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. 10 May - 2009

THIS MONTH – May 19, 2009

"Tap Into Your Inner Private Eye:
7 Strategies You Need to Find Living Relatives"
Presented by: Lisa Louise Cooke

Learn how to track down those elusive living relatives who just may hold the key to your brick wall or possess that treasured photo you've been looking for. It's easy to get caught up with finding dead relatives, but it's the living ones who can share their personal stories, their boxes of photos in their attic, and their address book full of other relatives. It's imperative that you find and talk to these folks while you still can. But finding a living person can prove quite a challenge in today's identity security conscience society. Lisa Cooke has interviewed private investigators who are in the business of locating people, and brings their tips and techniques to you.

A member of SRVGS, Lisa Louise Cooke is the producer of two genealogy audio podcasts: ***The Genealogy Gems*** Podcast which focuses on research strategies and ***Family History: Genealogy Made Easy*** which leads listeners through the research process. Both of these "Internet radio shows" are featured in iTunes and her website at GenealogyGems.TV. She is also the host of the Family Tree Magazine Podcast, and Family History Expos TV**.** Lisa is the author of Genealogy ***Gems: Ultimate Research Strategies*** as well as articles for ***Family Tree Magazine (her newest article will be*** in the September 2009 issue), a national genealogy lecturer and appeared in the PBS history miniseries ***Texas Ranch House***.

April Meeting

"A New Look at Immigrant Passenger Manifests"
Speaker: Stephen J. Danko, PhD, PLCGS Reporter: Lee Schlenker

PASSOVER
פסח

As well as earning his PhD in Botany and Plant Pathology, Steve Danko recently completed his requirements for the Professional Learning Certificate in Genealogical Studies (PLCGS) for the National Institute for Genealogical Studies, University of Toronto. Steve now resides in San Francisco, CA. He began his research ten years ago and studied American, Canadian and Polish records.

Before 1820 there were no lists required of the ship lines. From 1820 to1860 only name, age, sex, occupation, nationality, intent to become a citizen or death at sea noted. By 1890 the manifest listings were becoming more extensive with information. There were columns to be filled out by the ship's captain. The manifests look more like the U.S. Census with information. Even how long the immigrant was going to stay and with whom. Then by 1900 not only the name, age, sex,

Steve Danko

length of trip, but final destination was listed, who paid for the passage, marital status, could you read/write, how much money did you have with you, and then personal questions: are you a felon, a cripple, a polygamist, a person under contract, last residence. By 1910 the manifests got even longer with all of the above listed plus who were you visiting, your intent of the visit, place of birth, were you in the U.S. before, were you an anarchist. By the end of 1910 these manifests became two pages long with required information; they were titled "Manifest of Alien Passenger for the United States." By 1920 a column was added for "head tax." And every year thereafter the forms became more and more precise so by 1940 a column was added "do you plan to overthrow the government."

Steve went through "how to decipher the annotations" on the passenger lists filled out at the point of departure. "Contact number," "head tax number" (had to pay a tax), "not shipped," "NOB" (not on board), "did not sail," "cancelled" (not everyone sailed or they were too sick to sail), the line crossed out could be "not there" or "upgraded to a different class," "X," "D" (detained), "Held." Look at the *end* of the manifest if your immigrant had an "X" "D" "Held" in the first column. The detainee's line should show the cause, how many meals eaten at Ellis Island, time of discharge. The term "to be tagged" meant literally a shipping tag was placed on a person. Some reasons for tagging: person couldn't speak English well enough so had their name and destination written out, was going to be picked up or transferred to a relative, was a minor. The next two annotations were very bad ones - "S.I." (Special Inquiry) or "B.S.I." (Board of Special Inquiry) meant a Board of Inquiry comprised of three persons would listen to the immigrants case and make a decision whether to deport them or allow them to stay. "USB" or "US Born" or "USC" (U.S. citizen), "C #####" which is a special certificate issued.

There were annotations even after the time of arrival such as: re-entry numbers on the certificate of arrival (after 1906) to legally enter into the U.S. And issuance of the certificate of arrival (C.A.) with the date of arrival and numbers - e.g. #1 (East Coast arrival), X (before 1903), #151593. The number "1" meaning East Coast included the states of CT, MA, ME, NH, RI, VT. Other annotations after arrival were V/L = verification of landing, W/A = warrant of arrest, "In Hospital," "Discharged," "Died in Hospital." Steve says to carefully check the manifest. Often times these manifests were microfilmed starting at the end of the list and filmed going forward to the beginning of the list. Others were microfilmed from the beginning to the end of the list.

If a detainee ate meals while at Ellis Island the shipping line had to pay for all his meals consumed and/or if deported the shipping line had to pay his/her passage back home. So, the shipping lines made sure all their "ducks were in a row" before registering and carrying a person to the U.S. after 1920. If a woman arrived pregnant the letters "LPC" might be written meaning "Likely Public Charge" (a burden on society) which meant she could be deported if she had no attachment within the U.S.

