SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8305
President: Ed Mason
Coord. Editor: Bob Venter
Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tuesday of the Month
(Except August & December)
Diablo Family History Center
Stone Valley & Smith Rds., Alamo
http://srvgensoc.org/index.html

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Vol. XXIII No. 4 October – 2007

THIS MONTH – October 16, 2007
"Are you really that boring"
Presented by; Dr. Jurgen Mollers

Every person is unique, and each life story is an invaluable –and often untold- treasure. Drawing from both research and personal experience, Dr. Mollers will be demonstrating the power of understanding and sharing our personal narrative as well as discussing ways to preserve stories and memories through the creation of family histories and autobiographies.

Jungen Mollers is a native of Germany. He has lived and studied in several European countries before moving to the US 13 years ago. Has a PhD in Philosophy and Literature. Worked several years in Publishing and Marketing. Is president and founder of Storyzon, a company dedicated to the preservation and sharing of personal values and experiences through printed histories and biographies.

SEPTEMBER MEETING
"Old Family Photos"
Speaker: Sandra Harris Reporter: Lee Schlenker

Our speaker this last month was Sandra Harris of Sacramento, CA. She and her husband own and run a photography and restoration studio. The Elk Grove Genealogy Society asked her to help them date some photos, this got her interest going and she has continued with it. She has helped people all over in dating their photos. She was here to give us some of her expertise. Earlier in the month some of our members had sent old photos of their family members to Sandra hoping to get a better pinpoint of the date that picture was taken.

In her presentation she used "Flip Album" a program which she found on the internet and it displays pages as in a book and turns the page when going on to the next screen. This was an interesting way to present her photo dating because she was able to have a definitive photo from a particular time period on one side of the "book" and then show you one of our members photos in question on the opposite side of the page. This side-by-side presentation gave you a fairly clear idea how she dated those photos.

Sandra said she once ordered a book from Ancestry.com on dating photos and thought she'd learn so much more from that book Well, it turns out she already knew more than that book so decided to lend her expertise where she could.

Of course determining the date of photographs is done by knowing the clothes, hairstyles, hats, poses, props, and perhaps a studio name at a particular time. Once painted portraits were the "thing" to document persons. Then it moved on to the cameras in the 1900 (thanks to George Eastman and his Brownie camera) making production a little quicker. And as years went on production of pictures got faster and faster.

Here are a few clues to look for (generally) by the years:

Women **- 1840 -** fitted bodices & bell-shaped skirts, hair parted in the middle with long tendrils in front of ears.

1850-1860 - crinolines were the fashion contrasting the close-fitting bodice and fuller skirt became more noticeable.

1870-1880 - bustles came in and the "Dolly Varden" dress was popular (bodice connected to a short bunched-up overskirt and full, loose skirt below.)

1880-1890 - bustles still in style but worn higher at the small of the back, corsets were tight through the 1890s.

20th Century - sleeker look in the bodice and skirt, corsets still evident but created a heavy-busted S-shaped stance for a few early years in 1900. 1908 - the S-shape was less pronounced. 1909 close-fitting dress was the rage with a long hobble skirt, very narrow at the ankles.

Men **- 1840 to 1850** suits were worn tight and fitted close to the body.

1850 - at the end of the '50s suits became looser fitting with wider sleeves and legs.

1860 - second half of '60s the lounge suit was popular characterized by deep cuffs.

1870 - suits were back to tight and jackets were often double-breasted.

1880 - straight, narrow line continued, by the end of decade a bigger look was popularity lasting until the end of the century.

More Clues: Plaids became popular in the 1889-1893 for young girls and then for the boys. 1870-1890 buttons were closely-spaced on ladies bodices. 1900s women dressed in slim skirts flaring out below the knees, bodice had tight sleeves flaring over the hand. Accessories included brooches, watches, small earrings, hair combs for their buns.

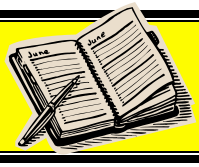
Hairstyles - before 1870 women parted their hair down the center and tied back, remaining common until the 20th century. 1870-1889 free-flowing styles were popular during the bustle era when the seven Sutherland sisters were touring with their floor-length hair. Bangs didn't appear until1910. 1920 the "bobbed" hairstyle became the rage.

