

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. 10

May 2001

THIS MONTH - May 15, 2001

MEMBER "SHOW AND TELL" TIME

The meeting for May will feature some of our SRV Genealogical Society members who will "show and tell" us about an artifact that has lead them to discover information about a relative OR an artifact that has an interesting history or story about a relative. Several members have already signed up to be on the program, BUT if you have something you would like to share with the group, please call: Dorothy Baker 427-4883, or Helen Odegard 932-6796 or Clyde Walden 837-4344.

LAST MEETING- April 17, 2001

California, 2001 - Open Records or Not?

Notes by Frank Williams

Stephen Weir is the County Clerk-Recorder for Contra Costa County, and a likeable, humorous public speaker. His talk explored some of the problems and difficult decisions required to do his job.

After a short, costumed takeoff on Johnny Carson's mind-reader character "Karmac", he started the main portion of his speech by commenting that he learned to care about genealogy while driving his grandfather around in search of information on his family.

When he became Registrar twelve years ago, he says he stumbled into the first of an endless series of difficult decisions concerning the retention of public records. He found, on assuming the office after the death of his predecessor, that the county had never had a records management program, with the result that various departments were keeping or discarding records at will. Some records were destroyed early for lack of room, while other less important ones might be duplicated in more than one department and still preserved. He set up a comprehensive retention program, and meanwhile hid records slated for destruction until he could review them. He found many documents of unique or historical value that begged to be retained; and was able to quietly pass them over to the county historical society for preservation. Still other irreplaceable records were squirreled away in a warehouse until they could be copied or better preserved.

Through the records retention program the county has been able to reduce duplicated copies and identify those records that need to be kept indefinitely for the use of citizens and historical purposes.

He pointed out that it grows ever more difficult to save paper records in a "paperless society"; noting that our institutions have learned to casually accept records based on other records without asking questions. He described how any person could obtain an official birth certificate for someone else through his office; use it to get a driver license in that person's name; and then get a Social Security card with which to achieve a new identity.

As these kinds of examples appear, legislators are pressured to greatly restrict the access to public records. At the same time, counties and states regard the swelling body of records overflowing their files, and mindful of the cost of additional storage space they look for ways to get rid of "outdated" documents; as few people other than genealogists and historians object strongly.

He noted that counterfeiting of identity problems have lead to most counties refusing to issue non-certified copies; that is, a document copy not printed on banknote paper which will betray any alteration. Certified copies cost \$10 instead of the 50

cents charged for non-certified copies. He suggests most genealogists gathering lots of records will get the cheaper copies at first, and then get a certified copy for a final record.

Mr. Weir made an interesting comment, based on his early experience working as a legislator's aide. He says: "Senators and Assemblymen get excited about things that gripe them!---the time demands of their work makes it difficult to interest them in a new or difficult cause." Was he telling us we need to organize the crusade for better records retention to a far greater degree before it is too late?

He pointed out that even the present use of microfilming or (better yet) preservation on CD's will still not provide a truly permanent record. Microfilms and fiches can burn or suffer water and environment damage; and even CD's can become lost records when technology turns to a later storage media. Eventually no machines are left that can read the record.

He closed with the comment that genealogy has developed more business for his office. He could have added that it is also creating a large, vocal group of citizens pursuing the same goal he seems to have---the safe, permanent preservation of records that are a vital link to our past.

SRVGS April 2001 Treasurer Report

by Nancy Alexander, Treasurer 2000-2001

Fund Balances: 4/28/01

General Fund	2677.85
Hospitality Fund	70.78
Publications Fund	966.07
Special Projects Fund :	200.00
N.A.R.A. Fund	0.00
Cassette Tape Library Fund	110.85
Library Fund:	
Prior Year Gifts & Donations	188.80
Current Year Donations	276.00

Overall Total Balance: \$4490.35

Note Change of address for Jane Steiner:

Redwood Cottage

2361 East 29th St.

Oakland, CA 94606

Phone: (519) 436-7849

President's Message by Barbara Dyer

This is the last column I will write as president of the SRVGS and I wish to assure you it has been an honor and pleasure far beyond my expectations. Little did I think, when I took the job of Cassette Librarian four years ago, that I would hold any Board position. My usual role has been in a behind the scenes position. It was only because of your willingness to accommodate my hearing loss by using the microphone that I was able to fulfill the duties of President and I thank you. We all benefitted by overcoming our reticence to hear our own voices amplified.

