

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305

Diablo, CA 94528-8308

President: Frances Lloyd

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

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June 2002

THIS MONTH - JULY 16, 2002

A PUBLISHING "HOW-TO" FOR FAMILY HISTORIANS

The goal of most genealogists is to preserve their research in some form to pass along to others. Many are thinking seriously of publishing "someday." To inspire and help us, several SRVGS members will give us the benefit of their experiences. They will tell us how they accomplished their goals, what they learned and also, what they wouldn't do next time. Barbara Dittig, Marilyn Fullam, Bob Heacox, Frances Lloyd, Fran Schweitzer, and Jane Steiner used a variety of materials and methods from binders to hard-bound books. We will have examples of many publishing techniques on display before and after the meeting.

LAST MEETING - JUNE 18, 2002

IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN

Speaker - Barbara Leak, Notes by Lee Schlenker

This month's speaker was very detailed in explaining how the original 30 public land states came to be divided up into parcels and given or sold to applicants. The term "in the public domain" is the same as *public land* or ungranted land. This land started out with the federal government and would eventually pass to a veteran or his widow, or an entryman (which was the first person to ask the government for the land and set claim to it).

The Land Ordinance of 1785 required that all public domain lands be surveyed and laid out into townships, ranges and sections before being opened for settlement. So a rectangular survey system was invented. The government surveyors kept field notes and drew survey or township plats. The surveying consisted of the Principal Meridian intersected by the Base Line, then the Range Lines, into the Township Lines, into the Township (of 36 sections or 36 square miles), into Sections (equaling 640 acres of 1 square mile). These Sections were surveyed as small as 1/4 of 1/4 Section equaling 40 acres.

Obtaining land from the federal government meant filing a claim with the local Land Office. The entryman's name and property description were entered into the *tract book*. After the terms of the grant were satisfied, the local Land Office assembled all papers proving the claim into a *land entry case file* which was sent to the General land Office in Washington, D.C. If approved, a final certificate

was issued. The last step was the government issuing a *patent* transferring legal title to the land to the entryman.

There were many types of Land Grants:

- ♦ **Military Bounty-Land** (for military service 1776-1855) free land granted to veterans as an incentive for service.
- ♦ **Credit Entries** (1800-1820) settlers were allowed to purchase land on credit for a minimum of \$2.00 per acre and paid for it in installments.
- ♦ **Cash Entries** (1820-1908) persons could purchase land from the government for cash - minimum \$1.25 per acre
- ♦ **Pre-emption rights** (1830-1891) persons who settled on public domain lands not yet officially opened for settlement could be eligible for first rights to enter claim on the land before becoming available to the general public
- ♦ **Donation Lands** (1842-1883) the forerunner of the Homestead Act, free land was granted in present-day FL, OR, WA & NM to strengthen the U.S. claims to the territory
- ♦ **Homesteads** (1862-1935) persons obtained title to land (usually 160 acres) by entering a claim, residing on the property for 5 years, making improvements to it.

- ◆ Timber Culture Lands (1873-1891) to encourage the cultivation of trees on the prairies, persons could obtain title to 160 acres by planting a specified number of trees on the land and maintaining them in a healthy condition for 8-10 years.
- ◆ **Desert Lands** (1877-On) persons could purchase 320 acres of arid land at \$1.25 per acre but were required to develop an irrigation system under certain guidelines
- ◆ **Special Grants** such as Railroad Grants (for railroad construction) or the State Land Grant College Act a.k.a. Morrill Act (federal lands given to the state to be sold for mechanical and agricultural colleges).

Barbara Leak gave us a terrific handout listing the seven steps you need to search in order to obtain land-entry case files for patented claims. Very helpful hints for the national Archives, General Land Office Automated Record System (GLOARS), county recorder's offices where your ancestor's land was located, getting a legal description of the property, searching tract books (in SLC or local Family History Centers), BLM, and the forms needed to finally send your data to the National Archives. She also listed steps to obtaining Land-Entry Case files or canceled claims and to obtaining Military Bounty-Land Files - all were too numerous to list here. Her handout included titles of books to study, Internet sites, addresses and repositories for Federal Land Records. If you rent the tape of this month's speaker don't forget to get the handout to copy for your own use. It is very helpful and seems very complete.

