

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308
President: Virginia Rood
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 2003

THIS MONTH -JUNE 17, 2003

Immigration To The U.S. Routes and Processing & Ellis Island Data Base

Why should you look for the immigration records of your ancestors? Lester Smith will tell us what data is available on the immigration manifests. What OTHER immigration information is accessible. What did our ancestors go through to get here? . Lester Smith is a retired urban planner, and is currently Vice President and Program Chair of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Sacramento. He is a first generation of Russian/Jewish origin and has been actively doing research for 5 years.

LAST MEETING - May 20, 2003

Researching German Genealogy

Speaker - Shirley J. Riemer - Notes by Lee Schlenker

Shirley J. Riemer, from the Sacramento German Genealogy Society is a wonderful, knowledgeable speaker. She graduated from Pittsburg University, taught English for many years, and is editor of the *Der Blumenbaum*, a quarterly journal. She has written the book The German Research Companion and has co-written the book Researching in Germany with Roger Minert. She has won various state and national awards for her works. And, since 1971, she has been to Germany 34 times! Shirley was a wealth of information; but with our one hour allotment for speakers, we didn't have a long enough time to continue on at great length. So, she covered as much as she could as quickly as possible. Included was a multi-page handout of "thumbnail" information for starting your research:

- A) Two Steps in German Genealogy, Political Entities of the Second German Empire (1871-1918) and
- B) A list of local aids for German family history research.

The important "two steps" to start were:

- 1) If you know the immigrant's place of origin - search German records in the U.S. (Especially through the FHL) then write or visit your ancestor's homeland for more records not available in the U.S.
- 2) If you DO NOT know the place of origin - search U.S. records for German place of origin, find the place then write or visit your ancestor's homeland for records not available in the U.S. Or if you Do NOT find the place of origin, conduct creative querying and area

searching until you do find the place of origin.

Shirley took us through how the country of Germany had changed so greatly from vast lands down to what it is today. Each crucial war left Prussia (Germany) with less and less land to claim as Germany. Germany today is quite small compared to what it was in the 1800s. In the handout was a listing of the provinces of Prussia, the independent states then the states of Germany today, and an overview/timeline of German political organization. She also walked us through the religious strife the country went through from the 1500s to 1700s.

In old Germany, the Catholic priests kept the record books for the town. Records were kept for military purposes, for tax purposes, along with religious affiliations. When Napoleon took over west of the Rhine River and closed the churches (1792), the French took over the civil registration for a period of time (1794-1815). Each town or "dorf" had a registration book - listing the births, deaths, marriages, etc. for that town.

The largest migration occurred in the 1880s. A "Chain Migration" was when a German family member or family moved to the U.S., sent money home to bring over most of the family who then came to the same town, where they earned money to send back to Germany to bring more family over. When this newfound town became large enough they probably enlisted a German minister, priest, etc. to run their church. That clergyman kept the records book just as he had in Germany - listing births, deaths, marriages, people

going from this place to that place. Shirley took us through the many German words listed in these books helping us identify the particular event listed with that particular person.

The church books are a wealth of information when you find them. Many have been put on microfilm and/or microfiche and are available through the Family History Library Catalog (FHLC). They offer 121,000 films and 19,000 fiche. Other good sources are Gazetteers of Prussia and other areas (especially Meyers Orts-und Verkehrslexikon des deutschen Reich - available on microfiche and microfilm and considered the Bible of German Genealogy). Don't forget maps and atlases, International Genealogy Index (IGI). Purchasing the Source Guide of German Genealogy (approx. \$5.00) from the FHL is extremely helpful.

Shirley Riemer was an excellent speaker and if you missed this talk on German genealogy be sure to catch her at another time. She is very informative.

SRVGS CALENDAR JUNE 2003

3 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. A joint Board Meeting held at the home of Jack and Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo in Danville. The newly elected board members, outgoing board members, other SRVGS staff and members also plan to enjoy a salad bar lunch.

17 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.

