

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. XII No. 1

June 1996

THIS MONTH

George Curtis, author of *TENNESSEE TEARS*, was a victim of the Tennessee Children's Home Society scandal featured on a *60 Minutes* television program. Many other programs revealing how the Tennessee children were sold on the black market, have created interest in their adoption. Mr. Curtis will share with us the methods and sources he used to find his biological parents. This program should be of interest to us all.

— Jeanette Moses

LAST MONTH

Reported by Frank Williams

Rose Marie Silver, a founder of the International Joseph Diseases Foundation, discussed the identification and genealogical research of Joseph Disease and other genetically spread diseases, using her family as an example.

Mrs. Silva, a member of the Joseph family, had been aware all her life that family members often developed a crippling neurological disease leading to an early death. Working with doctors and the National Genetics Foundation of New York, she developed a family pedigree chart that identified the first known family victim as her great-great-grandfather, Antone Joseph, a sailor who jumped ship in San Diego harbor in 1845 and later homesteaded at the base of Mt. Diablo. He and some of his children were victims of a fatal genetic disorder that cripples and paralyzes while leaving the intellect intact.

In 1975 the Joseph family held a clinic for its affected members. At this time physicians from California and Texas recognized that here was a disorder never before described in med-

ical journals. It was initially thought to appear only in Portuguese families from the Azores. Three hundred cases were identified among Joseph descendants. Earlier similar research in the Machado family exposed parallels that led to choosing the name Machado-Joseph disease (MJD). Meanwhile the Joseph family had established a foundation to research and treat this and related diseases.

Publicity from family clinics and later national and international meetings brought forth reports of the disease in 14 countries on 5 continents. Machado Joseph disease is now identified as a thousand-year-old international disorder affecting its victims in the same way with the same type of inheritance pattern; hence, the MJD gene has been referred to as a "traveling gene."

Recent Japanese research has mapped the gene to chromosome 14q. It is now possible to test for MJD susceptibility, although this is not commonly done before age 18 due to the devastating

(Continued on page 3.)



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

JUNE



SRVGS EVENTS

- 18 - TUESDAY 10:00 a.m. SRVGS general meeting. George John Curtis will speak on finding family after an adoption in the Tennessee Courts.
- 25 - TUESDAY Trip to the National Archives, San Bruno. See page 7 for details.

OTHER EVENTS

- 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.
- 29 - SATURDAY 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Family History Day at the Historic City Cemetery, Sacramento. Broadway at 10th Street. Phone: (916) 448-0811.



JULY

SRVGS EVENTS

- 2 - TUESDAY 10:00 a.m. Board meeting at Fran Lloyd's. 210 Town & Country, Danville. EVERYONE WELCOME.
- 11 - THURSDAY 10:00 a.m. The Midwest Interest Group will meet at Francis Lloyd's, 210 Town & Country. The focus will be on Minnesota and Michigan. NOTE THE CHANGE TO THE SECOND THURSDAY BECAUSE THE 4TH OF JULY HOLIDAY.
- 16 - TUESDAY 10:00 a.m. SRVGS General meeting. In a program titled AMONG OURSELVES members will share their expertise.
- 17 - WEDNESDAY 2:00 p.m. The Program Planning Committee will meet at Shirley Terry's, 301 Almond Ct., San Ramon (829-1433).

NO LIBRARY TRIPS IN JULY AND AUGUST.

OTHER EVENTS

- 27-28 SATURDAY-SUNDAY Los Californianos meeting. See details below.
- 30-Aug 2 Annual 1996 Genealogy & Family History Conference in Provo, UT.

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 283-3596
 824 Moraga Road
 Lafayette, CA 94549
 Mailing: Barbara Dittig 735-9610
 Lucy Carver: 837-3146
 The newsletter is published each month except August & December.

LOS CALIFORNIANOS

Los Californianos is dedicated to the preservation of Alta California's heritage. At every quarterly meeting there is a Genealogy Room containing a great deal of material on Alta California genealogy. For further information, contact the president, F.J. de Larios, 355 Erica Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080-4131.



SUPPORT ANCESTORS

If you would like your local Public Television to carry the 10-episode genealogical program *Ancestors* this year, you are encouraged to write or call both local stations: KQED, 2601 Mariposa Street, San Francisco, CA 94110-1400, Phone: (415) 553-2100 or KTEH, 100 Skyport Dr., San Jose, CA 9511. Phone: (408) 437-5454.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

GERMAN - Will not meet until September.

