SAN RAMON VALLEY
GENEALOGICAL
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-0305
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

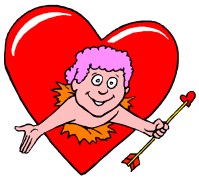
San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Vol. XXIV No. 8 March - 2009

THIS MONTH – March 17, 2009
"Organizing Your Stuff"
Presented by: Richard Rands

In this presentation Richard will be giving us some much needed insight into how to organized our genealogical records. You may remember that Richard and his wife Janet, spoke to us last November. At that time he talked to us about best practices for sound source documentation in your computer genealogy databases.

Richard will also hold an afternoon session, at 1:00 pm, where he will lead a workshop on digitalizing the LDS records through the LDS website www.familysearchindexing.org. This will be a training session for those who are interested in volunteering to help with the indexing of the current U.S. census projects. Anyone wishing to attend this session should e-mail Ed Mason at: edmason@sbcglobal.net

Richard is President of the Silicon Valley Computer Genealogy Group. He has been deeply interested in family history since being a teenager and has long been involved in the use of technology for family history research. Professionally, he has worked for Hewlett-Packard Co, Tandem Computers, The Tech Museum, and a marketing research software company. Richard was the principal author of the book, Family History Documentation Guidelines, he has an MBA from UC Berkeley, and is currently retired.



February Meeting
"Genealogical Holdings of the Pleasant Hill Library"
Speaker: Turalu Brady Reporter: Lee Schlenker

Probably 50% or more of us in our Society have been to the Pleasant Hill Library on one occasion or another to visit the Heritage Library within that library. Turalu Brady, who has been the librarian there for many years since her retirement from teaching in Contra Costa County schools, gave her informative talk on how the Heritage Library was first created. She also handed out a map of the Heritage Room, the example of how the books are shelved, how items are listed in their print-outs and an example of what you will find in the card catalog.

The Heritage Room started back in the 1970s when the D.A.R. started to gather books on family genealogy and local histories. Through much persuasion they got some shelving installed in the Pleasant Hill Library - a total of three bookcases. But as people used those few books they would disappear - and often! So, it was apparent that a system had to be created to account for the

Turalu Brady

books within those shelves. But, before that could truly happen the genealogy section grew and then quickly outgrew their designated space. There soon was another "okay" to build more shelving for the many books. And, again, that quickly was filled to capacity. At about that same time, the Contra Costa Genealogy Society came into being; and with their "clout," they proposed taking the D.A.R. books and cataloging them. The librarian said there wasn't enough manpower to do all that cataloging, but she would accept volunteers to help. So, the Contra Costa Genealogical Society, the D.A.R. and other Heritage groups volunteers started working on the books. They soon realized that there needed to be a modification to the Dewey Decimal System in the Heritage Library. And rather than using the R929 numbers (the reference only code in the Dewey system) they adopted the D.A.R. system of categorizing the books.

On the book spine they listed the Acquisition Number; the States in alpha order first; then Category or topic next (e.g. census, families, foreign); Books (in alpha order) related to county info; third - Book Content in alpha order (e.g. History comes before Marriage); next comes last Name of Author; fifth is the Book Title; and sixth is the Section number (where the book is stored). The Section numbers run completely around the perimeter of the Heritage Room starting with Section #1 and continuing around to Section #15. After all this listing of the sections and books involved, they needed to produce a card catalog of these books and documents. The catalog listings are much like the spine of the books. And it all got done as the Heritage Room grew and grew with donations from genealogists all around the county areas. The collection numbers close to 4,000 books, periodicals, maps, stories, etc.

There is a large California Family periodical and information collection. The only other Early California information location is in Santa Clara. The Heritage Room has organizations listings including the Mayflower, New England Heraldry.

There is a separate index file for the periodicals which are then listed by state.

The Pleasant Hill Library is part of the Contra Costa County system. The Library is located at:

1750 Oak Park Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA
(925) 646-6434

The Heritage Library Room hours are:

- Mon, Tues, Thurs - noon to 8:00 p.m.
- Wed, Fri, Sat - 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

There are usually docents to aid you in your resource hunt. There are microfilm readers if you should need them. "The Vault" contains local and historical material as well as some California census records. And volunteers are always needed for daily time-slots if you would care to volunteer.

