

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY

Vol. XVII No. 7



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308
President: Barbara Dittig
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

February 2003

THIS MONTH - FEBRUARY 18, 2003

USING CEMETERIES AND GRAVESTONES AS GENEALOGICAL RESOURCES

Speaker: Traci Parent

Traci is Supervising Naturalist with Black Diamond Mines Regional Preserve, East Bay Regional Park District. Among her many duties, she serves as a caretaker for the Preserve's historic resources. She has documented the Preserve's Rose Hill Cemetery and has researched each of the nearly 200 individuals buried there. Traci serves on the Board of Contra Costa County Historical Society. She has conducted workshops for educators focusing on historic subjects and has provided training to groups in how to conduct oral histories. Her presentation will focus on using cemeteries and gravestones and may include gravestone types and shapes; documenting information you can obtain from gravestones; photographing them; cleaning gravestones to obtain information; proper and improper gravestone repair methods, and how to do gravestone rubbings and additional resources.

LAST MEETING - January 21, 2003

HOW TO FIND WHERE YOUR IMMIGRANT ANCESTORS CAME FROM

Speaker - Don R. Baker - notes by Lee Schlenker

Our speaker for the January meeting was Don R. Baker, a docent at the Oakland FHC. He is an extensive traveler, who started his genealogy enthusiasm when he was quite young, learning his ancestry from his mother's side of the family. He has embarked on Swedish, English and German research, and he had some good tips for all of us who are still searching.

Family Histories - don't forget your own personal family from which to draw stories and details to help you get started.

Immigration Records - can be very helpful but they are not always correct. Cities listed on the records could be only the port city from which that ship sailed or from where your ancestor embarked, but not necessarily the city in which your ancestor was born or lived. The country listed would probably be correct.

Census Records - usually tell you the country, but not necessarily the city/county/local area from where your ancestor came. Very often families came to America together, lived next to each other and may have moved along together. Keep that block of names together in your mind when searching. The 1851 English census tells you exactly where people were born.

Newspapers and Obituaries - the Library of Congress is a good place for finding the different newspapers you

might need. Don has used the Union List of newspapers - 1825 to 1937 (found at the U.C. Berkeley Library). He found that obituaries after 1880 were more helpful because they became more precise in description about the individuals death.

Maps - are very helpful if you can find a very good one for that area and at the time you're researching.

Clerical Records - for some countries have a wealth of information (some good, some bad) if you can locate which parish your ancestor came from or where they were baptized.

County Histories - are readily available at most local libraries. Remember, very often families came together to America, lived next door to each other and often moved at the same time together. You might find one of those names in the county archive; or the name of a sister/brother mentioned in the history.

The Internet - In the past one or two years the Internet has become very handy. Mr. Baker finds the use of "Google.com" very helpful in searching for people, places and things as well as Ancestry.com and Genealogy.com. There are other Internet records available, some you need to pay for and some you really need to check out who put the info there. Posting queries on a genealogy site on the Internet might give you good results. Remember that not all Internet info is accurate.

The LDS Libraries - there is a wealth of information at these facilities. Mr. Baker is available on Thursday evenings at the Oakland LDS Family History Center and is very willing to aid you in your search.

A few helpful tips: Surnames - same names are difficult, you need to go from generation to generation backwards slowly, verifying each person involved in that lineage. The John Jones you found may not be YOUR John Jones.

Tracing Irish Relatives - the county is very important. The older the relative the harder it is to find them in Ireland. Any old correspondence can be very helpful/useful if you should have it.

City Names - be sure that if your ancestor was born in Lancaster it was in Lancaster, Penn. and not in Lancastershire, U.K.

The New England Antiquarian Society in Mass. has a large variety of historical information (1750 to 1850, New England) but you have to go there in person to view it. The Society will not look up anything for you over the phone or by mail.

The best tip he gave us was to go visit the actual place where your ancestor lived. He has visited England, Germany and Sweden where relatives were raised and was welcomed by existing relatives, friends and acquaintances. He was able to see the "old homestead", listen to stories which the people knew, eat with the folks and listen to the language. He suggested staying as long as possible to get the flavor of the town and it's people. In England, it was a night of story-telling and relative-gathering in a pub.

In closing, he reminds us: there are a lot of rocks to turn over, some rocks are more attractive than others, but turn them ALL over.

Nominating Committee

In accordance with our bylaws the nominating committee shall consist of at least 3 members. If you are interested in serving on this committee please contact Barbara Dittig at 648-9364.

