

SAN RAMON VALLEY

GENEALOGICAL

SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER

P.O. BOX 305
Diablo, CA 94528-8308
President: Virginia Rood
Coord. Editor: Dorothy Baker
Meetings: 10:00 a.m.
3rd Tues. Of the Month
(Except August & December)
Alamo LDS Church
Stone Valley & Smith Rds - Alamo

Vol. XVIII No. 3

September 2003

THIS MONTH – SEPTEMBER 16, 2003

Mortuary Records and the Information Contained Therein

Sonya Gividen of the Callaghan Mortuary in Livermore will be our guest speaker in September. Her topic will be Mortuary Records, including Death Certificates, permits, and arrangement work sheets. She will also discuss Cemetery Records, the Privacy Act, Ordering death certificates, and veterans records.

LAST MONTH – The Veterans History Project

Speaker: Jane Steiner Notes by Lee Schlenker

Jane Steiner, our very own Life-time Member, co-author of Print, Publish and Preserve has taken on another important task with the Veterans History Project initiated by the Library of Congress and it's American Folklife Center. This is the recording and documentation of veterans and their own personal stories during World War I, World War II, the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars. It encompasses the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Air Force, Coast Guard as well as the Merchant Marines. And it includes both male and female veterans.

In October, 2000 the U.S. Congress voted unanimously to create the Veterans History Project. They realized the urgency in collecting these war-time memories due to the fact that 1,500 veterans die each day. With each death we have lost a memory and a piece of history. The goals of this project are: 1) to stimulate opportunities for public learning, 2) to interview and collect documents from war veterans and those who served in support of them, 3) to preserve and present the collected materials to the public through the Library of Congress, 4) to identify veterans oral history programs and archives, and 5) to create a searchable national catalog of all oral histories and documents.

There are certain criteria that should be met in order for the American Folklife Center to accept

your particular interview. There are biographical, interview, audio/video, manuscript and photographic forms and releases to be submitted along with your interview. Each need to be signed by the interviewee. There are some parameters so each person does the same correct interviews as they go along: write out your questions to be asked ahead of time, you must have a good tape recorder with an acute microphone, interviews should take approximately 90 minutes (actual tape time equals about 45 minutes), interview must be done in a perfectly quiet room with no unnecessary interruptions (such as cell phones, door bells ringing, no clocks ticking or chiming, etc.), introduce yourself, the date, time, place, interviewees name, date and place of birth. Jane has the complete folder if you think you may be interested in this totally volunteer project.

Jane takes her interviews one more step (which is not required but sometimes people are hard to understand on tape due to their age), she transcribes her interview tapes and sends it along with all the pertinent information. She lives in a retirement community which affords her the luxury of great accessibility to older men and women who have served our country in one capacity or another. And so, we had a chance to hear some of her stories she had taped since she also has them in writing.

One Army nurse, who had been trained as a surgical nurse but found herself without a hospital abroad to aid soldiers, ended up in an Orlando, Florida hospital in the obstetrics ward (while the new hospital was being build across the street). One night she woke up suddenly for some strange reason and soon figured out that a hurricane was brewing and her hospital could be in its path. She went to the maternity ward and started placing the proper charts with the proper mothers and their proper babies, had to find other hospitals with incubators for their preemies. She acquired 15 ambulances for all her charges, doubled checked all charts again, got everybody to where they should be and finished about 5:00 a.m.. The hurricane never hit that hospital. The next day, when things settled down, she had to do the reverse all over again. She later went on to be flight nurse with a grueling work schedule but enjoying every minute of her time served.

Another story was about a young man from Athens, GA. In 1966, he was an ensign/supply officer on a destroyer. He had joined the service through the NROTC in Berkeley, CA which meant he hadn't gone to any type of a boot camp. He had done 6 weeks on a training ship to become an officer. (He was later commissioned after college.) He had gone to Montreal, the Suez Canal, the Dominican Republic and then cruised the Mediterranean. He was allowed to play bridge with the Captain and the line officers because he was a very good player. And often times he had to let the Captain win! The Captain always loved his own Windsor cigars and this supply officer made very sure there was always a supply on board. When the Commodore came on board for a visit the ship had just been restocked with all provisions except chocolate-covered peanut M & M's which the Commodore loved. So, after a lot of scurrying about the docks, vendors and other ships in Port, he managed to come up with a case of chocolate-covered peanut M & M's for the Commodore. And that won him great praise from both his Captain and the Commodore!

