

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308
President: Marilyn Tanner
Coord. Editor: Dorothy Baker
Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tuesdays of the Month
(Except August & December)
Alamo LDS Church
Stone Valley & Smith Rds - Alamo

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. ~~XXIX~~^{XX} No. 6 January - 2005

THIS MONTH - January 18, 2005 "Free the Memories and Let's Write"

Mary Jane DeRoss is a writer and writing teacher. She has helped hundreds of people capture and write their life stories in simple anecdotal form. Whether you want to write a little or a lot, she will show you how to create a lasting legacy to share with future generations.

"Free the Memories and Let's Write" covers highlights from an eight week course. Writers will learn to jog vivid memories from life stages and historical prompts. The presentation will also include tools and techniques to help structure stories and capture qualities of real people.

NOVEMBER MEETING

"Tri-Valley Heritage Families Project"

Speaker: Richard "Dick" Finn

Reported by: Lee Schlenker

Dick Finn was our speaker at our meeting. He is past President of Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society (L-AGS) and Heritage Families Project leader. There is the Tri-Valley History Council and the Tri-Valley Heritage Families Project.

The Tri-Valley area is comprised of the San Ramon Valley, the Amador Valley and the Livermore Valley.

The "council" is a network of local history centers, sites, libraries and genealogy societies. They are hoping to encourage, promote, assist the study and research of local history, organize training, advertise member needs and interests, support communication and encourage school projects all within the Tri-Valley area.

The "project" is the collection of data on pioneer families of these three valleys including stories and photos. This was built into a database so that local libraries, museums and societies could access the information. There are now over 270 families and over 4,500 people in the database. The more people contribute their family histories to this

database the more this project grows.

This "project" started with an inquiry from a Mr. James Lyster in London who had been tracing his family from England to New Zealand to Dublin. California. The name Lyster had changed through time to Lester and the L-AGS group helped out all they could. The end result was a book of facts and The story of the Lyster/Lester family which was gifted to him. L-AGS even found living descendants of the Lyster family. But they also unearthed a wealth of other names and facts and started this "project" going.

Dick Finn had some interesting questions to ask us regarding history in our Tri-Valley. And, I have to admit after living here for 20 years, I knew not one of the answers to his questions! Some street names and some school names were familiar to me but not how they originated. Did you know that the town of Pleasanton was once known as Alasal after the man who owned that large parcel of land? I guess that's how the Alasal School got it's name. Did you know there were two cemeteries in this area - the

Alameda Burying Grounds and the Oak Knoll Cemetery? Wm. Mendenhall (father of the city of Livermore), Geo. Harlan (part of the Donner Party), Joel Harlan, and Henry Clay Smith (father of Alameda County) are all buried in these two cemeteries. George Harlan of Harlan/Young wagon train was the last wagon train over Donner Summit in 1846. He owned acres of land all around what we now call Roundtree Country Club. Joel, his son, built a large home in the Roundtree Country Club area. George Beck lost his life as well as his family members in the worst U.S. avalanche disaster in 1910. It buried two trains and 96 people died in the state of Washington. Beck Road was named after him. Don Jose Maria Amador had a city, a valley, a county, and a high school named after him. He was the wealthiest man in this area a one time! Peter Wimmer, husband of Mary Polly Harlan and brother-in-law to Geo. Harlan, worked for George Marshall (Sutter's Mill) and claimed *HE* was the one who found a gold nugget first. His second wife, Jennie, kept it under the bed in a leather pouch and upon her death, Peter, decided to give it to the Bancroft Library in Berkeley along with his story about who found what first! Somehow his story never materialized. John Green owned the Green Store in Dublin (1862) was a county supervisor 1863-1866 and 1877-1882. Greenville Road. (at the foot of the Altamont Pass) and Greenville town were named after him.

There are many, many other interesting stories and details about these valleys we live in today. Many of the same names kept cropping up throughout Dick Finn's talk. But his message to our group was: *survey local cemeteries, index local history collections, make findings available on a website, pass on results of queries. And in general - tell friends about this project (especially if you know they are descendants of the Tri-Valley pioneers), be on the lookout for obituaries of pioneer descendants, be on the lookout for family histories and old photographs. You can pass them on to Dick Finn, if you choose.*

You may contact him by telephone at 925-447-9652 or at the following websites:

www.rwfinn@pacbell.net and www.L-AGS.org
(Livermore-Amador Genealogy Society) or

By writing to:

Tri-Valley Heritage Families Project
C/O Dick Finn
4400 Mines Road
Livermore, CA 94550

Special Note

The January meeting will present a mini-education period before the break. The topic will be Resource Books. The basic four genealogy books will be reviewed and available for perusal. If you have a favorite book that has been of help to you in your research, please bring it to this meeting. Clip your name on the cover so you'll get it back but also so interested members may discuss it with you. Marilyn

A Little Humor!