The members of the Board have been a committed, thorough and reliable group upon whom I could depend and I am grateful. I would like especially to commend the 2nd VP, better known as the Program Chairperson. When the Nominating committee could find no one to fill the job, a committee was formed consisting of Dorothy Baker, Helen Odegard and Clyde Walden. While they did not have experience and they struggled at first to define and refine their roles, they quickly took command and provided the Society with varied and interesting programs.

Another Board member who deserves notice is Audrey Morgan, 3rd VP in charge of Membership. She no sooner took office then she had to publish the Handbook, a daunting task for anyone and especially someone who was uncertain how to proceed. With the help of experienced members, she put out the Handbook on time and at a lower cost. She also became skilled at the use of the mike to introduce new members and guests.

I mention the challenges met by these particular members not only to acknowledge their efforts but to point out that we all can take on a challenge and succeed; after all we're genealogists and already have these skills.

Take a look at the first few pages of the Handbook and you will see the names of the Committee and SIG Chairpersons. Some of them are well known because we see them in front of us at each meeting and others are seldom heard. Some jobs are easy and some are difficult, but each is important and contributes to the smooth functioning of the Society and it's services. As a representative of the members, I wish to thank every one of you whose name is on the lists and the others of you whose names do not even appear on a list but who have contributed to the operation of the SRVGS.

Newsletter Team

Coordinator: Sharon Clay 462-4518
sharoncl@ix.netcom.com

Special Contributors: Pat Isom 820-2660

Calendar Coordinator: Vern Segelke 838-8570
 e-mail *v.m.seg@att.net*

Mailing:

Barbara Dittig 648-9364

Lucy Carver 837-3146

Deadline to put information in newsletter is the last Thursday of the month.

SRVGS CALENDAR-MAY 2001

- 1 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting** at home of Barbara Dyer - 617 Camino Amigo in Danville
- 1 **Tuesday 10:00 a.m.** "Genealogy on the Internet" presented by Ron Frye at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, Alamo. Sign up in advance. This is the last internet class to be offered for a while.
- 15 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** General Meeting at LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east.
- 17 **Thursday- 10:00 a.m.** Frances Lloyd will present a Member Education Class. This will be a rare opportunity to learn about OTHER records that are held at the National Archives. Plan to meet at her home, 210 Town and Country Drive, in Danville. Please sign up at the general meeting or call 837-9382.
- 22 **Tuesday - 9:00 a.m.** Departure Time for the Library Trip to the National Archives in San Bruno. PHONE (650) 876-9009. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's off Diablo Road in Danville. Note that the Library Trip Coordinator for this trip is Vern Segelke. If you sign up for a trip and wish to cancel, please call him at 838-8570.

JUNE 2001

- 5 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** Board Meeting, Joint Boards Francie Lloyds - 210 Town & Country-Danville
- 19 **Tuesday - 10:00 a.m.** General Meeting at LDS Church on Stone Valley Road.
- 26 **Tuesday 9:00 a.m.** Library trip to the California State Library and California Archives in Sacramento.

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: MAY - 2001

BRITISH - This group will not meet in May. If there is a renewed interest, they will meet again in the fall. The contact person is Suzanne Johnston, phone 838-8682.

CANADIAN/FRENCH CANADIAN - This group will not meet during June, July or August. The contact person is Clarice Hart. You may phone her at 743-9245, or e-mail *WRHCGH@aol.com*.

GERMAN - Meets 10 a.m. May 23 (fourth Wednesday) at the home of Carol Huvane, 4589 Walnut Blvd., in Walnut Creek. If you need directions or if you regularly attend, but cannot attend this meeting, please phone 947-5669. Her e-mail address is *tomcarhuv@aol.com*

IRISH & CALIF. - Meets May 9, (second Wednesday of month) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889. Her e-mail address is *russpat@netvista.net*

NEW ENGLAND - Monday May 21 (third Monday) at 1:00 p.m. at Barbara Dyer's house. Everyone Welcome. If interested contact Barbara at 820-9738.

PENNSYLVANIA - This group will not meet during June, July or August. The contact person is Barbara Johnson. Phone 837-2153 or e-mail *bjohnson@peoplepc.net*.

