

SAN RAMON VALLEY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308

President:

Barbara Dyer

Coord. Editor: Sharon Clay

Meetings: 10:00 a.m.

3rd Tues. Of the Month

(Except August & December)

Alamo LDS Church

Stone Valley & Smith Roads - Alamo

Vol. XVI No. 4

October 2000

THIS MONTH -October 17, 2000 SPECIAL GROUPS "FRONT AND CENTER"

Each of our SRVGS Special Interest Group leaders will present an overview of their group's activities. If you are interested in joining a group BUT never took that extra step because you really didn't know whether the group would or could benefit "you" - NOW is the time to learn how they can & will help you. Bring questions. Be prepared to sign up for the Interest Group of your choice.

Note: the business meeting will be cut short to only 30 minutes to allow adequate time for the program.

LAST MEETING- September 19, 2000 PUBLISHING YOUR GENEALOGY - by Bette Kot by Frank Williams

Our speaker was Bette Kot, a charter member of this society whose genealogy classes have inspired many of us. She spoke on the need to publish, how to do it, and how to avoid many publishing pitfalls.

She began by giving her "best advice": **DO IT NOW; DO IT CAREFULLY AND CONSISTENTLY WITH AWARENESS OF COPYRIGHT PITFALLS; AND PROOFREAD YOUR WORK AGAIN, AND AGAIN, AND AGAIN!**

Bette pointed out that all your hard work researching and assembling facts about ancestors will be lost if the material is not made available to other family members---and to other genealogists. When a person dies, relatives face the daunting task of clearing out the accumulated material. They often don't understand its importance or how to read it. In the end, they usually throw out everything. How much more valuable it is to organize it now, and put it in readable form while you can still explain it, and add to it, and inspire your descendants to take up the hunt for any missing persons!

She discussed the hazards of quoting copyrighted material without permission; drawing the important distinction that facts are in the public domain and may be published by anyone, but material copied verbatim from copyrighted sources can bring legal action.

She reviewed two formats for publishing data on your ancestor lines; as adopted by the National Genealogical Society and the New England Historical and Genealogical Society. Her handout included examples of both plus references to 3 useful manuals on style and content.

She passed on some valuable tips on making a readable and organized publication; such as referring to the family name and location in the title (as this is how the book will be library indexed); making dedications and table of contents short and simple; putting illustrations near their subject; and noting where the subject research material is located. She also covered the handling of footnotes and their location choices, and the organization of descendant lists.

Bette finished by stressing the need to **DO IT NOW**---to start by organizing your material for no more than 4 generations back, and formalize it as it would appear in a publication. Then, edit the material thoroughly and reduce it to a readable standard. Next, add another generation or two at a time, reorganizing and editing as you go. When you have all you know in a readable form with footnotes, pictures, etc. in place you can edit again and number your generations in a preferred style. Work up your chapters, indices, and other

(Continuation of notes from September 2000 meeting)

refinements next. As always, constantly edit and re-edit to weed out errors or personal bias from your writing. Whether your finished product is ever published or not, you will have a lasting proof of your years of work to pass on to your family in readable form.

(Note: SRVGS has its own guide to self-publishing, and it is filled with tips on how to immortalize your ancestors and yourself in print. The title is PRINT - PUBLISH - PRESERVE and it is available from members of the Publishing Committee.)

SRVGS October 2000 Treasurer Report
by Nancy Alexander, Treasurer 2000-2001**Fund Balances: 9/30/00**

General Fund	3450.41
Hospitality Fund	70.78
Publications Fund	931.22
Special Projects Fund :	200.00
N.A.R.A. Fund	94.00
Cassette Tape Library Fund	57.85
Library Fund:	
Prior Year Gifts & Donations	203.80
Current Year Donations	276.00

Overall Total Balance: \$5284.06

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Genealogy and the Elections

(By Michael John Neill from Ancestry Weekly Digest 23 Sept. 2000)

November will soon be here, and with it Election Day. Have you even given a thought to the individuals who are running for those local offices that set access policies for public records? You can't vote in every county where you have ancestors, but you most certainly can vote in those local elections where you live.

