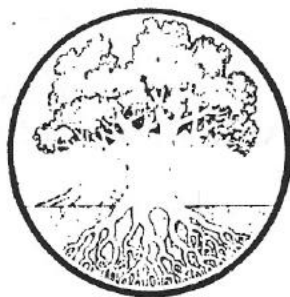


SAN RAMON VALLEY

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 month
(except August & December)
Danville Women's Club House
242 W. Linda Mesa Avenue
Danville, CA

Vol. XI No. 10

May 1986

THIS MONTH

Since 1975 Rose Marie Silva, one of the founders of the International Joseph Disease Foundation, has researched families with medical problems. She will discuss disorders which are of a genetic nature. Ms. Silva will explain how, using a family tree indicating which individuals have or may have a medical problem, genetic counselors, geneticists and physicians can determine the mode of inheritance. This should be a most interesting program. Plan to attend.



LAST MONTH

Reported by Jane Steiner

Shann and Bill Rupp are very much involved in learning how the California and Oregon emigrants came overland between 1840 and 1860. They belong to the Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), a group that marks and preserves the trails that the emigrants took, and Trails West, a group that makes trail markers and marks trails.

Bill Rupp gave a brief history of the overland emigration. In the 1840s many countries showed an interest in acquiring the American West; the United States, under Jefferson, wanted a foothold as well and offered homesteads to any willing settlers. After the discovery of gold in 1848, between 500,000 and 750,000 emigrants came west by various overland trails until the railroad was completed in 1857. Who were these intrepid travelers? Many were single men or husbands seeking their fortunes, some fled bad debts, disease-ridden cities, or a broken love affair; some who had heard of the marvelous climate and fertile soil sought to better their lives.

According to *Women's Voices from the Oregon Trail*, most women didn't want to go, but they weren't consulted. Those who went tried to civilize the trip. Before leaving they spent the winter weaving, making soap, and planning supplies. They made jackets for the men and shawls or sweaters for themselves. There was a fine line in determining how much to take. They needed enough supplies to keep warm and not starve, but not so much that they exhausted the oxen.

During the trip the women collected wood or buffalo chips, cooked and served the meals and tended the children. Few people rode in the wagons unless they were ill or driving the team. The trip was a long trek — from Missouri to California 1500 miles, to Oregon 2000. It took 4-6 months, depending on the destination. It is estimated that one person died for every 900 feet of trail. Crossing the rivers, climbing the mountains, encountering Indians made the trip perilous.
(Continued on page 82.)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR



MAY

SRVGS EVENTS

- 20 - MONDAY 9:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. Second genealogy class will meet at Millie Freitas', 607 Diablo Rd, Danville (837-2483). Subject: Federal Census. You must make a reservation. See details on page 78.
- 21 - TUESDAY 10:00 a.m. SRVGS Meeting at Danville Women's Club. Rose Marie Silva will speak on "Hereditary Diseases."



THE MAY LIBRARY TRIP HAS BEEN POSTPONED TO MONDAY, JUNE 3 BECAUSE OF THE MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY.

OTHER EVENTS

- 14 - TUESDAY 7:30 p.m. Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society. Congregational Beth Emek, 1866 College Ave., Livermore. For info. call (510) 447-9386.
- 15 - SATURDAY 1:00 p.m. Genealogical Association of Sacramento, Belle Coolege Library, 5600 So. Land Park Dr., Sacramento. Verna Benedict will present "Documentation."

JUNE



SRVGS EVENTS

- 3 - MONDAY 9:00 "May" Trip to the Mayflower Library. See details below.
- 4 - TUESDAY 10:00 a.m. SRVGS Board Meeting at Frances Lloyd's. See page 78. ALL MEMBERS WELCOME.
- 18 - TUESDAY SRVGS general meeting. George John Curtis will speak on finding family after an adoption in the Tennessee Courts.
- 25 - TUESDAY Trip to National Archives, San Bruno.

OTHER EVENTS

- 1 - SATURDAY 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Gen & Historical Council of Sacramento Valley. Sacramento City College, 3835 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento, CA. See details below.
- 12 - WEDNESDAY - 7:30 p.m., Belmont City Hall, 1365 5th Ave., Belmont, San Mateo Genealogical Society. Jim Lyons will speak on "Gold Mine: the uses of Newspapers in Genealogical Research."
- 13 - THURSDAY - 7:30 p.m., LDS Church, 3700 Concord Blvd., Concord. Contra Costa County Genealogical Society. Barbara Edkin will discuss how to extract more information from census data.

