

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. 9

April - 2004

THIS MONTH - April 20, 2004

"White, Blue, Gray! What Color Ellis Island Search Form should I use?"

"You can run, but you cannot hide in the 1910 to 1930 Census"

Dr. Stephen Morse will be our April Speaker. Stephen Morse is an amateur genealogist who has been researching his Russian-Jewish origins for the past few years. Several years ago he developed some web-based searching aids which, much to his surprise, have attracted attention worldwide. Dr. Morse will be speaking to our group on two of his creations as follows: **"White, Blue, Gray! What Color Ellis Island Search Form should I use?"** In April 2001 the Ellis Island ship manifests and passenger records went on-line. A few weeks later the One-Step Ellis Island website was created to make this resource easier to use. Since that time this One-Step site has been greatly expanded to include new search capabilities and an array of color-coded search forms. This talk will describe the evolution of the website from both a historical and a practical perspective, and provide a beacon for navigating through this color maze.

His second topic will be: **"You can run, but you cannot hide in the 1910 to 1930 Census."** Even before the 1930 Census was unlocked on April 1, 2002, researchers began wondering how they were going to locate people's records. The lack of indexes was going to present a real challenge. Several solutions to this problem have since evolved. The One-Step Census website presents a street aid for finding records. The One-Step website has since been expanded to include 1910 and 1920 as well. This presentation describes and contrasts these various solutions of searching in these census years.

Because two topics are being discussed, the presentation may run a little longer than usual. So, please plan accordingly.

MARCH MEETING

"Passenger Arrival & Naturalization Records of the National Archives"

Speaker: Rose Mary Kennedy

Reported by Lee Schlenker

Rose Mary Kennedy was our enthusiastic speaker in March. She is currently the Reference Coordinator and Volunteer Coordinator at the National Archives-Pacific Region in San Bruno. She comes highly credentialed as a teacher. She leads the Workshops that are offered at the National Archives. Rose Mary is also the representative

guest speaker for the Archives.

She began her informative talk with a brief history of the National Archives. The National Archives contains the Census from 1790 to 1930, Passenger Arrival/Departure Lists and Customs Lists.

Federal Government maintains 3 to 5% of all

paper from governmental agencies and then these are destroyed or burned every seven years *unless* they are deemed to be of "historical" value.

Using her own family as some of the examples on how to go about locating your ancestors from Passenger Arrival lists and Naturalization Records, she walked us through the procedures.

Before you start your search there are particular items you need to know before starting:

- 1) your ancestor's FULL FOREIGN name,
- 2) approximate age at arrival, 3) approximate date of arrival, 4) port of arrival and, 5) ethnic group.

There were five great ports of entry between 1800 and 1953: Boston 1848-1943, New York 1820-1948, Philadelphia 1800-1945, Baltimore 1820-1948, New Orleans 1820-1945, plus the Port of San Francisco 1893-1953 (prior to 1893, records have been lost or destroyed). Rose Mary Kennedy gave us a handout as to what can be found at the Archives for each of these ports. One interesting point she told us was that if you were traveling you kept your personal possessions (clothes, pots/pans), literally, around you on board the ship, but tools & equipment were stored below deck (considered "baggage"). Any baggage then became a taxable item; so upon arrival the ship's captain charged you a tax on your equipment stored below deck. So, in some cases there will also be "Baggage Lists" (1800-1820) to look for. "Captain's Lists" (prior to 1850) would be list of people traveling under a cabin class ticket (1st, 2nd or 3rd class ticket) and the people traveling in steerage would be listed as "so many souls in the hole of the ship." There were no names listed for people in steerage. Immigration Passenger Lists - an Act of 1882 established procedures for recording the arrival of immigrants into the U.S. These records were maintained by Federal Immigration Officials often called Immigration Passenger Lists or Manifests. But before this was "an Act" many records sat on the docks where the ships arrived and were left to the heat, moisture and/or snow and were lost.

Ellis Island, Angel Island, and Castle Gardens were all quarantine stations for immigrants. These were the people traveling in steerage. If you held a

cabin-class ticket you went directly to the port. If your ancestor arrived in N.Y., he/she will be either on the list at Ellis Island OR on a N.Y. passenger list.