Ties - 1870s men's ties had large knots but got smaller and tighter in 1890. Boys had full bows for ties from 1884-1894. Boys wore velvet suits with lace collars in 1885 and this continued until the turn of the century.

Sandra went through dating of tintypes with it's introduction in 1856-1860 on heavy metal; many in gilt frames, leather or plastic cases. *Civil War period 1861-1865* - tintypes were on thinner metal adorned with stars and emblems; later paper holders embossed rather then printed; uncased tintypes found with canceled tax stamps adhered to backs which date the photo. *Brown Period 1870-1885* - Phoenix Plate Co. making chocolate-tinted surface creating a sensation; later "rustic" photography debuted with painted backgrounds, fake stones, wood fences, rural props. Both of these were gone by 1870. *Gem Period 1863-1890* - Tiny portraits 7/8 by 1 inch (postage stamp size) with the invention of the Wing multiplying cameras. Gem Galleries flourished until 1890. *Carnival Period 1875-1930* - Itinerant photographers brought tintype to public gatherings (fairs and carnivals) equipped with painted backdrops (Niagara Falls, a beach, a boat, other novelty props) for comic portraits. *Postmortems* - In the 19th century it was common to request a photographer to take a deathbed portrait of a loved one.

She also shared with us the Revenue Stamps and how they can be used to date a photo. Sandra went over the Stereograph (1849-1925) and how it was created as well as the wet-plate print (1853-1902) information. All of this was included in her six page handout which you might get from an attendee.

Sandra covered a lot of territory in her brief hour talk and I have tried to narrow it down and there's still much more. But it was so very interesting - if you weren't there for the meeting you have missed a good speaker!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

October 2007

2 Tuesday – 10:00 am. The Board Meeting

was held at the home of Vern Segelke in Alamo.

16 Tuesday - 10:00 am. The General Meeting will be held at the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 &1/2 miles. The speaker will be Jurgen Mollers. The topic will be Interviewing.

November 2007

6 Tuesday – 10:00 am. The Board Meeting will be held at the home of Carol Huvane in Walnut Creek.

13 Tuesday – 10:00 amThe General Meeting *PLEASE NOTE THAT THIS MEETING DATE IS THE **SECOND TUESDAY** OF NOVEMBER.* The General Meeting will be held at the Danville Family History Center on Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. Lisa Cooke, the host of the Genealogy Gems Podcast, will be speaking about "*Google: A Goldmine of Genealogy Gems!*"

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP (*The Master Genealogist*) -- This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their focus on the use of *The Master Genealogist*. This group will meet Tuesday October 16, after the general meeting at about 12:30 pm at the home of Jack and Barbara Johnson in Danville. Please bring a bag lunch. Peggy Dearman is the contact person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail pdearman@earthlink.net.

FAMILY TREE MAKER GROUP – This is a genealogy software users group for PC's with their focus on the use of *Family Tree Maker*. This group is currently scheduled to meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. On Thursday October 25 from 10:00 am until noon, they will likely meet at the Danville Family History Center in Alamo. They held their first meeting in September. Gail Roche Van Wye is the contact person for the group. Phone 253-1096 or e-mail gailrvw@aol.com.

GERMAN – The German Group will meet October 24 (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Helen Odegard in Alamo. Helen Odegard is the contact person for this group. For more information, contact her at 932-6796 or e-mail shodegard@aol.com.

IRISH – This special interest group will meet October 10th (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 am. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail russpat@cpmcast.net for further information.

SOUTHERN – This group will meet October 9th (the second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 am. at the home of Suzanne Johnston in Danville. This group will not meet in November, since **the General Meeting will be held at this time**. 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.

NEWS VIA EMAIL – Ed Mason is the coordinator for the sending of group emails. This extends our group communication ability beyond the monthly newsletter. In addition, about half of our members have chosen to receive their monthly newsletter by email, the advantages being; faster delivery, a much prettier presentation in full color, substantial savings for the Society and for the environment. Ed keeps an email address list of members. He will distribute messages a minimum of once a month. Members

wishing to share news may send it to Ed. If it is deemed appropriate, it will be distributed. Members always have the option to Opt-Out of the email distribution. Notify Ed Mason at: edmason@sbcglobal.net

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

October 2007

13 Saturday 8:30 am - 4:00 pm

Family History Day at the Archives will be free to the public. This event will be at the California State Archives Building, 1020 "O" Street in Sacramento. There will be classes, Local Society booths and vendors. This all day event is sponsored by the Sacramento Genealogical Society, The California State Archives, and Rootcellar.