OFFICERS to Contact

President: Millie Freitas 837-2483
 Vice-Pres.: Irma Dotsun 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 94549
 Mailing: Barbara Dittig 735-9610
 Lucy Carver: 837-3146
 The newsletter is published each
 month except August & December.



MAYFLOWER LIBRARY TRIP

On MONDAY, JUNE 3 we will visit the Mayflower Library, 405 14th St., Oakland. Meet at 9:00 a.m. in the rear parking lot of Lucky's on Diablo Road, Danville. Those living closer to Oakland will meet at the Orchard Nursery upper parking lot in Lafayette. Questions? Call Manny Lindner at 837-4444.

SACRAMENTO CONFERENCE

The Genealogical & Historical Council of Sacramento Valley will present "Tools to Build Your Family Tree" at the Sacramento City College cafeteria, 3835 Freeport Blvd., Sacramento, CA, 8:30-4:30 p.m. Speakers from all over the state will include Wendy Elliot, Karen Clifford, J. Carlyle Parker, Alton Sissell, Joyce Buckland, John Movius, Thatcher Johnson, Barbara Leak, Jolene Abrahams and LaRayne Green. \$20 at the door. Have questions? Call Iris Carter Jones (916) 428-2245.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

GERMAN - Will not meet until September.

SOUTHERN - No May meeting. Next meeting June 11, 10:00 a.m. at Peggy Dearman's, 749 Morninghome Rd., Danville (837-1621).

IRISH - Will meet Wednesday, May 15 at 10:00 a.m. at Patty Erickson's, 10 Ridge Pl., Pleasant Hill (229-0889).

CALIFORNIA - Will meet with the Irish Group.

MAC COMPUTER - No meetings until further notice.

UNITED KINGDOM - No meetings until further notice.

PUBLISHING - Meets on needed. If you would like help with a publishing project, contact Jane Steiner (283-0867).

ROOTS USERS - Official Comsoft ROOTS III/IV Users will meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesdays following the general meeting at Ruth Pfeiffer's, 59 Mariposa Ct., Danville (837-5160).

MIDWEST - Will meet on Thursday, June 6 at 10:00 p.m. at Shirley Terry's, 301 Almond Ct. San Ramon (829-1433). See page 78.



A GENEALOGIST'S NIGHTMARE

The fun of the game of genealogy is in the discovery of each generation and the proof positive derived from all the records together.

It was all very simple before the 1960's; a couple got married, had children and died — a few exceptions accepted. Marriage became obsolete for many of the "flower children." Many mothers did not know the identity of their children's fathers.

Now science has made it possible for a widow to conceive and bear her husband's child many months or even years after his death due to the availability of frozen sperm.

Sperm banks now accept sperm from anonymous donors and dole them out according to IQ or physical properties such as color of eyes and hair.

What of the frozen bodies that are waiting for cures to the diseases that inflict them? Maybe in 100 years they can be revived and cured and will walk the earth again in healthy 30-year-old bodies. These "old youngsters" could spend their time searching for their descendants or even having more children. Two siblings could be born 100 years apart. They could be peers of their own great-great-great grandchildren.

The future can only become a genealogist's nightmare. Or maybe everything will be on computer — just put in a name, jump on the internet of genealogy, and zip right through the

DNA and learn every person living or dead that belongs to your bloodline. There will be no closet in which to hide skeletons.

A newer branch of genealogy is the "Genetic Family Tree," an ancestor chart that not only traces the generations through bloodlines, but also takes time to record causes of death, inherited diseases and other genetic problems and birth defects. A new science called Genetic Counseling is helping couples to recognize problems before their children are conceived or born and, in many cases, correct defects before birth. Or, in the case of terminal diseases, a couple may decide to forego continuing the line by not conceiving children or aborting fetuses.

Genetic engineering, which includes identifying the troubling gene and changing it, is a controversial subject among scientists, lawyers and religious organizations. Some diseases that can now be identified by DNA tests include: cystic fibrosis, muscular dystrophy, "Lou Gehrig's disease," hemophilia, fragile x syndrome and Tay-Sachs disease.

Cloning may be a reality for future generations.

The legal aspects of sperm banks, surrogate mothers, test tube babies and stolen embryos are a real problem now. Once again, how will the genealogist of the future document the family tree?