SOUTHERN - July meeting to be announced.

IRISH - Will meet Wednesday, June 12 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 when 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, July 12 at Frances Lloyd's, 210 Town & Country, Danville.

(MJD) continued from page 1.)

psychological effect on a child and the family. The gene can be passed along by both male and female offspring whether they succumb or not; but each well generation reduces the chances of the next getting MJD by one-half.

The disease starts with imbalance problems, then double vision, slurred speech, and further symptoms similar to drunkenness. Eventually the patient is confined to a wheelchair and must have total care. Onset is usually at around age 20 with death before 40, but in some cases the symptoms may not start until 70 or older. Although some drugs help improve talking and walking, they build up in the system and must be stopped periodically for up to a month. All symptoms return during this period.

Information on MJD is on the internet on a home page maintained by relative Tom Joseph, who has the disease. Rose Marie Silva can be reached through the International Joseph Disease Foundation, 4047 First Street, Suite 107, PO Box 2550, Livermore 94551-2550. Phone: (510) 371-1287 FAX: (510) 371-1288.

eties (FGS) submitted to the United States Postal Service's Chief Counsel, Consumer Protection, a 120-page report on Halbert's marketing practices with the request that these practices be investigated.

NGS and FGS also launched a "grass roots" campaign to encourage the participation and cooperation of genealogists nationwide. A brochure and companion flyer entitled "PSSST! Wanna Buy Your Name?" were mailed to genealogical societies and libraries. Societies were asked to reprint the cartoon and brochure text in their newsletters; librarians were asked to post the flyer on their bulletin boards. As a result, many people wrote the NGS and its Ethics Committee about the solicitation materials they had received from Halbert's and others who wrote directly to the U.S. Postal Inspection Service.

On 21 November, the Postal Service issued a supplemental cease and desist order prohibiting Halbert's from further use of certain misleading marketing practices.

(NGS Newsletter, Vol. 22, No. 2, March/April 1996.)

STOP

HALBERT'S UNDER CEASE AND DESIST ORDER

Halbert's, Inc., of Bath, Ohio, a mail order firm that markets surname products, has agreed to the provisions of a cease and desist order issued by the United States Postal Service in November 1995. "Family Book Offer," "Historic Book Offer", and "Halbert's" are trade names used by Numa Corporation of Akron, Ohio.

On 23 March 1995, the National Genealogical Society (NGS) with the support of the Federation of Genealogical Soci-



BOOK REVIEW

WAR OF 1812 BOUNTY LANDS IN ILLINOIS, 1840, 6th Congress, 1st sess., House Document 262. An index of veterans of the War of 1812 who filed bounty land warrant applications in the Illinois military land tract. Includes veterans from many states, not just those who served from Illinois. Shows name, rank, unit, and location of the land. (Danville LDS #6051272, 8 fiche)

- Mary Jo Hosteny

RESEARCH TIPS

• **LDS HOURS:** The library at Stone Valley Rd. and Smith Rd., Alamo, is open:
 Monday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 Tuesday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.;
 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
 Thursday 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
 6:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

• **BORN IN VIRGINIA:** If reference is made to a person having been born in Virginia from 1728 to 1863, it could mean that he was born in:
 Any part of Illinois from 1781-1818.
 Any part of Indiana from 1781-1816.
 Any part of Kentucky from 1755-1792.
 Any part of Maryland from 1775-1792.
 Any part of North Carolina from 1728-1803.
 Any part of Ohio from 1778-1803.
 Any part of Pennsylvania from 1572-1786.
 Any part of Tennessee from 1760-1803.
 All of West Virginia from 1769-1863.
 (The Live Oak, May/June 1996.)

• **LOCATING LOST TOWNS:** If you can't locate your ancestor's town on a map, contact the U.S. Board on Geographic Names. The board is responsible for resolving place name discrepancies.

Their staff has an extensive library of literature, maps, and the National Geographic Names Database with over two million names. They will research inquiries about current and historical place names and locations for no charge.

Write to Executive Secretary for Domestic Names, U.S. Board on Geographic Names, U.S. Geological Survey, 523 National Center, Reston, VA 22092-0523. (CBS Newsletter, Vol. XXVI, Aug. 1995)

• **BODIES IN TRANSIT:** An unused resource available at the New York City Municipal Archives (Archives Div. of Dept. of Records and Information Center, 52 Chambers St., NY, NY 10070) is microfilm covering ten volumes, 1859-1894, "Bodies in Transit." Any deceased person arriving in Manhattan via ship, train, or local ferry had to be registered. (SMCBS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 4, April 1996.)