President's Message

By Ed Mason

No, we can't say goodbye to local libraries, courthouses, newspaper microfilm and various sources in faraway paces. However, with time always at a premium and financial resources dwindling, we can cheer the fact that so much genealogical information is now available online. If you are like most people doing genealogy today you are likely to have made good use of Ancestry.com and FamilySearch.com, as well as other sources. Sneaking up on us is another important resource that you may not have used to its full extent. That source is Google, where you are now able to access many times more records than was possible just a couple of years ago. Although I don't pretend to be an expert, this letter will give you some tips on how to uncover it.

First subject: Google Books. In the upper left hand corner of the Google search page you will see, *Web, Images, Maps, News, Video, Mail* and *More.* Hit the down-arrow to the right of *More.* The third item down is *Books.* Go to that. When you type in the name of your ancestor, the results will include his or her mention in the contents of the many thousands of books that have been scanned. To cut down on the number of hits, you can insert a comma followed by a location. Each book listed will indicate whether you will have access to a *Snippet View* or a *Full View.* This depends on the book's copyright status. Google states: *If the book is in the public domain and therefore out of copyright, you can page through the entire book and even download it and read it offline. But if the book is under copyright, and the publisher or author is not part of the Partner Program, we only show basic information about the book, similar to a card catalog, and, in some cases, a few snippets -- sentences of your search terms in context. The aim of Google Book Search is to help you discover books and learn where to buy or borrow them, not read them online from start to finish. It's like going to a bookstore and browsing - with a Google twist.*

I'm having trouble getting this letter written because I am discovering so much new information in various books about my relatives. Of course, it helps to have relatives whose families have been in the country for a couple of centuries or more. Anyhow, when you get to the page of the book that shows your relative's name, the name will be highlighted in yellow wherever it appears. On the upper right of the page is a choice between *View Plain Text* and *View Page Images.* You can toggle between the two at your leisure. In the *View Plain Text* you will be able to copy and paste.

Second subject: Regular Google searches. Daniel M. Lynch wrote a book entitled, *Google Your Family Tree, Unlock the hidden power of Google* The following suggestions came from the appendix of that book and they all have to do with ways to get better results by narrowing your Google searches:

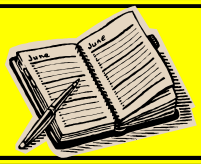
1. If you are looking for Ezra Mason, put quotation marks around both names, i.e., *"Ezra Mason"* – otherwise you will get all of the Ezras and all of the Masons (including the bricklayers).
2. If you want to narrow the search, i.e., search for *"Ezra Mason" and Michigan.* That will prioritize the Ezra Masons in Michigan.
3. If you are looking for either of two items, say Ezra **or** his wife, then search for *"Ezra Mason" or "Harriet Mason"* . That will find either of them.

4. If you want to get results including a keyword, use a plus sign, i.e., *"Ezra Mason"+birth.*
5. To narrow results with a keyword or a word similar to the keyword, use a tilde, i.e., *"Ezra Mason" Michigan~genealogy*
6. To find results within a certain date range, us double dots, i.e., *"Ezra Mason"1813..1897*
7. To get results for a query that will exclude a word or a phrase, use a dash before the word that you wish to exclude, i.e., *"Ezra Mason" michigan-new york. Ezra* spent time in both places. This will find him in Michigan but will not find him in New York.
8. Use can use a wildcard to replace one or more characters, i.e., *"Ezra*Mason". Use a double asterisk to* replace two words, a triple asterisk to replace three, etc.

These are the main tips. Many of them can be used in combination. So, experiment with them. There is a lot of information waiting to be found. Good luck.

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



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

March 2009

3 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting was held at the home of Vern Segelke in Danville.

17 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** The 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

April 2009

7 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting will be held at the home of Barbara Dittig in Danville.

