

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

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society

Vol. XVIII No. 6 January - 2004

THIS MONTH - January 20, 2004

Finding and Using Probate Records

Margery Bell bio - I have been doing genealogy for about 30 years and have worked nearly every possible position in an LDS Family History Center from general staff to director. I am now in charge of getting the new automated card catalog in the Oakland Family History Center up and running and am co-supervisor with my husband on Saturdays. I have been teaching genealogy in seminars, and genealogical societies now for about 20 years. My specialty areas are Massachusetts and Connecticut, but I usually teach about specific research sources, ie Probate, newspapers, and vital records. I have two grown children and 6 grandchildren, and my only claim to fame is that I am the author of Line Upon Line - A Beginners Guide to Genealogy which is published with Ancestral Quest Software.

Margery Bell will speak on **Finding and Using Probate Records** is an introduction to the records created in order to settle the estate when a person dies, and where to get them. This will include records whether or not there is a will, how they are indexed, and will also cover guardianship records.

NOVEMBER MEETING

"A Man May Work From Sun to Sun...."

Speaker: Douglas Mumma Reported by Lee Schlenker

Our speaker in November was Douglas Mumma. He has a BA in physics and for the past 35 years worked as an experiment physicist/administrator in nuclear weapons effects and high explosives research. But since his retirement he has become interested in science with regards to DNA testing for genealogical research. His MUMMA SURNAME PROJECT was the first privately funded project initiated three years ago. He had gone through Family Tree DNA with his first project. He has gone on to do the DNA research for the GATTER surname on his wife's maiden name. The objectives of this GATTER search were to determine: 1) if English GATTER families all share a common ancestry; 2) if European GATTER families all share a common

ancestry; 3) if European and English GATTER families share a common ancestry between region.

Mr. Mumma gave us a brief lesson on DNA without getting too scientific. Deoxyribonucleic Acid is the word for DNA. And, as most everyone realizes, this is the "blueprint" to life. The human cell consists of a nuclei. Within this nuclei are 46 chromosomes: 23 from mom and 23 from dad. The 23rd chromosome is called the "sex" chromosome. Mom has two X chromosomes and dad has X and Y chromosomes. If the father's sperm with the "Y" penetrates the egg, a male child is produced. When the DNA in a cell is stretched out it is about 6 feet long with 3 billion base pairs. It would look like a twisted ribbon with the base pairs strung between the

twists called the twin "helix." It is these base patterns which are measured for repeats and measured at a specific location along the DNA molecule.

Mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) is only passed from mother to sons and daughters. Y-Chromosome DNA (nucleic DNA) is only passed from father to his sons. Polymorphism is when the DNA alphabet sequence (the base pattern repeats) mutates or changes slowly after many generations (about 1 mutation every 500 generations). It is easier to trace Y-chromosome DNA because it pertains to the male and male surnames tend to be repetitive. The Mitochondrial DNA is more difficult because the women have 'maiden' names and tracking names can become more difficult. The very "best" DNA comes from the bone marrow.

One example Mr. Mumma used was the recent DNA testing in the Thomas Jefferson/Sally Hemmings case. There were many tests done but the problem in proving a match was that Jefferson had no living males. He had only his brother, Randolph, who also had no living sons. Randolph's daughter-in-law, Jane, might prove a little something from her off-spring. So, it was concluded that Sally Hemmings' son, Eason, was probably sired by Randolph Jefferson and not Thomas Jefferson.

Mr. Mumma also showed us how the human migration could be traced using DNA. He went so far as to do this for the GATTER family tree all over Europe.

Basically, to do a DNA study for your family trace you will need to contact an agency (some listings to follow at the end); they will send you individual swab kits which you and your participants will complete and return with a payment ranging from \$99. to \$250 per person (depending on how many participants and how many markers the company uses); you have to choose a coordinator for your group so that the one person receives back all the information submitted. This coordinator will have to send each person copies of the results. The results can be difficult to read and understand. You can always ask for help from the company to aid in deciphering. But the uses and limitations of DNA testing are: you can determine if two people share a common ancestor (but not which

specific ancestor), you can establish a "fingerprint" (haplotype) for a particular family surname which may yield unexpected or undesired results - identify non-paternity (infidelity) or adoption, and the DNA techniques continue to improve and refine.

