

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. Box 305

Diablo, CA 94528-8308

President: Patty Erickson

Coord. Editor: Dorothy Baker

Meetings: 10:00 a.m.

3rd Tuesday of the Month

(Except August & December)

Alamo LDS Church

Stone Valley & Smith Rds.-Alamo

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. ~~XXIX~~ No. 11

~~May~~ June

May - 2005

THIS MONTH - June 21, 2005

Colonial Handwriting

Marge Bell will be our speaker for this month. Her topic will be Colonial Handwriting. We are going to be talking about, and practicing the reading and transcribing of old documents. We will learn the rules of transcription and the techniques to help us, regardless of the language or time period. However, on the 21st, we are going to be concentrating on learning to read documents written in this country from the mid 1600's to around 1860. Everything from the simple "s" that looks like an "f", to why the thorn came about, as in "ye" for "the". We will be talking about abbreviations, date changes, and the lack of standardized spelling.

Marge Bell is married with two children, and seven grandchildren. She has been "doing" genealogy as a full-time hobby, and part-time profession for more than 30 years. She has served for almost that long in one LDS Family History Center after another, every place she has lived. Currently, she is serving as the Assistant Director of the Oakland Family History Center. She is also the Stake Family History Consultant, meaning she trains those asked to work in their own churches as Family History Consultants or Teachers. Marge wrote the guide for genealogy called, "Line Upon Line: A Beginners Guide To Genealogy", that is published with Ancestral Quest software. Her specialty area would have to be New England, as her ancestors all settled there between 1620, and 1635. We look forward to welcoming Marge Bell back to speak on Colonial Handwriting!

May Meeting

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society's Twenty Anniversary
1985-2005

Well, this month brought a momentous occasion - the 20th anniversary of the establishment of the San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society!! We had a very nice showing of "old friends, acquaintances and past officers" as well as our regular members.

To help us celebrate, Dorothy Stanton printed up a list of our members who have published their ancestors tracings and stories. There are close to 50 of our members who have published books. On the table for perusal were quite a few of the books:

Ancestors of Manfred Lindner, Jr.

By Manny Lindner

Missouri Ordeal 1862 to 1864 and

Delaware Advertiser 1827-1831

By Margaret Mendenhall Frazier

Marie Montagne Delage By Fran Schweitzer

Rubin Framily By Barney Rubin

Peter Rudolphus & Anne Jane McKenna from

Sweden & Ireland to the United States and

their Descendents 1850-2005 (This was in

Binder form and appeared to be an ongoing

project), Stelburg and Tuel/Toole and Philip Fullam & Ellen Kennedy of Neenal, Wisconsin and Their Descendents 1859 to 1999 all by Marilyn Fullam

There was a nice letter from Barbara "Bea" O'Rand, past President 1989-1991, congratulating the society on our anniversary and mentioning her book Frederick Golding Neale Diaries and Letters 1921 to 1941 - which is at the LDS library in Salt Lake City. She has also written three other genealogy books available worldwide.

A timeline of SRVGS activities (previously done by Patty Erickson) starting in 1985 to 1995 was posted on the boards in the adjoining room. Patty Erickson verbally took us through the timeline starting with the first inkling of "we should start our own society" after a genealogy course given by Bette Kot to the Contra Costa County Genealogy Society. She went through all the members who had given of their time and energy to get this genealogy society off the ground and to keep it running for these past 20 years. She listed the past presidents (Jean Blackmur was the first president), vice presidents, officers and chairmen who all contributed so highly to this society over these many years. Patty mentioned the large majority of the Charter members along with their rolls in helping form this society. The Charter members in attendance were: Jacquie Baggett, Marilyn Fullam, Dorothy Stanton, Patty Erickson (herself) and Mary Ellen Brown.