At Ellis Island there were strict rules and regulations as to the mental and physical health of

the immigrant: alcoholic? cripple? feeble minded? idiot? imbecile? immoral? insane? illiterate? moral turpitude? senile? pregnant? under 16? vagrant? TB? eye infections? Each immigrant's jacket was chalk-marked with a certain mark denoting their problem. In 1918 the inspectors at Ellis Island had a manual depicting pictures of what a person with mental defects would or should look like. Then they could better distinguish who was mentally defective by looks. There were also hand-written rules for idiots and imbeciles.

Steve says to remember to look for everything on the manifest once you've found the one you're searching for. The manifest should show if the ship was an indirect passage (put into another port after sailing to pick up more passengers). The Certificate of Arrival should be attached to the manifest. Tracking ships into Canada could be difficult because many people crossed into the U.S. at the Canadian border. You could have some luck with the St. Albans, VT records. There are departure lists from Bremen and Hamburg as well as the White Star Line lists. Other good sources of information are Ancestry.com and Steve Morse.org websites.

WELCOME—NEW MEMBERS

Please extend a warm welcome to our newest members:

Frances Button Davis
2177 Nelda Way
Alamo, CA 94507
(925) 838-1753
fbdavis@comcast.net

Mary C. Dillon
5624 San Luis Court
Pleasanton, CA 94566
(925) 462-3018
mary_dillon@sbcglobal.net

President's Message

By Ed Mason

This is my final letter as your President. It has been a pleasure serving the Society for the last two years. My greatest pleasure has been witnessing the smooth running of our Society enabled by the dedication of so many of our officers, committee chairs and other participating members. The last several months I have made my gratitude clear via the monthly kudos to which you (and they) have been subjected.

As a group we have many accomplishments to be proud of:

Improved website: Our constantly expanding and improving website has made it easy for prospective members within our geography to find us, to download a membership form and to join. Just as important for our existing members is the easy access our website provides to information: including 15 pages about our mission, history, meetings, contacts, member publications and pictures. The site also offers downloads of the last 27 Newsletters, lists of available books and media and several SRVGS forms.

We have kept the Society meaningful: At a time when most genealogy societies are shrinking, our membership has stayed constant. There are many factors causing societies to shrink, including members aging and the ease of Internet data gathering. We have countered the trends by providing good educational services, being neighbors with a great Family History Center, being very proactive about community outreach and offering good meetings, special interest groups and strong public exposure.

Observing our traditions: Our founders laid a strong foundation 24 years ago. I would guess that 95% of our Constitution and By-Laws remain unchanged from the original version in 1985. Our first Newsletter was published in the spring of that year and has continued ten times a year like clockwork ever since. Education remains a top priority. We work hard to provide informative monthly meetings. We offer individual and group assistance. And we continue to

provide a friendly, social and supportive environment.

Ensuring orderly succession: The Nominating Committee is presenting a strong slate of Officers for the coming year. They await your votes at the Annual Meeting on May 19. Once approved, we are expecting a flawless transition come June first. The Nominees are:

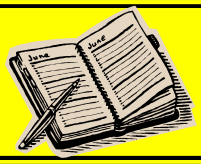
President:	Barbara Dittig
First Vice President:	Ileen Peterson
Second VP Programs:	Sherri Hedman
Third VP Membership:	Ed Mason
Recording Secretary:	Lisa Cooke
Corresponding Secretary:	Kathy Javdani
Treasurer:	Gail Roche Van Wye

It is not necessary to vote on committees, but it is worth mentioning that our committees are very important contributors to the operation of the society. Three of the officer/director positions will have committee support personnel. Independent committees, which are sometimes just one person, provide functions as important as our Website, Newsletter, Education, and Community Outreach.

So, thank you for letting me be your president for two years. I have enjoyed it and expect to continue to serve the society for several more years.

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

May 2009

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

19 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** The Annual 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

June 2009

2 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m.** A Board Meeting will be held at the home of Ed Mason in Alamo.

16 **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 is scheduled to meet Tuesday, May 19 after the general meeting at about 12:30 p.m. 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 May 28th (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 May 27th (the fourth Wednesday) at the home of Fran Schweitzer in Walnut Creek. 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 May 13th (the second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson in Pleasant Hill. Likewise they are scheduled to meet on June 10th. 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 May 14th and June 11th (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

19 May - Tuesday 7 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. Mary Hanel, Santa Clara City Local History Librarian and Library Staff Liaison to SCCHGS will review some of the new resources provided to genealogists and historians in the past year by the Library. These include some new databases added to Ancestry Library Edition, the Historical San Jose Mercury News database, and some excellent genealogy books.

20 May - Wednesday 7:30 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:** "DNA to Genetic Genealogy" **Speaker: Steve Morse** This talk will introduce genes, chromosomes and DNA.

