

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



Editor: William Allen
331 Eton Court
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Pres: Marilyn Fullam
415-828-1873

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday, 10 a.m.
except August & Dec; Danville
Women's Club House, 242 W. Linda
Mesa Ave, Danville 94526

Box 305, Diablo, CA 94528

NOVEMBER

Marilyn Fullam, President
1988

TUESDAY, NOV. 15, NEXT GENERAL MEETING

Barbara O'Rand, program chairperson, announces that she has lined up five of our own members who are going to "share an ancestor" with us. This is the first time the SRGS will have devoted a monthly meeting to the sharing of family anecdotes, stories and memorabilia. A diversity of topics will be presented:

****research which revealed a story of two brothers who fought on opposing sides during the Civil War (or War of the Rebellion to you northerners)**

****a hair raising account of an ancestor captured by Indians in early America**

****how did a 100 year old Welsh-made baby dress and apron show up in 1988 America**

****then there's the lady who will explain about a piece of fine silver given to her ancestor just after the Civil War**

****lastly there's a story to be told about a linen sheet made by a gr. gr. gr. grandmother who grew the flax, spun the thread and wove the linen**

At our October meeting Philip Breck urged his audience to flesh out our impersonal genealogical data. Here's a chance to hear examples of stories that do just that--give life to a dead ancestor.

MARK YOUR
CALENDAR

see you

the 15th

WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Maureen Carro, 1203 Greenbrook Dr., Danville, CA 94526; researching surnames Kennedy in MA/RI and Moran in MA

Jean Anderson, 2633 Saplan Indian Dr. #2, Walnut Creek, CA 94596; researching Anderson in OR/WI and Johnson in SD/ND/OR--both names are Swedish and seem to change spelling each generation

Joyce Gunderson, 2005 Lincoln Street, Apt. C, Berkeley, CA 94709

RENT INCREASE 63% HITS OUR SOCIETY

President Marilyn Fullam was notified by letter from the Danville Women's Club House owners that our monthly meeting time will cost us 63% more than we've been paying in the past. Given the fact that our society has a very limited budget and very low dues, something has to give. The usual alternatives in budgeting are to decrease expenditures or to increase income. There's no room to cut in expenditures, so...

At this month's Executive Board meeting the officers discussed the possibility of having fund raisers. A raffle would be one possibility. Ex-Pres. Vranish and Dee Huckabone were asked to study the possibilities and report back at the January Exec. Board meeting.

DOING RESEARCH IN THE OAKLAND HISTORY ROOM

The Oakland History Room, 125 - 14th Street has a variety of materials you may wish to examine. Examples only:

**Oakland City Directories, 1869-1943

**Alameda County Voting Registers, 1867-1894

**California County Histories

**Oakland birth and death certificates for 1870-1904

**Oakland Tribune yearbooks for 1911-1949

**City block books, 1877-1925

**Sanborn map books, 1877-1929

Hours: Tues., Thurs. 12:00-8:30 pm

Wed., Fri. 10:00 am-5:30 pm

Sat. 1:00-5:30 pm

HERE AND THERE . . .

**The Southern study group will meet on December 8 at Barbara Irwin's house (see Directory for address/phone).

**The German interest group will meet once again immediately after the General Meeting on November 15

**Marilyn Fullam had great success in her research in Salt Lake. She found in the Irish records not only her husband's ancestor's church and baptismal record but also that ancestor's father name. Marilyn took the 16 hour train trip to and from Salt Lake--"just a great" experience.

**The field trip to the National Archives in San Bruno on November 17 is still on; meet in the parking lot of Alpha Beta in Danville if you want a ride.

**Milly Wing is doing research on ancestors from Portugal. Anyone out there like to ask questions of Milly?

**Interested in Pilgrim dolls made in the Netherlands? Member Alice Wade just returned from Amsterdam and informs us that the lady who provides Pilgrim dolls, etc. was very helpful with information about people and old houses in the Leiden neighborhood. Her profile: Johanna W. Tammel, Kanaalweg 110, 2313 DX Leiden (Leyden), Netherlands; Ph. 071-144018 (only in evenings)

**Roots 3 interest group meets December 5 at 1 pm, home of Mary-Ella Parrott

BOOK REVIEW

How to Climb Your Family Tree: Genealogy for Beginners by Harriet Stryker-Rodda, 1987. The author introduces genealogy to the beginner as the nation's most popular hobby and the most fascinating of puzzles, a hobby anyone can pursue. Then she stresses how it involves the intelligent search employing all the skills of science - research, analysis and synthesis; how it involves the disciplines of history, geography, math, law and religion and even the psychology of learning more about oneself through their forebears.

