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)
Danville Family History Center
Stone Valley & Smith Rds., Alamo
http://srvgensoc.org/index.html

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Vol. XXIII No. 5 November – 2007

THIS MONTH – November 13, 2007
"Google: A Goldmine of Genealogy Gems!"
Presented by: Lisa Cooke

You're a dedicated researcher, but chances are you're working too hard! Discover innovative ways to work smarter and find more research golden nuggets than you ever thought possible with the power of Google. You will learn how to transform Google.com into your personal genealogy research headquarters with iGoogle, Google Gadgets and Alerts, and Genealogy Podcast and Blog feeds.

Lisa L. Cooke is the producer and host of the *Genealogy Gems Podcast*, a weekly Internet radio show featured in ITunes and at www.genealogygems.tv. Lisa is the author of *Genealogy Gems: Ultimate Research Strategies from Season One of the Genealogy Gems Podcast,* and appeared in the PBS miniseries *Texas Ranch House*. She is currently a member of the SRVGS Program Committee.

OCTOBER MEETING
"Are you really that boring"
Speaker: Dr. Jürgen Möllers Reporter: Lee Schlenker

Our speaker for the month of October was Jürgen Möllers who is a native of Germany and has lived and studied in several European countries. He has his doctorate in Philosophy and Literature. Moving to the U.S. approximately 13 years ago, he worked in the publishing and marketing area. Jürgen is now the president and founder of Storyzon, LLC a company dedicated to the preserving and sharing of personal experiences and values through printed histories and biographies.

Now this sounds like a very boring topic, but Jürgen had some very interesting stories to illustrate how important putting your past life into print (or DVD) can be. He started with an African proverb: The death of an old person is like the death of a library. He said, "just think about it." Isn't that so true?

At the tender age of 8 or so, while visiting his grandparents, he noted his grandfather doing a considerable amount of writing but never gave much thought of it until his grandfather died a few years after. Jürgen realized that he had been creating his own eulogy. And that eulogy was his grandfathers life history. And it wasn't about all the huge things he had done in his lifetime but the smaller things.

Dr. Jürgen Möllers

It got Jürgen thinking and asking questions about his grandfathers life.

And when his own grandmother died at the age of 85 he found her hymn book and as he flipped through the pages a photo fell out dated 1913. He had never see this man before. He found out that it was his grandmothers first fiancé who never returned from the war. She had waited years and years for his return but finally had to move on with her life. It brought home the character she was for him.

It's a matter of time - if you spend 20 hours taking time to record your personal past life - what a great story you have left for someone. 20 hours in really nothing in the scope of your own life. And it's not those historical events which you might have lived through, it's the little things you personally did during those events that make up who you are or were. You should never feel that you haven't done anything special in life. Our own hopes and dreams are phases of development. It's preserving your own memories. People don't know what you have done or have experienced. Personal stories are really history - not those written and noted facts already in books.

"Don't leave it to accident!" Since we are like "nomads" in today's times he says we need to pick a small amount of time to write in a journal. If you don't like to write the recorder is a simple solution. You can have a conversation with another person while recording. It doesn't matter - just do it! Because it just won't happen all on its own.

Your topic doesn't have to be chronological; it can be topical, professional, social life, culinary. One woman had her family recipes with handwritten notations in the margins and added stories to the bottom of the recipes which she remembered, then turned them into a book to hand down.

One of the many interesting stories Jürgen related to us was about a Russian/Jewish family in 1914 decided to come to the U.S. since the war was growing. By 1915 they ran a store in Manhattan and by the 1930s one member had developed boundary sites from aerial photos. This meant that nobody had to actually go out and measure acreage. By the age of 30 this Jewish son met a girl from Tennessee - the mayor's daughter, a socialite and a Baptist. (There were no Jewish people in Tennessee at the time.) They married and founded the first Church of Unitarians in Tennessee. Their offspring always knew they were Unitarians but until they heard their parents story of why they started the Unitarian Church these children would never have known they came from Jewish/Baptist ancestors which was exactly why they formed this church.

Jürgen enjoys working with two or three generations in a row to see the patterns of the generations. He also works with many dying people who want their story told.