President's Message - July 2002

by Barbara Dittig

Starting the year as your new president, I realize how fortunate I am to be a part of such a dedicated and talented group of loyal SRVGS members. I truly look forward to this coming year, working with the board and committee chairs.

Recently a comment was made that being an officer took up so much time and energy, that there was little time left for one's genealogy research. I hope to dispel this assertion. Now that I have agreed to get involved as your president, I find that I'm also spending more time thinking about what I need to do to jump start my own genealogy research. While going through a large stack of "Things to do someday" I came across a packet from a class I took many years ago called Creative Dynamics. The first session was GOAL SETTING. I learned that the first step in achieving any goal is knowing exactly what

that goal is and why you want to achieve it. The second step is believing that somehow, some way, you can and will achieve it. We were told to write our goal down on a piece of paper and post it where it could be seen daily. Today (30 years later), I wrote down on my piece of paper, Start the book on the Dittig Family History and posted it at eye level above my computer screen. So now, I've committed myself to starting and finishing this project. Where do I start?? How can our organization be of help?

1. Sign up for our General Education Classes. These are very helpful if you're new to genealogy and also a good review for us old timers.
2. Join a Special Interest Group that will help in your area of research.
3. Take advantage of the monthly library trips. We are lucky to have so many research facilities in our area and it's fun going with a group and sharing knowledge.
4. Learn the many research features that the FHC here in Danville has to offer.
5. Attend this month's meeting on Publishing.

OK, I've set my goal and announced it to all! I'm excited and ready to get started. Anyone care to join me - Barbara Dittig - making this another outstanding year for the San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society. Looking back, we have had educational programs and informative special interest groups, instructive classes and successful trips to research facilities and libraries. Our members have been kept up to date by our great newsletter. We have been well nourished and our library collection has grown. It's hard to work on an empty stomach! Our "passing the clip boards" skills have vastly improved. What a great group you all are - fun too!

SRVGS CALENDAR JULY 2002

2 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of Barbara Dittig on Jacaranda Drive in Danville. Maps were made available at the June general meeting.

16 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at the LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/3 miles. The program will consist of a panel of members relating their varied experiences of publishing genealogical material. We wish to thank Dorothy Stanton and each panel member for participating.

23 Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. Departure time for the library trip. The library trip will be to the California Genealogical Society Library in Oakland. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. The

Library Trip Coordinator is Michael Fiorenza, phone 820-8294. If you sign up for the trip and wish to cancel, please call Michael or e-mail mfioRENza@earthlink.net. You should also feel welcome to call him if you wish to add your name to the library trip roster. This trip was canceled earlier in the year, due to the fact that the library moved downstairs in the same building at 1611 Telegraph Avenue. It is located between 2 BART stations, thus it is reasonably accessible via BART. In fact, getting there by BART is encouraged because parking is expensive and fairly difficult. Phone (510) 663-1358 or go to www.calgensoc.org. Non-members of CGS will be asked for a user fee of \$ 3.

AUGUST 2002

Meetings are not held during the month of August.

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: July 2002

GERMAN -. Some members of this group will be carpooling to Sacramento on Tuesday July 23 to attend the general meeting of the Sacramento German Genealogical Society. The speaker will be Roger Minert. The topic will be "The Keeping of Vital Records in Germany," Church and Civil records. Their meeting location is St. Mark's Church, on Lusk drive at St Mark's Way. If you are planning on going, please call Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail rbtschw@pacbell.net.

IRISH - They will meet July 10 (second Wednesday) 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

SOUTHERN - This group will NOT meet again until September. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, Phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com. Members of this group will no longer be contacted by phone.

INTERNET - Interested users communicate via e-mail. The new coordinator is Jack Johnson, 837-2153 or jackmj@earthlink.net

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They did not meet in June.. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's and their interest is the use of Master Genealogist.

Peggy Dearman is the contact person for the group, phone 837-1621 or dearman@pacbell.net.

The following is a list of Special Interest Groups that are currently inactive. The name and phone number of the group contact person is also listed:

MAC Computer users - Barbara Dittig, phone 648-9364 or e-mail bdittig@aol.com.