NO Member Education Class is scheduled for June or July. Pat Isom presented a very worthwhile class last month. The subject was "Land Records and Genealogical Research"

24 Tuesday -- 8:30 a.m. The Library trip will be to the California State Library; Calif. Room at 900 "N" Street in Sacramento and one block away is the Calif. State Archives at 1020 "O" Street. The Sacramento Genealogical Society also has its Library collection available in the State Archives building. (916) 654-0261 is the phone number of the State Library. (916) 653-7715 is the phone no. of the State Archives. You may find it helpful to view the following web sites:

Calif. State Library:

<http://www.library.ca.gov/html/genealogy.cfm>

Calif. State Archives:

http://www.ss.ca.gov/archives/archives_e.htm

Sacramento Genealogical Society:

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~carcsgs/MainPages/Library.html>

NOTE THE EARLY DEPARTURE TIME. Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. Departures are prompt. Please sign up at the general meeting. However, if you wish to join the group or wish to cancel, please call Louise Ford, (925) 376-4587.

JULY 2003

1 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. The Board meeting will be held at the home of Jack & Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo in Danville.

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

22 Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. The Library trip will be to the Santa Clara City Library, 3345 Lochinvar Ave in Santa Clara. Phone (408) 615-2900

SRVGS Special Interest Groups: JUNE/JULY - 2003

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They will NOT meet in June. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's and the focus is 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.

GERMAN - The German group will meet on Wednesday June 25th (fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Carol Huvane, 4589 Walnut Blvd. in Walnut Creek. If you cannot attend please call her at 947-5669, or call Fran Schweitzer at 935-5744. Carol's e-mail is tomcarhuvane@aol.com and Fran's is franschw@pacbell.net. The group will not have home meetings in the month of July and August, however they will be carpooling to Sacramento for the Sacramento German Genealogy Society General Meetings.

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. Member Internet users may join this group by sending an e-mail request to jackmj@earthlink.net Please use "SRVGS internet

user" as a subject heading.

IRISH. – Their meeting dates will be June 11, (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 They will NOT meet during July or August.

SOUTHERN – This group will not meet this month or during July or August. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, e-mail dpstant@hotmail.com. Or phone 820-3757.

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

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.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

19 June Thursday At 7 p.m., The Santa Clara Co. Historical and Genealogical Society will hold its member meeting at 3345 Lochinvar, in Santa Clara. Debbie Shields will talk about "Genealogy Software". It is open to the public and free. Three of the most popular genealogy software programs will be demonstrated.

20 June Friday A workshop will be held at the National Archives in San Bruno. "Military Records, Revolutionary War- Civil War" will be presented by Rose Mary Kennedy. \$15 is payable in advance. Phone (650) 876-9009 to reserve a space.

28 June Saturday The Santa Clara Co Historical and Genealogical Society will sponsor a beginners seminar from 1 to 4 p.m. at 3345 Lochinvar, in Santa Clara. Presentations will be made about Using the Internet and Census. Sign up sheets will be at the genealogy room of the Santa Clara City Library at this address. E-mail GraceSch@pacbell.net or phone (408) 615-2986. It will be open to the public and free.

26 July Saturday Cyndi Howell will be a guest speaker at the Pennington Research Association conference to be held in San Rafael. \$35 registration fee. Visit www.penningtonresearch.org, or e-mail genepenn1@attbi.com

Presidents Message by Virginia Rood

It seems unusual to begin a new year in June when the weather has turned warm, finally, and summer is here. I would like to begin by giving you a little history about my involvement with our society. In looking back through my newsletters I discovered that I have been a member since January, 1989, and I have nearly all of the newsletters published since that time. I have enjoyed being a member of such a worthwhile organization and have learned so much thru the many programs we offer. I hope that you all feel the same way. I have kept the newsletters, knowing that sometime I might be looking for some research tool, clue or resource to help me in my search.

So maybe this is the time to make a plea for a newsletter editor to follow Editor, Sharon Clay, when she retires in July. The newsletter has been one of our most important assets as you all know, keeping us informed on what is going on in our world of genealogy through the calendar of events, along with all the other helpful research information and tools. I hope that one of you will consider doing our newsletter, as it is also unifying for our society. Sharon has done a wonderful job producing the newsletter these past four years, and I know she would be willing to help anyone interested in continuing it to get started.

