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. 9 April - 2009

THIS MONTH – April 21, 2009
"A New Look at Immigrant Passenger Manifests"
Presented by: Stephen J. Danko, PhD, PLCGS

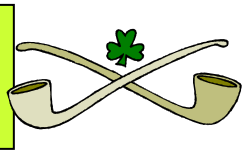
PASSOVER פסח

Immigrant passenger manifests provide family historians with important information about the origin, immigration, and destination of their immigrant ancestors. Passenger manifests after 1892 frequently include marks and annotations that can provide additional information about the experiences and activities of the immigrant. Some of these notations were made at the time of immigration; others were made years or decades later. Some describe corrections to the manifest, but other annotations can lead to other records that document the lives of the immigrant.

Steve Danko was born in upstate New York and currently resides in San Francisco, California. He began seriously researching his family history ten years ago and, in the course of that research, Steve has studied American, Canadian, and Polish Records. He has conducted research on location in Poland and Lithuania and has visited the villages in which his immigrant ancestors lived.

Steve holds a PhD in Botany and Plant Pathology and recently completed requirements for the Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies (PLCGS) from the National Institute for Genealogical Studies / University of Toronto.

March Meeting
"Organizing Your Stuff"
Speaker: Richard Rands Reporter: Lee Schlenker



Richard Rands, a member of the LDS Church and author of "Family History Documentation Guidelines," returned to give us another presentation in March showing us how he organized his genealogy records so it's quick and simple - once you get the hang of it. Richard told us that his ancestor's relatives gave him tons of researched documents and he found it a daunting task to organize it all. So, his techniques of organizing are a personal thing. Dealing with the chaos only lead him to organization and getting it under control. It's the means and not the end.

He claims we must live in the era of the "search engines" (e.g. Dogpile, Google, MSN, Zillow). You must get savvy with the search engines because this is where your data lies. You must realize that there is NO "organization fairy" out there - it's all up to you to do it comfortably for yourself.

His emphasis was on the computer and how to be just a little more proficient with it. With his power point presentation and a nine-page

Richard Rands

handout he started with The Five **Es: Easy to use = simple to implement,** few procedures, little to remember, fits my skill level and works with my work habits. **Elastic = versatile,** flexible, multiple media, adapts/transfers to new technology. in**Expensive = cheap, available materials**, minimal time, optimizes existing technology. **Expandable = easily grows with my needs,** no renumbering, interchangeable. **Effective = makes me feel organized**, materials are accessible, sufficiently mobile, displayable, and advances my research. These can be kept in mind as your guideline to organization.

Richard uses the following elements for his system: filing cabinets (lateral), hanging folders and manila folders, bookcases, 3-ring binders, clear acid-free sheet protectors, flash drives, wire bound journals, and CHOCOLATE! (I like this man's idea!) Yes, carry with you, at all times, a large bag of some kind of chocolate (he showed a bag of M & Ms) for that instant power serge while researching. His equipment consists of either a desktop or laptop computer, printer, scanner, copier, and an external backup drive. His optional equipment consists of a digital camera, digital recorder, shredder, PDA, and GPS. And his software consists of a genealogy database, word processor, spreadsheet, photo/image processor, backup manager and, once again chocolate!

Numbering, as in the Ahnentafel System or the Dollarhide System, is non-existent to Richard. Using Tagged Notes and Advanced Focus/Filter system in PAF or Windows File Management system gives him what he prefers. He numbers all his files (hanging and manila folders) in chronological order starting with 00001, 00002, 00003 etc. These numbers will then make it easy to re-file when removed; the numbered manila folder will slide back into the same numbered hanging folder.

Richard relies on flash-drives. He prefers the smaller GB flash-drives (¼ GB is good and it's cheaper than a larger GB flash-drive) to copy ancestor data from researched files. Each flash-drive has been numbered. When researching information on John Doe the numbered flash-drive is used; when finding out more information on John Doe he'll use any numbered flash-drive but

then record the information later adding it to his "edited note" screen for the listing of John Doe. So, when he pulls up ancestor John Doe on the "edit note" screen, every numbered flash-drive containing information on John Doe will show up. He puts a brief description of what is on the flash-drive. If there are multiple people on the same flash-drive, Richard simply "cuts and pastes" to the proper ancestor's pedigree (information) sheet. He says it is a must to keep all your flash-drives in a fire-proof safe or safely off-site.

Setting up your binders is much the same way - using the same numbering system 00001, 00002, 00003 (chronologically). And your documents should go into the sleeves which makes them fairly portable when researching, plus they're protected. New items as well as old items should be scanned and a hard copy printed, if needed. This old and new information should always be copied to a flash-drive with no thought about which flash-drive unless there is not enough space left on that particular flash-drive.

You should also keep spreadsheets that show - 1) missing data, 2) activity check list, 3) single surname log. With these spreadsheets you will be able to pull up what you want to research and have a handy guide to your search.

When searching information use keywords searches (as in Google Desktop Search or Advanced Focus/Filter of PAF/AQ). Keywords can cross-reference and keywords can link to descriptions.