NEW ENGLAND - Barbara Dyer, phone 820-9738 or e-mail bdyergen@aol.com.

PORTUGUESE - Millie Freitas, phone 837-2483.

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

PUBLISHING - Dorothy Stanton, phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com. If you are interested in publishing, please plan to attend our July general meeting.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

19 July, Friday Rose Mary Kennedy will present Part II of a workshop on "Military Records, The Spanish American War to Viet Nam." It will given at The National Archives. The time is 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.. Fees are \$15. To register and reserve a space, call (650) 876-9009.

7-10 August, Wednesday through Saturday. The Federation of Genealogical Societies and Calif. State Genealogical Alliance will host an annual convention in Ontario, CA. <http://www.fgs.org> for further information.

7 September Saturday The Solano County Genealogical Society general meeting will be held at 11 A.M. at the Fairfield Senior Center, 1200 Civic Center Dr. in Fairfield. Sue Downhill, a member of their society, will speak about Genealogy Websites. www.scgsinc.org

12 October Saturday The Monterey County Genealogical Society will sponsor a fall conference. The featured speaker will be Karen Clifford. The location will be 1200 Aguajito Road in Monterey. Watch for further details. www.mocogenso.org

Treasurer's Report- June 2002**Treasurer - Marilynn Tanner**

Beginning Balance:	\$5049.09
Income:	1105.00
Expenses:	182.46
Fund Balances:	
General Fund	2688.61
Hospitality Fund	150.78
Directory Mailing	15.00
Publications Fund	703.67
Special Projects	500.00
NARA Income	58.00
Cassette Tape Library Fund	183.79
Library Fund	862.78
Current Total Balance	\$6267.63

Newsletter Team:

Coordinator: Sharon Clay	462-4518
	sharoncl@ix.netcom.com
Special Contributor: 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 the newsletter is the last Thursday of the month.	

How to Reach the Board Members:

President: Barbara Dittig	648-9364
	e-mail: bdittig@aol.com
1 st Vice President - Barbara Johnson	837-2153
2 nd Vice President: (Program)	
Bob Kay	945-7426
Carol Thompson	820-4103
Frank Williams	283-6135
3 rd Vice President (Membership)	
John Lemak	932-3957
Recording Secretary: Virginia Rood	937-8659
Treasurer: Marilynn Tanner	376-6733
Parliamentarian: Frances Lloyd	837-9382

For all the people involved in Special Interest Groups and the other necessary duties of the operation of this organization, please see your handbook and the calendar.

The Budget shown below will be voted upon at the July meeting. Please bring this newsletter for any discussion regarding the budget.

Budget - Fiscal Year 2002 -2003

Fund - Item	Actual Expense 2001-2002	Proposed Budget
General fund	2780.00	2665.00
Dues Income	2574.50	
Expenses:		
Mailbox Rental	20.00	25.00
Facility Rental	0.00	0.00
Liability Ins.	302.00	320.00
Membership Com.	256.54	300.00
Monthly Program Costs	297.54	500.00
Newsletter:	1198.99	1330.00
Printing 491.94		
Postage 707.05		
Officers Exp.	50.00	25.00
Publicity	30.60	40.00
Miscellaneous	66.91	25.00
Sales Tax	1.00	0.00
Hospitality Fund	150.78	0.00
Publication Fund		
Soc. Memb. Fund	100.00	100.00
Special Projects	500.00	0.00
N.A.R.A. fund	0.00	0.00
Roster Mailing	0.00	0.00
Cassette Tape Library	176.79	0.00
Library Fund	642.76	0.00
Total Budget for 2002-2003 Fiscal Year		\$2665.00

Guidelines For Genealogical Self-Improvement and Growth

Recommended by the National Genealogical Society

<http://www.ngsgenealogy.org/comstandself.htm>

Referred by Dorothy Stanton

Faced with ever-growing expectations for genealogical accuracy and reliability, family historians concerned with improving their abilities will on a regular basis--