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. The contact person is Millie Freitas, phone: 837-2483

SCANDINAVIA - Those persons interested in Scandinavian research will not meet as a group. They will form e-mail groups for each country. The contact person is Marilyn Tanner, phone 376-6733 or e-mail *jtanner@nothingbutnet.net*.

SOUTHERN - Meets May 8 (second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. They will meet at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, Alamo.

The contact person is Frances Becker, phone 934-4962.
PUBLISHING - A future meeting will be scheduled as interested persons express a need. The contact person is Jane Steiner, (510) 436-7849.

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

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - This is a genealogy software users group for PC's. Their primary focus has become the use of MASTER GENEALOGIST. The group often meets after the General Meeting. The contact persons are either Bob Heacox, *riponolive@worldnet.att.net*; or Dorothy Stanton, *dpstant@hotmail.com*. MAC users do not currently have an active user group of SRVGS members.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS:

- 7 May, Thursday Mount Diablo Genealogical Society regular meeting 1 to 3 p.m. at Civic Bank of Commerce, 1940 Tice Valley Blvd., in Walnut Creek. The speaker in May will be Jim Tackitt.
- 18 May, Friday A workshop will be held at the National Archives in San Bruno from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. The subject will be Military Records- Part I, Revolutionary to Civil War. Class fees are \$15. To reserve a space, Call Rose Mary Kennedy at (650) 876-9009.
On Friday, June 15 the topic will be Military Records- Part II, Spanish American to Viet Nam
- 16-19 May NGS Conference will be in Portland, OR. Phone 1-800-473-0060 or see www.ngsgenealogy.org
- 2 June Saturday Curt Witcher of Fort Wayne, Indiana will be featured from 9 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. at Woodcreek High School Theater in Roseville, CA. This is sponsored by The Sacramento Genealogical Society (Root Cellar). \$27 if space is available. Call Sammie Hudgens at (916) 481-4930 or Billie Helms (916) 991-5971
- 23 June Saturday California State Genealogical Alliance Seminar from 9:30-3:00 PM at the LDS Church, 5301 Badger Road, Santa Rosa.
(1) Using the Internet for Effective Genealogical Research
(2) Documentation & Citations
(3) Research in SF Bay Area (Interactive Panel)
For reservations contact Jo Russell, 4344 Brookshire Circle, Santa Rosa, 95405 (707) 528-1127, or e-mail ljrussell@earthlink.net
Seminar is free and includes pot luck salad lunch.
- 22 September Saturday The Contra Costa County Genealogical Society will sponsor a seminar featuring Grace-Marie Hackwell on researching the Civil War.
- 27 October Saturday NGS Regional Conference, 1221 Chess Drive, Foster City, CA. Speakers will include Curt Witcher and Cyndi Howells.

PROPOSED BUDGET - 2001-2002

Presented by Nancy Alexander, Treasurer 2000-2001

Balance Forward General Fund		\$2,780.00
Dues Income	2,665.00	
Other Income	85.00	
Total		2750.00
Total General Fund		\$5530.00

Expenses:

Facility Rental	0.00
Hospitality	0.00
Liability Insurance	330.00
Membership Expenses	300.00
Miscellaneous	50.00
Monthly Program Costs	500.00
Newsletter	1350.00
Officers Expenses	50.00
Post Office Box Rental	20.00
Publicity	50.00

Society Memberships:

Conf. Of CA Hist. Societies	35.00
Fed. of Genealogical Soc.	45.00
CA State Genealogical Alliance	20.00

Total Expenses: \$2750.00

Net Income/Expenses: \$2780.00Designated/Restricted Funds

Cassette Tape Library	110.85
Library Fund	479.80
Publications	666.97
Special Projects	500.00
NARA Stern Fund	0.00
Total Designated Funds	\$1,756.72

SRVGS - Proposed Slate of Officers for 2001-2002

President:	Francie Lloyd
1st Vice President	Barbara Dittig
2nd Vice President	Verne Segelke, Bob
- Program	Kay & Louise Ford
3rd Vice President	Barbara & Jack
- Membership	Johnson
Recording Secretary	Virginia Rood
Corresponding Secretary	- Audrey Morgan
Treasurer	Marilyn Tanner
Parliamentarian	Barbara Dyer

TAPES IN OUR TAPE LIBRARY RELATING TO CASE STUDIES AND PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

Check out a tape or two and listen to it on your walkman on your walk or at the gym. Learn while you "burn".