There are many circuit clerk, county recorder, and other "courthouse official" jobs on the election slate this year. These officials frequently set or significantly influence the ways in which genealogists can access records. Have you tried to find out the candidate's views on records access? Does the candidate even know how records in her office (or the office he/she hopes to get) are created and preserved? Does the candidate have any thoughts about public access to these records? Does he/she even know where the early records are kept (knowing how to search them is another matter entirely)?

Have we thought to ask the candidate for county recorder what she plans to recommend in response to the lack of space in her office? Have we thought to ask how the old records will be impacted by this lack of space? Are responsible preservation techniques being pursued in a fiscally and archivally responsible fashion?

Records access can vary greatly from one county to another, and in many areas the implementation of policy is left to the clerk and his assistants. I've been in county offices where the clerk and her staff would get the "genealogist friendly" seal of approval. I've been in offices where it seemed like they should have had a pedigree chart on the front door with the word "NO" emblazoned across it. And I've seen every shade in between. However, these are questions better answered sooner rather than later. (Continued on page 3)

OFF THE WEB**OBITUARIES?**

You can often request copies of obituaries via e-mail from libraries in the area where your ancestor died. It has been the experience of Jennifer Rader, of Reno, NV that the libraries charge a small fee (less than a dollar) for copying and postage, and they request a small donation for their time. The following address contains an index for many libraries, but not all of them, so if your library isn't listed, try a search engine or other sources to obtain an address.
<http://www.publiclibraries.com/index.htm>

FRENCH GENEALOGICAL INFO.

If you need French genealogical information, try the following: <http://www.karolus.org/>. This site provides a comprehensive directory (links and/or mailing addresses) to French genealogical and historical libraries, organizations, archives and surname organizations. Members of the organization can also post their research interests to the site. Although the site is in French, Alta Vista's Babelfish translator works well enough to use it and make it fairly easy.
from Ancestry Daily News 9/20/2000

New Tapes Now Available In Our Tape Library These were donated by Barbara Dyer

New England:

C-234 New Bedford Whaling and Portuguese Immigration
By Paul Cyr (RP NEHGS 95, T-30)

Midwest

C-235 Voyageurs & Habitants: Tracing the Early French in
the Great Lakes Region by James L. Hansen
(RP GLConf 94,S-63)

Western

C-236 Oregon Records and Resources by Connie Lenzen
(RP FGS 95,S-135)

C-237 Researching in Wyoming by Janet L. Williams
(RP NGS 98,W-04)

C-238 Western Research Treasures at the DAR,
Washington D.C. By Eric G. Grundset
(RP NGS 98,S-217)

C-239 Scandinavian Life in Western U.S. by Timothy
Laitila Vincent RP NGS 98,S-196)

OTHER COUNTRIES

C-240 Locating German Russian Relatives - A Visit to
Russia by Clarence Kissler (RP NGS 98, T-65)

C-241 Routes to Roots in the Former Soviet Archives:
Ukraine, Moldova, and Belarus by Miriam Weiner
(RP NGS 98,T-86)

C-242 Sibling Research: The three Brothers -
America/Australia/New Zealand by Nick Vine Hall
(RP NGS T-71)

TAPE REVIEW by Betty Vail

"Voyageurs & Habitants: Tracing the Early French in the Great Lakes Region" (RP GLConf.94,S-63)

James I Hansen first points out some of the problems in tracing the Voyageurs, including the fact that the early records were written in French, that most of the men were young and unattached, and that their double names can be confusing. He stresses that church records are complex and widely scattered since people often traveled miles to record births, marriages and deaths. He gives clues to accessing records of government land grants, the fur trade, Indian treaties and the financial accounts of the Voyageurs. The latter are particularly helpful in identifying men with the same name. Mr. Hansen also cites several books that are particularly helpful when trying to trace these elusive ancestors.