• OUTSTANDING GENEALOGICAL WEB SITES TO VISIT:

Yahoo's Genealogy page
<http://www.yahoo.com/Arts/Humanities/History/Genealogy/>

Helen's Genealogy Toolbox
<http://uxl.cso.uiuc.edu/~al-hela/genealogy.html>

National Genealogy Society - Home Page
<http://genealogy.org/NGS/>

Genealogical Resources on the Internet
http://www-personal.umich.edu/~77Ecgaunt/gen_intl.html

Treasure Maps-the How-to" Genealogy Site
<http://www.firstct.com/fv/taaps.html>
 (The Odom Family Tree, April/May 1996.)

• **NUNCUPATIVE WILL:** A nuncupative will (to name before witnesses as one's heir, oral not written) could dispose only of personal property. Title to land could be conveyed either by deed, inheritance, or marriage. In the latter cases, no instrument was required. Land could descend through several generations by inheritance without a deed being recorded to denote the same. (SMCBS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 2, February 1996.)

• **PENNSYLVANIA ARCHIVES:** The Pennsylvania Archives, an important research tool, can be found in many libraries. The collection consists of over 100 books and records containing a vast amount of early Pennsylvania information on official government proceeding, legal and military records, church records, militia rolls, and other useful data. (CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 14, No. 2, February 1996.)

• **SETTLEMENT PATTERNS:** If your ancestors settled in Kentucky just after the Revolutionary War, they may have had bounty lands from Virginia. Those who settled in Tennessee generally served in the militia from North Carolina. If your forebearers settled in Arkansas, Missouri or Illinois between 1816-1817 and initially held 80 or 160 acres, quite likely they served in the War of 1812. (CCCGS Newsletter, Vol. 10, No. 9, September 1995.)





ORPHANS: The term "orphan" in old documents and court records often referred to someone under 21 whose father had died even though his mother was still alive. Often the mother was appointed guardian of children under 14. In most jurisdictions, if the child was over 14, he could name his own guardian. Many times it was an older brother, rather than the mother, who was selected.

(SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 13, Issue 8, September 1995.)

COUNTRY UNKNOWN TIP: If you do not find the person for who you are searching in the IGI do not overlook the "State Unknown" or "Country Unknown" sections. Most of the entries in this section have place names that were unrecognized by the computer, were not in the correct order, were misspelled or included an unusual abbreviation.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 14, No. 2 February 1996.)

COPYRIGHT LAW: If you're working from secondary sources, you may be unnecessarily concerned about using material from another source in your publication. If you're only using a small amount of material and if you cite the source, it's considered "fair use." If the publication you're citing is already out of copyright, i.e. over 56 years old, you are free to use any amount of material from it without permission. This is also true for books that are over 28 years old, where the copyright was not renewed.

(Gateway Press, Inc., Baltimore, Maryland.)

GREAT MIGRATION: The New England Historic and Genealogical Society has embarked on a major endeavor, the Great Migration Study Project. About 20,000 English men, women and children crossed the Atlantic to settle New England between 1620 and 1624. The Great Migration Study will examine all that is in print of the settlers of this period and will carry out new research. The first three volumes entitled *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620-1633*, will soon be available.

(SCC His. & Gen. Soc. Newsletter, Vol. 41, Issue 4, May 1996.)

WINTHROP FLEET: The ships in Winthrop's fleet of 1630 were the Arbella (originally Eagle), Ambrose, Jewel, Mayflower, Whale, Talbot, William and Francis, Hopewell, Trial, Charles, Success. This was not the same Mayflower as the 1620 Mayflower. Charles Edward Banks published, in 1930, *The Winthrop Fleet of 1630, An Account of the Vessels, the Voyage, the Passengers and their English Homes from Original Authorities*. The passengers from the entire fleet are published, but there is no list that tells which of the ships any specific person was aboard.

(SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 2.)

BOOK CONTEST: Authors of genealogy and family history books will compete for \$1000 in cash prizes in the 25th Anniversary London Bridge Genealogy Book Contest sponsored by the Genealogical Society of Lake Havasu City, Arizona. In 1971, 25 years ago, the world famous nursery rhyme London Bridge found a new home in the American desert.

Genealogy and family history books must have been published since 10 Oct. 1971 — the date London Bridge opened in Arizona. Only entries written in the English language will be considered, and entries must be postmarked before 10 October 1996 to be entered into judging for this contest.