(From The Odom Family Tree, December 1995-January 1996.)

?

SRVGS MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A WORD FROM YOUR PRESIDENT



Our membership is growing by leaps and bounds; we are bulging at the seams at our current meeting place. Other facilities are available in the Valley; however, requirements and costs would make them impractical for us. Therefore, we must adapt to our present facilities. The problem is evacuation in an emergency. We must keep a clear path around the seating area and an adequate center aisle. Please do not move your chair into these areas or sit along the back wall. There are three exit doors. Use the one closest to you.

— Millie Freitas



"Accessing the U S Census," the second in our series of member-education classes, will be held May 20. In order to allow each person to become familiar with a microfilm reader, we will have two sessions, one at 9:30 a.m. and another at 1:30 p.m. Call Millie Freitas at 837-2483 to make a reservation. No drop-ins, please. A third session will be scheduled if needed. Bring your list of surnames, each with an approximate date that your ancestors were in a particular state. We will set a date to visit the National Archives in San Bruno so that you can try out your new skills.

On May 2 twenty-one members of the Midwest Group met at Fran Lloyd's to share Ohio research experiences and resources. The next meeting, to focus on Nebraska, Kansas and the Dakotas, will be at 10:00 a.m., at Shirley Terry's, 301 Almond Ct., San Ramon (829- 1433).

VERN SEGELIKE, the Cassette Library Chairman, has made a new case for our tapes. When you admire it, borrow a tape!

50 more copies of MEMBERS' PERSONAL HOLDINGS will be available at the May meeting for \$1. An addendum will be printed. If you have something to be included, please call Alice Tiso (735-8172).

ELECTION OF OFFICERS for 1996-97

The officers for 1996-97 will be voted on and installed at the May meeting. The nominating committee has prepared the following slate, but other candidates may be nominated from the floor provided that the nominator has the written consent of the nominee.

President	MILLIE FREITAS
1st Vice President	IRMA DOTSON
2nd Vice President	SHIRLEY TERRY
3rd Vice President	DIANA HANCOCK
Recording Secretary	CINDY WHEELER
Corresponding Secretary	BARBARA JOHNSON
Treasurer	JACK JOHNSON
Parliamentarian	CAROL GLOVER

The Board meeting June 4 will be a joint meeting of the 1995-96 Board members and the new Board. All job descriptions should be updated and made ready to pass on to the new job-holder.



IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN!!! Membership dues are due on June 1, delinquent on July 1. If you do not pay your annual dues before July 1, your name will not be in next year's handbook. Even if you are not a new member, fill out the form completely; DO NOT indicate the names you are investigating as "the same."

We still need a LIBRARY TRIP CHAIRMAN to arrange trips. The chairman does not have to be from the Danville area and does not have to go on all trips. If you would like to help, please let Millie Freitas know ASAP!



The Society wishes to express its sympathy to the family of Joseph A. King who died last month. Mr. King was an expert on Irish immigration and the Donner Party, whose tragedy he recorded in *Winter of Entrapment: A New Look at the Donner Party*. A popular speaker Mr. King will be missed by all of us.



1996-1997 MEMBERSHIP SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

Street

City

Zip Code (9 digits)

Please list 2 surnames being researched (for Individual Membership) or 4 names (for family membership) to be in our Handbook's Surname Index.

- (1) _____ Locale & yrs _____
- (2) _____ Locale & yrs _____
- (3) _____ Locale & yrs _____
- (4) _____ Locale & yrs _____

Individual Membership \$15.00 _____ Family Memberships \$20 _____

Please send this form and your check, made payable to SRVGS, to:

DIANA HANCOCK, 512 ZEPHYR CIRCLE, DANVILLE, CA 94526

ANCESTORS

The genealogy series for public television, announced last year but shelved, has now come to life.

Ancestors will be the first television series to provide beginning genealogists and family historians with sound principles to have a successful experience. The series will consist of ten episodes:

ONE dispels common misconceptions about genealogy and defines the pedigree chart as one of the most important genealogical tools.

TWO helps you understand how to get started at home, what to look for, and how to put these bits and pieces of your past on a family group or pedigree chart.

THREE focuses on how to interview and document the story of living relatives.

FOUR explains how the records you find are related to past life events and illustrates their importance in research.

FIVE looks at some repositories in the United States.

SIX explores these major American record groups: census, military and passenger lists.