The very first meeting place of SRVGS in 1985 was the old Danville Library (second floor) but the stairs became too much for some folks and the room got very warm in the late Spring and Summer. The society found space at St. Timothy's Episcopal Church which worked for a while. But by 1986 the society found out that they were required to have insurance and the money wasn't there for that expenditure yet. So, it was off to the Danville Women's Club which lasted for approximately 10 years. But by then the society started to grow with memberships and the Women's Club got smaller and smaller. Claudia Mortensen knew someone who knew someone and we then moved to the Golden State Rehabilitation Center in San Ramon. After the Center decided to do a huge renovation project, we

moved onto the LDS Church in Alamo and where we still are blessed to have this facility available to us. And by the way, we do have that insurance now!

The first library trip was to the Sutro Library in San Francisco; the first Educational Classes were taught by Betty Kot doing "Beginning Genealogy" as well as "Intermediate Genealogy."

And the first year of our society ended with a luncheon in a private home of Jean Blackmur and has continued ever since. In June we still have a luncheon with the incoming/outgoing officers.

In 1988 the rent was raised 63% at the Women's Club and the need for extra funds became visible (\$500.00). A raffle was created raffling off genealogy books, wines, homemade items and half the amount was raised by March. By May the funds were complete and a "slush fund" was created. This "slush fund" still exists and now helps to provide better speakers for our group meetings. The newsletter took a change in 1988 too, changing a sole Editor into a coordinator of separate item information from many sources. This made the job easier for any Editor. Also in 1988, Peggy Frazier starting organizing the "Special Interest Groups" starting with the Irish Group, the German Group and the Computer Group.

1993 was a large step forward - the SRVGS and the Contra Costa County Genealogy Society co-sponsored a seminar inviting Dr. Arlene H. Eakle to speak. And then our own handbook Print, Publish, Preserve was launched. And it still remains \$7.00 per copy.

Patty Erickson gave special kudos to everyone individually who played significant rolls in moving this society ahead - from the smallest to the largest rolls - everyone of them was very important and still are important.

Our society now volunteers at the Danville Family History Center (LDS), at the Danville Library, we provide speakers at LDS meetings; we have co-chaired with L-AGS the Genealogy Table at the Alameda County Fair and a "mixer" to get genealogy interest sparked within these neighboring counties.

The team who put this anniversary together included: Patty Erickson, Dorothy Stanton,

Bob Dougherty, and Peggy Gierke. Thank you for doing all that hard work!

We had a wonderful anniversary cake along with juices and fruits to help us celebrate! So, a great big HAPPY 20th ANNIVERSARY San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society!!!!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SRVGS CALENDAR JUNE 2005

7 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. The joint Board Meeting of newly elected board members, those that have been on the board for the past year and supporting staff was held at the home of President, Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill.

21 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.

27 Monday - 9:00 a.m. The Library Trip will be to Sutro State Library in San Francisco. See their website "California State Library - Sutro" (www.library.ca.gov) to review their holdings and prepare for your search.

NOTE THIS TRIP IS ON MONDAY, JUNE 27. Carpools meet BEHIND Albertson's on Diablo Rd., in Danville and leave promptly at 9:00am. Please sign up at the general meeting or call the Library Trip Coordinator, Louise Ford at (925)376-4587 by 5:00 pm day before trip to add your name to the list or cancel if necessary.

The September trip will be to the National Archives in San Bruno; the October trip will be to Sutro in San Francisco.

JULY 2005

5 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. The Board Meeting will be at the home of Sandra Burns - 742 Liquid Amber Place, Danville 648-4653

19 Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. The General Meeting will be held at the LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. The speaker is scheduled to be Gail Roche Van Wye. Her topic is to

The Paletine Movement from Germany to Settlements in America.

Library Trip: There will be NO library trips in July and August.

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: JUNE/JULY 2005

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP (The Master Genealogist) - This group will not meet during the months of June, July and August. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their 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. This group is scheduled to meet again Tuesday September 20 at the home of Peggy Dearman on Morninghome Road.

GERMAN – A field trip to the Oakland Family History Center is scheduled for Wednesday June 22 (the fourth Wednesday). Please let the hostess know if you do not plan to attend. For further details, the contact person for the group is Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail FranSchw@pacbell.net. This group will not meet during the months of July and August.