Judging criteria includes narrative presentation, generation organization, indexing, use of photographs, documentation of data and historical relationships placing ancestors in historical context.

For more information write Genealogy & Family History Book Contest, PO Box 953, Lake Havasu City, AZ, 86405. Phone (520) 855-7105, or call Don Foust, Book Contest Chairman (520) 680-6527.

(CSGA Newsletter, Vol. 14, No. 6, June 1996.)

CYBER CERTIFICATES: As of the end of last year, 58% of U.S. births were being recorded with an electronic birth certificate and transmitted electronically to a vital statistics agency, according to sociologist Paul Starr in Public Health Reports.

(SMCGS Newsletter, Vol. 14, Issue 4, April 1996.)

SRVGS MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A CHANGING OF THE GUARD

At the June 4th Board meeting, job descriptions, materials and responsibilities were turned over to the 1996-97 Board and Committee Chairs.

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
1996-1997 OFFICERS AND BOARD MEMBERS

President	MILLIE FREITAS
First Vice President	IRMA DOTSON
Second Vice President (Programs)	SHIRLEY TERRY
Third Vice President (Membership)	DIANA HANCOCK
Recording Secretary	CINDY WHEELER
Corresponding Secretary	BARBARA JOHNSON
Treasurer	JACK JOHNSON
Parliamentarian	CAROL GLOVER

COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSONS

Alliance Representative	FRANCES LLOYD
Book Reviews	DOROTHY STANTON
Cassette Library	VERN SEGELKE
Education	
Freebie Basket	JO BOLENBAKER
Historian	NANCY ALEXANDER
Hospitality	SUE HUGHES,
	CAROL HUVANE, CHARLOTTE THOMPSON
Library Trips	MANNY LINDNER
Newsletter Editor	BETTY VAIL
Newsletter Back-up	DOROTHY STANTON
Newsletter Publication	BARBARA DITTIG, LUCY CARVER
Program Taping	WYN KYNETT
Program Reporting	JANE STEINER, CHRISTINE SCOTT
	BILL ALLEN, FRANK WILLIAMS,
	FRAN SWEITZER
Publicity	ED O'DONNELL
Special Interest Group Coordinator	LOIS TAYLOR
German Research	BARBARA JOHNSON
Irish Research	PATTY ERICKSON
California Research	CAROL GLOVER
Publishing Information	JANE STEINER
Roots III & IV	RUTH PFEIFFER
Southern Research	FRANCES BECKER
United Kingdoms	RON SKILTON
Midwest Research	LOUISE FORD, JANICE CLAPP
In-House Genealogy Classes	VERN SEGELKE, PATTY ERICKSON
Heritage Library	JACK JOHNSON
Members' Personal Holdings	ALICE TISO, ARDITH STEGER
Telephone Tree	JO ANN TATUM

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GENEALOGY IS NOT FATAL, BUT IT IS A GRAVE DISEASE!

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A NOTE ON THE CHANGES

Any member is welcome to attend a Board meeting; it is a good way to meet the people who make the Society work. There are some new additions to the SRVGS "staff," and one position is still not filled. If you would like to be our new Chairman of Education, please call Millie Freitas (837-2483).

Shirley Terry, in charge of programs, and Cindy Wheeler, recording secretary, have returned to the Board.

Dorothy Stanton replaced Mary Jo Hosteny as our Book Review Chairman. If you discover a book that you think will be helpful to other members, please let Dorothy know the title or write a review and send it to her. Mary Jo, who was Chairman of both Education and Book Reviews, has retired to put her family genealogy in book form.

Several new positions have been created this year. Vern Segelke and Patty Erickson are coordinating our in-house genealogy classes. The first two were a great success; the third will meet July 17.

Jack Johnson, Diana Hancock and Fran Lloyd have been investigating a home for our Heritage Library. If you have any books that you would like to donate to the collection, please see one of them. By the way, if you are new to the society or forgot to list materials or books that you would be willing to lend a member, please pick up a form at the general meeting.

Alice Tiso and Ardith Steger have worked hard to put together our Members' Personal Holdings pamphlet. They are \$1.00 and will be available at the general meetings. Jo Ann Tatum has done a great job building the telephone tree. It is an on-going project as new members join the Society.

Lois Taylor has taken on the task of coordinating the special interest committees. Louise Ford and Janice Clapp did an excellent job organizing the Midwest group. Fran Sweitzer, a new member, has agreed to be a program reporter.