- **Study** comprehensive texts and narrower-focus articles **and recordings** covering genealogical methods in general and the historical background and sources available for areas of particular research interest, or to which their research findings have led them.
- **Interact** with other genealogists and historians in person or electronically, mentoring or learning as appropriate to their relative experience levels, and through the shared experience contributing to the genealogical growth of all concerned
- **Subscribe** to and read regularly at least two genealogical journals that list a number of contributing or consulting editors, or editorial board or committee members, and that require their authors to respond to a critical review of each article before it is published.
- **Participate** in workshops, discussion groups, institutes, conferences and other structured learning opportunities whenever possible.
- **Recognize their limitations**, undertaking research in new areas or using new technology only after they master any additional knowledge and skill needed and understand how to apply it to the new subject matter or technology.
- **Analyze critically** at least quarterly the reported research findings of another family historian, for whatever lessons may be gleaned through the process.
- **Join and participate** actively in genealogical societies covering countries, localities and topics where they have research interests, as well as the localities where they reside, increasing the resources available both to themselves and to future researchers.
- **Review recently published basic texts** to renew their understanding of genealogical fundamentals as currently expressed and applied examine and revise their own earlier research in the light of what they have learned through self-improvement activities, as a means for applying their new-found knowledge and for improving the quality of their work-product.

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Genealogy Fuels the Economy

An article in the New York Times entitled "Fueled by Internet, Families Vacation to Research Ancestors" states that more people are traveling to the locations where their ancestors lived, adding significantly to local revenues as they spend money for hotels, restaurant meals, gasoline and copying fees.

The next time a local government talks about limiting access to their records, citing manpower expenses, I think we should shove a copy of the article under their noses. No less a voice than the New York Times says that encouraging people to research local genealogy records can boost the local economy.

Read the whole article at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2001/08/19/national/19SEAR.html>.

Ancestry.com - Dick Eastman Online 8/22/2001

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TAPE LIBRARY

Don't forget to get your tape at the meeting. This month - there is a special deal - 2 months for the price of one. There are lots of tapes about organizing your material, how to write your family history, and publishing. See page 41 in your handbook. Since there isn't much time to browse the library, plan ahead, come prepared. Check your handbook

STATE RESEARCH SITES

Research sites on the Internet are being added and changed constantly. Check your state resources frequently - either through Cyndislist, or try a search engine - like Google. One site that has been added recently is the Illinois State Death Certificate Index. An article in the 6/12/2002 Ancestry Daily News, by Michael John Neill explains how to get the most of this online index. For the complete article - see <http://www.ancestry.com/library/print/news/articles/5885.html>.

The online database contains an index to deaths in Illinois from 1916 until 1950. The index can be accessed at www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/idphdeathindex.html). It is hosted by the Illinois State Archives website. It only includes the records that were created after state-mandated registration of deaths began in 1916.

Certificates for Illinois deaths from 1916-47 can be ordered (at no charge) from the Illinois State Archives through the website (which also includes a regular mailing address for those who do not wish to submit requests online). Requests are limited to two certificates at a time and online requests are not given priority to mail or telephone requests. Certificates after 1947 can either be ordered through the Illinois Dept. Of Vital Records or the Recorder's Office in the county in which the event took place.

Don't skip any steps when you try to use this database. Read the sections that explain more about the index and the original records from which it was created. It is a finding aid, and it might not be perfect and the site might explain known limitations of the index. If you just type names into boxes without reading and learning

more about the actual database you may make incorrect assumptions about the site and the data it contains.

The site will return as "hits" any name that starts with the letters entered in the search box. A search for the last name "Neil" and the first name "Sam" brought the following results: Neiler Samuel, Neill Samantha, Neill Samuel, Neilsberg Samuel, Neilson Samuel. It is an effective way to perform multiple searches simultaneously. It is necessary to enter at least two characters in the last name box.

Spellings Can Be Incorrect

Remember, some original certificates are difficult to read. Few early certificates were typed and few of those who completed the certificates by hand used block printing - which is easier to read. The script rendition of the name may be easily interpreted in several different ways. So, consider all reasonable variants. For example, Oneill, O'Neill and O'Neill (with the apostrophe) brought about different results. The names containing Mc or Mac surnames may also have to be searched with several variations: McSurname, Mc Surname (with a space), MacSurname, or Mac Surname (with a space).