(Genealogy & the Election -Continued from page 2)

Consider having the candidates come to your genealogical society meeting (*idea for a future program?*) for a question and answer session. You might find that there are legitimate reasons why access to some records is restricted or why staff hours have been cut back. You may find that the candidate does not understand genealogists' or family historians' needs and makes decisions accordingly. You may find the candidate willing to work with genealogists as best he can, given his duties involving current record keeping and "present-day" activities. Current business, when combined with budget constraints, space difficulties, and other factors, may create difficulties for genealogists. You may get answers you really do not want to hear. The candidate may not consider genealogists a large enough group to worry about.

Keep in mind that a candidate from "that other party" may be a bit more friendly to family historians than the candidate from "your party". I'm not suggesting genealogists form their own political party, although instead of "Four More Years" a potential slogan could be "Four More Forebears".

Please make the following member additions or changes to your membership handbook

Jeanette Moses
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President's Message - October 2000

From Sept. 6th-9th, I attended the Federation of Genealogical Societies' national conference in Salt Lake City. The conference was co-sponsored by the Utah Genealogical Society and was held in the spacious, comfortable and convenient facilities of the Salt Palace. About 1800 attended, a large turnout for an FGS conference, I was told.

The FGS provided for the first time, free space for member societies to set up displays. Our SRVGS had a half table shared with Sonoma County GS and was one of about 30 such displays. Our Society brochures and publication "Print, Publish, Preserve" flyers were featured. I appreciate the help of our FGS representative Dorothy Stanton, Jane Steiner and Barbara Johnson of the Publication SIG, Jack Johnson who printed out a SRVGS banner and Audrey Morgan, membership chairman. They all contributed to assembling the materials.

Wednesday sessions were devoted to Society topics. After attending six such presentations, I felt that our SRVGS has been doing well in its operation, special interest groups, education classes and monthly library trips. We have the cassette library, a publication and have a good start on a library collection. There were sessions describing new areas via the Internet such as e-comm for societies and virtual meetings that I will leave for a more computer savvy officer, committee chair or member to develop. It won't be me.

One area that did interest me was a Society Handbook. Previous boards have developed notebooks and job descriptions for each office and committee. A Handbook would be a resource anyone could go to and find the details of operating SRVGS. For example, where we bank, where our mail is received and who has PO box keys, where the newsletter and directory are printed, who has a certain piece of Society property such as the projection screen. It would eliminate the need to track down which notebook contains the written information or to find someone who remembers.

The balance of the conference sessions followed tracks: Methodology, United States, Ethnic, International, British Isles, Computers and Professional Genealogists. It was fun choosing from a wide variety of topics and levels of ability. One of the highlights of the conference was a luncheon I attended. Since I have a hearing loss, I try to arrive early so that I can sit as close to the front as possible. I sat down at a table in front of the podium which had one empty chair. As I looked around the table I found I was sitting with Curt Witcher, Karen Clifford, Amy Carter Flemming and several others whose names I recognized as speakers on our cassette tapes and as officers on a national level in several societies. It was a treat to be with them.

I encourage you to think about attending a national conference; the NGS conference will be in Portland next May. Not too far off, literally and figuratively.

REGARDING THE 1930 CENSUS

Coming soon. A finding aid for the 1930 census. As you know, the 1930 census will not be released until April 2002, and most of it will not be indexed. National Archives has acquired 865 rolls of film containing City Directories that can be used to find residence addresses of your ancestors. NARA will eventually also have materials that will define the boundaries of the Enumeration Districts. Used together, these tools will help you find people in the census. At this time, the City Directory films are being indexed and labeled. When this is completed, they will be available to the public at National Archives in San Bruno. NARA has given permission to make the city directory available for purchase.

From the SMCGS Newsletter, Sept. 2000

A PRAYER FOR GENEALOGISTS

Lord, help me dig into the past
And sift the sands of time
That I might find the roots that made
This family tree of mine.
Lord, help me trace the ancient roads
On which my fathers trod
And led them through so many lands
To find our present sod.
Lord help me find an ancient book
or dusty manuscript
That's safely hidden now away
In some forgotten crypt.