20 Saturday 8 am - 4:30 pm

The Concord Family History Center will have its annual fall seminar at 3700 Concord Blvd. in Concord. Six one hour class periods will begin at 9:15 am. Over 30 classes will be offered. For late registration information, contact Jackie Hein at (925) 827-4729 or e-mail: lejaki1957@aol.com.

November 2007

3 Saturday 9:30 am to 3 pm

The San Mateo County Genealogy Society will have its annual fall seminar at the First Presbyterian Church, 25th and Hacienda Avenues in San Mateo. The featured speaker will be Christine Rose. She will give four lectures:

- Addicted to Courthouses
- County and other Local Land Records
- Military Records for Problem Solving
- Using little known & neglected Land, Federal, Court & Military Records.

The advanced registration fee for non-members is $27 which includes a syllabus. Visit www.smcgs.org/ to print a form and get more information. Checks may be mailed to Patrick Gilbride, 153 Occidental Ave., Burlingame, CA 94010-5219.

13 Tuesday 7:30 pm

The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society will hold a regular meeting at Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court in Pleasanton. German Genealogy will be the subject of the presentation by Shirley Reimer. She is an accomplished author, newsletter editor and member of the Sacramento German Genealogical Society.

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President:	Ed Mason	925-838-7848
	edmason@sbcglobal.net	
1st V.P.	Barbara Dittig	925-648-9364
2nd V.P. Program:		
	Kathy Javdani	925-736-5464
	Clarice Hart	925-743-9245
	Lisa Cooke	925-831-8537
3rd V.P. Membership:		
	Patty & Russ Erickson	925-229-0889
	Sandra Burns	925-648-4653
Recording Secretary:		
	Carol Huvane	925-947-5669
Corresponding Secretary:		
	Vern Segelke	925-838-8570
Treasurer:	Ileen Peterson	510-651-7728
Parliamentarian:	Virginia Rood	925-937-8659

President's Message

By Ed Mason

"What connects us to our ancestors is a vast web of information – some contained in genes, some in brain structure, some in the flow of dinner table conversation – that joins us to our ancestors and reminds the living of the presence of the dead."

This is from the writings of Douglas Hofstadter, a professor of cognitive sciences at Indiana University. Since, in a way, our ancestors live within us, we can get to know ourselves better by studying our ancestors. And, when we know how, we can have fun doing it.

Within and without our Society there are many resources to assist us:

- Frances Lloyd has just completed a two-session class for beginning Genealogists. Classes can be scheduled as needed by Dorothy Stanton, our Education Chairperson.
- Periodically, Linda Bailey, who coordinates the activities of the Family History Center, will schedule classes explaining the many resources of this well-equipped facility.
- Individual help is available on a variety of topics. You can consult the Individual Help page on our website or contact Harry Baggett.
- The Resources Page of our website also has lists of:
  - Area Libraries with holdings of Genealogical Interest
  - The SRVGS Booklist at the Danville Library
  - The SRVGS Audio & Video Media Library
- Our Special Interest Groups meet monthly. See the Newsletter for times and places. The Groups include:
  - German Research
  - Irish Research
  - Southern States Research
  - Computer Interest Group - The Master Genealogist Software
  - Family Tree Maker Software Group
- As demand develops, trips to local libraries such as Sutro, NARA, the Oakland Family History Center and the California Genealogy Society, can be scheduled by Gail Roche Van Wye.
- There is a lot to learn at each of our General Meetings, both from the main speaker, from our own members during the Mini-Ed sessions, and during the social break.
- Our monthly Newsletter lists events sponsored by other entities. For instance:
  - Nearby classes are often provided by Acalanes, DVC and Las Positas Adult Education.
  - On October 20th a daylong seminar hosted by the Concord Family History Center.
  - On November 3, a daylong seminar, On The Research Trail With Christine Rose, hosted by the San Mateo County Genealogical Society

So, get to know what you are made of. October is Family History Month. What better time to apply yourself to the search?

A reminder: The General Meeting, usually held on the third Tuesday of the month, so as not to interfere with your Thanksgiving celebrations, will be held in November on the ***second Tuesday***, the 13th rather than the 20th.

Who's Who in Our SRVGS Society

Sandra K. Burns

Dzien dobry! Nazywam sie Aleksandra Kordulasinski.