Things to Remember:

- Records were for taxation
- Early 1800s "Good Neighbor Policy" between Canada and the U.S. meant that you could get off any train in Canada or in the U.S. and you were automatically a citizen of that country!
- Journeys by ship were two weeks or longer to arrive in port. Travel would be usually from March to October when the weather was good.
- A 19 year old girl never traveled by herself. She traveled with a friend, relative or as a nanny for a family coming to the U.S.
- Often times the arrival date your ancestor claims maybe not be the actual disembarkation date. The ship may have sat outside of port for a day or two.

When a person disembarked from their voyage, they were handed a slip of paper which stated that they had one year to become a naturalized citizen. Naturalization Records can be found in many places depending on where and/or who had the authority in the town/county. They can often be found at the local courthouse, at Superior Court -state level, Federal Court, U.S. Postmaster, voter registrar, military service, or Homestead claim. Homestead claims, Federal Court naturalizations, Military Service/Naturalization (pre-WWI) will be at the National Archives in Washington, D.C. Military Service/Naturalization (WWI to current day) will be in St. Louis, MO. U.S. Postmaster and voter registrar will not be found at the National Archives, perhaps locally if they haven't been lost or destroyed.

Rose Mary Kennedy suggests that we always start our search at the local level and work your way up to the Federal level.

Passenger Lists can hold a wealth of information regarding your immigrating ancestors.

Things to Remember:

- Prior to 1923 women were not naturalized.
- After 1923 photos were placed on Declaration of Intent to become a naturalized citizen.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**SRVGS CALENDAR APRIL 2004****6 Tuesday-10:00 a.m. The Board**

Meeting will be held at the home of Fran 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.

22 Thursday-10:00 a.m. A Member

Education Class will be presented by Fran Lloyd at her home, 210 Town and Country Drive, in Danville. The topic will be "County Court House Records." Please sign-up at the general meeting or contact Fran Lloyd at 837-9382.

22 Thursday - 1:00 p.m. Members that

are "Aspiring Printers" will plan to meet at the home of Fran Lloyd, 210 Town and Country Drive, in Danville. This member group has met a few times previously, the last time being in November. Any member that is interested in organizing their material to make multiple copies for distribution, should plan to attend. For additional information, call Fran Lloyd at 837-9382.

28 Wednesday-9:00 am The Library Trip

will be to Sutro State Library in San Francisco (415) 731-4477. It is located at 480 Winston Drive (behind Stonestown Shopping Center). Preparing for the visit is important for a fruitful search. Visit their website to see that they have one of the largest genealogical collections west of Salt Lake City.

(www.library.ca.gov) for "California State Library - Sutro" Carpools will meet behind Albertson's, off Diablo Road in Danville. Carpools leave at 9:00 am sharp. Sign-up can be made at our general meet-ing, or call the Library Trip Coordinator, Louise Ford by 5:00 pm the day before the trip to either add or delete your name at (925) 376-4587. This is a popular trip-members who can drive, please take note.

MAY 2004**4 Tuesday- 10:00 a.m. The Board**

Meeting will be at the home of Jack & Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo, in Danville (925)-837-2153.

18 Tuesday-10:00 a.m. General Meeting

at the LDS Church on Stone Valley Road. The speaker will be Sue Severson. The topics of this presentation will be: Louisiana Family History, People and Culture.

25 Tuesday - 9:00 a.m. The library Trip

will be to the Napa Valley Genealogical Society Library (707-252-2252).

SRVGS Special Interest Groups**APRIL - 2004**

COMPUTER INTEREST GROUP - They will meet Tuesday, April 20th after the general Meeting at about 12:30 pm at the home of Jack and Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo, Danville (925) 837-2153. Bring a bag lunch. This is a genealogy software users group for PC's and will focus on the users of Master Genealogist. Peggy Dearman is the contact person for this group 837-1621 or email dearman@pacbell.net.

GERMAN - A home group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 28th (the fourth Wednesday) at 10:00 a.m., at the home of Jack and Barbara Johnson, 616 Camino Amigo in Danville (925) 837-2153. Please Phone or e-mail to 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 April 14th And May 12th, (second Wednesday) at 10a.m. at the home of Patty Erickson, 10 Ridge Place in Pleasant Hill. Phone (925) 229-0889 or e-mail russpat@comcast.net.

SOUTHERN - This group is scheduled to meet April 13th (Second Tuesday of the month) at 10 a.m. at Dorothy Stanton's 501 El Capitan Dr., Danville. The contact person is Dorothy Stanton, Phone 820-3757 or email dpstant@hotmail.com. May 11th meeting is canceled.