Genealogy Word for the Day

One problem with family tradition is the likelihood of its being tainted by confabulation.

CONFABULATION - (verb)

Definition 1: to chat, converse; (Psychology) to fill lapses of memory with fabrications that one believes are facts.

Source: MISSING LINKS, Vol. 8, No. 4, 27 Jan. 2003.

President's Message by Barbara Dittig

It doesn't seem possible that February is here and spring is right around the corner! It's nice to get out on a warm sunny day and start thinking about refurbishing the garden or just enjoy seeing the trees showing signs of waking up and their blossoms suddenly opening - a true sign of spring.

Many are in the process of putting together the year's travel plans. Jim and I have filled our calendar and are looking forward to March - Spring Baseball in Phoenix; April - a Porsche event in Cambria (I go along with his car thing and in return he agrees to my genealogy trips and tramping through cemeteries); an Alaskan cruise in June with Lucy and Jack Carver; and a fall foliage cruise leaving Boston in October. CGS is again sponsoring a genealogy seminar on board. Sounds like fun!

Time really flies when you're having fun - and it is now time to start thinking about new officers for the coming year. Nominees will be announced at the April meeting and the election held at the annual Meeting in May. I do hope many will consider taking an office or chairmanship. It's really not that time consuming and it can be a very rewarding experience. For those who say "I just don't have time to take on another commitment, I want to have time to do my genealogy research". I have the following note tucked away on my hard drive and take it out every once in a while when I feel overwhelmed:

A professor doing a lecture on time management did a demonstration with one of his classes. He took a large jar and filled it with rocks. Then he asked his class if they thought the jar was full. They all said "Yes"! He then took gravel and poured it into the jar. And again, he asked the class if the jar was full. Some said "Yes, the jar is full"! He then poured sand into the jar, to show the class there still was space left in the jar. Then he poured water into the jar to show that there was still room for something else. He asked the class to explain what the demonstration meant. Most said "Even when you think your schedule is full, there might be room to do something else." His comment was "you must put your big rocks in first or you will never have room for them later on."

SRVGS may not be one of your "big rocks" but it could be the gravel, sand or water. And there may be some place in your schedule to be an officer. Say "yes" when the nominating committee calls.

SRVGS Calendar - February 2003

4 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of President, Barbara Dittig on Jacaranda Drive in Danville.

11 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Member Education Class, "Computer Resources Available at the Local Family History Center". Ron Frye at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road will present this class. Please note: This is NOT his Internet class. Eight members signed up at the January meeting. Another session will be scheduled for the other members that also signed up.

18 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at LDS Church, 2949 Stone Valley Road at Smith Road, in Alamo. From I-680 freeway, take Stone Valley Road east 2 & 1/2 miles.

26 Wednesday - 9:30 a.m. The Library trip will be to the Oakland Family History Center. The address is 4766 Lincoln Ave., and the phone no. is (510) 531-3905. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. Departures are always prompt. If you sign up for the trip and wish to cancel or if you wish to join the group, please call Louise Ford, Library Trip Coordinator. Her phone number is (925) 376-4587.

PLEASE NOTE: The departure time on a Wednesday.

MARCH 2003

4 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of President, Barbara Dittig on Jacaranda Drive in Danville

18 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. General Meeting at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road.

19 Wednesday - 1:30 p.m. Member Education Class. This will be a meeting for those members that would like to join the Internet Users special interest group. Watch for more details in the March newsletter and please sign up at the General Meeting.

24 Monday - The Library trip will be to the Sutro State Library in San Francisco. In case you missed it in the last newsletter - they now have the 1930 census.

**SRVGS Special Interest Groups:
FEBRUARY/MARCH - 2003**

GERMAN - There will be a meeting of group members on Wednesday February 26 (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m.. This meeting will be at the home of Marilyn Tanner, 140 Warfield Drive in Moraga. It would be appreciated if you let the hostess know if you do plan to attend. For directions, phone (925) 376-6733 or e-mail jtanner@nothingbutnet.net. The group coordinator is Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail FranSchw@pacbell.net.

IRISH - Their meeting dates will be February 12 and March 12, (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 meet February 11 and March 11, (Second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m. at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road, in Alamo. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, Phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com.