Jane is hoping that she will get permission in the near future to interview soldiers who were part of the Batan Death March. There are so few left and the memories should be captured on tape.

Project Contact Information:

Veterans History Project
Library of Congress/American Folklife Center
101 Independence Ave. S.E.
Washington, DC 20540-4615

E-Mail: vohp@loc.gov

Phone: 1-888-371-5848

Website: <http://www.loc.gov/floklife/vets>



SRVGS CALENDAR

September – 2003

- 2 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting** at the home of Frances Lloyd – 210 Town and Country Drive in Danville
- 16 **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
- 23 **Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. The Library trip** will be to Sutro Library, 480 Winston Drive in San Francisco. It is directly behind Stonestown Shopping Center. Free parking. 415-731-4477 Web www.library.ca.gov Carpools will meet **behind** Albertson's off Diablo Road in Danville. Departures are Prompt. Please sign up at the general meeting. If you sign up for the trip and wish to cancel, Please call the Library Trip Coordinator, Louise Ford, (925) 376-44587.

The Sutro Library is a branch of the California State Library. Go to the website "California State Library – Sutro" and you will see that Sutro "has one of the largest genealogical collections west of Salt Lake City with extensive resources for states other than California and basic resources for California." They have all U.S. Census microfilms from 1790 to 1930 (except 1890). Prior to visiting, the use of their on-line catalog can assist in making efficient use of your time at the library. The collection of books is vast. One can happily spend hours among the shelves perusing the pages of old books. There is nothing like seeing your ancestor's name printed in a book decades ago.

SRVGS CALENDAR**October – 2003**

- 7 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting** is to be held at the home of Frances Lloyd' home at 210 Town and Country Drive in Danville
- 21 **Tuesday – 10:00 a.m. General Meeting** at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road, Alamo
- 28 **Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. The Library Trip** will be to The National Archives in San Bruno. 650-876-9009 or go to www.nara.gov.

SRVGS SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS**September/October 2003**

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP – They will meet Tuesday, September 16th after the general meeting at about 12:30 p.m. The meeting will be at Jack & Barbara Johnson's home, 616 Camino Amigo, in Danville 837-2153. Bring a bag lunch. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's. It will focus on the use of Master Genealogist. Peggy Dearman 837-1621 or dearman@pacbell.net is the contact person for the group.

GERMAN – A home group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, Sept. 24th (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Helen Odegard. Her address is 1408 Entrada Verde Place in Alamo. Her phone is 932-6796. Any necessary changes will be announced at the general meeting. Please let the hostess or Fran Schweitzer know if you do not plan to attend. If you need directions please call the hostess. For other group information, contact Fran Schweitzer 935-5744 or FranSchw@pacbell.net.

SOUTHERN – This group will meet September 9th and October 14th, (Second Tuesday of the month) at 10:00 a.m.. The September meeting will be held at the home of Dorothy Stanton, 501 El Capitan Drive in Danville. The location of the October meeting will be announced at a later date. Dorothy is the contact person for the group. Phone 820-3757 or dpstant@hotmail.com. Member of this group will no longer be contacted by phone.

IRISH – Their meeting dates will be September 10th and October 8th, (second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. 229-0889 or russpat@netvista.net.

INTERNET – Interested SRVGS members that are also Internet users communicate via e-mail. The coordinator is Jack Johnson. Phone 837-2153 or e-mail jackmj@earthlink.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@comcast.net

NEW ENGLAND – Barbara Dyer, phone 820-9738.

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.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

- 23 **September Tuesday At 1 p.m.**
The Sacramento German Genealogical Society will have its regular meeting at St. Mark's Methodist Church on Lusk Drive in Sacramento. A panel of 3 reference Consultants (Barbel Johnson, Marion Wolfert and Sonia Nishimoto) from the Family History Library in Salt Lake City will be Asked, "Where Do I Search Next?".
- 27 **September Saturday 9 am to 2:30 pm**
Learn "How to use Digital Graphics in Genealogy." The California Genealogical Society will sponsor a seminar presented by Jerry Carleton. The Fee is \$25 for non-members, which must be received by September 20 at CGS, 1611 n Telegraph Avenue, Suite 100, Oakland, CA 94612. For additional information phone (510) 663-1358.

