, Redruth, Cornwall TR 15 2 BU. She has compiled data on Cornish emigrants but is seeking additional information on these emigrants who left from Cornwall, England.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8 (Aug. 1995))

If you had an ancestor born at sea aboard a British vessel from 1656 to the present, a source of information is: St. Dunstan's Parish, London, England.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8, p. 158)

THE SOUTH

The following books are available from the Southern Historical Press, PO Box 1267, Greenville, SC 29602-1267. The toll free phone number is 1-800-233-0152; Fax 803-233-2349.

Early Settlers of Alabama, with Notes and Genealogies, Parts 1 & 2 by James Edmonds Sounders (\$45.00).

Arkansas Pensioners, 1818-1900: Records of some Arkansas Residents Who Applied to the Federal Government for Benefits Arising from Services in Federal Military Organizations (Revolutionary War, War of 1812, Mexican Wars) by Dorothy Payne (\$26.50).

Laurens and Newberry Counties, South Carolina:

Little River Settlement 1749-1775 by Jesse Hogan Moses and Margaret Peckham Moses (\$32.50).

The Blount Journal, a publication of Blount County Genealogical and Historical Society, an affiliate of the East Tennessee Historical Society, includes in Vol. XI, No. 1 (Spring 1995) articles on "The Men Who Built for Loudoun" and a listing of Loudoun County, TN: Males 21 and upward 1891.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8, p. 161)

GERMANY

The Sacramento German Genealogical Society has for sale a "German Card" designed to fold to credit card size. It includes the old German script alphabet (both printed and cursive) genealogical symbols used in German records, a basic German vocabulary for genealogical research, etc. To order the card, send \$3.00 and a legal-sized SASE to SSGS, PO Box 660061, Sacramento CA 95866-0061.

(Diablo Descendants, Vol. 10 No.8 August 1995 p. 72)

John Bentz of the German Research Association of San Diego has collected over 15,000 German surnames and exchanges with other societies yielding a total of 150,000 names. He will check his list, without charge for a match, if you send him a list of your surnames plus a SASE. Your list should be arranged in alphabetical order and include surname, general locality, specific town, and approximate date. Write him at 13139 Old West Ave., San Diego, CA 92129.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8, p. 161)

IRELAND

The Glenravel Local History Project in Belfast has full access to all the information contained on all the graveyards within Belfast. Other records include the complete 1901 and 1911 census returns for Belfast. For a small fee, they also do research work for those who are trying to trace Belfast families. For more information write to the project at Ashton Centre, 5 Churchill St., New Lodge, Belfast BT 15 2BP Northern Ireland.

If you had an ancestor born at sea aboard an English vessel, if at least one parent was Irish, and if the birth was between 1864 and 1920, records may be obtained from Registrar General, Custom House, Dublin Ireland.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 8, p. 161)

SEMINARS AND CONFERENCES



September 18

GENEALOGY CLASS

Bette Kot's beginning genealogy class will meet Mondays from 1:00-3:00 p.m. September 18-November 13 (except October 9) in the Elderberry Room, Lafayette Senior Center, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Register at the first class.

Learn to organize and document what you have, to obtain new information and to keep your files in useable working order. There will be trips to check census records and local libraries.

The cost is \$13.00 for Seniors and \$50.00 for non-Seniors. The class is open to non-residents. Make your checks payable to: "City of Lafayette."



September 24

WRITING YOUR LIFE STORY: A GIFT FOR YOUR CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN

Joan Hodgkin, whose training is in psychology and sociology, is an experienced instructor for writers. She'll give tips, help you plan the organization of your story, and trigger your memory for many of your life experiences.

This seminar, presented by the California Genealogical Society, will be held at the San Francisco Police Academy, 350 Amber Drive (off Duncan) San Francisco from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. There will be an hour break for lunch and it is all right to bring lunch or there is service nearby.

The cost is \$15.00 for CGS Members; \$20.00 for Non-members. To reserve your place, call the CGS Library at 415-777-9936 (Wed., Thurs., or Sat.).

October 14

DIGGING FOR YOUR ROOTS

The Concord & Walnut Creek Stakes, and the Concord/Walnut Creek Family History Center will sponsor an all day seminar for beginners and experts at the LDS Church 3700 Concord Blvd., Concord CA (near Farm Bureau Road), Saturday, October 14. Registration is from 8:30-9:00 a.m.; classes from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.

The keynote speaker will be Margery Bell who will speak for a half hour before classes start. Margery is on the staff at the Oakland Family History Center. She is the Family History Specialist for the Oakland Stake of the LDS Church.

Pre-registration is \$10.00 per person (includes a syllabus); at-the-door registration is \$10.00 per person (\$5.00 additional for a syllabus). For more information call Jackie Hein at 510-827-4729; to make a reservation, send a check made payable to Concord/Walnut Creek Family History Center to Jackie Hein, 2129 6th Street, Concord CA 94519.

October 21

RESEARCHING YOUR FAMILY HISTORY

This one-day seminar for beginners and experts, will be presented by the Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society Workshop in conjunction with the LDS Church Livermore and Pleasanton Stakes. This seminar/workshop will be held at the LDS Church on 6101 Valley Avenue in Pleasanton. The keynote speaker will be Bette Kot. A variety of classes will be presented, some by our members: "Publishing Your Results" by Jane Steiner and Dorothy Stanton, "LAGS Research" by Judy Person, "City Directory Research" by Bette Kot, and "Bay Area Library Resources" by Mary Jo Hosteny. There will be classes on Hispanic, German and African-American Research. There will also be a Computer Center set up with several workstations demonstrating various genealogy programs and utilities, which will be available throughout the day.

Pre-registration is \$7.00 per person (must be received by Oct. 1); at-the-door registration is \$10.00. Make the check payable to Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society (LAGS) and mail to Kathy McGhee, 929 Lucerne Street, Livermore, CA 94550. For more information call: Jolene Abrahams 510-447-9386 or Garth Ludwig 510-828-9308.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

There were the Scots who kept the Sabbath
And everything else
They could lay their hands on.

Then there were the Welsh
Who prayed on their knees
And their neighbors.

Thirdly there were the Irish
Who never knew what they wanted
but were willing to fight for
it anyway.

Lastly there were the English
Who considered themselves a self-made nation
Thus relieving the almighty
Of a dreadful responsibility.

(Contributed by Mary Jo Hasteney from Tracing Your Ancestors by Marilyn Yurdon)



OH MY GOODNESS!

A modern mother explaining to her little girl the pictures in the family photo album:

This is the geneticist with your surrogate mother, and here's your sperm donor and your father's clone. This is me holding you when you were just a frozen embryo. The lady with the very troubled look on her face is your aunt, a genealogist.

(Contributed by Dorothy Stanton from Piedmont Lineages VA-NC Piedmont G S May 1995)

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FIRST CLASS MAIL