

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 20, NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Now that all of you have returned from the far corners of the globe, why not return to familiar haunts by attending the second meeting of the fall. It promises to be a great day. Fancy goodies are promised--they seem to get better each time; coffee and tea will be hot. Your Executive Board will be there with their collective smile to welcome all returning members and any new ones who show up.

Peggy Frazier, program chairperson, announces that . . .

our program this time is entitled ROUTES TO OUR ROOTS, or What did YOU learn/do recently that might help or teach another member. Many of you travelled to do research in the last few months. Peggy is asking members to report on their new techniques, discoveries, and places visited. If we share these successes/failures others will profit.

Answer these four questions: What were the routes to your success?

What were you looking for?

How did you find it?

Where did you find it?

If you are willing to share, for up to five minutes, please phone Peggy at 837-6894.



Coming attraction

SHARE & TELL BY OUR OWN DOROTHY STANTON

COUNTY COURTHOUSE TIPS

Have you ever wondered why an inquiry to a County Courthouse comes back with the reply "Records lost", "not available", etc. when you know they must be there? My recent experience in a small Courthouse in Tennessee might shed some light.

The smartly-dressed young woman in the clerk's office was not too encouraging when I told her I wanted to see a file from 1868. "Oh, those are all downstairs in the vault and they're impossible to find". When I explained I'd come from California to look at it and was willing to search for it myself, she agreed to let me try. She led the way down to the basement to the metal door of a small storeroom. The doorway was filled with black garbage-bags (apparently full of files) and boxes of ballots. After reaching in to turn on the light she said, "The old files are way in the back and there's probably snakes and mice in there!" With that, she scurried back upstairs!

It took awhile to get brave enough to climb over all the bags & boxes. Once inside, the room was not too bad--just dusty & crowded. After a search of a couple of hours--which included reaching behind file drawers for papers that had fallen there--I did find what I was looking for. I'm sure, however, that if I had written asking for information, there was no way that young woman would have searched for that file. I'd have received a letter saying the early records were "unavailable...missing", etc.

Another tip: the file I wanted was labeled, not with my great-grandmother's name, but with that of her legal representative ("next-friend") vs. her guardian. Fortunately, before my trip, I had gone through the County Court Minutes (ordered from Salt Lake at the LDS Branch Library). Otherwise, I'd never have recognized the file!



NO FOOTPRINTS ON THE SANDS OF TIME

or

Oh, for a court record on
Great-Great-Great-Great Grandpa

It's nice to come from gentle folk who
Wouldn't stoop to brawl,
Who never took a lusty poke
At anyone at all.

Who never raised a raucous shout
At any country inn
Or calmed an ugly fellow lout
With a belaying pin,

Who never shot a revenuer
Hunting for the still,
Who never rustled cattle, who're
Pleased with uncle's will,

Who lived their lives out as thy ought,
With no uncouth distractions,
And shunned like leprosy the thought
Of taking legal actions.

It's nice to come from gentle folk
Who've never known disgrace--
But oh, though scandal is no joke
It's easier to trace!

--Virginia Scott Miner
Saturday Evening Post, 1941

COMING IN NOVEMBER

We are very lucky to obtain as our speaker for the November meeting Laverne Galeener-Moore, a lady who has made a big hit in genealogy circles with the publication of the funniest book every written on genealogy, **COLLECTING DEAD RELATIVES**.

Her promo material says you will learn about the latest techniques employed by county clerks in repelling genealogists, about projector fatigue, and about acceptable and unacceptable behavior in graveyards.

You will hear about the sins of the D.A.R., research trip survival tactics, sadism in the county courthouses and the National Archives, the banality of workshops and seminars, the proper etiquette in prying information from reluctant relatives, and much, much more.

The author will also have a supply of her book on hand for those eager to buy a laugh and some useful clues to resourceful genealogical research.

So circle November 17 TODAY.

NEW BRUNSWICK, CANADA, ARCHIVES PROVIDES INFORMATION

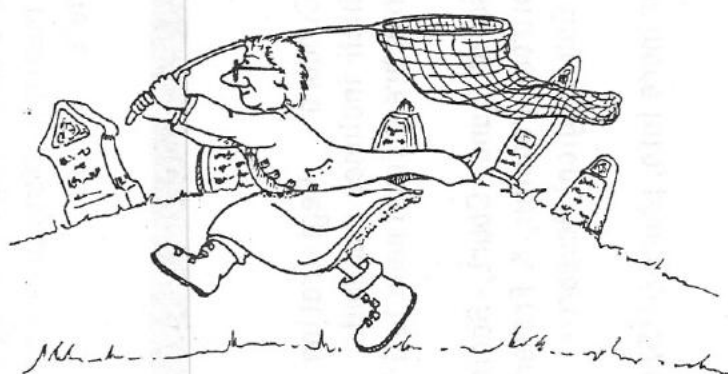
Member Arlene Sloan Grimes offers this bit of information about research in New Brunswick Archives:

They will send 12 pages of information including listing of County Genealogical Guides, Family Histories, Genealogical publications, census records, church records, passenger lists, St. John Burial Permits, marriage records, land records, probate records, records of