Since the month of June is the first month of summer it is also the month that we honor our flag with Flag Day, June 14th. We show our patriotism by flying our nation's flag as a symbol of our country's history. An article in the June, 2003 issue of Better Homes and Gardens refers to the Stars and Stripes as a symbol to represent unity in diversity and one nation out of several. For we genealogists interested in learning about our own heritage this often means we find a personal history linking us to other nations, and this symbol then has an added meaning for us. So remember to fly your flag on June 14th!

You know you've had too much coffee when....

Instant coffee takes too long

You answer the door, before people knock

You go to sleep, just so you can wake up and smell the coffee

You're the employee of the month at Starbucks and you don't even work there

You go to AA meetings just for the free coffee

Newsletter Team

Coordinator: Sharon Clay 462-4518
 sharoncl@ix.netcom.com
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 vmseg3@greaterbaynet.com
 Special Contributor: Pat Isom 820-2660
 Mailing: Lucy Carver 837-3146
 Deadline to put information in the newsletter is the last
 Thursday of the month.. Members are encouraged to
 submit articles for the newsletter by mail or e-mail.

Member Update:**New Members:**

Ann E. Wrenn Phone: 925-743-8354
 120 Montair Court email: wrenn@pacbell.net
 Danville, CA 94526-3724

Katja May, PhD. email: drmayusa@yahoo.com
 314 Mountain Ridge Drive
 Danville, CA 94506-1314

In Memoriam:

Peg Frazier - a longtime member of SRVGS
 passed away on May 14, 2003. Her Memorial
 Service was held on Saturday, May 17 at Grace
 Presbyterian Church, Walnut Creek.

**Attend a Genealogy Conference
From Your Home** by Jack Johnson

eGenConference ---June 10-12
 Family History Radio, LLC debuts eGen Conference,
 the first Internet based genealogy conference.
 Scheduled for June 10-12, eGenConference will be
 conducted entirely on the Internet and will feature
 genealogy speakers and presenters, round table dis-
 cussions with industry professionals, exhibitors, and
 Genealogy School social events, not to mention a
 virtual store with family history related products and
 services. Open to the general public, registration for
 the conference is \$69.95 for the entire event.
 Conference sponsors include: Genealogy.com at
 www.genealogy.com/; Genealogy Research
 Associates at www.graonline.com/; and the Federation
 of Genealogical Societies (FGS) at www.fgs.org/. To
 register or for further information, visit the Web site at
 http://www.familyhistoryradio.com/. If anyone tries it
 out, how about letting the rest of us know. It sounds
 like it might be a recurring venue.

**NEWS FROM THE CASSETTE
LIBRARIAN** by Betty Vail

We are thinning our cassette library. Some of these are
 because the information is dated, the speaker referred to
 too many overheads or slides, or the speaker was not
 well organized, or another tape covered the same
 subject. We are thinning all of our member panel tapes;
 many of the speakers relied too much on visual aides.

But, many of these tapes contain interesting and
 useful information. Consult your handbook to see if
 you would like to own any of the following tapes. **They
 will be distributed at the June meeting for only a
 \$1.00 donation.**

C-31,	C-158	M-6	M-31	M-61
C-59,	C-174	M-9	M-33	M-63
C-71,	C-175	M-10	M-34	M-65
C-73,	C-176	M-12	M-39	M-70
C-91,	C-185	M-13	M-40	M-72
C-94,	C-190	M-14	M-41	M-74
C-96,	C-192	M-20	M-43	M-78
C-104,	C-194	M-21	M-45	M-82
C-129,	C-202	M-22	M-47	M-87
C-150,	C-211	M-25	M-50	M-89
C-154,	C-212	M-27	M-51	M-90
C-155	C-221	M-28	M-52	M-93
C-157	M-2	M-29	M-54	M-96

M-97 & M-98

Library Trip This Month**California State Library and Archives**

The California State Library holdings include extensive
 microfilm collection of California newspapers, early
 San Francisco newspaper index; state wide birth and
 death records; the Great Register of voters, census
 records for California, county histories, city and town
 directories, DAR extraction index; a card file and
 folders of early California pioneers, public officials and
 notables. But, there is also material on many other
 states.