SEVEN focuses on two groups of Americans: African Americans and Na-

tive Americans.

EIGHT deals with the world of medicine and the fascinating and important information you can find in your genetic genealogy.

NINE takes you into the world of technology and shows you how computers and the Internet make searching more fun and exciting than it has ever been before!

TEN helps you realize the impact of leaving a legacy can have on your life and the lives of those to come.

You can contribute to *Ancestors* in a number of ways:

1) Make a financial contribution to the series production and community education fund.

2) Create a partnership with your local PBS stations to sponsor local genealogical activities in your community when the series is aired.

Ancestors is seeking funding from individuals and genealogical societies across the country. Your contribution to the production and educational fund is tax deductible. To contribute to this effort make your check payable to *Ancestors* c/o KBYU Television, 2000 Ironton Blvd., Provo, Utah 84606.

(The Sequoia Genealogical Society Newsletter, Vol. 22, No. 8, April 1966.)

RESEARCH TIPS



● **LIBRARY OF CONGRESS:** All genealogies in the Library of Congress published from 1876-1900 have been microfilmed and nearly all of this group should soon be available on interlibrary loan. (CSGA Newsletter, Vol 14, No. 4, April 1966.)

● **ALASKA:** The Alaska State Office of History & Archaeology has received a grant to explore the possibility of putting together a list of 100,000 pioneers who joined the turn-of-the-century gold rush to Skagway, Nome, Fairbanks and other far north communities. The list would be available to families, genealogy buffs, historians and others. If completed, the list will be part of the University of Alaska's Ancestor Database. Relatives of gold rush pioneers are asked to send any information about their antecedents to Jo Antonson, State Historian, PO Box 107001, Anchorage, Alaska 99501.

(SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 1, January 1996.)

● **CALIFORNIA:** The California Information File (CIF) is a card file created by the librarians at the California State Library, Sacramento. It is an index to the names appearing in nearly all of the 19th and 20th century California County histories, and in a great many of the California newspapers, magazines, biographical books and manuscripts. It also indexes many who came to California during the Gold Rush and were mentioned in biographical works in their home state. There are more than 1.4 million index entries on the CIF microfiche in the Carlsbad City Library Genealogy Local History Collection.

(SMCGS Newsletter, No. 14, Issue 3, March 1996.)

● **GEORGIA:** If you are searching for someone who lived in southwest Georgia, be sure and send a query to *The Colquitt County Family Album*, a genealogical column published each Monday in *The Observer*. Write PO Box 889, Moultrie, GA 31776. Queries are free. (*The Family Tree*, Oct/Nov 1995.)



● **KENTUCKY:** The Kentucky Death Index from 1 Jan 1911 to 31 Dec 1992 is now available through Internet. Researchers who have a modem and Internet access may use this to search for death certificates. If a certified copy is desired, write: Office of Vital Statistics, 275 East Main Street, Frankfort, KY 40602. the cost is \$6.00. Uncertified copies of death certificates issued from 1911 through 1938 may be obtained from the microfilm at Kentucky Historical Society or Kentucky Library and Archives. (SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 5, May 1966.)

● **NORTH DAKOTA:** The North Dakota Institute for Regional Studies houses a large collection documenting the development of the state. It includes a collection of 50,000 photographs. All the collections are described in the public online catalog (MSUS/PALS system). Box 5599, Fargo ND 58105; (701) 231-8914. E-mail: nulibrac@plains/nodak.edu (AGLI Bulletin, #31, p. 15.)

(CCCGS Newsletter, Vol. 11, No. 4, April 1996.)

● **FOR YOUR INFORMATION:** In an effort to combat falsification of vital records, Wisconsin has passed a law making it illegal to photocopy certified and non-certified copies of all vital records for any reason. An individual may abstract information from the vital records and put or publish it in another form. This law, along with added restrictions, is expected to eventually be enacted in every state. For information on obtaining copies of vital records in Wisconsin, call Vital Records in Madison at (608) 266-1371.

This is a sign of the times. Legal vital records are being used for illegal purposes, and county clerks are simply trying to protect the privacy and unauthorized use of the documents which they are sworn to preserve. If you are in doubt about required identification, contact the County Clerk in the county concerned. (The Heller Helper, Vol. XIII, No. 4, Cary, IL.)



MEMORIAL DAY



Remember when Memorial Day was also known as Decoration Day? Families cleaned the cemeteries and left flowers on the graves.