27 September Saturday 9 am to 3 pm A Workshop for writing Genealogical Family Histories will be presented at First Presbyterian Church, 25th Avenue and Hacienda in San Mateo. Fee is \$30. It is limited to 30 persons and sponsored by the San Mateo Genealogical Society. More info is available at www.smogs.org

17-19 October Friday, Saturday and Sunday The San Francisco Bay Region of the California State Genealogical Alliance will host a "California Conference" at the Crown Plaza in Foster City, CA.
http://users.lmi.net/catcn/ca_conf

The main conference will be held on Saturday. Subjects will include California records, record preservation and research methodology. On Friday and Sunday there will be guided field trips and indoor workshops on photo preservation, cemetery research (includes and afternoon field trip), organizing a research project and hands on preservation techniques. NARA will be opened on Sunday for Conference attendees

18 October Saturday – The Stockton California Family History Center announces a Family History Faire. This is a FREE to the public show. Get help on starting your family history. Stop and visit our many information booths. See Grandma's Attic, computer related genealogy, journals, newspapers, old pictures, poetry, quilts, scrapbooking, software, spinning, and tatting. Listen to ancestral stories. Explore the royal genealogies database. Bring the whole family for the fun. For more information, contact: stocktonfh@yahoo.com

1 November Saturday 9 am to 4 pm Hank Jones will present a seminar at First Presbyterian Church, 25th Avenue and Hacienda in San Mateo. Fee is \$30 for non-members of SMOGS. Mail checks to San Mateo Genealogical Society, 773C Loma Verde Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94303. E-mail questions to: john.s.gleed@worldnet.att.net

8 November Saturday L-AGS and LDS will co-sponsor an all day seminar at the LDS church, 950 Mocho Street in Livermore.

24 April, 2004 Saturday At Rohnert Park, CA: Elizabeth Shown Mills will hold all-day seminar in Sonoma County, California, sponsored by the Sonoma County Genealogical Society. Details are available at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~cascgs/mills.htm>

President's Message by Virginia Rood

After a brief break from meetings it is time to think about getting back into our research to find those missing ancestors. One part of this search usually includes a library search. Our library trip coordinator, Louise Ford, has put together an excellent schedule for this year. I hope that more of you will take advantage of these trips. I know most of you have probably used these libraries, some many times, but some of you are new to the Society and may not be as familiar with the area's resources.

Preparation is a necessary part of getting ready for a trip. One tool I have found helpful when planning a trip to Sutro Library, where we will visit this month, is using the Library Catalog online, listing the resources that I want to look at there and then print out the list. The California State Library Catalog system offers a place called "My List" to accumulate all references that you want to look at in the library. Perhaps some of you have taken advantage of this. If you do not have access to a home computer you can access the Internet at one of the Family History Centers such as the Alamo FHC. Having a plan or a list seems even more important when going on our trips, because our actual library time is limited, usually only a few hours from about 10-3. And that time always seems to go too fast.

Another important aspect of going together is the sharing of experiences and sometimes unusual ways one comes upon information. We also get to know one another better and learn from each other. So please consider taking a library trip with us.

"IN SEARCH OF THE WILD-LNUs"

A long time ago in a kingdom far away there lived a fair maiden by the name of Fnu MNU. She married a handsome young knight named Sir Arthur LNU and thus she became Fnu (MNU) LNU. Wait! Stop! Does this sound a bit like a page out of YOUR family tree?

Are you spending sleepless nights prowling the Web in search of your elusive MNU and LNU ancestors? Or perhaps you've encountered them in someone's GEDCOM file on WorldConnect at RootsWeb, and after doing more searches have come to the conclusion that there are many researchers out there hunting those wild and crazy LNUs.

Well, it's time to let you in on one of genealogy's best kept secrets: LNU, MNU, and FNU are not real names. They are acronyms. (Acronyms are combinations of the first letters/syllables in a group of words to form a new grouping of letters that can be pronounced as a word.) They are: First Name Unknown (FNU), Maiden Name Unknown (MNU), and Last Name Unknown (LNU). They are first cousins to the mysterious UNK ancestors that you might have spent time tracking down until you realized that UNK was short for "unknown".

Researchers have used these acronyms and other symbols and abbreviations for years, with little or no uniformity from file to file, to indicate the unknown or missing names. The meaning of these acronyms is often unclear and can be mistaken for actual names by new and not so new genealogists. After all, we all have a few oddly spelled names in our trees, so what's a MNU or two?

On another note, be careful should you encounter any DITTO ancestors in your line. DITTO is an actual surname, but it is frequently mistaken as a surname by those reading an enumerator's "ditto" entry to denote that the name is the same as the one listed above it. (DITTO and DITTOE are Anglicized forms of a Huguenot name of unexplained etymology. The names are found in North America by 1700. Ditto also is short form of the Italian personal name Benedetto.)