Good morning! My name is Alexandra Kordulasinski. You know me as Sandra Kordell Burns. I have been a member of this group for seven years. This year I am one of the Membership Chairmen, along with Patty and Russ Erickson. In the past I have served as Corresponding Secretary, and as Program Chairman.

I was born in Jersey City, New Jersey, to first generation American parents, whose parents had come to America in the late 1800's from Poland. After Catholic grammar school, and public high school, I graduated from The Newark School of Fine and Industrial Art, where I majored in Advertising and Graphic Design. After working in a graphic art studio for a while, and finding it too confining, I took a job in a department store in the Display department, and later as Fashion Coordinator, which was three dimensional design and more to my design style. While working on the traveling team to set up new stores, I met and later married my husband of 41 years, Richard Burns. We have two married sons, Scot and Brian, and we have one GRANDdaughter, Bijou. After starting out in New Jersey, we then moved to Dallas, Hong Kong, Chicago, and finally, San Francisco! We have traveled all over the world, but never to Poland. I have owned my own Floral Design Company for nearly 25 years.

I never met my maternal grandmother, as she died when my mother was only 15. My mother had to quit school and stay home to care for her father and three brothers. I didn't meet my grandfather, Clement, until I was 10 years old, when he was quite old and sickly. I knew only that he had married my grandmother, his brother's wife, after his brother's sudden death by accident, and just before the birth of twins. They then had my mother and another son. Confused yet, well it gets better when I learned that both brothers spelled their last name differently.

Because we lived around the corner from my fraternal grandparents, I spent many of my childhood hours at the side of my "babcia". I would go to the Polish church for mass, help shop for and cook Polish food, and enjoy the various Polish holidays. I was not allowed to attend Polish school because they didn't want me to speak with an accent. And the many times I inquired about our Polish roots, the answer was always the same… "we are Americans now"! I believed it when my grandfather told me that our name Kordell was Polish, and even though it didn't sound very Polish to me, he said it was all a matter of pronunciation.

About nine years ago, one of my husband's relatives sent out the Burns Family Tree. They had traced back to Robert Burns, the poet and all of their Scotch/Irish kin. My mother-in-law gave us an accounting of her Swedish roots. When asked about my family background all I could say was that I didn't know. I then decided to find out. I needed all of those questions from my childhood to be answered.

The first discovery was the one that started the endless search that we know as the hobby of Genealogy! I sent away to a company called Lineages to do a search for a census record of my KORDELL grandparents. Well you can imagine my surprise when I got a letter in the mail saying they could find nothing! Fortunately, they included a page of the family name cards, which would include "KORDELL" if it were there, and to my surprise… there was the KORDULASINSKI family! My grandfather, grandmother, my father and his brother, and also included was my Great grandmother, Bridget Tybus. That sounds Polish, doesn't it? Bingo! Eureka! I was hooked! So much for "all in the pronunciation".

So, that was the start of my adventure, which I can say I am still enjoying. I have found the search very difficult because of two things. First, Grampa was right when he said it was all in the pronunciation. The written word is quite different from the word we hear. Many Poles came to the US not being able to read or write English. Many of the records reflect what was heard by the person taking the information. So is it any wonder that Stempora was really spelled Stepora, and pronounced Stempora in Polish.

Secondly, the borders of Poland have changed many times due to many wars, and therefore Poles would say they were from Russia, Germany, or Austria, depending on which country had taken over at the time they left. Pin pointing a location on a current map of Poland can be daunting, if at one time it was ruled by another country. Is it any wonder that many didn't and wouldn't talk about what they had left behind. They truly wanted to be Americans!

After clearing those hurdles, searching for information has become easier because of the greater, worldwide interest in Genealogy. Searches have also become easier and more productive because of the following:

The computer… can we even imagine not having the computer at our fingertips? Searches online via the different websites and search engines have produced so many results and saved so much time. I "Googled" my surnames and found people in Poland with whom I now correspond and exchange information.

On Line Genealogy Groups and Forums…there is so much information to be gained from others by joining these groups, plus someone always seems to know the answer to your question.

SRVGS…by joining this group I have been inspired by members and guest speakers who have so much experience, knowledge, and information to share. The sponsored trips to libraries, NARA, and SUTRO, and the exposure to the Family History Center provide a wealth of information.