The California State Archives have the 1852
 California state census, 1860 and 1880 Federal Census
 for California, probate court records for some counties,
 wills, naturalizations, deeds, homesteads, and vital
 records for 1850-1987. Registered trademarks, some
 school records, military records, prison records, and
 supreme and appellate court cases. Check the web
 sites for specific holdings.

**Remember - we are leaving earlier than
 usual on this trip. Be at the parking lot behind
 Albertsons on Diablo Road by 8:25 a.m.**

Nothing But Net - Internet Findings

The Wisconsin Historical Society has announced it's Wisconsin Name Index (www.wisconsinhistory.org/wni) a new online tool to help genealogists search their Wisconsin ancestors.

The Wisconsin Name Index leads to more than 100,000 obituaries, personal sketches, and other short biographies of Wisconsin people. These texts originally appeared in 150 county and local histories, dozens of professional directories and biographical encyclopedias, more than 60 scrapbooks containing 30,000 obituaries and in Wisconsin magazines and newspapers.

Thousands include portraits and other illustrations. Users can search the database with a last name, first name, maiden name, time frame, and various other details. Photocopies of biographical sketches, articles, and obituaries can all be ordered online through our online genealogical research service.

The name index was created not by amateurs but by professional librarians at the state Historical Society. Starting about 1870, our staff made a catalog card for every biographical sketch in each new Wisconsin county history. They made a similar card for every obituary added to the scrapbooks they called "Wisconsin Necrology", and frequently added cards for magazine and newspaper articles about Wisconsin residents. After more than a century of such work, the data on the original cards was typed into a database and the Wisconsin Name Index was born.

Melissa Mc Limans

Administrator, Online Genealogical Research Service

Wisconsin Historical Society

<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/genealogy/ogrs/index.html>

From the CSGA Newsletter Vol. 21, No. 4 (April 2003)

Immigration History Research Center

The University of Minnesota houses one of the United States' most outstanding resources for American immigration and ethnic history research - the Immigration History Research Center (IHRC). According to its website, the IHRC's collections comprise more than 23,000 books, 900 newspaper titles, 3000 serial titles, 900 manuscript collections, covering the period from the mid-nineteenth century until the present and consisting primarily of documents that immigrants generated to record their migration experiences. For more info about the IHRC, visit their website at www.umn.edu/ihrc

From the Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society Newsletter, April 2003. Originally from *The Hoosier Genealogist*

More Midwest Internet Sites

You can find names of immigrants in several counties in **Michigan** at: <http://www.michigan.gov/hal/> Counties included are: Allegan, Clare, Crawford, Delta, Kent, Mackinac, Macomb, Marquette, Mason, Newaygo, Ottawa, Sanilac & St. Clair (with Iron County coming soon). Also available 1870 Michigan census.

You can find the **MN Death Index 1908-1998** online at: <http://people.mnhs.org/dci/Search.cfm>

The **Illinois death index 1916-1950** URL is <http://www.cyberdriveillinois.com/departments/archives/idphdeathindex.html>. This is same index as below.

Illinois Genealogy Databases Online at State Archives Web Site

If you're doing genealogy research in Illinois, you should check the online databases, new and old, of the Illinois State Archives:

Database of Illinois Death Certificates, 1916-1950: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/idphdeathindex.html>. This database provides listings of death certificates filed with the Illinois Department of Public Health between 1916 and 1950.

Illinois Statewide Marriage Index, 1763-900 - Updated: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/marriage.html>. Since 1985 the Illinois State Genealogical Society (ISGS) has cooperated with the Illinois State Archives to create an index to Illinois marriages occurring prior to 1901. Today more than one million marriages, or two million names, are included in the Illinois Statewide Marriage Index. This is an on-going project.

Illinois Public Domain Land Tract Sales: http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/data_lan.html The database contains information about nearly 550,000 land sales from the 54,740 square miles of the public domain sold within Illinois.