- *My ancestors must be in a witness protection program!
- *How can one ancestor cause so much TROUBLE??
- *Isn't genealogy fun? The answer to one problem, leads to two more!
- *Genealogy is like Hide & Seek: They Hide & I Seek!
- *I should have asked them BEFORE they died!
- *Documentation . . . The hardest part of genealogy

KNOW YOUR FAMILY TREE, SAVE YOUR LIFE

Some of the biggest health advances are in genetics - and finding the best ways to help patients may lie in knowing their family health histories. Top killers like stroke, diabetes and cancer are produced by genetic and nongenetic factors, so having family with those diseases can heighten your risk. The Surgeon General wants Americans to compile a family health history and is even offering a free computer program to help guide you along. Go to www.hhs.gov/familyhistory for the new "My Family Health Portrait".

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**SRVGS CALENDAR JANUARY 2005**

4 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. The Board Meeting
was held at the home of Sandra Burns in Danville
742 Liquid Amber Place.

18 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. General Meeting
will be held at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road
at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take
Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/2 miles.

25 Tuesday - 9:30 a.m. The Library Trip
will be to the Oakland Family History Center on
Lincoln Avenue off Warren Ave. (Hwy 13). Their
phone no. is (510) 531-3905. Please note the
departure time.

*Carpools meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road
in Danville. Carpools leave promptly. Sign-up can
be made at our general meeting or call the Library
Trip Coordinator, Louise Ford by 5:00 pm the day
before the trip to either add your name or cancel if
necessary. Her phone number is (925) 376-4587.*

**19 Wednesday 10:00a.m. "GETTING
ORGANIZED"**, a MEMBER EDUCATION class,
will be presented by Frances Lloyd in her home at
210 Town and Country Drive in Danville.
Her phone number is 925) 837-9382.

This is a two day class to help you get started in an
organized manner or get organized before your
information and documents pile becomes impossible
to deal with. We will start with the basics, look at
some sources, and visit some repositories. If possible,
bring some of your documents or family papers -
starting with you.

*Note: class begins at 10. Bring a bag lunch for
break. Class will end about 3 p.m. This is a two
session class; Sign up at the general meeting,
call Carol Huvane or call Fran Lloyd.*

Sign-up commits you to a follow-up session on
Wednesday, February 2.

For further information you may contact Carol
Huvane, Member Education Coordinator.

Phone 947-5669 or e-mail Tomcarhuvane@aol.com

FEBRUARY 2005

1 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. The Board Meeting
will be at the home of

**2 Wednesday 10:00 a.m. "GETTING
ORGANIZED"**, session two, presented
by Frances Lloyd in her home.

15 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. General Meeting
will be held at the LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley
Road at Smith Road, in Alamo.

22 Tuesday - 9:30 a.m. The Library trip
will be to the California Genealogical Society Library
in Oakland at 16th and Telegraph. There will be a
small user fee for those who are not members of the
California Genealogical Society. Please note the
departure time for carpools. Members may wish to
take BART. Phone (510) 663-1358 or go to
www.calgensoc.org

SRVGS Special Interest Groups
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2005

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP (The Master
Genealogist) - They will meet Tuesday, January 18
after the general meeting at about 12:30 p.m.. They
will meet at the home of Bruce Garner, 216 Midland
Way in Danville. Bring a bag lunch. His phone no.
is 837-9285. This is a genealogy software users
group for PC's and does focus on the use of The
Master Genealogist. Peggy Dearman is the contact
person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail
dearman@pacbell.net

GERMAN – A home group meeting is scheduled
for Wednesday January 26 (the fourth Wednesday)
at 10:00 a.m., at the home of Robert and Fran
Schweitzer. Their address is 2493 Lariat Lane in
Walnut Creek. Please let the hostess know if you
need directions. For further details, contact
Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail
FranSchw@pacbell.net.

The group also plans to meet on February 23 at the
home Jack and Barbara Johnson.