Points of Interest: When DNA first came about there were only 10 markers used to identify, now it is up to 12 to 25 markers with 30 to 35 markers used to identify soon on the horizon. Many university studies are for the purpose of studying diseases and not "family matches." English-based companies tend to throw away your sample when the results are printed. But if the number of markers should rise they would be unable to go back and retest for those added markers. You would have to resubmit your DNA swab all over again and start from scratch. So, try to choose wisely. Mr. Mumma recommends Family Tree DNA since he is so familiar with it!

DNA can be a powerful tool

IF it answers your question!!!

References/Resources:

Family Tree DNA

<http://www.familytreedna.com>

Good Resource

Duernick site

<http://duernick.com/geolinks.html>

Complicated, but good

DNA & the Family Historian

<http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.com/~allpoms/genetics.html>

English - very good

MUMMA results

<http://www.mumma.org/DNA.htm>

Check him out!

Doug@mumma.org

NEED COMPUTER HELP?

Classes are available through the

Rossmoor Computer Club

P.O. Box 2070

Walnut Creek, CA

(925) 256-8537

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

SRVGS CALENDAR JANUARY 2004

6 Tuesday- 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting at the home of Frances Lloyd, 210 Town and Country Drive, in Danville.

20 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.

27 Tuesday 9:30 am The Library Trip will be to the Oakland Family History Center on Lincoln Avenue, off Warren Freeway (Hwy 13). sign up at the general meeting. Their phone number is (510) 531-3905.

If you sign up for the trip and wish to cancel, please call the Library Trip Coordinator, Louise Ford, (925) 376-4587.

Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. Departures are prompt.

27 Tuesday 10:00 a.m. Member Education Class will be presented by Ron Frye at the Family History Center on Stone Valley Road. The topic will be "Genealogy Resources on the Internet". Six members can be accommodated at this particular session.

SRVGS CALENDAR FEBRUARY 2004

3 Tuesday - 10:00 a.m. Board Meeting will be held at the home of Fran Lloyd, 210 Town and Country Drive in Danville.

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

25 Wednesday - 9:00 a.m. Library Trip to the National Archives in San Bruno - **prompt departure at 9 a.m.** Phone (650) 876-9009 or go to www.nara.gov.

A Member Education Session is being planned for February.

SRVGS Special Interest Groups JANUARY - 2004

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They will meet Tuesday, January 20th 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 (925)-837-2153. 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, 837-1621 or dearman@pacbell.net is the contact person for the group.

GERMAN - A home group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday January 28th (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m., at the home of Fran and Robert Schweitzer. Their address is 2493 Lariat Lane in Walnut Creek. Please let the hostess know if you do not plan to attend or if you need directions. For other group information, contact Fran Schweitzer (925) 935-5744 or e-mail FranSchw@pacbell.net

IRISH - Their meeting date will be January 14, (second Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail russpat@netvista.net

SOUTHERN - This group will meet January 13, (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 email dpstant@hotmail.com.

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.

Member Internet users may join this group by sending an email request. Please use "SRVGS Internet User" as a subject line.

President's Message - January, 2004

10 January, 2004 Saturday

15 January, 2004 Thursday

24 April, 2004 Saturday

<http://www.rootsweb.com/~cascgs/mills.htm>

19-22 May, 2004 The National Genealogical Society will hold its annual national conference in Sacramento at the Sacramento Convention Center.

NEWSLETTER TEAM

Coordinator: Dorothy Baker 437-4883

DJBDorothy@cs.com

Calendar Coordinator: Vern Segelke 828-8570

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.

For me and maybe for you some of the reasons we spend this time searching is an interest in history, a love of travel and adventure, the thrill of the hunt and most important a need to feel connected to our family and its past. Our ancestors place in history makes our search meaningful, the love of travel gets us to where these people lived, and finding something about them gives us a thrill and feeling of connection. We can learn more about their lives when we learn about life in those times and places.