All of this name confusion serves to reinforce the notion that while user-compiled genealogies are a valuable tool in research, you need to examine original records to verify or refute what the compiled records indicate. When possible examine the records for yourself.

What can you do to make your files clear as to the abbreviation or acronyms you use to indicate any unknown given names, maiden names, or surnames? There are no perfect solutions or world-wide standards. Some compilers, especially those who use genealogy software, put a question mark to indicate that a name is not known, but this is not recommended as some creative family historians use one question mark, while others use two or three, and a ? for a name might mean one thing to you and something else to another researcher.

A recent unscientific search at WorldConnect Revealed the following are being used as names:

Unknown - 2,742,761	LNU/Lnu - 14,134
UNK/Unk - 39,332	FNU - 139
MNU/Mun - 3,357	
?? - 78,201	
?,? - 605,694	
??? - 140,665	

Obviously, there is no standard for indicating that a name is not known - hence the confusion.

Remember you do not have to fill in every field in your genealogy software. If you do not know the given or maiden name of a woman, either leave the field blank or use (--?--).

Using acronyms or various symbols when names are unknown is not a good idea because you want to make it clear that the name is unknown so as not to send others and generations of future researchers on an endless and futile search for the wild LNU. Don't put your cousins in the position of having to ask "What's MNU? Or Who is Unk FNU?"

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Newsletter Team

Coordinator:	Dorothy Baker	437-4883
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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.

Message Boards and Mailing Lists: **Treasures Within**

What are they? While mailing lists and message boards are similar in purpose, the difference lies in the way the information is distributed. With mailing lists, with every message that is posted to the list, a copy is sent to all of the list's subscribers. In addition, most lists have an online archive where past messages can also be searched.

Message boards are online forums where each message is posted to the board. Users can choose to receive notifications when items are posted to boards of interest. Message boards are also searchable.

More and more of these forums are also being used to archive transcriptions from records, newspapers, and other sources. For example, we all have tidbits on people who share our ancestors' surnames, but whom we are not quite sure are related. By posting these tidbits to the list, we may be able to connect with a descendant of the person/people in the record. Information they have may even help you to either make a connection or rule them out as possible relatives. Even if you don't make any connections, it's a great way to help other researchers and build up some "genealogy karma points."

Before posting anything though, it's important to read the welcome message (sent when you sign up for mailing lists), or message board guidelines where available (typically found on the "Links & Announcements" section of the message board.) You'll especially want to look for a description of the focus of the list and what constitutes an acceptable posting and what topics are taboo. While a list may have a focus on a particular country, it may only be looking for data and queries, and it may want to stay away from the cultural aspects. Others may welcome recipes, traditions, and history. It all depends on the administrator's preferences and yours, as this information is helpful to you in deciding whether or not that forum is right for your needs.

Another important aspect you'll want to look at is where your replies to a mailing go. Some lists have it set so that any replies automatically go to the sender and to reply to the list, you need to select "Reply to all." Others may have it set so that all replies go to the entire list. If you want to share an embarrassing story with a friend from the list, be

careful where it's going or you might unwittingly be creating your next embarrassing story.

Posting Effectively – To get the most from these forums, you will want to tailor your messaging so that it will catch the attention of anyone who has information. Many mailing lists offer digest versions where each message is attached and only the subject line is visible. In addition, many people simply don't have enough time in the day to read every message that comes through the mailing lists they subscribe to. For this reason, a good subject line is critical. A subject line of "genealogy" or "searching for ancestors" for a posting to a genealogical mailing list is pretty much stating the obvious and it just isn't going to grab my attention.

In addition, if you're posting to the Kelly surname list, you will want to be a little more specific than just posting "Kelly ancestors." If someone's on the list, presumably they're also looking for Kelly ancestors. A good subject line will tell which Kelly, when he or she lived and where. Example: Kelly, James, ca. 1815-1896, IRE>NYC>Brooklyn

You can fill in any particulars in your messaging. Your message should contain pertinent information that will help whoever is reading it identify the person, but you might want to save their life story for follow-up correspondence.

Archives – You need not search daily for messages. I make a point of searching the archives every so often to see if anyone has posted anything of interest for my family.

Mailing List Archives – To search mailing list Archives at RootsWeb.com go to the mailing list main page at: lists.rootsweb.com and locate the list(s) that you are interested in. With the subscription information, there should be a link to any archives that are available. They are typically archived by year so if this is your first foray into the archives, you'll want to do searches for each year so that you don't miss anything.