IRISH – Their typical meeting dates will be January 12 and February 16 (second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail russspat@comcast.net to verify these times.

SOUTHERN – They will meet on January 11 (the second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Dorothy Stanton, 501 El Capitan Drive in Danville.

The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, Phone 820-3757 or email dpstant@hotmail.com.

New persons interested in attending should contact Dorothy Stanton for information.

The February 8 meeting will be held at the home of Peggy Dearman, 749 Morninghome Road in Danville.

EMAIL COMMUNICATION/INTERNET –

Some interested members may wish to continue communicating and receiving messages via the network established by Jack Johnson, group coordinator. This group does not otherwise get together for meetings on a regular basis. Their purpose is to more to alert it's participants to useful genealogical sites on the Web. Receiving a message from someone in this group allows a group member to communicate with all group members by saving a message and sending a reply to ALL. Member Internet/e-mail users may join this group by sending an email request to jackmj@earthlink.net. Please use "SRVGS Internet User" as a subject line.

Ed Mason will be the coordinator for an additional new method to improve the timeliness and frequency of communication by emails. The purpose of general email is simply a way to extend our group communication ability beyond the monthly newsletter. This will be done a minimum of once a month. Members will always have the option to Opt-Out if they do not wish to receive these messages. Notify Ed Mason at: edmason@sbcglobal.net

1. If your email address does not appear in Handbook, and you wish to receive these messages.

2. If your email address does appear in the handbook and you do not wish to receive these notices.

3. If you have some information that you would like to make available to the membership.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

29 January Saturday A DAR Chapter and the Seaside FHC will present an annual Genealogical Seminar from 8 am to 4 pm. The keynote speaker will be Karen Clifford who will apparently be moving to Utah. Many class choices are offered. The cost will be \$ 31 including lunch. The seminar will be held at eh FHC in Seaside. For information call Marilyn Knowles (831) 625-2513 or go to mocogenso.org

2 February Wednesday

At the regular meeting of the Monterey County Genealogical Society, Carl Davis, retired Mortician will speak about types of cemeteries, changes since 1850, cemetery ownership, types of cemetery records and how to get copies of them. They meet at the FHC in Seaside, CA. Doors open at 6:30 pm.

5 February Saturday The

Tracy Area Genealogical Society (TAGS) and the LDS church are sponsoring an all day seminar from 8:30 am to 4:15 pm. A \$ 15 donation is requested if you pre-register before January 26. \$ 6 additional for a box lunch. The seminar will be held at 1981 Chester Drive in Tracy. For further information contact Margaret Toth (209) 814-0941 or TAGS office (209) 832-1106.

16 April Saturday

The Sacramento Genealogical Society (Root Cellar) will sponsor an all day seminar featuring Dr. George Schweitzer. The seminar will be held at the Calif State Archives Building, Tenth and "O" streets in Sacramento. www.rootsweb.com/~c

Thought for Today

"A family is a unit composed not only of Children But of men, women, an occasional animal, and the Common cold."

Ogden Nash

President's Message

By Marilyn Tanner

I just know there hasn't been much research done during the holidays unless you found a long lost source sitting next to you at the dinner table.

I decided, in one of my lesser stress moments, to get my act together.

I took a stack of genealogy magazines, went through them, cut out a couple of articles that *might come in handy for reference and donated the leavings to land fill.*

I have "post it" notes with websites on them here, there and everywhere. I'm not done yet but I'm trying each one one more time -- then they're toast.

I bought a cheap rolling stand to put my genealogy file on. Next step...get my files in order again. It was so easy when I started. Then I got more and more material. I didn't cross-file and the mess I've got now is pretty daunting. It can and will be fixed. May take several rainy days to get it completed but I'll feel so good when it's done.

I'm going to make a definite plan for my genealogy research next year. Know where my "holes" are and fill it. Take my research logs with me on every library trip and write two letters a month for research.
Come next year, I hope I will still be organized and ready to start writing another family history.

Happy New Year to you all. Marilyn

Change of Email Address

Helen Odegard: shodegard@aol.com

Signatures Add a Personal Touch

Although my family histories will never be completely finished, I keep a word-processed (Word 97) narrative for each family group in a three-ring binder. Each binder contains the family group's story along with as many pages of labeled pictures of the people and places involved as possible.