INTERNET - Interested users communicate via e-mail. They do not hold regular meetings. The coordinator is Jack Johnson. Phone 837-2153 or e-mail, jackmj@earthlink.net

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They will meet Tuesday, February 18 after the general meeting at about 12:30 p.m.. They will meet at the home of Peggy Dearman 749 Morninghome Road in Danville. Bring a bag lunch. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's and will focus on the use of Master Genealogist. Peggy Dearman is also the contact person for the group. Phone 837-1621 or e-mail, 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.

PUBLISHING – Dorothy Stanton, phone 820-3757 or e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com. If you are ready to organize your material into a format for publishing, printing or distribution, contact this group. A group of interested members has met twice since last fall and will schedule another meeting in April or May. If you are interested in meeting with this group, watch for details or phone Fran Lloyd, 837-9382.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

11 February, Tuesday The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society will hold its regular meeting 7:30 p.m. at 1866 College Ave. in Livermore.

20 February, Thursday The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will hold their general meeting at 3345 Lochinvar Ave. in Santa Clara at 7 p.m.. Richard Rand will speak about "Principles of Good Documentation".

8 March, Saturday Family History Day at the California State Archives, 1020 'O' Street in Sacramento. Free admission. Computer demonstrations, preservation techniques, mini classes and more. For further information go to www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives or e-mail ijones@accessbee.com

15 March Saturday The San Mateo County Genealogical Society will sponsor an all day seminar featuring Nora Hickey of County Cork, Ireland. The time is from 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. at 1st Presbyterian Church, 25th & Hacienda in San Mateo. The pre-registration fee for a non-member is \$ 22. For further information e-mail CathT@aol.com

22 March Saturday The Sonoma County Genealogical Society will hold its 11th annual Spring Seminar featuring Sharon DeBartolo Carmack. It will be held at Sonoma State Univ. in Rohnert Park. The pre-registration fee for a non-member is \$ 22; \$25 at the door. For further information go to www.rootsweb.com/~casgcs/carmack.htm

Ireland Tax Records

Two important Irish tax records are the *Tithe Applotment Books (1823-1838)* and *Griffith's Primary Valuation (1848-1864)*. Each contains a list of those who paid taxes, normally the head of the household. One surname index to these records is called the Householder's Index (FHC item number 34070)

To find names in the *Tithe Applotment Books* and *Griffith's Primary Valuation*:

1. Look up the surname in the Householder's Index. Write down the name of the parishes, baronies, unions, and counties where the surname is located.

2. In the Family History Library Catalog, look for tithe applotment records in the place search under Ireland --- Land and Property.

- ◆ For Northern Ireland counties (Antrim, Armagh, Donegal, Down, Fermanagh, Londonderry, and Tyrone), find the title "Tithe Applotment Books and Indexes, for Northern Ireland, ca. 1822--1837"
- ◆ For the rest of Ireland, find the title "Applotment Books, abt. 1824--1840."

3. In the catalog entry, the parishes are listed in alphabetical order. Find the parish you need and write down the microfilm number.

4. In the Family History Library Catalog, look for Griffith's Primary Valuation records in the place search under Ireland --Taxation or Ireland --Land and Property.

- ◆ For Northern Ireland, find the title "General Valuation of Rateable Property in Northern Ireland, 1858--1864."
- ◆ For the rest of Ireland, find the title "General Valuation of Rateable Property in Ireland, 1848--1861".

5. In the catalog entry, the records are listed by county and then by union or barony. Find the union or barony you need and write down the film number.

Source: *Family History Centers Memorandum December 2000*

About the Census

by Sharon Clay

Coming up soon will be a library trip to the Oakland FHC, and Sutro, and the National Archives. Each of these resources have some censuses. But, what can you get from that census information? Do you only check to see if your ancestor is listed there? We have had several classes on information you can get from the census, other than just finding the name of your ancestor. If you didn't attend one of those classes, here is a quick "pocket reference" from Tracing Your Ancestry Logbook by F. Wilber Helmbold copyright 1976 by Oxmoor House Inc. ISBN 0-8487-0414-2, Library of Congress Catalog Card Number 76-14109]

All the censuses prior to 1850 listed only heads of households, plus: 1800 or 1810 - numbers of (white) males by age ranges, number of (white) females by age ranges, all other persons except Indians, slaves. **1820** - residence, numbers of (white) males by age ranges, number of (white) females by age ranges, number of slaves by sex & age range, number of freed colored persons by sex & age range, and all other persons;

1830 or 1840 - numbers of (white) males by age ranges, number of (white) females by age ranges, a column for employment/pensioners, a column for impairment/schools.