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

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, March 17 after the general meeting at about 12:30 p.m. at the home of Bruce Garner in Danville. Peggy Dearman is the contact person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail dearmanp@gmail.com

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 meeting date for March has not been determined. Listen for an announce-

ment on March 17th at the general meeting; otherwise contact Gail Roche Van Wye. This group typically meets the fourth Thursday of the month from 10:00 a.m. until noon at the Danville Family History Center in Alamo**.** 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 be meeting at the DJ Bistro at 11:00 a.m. on March 25th (the fourth Wednesday) where they will enjoy a lunch of German food. DJ Bistro is located at 1825 Sutter in Concord. If you are interested in joining the group please contact Helen Odegard at 932-6796. Helen Odegard is the contact person for this group. For more information, please call her or e-mail shodegard@att.net.

IRISH – This special interest group will meet March 11th (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Patty Erickson is the contact person for the group. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail russpat@comcast.net

SOUTHERN – The Southern Interest Group will meet at 10 a.m. on March 12th and April 9th (the Second Thursday of the month) at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton; Phone (925)820-3757 or email dpstant@hotmail.com. New persons interested in attending should contact Dorothy Stanton for information.

Do You have Something to Contribute?

Your SRVGS Newsletter is always in need of new material. Do you have an interesting story to relate? Some discovery that you want to share with others? Maybe an unusual experience that could help others in their own research. Anything you think will be of interest to the group. If so, we would be happy to include it in one of our issues. Anything in length from a half page to a page and a half of type written text would be ideal. Just write it up and forward it to the newsletter editor (contact information is on page 7).

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

10 **March, Tuesday - 7:30 pm** The Livermore-Amador Genealogy Society will have one of its regular meetings at Beth Emek, 3400 Nevada Court in Pleasanton. San Francisco Genealogy is the title of the presentation that will be presented by Ron Filion.

14 & 17 **March - 10:30 a.m. to noon and**

21 & 24 **March - 10:30 a.m. to noon** The CGS Library or the Oakland Regional Family History at 4766 Lincoln Avenue in Oakland will have their final sessions of an intermediate class series. This is another Joint Venture with the Oakland Regional Family History Center and the California Genealogical Society. Each class is being offered twice; On Saturday at the CGS Library and on the following Tuesday at the Family History Center.

- **March 14 & 17:** Immigration, Passenger Lists, Naturalizations and Passports
- **March 21 & 24:** Other People Finders, Continuing Education and Giving Back

Pre-registration is necessary to insure adequate handouts. Individual sessions cost $2 each. Register by telephone (510)531-3905 or E-mail fhcoakland@yahoo.com

28 **March, Saturday - 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m.** The Sacramento Genealogical Society will hold their annual spring seminar to be held at Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church, 11427 Fair Oaks Blvd, Fair Oaks, California. The registration fee is $27 for non-members if received prior to March 14. The featured speaker will be Geoff Rasmussen. The Topics being offered are:

- Mapping Your Ancestors: Using the latest Software and the Internet
- Sharing Genealogy Electronically: Publishing to CD/DVD, the Internet
- 12 Step Checklist to using your Genealogy Computer Program

- Organizing, Planning, and Sharing using Legacy Genealogy Software.

For further information, visit www.rootcellar.org

4 **April, Saturday - 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.** The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will have a spring seminar at the First Presbyterian Church, 25th and Hacienda in San Mateo. *The Women in our Lives, Finding the Records of our Female Ancestors*, will be the theme. The speakers will include; Pam Dallas, Gayle Simons, Rosemary Kennedy, Deborah Osterberg, & Janet Brigham Rands. The registration fee is $28 if received prior to March 28. For further information visit www.smcgs.org.

18 **April, Saturday - 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.** The Sacramento German Genealogical Society will hold an all day Seminar at the Turn Verein, 3349 J Street in Sacramento. The speaker will be Kory L Meverink, MLS, AG, FUGA, a popular presenter at national genealogy conferences, with many years of experience in German research. He will address the following topics:

- Internet Sources for German research
- German resources in the Family History Library
- Accessing Records at local repositories in Germany
- German sources for determining the ancestral home.

The pre-registration fee prior to April 11 is $50 for non-members. For further information, visit www.SacGerGenSoc.org or contact Milt Kelly at: mekelley4143@comcast.net

25 **April, Saturday - 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.** The Sonoma County Genealogical Society is sponsoring their annual spring seminar to be held at The Wells Fargo Center for the Arts, Harry Merlo Theater off Highway 101 at River Road in Santa Rosa. The speaker will be Lloyd de Witt Bockstruck. The following 4 topics will be the subjects of his presentations: Court Records, Colonial and Sate Statutes, Bridging the Atlantic and Finding Your Ancestral Home, Substitutes for Birth and Death Records. The pre-registration fee prior to April 17 is $25. For further information visit www.scgs.org or contact Audrey Phillips, Registrar at (707) 763-4492.