I think all of us would like to see our work continue and so possibly for the New Year our challenge is to think about how we can begin to plan a way to create an interest in the young, who come after us. I'm sure there are many ways to accomplish this through visits to relatives, especially those distant cousins, and through family reunions. Sharing stories of favorite things, holidays, birthdays and special occasions as well as favorite meals and foods might encourage young people to become interested. Looking through scrapbooks and old photos and albums can be a way to spark an interest to look further into our families past. Creating a family map with the trail your family followed as they moved through the country could be fun for children to make. Consequently getting help from children and grandchildren in gathering photos and stories to help us put together our long put off published genealogy might be another way to insure that our work will be continued. But perhaps some of you have some unique ideas and would be willing to share these with our group sometime this year.

LOCAL LIBRARY HIGHLIGHT*By Louise Ford, Library Coordinator*

Researchers of California history, with emphasis on Alameda County area, will want to check out the Oakland History Room, second floor, of the Oakland Public Library at 125 14th Street, Oakland. (510-238-3222). See Page 14 of our Handbook for details of Hours and Holdings. Better yet, go to the Oakland Public Library website; click on Services and Collections to view specific holdings. Besides its weekday and Saturday hours, the Library is open Sunday afternoon from 1:00 to 5:00 with nearby street parking.

**** **Welcome to Our** ****

NEW MEMBER

Donna B. Lutz
788 Contada Circle
Danville, CA 94526-3558
(925) 837-9540
Dlutz90358@aol

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: jtanner@nothingbutnet.net *

2nd V.P. Program:

Bob Venter	Pat Denton	Pat Levy
454-9919	735-8419	938-3301

3rd V.P. Membership:

Dorothy Humpal 735-3310
E-mail: DLHumpal@aol.com

Recording Secretary: Mary Wright 287-8254

Corresponding Secretary:

Sherri Hedman 275 - 8123

Treasurer: Bob Dougherty 556 - 3302

Parliamentarian: Barbara Ditting 648 - 9364

***Please - NOTE**

Correction on Marilyn Tanner's email address

"I'm My Own Grandfather!"

Several member of SRVGS attended the fall seminar sponsored by the Concord & Walnut Creek LDS stakes on Oct. 11th. Much was learned by all. We were also treated to a musical rendition of "I'm My Own Grandpa!" (Following) by a VERY talented quartet. It was enjoyed by all.

I AM MY OWN GRANDPA

Many many years ago when I was twenty three,
I got married to a widow who was pretty as could be.

This widow had a grown-up daughter
Who had hair of red.

My father fell in love with her,
And soon the two were wed.

This made my dad my son-in-law
And changed my very life.

My daughter was my mother,
For she was my father's wife.

To complicate the matters worse,
Although it brought me joy.

I soon became the father
Of a bouncing baby boy.

My little baby then became
A brother-in-law to dad.

And so became my uncle,
Though it made me very sad.

For if he was my uncle,
Then that also made him brother
To the widow's grown-up daughter
Who, of course, was my step-mother.

Father's wife then had a son,
Who kept them on the run.

And he became my grandson,
For he was my daughter's son.

My wife is now my mother's mother
And it makes me blue.

Because, although she is my wife,
She's my grandma too.

If my wife is my grandmother,
Then I am her grandchild.

And every time I think of it,
It simply drives me wild.

For now I have become
The strangest case you ever saw.
As the husband of my grandmother,
I am my own grandpa!!

Resolutions for 2004

By Drew Smith

At the end of each year, many of us make resolutions for the year to come. Here, then, are my 10 resolutions for the digital genealogist for the new year.

1. Stop procrastinating. To help do that, I need to find a good calendar program and use it consistently. Recently, I've taken to using the calendar built into to AOL 6.0. It allows me to keep a calendar on my machine at home and another on my machine at work, and when I sign on to AOL, the copies on my PC are synchronized with the copy on AOL's system. I can use it to block out time for my genealogical activities, or even to remind me of recurring events, such as online chats. If I weren't an AOL user, I'm sure I could find some sort of similar software product to use.

2. Keep in touch. This means I'm going to have to be more organized with my online correspondence. One way to do this is to create some additional mail folders in my e-mail software, such as one entitled "To be answered" and another entitled "To be filed." I also need to print out copies of correspondence I send and receive and file it with my surname binders.