Message Boards – You can search the boards from the home page at: boards.ancestry.com using the basic search box. You have a choice of searching for a particular surname board, or searching all the boards for a particular name or term. In addition, by clicking on the "Advanced Search" link in that same line, you can refine your search. There are a number of options, but the search I have found most effective is to just search for the surname in

the appropriate field and include a location in the space for "Find Messages Containing." This gives you hits on any list where that surname and location appear. A Soundex option is also available.

These services are free and available to everyone, So if you haven't taken advantage of them yet, why not give it a shot? Who knows what treasures you'll uncover!

RootsWeb.com Mailing List
[Lists.rootsweb.com](http://lists.rootsweb.com)

Ancestry.com/RootsWeb Message Boards
[Boards.ancestry.com](http://boards.ancestry.com)

Juliana Smith is the editor of the Ancestry Daily News and author of the Ancestry Family Historian's Address Book. She has written for Ancestry Magazine and Genealogical Computing. Copyright 2000. My Family.com



IT'S ON THE WEB!

<http://www.rrgs.org>

A web site dedicated to the history of railroads and the men and women who built them by the Railroad Genealogical Society from Silicom Valley PAF User Group Newsletter – Aug 2003 –
Forwarded from Marilyn Tanner

<http://www.multimap.com>

Map site Forwarded from Dorothy Stanton

CITY DIRECTORY INFORMATION

Forwarded from Marilyn Tanner

All the wonderful history information in the front of city directories has always said we could not duplicate any part of the directory. Family Tree Magazine, August 2003, states that directories published prior to 1923 are now in the public domain. You can use advertisements or city histories from them without copyright permission.

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

President:

Virginia Rood 937-8659
 E-mail: VSRood@aol.com

1st V.P. :

Marilyn Tanner 376-6733
 E-mail: itanner@nothingbut.net

2nd V.P. Program:

Bob Venter Pat Denton Pat Levy
 735-8419 938-3301

3rd V.P. Membership:

Dorothy Humpal 735-3310

Recording Secretary: Mary Wright

Corresponding Secretary:

Sherri Hedman 275-8123

Treasurer: Bob Dougherty 556-3302

Parliamentarian: Barbara Dittig 648-9364

Family History Center

2949 Stone Valley Road, Alamo, CA

Hours: Monday, Wed., Thurs. 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tuesday: 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

Phone: 925-552-5920

Website:

<http://www.geocities.com/dsfho@sbeglobal.net>

NEW MEMBER

Pat A. Mac Eachern
 1990 Woodbury Court
 Walnut Creek, CA 94596-6249
 Tel: (925) 934-3041
 Email: Pamaceacher@aol.com

LATE RENEWALS

Too late to make into the Handbook

Marilyn King
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 Tel: (925) 376-1193
 E-Mail: marmal@comcast.net

Joyce Morse
 2792 Bollinger Canyon Road
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 E-mail: JoyceMorse@aol.com

Special Update on Scam

I, Dick Eastman, have written a number of times about a genealogy-related scam that operates under a variety of names, including GenSeekers.com, GenealogyGiants.com and more. In the July 7 edition of Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter, I identified the owner/operator of this "business" as 21 year old man of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. Since then, I have had conversations with several people in Iowa about this "business". The Cedar Rapids Police arrested this man after a two year internet crime investigation. He faces four charges: 1st degree theft, identity theft, money laundering, and on-going criminal conduct. Details are still developing. Keep an eye on the newsletter Discussion Board at <http://www.eogn.com> for updates. You can read my earlier article at www.eogn.com/archives/news0327.htm Dick Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter.

Trees For All

Traditional pedigree charts don't fit every family. Life Preserves" designed special trees to reflect blended families' extra branches. These 8 1/2x 11 inches fill-in-the-blank forms simplify the job of documenting all your family, with selections such as Adoptive and Birth Family Tree, Single Adoptive and Birth Family Tree, Single Parent Family Tree and Step-Family Tree, as well as a traditional pedigree format. Each chart retails for 99 cents.

(423) 477-5700, www.lifepreserves.com

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"QUESTIONNAIRE"

Enclosed you will find a "Questionnaire" that is designed to help us help YOU in your genealogical research. It will provide us, SRVGS, with the information we need to serve you in setting up speakers, educational classes, special interest groups, etc.

We would appreciate it if you would *PLEASE* complete and return it as soon as possible – either at our next meeting (Sept. 16th) or by mail.

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP.

San Ramon Valley
Genealogical Society
Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-0305

FIRST CLASS