His company can do histories in book form (soft or hard bound) and in DVD form. They strive to capture the essence of your speech pattern so the book reads as you might speak. Sometimes a video might be requested but he seems to feel videos are a bit distracting when you listen to the stories. A child can always pick up a book and read for as little or as long as he/she chooses. Or how great to actually hear the voice of your grandfather or grandmother again and again on a DVD telling you his/her story. It's not the children of the parent who are the most interested; it's the grandchildren who are the most interested in your parents.

Jürgen Möllers was a very interesting speaker. He had many interesting stories which he ran across in his work. And he also made you feel like you should get started immediately on this project! If you don't feel like you want to do it yourself, you can always use a professional. He is located in San Francisco, CA

www.storyzon.com or jmollers@storyzon.com

President's Message

By Ed Mason

October was Family History Month and it was busy. Several of our members warmed up for October by attending the all day conference at the end on September offered by the New England Historic And Genealogical Society in conjunction with the California Genealogical Society. In October Linda Bailey was offering classes at the FHC. Francie Lloyd was giving classes in Beginning Genealogy. Many members were attending Cat Nielsen's classes at the Acalanes Adult Education Center. The Concord FHC ran a very impressive all-day seminar. The California Genealogical Society and Library was hosting a heavy schedule of activities. Our Special Interest Groups were running on their regular schedule. Meantime, some of our members were availing themselves of our Individual Help offerings.

It will be impossible to keep up this pace with the holidays coming up. We don't have regular meetings in December and we have advanced the date of our November meeting by a week. However, everyone is invited to the annual Cookie Exchange at the Home of Francie and Bill Lloyd on Tuesday, December 11th.

Despite the lull, we have a lot going on. At the November meeting Lisa Cooke will make us aware of a great research tool hidden in plain sight. You may use Google every day – but do you fully appreciate how much it can help you with your genealogy? Separately, Lisa is arranging to help people find us by linking our Website to other sites. Sande Burns is sprinkling our brochures around in many places where potential members can spot them. The Board was so impressed by the initiative of Lisa and Sande that they have been selected to head up our Outreach Committee. Meantime Bob Venter is working on activating a button on our web homepage that will take you to the latest pictures of our activities. If you are in the pictures, we will do our best to caption the pictures with your name. Also, where space permits, we will include some pictures of main speakers and Mini-Ed Speakers in the Newsletter.

The Board has approved the addition of a page to our website called *Publications of Our Members*. This list can include books, pamphlets, audio and video recordings, podcasts, WebTV, YouTube, personal web pages, etc. Lisa Cooke is gathering info and will prepare the initial page. Heading up the page will be a preamble, which might read something like this (an edited version of what appears on the L-AGS website). Comments are welcome:

> *This is a list of publications by members of San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. The authors made entries in this list voluntarily, to help publicize their research interests, and to inform other members that they have experience in the publishing process. SRVGS encourages its members to publish their research results. It also encourages more experienced members to help others who want to publish.*
>
> *Appearance of a publication on this list does not necessarily imply that the author agrees to share the contents of the work with the public, or with other members. Some of the items in the list are strictly private within a family. All are self-contained reports of research, some large in extent, some small, performed by the authors.*

This is my last letter until January. I wish all of you and your families a very pleasant holiday season.

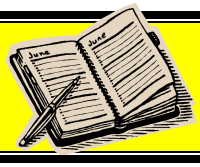
Ed

What's in a Name?, Revisited.

Last month we ran a very interesting story entitled *What's in a Name?*, by Lisa Cooke. In it she told us about a fascinating web site which allowed one to type in a name and a chart would appear to show that name's popularity through the years. Unfortunately, the link to the referenced web site did not work in the e-mail version of our newsletter and it was non-existent in the postal version. So, for those who wanted to visit this site the URL is supplied here:

http://babynamewizard.com/namevoyager/lnv0105.html

Even though these URLs can be inconveniently long, it will be our policy to spell them out in the future. We apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

November 2007

6 Tuesday – 10:00 am. The Board Meeting

was held at the home of Carol Huvane in Walnut Creek.

13 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 Lisa Cooke. The topic of her presentation will be: *Google, a Goldmine of Genealogy Gems*. **Please note that the General Meeting will be held on the second Tuesday of November**.

