

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



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Loretta Vranesh, President

MARCH 1988

TUESDAY, MARCH 15, NEXT GENERAL MEETING

10 AM, DANYILLE WOMEN'S CLUB
242 W. Linda Mesa Avenue, Danville, (415) 837-1165

Peggy Frazier, program chairperson, announces that . . . the Irish are coming, the Irish are coming! You may be *green* with envy if you dare miss this meeting! Talented and knowledgeable members of our special study group on Irish ancestors will make a presentation. *Faith now but you've not seen the likes of Marilyn Fullam, Carol Glover, Patty Erickson, Ruth Day and Helen Roach sharing experiences of doing research on Irish ancestors!* So before you take a trip to the emerald isle, rub your clover leaf or hire a professional in Ireland, come to your own society's meeting. Don't forget to give a big Irish smile to little leprechauns Delores Huckabone and Marjorie Stenger for providing us hot coffee and sweets.

*****see you the 15th*****

PRES LORETTA VRANESH BUYS TAPES

Loretta announced to the Ex. Board on March 2 that she has now received 29 new tapes for our circulating library; cost \$100, donated in memory of a former member. Such topics as . . . as for beginners, Canadian research, county records, land deeds, writing/publishing and new Ellis Island records are included. Look for these cassettes soon at "the table."

CIRCLE YOUR CALENDAR NOW-- MAY 21

If you have ever read any of Dr. George K. Schweitzer's ten genealogy books or heard him lecture, you've probably already mailed in your reservation form for the Saturday, May 21 session of the Calif State Gen. Alliance annual meeting to be held at the Elks Lodge Hall, 3994 Willow Pass Road, Concord. The lecture and meeting will be \$15 with an optional luncheon

(concluded on last page)

MARK

YOUR

CALENDAR

NAMING NAMES AFTER NAMES--A LITTLE HISTORY

If grandpa didn't have a middle name, there is a reason, especially if he were English. Old English law ^{did} not allow a middle name except for royal personages. Have you seen the list of names of people on the 1620 Mayflower? No one, that's right, not one person had a middle name. Everyone at birth was "given" a name at birth, but that's where it stopped.

Later it seems, parents developed a regular pattern for naming their sons and daughters. So sometimes it is possible to go back one more generation in family research by using the naming patterns the different nationalities used. Many of the given names in the U.S. currently come from five languages: Germanic, Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and Celtic (which includes Irish, Welsh, and Scotch).

Generally, the Scotch used this naming pattern:

First son: named after the father's father

Second son: named after mother's father

Third son: named after the father

Fourth: named after father's eldest brother

Fifth: named after mother's eldest brother

Sixth: named after father's second eldest brother, etc.

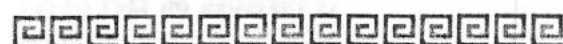
First daughter: named after mother's mother

Second daug: named after the father's mother

Third daug: named after the mother

Fourth daug: named after the mother's eldest sister, etc.

The Germans were different. The first son born would often be given the first name of his father, and the middle name would be the given name of the baby's baptismal sponsor. The first daughter was given the first name of her mother, and the middle name would be the given name of her female baptismal sponsor.



The designation Junior (Jr.) or Senior (Sr.) after a surname did not always mean the son was named after the father. It could have been an uncle. But it was an easy way to indicate who was older. Sometimes families might have a name used three times. So when the oldest one died, each person moved up and became either a "junior" or a "senior."

Other naming pearls of wisdom:

1. In the U.S., parents often chose Biblical names by shutting their eyes while holding the "good book" and then put a finger on a page. Whatever name was closest to the finger was given to the child.
2. In New England, parents often named the baby after a virtue: Faith, Hope, Charity, Prudence, Patience, Temperance.
3. During the American Revolutionary War fathers were eager to name their sons Freedom, Liberty, or Independence.
4. A reference to sister or brother may mean sister-in-law or brother-in-law. Niece or nephew sometimes meant grandchild.

PUT IRISH IN YOUR STEW, BY GOLLY!

From the Mt. Diablo Gen. Society comes a bit of the old Irish sod news. You might be interested in these tidbits.

At their Thursday, 17 March meeting, 1 p.m. in the Home Federal Friendship Room, 1936 Tice Valley Blvd., Walnut Creek (Rossmoor Shopping Center), Joe King of Lafayette, known for his contributions to knowledge of Irish History will be the speaker. His new book, THE UNCOUNTED IRISH IN CANADA AND THE U.S. received excellent reviews in NEWSWEEK and THE SATURDAY REVIEW. King will talk on "The Irish in Rural California, 1850-1880."

Should you be looking for an Irish ancestor in Scotland? Why not, it is only 12 miles between the two lands and many of the Irish settled in Glasgow and the industrial lowlands.