M-25 Adventures in Research - Member tape from 11/89

M-28 Share an Ancestor - Solve a Problem - Member tape from 11/90

M-51 Serendipity in Genealogy Research - Bill West

M-52 Adv. of a Genealogical Researcher - Kathy Beals.

C-99 Preserving & Weighing Family Tradition- Marsha Hoffman Rising

M-42 Clues from Old Family Photographs - Jim Tackett

M-61 Preservation and Maintenance of Items Treasured by A. Marks

Tape Reviews by Betty Vail

The following tapes were reviewed by Mike Fiorenza. A former teacher, Mike graded them both as B+. I have condensed his notes.

C-218 SOURCES AND STRATEGIES FOR ITALIAN AMERICAN RESEARCH by Jayare Roberts. Mr.

Roberts stresses the importance of knowing the history and geography of the part of Italy your ancestors came from. The ownership of land changed as a result of wars and invasions and was often affected by natural disasters such as the earthquake in Sicily and Calabria in 1890. The date of the earliest church records, written in Latin, varies on the City State in which they were recorded. Civil records of births, marriages and deaths have been kept since 1809 because Napoleonic law required them of all citizens. Mr. Roberts points out that United States resources should be exhausted before a trip to Italy is undertaken. These resources includes State and Federal Censuses, records, city directories, Catholic directories, etc. Other helpful hints are given.

C-227 FROM ITALY TO AMERICA: STARTING YOUR ITALIAN AMERICAN RESEARCH by Sharon DeBartolo Carmack. Ms. Carmack says that your research is like cooking an Italian meal. First, you gather your ingredients by going to places that house the records and by recording the oral family history. Then, you combine these ingredients by analyzing the records and comparing them to the oral history, and finally you bake or cook what you have mixed by writing the information down. She stresses the importance of including family stories: what were your ancestors' lives like in Italy; why did they leave; what were their lives like in America; why were so many of them "Birds of Passage" returning to Italy several times; why were the Italian immigrants known as WIPES; how did the label LPC (Likely Public Charge) or LCD (Loathsome

Contagious Disease) affect their chance of entering the United States? Ms. Carmack answers these questions and gives many specific aides to further Italian-American research.

OLD MEDICAL TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

This is part 2 of an article published in several parts. There will be more sections in succeeding issues of this newsletter. This can also be found at <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Hills/2840/diseases.html>

Chillblain - Swelling of extremities caused by exposure to cold.

Child bed fever -infection following birth of a child

Chlorosis - Iron deficiency anemia

Cholera - Acute severe contagious diarrhea with intestinal lining sloughing. Spread by feces-contaminated water and food. Major epidemics struck in the United States in the years 1832, 1849, and 1866.

Cholera infantum-a common, noncontagious diarrhea of young children, occurring in summer or autumn. It was common among the poor and in hand-fed babies.

Death frequently occurred in 3-5 days. Synonyms: summer complaint, weaning brash, water gripes, choleric fever of children, cholera marbus.

Cholic- Paroxysmal pain in the abdomen or bowels. Infantile colic is benign paroxysmal abdominal pain during the first 3 months of life. Colic rarely caused death. Renal colic can occur from disease in the kidney, gallstone colic from a stone in the bile duct.

Commotion - concussion

Congestion - An excessive or abnormal accumulation of blood or other fluid in a body part or blood vessel. In congestive fever, the internal organs become gorged with blood.

Congestive Fever - Malaria

Consumption - A wasting away of the body; formerly applied especially to pulmonary tuberculosis. Synonyms: starvation, phthisis.

Chorea (St. Vitus' Dance) Nervous disorder. An acute, infectious disease characterized by profuse diarrhea, vomiting and cramps. Any of several diseases of the nervous system, characterized by jerky movements that appear to be well coordinated by are performed involuntarily, chiefly of the face and extremities.