Picture pages contain 8-25 pictures along with explanatory text boxes. A recent refinement was to add to each picture a small scanned image of that person's signature. These handwriting samples seem to give a feeling of knowing the people more intimately. Sources of signatures are greeting cards, funeral visitation books, legal papers, etc., and personal request if the person is still alive.

Loretta O. Davis

Ancestry Daily News 6/12/2004

"A Word From Mark"

"The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one."

--Mark Twain

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS**President:**

Marilynn Tanner 925-376-6733
Email: jtanner@nothingbutnet.net

1st V.P.

Patty Erickson 925-229-0889
Email: russpat@netvista.net

2nd V.P. Program:

Pat Denton	Ed Mason	Sandra Burns
735-8419	838-7848	648-4653

3rd V.P. Membership:

Dorothy Humpal 925-735-3310
Email: DLHumpal@aol.com

Recording Secretary: Helen Odegard 925-932-6796

Corresponding Secretary:

Mary Tom 925-376-2756

Treasurer: Bob Dougherty 925-556-3302

Parliamentarian: Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

CONTINUING EDUCATION --

It's 2005, a new month and a new year. There are so many class offerings within our immediate communities which can help us get organized and/or solve pesky genealogical problems.

*SRVGS Life Member Frances Lloyd will present a two-session MEMBER EDUCATION class entitled **"GETTING ORGANIZED"** on Wednesday, January 19th and Wednesday, February 2nd. The SRVGS calendar column details times and place. Frances has described her presentation as a way to "get organized while it's still possible". She has viewed the results of the SRVGS questionnaire taken at the November general meeting. She will include many of the subjects that you as a group communicated you are most interested in. Since this class is to be presented in two sessions, a commitment must be made to these two days. *Be sure to sign up at the general meeting.* You may call me following the meeting to be included if space allows.* Call Carol at 925-947-5669. Since it is the holiday break I am finding that the usual web sites for adult ed classes are not responding and information about classes in the next quarter is not available before this newsletter must be printed. Adult Ed programs in all of our communities have offered genealogy and computer ed classes during this past year, and will most probably offer similar classes in 2005.

Check the web sites or call:

Pleasanton Valley Adult,

www.pleasanton.k12.ca.us/adulted, 925 426 4280

Computer Club of Rossmoor,

www.rossmoorcomputerclub.com. 925 256 8537

Livermore Adult Comm. Ed

www.livermoreadulted.org, 925 606 4722

Acalanes Adult Education

www.acalanes.k12.ca.us/adulted, 925 935 0170, ext.0

Concord Senior Center (hands on computer learning)

925 671 3320

Walnut Creek Recreation Division,

www.walnutcreekrec.org, 925 943 5858**

San Ramon Valley Campus, a satellite campus of

Diablo Valley College, www.srvs.net, 925 866 1822

(location is 3150 Crow Canyon Place, SR)

Walnut Creek Rec has an on-going Wednesday afternoon class, 1:30-3:30) called **"Write Your Memoirs". Described as "join us to learn how to find your own voice to tell your own story in an interesting and lively manner". Classes until end of February.

The Oakland Museum of CA offers a FREE "mini-workshop" with genealogist Allen Gardiner described as "learning how to get started researching your family history". It's titled **"Searching for Your Ancestors"**, Thursday, January 13th, 1 p.m. The museum is located one block from the Lake Merritt BART station at 1000 Oak St. www.museumca.org
Note: Current exhibit, California and the Vietnam Era.

Plan to take a class in 2005! SRVGS hopes to present what you asked for based on that questionnaire. Remember the "sign-up" sheet is now on the sign-up table (not passed around) at the general meeting. Call me if I can clarify any of the above, Carol Huvane 925 947 5669

Genealogy Mixer

February 8th, 2005 at the Radisson Hotel
6680 Regional St., Dublin 4:00 - 7:00 pm

L-ags is sponsoring this free get acquainted genealogy open house. There will be information on local genealogy societies, how to get started tracing your family tree, and what resources are available. Should be fun for the beginners as well as more advanced.

Our Sympathy to the Lemak Family

John Lemak died on Saturday, December 11th.

A Memorial Service was held at the St. John Vianney Church in Walnut Creek on Saturday, January 8th.

John was a member of SRVGS and was the 3rd Vice President two or three years ago.

Hints for Heirlooms

By Karen Kidd

Have you ever looked through a box of old photographs and wondered who some of the people were? I have several unknowns in my files. I know that they are probably family from the past, but in all reality, I will probably never know who they are.