MORE SRVGS NEWS

• NEW MEMBERS

Millicent Joyce Evans, 3210 Rossmoor Pkwy. # 4, Walnut Creek, CA 94595 (934-8201) is researching Evans in PA 1880, WY 1890, CA 1902; Shirey IA 1870-80's.

Helen Odegard, 1408 Entrada Verde Pl., Alamo, CA 94507 (932-6796) is researching Diefenbach and Deafenbaugh.

Robert and Victoria da Roza, 385 Borica Dr., Danville, CA 94526 (820-7866) are researching Callaway NC, TN pre 1850; Hawkins IN, PA pre 1860; da Roza Azores/Portugal pre 1890 and Stinchfield MA, ME, CA 1700-1960.

Paul and Nancy Schatz, 424 St. Francis Drive, Danville 94526 (820-5779) are researching in Germany Schatz 1750-1850, Fritz 1750-1870, Troxel 1750 and Stauffer.

Richard and Marna Stansberry, 845 Kirk Crest Rd., Alamo 94507 (837-4359) are researching Bradford MO 1840; Suitor MS 1850; Johnson IN 1850 and Stansberry MO 1900.

• A NEW ADDRESS: Barbara Dittig 366 Jacaranda Dr., Danville CA 94506-2125. (648-9364)

• JUNE LIBRARY TRIP: Visit the National Archives in San Bruno Tuesday, June 25. Meet at 9:00 in the rear parking lot of the Lucky supermarket on Diablo Road in Danville or in the upper parking lot at Orchard Nursery in Lafayette. Question? Call Manny Lindner (837-4444).

• NEXT MEMBER-EDUCATION CLASS: The class on Archives, Libraries, and Genealogical and Historical Societies, will meet on Wednesday July 17 at 2:00 a.m. at Shirley Terry's, 301 Almond Ct., San Ramon (829-1433).

• NEW TAPES

C-156 GETTING THE MOST OUT OF DEATH CERTIFICATES NGS Conference (1995) Desmond Walls Allen.

C-157 KENTUCKY & TENNESSEE, SISTER STATES; part 1 of 2 NGS Conference (1995); Irene Griffy & Shirley Wilson.

C-158 KENTUCKY & TENNESSEE, SISTER STATES; part 2.

C-159 NATIONAL ARCHIVES, FINDING AIDS; NGS Conference (1995); Craig Roberts Scott.



The Society wishes to extend its sympathy to Josephine Adams for the loss of her son, Michael, who died in his sleep, Tuesday, May 21, 1996.

PAY YOUR DUES BEFORE JULY 1 IN ORDER TO HAVE YOUR NAME IN THE HANDBOOK AND TO RECEIVE YOUR SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER..

1996-1997 MEMBERSHIP SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NAME _____ PHONE _____

ADDRESS _____

City _____ Zip Code (9 digits) _____ 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 Membership \$20.00 _____
Please send this form and your check, made payable to SRVGS, to:



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

JUNE — THE MONTH OF MARRIAGES



HANDBASTING VS MARRIAGE - The letters "H/F" may be found beside a person's name on early marriage and birth records. The abbreviation stands for "Handfast." It is basically a sign of the conformation of a form of "uncanonical" private, or even a probationary form of marriage. Handfasting was a form of announcing a union between a man and woman who wished to lie together as husband and wife before receiving the blessing of the church. The couple would stand before a group of peers, hold their clasped hands above their heads and state their intentions. The agreement was good for a year and a day, or until the preacher came to perform the rites of the church. If each wished to go his own way, they could do so without ties. Any child born of a handfast was considered legitimate with inheritance rights.

(L-AGS Newsletter, Vol. XIV, No. 3, Summer 1995.)

GOOD NEWS FOR MOST FAMILIES - Apparently finding our ancestors marrying cousins should not be a source of concern. According to Dr. James V. Neel of the University of Michigan, "Inbreeding is not a bad thing. In...inbreeding, you are flushing out a higher proportion of deleterious genes than in a population that is not inbreeding." Frequency of major genetic defect was only 1.5% higher in marriage of cousins than in marriages of unrelated people.

(Odem Family Tree, Oct./Nov. 1995.)

BEST MAN - The phrase "best man" is of Scottish origin and recalls the days when a bridegroom simply kidnapped the woman he wanted as his bride. To help him in the task, the groom enlisted a cadre of friends. The toughest and bravest of these groomsmen was known as "the best man."

(CCGS Diablo Descendants, Vol. 10, No. 7, July 1995.)

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FIRST CLASS MAIL