Database of Servitude and Emancipation Records, 1722-1863 Updated: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/servant.html> This database includes approximately 3,400 names found in governmental records involving the servitude

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and emancipation of Africans and, occasionally, Indians in the French and English eras of colonial Illinois (1722-1790) and African-Americans in the American period of Illinois (1790-1863).

Database of Illinois Civil War Veterans Serving in the U.S. Navy: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/ilnavy.html>.

Database of Illinois Civil War Veterans of Missouri Units <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/missouri.html>. Some 5,610 Illinois citizens appearing on the rosters of Missouri's Federal Civil War units.

Database of Illinois Spanish-American War Veterans: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/spanam.html> -- About 11,000 names divided into ten regiments.

Database of 1929 Illinois Roll of Honor: <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/honorroll.html> -- The 1929 version of a list of the burial places of soldiers, sailors, marines, and army nurses who served in any of the wars of the United States and are buried in Illinois. More than 72,000 names.

Database of Soldiers' and Sailors' Home Residents (1887-1916): <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/quincyhome.html> -- More than 14,000 entries.

There are also several county databases (such as Cook County Coroner's Inquest Record Index, 1872-1911) which you can learn more about at <http://www.sos.state.il.us/departments/archives/databases.html>.

Legacy News April 3, 2003

New York Vital Records Fee Change

From: "Cliff Lamere" <clifflamere@global2000.net> via Dorothy Stanton

The price will rise from \$11 to \$22 for New York certificates used for genealogy and research. Certificates for other purposes have been raised to \$30 (from \$5 and \$15). The date when the increase will go into effect is about July 1. The exact date is not yet set.

I have extracted some information from the new budget and made it into a webpage. It isn't very long. I have also included a little background information. There is information on the various kinds of certificates and services.

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~clifflamere/Misc/NYCrt2003Law.htm>

OHIO DEATH CERTIFICATE INDEX IN DANGER

from Dorothy Stanton

Genealogists tracing Ohio ancestors could lose a valuable online resource as early as July 1. The Ohio Historical Society (OHS) may have to shut down its Ohio Death Certificate Index, a searchable online database spanning 1913 to 1937, due to insufficient state funding and staff cutbacks. On-site access to the index and death certificates -- from the Ohio Historical Center in Columbus -- also could be limited if OHS can't raise enough funding. You can help save OHS by becoming a member or making a financial contribution. For details, visit <http://www.ohiohistory.org/dindex>

NOW, WHAT DO I DO WITH ALL OF THIS STUFF?

by Edward Henry Gaulin (Sr.)

A message on the Internet caught my eye the other day and I can't get it out of my mind. A West Coast genealogist had been exchanging information with a researcher in Virginia for some time. Then it happened. Her last message bounced -- it couldn't be delivered as the address no longer existed. Fortunately she had received a number of family group sheets from her correspondent which listed a telephone number. When she called the number a man answered, so she asked for her Internet friend and, after a slight hesitation was told, "Oh, Mary Ann passed away three weeks ago."

Shocked, but ever gracious, she expressed her sympathy and commented how close this long-distance relationship had become and how it will be missed by her.

The husband explained that he was sorry that he couldn't be of any help because he really didn't know much about what his wife was doing with her genealogy.

Perhaps you too have noticed at genealogical gatherings that the average age of the participants is something in excess of 39 years, at least judging by hair color. Most of us really don't have a lot of time to devote to our hobby until after the kids are grown, out of school and we've retired. Then it is no longer a hobby, it becomes an obsession. At some point in our continuous search for dead people, our ancestors, we recognize our own mortality and start to think about a permanent home for our research. If our children or grandchildren appear to be interested, we have it made, but frequently that's not the case.

Then what happens to our "stuff"?

(Continued on page 7)

Genealogists are usually pretty smart people, until it comes to providing for the distribution of their genealogical assets. Their files are loaded with folders bearing family and town names, historic events, and a bunch labeled "MISC." There are miles of computer printouts, hundreds of photocopies, and many "original" vital records. What should my wife do with all this stuff when I make the ultimate research trip -- a personal meeting with my ancestors?