MEMORIAL HONORS OUR AMERICAN SERVICEWOMEN

The nation's first memorial honoring servicewomen will be constructed at the gateway to Arlington's National Cemetery.

The women in Military Service for America will recognize the 1.8 million women who have served from the American Revolution to the present.

The heart of the memorial will be a computer register which visitors can use to access photos, military histories, and individual stories of registered servicewomen.

Women service members can register for the memorial by calling 1-800-222-2294 or by writing to the Women's Memorial, Dept. 560, Washington, DC 20042-0560.

MERCHANT SEAMAN CEMETERY

Ft. Stanton, New Mexico, established in 1859, was reactivated in 1899 as the first US Public Health Service Hospital for Merchant seamen suffering from tuberculosis. The cemetery has over 1600 graves of Merchant seamen of many nations and of servicemen of other branches. A list of those buried in the cemetery is available at the Southern California Genealogical Society Library. Send request and SASE to SCGS, PO Box 4377, Burbank, CA 91503. (CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 14, No. 1, January 1996.)

PHILADELPHIA CEMETERIES

For a short time cemeteries in Philadelphia had to submit to the city government names of everyone buried. Not every cemetery complied. The word "return" was used for these reports. The usage is similar to our tax "returns." In addition to carrying death records from 1860 to 1915, the Philadelphia City Archives has "cemetery returns" from about 1806 to 1860. (SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 4, April 1996.)

HOW TO "DATE" A TOMBSTONE

One way to figure out the era in which your ancestor was buried is to examine the material the tombstone is made from. If your ancestor has a stone made of common fieldstone or slate (except wooden markers used by pioneers), chances are the stone dates from 1796-1830. If the stone is flat topped hard marble, it probably dates from 1830-1849. If your mystery stone is round or pointed soft marble with cursive inscriptions, look for a date of 1845-1868. Masonic four-sided stones began in the 1850's and are still in use. Pylons, columns and all exotic monuments are usually dated 1860-1900. Zinc monuments date from 1870-1900. Granite came into use ca. 1900. (CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 14, No 4, April 1996.)



CIVIL WAR VETERANS

To locate which National Cemetery an ancestor was buried in during the Civil War, write: Veterans Adm., 810 Vermont Ave. NW, Washington, DC 20420.

To find your Confederate soldier, write Confederate Descendants Society, PO Box 355, Braddock Heights, MD 21702.

Confederate Research Center, Hill Junior College, Hillsboro, TX 76645 answers queries by mail. The center holds the largest collection of its kind in the southwest with over 3500 books on the Civil War. The center will do regimental histories for a reasonable fee.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 13, No. 7, July 1996.)

TO THE POINT!

In Civil War graveyards in the South, Yankee stones were rounded at the top, but the Confederate markers bore a pointed top. It is said that the Confederate stones are made that way "so that no D--- Yankee' can sit on them."



(TRAILS continued from page 75.)

Mrs. Rupp read excerpts from several letters, diaries and journals.

Another important OCTA project is the Census of Overland Emigrant Documents. COED volunteers are surveying and recording in a computer database essential information from all known documents written by emigrants during their overland journey: letters, diaries, journals, logs, guides, autobiographies, and newspaper accounts. There are 2,125 documents in the database now and 200 more waiting to be entered. It consists of 63,225 names, 6,800 locations, and 11,510 Indian incidents. COED hopes to make this information available to the public soon.

OCTA has an annual convention each August. In 1996 it will be in Elko, Nevada, where 14 miles of trail are found nearby. An individual membership in OCTA is \$30 per year; a family membership is \$35. Contact OCTA, P.O. Box 1019, Independence, MO 64051-0519.



BOOK REVIEW

CHARACTER CERTIFICATES IN THE GENERAL LAND OFFICE OF TEXAS, ed. Gifford White, GPC, 1993.

The government of Mexico, in allowing the settlement of Texas by people other than its own residents, wanted to ensure that the new Anglo-American settlers were of high character. It did not want the province to become haven for the criminal element, or for the non-productive. Therefore the authorities through the colonization laws directed that the immigrants prove their good character by providing credentials from their homeland, or having 2 witnesses to vouch for them. Places of origin, marital status, occupation and family size are provided. Surnames are listed alphabetically, but an additional index is provided of officials and attorneys.

— Mary Jo Hosteny

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FIRST CLASS MAIL