December 2007

11 Tuesday – 10:00 am. Cookie Exchange
Plan to attend the traditional pre-Christmas Cookie Exchange. All members are welcome. It will be held at the home of Fran Lloyd in Danville. You will find her address and phone number in the member handbook. Bring a dozen or so cookies to share and plan to take some home.

NOTE

The San Ramon Valley Genealogy Society will NOT have a General Meeting during the month of December.

NOTE

Special Interest Groups of The San Ramon Valley Genealogy Society will NOT meet during the month of December.

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, November 13th after the general meeting at about 12:30 pm at the home of Bruce Garner in Danville. Please bring a bag lunch. Special Interest Groups will NOT meet during the month of December. 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*. *The Family Tree Maker* special interest group will meet November 29, the 5th Thursday, from 10:00 am until noon at the Danville Family History Center in Alamo. This group will typically meet on the fourth Thursday of the month. They held their first meeting in September. Special Interest Groups will NOT meet during the month of December. 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 November 28 (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Fran & Robert Schweitzer in Walnut Creek. Special Interest Groups will NOT meet during the month of December. 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 November 14th (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 not meet in November, since **the General Meeting will be held at this time**. Special Interest Groups will NOT meet during the month of December. This group typically would meet on the second Tuesday of the month. 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.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

November 2007

13 Tuesday 7:30 am

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.

February 2008

2 Saturday 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

The San Luis Obispo County Genealogical Society will present a seminar for "Tracing Your Family Tree – Digital, DNA and Traditional Sources." Guest speakers will include Dick Eastman, publisher of online genealogy newsletter; Max Blankfeld, expert in using DNA to trace your ancestry; and others. Five sessions are planned in 3 classrooms.

The pre-registration fee prior to January 18, 2008 will be $ 45 for non-members. This all day seminar will be held at Veteran's Hall, 801 Grand Avenue in San Luis Obispo. For further details visit –

http://home.kcbx.net/~slogen/08seminar.html

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

Welcome – New Members

We extend a warm welcome to the newest members of our group.

Peggy Spencer Osher
148 Via Bonita
Alamo, CA 94507
(925) 837-9449
josh15star@gmail.com

Linda Reiner Vose
10106 Foxboro Circle
San Ramon, CA 94585
(925) 833-9428
starbazaar@aol.com

Richard Finn
4400 Mines Road
Livermore, CA 94550-9160
RWFINN@WECARE.net
925 447-9652

"We've uncovered some embarrassing ancestors in the not-too-distant past. Some horse thieves, and some people killed on Saturday nights. One of my relatives, unfortunately, was even in the newspaper business."

Jimmy Carter

Julian & Gregorian

by David & Laura Luther
(Luther Family Newsletter, #83, August 2007)

It's 1752: Betsy Ross, is born. Benjamin Franklin discovers the electrical nature of lightning by flying a kite in a thunderstorm and invents the lightning rod. The Liberty Bell arrived in Philadelphia. Those dates we all might remember from school, but did you know in 1752 the American colonies converted over to the Gregorian calendar from the Julian calendar? Gregor-what? Julian-who?

A solar year is 365.242199 days (the time for the earth to make a complete revolution around the sun.) The ancient Romans devised the Julian calendar. It represented a measurement of a year that lasted 365.25 days, but in reality the solar year is eleven minutes and fourteen seconds shorter.

There's only a slight difference between the actual solar year and the Roman's Julian calendar… right? Ah but every little bit ads up so, by 1582, the Julian calendar was ten days behind the solar calendar. The Catholic Church needed to act to end an embarrassing situation because Easter was being celebrated at the wrong time.

To solve this problem, Pope Gregory XIII, with the help of an astronomer-mathematician named Clavius, ordered some new changes. The new calendar was called the Gregorian calendar (named after Pope Gregory of course.) The Gregorian calendar insures that the first day of spring, the vernal equinox (the first day of the year that has an equal amount of daylight and darkness), falls on or about March 21 each year. It is the most accurate calendar in history except for the Mayan Calendar, which was far more complicated.

The modern Gregorian calendar differs from the solar year by only about twenty-six seconds per year, or one day every twenty-five hundred years.

The Catholic countries (Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and the Catholic Dutch provinces) were quick to adopt the Gregorian calendar soon after it was created in 1582.