Some of our brighter colleagues say "My college library is getting all my stuff" or it's going to the local public library or to the LDS Family History Library in Salt Lake City or even to the Library of Congress. Well, I hate to be the one to tell you this, but unless you are a celebrity or a huge financial donor, these institutions probably won't want your material -- they just don't have room for it. They would be grateful for a copy of your book, but they might not want the manuscript or research notes. The FHL would appreciate a GEDCOM disk of your genealogy database files, but it doesn't want your paper pedigree charts or family group sheets.

So what are your spouse and children to do with all of your stuff? It could be placed in the weekly trash collection and don't say "They wouldn't do that" because it unfortunately happens all the time. How about a garage sale? Now that is really scary, but it also happens every day.

What should you do to insure the safe distribution of your genealogical assets? Perhaps the first thing is to make a record of what you have and then try to keep it current. Show the acquisition date and how much you paid for each item on the inventory sheets. This is especially helpful for artifacts, collections, and books. A photographic record of these items, including those of rare books, could also be useful. Microfilm, microfiche and complete photocopies of books and some records have value. Back issues of many journals, newsletters, and magazines are also in demand by genealogists and therefore have value. However, if you don't tell them what is valuable, your heirs probably won't know.

Now that you have identified your assets, you need to tell someone what you want done with them. Maybe the simplest way is to prepare a letter to your heirs, but remember this lacks the force of law. If they want to, they can toss everything in the trash. A better way to provide for the distribution is in your will, particularly if you also designate sufficient funds to carry out your wishes.

Your Last Will and Testament is also where you may make specific bequests: your copy of the 1898 edition of Burke's Peerage to your FGS Conference roommate or your old roll-top desk to your newest granddaughter. Your wishes can now be enforced by the courts, if necessary.

(Continued on page 8)

MEMBERSHIP AND RENEWAL APPLICATION 2003-2004

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 (San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society) 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.

\$ _____ 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

If you still want to have any of your assets given to your alma mater or a local library or anywhere else, personally contact that agency and discuss the possibility -- right now. It won't come as a surprise to them and they should be able to advise you immediately of any conditions of acceptance. If you can, support those conditions, ask for a written acknowledgment that can be placed with your will.

Some other things that you can do right now are to distribute copies of your research among your family, friends, and, perhaps, local or national libraries. This is simple if you have progressed to the book-writing stage, but don't be too concerned if you haven't. Many genealogists assemble their pedigree charts, group sheets, pertinent vital records, selected family photographs, and other important documents in notebook form. They write a brief introduction, provide a table of contents, and sometimes an index before having copies made for distribution. Afterwards, the notebook can be kept current with a new year's letter which might include new charts and photos.

Computerized genealogical data can be distributed in the same way on diskette. Sometimes an envelope or jacket is provided in the notebook described above to house data disks. Another way some researchers try to insure the safeguarding of their electronic data is to submit it to the LDS Ancestral File (tm) or one or more

of the other commercial collections. If you don't know how to do this, consult your local genealogical society or Family History Center or even the public library for instructions. Another thing you can do right now to benefit your heirs is to clean up your files. Eliminate unnecessary correspondence and duplicate copies of records. Toss out all those old printouts you made in 1984 on your Apple IIe computer. Sell all the "Genealogical Helper" magazines you have saved since 1973, because you will never open one of them again and you know it. If you get 50 cents each for them you can have a pretty good dinner. Give away all that old computer software that is taking up room on your bookshelves -- it's probably not worth anything anyway. Label your photographs, and diskettes too.

I find it a bit morbid, but you may wish to write your epitaph and select your tombstone now to insure future researchers will not encounter some of the same problems that you've had. If you decide to follow some of these suggestions, when you do eventually meet your ancestors they may thank you for perpetuating their memory. They may also show you where you made some of your mistakes and be able to fill in a few of the blank spaces in your previous research.

Remember, do it now; there may be no tomorrow.
From the Rochester, N.Y. Genealogical Society Newsletter, Dec. 1998.

San Ramon Valley
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Diablo, CA 94528-0305

FIRST CLASS MAIL