3. Be more efficient. I receive a great deal of e-mail, which means it is easy for me to overlook something important. I need to review everything that comes in and look for ways to cut down on how much e-mail I get. For instance, I might change my mailing list subscriptions from regular mail mode to digest mode, so that my inbox doesn't show so many messages each day.

4. Get caught up. I need to go through that enormous backlog of research materials and enter the data into my genealogy database, together with appropriate source citations. Who knows how much research time I've lost because I've duplicated effort?

5. Digitize. I have a large pile of photographs from one of my last genealogy trips. I need to scan them, label them, and organize them. Because I won't need them often, I could archive them onto a Zip disk. Then I could use archival storage for the photos themselves, putting them in a cool, dark place.

6. Protect myself. I use an anti-virus program, but I need to be sure I am keeping it up to date. To help myself do this, I will probably want to put a monthly reminder in my online calendar to check for updates to my program.

7. Keep track of correspondents. I already use *Microsoft Outlook* to maintain a phone list for family, friends, and businesses. Why not use it to keep a contact list (especially e-mail addresses) for fellow genealogists?

8. Organize my browser bookmarks. It is easy to create a bookmark, but after a while I end up with a screen full of unorganized bookmarks. I can create bookmark folders for my surnames; my countries, states, or counties of interest; or other topics.

9. Learn more. I need to block off some time each week to read a book, a magazine article, a newspaper article, or a Web page that teaches me more about how to improve my online research skills.

10. Turn off my computer. When I was a college freshman in 1974, I wrote my first real computer program. While working on it, I often lost track of time and completely missed lunch. Twenty-six years later, it is still easy for me to forget what time it is when I'm engrossed in using a computer. By turning off my computer, I can go back to spending time with family and friends, never miss a meal, and perhaps even get enough sleep.

Here's hoping that you enjoy creating your own list of resolutions for 2004.

(Feel free to steal some of mine.)

*Drew Smith is an instructor with the School of Library and Information Science at the University of South Florida in Tampa. He is also a regular contributor to the quarterly journal Genealogical Computing, where he writes the Cybrarian column. He can be reached at drewsmith@aol.com Digital Genealogy is a bi-weekly column at Ancestry.com. Look for it in the *Ancestry Daily News* every other Tuesday. The Digital Genealogy archive is also available online. Copyright 2000*

"On the Lighter Side"

DYING MYSTERIOUSLY

By Jan McClintock (THE GENIE'S VIEW)

Found the following on an old Tennessee death certificate...Cause of death: CARRANOVER. I thought it must be a really strange disease, until I realized that three words had been run together and that the person worked for the railroad.

GOES TO BED WITH A CORPSE

Clerk's Mistake Causes Sensation in a Kentucky Hotel

Maj. James Morton, editor of the Hardaman Free Press, unwittingly went to bed with a corpse here the other night. He had missed his train, and going into the hotel asked for a room. The clerk said the house was crowded, but assigned the editor to a room with another man. By mistake the clerk sent him into the wrong room, and the editor quietly disrobed and got into bed.

Soon a young man and a woman came in and took seats near an open window. The Major thought the procedure strange, but said nothing. Listening to what they said, he heard a remark about sitting up with the dead. Then he remembered that his bedmate had not moved, and reaching over touched his hand. With a yell the Major jumped up with the sheet over him and rushed out of the room. Believing that the corpse had come to life, the two watchers broke for another door. All met in the office of the hotel for explanations.

(The LaSalle Daily Tribune - August 24, 1907)

Family History Center

2949 Stone Valley Road, Alamo, CA

Hours: Monday, Wed., Thurs. 10a.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>

Time lines

Time lines are helpful tools for establishing migration patterns and determining where an ancestor was at a particular time, thus making it easier to locate additional records.

A timeline can be created for an ancestor or family group by listing events and facts drawn from various sources chronologically. By arranging the facts in this way, it is easy to see gaps that need to be filled, and estimate dates that are missing, thus narrowing down the search for records to fill in these gaps. By including source information (in parentheses), sources can also be evaluated. Some genealogical software programs, like The Master Genealogist, will create timelines for you, using the information you have entered. Genelines, will import your GEDCOM file, and create a timeline for your family. It will then take it another step, by placing it against timelines of historical events, making easy to place your ancestors in the context of the times in which they lived. Both of these products are available in the Ancestry E-Store.