The **1850** census is the first to list each individual, includes column headings: dwelling number, family number, name, age, sex, color, value of real estate, birthplace, married within year, cannot read or write, remarks.

1860 - Column headings: dwelling number, family number, name, age, sex, color, occupation etc, value of real estate, value of personal property, birthplace, married in year, school in year, cannot read or write, remarks.

1870 - Column headings: dwelling number, family number, name, age, sex, color, occupation etc, value of real estate, value of personal property, birthplace, father foreign born, mother foreign born, month born in year, month married in year, school in year, cannot read, cannot write, impairment, males eligible to vote, males ineligible to vote.

1880 - Column headings: dwelling number, family number, name, color, sex, age prior to June 1st, month of birth if born in census year, relationship to head of household, single, married, widowed/divorced, married in census year, occupation, miscellaneous, cannot read, cannot write, place of birth, place of birth of father, place of birth of mother

1890 - most areas not available due to fire, but if you are very lucky, a few are available on film.

1900 - Column headings: house number, name, relationship to head of household, color, sex, month and year of birth, age, marital status, years married, mother of how many children, number of living children, person's birthplace, father's birthplace, mother's birthplace, year of immigration, number of years in US, naturalized, occupation, remarks

1910 - Column headings: house number, dwelling number, family number, name, relationship to head of household, Personal description (Subheadings: sex, color/race, age, marital status, years married, mother of how many children, number of living children), person's birthplace, father's birthplace, mother's birthplace, year of immigration, naturalized/alien, Able to speak English or what language spoken, occupation, industry establishment, Employee or self employed, employee out of work (subheadings: working on April 15, 1910; weeks during 1909), education (subheadings: read, write, school since Sept. 1, 1909), home ownership (subheadings: owned/rented, free of mortgage, farm/house, schedule number), Survivor of Union or Confederate. Army/Navy, blind both eyes, deaf and dumb.

(Continued on Page 6)

1920 - Column headings: place of abode (subheadings: street, avenue, road, etc.; house number, dwelling number, family number), name, relationship to head of household, tenure (subheadings: home owned or rented; if owned, free or mortgaged), personal description (subheadings: sex; color or race; age at last birthday; single, married, widowed or divorced), education (subheadings: attended school any time since Sep. 1, 1919; whether able to read; whether able to write), nativity and mother tongue (subheadings: person - place of birth, mother tongue; father- place of birth, mother tongue; mother- place of birth, mother tongue), whether able to speak English, occupation (subheadings: trade, profession, or particular kind of work done, as spinner, salesman, laborer, etc.; industry, business, or establishment in which at work, as cotton mill, dry goods, store, farm, etc.; employer, salary, or wage worker, or working on own account), number of farm schedule.

1930 - Column headings: place of abode (subheadings: street, avenue, road, etc.; house number, dwelling number, family number), name, relationship to head of household, home data (subheadings: home owned or rented; value of home if owned, monthly rental fee if rented, do they have a radio, does the family live on a farm); Personal description, (subheadings: Sex, color or race, age, marital condition, age at first marriage); education (subheadings: attended school or college since Sept. 1, 1929; able to read and write) Place of birth (subheadings: of the Person, Father, Mother) Mother tongue or native language of foreign born (subheadings: language spoken before coming to U.S.), Citizenship (subheadings: Year of immigration to the U.S. Naturalized or alien, whether able to speak English) Occupation or Industry (subheadings: Occupation or trade or profession, Industry or business,) Employment - whether out of work or not., Veterans (Subheadings: Whether a veteran of the U.S. Military, and then what war or expedition). Number of farm schedule. Then there is an area for notes.

Following your ancestor or relative through these different censuses will add a lot of information to your story without an oral history. Although we have to take into consideration that the person gathering the information may not have gotten it entirely correctly, and our ancestor may not have told the entire truth, by checking other records for that time, it can help us verify information or add "flesh" to our family pedigree skeleton.

See your membership handbook for which library has which censuses.