IRISH – This special interest group does not plan to meet during the months June, July and August. They normally meet on the 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 russpat@comcast.net for further information.

SOUTHERN – They will not meet in June because too many members expect to be away. They do plan to meet July 12 (the second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Linda Sada, 1120 Mustang 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.

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. On March 21 a message was sent to an updated list of interested users at their current email addresses.

Ed Mason is the coordinator for an additional method to improve the timeliness and frequency of communication by emails. The purpose of this 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. 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

16 June Thursday 1:15 to 3 pm

The Mount Diablo Genealogical Society will hold one of their regular meetings at the California Savings Building in the Rossmoor shopping center. The featured speaker will be Don Dickenson of the Oregon-California Trails Association. The Oregon Trail will be the topic of his presentation.

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.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By Patty Erickson

Now that we have celebrated our 20th Anniversary, it is time to go to work. I have a wonderful board to work with this year. We know each other and work well together.

We are hoping to keep the benefits of our educational extras continuing for you this year, but at present, we are lacking chairpersons for our cassette library, education classes, and library trips (which are all planned ahead for the coming year).

Certain people have held many positions in our society over the years. In good conscience, I cannot ask them to do more than they have already done. How about those of you who have never held a position in our society? Yes, it is a monthly commitment and a responsibility. However, you gain the appreciation of our society and deepen friendships. Please, can we hear from you?

Patty Erickson

Thought from Henry Ford

"Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs."

Fast Fact From Ancestry

Free Family Facts

Knowing some basic facts about the surnames you are researching can help you know when and where to search for ancestors. That's why Ancestry.com has added Family Facts.

Clicking on the search tab and then "Family Facts" in the right hand column will bring up facts about the surname being searched on. These facts include: surname distribution across the United States in the 1840, 1880, and 1920 federal censuses, Civil War service by surname, occupations by surname, surname's place of origin, ports of departure by surname, and name origins (for both given names and surnames). These facts are accompanied by fields of text titled "How is this helpful?" and "What do I do next?"

Check out Family Facts at www.ancestry.com/learn/facts/default.aspx.

Alameda County Fair

We are looking for volunteers for the Alameda County Fair 2005. The "genealogy booth" again this year will be in the air-conditioned Technical Adventures Building (called Special Exhibit Building F. from June 24th through July 10th. We will share the booth with Livermore Genealogical Society, Tri-Valley Macintosh Users Group, Amador-Livermore Valley Historical Society, and the DAR.

We hope to have volunteers staff-ing the genealogy booth for 17 days from 11 AM to 8 PM daily in three shifts like last year. Information about the Fair can be found on the Internet web site at <<http://www.alamedacountyfair.com/fair/faq.html>>.

If you have friends who might enjoy volunteering at the genealogy booth, we plan to supply free admission and parking tickets to cover everybody who volunteers. Please encourage them to join us. They don't need to be members of L-AGS or SRVGS. But, just have an interest in genealogy and helping others.

There will be two PC and two Mac computers available for use.

It is fun to help others discover genealogy. Plus you will learn WHILE helping others.

To signup using the L-AGS website use one of the following forms:

www.L-AGS.org/Fair2005
www.l-ags.org/fair2005
www.L-AGS.org/Fair2005Booth
www.l-ags.org/fair2005booth
www.L-AGS.org/FairBooth
www.l-ags.org/fairbooth

Fair Dates

June 24th through July 10th, 2005

Fair Hours

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. (M-TH)

10 a.m. to 10 p.m. (F-SU)

10 a.m. to 9 p.m. (4th of July)

No fireworks on July 4th

Heritage Quest

The Pleasanton Library now has the Heritage Quest genealogy subscription service available for use from home for those patrons possessing a current library card. If you have an older card, it may not work to access this service and you will need to apply for a new card. Try it first to find out. The Pleasanton Library encourages residents of other communities to use its services and obtain library cards.