The same thing can happen with heirlooms. My parents have many precious heirlooms in their home that I have seen all of my life, yet there are details that I may not remember when the time comes to pass them on.

About two years ago, I decided to find out exactly which items had belonged to whom. We started with glassware and china that had once belonged to my great-grandparents. For each item, I took a small label and wrote the name of the original owner on it and stuck it underneath. I also made a list and filed it. That would make it easy for those family members who received the heirlooms in the future to know where they originated.

After that beginning, I proceeded to look throughout the house for other treasures. For instance, one grandmother and great-grandmother painted several beautiful oil paintings. There were to small canvases, however, with no signature, and I was unable at that time to identify the artist. Many other items were cleaned and stored with identifying tags, such as linens, clothing, etc. To me, it would be a tragedy to have heirlooms with no history of their ownership.

I am so glad, now, that we accomplished this project. Not long ago, my father died and my mother had a stroke and cannot remember the details that she used to know so well.

Another idea for preserving the past would be to photograph heirlooms. Those who do scrap booking would probably enjoy this project. You might even want to mark or list your own treasures for future generations.

Remember, the time to start is now. Identifying photographs and heirlooms is a labor of love, one that you and your children can enjoy for years to come.

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3 December 2003

SPECIAL NOTICE

Betty Kot who is the Librarian at the California Genealogical Society and a passed member of SRVGS is moving to Denver to be nearer her son. Many of us have learned much about Genealogy by attending her classes over the passed years. She will be missed

Storing Family Memorabilia

Storing Family Memorabilia to CDs for Sharing Cards, letters, newspaper clippings, pictures, and similar items that deceased relatives may have saved for many years can be scanned and burned to CDs or DVDs. Then you can make as many copies as you need for family and friends. They can then print off images from the CD. It's so easy to save these items, and my relatives don't have to worry about storage. I have made several for relatives and am now working on clippings and things from friends, people of interest, and school things that I have saved all these years.

Connie K. Gibson
Ancestry Daily News
21/12/2004

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Coordinator: Dorothy Baker 925-427-4883
Email: DJBDorothy@cs.com

Calendar Coordinator: Vern Segelke 925-828-8570
Email: Vmseg3@greaterbaynet.com

Mailing: Lucy Carver 925-837-3146

Deadling to put information in the Newsletter is the Last Thursday of the month.

Member are encourage to submit articles for the Newsletter by mail or email to Coordinator.

New Year Traditions

How New Year is said around the world

Arabic: Kul 'aam u antum salimoun

Hebrew: L'Shannah Tovah Tikatevu

Hindi: Niya Saa Moobaarak

Irish (Gaelic): Bliain nua fe mhaise dhuit

Italian: Buon Capodanno

Khmer: Sua Sdei tfnam tmei

Chinese: Chu Shen Tan

Czechoslovakia: Scastry Novy Rok

Dutch: Gullukkig Niuw Jaar

Finnish: Onnellista Uutta Vuotta

French: Bonne Annee

German: Prosit Neujahr

Greek: Eftecheezmaenos o Kaenooryos hronos

Hebrew: L'Shannah Tovah Tikatevu

Hindi: Niya Saa Moobaarak

Irish (Gaelic): Bliain nua fe mhaise dhuit

Italian: Buon Capodanno

Khmer: Sua Sdei tfnam tmei

British New Year

In Britain the custom of first footing is practised. The first male visitor to the house after midnight is usually supposed to bring good luck. Usually they bring a gift like money, bread, or coal, which is done to ensure the family will have plenty of these things all the year to come. The first person must not be blond, red-haired or a woman as these people are supposedly bad luck.

The Druids gave a gift of twigs from the mistletoe, as this was a plant that was sacred to them as a magic source of fertility. It would bestow on the recipient a fruitful year in the number of children, as well as the amount of cattle and the amount of crop.

German New Year

In Germany people would drop molten lead into cold water and try to tell the future from the shape it made. A heart or ring shape meant a wedding, a ship a journey, and a pig plenty of food in the year ahead.

People also would leave a bit of every food eaten on New Year's Eve on their plate until after Midnight as a way of ensuring a well-stocked larder. Carp was included as it was thought to bring wealth.

To find out how your Ancestors celebrated New Years go to website: www.fathertimes.net/traditions.htm

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