Consumption - Tuberculosis

Congestion - Any collection of fluid in an organ, like the lungs

Congestive chills - Malaria with diarrhea

Corruption - Infections

Cramp colic - Appendicitis

Crop sickness- overextended stomach

Getting More Than Meets the Eye Out of the Census

by Shirley Hornbeck

In the census returns that show the birthplace of an individual and the birth place of the individual's parents, much circumstantial evidence is present to indicate the family structure. If it shows the place of birth of the mother of the household as New York, but it shows the place of birth of some or all of the children's mother as Massachusetts, one can start making other assumptions as to how many wives the husband had and which children, if not all, might be from another marriage.

The presence of an elderly person in the household of the same surname might indicate a parent, aunt or uncle of the husband. If the surname is different, it might be a mother or father-in-law and watch out for the remarriages of this newly found grandma before jumping to the conclusions that you have discovered a maiden name for the wife.

Always take note of the families nearby (census takers usually took the houses in order that they were situated) and also take note of any families that are housing one person of your surname of interest. The data you transcribe in doing this will very often reap rewards of family connections later down the line. Take note of the places of birth of your family and the other families in the area with the same origins whether it be the same state or the same country. You will often find people moved in groups or invited friends and relatives from their former home to join them.

Taking note of the places of birth of all the children can tell a story of family movement and judging from the length of time they lived in a particular area (perhaps 3 children were born in Vermont over a 10 year period) one can determine whether or not a search for a deed or other documents in that area would be worthwhile.

The education of a family can be determined from the number in the family who can read and write and if the children did or did not attend school.

The value of property and other monetary facts might give you a clue as to whether a will or other estate papers might be found. It could also help you determine whether they might be mentioned in a local history.

See "This and that Genealogy Tips" by Shirley Hornbeck for More Shirley Hornbeck <hornbeck@s-hornbeck.com>

BOARD ACTIONS:

The Board of Directors recently voted to revise the SRVGS Standing roles in response to insurance and other concerns.

Members and non-members alike are invited to attend the Society's monthly meetings. Education classes are to be for members only. Special interest groups and Library Trips are open to members and their out-of-area guests. Drivers of carpools to Society sponsored events should be members.

Dues remain the same, but the reduced dues to be charged after January 1 is for first time members only.

Cataloging Keepsakes

In light of recent programs of family keepsakes or valuables (like the quilts we saw in a recent program) this information from Linda Mecham (printed in Ancestry Weekly Digest, 3 Feb. 2001) might be good advice:

"I recently began a project to catalog, identify, and date a large number of family antiques that have been handed down from one generation to the next. My mother, who passed away in 1989, had started making a list of the item's owners and dates they were acquired. Unfortunately, she never completed the list. However, I discovered that she had written the information on tape on the bottom of some of the dishes. Thank goodness! Still, I have many I will need to date using other sources.

If you will be inheriting any old family objects, learn the history of the item while those who know it are still living. I truly regret that I did not have the foresight to sit down with my mother and make a complete listing of all these old antiques I now have in my possession. Believe me, you'll be very glad you took the time."

Editorial note: My mother is 91, and she just gave me a glass pitcher, with a heavy gold rim. I have seen that in her curio cabinet for years. I didn't know until this last month that it belonged to her great grandmother. She doesn't know WHICH great grandmother, or any stories about it. Now, that is up to me to find out.

NARA Sets New FEES

The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration has published its new fees which went into effect on November 13, 2000. A complete list of the fees, as well as a copy of the final rules can be found at:

<http://www.nara.gov/nara/newfees.html>.

Veterans in Your Family: Finding Background History and Images to supplement Your Family

History by Juliana Smith 11/11/1999 - preprinted with permission from Ancestry Daily News

As we remember the veterans in our family this Memorial Day, the Internet has many resources available that can help us document their service in our family history. As you go through these sites, although you may not find a photo of your ancestor, you can find historic photos, documents, and other information that can greatly enhance your family history.

Was he onboard a ship in the Navy? Include a photo of the ship from the U.S. Naval Historical Center's Photographic Unit. (<http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/sh-usn/usn-name.htm>). What was the insignia for the military unit he served in? See the section below on insignias, medals, etc. Be creative. Was your great-great-grandfather one of the soldiers who listened to Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address? If so, a copy of the address (<http://lcweb.loc.gov/exhibits/gadd/>) can bring an interesting element to the story, indelibly linking him to the history of the country.