COLLECTING =DEAD= RELATIVES

*An Irreverent Romp Through the Field of
Genealogy*

By Laverne Galeener-Moore



Illustrated by Randy Calhoun

Genealogical Publishing Co., Inc.
Baltimore • 1987

equity court, late registration of births, military records, school records, newspapers, municipal records, private manuscript collections, list of genealogical societies and archives. Most information has been microfilmed and is also available on interlibrary loan. For further info, write: Provincial Archives, P.O. Box 6000, Fredericton, N.B., E3B 5H1 (506) 453-2122

JACQUIE MEYPANS ON THE WESTWARD MOVEMENT

At our last meeting Jacquie Meypans with the skillful use of several maps and handouts presented several major ideas about the important relationship between genealogical research and settlement patterns of the westward movement. The time frame went from about 1650 to 1840. If you are searching for an ancestor who supposedly was born in Virginia sometime in the late 1600's, for example, you may be in the wrong part of the country. Why? Because Virginia's boundaries went across mountains to the west as far as the Pacific Ocean. Other states that jumped far beyond their own present-day known boundaries included North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Georgia.

Jacquie recommended to those fascinated with early American history a reading of The Lost State of Franklin by Samuel Cole Williams. It includes the names of partners who were anxious to establish such a state. Many famous and some not so famous names were in on this scheme.

Our president, Loretta Vranesh, will have some maps used by Jacquie in her presentation ready for pickup at this meeting. Many of the members expressed a strong wish to have such materials.

INQUIRY FROM KATHY AND TOM WILBUR

Mr. Wilbur claims these California ancestors: Thomas Ford Wilbur 1887-1980, Francis Albert Wilbur 1845-1925, Meriba Rose Stone 1890-1981; Levi Elias Stone 1863-1905; Roita Fairchild 1862-1950; Thomas Henry Fairchild 1830-1881; Sara Jeannette Dowell 1866-1939; Mary Alma Eddy 1833-1912; and Mary Ann Wyncoop 1845-1876. Most of the above families settled in northeast California. He wants to hear from anyone knowing these relatives; he will also share his research with anyone contacting him at 1606 Melrose, East Lansing, MI 48823.

KANSAS VITAL RECORDS NOW OPEN

A law passed by the 1987 Kansas legislature has opened to the public vital records which were previously closed to the public. This law affects vital statistics created before July 1, 1911, and held by city or county clerks and other officials. Copies of birth & death certificates filed after July 1, 1911 will be provided only if individuals requesting them indicate a direct interest in the record. (from Hospitality, Sept. 1987)

WENDY L. ELLIOTT TO SPEAK TO CONTRA COSTA CO. GEN. SOCIETY

Certified Genealogical lecturer, teacher, researcher, author Wendy L. Elliott will present a workshop on Saturday, November 7 from 9 am to 3 pm at the Contra Costa County Water District Center, 1331 Concord Avenue,

Concord. Registration is \$12.50, which includes handouts. There is a lunch break from noon to 1:30. Topic:

Use of Land, Court, Social Security, Railroad Pension, & Fraternal Records in Genealogical Research

For more info, phone (415) 682-8240

Warning: This page is intended only for those who like the tales of Edgar Allan Poe or stories of the macabre. I do maintain, however, that there is relevancy to genealogy.

THOUGHT NO. 1

You've heard about born-again Christians, slim-jim skinnies and even couch potatoes converted to a more active roll in life. But did you ever hear about the cremation-quickie to complete-cemetery-rites convert?

Well, you're reading about one now--your editor. When I started genealogy work a couple of years ago, I was convinced that the only way to go at the inevitable end was cremation. It was cheap and easy on the family. I've changed my mind.

After tramping through a few cemeteries looking for stones with information useful to my family research--in many cases, not finding it--I no longer want to be cremated. I have no illusions that my own descendants down the road will seek out facts about me--I have no children.

But there may be some one for some reason some time in the future who will seek information about me. So here's what I've done to help that poor soul lost in microfilm corner somewhere:

I've bought a graveplot in a cemetery which permits the old fashioned upright stone to be used in certain restricted areas. On it I have directed in my will that the stone be engraved thusly: William Ray Allen, October 8, 1930 Stroud, Okla; (then death date and place); U.S. Navy 1948-1952; Teacher 1958-85; married 21 July 1951.

Now I ask you, isn't my plan better than the usual flat stone (for the convenience of the cemetery for cutting the grass) with this brief info:

John Hanks 1928-1988.

Perhaps we should have a national

"be kind to future genealogists week" to promote the use of headstones with better info than they now contain.

THOUGHT NO. 2

Buy your cemetery plot now before the price goes up. Cemetery plots like any other real estate continue to escalate in price. My parents bought theirs for \$55 each prior to the passing of infamous Prop 13 in 1978. Two months ago I bought a plot in the same cemetery for \$425. Add a charge of \$25 for perpetual care which is paid up front and you have a tab of \$450. But that's not the end.

California law as of July 1 of this year allows public cemeteries to establish trust funds into which "clients of the future" who are doing some planning for the "ultimate trip" may prepay the other part of the cemetery cost. Namely, the opening-closing grave charge (digging the hole and covering it up) and the cement vault (goes over casket) charge. This comes to another \$450 in my own case.

Why pay now? You are guaranteed that these last two services will be performed at no increase in cost, regardless of inflation down the road. If ten years from now when I slip on a banana peeling, for instance, and costs have risen to \$850, I will not pay the increase. Besides, it's just one less unpleasant chore which some family member or close friend must perform and pay. If you have read this far, you may now exhale and put your eyes back in focus.