How to Reach the Board Members:

President: Barbara Dittig

e-mail: bdittig@aol.com

1st Vice President - Barbara Johnson

2nd Vice President: (Program)

Bob Kay

Carol Thompson

Frank Williams

3rd Vice President (Membership)

John Lemak

Recording Secretary: Virginia Rood

Treasurer: Marilyn Tanner

Parliamentarian: Frances Lloyd

Tape Library -by Betty Vail

648-9364 Although we no longer tape our guest speakers, we
837-2153 will continue to buy professionally produced tapes. If
you attend a conference and hear a speaker whose
information and presentation are outstanding,
945-7426 please let us know. If a tape is available we may be
820-4103 able to acquire it for our cassette library.
283-6135

At our February meeting, Traci Parent will discuss
932-3957 how graveyards and cemeteries can be of value to a
937-8659 genealogist. We have several tapes on this subject.

376-6733

837-9382

M-15 Tombstones by Mary Ellen Jones

M-14 Collecting Dead Relatives - by LaVerne
Galeener-Moore

**C-69 Behind the Inscription: Gathering Full
Cemetery Info** by Pat Geyh

**C-89 Looking Beyond Tombstones in Cemetery
Research** by Renee Jackson Smith.

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.

Computer Genealogy

Fran Schweitzer passed this along from her French Canadian/Minnesota Genealogical Society newsletter.

A Canadian web site which has Tanguay and Parchemin - <http://www.genealogie.org>

<http://epf.planete.qc.ca> - Both of these Canadian sites are in French, but most of it is available for translation

<http://www.justgen.com> - this has loads of sites, one leading to another. The Canadian site has the Sorel marriage records.

Minnesota Historical Society: Death Index Update

The MHS Library is making available an additional 30 years of Minnesota death certificates (1967-1996). This completes the current cooperative project with the Minnesota Dept. Of Health to make Minnesota's historical death certificates more accessible. See <http://people.mnhs.org/dci>.

More Canadian Web Sites

American Canadian Gen Soc. <http://www.acgs.org/>
P.O. Box 6478
Manchester NH 03108-6478

Canada's National History Society
478-167 Lombard Ave.
Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3B 0T6 Canada
email: cnhs@historysociety.ca
Ph: 1-800-816-6777

Canadian Military Heritage Museum
P.O. Box 28002
North Park Post Office
Brantford, Ontario N3R 7X5
Phone: (519) 759-1313
<http://www.bfree.on.ca/comdir/musgal/cmhm/>

Canadian War Museum (Archives/Lib.)
330 Sussex Drive
Ottawa ON K1A 0M8
(819) 776-8654 Fax: (819) 776-8657
jean.langdon-ford@cmcc.muse.digital.ca

Immigrants to Canada:

<http://ist.uwaterloo.ca/~marj/genealogy/thevoyage.html>
United Church of Canada Archives Network
<http://www.united-church.ca>

Source: SMCGS Newsletter Vol. 20-9 September 2002

Civil War Soldiers and Sailors

The U.S. Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System (www.itd.nps.gov/cwss/soldiers.htm) is a computerized database that contains brief facts about Union and Confederate soldiers and sailors during the Civil War. The records of 5.4 million soldiers are currently being added to this site. A search feature allows the user to search by name, regiment, or state. The original records are housed at the National Archives. With some copies in the Family History Library. Regimental histories, historical information and links to descriptions of 384 significant battles are included. Additional information about soldiers, sailors, regiments, and battles, as well as prisoner-of-war records and cemetery records, will be added over time.

The Civil War Soldiers and Sailors System is a cooperative effort by the National Park Service and several other public and private partners, including the Genealogical Society of Utah. The goal is to increase people's understanding of this time in American history by making information widely accessible.

Source: *Family History Centers Memorandum*, Dec. 2000.

Census on Line

The LDS Church has added the following Census information online at FamilySearch:

1880 U.S. Census
1881 Canadian Census
1881 British Census

Go to <http://www.familysearch.org>.

Membership Information

From John Lemak - Vice President in charge of Membership

New Member:

Ronald W. Frye (Life Time Member)
3263 Munras Place
San Ramon, Ca 94583 (925) 828-4845
email: ronfrye@ids.net

Address correction: Please correct the address for the Calif. Genealogical Society in your handbook. It should be 1611 Telegraph Ave.
This is important if you are trying to find the society on your own.

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)

Questions about research - or do you have a problem in finding some information?

Start with your **subject (i.e. Swedish research, Värmland)**. Then put your question on a 3x5 or 4x6" card with your name & phone number and attach it to the back bulletin board at the meeting. Maybe someone will help you find the answer to your question.

San Ramon Valley
Genealogical Society
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Diablo, Ca 94528-0305

FIRST CLASS