Historical and Miscellaneous Information

U.S. Army Military History Institute - Historic Documents: <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usamhi/DL/>

Historical documents can add an extra element to our family history. It places our veteran ancestors in the context of history. Browse a huge selection of documents at: <http://carlisle-www.army.mil/usambi/DL/AtoZ.htm>.

U.S. Army Center of Military History

Location: Building 35, 102 Fourth Avenue, Fort McNair, Washington, DC

Mail: 103 Third Avenue, Fort McNair, DC 20319-5058. Telephone: 202-761-5413.

E-mail: cmhweb@cmh-smtp.army.mil <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/default.htm>

This site often features revealing articles and online exhibits. Check back often as this page is updated regularly. Also check out the Army Division Matrix, which includes insignia information, lineage and honors, photos, unit decorations, sound and video, division commanders, order of battle, bibliography, interviews, and war service by division. Current online exhibits include: "Remembering the Korean War, A Prelude to the Official Commemoration;" "the German Campaigns in the Balkans;" "German Anti-guerrilla Operations in the Balkans (1941-1944):" and "Images of West Point."

Full text listings of Medal of Honor Recipients: <http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/moh1.htm>

U.S. Army Center for Military History - Lineage and Honors Certificates:

<http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/lineage/linindex.htm>

"Armies, Corps, Divisions, and Separate Brigades" by John B. Wilson

<http://www.army.mil/cmh-pg/BOOKS/Lineage/ACDSB/ACDSB-notice.htm>

CMH publications for sale - page has links to select images online..

MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL APPLICATION 2001-2002

It's time to renew your membership and pay your annual dues which support our educational programs, and provide knowledge to find our ancestors. Please fill out this form and send it with your check made payable to SRVGS to:
P.O. Box 305, Diablo, CA 94528-8308..

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

e-mail: _____ PHONE: _____

\$ _____ Dues: \$15 Single: _____ \$20 Family: _____

\$ _____ donation for Library resources additions, if desired.

\$ _____ \$1.00 Donation suggested for National Archives Record Administration (NARA)

Records microfilming project

\$ _____ \$2.50 added, please if you desire a handbook/directory sent to your address
and cannot pick one up at a meeting.

If you DO NOT wish a Handbook/Directory, please check here so we won't print unneeded copies.

\$ _____ Total amount of check

INTERNET SITES OF INTEREST

The web page of the **United States Geological Survey Unit**. You can ask about any other town, village, historic building, bridge, cemetery, etc in the United States. They are charged with keeping track of all sorts of things.
<http://geonames.usgs.gov/gnisform.html>

Want to add some interesting history to your family stories? Check out <http://www.ourtimelines.com>. Enter a name and the dates you want included, and out will come a time line of interesting events that occurred during the lifetime of your ancestor (or yourself.)

Do you forget to check in on Cyndi's List and see what are the newest genealogy sites? You can subscribe to her Mailing list and be automatically updated. Or you can check in on <http://www.CyndisList.com/whatsnew.htm>

One of the nicest free genealogical resources on the Net is the Ancestry Weekly Digest. This is sent weekly via e-mail and has lots of printable articles from some of the top names in genealogy. It is presented by the publishers of "The Source" and "Ancestry" Magazine. Just go to <http://www.ancestry.com/DailyNews>.

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FIRST CLASS MAIL

LOCAL CURRENCY EXCHANGE

If you are traveling and would like to exchange U.S. dollars for foreign currency, there is a local currency exchange in Lafayette. They stock a variety of different currencies or you can order what you need and get it in only a couple of days. The company is All World Currency Exchange, Inc. and it is located at 3705 Mt. Diablo Blvd. in Lafayette. Phone: 925-299-7660. There is a minimum for some currencies, but the exchange rate is quite good, and there is no fee. I checked the exchange rate for Swedish funds and their rate was better than the rate posted on the Internet. They do not write checks in foreign currencies for individuals, just for companies. For example, if you wish to pay someone for research in Sweden, they do not write you a check for X number of SEK in exchange for your bank check. The International Currency Express, Inc., has been suggested for that. They are available at 1-888-278-6628.

It has been noted that the best way and cheapest way to get foreign money when you travel is to wait until you get to the country then use an ATM with your international ATM card. I tried that, but the instructions were in the language of the country and if you don't have someone nearby who can read that, it can be quite confusing.