For more information about this service click on to <http://www.l-ags.org> 1) Main Menu: "The Roots Tracer (Our Journal) 2) Vol. 25 #2 May 2005 Current Issue [NEW] 3) Table of Content: "Heritage Quest at Home".

SRVGS Membership Application

It is time to renew your membership in our SRVGS Society. You will find a separate sheet dedicated to the application and also to the "Surname and Locality Searcher" Project.

Please complete both and return to the address provide on the form.

A word about the "Surname and Locality Searcher" Project. Last year you were asked to submit the surnames and localities you were researching. That information has been compiled in a list to be used by the members to help them further their personal research by enabling each of you to seek out others with related information and matching interests. Both parties can benefit.

In completing the "Surname/Locality" form, PLEASE be sure to **print clearly** all entries. If you have more than three names, you may use the back of the form or use a separate piece of paper. When submitting your state, county and/or country, PLEASE be more specific. Example: Do Not submit just "California" instead "California/Contra Costa County" or "California/ Danville.

A sample copy of the "Surname/Locality Searcher" project will be on display at the June and July General Meetings. Information submitted on your 2005-2006 membership application will be imputed after all have been received.

Extreme Genealogy

Ancestry Daily News

Megan Smolenyak Smolenyak – 4/19/2005

In a recent article, I asked you to take a moment to respond to a brief questionnaire about genealogical motivations. To date, more than 2,100 people have been kind enough to humor me (thank you!), so in the not-too-distant future, I'll share the findings about what motivates us to undertake the quest for roots.

But first, I wanted to explore one specific question from the survey. Truthfully, it was almost an afterthought. I thought it would be fun to ask about the most extreme thing each of us had done in the course of our genealogical pursuit. And it was fun. But it was more than that; it was inspiring. There's nothing like reading more than 1,600 heartfelt and enthusiastic descriptions of "the things we do for roots" to remind oneself why genealogy is both addicting and worthwhile.

I'd like to share a selection of my favorite and most representative responses. And because there were so many, I'm going to do this over several articles, focusing on different themes in each one.

On the Road Again Anytime you delve into more than a few hundred of something, patterns emerge, and such was the case with the replies to this question. Clusters of similar responses appeared and the first to reveal itself was travel. Genealogists are serious road warriors. We'll go just about anywhere to find the answers to our questions. Name a country and we've gone there. Go to Ireland, Slovenia, Sweden, South Africa, Austria, or Oregon? Why not? Fly from New Zealand to the United States to meet distant cousins? Of course. Drive cross-country to see a dilapidated cemetery? No problem. Your responses need no embellishment, so I'm going to let them speak for themselves:

- Made an eight-hour drive in the middle of a huge snowstorm in the nighttime to a state archives city because the trip was already planned and nothing could stop me!
- Flew to Iceland for a long weekend just to see the "old country."

- For me, it was to drive literally half way across the country, from Chicago to Baltimore, to meet a county archaeologist and see some of the items recovered from a dig on an ancestor's land.
- Gone off on a research trip alone for a week, which really irritated my boyfriend who thought I should be vacationing with him.
- Gone to Ireland and been elected clan chieftain.
- I spent a week in a tent in a campground (even cooked my meals over a campfire), spending my days searching all facilities available and my evenings perusing graveyards 'til they closed the gates.
- Flew to Wisconsin to help a third cousin I had met on the Internet clean up the old family cemetery of only a handful of grave sites on my great-great-grandfather's farm.
- Drove 700 miles in five days through all five New York City boroughs and the other counties in Long Island to meet living relatives.
- Moved to England from Texas.
- Traveled for six months in an RV visiting states, courthouses, graveyards, etc. and finding more than I ever expected. Such a thrill to see where they once lived!
- Took a trip to Budapest, hired a driver and translator, and visited country parishes researching family records.
- Hired a lobster boat to take us out to an island where ancestors had lived off the coast of Maine.
- Traveled from Australia to South Africa in the 1900s to meet descendants of my great-grandmother's brother who had "run away to join the circus," so the story ran, and had migrated to South Africa in the 1890s.
- Made more than 500 trips to Mid-Continent Public Library to reach the U.S. Censuses and access their other resources over a twenty-year period. This was an hour's drive each time that I would go to research during the day, and