Intermediate Genealogy classes are again being presented jointly by the Oakland Regional Family History Center and the California Genealogy Society. Pre-registration is recommended. Individual sessions cost $2 each. Walk-ins will be handled on a space available basis. To attend, you must complete a sign-up form. Class handouts will be provided. All sessions will be 9 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

For further details visit www.calgensoc.org, phone (510) 663-1358 or e-mail: CGSLevents@Gmail.com

Visit www.oaklandfhc.org, phone (510) 531-3905 or E-mail: fhcoakland@yahoo.com

The last classes of this series are as follows:

- **12 May Tuesday** at the Oakland Regional Family History Center:
  - U.S. Military Records presented by Susan Goss Johnston
  - Land and Property, Maps, Atlases & Gazetteers presented by Livinia Schwarz
- **16 May Saturday** at the California Genealogy Society Library **and**
- **19 May Tuesday** at the Oakland Regional Family History Center
  - Reading & Transcribing Handwriting of Colonial America by Marge Bell
  - Tax records, City Directories & Solving your Biggest Genealogical research Problems presented by Jane Knowles Lindsey & Marge Bell

UPCOMING LIBRARY TRIP

Several members have signed up to attend the National Archives Workshop on May 15th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.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.

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.

Proposed by-law changes:

The Society's Board of Directors is proposing changes to the Society's *Constitution and By-laws*. These same by-laws require that the proposed changes be published in the newsletter before the membership votes on the changes. The proposed changes are presented below. Strike-outs indicate deletions, and additions are shown in ***bold Italics***. The *Constitution and By-laws*, as currently written, can be found in your Society Handbook.

ARTICLE III MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Section B. Dues. Annual dues shall be payable June 1, and delinquent on August 1. ***A delinquent member shall be dropped from the membership rolls and no longer receive Society publications.***

Section D. Honorary Life Membership. This may be conferred upon any member who has given exceptional service. The recommendation shall be signed by one member and approved by the Board of Directors before being presented to the membership for a vote. A three-fourths vote shall elect. ***A Life Member shall retain the privileges of a regular Society member.***

ARTICLE IV MEETINGS

Section A. Regular Meetings. ~~General membership meetings of the Society shall be held a minimum of eight months per year.~~ ***Each year there will be a minimum of eight monthly general membership meetings.***

Section B. Special Meetings. Special meetings of the Society may be called by the President~~, the~~ ***or*** Board of Directors, or by the written request of ten members. A written notice stating the purpose of the meeting shall be given at least ten days prior to said meeting. No business other than that stated shall be conducted.

ARTICLE XI PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY

Section A. The rules contained in ***the current edition*** of Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised shall govern the Society in all cases in which they are applicable.

IN MEMORIAM

BARBARA ("BEA") NEALE O'RAND

The Society recently learned of the death of Bea O'Rand on January 20, 2009 in North Carolina. She was a past president (1989-1991) and honorary Life Member of SRVGS. For a number of years she hosted the Southern Interest Group and, as a member of the Publishing Interest Group, she helped to write "Print Publish and Preserve," a society publication. She researched her own English families as well as her husband's American roots. Her books are listed on our SRVGS website.

Bea was born in Durham County, England (she never lost her English accent), grew up in Norfolk and was studying in London during the bombings of World War II. She was evacuated to Cambridge where she met and married Texan Mike O'Rand, a flyer in the U.S. Air Force. After the war they made their home in Texas where she finished her degrees and taught before moving to California. After retiring as an administrator in the San Ramon Valley Unified School District, she became an active and valued member of our society. She often said her interests were the "three G's: genealogy, gardening and golf." In 1995, she and Mike moved to the Southern Pines community in North Carolina to be closer to their son and grandson. After her husband died in 1997, she became active in many historical and gardening organizations there. Also, she was the center of communications for her many relatives scattered around the globe.

She is survived by her son Michael in North Carolina, grandson Christopher and great-grandson Dylan in Florida. Her passing is a loss for all who knew her.

ROBERT ("Bob") KAY

Robert Kay, a past SRVGS member, passed peacefully away in San Diego April 6, age 85, survived by his wife Norma, 3 children, 5 grand children and six great grand children. He was born in Keokuk, Iowa. He served in the navy in WWII and worked for Chemetron, retiring after 38 years as vice-president. He lived in Walnut Creek. He was a very pleasant person while in SRVGS, and contributed to shared programs several times.

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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SOME HANDY 'CHEAT SHEETS'

Do you think you have checked all possible sources of information in trying to breakdown that brick wall? ***Family Tree Magazine*** has a long list of possible sources and it probably contains some you haven't thought of. Go to www.familytreemagazine.com/recordrefeferences and click on the "Records Checklist" link for a handy guide.

Or if you want to see at a glance the years that each US state began keeping state-level birth, marriage and death records, click on the "Vital Records Chart" link at the same web page given above.

And finally, how about a time line that shows how US Immigration laws have change over the years. You can find this by clicking on the "Naturalization Laws Timeline" link, also on that web page.

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