Her first chapter tells the reader "how to get started" with notebook, pencil and time to write down all one knows of oneself. Not only the facts - dates, names, etc. but other events that have shaped one's life. The author gets into the record keeping process in the 2nd chapter and includes a sample pedigree chart and family group sheet. She suggests working back through the generations and keeping one page of the notebook for each person on whom one is gathering facts.

In part two she walks the reader through libraries and cemeteries, public, church, land, probate, military and census records. She states census records are the most complicated and overwhelming of all the research sources.

Part three of the book involves some of the pitfalls in research. She warns of assuming a particular person is your own and then trying to trace forward from that person and stresses again the importance of working from present generation to previous generations. She goes into more detail about spelling of names and the changes that occur; words signifying relationship such as "junior", "brother", "in-law"

and others which have had different meanings through the ages. In the last chapter "At the Water's Edge", she warns that sooner or later we will face the decision of whether to research the "old country" and writes of names changes, boundary changes and language barriers. She emphasizes throughout the book that we should develop the status of "doubting Thomas" until we have overwhelming evidence of our statistics.

Conceivably, one could "climb their family tree" with this book. However, I would suggest this book be used in conjunction with a good beginners genealogy class for a few reasons: First, more is needed on the importance of accurate and precise documentation. Second, the learning of standard genealogical abbreviations and thirdly, for introduction to acceptable "forms" for gathering data, all of which one could get from a good beginner's class. This book is not indexed, so read well. The author does give a three page list of other beginner books at the back of the book. All in all, there is a lot to be gained from this book for the beginner and maybe even something for the non-beginner. At the nominal price of \$6.95 one could hardly go wrong. The book is published by Genealogical Publishing Company, Inc., Baltimore. It's paperback with 144 pp. It's also available by calling Frances Lloyd at Genealogical Resources.

Delores Huckabone

BY-LAWS STUDY COMMITTEE REPORTS

Former Pres. Loretta Vranish chaired a study team to review our Society's By-Laws. Her committee reported that there were only two recommendations and they were, in fact, of minor importance. These recommendations will be explained and voted on next year by the membership.

Descendants of Salem witch trial victims unite

BOSTON (AP) — The 20 people executed during the infamous Salem witch trials of 1692 are mostly remembered in history lessons and tourist attractions, but some of their descendants are organizing to emphasize their humanity.

"We want to keep the memory

alive," said Howard Hay of Boston, a descendant of accused witch Susanna Martin. "This type of thing keeps happening around the world. People keep getting persecuted. I don't know if we'll ever learn the lesson."

He is president of the recently formed Sons and Daughters of the

Victims of Colonial Witch Trials, which has 45 members, all direct descendants of the trial victims.

Hay founded the group with Wayne Higley of Stoneham, a descendant of accused witch Rebecca Nurse. They are members of numerous genealogical societies and discovered their link to the witch trial victims while researching their lineage.

CLUES FOR FINDING ADOPTIONS

Frequently information about adoptions are listed in record books where divorce and probate records are filed. But instead of placing them under "A," they are placed under "I" and then listed alphabetically. The March 1988 Searcher, newsletter of Southern California Genealogical Society, suggests you never ask for information on adoptions but ask for divorce or probate records. Under "I" you will find in re: petition to change name, petition to adopt, etc. If adoptions occurred in the Superior or Probate Court, you may have access to your own sealed records.

CIVIL WAR HELP

You can probably make your job of researching Civil War-related ancestors easier by writing to Harold B. Simpson, The Confederate Research Center, Hill Junior College, Hillsboro TX. They'll answer queries by mail, using their collection which is the largest of its kind in the Southwest. The center includes 3500 books on the Civil War along with Army and Navy official records and a comprehensive collection on Hood's Texas Brigade.

DIABLO DESCENDANTS Newsletter October 1988

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