WHAT ILLNESS DID GRANDMA HAVE ?

Ever get a death certificate on a relative and see the cause of death being hepatic melancholy? Ever wonder what it meant? Here are a few other illnesses and their current medical equivalents.

French pox	-	venereal disease
Green sickness	-	anemia
Lung fever	-	pneumonia
Sanguinous crust	-	scab
Vapors	-	fainting
Falling sickness	-	epilepsy
Felon	-	hang nail
Apoplexy	-	stroke
Costiveness	-	constipation
Grippe	-	influenza
Hepatic melancholy	-	cirrhosis of liver
Mortification	-	infection
Putrid fever	-	diphtheria
Quinsy	-	tonsillitis
hip fever	-	typhus

GENEALOGY WITH A CHUCKLE

Genealogy is a lot like popcorn, once you get started, it's hard to stop!

Everyone has ancestors; it is only a question of going back far enough to find a good one.

If we aren't counting dollars, accomplishments, calories or pounds, we're counting ancestors.

May all your ancestors be like vegetables in the fall--turnip!

★★★★★★★★★★★★

1988 publication: GUIDE TO IRISH ROOTS
by William & Mary Durning; covers traditions, families, surnames. 300 pages, softbound, \$15.95 ppd. (plus tax); sold by Irish Name Society, P.O. Box 2095, La Mesa, CA 92041

TRACING THE GENEALOGY OF LAND

No, Jim Dotson doesn't work in an escrow office nor is he even a real estate agent. But he does have a strong interest in previous owners of one piece of land.

Using a new graphics program for his computer, he has produced a nice chart showing what happened to the 600 acres granted his ancestor back in the early 1800's. First, of course, the land was left to someone else at death. The new owner divided it into several parts which in turn became many lots upon being subdivided. When new owners are known, Jim has so indicated on his chart. Nice going, Jim!

MICROFILM YOUR OWN FAMILY HISTORY?

The American Genealogical Lending Library, P.O. Box 244, Bountiful, Utah 84010, offers to microfilm up to 5,000 pages of material for \$25. So if your family history is too valuable to be left on a library shelf, you might think about permanently preserving it on either microfilm or microfiche. Just think how inexpensive postage becomes when you mail only a microfilm or microfiche versus a large book.

WHEN IS A DATE NOT A DATE?

With more and more people buying computers, it is inevitable that the way to write the month, day, and year will be changed in genealogy materials--at least those cranked out by computers. So when computer users use eight characters for the year, the month, and the day, the date becomes 1988AU19 for 19 August 1988. This new configuration makes it easy for the computer to sort each part of the date. The months become: JA, FE, MR, AP, MY, JE, JL, AU, SE, OC, NO, DE. Ugh! Just when I was getting used to the ZIP abbreviations.

THE ONTARIO SOCIETY SPEAKS ...

When you write a genealogical inquiry to any person or organization in Canada, always enclose a stamp or equivalent. So what is new you say! Just this. Stamps must be of the country from where the reply will be sent. If the SASE you provide is mailed from Canada, you must enclose a Canadian stamp.

Regular Canadian stamps cost:

36 cents within Canada

42 cents from Canada to USA

In lieu of a Canadian stamp, you may substitute an international reply coupon. Coupons may be purchased at your own local post office and the person who receives them can exchange them for stamps of any country. In Canada, coupons cost \$1.05; the exchange value is 72 cents. They do not have any cash value.

Always send a large envelope, size about 4 x 9". Most organizations use letter-size paper, 8 1/2 x 11" so the envelope will be too bulky if the contents require too many folds.

The following information, in case of Canadian correspondence, will help you understand the various methods of requesting prepaid postage:

SASE - means self-addressed stamped envelope

sae - stamped and self-addressed

IRC - international reply coupons

equivalent - a dollar bill

If you are sending IRC's overseas, you may need to enclose two or three coupons. The more postage you send, the fuller the reply you may receive. It could mean the difference between receiving one source address in exchange for one coupon, or several sheets of paper with many source addresses for two or three coupons.

To order Canadian stamps, contact:

Canada Post

Philatelic Service

Ottawa, Ont., Canada

K1A 0B5

Checks payable to: Receiver General Canada, checks drawn on a U.S. bank must be expressed in U.S. \$. (Provided by member D. Huckabone)

SPECIAL GROUP MEETING DATE

The Irish study group will meet Wednesday, March 9, 10 a.m. to noon at the home of Helen Roach. Call 828-1873 for further info.

A second meeting of the Irish study group will be on Wednesday, April 13, 10 a.m. to noon at the home of Priscella Dietrich.

The Publications study group has finished for the time being; next meeting will be Sept. 24.

HAVE YOU SEEN THIS ONE BEFORE?