SRVGS CALENDAR OCTOBER 2000

- 3 Tuesday** - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at home of Carol Thompson, 308 Hartford Road in Danville.
- 3 Tuesday** - 10:00 a.m. Member Education Class, Genealogy on the Internet at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. Note that classes are to be offered on the first Tuesday of each month when the Library is usually closed. Class size will be limited to 6 persons each session. Advance sign up is requested.
- 17 Tuesday** - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road on Smith Road, Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east.
- 19 Thursday** - 10:00 a.m. Member Education Class: Accessing the Federal Census records, getting around the Archives at San Bruno, coding surnames and learning to use the readers. Presented by Millie Freitas at her home, 607 Diablo Road in Danville. Phone 837-2483. Please sign up at the general meeting.
- 24 Tuesday** - 9:00 a.m. Library Trip to the National Archives in San Bruno. (540) 867 - 9009. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's off Diablo Road in Danville. Note that the Library Trip Coordinator is Michael Fiorenza. If you sign up for a trip and wish to cancel, please call him at 820-8294.

NOVEMBER

- 7 Tuesday** 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting 10:00 a.m. Frances Lloyd's home.
- 7 Tuesday** 10:00 a.m. Genealogy on the Internet at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, Alamo. Sign up in advance.
- 21 Tuesday** - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road
- 28 Tuesday** - 9:00 a.m. Library Trip to the Oakland Family History Center.

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: OCTOBER

- GERMAN** - Meets 10 a.m. October 25 (fourth Wednesday) at the home of Helen Odegard in Alamo. If you need directions or if you regularly attend, but cannot attend this meeting, please call her 932 - 6796.
- IRISH & CALIF.** - Meets October 11, (second Wednesday of month) at 10:00 a.m. at home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889.
- PENNSYLVANIA** - This is newer group and will meet October 23 at 1:00 p.m. at Francis Lloyd's.

PORTUGUESE - Meets third Tuesday of month after the general meeting. Bring a bag lunch. Confirmation of the meeting will be announced at the general meeting.

SOUTHERN - Meets October 10 (second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, Alamo.

PUBLISHING - A future meeting will be scheduled as interested persons express a need.

INTERNET - Interested users communicate via e-mail. Members should contact Robert daRoza, vrdaroza@ix.netcom.com to be included.

USERS OF ULTIMATE FAMILY TREE and conversions to **MASTER GENEALOGIST**: It will be announced if the group will meet after the General Meeting. The distributor of "Ultimate Family Tree" software has announced that it will not be producing newer versions of this product. Customer support services will be dropped after about 6-9 months.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS:

- 10 Oct. Tuesday** Livermore Amador Genealogical Society (LAGS), meets 7:30 p.m. at Beth Emek, corner of College and South M St., Livermore. For information call Debbie Pizzato, (925) 606-7466.
- 11 Oct. Wednesday** The East Bay Genealogical Society meets 10:00 a.m. at the Dimond library. Nancy Moreland will speak about Civil War Records.
- 12 Oct. Thursday** Contra Costa County Genealogical Society, meets on second Thursdays in the Community Room of the new Concord Police station, 1350 Gallindo Ave. Fran Schweitzer presents a Woman's History through Quilting.
- 14 Oct. Saturday** The Concord/Walnut Creek LDS stakes are sponsoring an all day seminar at 3700 Concord Blvd. In Concord. \$15 if registered prior to September 30. Call Sandra, day (925) 798-8998 or eve (925) 672-2108.
- 19 Oct. Thursday** Thomas Moore of Contra Costa County Coroners office will speak at the Mt. Diablo Genealogical Society meeting. They meet 1 to 3:00 p.m. on third Thursdays in the Community Room of the Civic Bank of Commerce, 1940 Tice Valley Road, Walnut Creek. Muriel James is scheduled to speak at the November meeting.

Calendar (Continued)

21 Oct. Saturday - San Mateo County Genealogical Society sponsors a fall seminar featuring Wendy Elliot. 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 25th and Hacienda in San Mateo. \$23 at the door. For information call SMC GS at (650) 572-2929 or contact Marypask42@aol.com.

26 Oct. Thursday LAGS Computer interest group meets 7:30 p.m. at Livermore. Adult Ed. Bldg., 543 Sonoma Ave. For information call Dick Finn, (925) 447-9652.