Also check out the following website:

www.ourlinelines.com

????? QUESTIONNAIRE ?????

Did you forget to turn in your homework?
Did your dog eat it? You can't blame your Mom.
So.....what happened??? We didn't get **YOUR** questionnaire!

Well...we will give you one more change.
This is really very important to **YOU**, our members.
The information you provide us with, will assist us in setting up speakers, educational classes, special interest groups, etc. to help you in your research.
Now isn't THAT important.

Want to "win" a complimentary years
FREE SRVGS Membership - TURN IN YOUR
QUESTIONNAIRE. At the March Board Meeting,
one name will be drawn from those who turn in
their questionnaire. Deadline Feb. 17th.

COMPLETE IT NOW. DON'T MISS OUT!

Mail it or bring to the January 20th meeting.

San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 305, Diablo, CA 94528-8308

Questionnaire

In order to better serve the members of our Society, we would like to know what your needs are regarding your research. Will you please fill out the questions below? This will give us useful information for planning education classes, programs, purchase of books, etc.

Member's Name _____ Phone _____
 E-mail _____

Your Research

Who are you researching? Where? When? Where have you checked already?

	Research Surname	State, county, town, country of research	What years are involved?	Researched areas
1.	_____	_____	_____	_____
2.	_____	_____	_____	_____
3.	_____	_____	_____	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

If you need more space, please add a separate sheet to this questionnaire.

We offer many educational classes during the year. Often in our research we know what we need to find but have little idea of how to find that deed or tax record. Our education classes will help solve the mystery of researching. Please check the following list and circle subjects that would benefit you in your research. We will consider them for classes, programs, books and tapes purchases.

Education

Beginning research	Deeds	Probate Record
Organizing your data	Death Certificates	Published Histories
Citing your sources	Fraternal Organizations	Railroad Records
Ask living relatives	Funeral Homes	School Records
Archives	Land Records	Social History of ethnic group
Cemetery records	Military Records	Tax Records
Census: Fed, State	Naturalization Papers	Town, County History
City Directories	Newspapers	Vital Records
Courthouse Records	Passenger Lists	Voter Registration
Coroner's Files	Pension Records	Wills

Would a small group of members benefit from your knowledge of one or more of these subjects? If yes, indicate the subjects: _____

A speaker for the General meeting is selected each month by the Program Committee. These speakers have been recommended by other genealogical societies or by our members having heard them speak elsewhere. Have you heard someone you think would be interesting and add to the education of our group? Tell us about him/her and the availability of this person.

Programs

Are there topics you would especially be interested in hearing more about? Please list: _____

Murphy's Laws of Genealogy

1. The document containing evidence of the missing link in your research invariably will be lost due to fire, flood, or war.
2. The keeper of the vital records you need will just have been insulted by another genealogist.
3. Your great, great, grandfather's obituary states that he died, leaving no issue of record.
4. The will you need is in the safe on board the "Titanic".
5. Copies of old newspapers have holes which occur only on last names.
6. Yours is the ONLY surname not found among the 3 billion in the world-famous Mormon Archives in Salt Lake City.
7. The 37 volume, sixteen-thousand page history of your county of origin isn't indexed.
8. The town clerk you wrote to in desperation, and finally convinced to give you the information you need, can't write legibly, and doesn't have a copying machine.
9. The spelling of your European ancestor's name bears no relationship to its current spelling or pronunciation.
10. That ancient photograph of four relatives, one of whom is your progenitor, carries the names of the other three.
11. No one in your family tree ever did anything noteworthy, always rented property, was never sued, and was never named in wills.
12. You learned that great Aunt Matilda's executor just sold her life's collection of family genealogical materials to a flea market dealer "somewhere in New York City."
13. Ink fades and paper deteriorates at a rate inversely proportional to the value of the data recorded.
4. The critical link in your family tree is named "Smith."

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Box 305
Diablo, CA 94528-0305

FIRST CLASS