Also, create a "working folder" so if you don't have the time to work with the newly received information, slide it into the "working folder" for future input.

Richard had several amusing stories interspersed with his talk and finished with a quick Q & A after.

A Gentle Reminder

The Society year is coming to a close. The new year starts on June 1st, and your annual membership fee is due by then. For your convenience, we have attached a membership renewal form to this newsletter. Please take the time to send it in with your check, now, while you are thinking about it.

President's Message

By Ed Mason

Those of you who attend our meetings regularly are aware that I have been recognizing the many contributions of our members who are helping to run the society. The recognition has been in the form of "Kudos" for one or two members each month detailing the ways in which the officers or committee members have helped us run a smooth ship. In order to be successful, we have to make membership a stimulating and enjoyable experience. We have to provide services for our current members and attract new members to replace those who drop out.

It amazes me how smoothly we can function with so little effort on my part. My main duties are to prepare the agendas and preside at the Board and General Meetings, also to write this letter every month. Meantime, most of our activities function with little or no input from me. The Society has been around for almost 25 years and the organization and structure already put in place by my predecessors provide much of the guidance. Many of our long-time members continue to contribute, but we also have creative and talented newer people who have initiated new ideas. Some examples would be: our superb Website (now completely revised), Community Outreach, Mini-Ed and Membership Liaison. Then we have many people just plain willing to pitch in. For example, when Bob Dougherty stepped off the Board, he remained very active, teaching courses in Digital Photography and Scanning, designing and building our unique badge storage system, as well as handling our A/V setup prior to each general Meeting. Now that he will be out of town much of the time, the setup will be handled by Bob Venter (already doing our Website and our Newsletter) and assisted by Phil Seelinger, a recent volunteer. Lisa Cooke has spent two years on the Program Committee, but will continue to serve that committee in an advisory capacity. Despite her extremely busy schedule, she has agreed to be nominated for Recording Secretary.

I was very encouraged that the clipboard passed around at the March meeting generated six signups to help with the 25th Anniversary com-

mittee. In February, Elaine Frank indicated she could help and now has been nominated to take Clarice Hart's place on the Program Committee. Kathy Javdani, who has been off the Board for a year, has been nominated for Corresponding Secretary. So where does this leave us for the coming year which starts on June first?

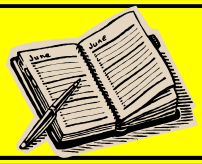
The Nominating Committee is being quite successful this year and we expect to have close to a full slate of officers to present to you at the April meeting. Some are being saved as surprises.

All of this may sound good, but we need more people to get involved, even in small ways. We have two places where explicit needs have been identified and any number of possibilities beyond.

- Membership needs a helper to replace what Jane Nowicki has been doing. Requirements: Arrive at the General Meetings at about 9:30 and help out at the Membership table. Also stay for 15 minutes after the meeting is over to make sure the badges are turned in and the equipment is put away. Attendance at Board Meetings is not required. Contact Ed Mason, edmason@sbcglobal.net or 925-838-7848
- The Program Committee could use a helper to spot articles in area papers, websites, Genealogy Group newsletters & Magazines for prospective speakers. In some instances it may be necessary to phone or email these prospects. Contact Sherri Hedman 2_vikings@comcast.net (note underscore) or 925-275-8123
- Start your own committee (with Board approval, of course) or join an existing committee. There is always more that we can do.

We all owe much to those who have contributed this year. We hope to have even more people involved in the coming year.

"*It is a desirable thing to be well descended, but the glory belongs to our ancestors.*"
Plutarch



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SRVGS CALENDAR

April 2009

7 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting was 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. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 &1/2 miles

May 2009

5 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting will be held at the home of Sandra Burns in Danville.

19 **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, April 21 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. This group will meet April 23rd (the fourth Thursday) 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 meet April 22nd (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Helen Odegard in Alamo. In March they met at D.J. Bistro for lunch. It was enjoyed by all. They plan to make it an annual affair along with their Oktoberfest. 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 April 8th (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Likewise they are scheduled to meet May 13th. 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 April 9th and May 14th (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.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

15 **April , Wednesday7:30 p.m**. The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will hold a regular meeting at the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 1700 South El Camino Real in San Mateo. This is near Highway 92. **Topic:** "Visiting Ancestral Homes" **Speaker: Margaret Melaney** This will be a "how to" session on preparing for the trip, how to make the most of your visit, what to look for, what you'll want to bring back, and the etiquette involved in exchanging information. Margaret Melaney gets most of her family history information from strangers she meets in coffee shops, graveyards, libraries, etc.

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.

25 April , Saturday 1:30 p.m. The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society City will hold a regular meeting at the Santa Clara City Library at 2635 Homestead Road in Santa Clara. "Using Little Known and Neglected Sources" will be the topic of the presentation by Christine Rose. In this lecture a variety of records will be discussed from land to federal court and military research.