- then an hour's drive home again after, putting in from eight to twelve hours each time the library was open.
- Spent time visiting cemeteries and other places to gather genealogical information while on my honeymoon.
- To live in the country (Finland) where my ancestors came from for six months.
- I'm almost embarrassed to admit that every time we plan a vacation now, we plan it around our family research. And most of my vacation pictures these days are that of cemeteries, tombstones, and historical landmarks. Yes, it's obvious that I have caught the genealogy bug and I don't care who knows it!
- Bought a 42-foot RV and a new jeep to travel the country in search of the past.
- Motorcycle/genealogy trip to Wisconsin to locate adoption papers on my father's real (biological) parents.
- Travel to the library in SLC. I am told Utah is a beautiful state, but in my numerous trips there, I've seen little but the inside of the library!
- Took a 10,000 mile, 3-1/2 month family history trek across the country.
- Drove 400 miles to interview my mother's 100 year old cousin and drove back 400 miles the next day to attend the memorial service of my father's cousin.
- Attended seven family reunions in five different states in a single year (to the consternation of my spouse).
- Taking my then 99-year-old grandfather back to a church homecoming in the town of his birth. My sisters, a cousin and niece went along. We drove him through the whole area and tape-recorded his memories, photographed his birthplace and cemeteries, and mapped out the area according to his version of our family history. He just passed away last week at age 102, but his memories and stories will live on.

Sound Familiar? Admit it--as you perused these comments, you found yourself thinking, "Yeah, I did that just last summer." Perhaps you were mentally checking them off as you read, "Yes, yes, hmmm . . . maybe I should try that . . ."

For many of you, these comments were familiar territory. And for those who are new to the world of genealogy, you may well be among the many who claimed that you hadn't done anything extreme, but then qualified your remark with that telling word -- yet! As one person optimistically wrote, "Nothing extreme . . . yet! There's always tomorrow!"

WE NEED YOU!

As our President, Patty Erickson, stated in her message, we still need four people to step forward to fill the remaining positions in our Society which are First Vice President, Cassette Librarian, Library Trip Chairperson and Education Chairperson. Description of these positions can be found in our Hand Book on Pages 46 and 49. Won't YOU help. You CAN do it. Think about it. *Make Patty's day.* Call her and tell her you can help by assuming one of these positions.

As Benjamin Franklin said:

"Hide not your talents, they for use were made. What's a sundial in the shade?"

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President:

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

1st V.P.

2nd V.P. Program:

Sandra Burns Marilyn Tanner Bob Dougherty
648-4653 376-6733 556-3302

3rd V.P. Membership:

Ileen Peterson 510-651-7728
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Recording Secretary: Helen Odegard 925-932-6796

Corresponding Secretary:

Mary Tom 925-376-2756
Treasurer: Ed Mason 925-838-7848
Parliamentarian: Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

A FATHER IS.....

Blessed in deed is the man who hears many gentle voices call him Father... *Lydia M. Child*

Every boy's father should be his hero..... *Joseph T. Kita*

A father is someone who carries pictures where his money used to be..... *Anonymous*

I talk and talk and talk, and I haven't taught people in fifty years what my father taught me by example in one week..... *Mario Cuomo*

No one knows the true worth of a man but his family..... *Pam Brown*

Fatherhood is pretending the present you love the most is soap-on-a-rope..... *Bill Cosby*

My father would pick me up and hold me high in the air. He dominated my life as long as he lived, and was the love of my life for many years after he died..... *Eleanor Roosevelt*

It doesn't matter who my father was; it matters who I remembered he was..... *Anne Sexton*

I could not point to any need in childhood as strong as that for a father's protection.....

Sigmund Freud

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