Here's a helpful hint:

Even if you think you know everything there is to know about your parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, researching them thoroughly helps build a strong genealogical foundation. Keep in mind that contemporary records have more detail and could have some clues to ancestral origins that older records do not.

It may be time to start thinking about the

1940 Federal Census

The official date for the release of the 1940 Federal census is April 1, 2012. That's the date the census is released from the 72-year privacy mandated by law. And that's the date family historians will be descending on the National Archives in order to open another chapter in their quest for their ancestors. However, no indexes will be available, so researchers will be required to know the correct Enumeration District in the city or town where their ancestors lived.

You can start preparing by determining and making note of the street addresses of all of your ancestors that you may be looking for in this census. It is possible that, at the time of the census release, third party tools will be available to help locate these addresses in the correct enumeration districts.

The census takers asked 35 standard questions. In addition, 15 supplementary questions were asked of a random sample. You can find out what these questions were and other information about the 1940 census at:

www.1930census.com/1940_census.php

This web site also has information on all of the other federal censuses as well as some state and local censuses.

WELCOME—NEW MEMBERS

We extend a warm welcome to our newest members:

Beverly Ann Craig
270 Verde Mesa Drive
Danville, CA 94526
bevcraig@sbcglobal.net

Carolyn Gellner
370 David Drive
Alamo, CA 94507
gellner@sbcglobal.net

Jo Ann Garlington
2560 Maple Avenue
Concord, CA 94520-1823
925 689-2458
Chiefjoret@aol.com

NEW LIBRARY BOOKS

The SRVGS Collection at the Danville Library has added the following new books on the shelves in the Reference section:

- **Erin's Sons: Irish Arrivals in Atlantic Canada 1761-1853** by Terence M. Punch GPC 2002 (R929.3715) PUNCH (Gen)
- **Denizations and Naturalizations in the British Colonies in America 1607-1773** by Lloyd DeWitt Bockstruck GPC 2006 (R929.1072) BOCKSTRUCK
- **Calendar of New Jersey Wills *1762-1817 Vol 1V to XIII*** Edited by A. Van Doren Honeyman (Vol IV and V) and Elmer T. Hutchinson (Vol VI through XIII) (R929.3749) CALENDAR
- **Gazetteer of the State of New York** by J. H. French (2002 reprint of 1860 edition) (R929.3747) FRENCH

The complete collection is listed on the SRVGS website at http://www.srvgensoc.org.

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President: Ed Mason 925-838-7848
e-mail: edmason@sbcglobal.net

1st V.P. (vacant)

2nd V.P. Program:
Clarice Hart 925-743-9245
Lisa Cooke 925-831-8537
Sherri Hedman 925-275-8123

3rd V.P. Membership:
Jane Nowicki 925-939-7808
Barbara Dittig 925-648-9364

Recording Secretary:
Ileen Peterson 510-651-7728

Corresponding Secretary:
Vern Segelke 925-838-8570

Treasurer: Gail Roche Van Wye 925-253-1096

Parliamentarian:
Virginia Rood 925-937-8659

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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

Calendar Coordinator:
Vern Segelke 925-838-8570
e-mail: 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

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Are you familiar with

Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness (RAOGK)

RAOGK is a global volunteer organization. With over 4000 volunteers in every U.S. state and many international locations, they have helped thousands of researchers. Their volunteers take time to do everything from looking up courthouse records to taking pictures of tombstones. All they ask in return is reimbursement for their expenses (never their time) and a thank you.

These volunteers have agreed to do a free genealogy research task at least once per month in their local area as an act of kindness. While the volunteers of Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness have agreed to donate their time for free, you *must pay* the volunteer for his/her expenses in fulfilling your request (copies, printing fees, postage, film or video tape, parking fees, etc.).

You can reach RAOGK at their web site:

http://www.raogk.org/

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