Many will be shocked to find

When the day of judgement nears,
That there is a special place in heaven
Set aside for VOLUNTEERS

Furnished with big recliners

Satin couches and foot stools,
Where there's no committee chairman,
No group leaders or car pools.

No eager team that needs a coach,

No bazaar and no bake sale,
There will be nothing to staple,
Not one thing to cut, fold or mail.

Telephone lists will be outlawed

But a finger snap will bring
Cool drinks and gourmet dinners
And rare feasts fit for queen or king.

You ask who will serve these privileged few,

And work for all their worth?
Why all those who reaped the benefits
And NOT ONCE volunteered on Earth!

--author unknown

MARY ELLEN JONES REALLY DIGS IT!

You were forewarned. "Don't miss it," I said. But for you unlucky souls who were not at the last general meeting to hear UC Bancroft librarian Mary Ellen Jones talk on researching gravestones in the Mother Lode, here are a few highlights of her presentation. Mary Ellen has been tramping through the graveyards of Northern California for 30 years. She has followed the careers of 125 Northern California gravestone carvers whose work from the mid-1800's through the 1890's is on display in the old burial grounds. She feels tombstones in ghost towns and old mining camp burial grounds capture the essence, the flavor and drama of the winning of the West. Her pet tombstone carver is Hugh Coyle. Mary Ellen feels that Coyle had a particular style that was not easily imitated; he was good enough to sign his name at the bottom of each "art piece."

What is a holographic

Will?

(see answer below)

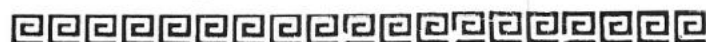
Soaring property values and marked changes in burial rituals have seen the gradual disappearance of the churchyard cemetery and flagging interest in gravestones. Berkeleyite Jones is among those few remaining who view the tombstone both as folk art and as an integral element of social history. In neither has it endured, she says, and much of what remains is not being preserved. Because of this, she has made tombstone photography her hobby--wandering through Nevada, Yuba and Calaveras counties, among others, to take the slides she uses in her presentations. "I'm trying to work faster than the vandals, the freeways and the weather."

There is a national association for those interested in seeking further information on this topic. The Association for Gravestone Studies with Rosalee F. Oakley, AGS Exec. Secretary, 46 Plymouth Road, Needham, MA 02192, is a non-profit corporation founded in 1977 for the purpose of creating an awareness of the importance of gravestones as a part of our heritage. AGS is a national organization with a concern for gravemarkers of all periods in all parts of the country.

Through its publications, conferences, special programs and exhibits, AGS encourages local groups to record and preserve their gravestones, promotes research into all aspects of gravestone studies, expands public awareness, and fosters liaison with groups of similar interests.

The quarterly AGS Newsletter, mailed to members, contains feature articles, book reviews, research material and items of general interest. Cemetery guides and a variety of informative pamphlets are also published. The Archive is housed at the New England Historic Genealogical Society Library in Boston, maintaining in its collection books, manuscripts, unpublished papers and dissertations, photographs, and field notes. Much genealogical information has been preserved and is available to the public. There is an index to the collection at NEGHS.

Quip: You're familiar with the typical meaning for R.I.P. on tombstones; but what do the letters stand for in England? "Rise If Possible."



HOLOGRAPHIC WILL: A will written, dated, and signed in the handwriting of the testator. No witnesses are required; still legal in California in 1988.

for \$8.50. If interested, mail your check, payable to CCCGS, to Contra Costa County Gen. Society, P.O. Box 910, Concord 94522. Deadline is May 10. A flyer will be available at the March 15 meeting.

BEGINNER'S GENEALOGY CLASS TO BEGIN

Betty Kot, Education Chairman and librarian for Calif. Gen. Society in SF, has announced a new class for those interested in research methods and materials organization. Class will begin Tuesday, March 29 at 10 a.m. at Frances Lloyd's house; six meetings and materials for \$40. There will be a signup sheet at the March 15 meeting. Anyone not having had Betty's class is strongly encouraged to take advantage of this opportunity; most of us have picked up many ideas. In fact, some of us have found out that there is much that we didn't know.

ANNOUNCEMENT: GERMAN ANCESTORS SPECIAL STUDY GROUP WILL MEET AFTER MARCH 15 MEETING, CAROL GLOYER'S HOUSE, 1-3 P.M.

MAY LUNCHEON AND BOOK FAIR COMING

The Executive Board decided that the regular May luncheon/general meeting should also be accompanied by the book fair. This format was so successful last year that the idea was warmly received. This will be a time in which you can share any of your good references and materials and a time that you can look over those items of other members. Tables will be set up outside in the patio area and will have signs indicating the geographical area in which items are applicable. If you wish to sell any item, just indicate the price, and let the cashier know about it.

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