It is possible to copy/paste data from the results page into other Windows applications and used in more sophisticated ways - such as into an Excel spreadsheet and using the sort/search features of that program to perform additional analysis not possible with the web site.

What Do These Certificates Contain

Typically these records include: (1) Name of deceased (2) Date and place of death (3) Place of residence of deceased (4) Age (5) Date and place of birth (6) (Parents' names (mother's maiden) and places of birth (7) Informant (8) Date and place of burial (9) Cause of death (10) Undertaker

Of course, this doesn't guarantee that the information will be there just because there is a blank for it ("unknown" is a very popular word on some of these certificates), nor does it guarantee that the information is correct, it depends on who the informant was. Information should always be cross referenced with other sources and be used as a clue to additional records.

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Another State Site - Missouri

Excerpted from "Among the Coles" - Coles County Illinois Genealogical Society Vol. XXVIII, May & June 2002.

The Missouri State Archives is uploading various birth, stillborn, and death information from registers that were published between 1883 and about 1900. This website is at: <http://www.sos.state.mo.us> Then go to "Research & reference", then click on "state archives & historical information", then "research room", then "archival holdings", then "birth & death records". The information is listed alphabetically **by county** (don't search on the letter of your surname - search alphabetically by the county). For each county, the available records are indicated by type of record and span of years. Entries in blue are completed, red entries are still being transcribed. Clicking on a blue entry presents the data as a PDF file. You need Adobe Acrobat Reader to see the information. Birth information on the index may include: name of child, sex, no. of child of this mother, race or color, date of birth, place of birth, name including maiden name of mother.

Death information may include name, sex color, age, occupation, date of death, marital status, place of death, and cause of death. Many county listings run over 20 pages, so check the page count before printing.

Another resource for Missouri is Compton & Dry's book "*Pictorial St. Louis (1875)*" which provides detailed illustrations of the city in that year. It is now accessible on the Library of Congress's American Memory page at <http://memory.loc.gov>. From this home page, select the search button and enter Compton Dry in the search box, and select the option which reads "Match all of these Words." You will then see a list of matches. Select the item that reads "Map collections: Pictorial St. Louis..." You will then see a page that shows a map of all of St. Louis in 1875. Clicking on each grid within that map displays the detailed section of the city.

Original article was written by Ted Steele for the News'N Notes newsletter of the St. Louis Genealogical Society, Volume 34, Number 5, May 2002.

MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL APPLICATION 2002-2003

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. **Dues must be received by July 31st or you will be dropped from the membership roster and your name will not appear in the members' handbook.**

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

TOWN: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

PHONE: _____ e-mail: _____

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

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

\$ _____ Donation for National Archives Records Admin. (NARA) Records
microfilming project (\$1.00 suggested)

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

_____ Check here if you **DO NOT** wish a Handbook/Directory, so we won't print unneeded copies.

\$ _____ Total amount of check

Another Helpful Web Site

When you need to find something involved with the government, either Federal or state, but you just don't know where to go - try this web site <http://www.firstgov.gov/>. Here you can find links to all sorts of government sites from social security to postal rates.

It is searchable by Federal or individual state government or both; by agency, services, topic, kids, students, workers, disabilities. Search by topics for citizens, businesses or governments. Find a school or library, zip code lookup, government phone numbers, passport application forms and information, and under that even a link to Consular Affairs, or State Department. There is even a subject line for obtaining birth and death certificates. There are enough subjects to keep you busy for a long time. It is a fun site - look it up.

FROM THE TAPE LIBRARIAN

by Betty Vail

We would like to thank Frances Becker for her contribution of the syllabi from the National Genealogical Society Conferences in 1987, 1990, 1994, 1995 and 1996 and the 1995 Federation of Genealogical Societies. They have provided handouts for twenty of the tapes we purchased. If you have a syllabus from other conferences, please let me know (particularly if we have the tapes to go along with them)..

I would also like to remind you that when you rent a tape in July for \$1.00, you do not have to return it until September! (Two months for the price of one).

When you get tired of checking government listings - and want to go back to researching your genealogy - look at these web sites: <http://genforum.genealogy.com> (lots of available search possibilities); and <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Acres/8310/gensearcher.html>.

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