2 Nov. Thursday Genealogical Society of Vallejo meets at Vallejo Naval and Historical Museum, 1 to 3:30 p.m..

Tips for Transcribing/Abstracting/Extracting Documents - by George G. Morgan Ancestry Daily News September 22, 2000.

In the course of our family history research, we spend a great deal of time working with original documents. The books, papers, and other original sources we work with provide a number of challenges for us. These include understanding the documents and why they were created, deciphering the sometimes-cryptic handwriting, and evaluating all types of variations on spelling and punctuation. Sometimes it is impossible or less urgent/important to make photocopies of original documents; you will sometimes prefer instead to copy some materials by hand. This can be arduous work and is fraught with a number of problems.

.....Let's discuss the differences between **transcribing**, **abstracting** and **extracting** documents, and share some tips to help make the process easier.

Three types of copying:

Transcribing is the act of copying the contents of an original document by hand EXACTLY as it was written. That means including all spelling and punctuation errors and refraining from the temptation to make corrections as you go along. If there are corrections to be made in the text, it is customary for the transcriber to include and indicate these inside brackets and to use the Latin word *sic*. An example of this might be shown as: "...being of sound bodie [sic body]"

Abstracting involves the summarization of a document or a long piece of textual material in order to represent the main points or ideas. You might, for instance, abstract a person's will in order to list the names of beneficiaries, their relationship to the deceased, and what they may have inherited, but you may omit otherwise standard jargon or

obviously trivial verbiage. An abstraction should also carefully preserve any spelling and punctuation errors that exist in the original document.

Extracting differs from abstracting in that an extract does not summarize a document; it culls pieces of information from the original. Extracts can be perilous for genealogists because the person who did the extracting may not have extracted all of the pertinent information in which you are interested. His or her interest level may have prevailed, and what may be very important details to your research may have been omitted.

Understanding the difference between these three means of copying information from original documents and representing them in print or on the Internet is critical. A conscientious researcher will use the correct label - transcription, abstract, or extract - when describing what he or she has produced in writing as a result of a review of an original document. By doing so, anyone reading the resultant work will be able to understand the amount of detail represented in the work.

Some Tips for Copying Documents

Copying documents longhand is a tedious process involving an infinite amount of attention to detail. Here are some tips to help you make the best use of your time and to improve the accuracy of your transcription/abstraction/extraction process.

1. **Take your time!** Invest the time necessary to read the entire document; understand the contents; become familiar with the writing style of the author and any repetitive nuances.

2. **Decide which copy method is appropriate.** Ask yourself, "How important is it to transcribe the entire content of the original document?" If you will gain significant benefit from copying the entire document, do it. If the summary of every point will suffice (without seeing every single word of text), then an abstract may be appropriate. If there is a limited number of points or snippets of the document that are relevant for you or your audience then perhaps an extract will be sufficient.

3. **Err on the side of too much information.** It is better to provide too much information than too little. Names that appear to be inconsequential or irrelevant at the time you review an original document may be of supreme importance at a later date.

(Continued on page 7)

(Transcribing/Abstracting, etc. Cont. from page 6)

4. Use pre-printed forms. There are a variety of places on the Internet where you can obtain free forms to be used in abstracting and extracting details from original documents. Ancestry.com offers a Research Extract form or check Cyndi's List - Supplies, Charts, Forms, Etc.

5. Use a tape recorder. A small hand-held cassette recorder can be used to dictate information found in documents. With a little practice you can develop a dictation style in which you describe the type of document, provide details or its location (for your source citation) and dictate an entire document verbatim. The verbatim piece will include the text, work for word, and you will spell out all the non-standard and/or misspelled words - and you will speak every single punctuation mark shown in the document.

6. Proofread your work! Absolutely every makes mistakes, and so it is important to double - or triple- check your work. Then your error won't be perpetuated by other researchers who "trust" the work you've done.

7. Review the original yourself. If you are working with other people's transcriptions, etc. it is important that you verify the information yourself. Use the work of others as a pointer to locate the original source documents so that you can view the original or obtain a copy for your own review.

8. Photocopy the original for future reference. Sometimes it is impossible or impractical to make a photocopy of an original document. But, it is always desirable. You never know if or when you may need to see the actual source document and refer to it again. If you can obtain a photocopy for your own files, do so.