However, adoption of the Gregorian Calendar outside of Catholic countries was delayed as Martin Luther had nailed his Ninety-five Theses to the door of his church on October 31, 1517. This started the Protestant Reformation, which was still ringing strong enough in 1582 to make most Protestant countries resist anything to do with a Papal decree.

After 200 years the problems with date accuracy were growing and England finally decided to adopt the Gregorian Calendar. The law was passed in 1751 and implemented in 1752. The change would eliminate eleven days and change the beginning of the new year from March 25 to January 1.

Summary of the 1752 Calendar Change

31 December 1750 was followed by 1 January 1750

24 March 1750 was followed by 25 March 1751

31 December 1751 was followed by 1 January 1752

2 September 1752 was followed by 14 September 1752

31 December 1752 was followed by 1 January 1753

Note that the 1752 calendar change occurred in a series of steps.

Just imagine your eighteenth-century ancestors going to bed on Wednesday, September 2nd and waking up on Thursday, September 14th. What would have been September 3rd was actually September 14th in the year 1752. They lost those eleven days from their lives.

Ben Franklin wrote, "It is pleasant for an old man to be able to go to bed on September 2 and not have to get up until September 14." People rioted in the streets to protest the calendar change. Londoners cried, "Give us our 11 days back!" Rumors spread that employees are losing 11 days' pay and everybody is losing 11 days of their lives.

Don't bother about doing any family research on September 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10,11,12, and 13, 1752 because those are days that history has forgotten.

This little change in 1752 has caused much confusion for the genealogist. Here are two examples:

Thomas Jefferson's birthday under the Old Style Calendar (Julian) is on April 2 but if we use the New Style Calendar (Gregorian) he is born on April 13.

And as for George Washington he was born on February 11, 1731 if we use the Julian Calendar at the time of his birth, but the Gregorian anniversary of his birth is on February 22, because of the 11 days

eliminated from the calendar switch. And remember at the same time, New Year' s Day was changed from 25 March to 1 January, thus according to the new calendar, Washington was born in 1732.

England /Colonies Adopt Gregorian Calendar

September 1752						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

September 1752 Had Only 19 Days

Number of days the Julian date is behind the Gregorian date:

1582-1699 10 days
1700-1799 11 days
1800-1899 12 days
1900-2099 13 days
2100-2199 14 days

"I saw behind me those who had gone, and before me those who are to come. I looked back and saw my father, and his father, and all our fathers, and in front to see my son, and his son, and the sons upon sons beyond.

And their eyes were my eyes."

Richard Llewellyn

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

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.

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

A CIVIL WAR BURIAL

By: Derick S. Hartshorn

Several years ago, I set out to trace my wife's family. This was not a difficult task, due to the fact that they were, for the most part, confined to a small area in the Western Piedmont of North Carolina. Most folks in this area have an ancestor who participated in the Civil War (or, as they prefer hereabouts, the War of Northern Aggression). My wife's great-great-grandfather was no exception. Plenty of information was found in census and courthouse records. The state of North Carolina has an excellent archives with extensive war records. I had everything about Daniel C. WILSON except his death and burial.

Since he didn't appear on a death certificate (none recorded in North Carolina until 1913) or in any cemetery records, I was at a loss to determine his ultimate fate. Working backwards from 1913 through newspaper microfilm, I finally located his obituary in a newspaper dated 15 January 1911. It provided the cemetery name and I immediately drove there. Although the cemetery was small, I could not locate his gravestone. I used a steel rod to see if his marker was buried, but to no avail. Assuming his stone was either gone or never marked, I gathered his records together and petitioned the Veterans Administration for a marker. Several months later, the stone arrived and the planned dedication ceremony was scheduled. At the appointed time, a Confederate reenactment color guard, complete with ten-pound field piece, arrived and gave the traditional salute, complete with fife and drum corps.

Nearly two years passed before I was contacted by descendants of Daniel C. WILSON. From many parts of the country, they contacted me asking if it might be possible to hold a reunion. Several had seen the Web site that revolved around this valiant soldier, wounded severely in the head at Spotsylvania and held in a prison for over a year. Feeling that I was one of the very few folks who knew Private Wilson, I now have an extended family of several dozen folks who finally have come together to honor his memory.

Taken from: ***Great Genealogy Stories***

http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~dgstuart/gs12.htm

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