Joining nationwide Genealogical Societies and attending their conferences are not only fun, but an even greater source of information. When I attended the Polish Genealogical Society of America conference in Salt Lake City last year, the whole concentration was on Polish research. After I found

the WWI Registration record of my Stempora grandfather, I met a young man from Poland, who not only located his birth place on an old map of Poland, but pinpointed one of the remaining Stempora women, there. I also found records which showed my grandfather's mother to be Bronislawa Tyburska, not Bridget Tybus! Another wall broken down!

And so, the search goes on, one more name, one more town, one more record to be found! The reward will be when I go to Poland next year, and visit the actual places of my family that I was never told about.

Dziekuje za uwage! (Thank you for your attention!)

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Coordinator: Bob Venter 925-454-9919
Email: rjventer@comcast.net

Calendar Coordinator: Vern Segelke 925-838-8570
Email: v.m.seg3@sbcglobal.net

Mailing: Lucy Carver 925-837-3146

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

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

EDUCATION

October, designated Family History Month, offers several educational opportunities for genealogists in the Bay Area:

All month the California Genealogical Society will be offering Brown Bag Lunch Seminars at the CGS Library at 2201 Broadway LL2 in Oakland. Seminars are free to non-members on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. For details, see their site at http://www.calgensoc.org. The Library is open free to the public during the entire month.

Saturday, October 13; 8:30am – 4pm, Family History Day at the California State Archives in Sacramento.

Saturday, October 20 - Family History Seminar by the Concord Family History Center at 3700 Concord Blvd. It's too late to pre-register for a syllabus but you can attend the Seminar by registering at the door at 7:30-8am for $7.

Upcoming class offerings for SRVGS members:

Thursday, November 1, 10am -12noon at the Family History Center, Alamo.

USING YOUR DIGITAL CAMERA IN GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH

Presented by Bob Dougherty, this is a class aimed at tech novices who want to use their digital cameras in their family history research. It will cover taking photos, sharing them with others, using them in published genealogies as well as using the cameras in courthouses, libraries, cemeteries, etc. A sign-up sheet will be at the October meeting.

Many thanks to Frances Lloyd for her 2 sessions on "Getting Organized." For those who missed them, we'll offer a 2nd set of classes after the first of the year.

Thanks, too, to Linda Bailey for her session on Finding Your Way Around the Family History Center. We have a full sign-up for the October 11 class. If more are interested, we'll schedule another session later.

For more information or to make suggestions, contact: Dorothy Stanton, Education Coordinator (925)820-3757 or dpstant@hotmail.com.

INDIVIDUAL HELP

Do you need individual help in overcoming a "brick wall" in your research? Go to the SRVGS web site at: http://srvgensoc.org/, click on RESOURCES, then click on INDIVIDUAL HELP FOR SRVGS MEMBERS.

Want to help someone who is having research problems in your area of knowledge? Call Harry Baggett at 925.837.7960 to have your name added to the SRVGS Individual Help list.

Harry Baggett trvlr1@hotmail.com

Lisa Cooke suggests a fun site.

What's in a Name?

By: Lisa Cooke

When I was a teenager, I asked my mom one day why she named me Lisa. There were always multiple Lisa's in my classes in grade school, and I spent most of my life answering to "Lisa M." But I noticed that there really weren't any Lisa's my mom's age. She told that when I was born in the 1960s (I don't have to say the exact year!) she remembers sitting on the couch very pregnant and watching the soap opera *As the World Turns.* About that time they introduced a new character, a vixen named Lisa, and that's where she got the name. I walked away thinking, "great, I'm named after a soap opera character."

Over the years I've run into several Lisa's in my day, and every once and a while the subject comes up of how our mom's chose that name. Lo and behold, the soap opera story has popped up again and again! So I was fascinated when I discovered Laura Wattenberg's **Baby Name Wizard website.** Laura is the author of **The Baby Name Wizard**, a practical guide to baby name styles and ideas. By typing my name next to the > in the upper left corner of the wizard, a chart automatically appeared showing the names popularity. And sure enough the name *Lisa* was the #1 most popular name given in the 1960s. Another sure sign of pop culture's influence!

You could have a lot of fun entering not only your name, but your ancestors names. Perhaps you will discover correlations between their name and when they were born. Have fun!

from the Genealogy Gems Podcast Newsletter by Lisa L. Cooke www.genealogygems.TV

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FIRST CLASS MAIL