New on the Society Web Site

Recently we added a *Internet Links of Local Interest* page to our web site. Its purpose is to help researchers from outside the area to find local web sites that may help them in researching ancestors from the Tri-valley area. Check it out at:

http://srvgensoc.org/resources/local_links.htm.

We invite you to suggest others sites that you think are of interest, which we may have missed.

UPCOMING LIBRARY TRIP

Several members have signed up to attend the National Archives Workshop on May 15th at 9 a.m. in San Bruno. Gail Roche Van Wye is the contact person for the group. Phone 253-1096 or e-mail gailrvw@aol.com. Contact Gail if you want to join this group. There is a registration charge of $15 for the workshop. Veterans' records and E-Vet research will be the subject presented by Rose Mary Kennedy. More details will be given at the April general meeting and other members will have an additional opportunity to sign-up. Participants should plan on giving a check to Gail at the April 21 meeting so group registration can be sent to San Bruno.

The National Archive is offering a number of other workshops in the coming months. See the box below for more information.

CALENDAR OF OTHER NATIONAL ARCHIVES WORKSHOPS

Passenger Arrival and Naturalization Records	April 17, Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogy Specialist
Military - Part I **Revolutionary War to Civil War**	June 12, Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogist Specialist
Military - Part II **Spanish American to Viet-Nam**	June 26, Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogy Specialist
Federal Land Records	July 17, Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogist Specialist
Preserving Your History	August 14, Friday, 9:00 A.M. to 1:00 P.M. Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogist Specialist

Contact Rose Mary Kennedy at 650-238-3488 or send her an e-mail at rosemary.kennedy@nara.gov to obtain further information. Fees are $15, payable in advance. All workshops will be held at:

The National Archives and Records Administration
Pacific Region (San Bruno)
1000 Commodore Drive,
San Bruno, California

Their web site address is: http://www.archives.gov/pacific/

WELCOME—NEW MEMBERS

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest member:

Janet Broderick

504 Zita Ct.

Danville, CA 94526

925-831-8516

janetanddennis@gmail.com

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 (rjventer@comcast.net).

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

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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Vital Records in Arizona

Are any of you researching family members in Arizona? *Internet Genealogy*, a magazine devoted to researching genealogy on the web, ran an article this month about a web site that was made available by the Arizona Department of Health Services at: http://genealogy.az.gov. At this site you can search the Arizona Birth records for the years 1855 – 1933, and the Death records for the years 1844 – 1958. This site is quick, free and easy to use, and provides .PDF copies of the actual birth and death certificates which you can then save to disc or print out.

Interestingly, this site will even return a birth record for a child if you search on the mother's maiden name – something that could prove very useful. You can also find a woman's death record by searching on her maiden name, if it or her father's name was given in that record. In other words a search will return any record in which the name you searched for appears, whether it is the principal on not. These are features that could prove to be very valuable.

San Ramon Valley
Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-0305

FIRST CLASS MAIL

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society Membership/Renewal Application

Please use this application when activating or renewing your membership. Annual dues are used to support *SRVGS* educational programs and provide knowledge to find ancestors. Please send this form and your check to:

SRVGS P.O. Box 305 Diablo CA 94528-0305

PLEASE PRINT **DATE:** _____

NAME: Mr./Miss/Ms./Mrs. _____

[ ] *RENEWAL (not necessary to fill in any of the following info which is the same as last application)*

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **Zip:** _____

E-MAIL: _____ **PHONE:** _____

$ _____ DUES: [ ] $15.00 Single [ ] $20.00 Family [ ] $10.00 New Member joining after Jan.1

$ _____ DONATION for *SRVGS* Library Book Fund

$ _____ DONATION for NARA Records Microfilming Project ($1.00 suggested)

$ _____ $2.50 US Mailing charge for the Handbook/Directory, if it can't be picked up at a meeting

[ ] I DO NOT wish to have a *SRVGS* Handbook/Directory this year

[ ] Please send my Newsletter by E-MAIL OR [ ] please send my Newsletter by US MAIL

$ _____ $10.00 voluntary contribution for Printing and Mailing the *SRVGS* Newsletter

[ ] SRVGS may publish my name, address, phone and email in the Handbook and the Newsletter.

$ _____ TOTAL AMOUNT OF CHECK/CASH **DEADLINE FOR DUES IS JULY 31**

SRVGS "Surname and Locality Search" File

Because our members are searching a wide variety of surnames, states and countries, we hope this file will enable members searching in the same areas to share research information and techniques. The file is divided into two sections. The first is an alphabetical list of our members with their personal code, and the second lists the surnames and localities being searched. Please PRINT the following information and return it with your Membership/Renewal application. Thank you.

	Surname	**State / County / Country**	**Dates**
(sample)	*Eggers*	*Germany/Schiffeck*	*1834-1868*

My Name: _____

Surname: _____ **Area:** _____ **Time Period:** _____

Surname: _____ **Area:** _____ **Time Period:** _____

Surname: _____ **Area:** _____ **Time Period :** _____

(Please use back of form or a separate sheet to submit additional information)