Commit to Excellence: It is important that you, as a responsible genealogist, commit yourself to excellence in your research methods and in the copying and recording of data. Never accept as truth the information you see transcribed, abstracted, or extracted without verifying the information personally. And if you are copying records yourself, make sure you are creating the highest quality, most scholarly, copied material for other people's use as possible. That way, your work will be part of the solution, and not part of the problem.

Keeping Track of Addresses - WHY?

It can be helpful to keep track of the addresses on birth and other vital records. This information can be very useful in locating other records. If you can't locate your family in a census index, it may be that they were missed in the index, or the name was so badly mutilated that it cannot be found. If you know where they lived at the time of that census, you may be able to locate their entry by location, thus saving you time spent searching line by line."

What Do Those Initials Mean?

Initials after your ancestor's names may provide useful information that you'd not expected. The following list includes initials you may come across when reading old wills or other documents.

a.a.s.	died in the year of his/her age (anno aetatis suae) (86 y/o died in year 86)
d.s.p.	died without issue (decessit sine prole legitima)
d.s.p.l.	died without legitimate issue (decessit sine prole mascula supesita)
d.s.p.m.s.	died without surviving male issue (decessit sine prole mascula supersita)
d.s.p.s	died without surviving issue (decessit sine prole supersita)
d.unm	died unmarried
d.v.p.	died in the lifetime of his father (decessit vita patris)
d.v.m.	died in the lifetime of his mother (decessit vita matris)
Et al	and others (et alia)
Inst	present month (instans)
Liber	book or volume
Nepos	grandson
Nunc	Nuncupative will, an oral will, written by a witness Ob he/she died (obit)
Relict	widow or widower (relicta/relictus)
Sic	so or thus, exact copy as written
Testes	witnesses
Utl	late (ultimo)
Ux or vs	wife (uxor)
Viz	namely (videlicet)

Tricks for Reading Tombstones-Ancestry Quick Tip

9/5/2000 When trying to read old tombstones at a cemetery, it is very useful to bring a flashlight and a large paper bag. Pull the bag over the stone, stick your head and the flashlight inside, and shine the light sideways on the inscription; you may be able to read an inscription you could not read before. This technique is used to study antique rock carvings and should work equally well on old tombstones.

TAPE REVIEW by Sharon Clay

A Guided Tour of Cyndi's List by Cyndi Howells. C-221.
Get to know a little about the Cyndi behind Cyndi's List as she takes you through the ins and outs and organization of the best genealogical research tool of the Internet. If you haven't visited Cyndi's List lately, you need to take another look. Sections of it are revised daily. There are thousand of links to web sites and resources, categorized by topic and alphabetically. Cyndi has tried to make it very user friendly, and this tape takes you through the process behind the List and it's organization. You may want to walk through the List as you listen to the tape.

The Methodists and Presbyterians in the Mid-Atlantic Area by Marty Hiatt C-228

Marty explains the genealogical importance of the organization of the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in the Delaware, Maryland and Virginia areas of the early United States. Methodists were migrant evangelistic ministers who kept diaries and lists as they went from place to place. Presbyterian ministers were "called" to the area where other Presbyterians were already. If you have ancestors from these churches, check out this most interesting tape.

INTERNET LINKS & REFERENCES**Sites of the month:**

<http://www.peoplespot.com>

This site has a great search engine for all kinds of miscellaneous information

White pages - U.S. & International

Grassroots.com - links to 2 sides of political issues

Records: Adoption, Cemeteries, Obituaries, Vital

Records

Statistics: Census, Demographical, Population

Notable People

Connections: Associations, ListServes, Chat Groups, etc.

Even allows a reverse search.

Check out this one too:

<http://www.genforum.genealogy.com>

Allows search by: surname (alphabetic)

Regional Searches: U.S. States or Countries

General Topics - general genealogy questions

Specific Topics: a few of these are - adoption,

Deaf culture, Civil War, coat of arms,

emigration, Quaker, WWI and WW II.

If you find a really good web site - let Editor know.

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