INTERNEST - Interested SRVGS members that are also Internet users communicate via e-mail. The coordinator is Jack Johnson - 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.

CALENDAR OF OTHER EVENTS

13 April 2004 Tuesday The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society will hold its regular meeting, 7:30 pm at Beth Emek, 1866 College Avenue at M Street in Livermore. Judy Person will speak about "Persi and Draper Manuscripts"

15 April, 2004 Thursday at 7 pm The Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society will hold its regular meeting at which Alison K. Douglas will discuss the traditional occupations of female ancestors. This meeting will be held at the Mission Library, 1098 Lexington Street in downtown Santa Clara. *Note: Their main library is now closed through April 18th. It is scheduled to re-open in the new Main Library building at 2635 Homestead Road.*

27 April, 2004 Tuesday at 1 pm in Sacramento, Suzanne Hanson and Emily Gann will speak about *German Lutheran Church Records in the United States*. This is a regular meeting of the Sacramento German Genealogical Society. The location is St. Mark's United Methodist Church on Lusk Drive at St. Mark's Way.

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

12 June, 2004 Saturday from 8:30 am till 2:30 pm, the California Genealogical Society is sponsoring a Germany Genealogy Seminar featuring Sabine Schleichert from Munich. The fee for non-members will be \$25. prior to June 1st. You may pre-register and order a box lunch for an additional \$9. The location will be Preservation Park off I-980 at 13th Street in Oakland. For further info, visit their web site at www.calgensoc.org and click on special events.

8-14 August, 2004 The California Genealogical Society is sponsoring a 6 day research tour to the Allen County Public Library in Fort Wayne, IN. For further details and info - visit their web site at www.calgensoc.org.

SYMPATHY

The SRVGS extends its deepest sympathy to the family and friends of member, Helen Hubbard of Walnut Creek who died March 16, 2004.

HOW TO REACH THE BOARD MEMBERS

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Sherri Hedman 275- 8123

Treasurer: Bob Dougherty 556-3302

Parliamentarian: Barbara Ditting 648-9364

President's Message - April, 2004

By Virginia Rood

Since April is tax month using tax records in our research seems like an appropriate subject for my column this month.

According to Val Greenwood's "The Researchers Guide to American Genealogy" there are three types of tax records: Real property, personal property and a combination of the two. Both types should be considered since often persons with no land did pay tax on possessions. Tax records were not uniformly kept. Some states kept better records than others.

"The Source: a guidebook to American Genealogy" by Szucs and Luebking discusses the poll or head tax when colonial and antebellum counties and towns taxed free adult males from approximately age 21 until age 50 or 60.

Unfortunately for us, women were not part of the poll tax even though they could have owned land and be taxed. Others that were omitted were children, slaves and indentured servants, landless men over poll tax age, paupers, ministers, justices of the peace, militia officers, tax assessors and those granted exemption.

Even though there are limitations there is information to be gained in looking at the tax lists, both poll and property lists, if they do exist for an area. These can be used to substitute as a census, helping us to locate persons at a particular time and place. Some state census have been put together from county tax lists but do not contain all the information that exists in the federal census.

Other lists are three federal direct tax series that produced names. The purpose of these were to raise money for the wars of 1798 & 1812. The largest number being the assessment lists from the Civil War to 1917. The latter were name lists of taxes on income, property and license fees and are found in the National Archive records.

In conclusion, combining some of these tax lists with your other documents and public records often helps in solving some of our puzzles.

Gleaning Information from Newspapers

Ancestry Quick Tip - 10/13/1999

After spending several years reading and indexing over forty years worth of old newspapers (for genealogical purposes), I offer the following comments and suggestions.

First, if the papers were microfilmed many years ago, I found they were occasionally filmed out of order; therefore, scanning the film for a few months in each direction is advisable. (Also note that on occasion the incorrect dates are listed on newspapers—typographical error.)

Second, in newspapers of early years look in the "gossip" portion of the paper. There were very few obituaries and/or death notices. This information was more commonly reported as a news tidbit. These were often no more than a single sentence or two listed along with many such items. Remember to check the issues several weeks preceding and following the date you have interest. Check earlier issues because illness, and accidents, etc. were regularly included. Check later issues because this information may not have reached the paper in a timely fashion.

Third, check ten, twenty, twenty-five, thirty, forty, and fifty years after the event. Many newspapers ran columns that reprinted items from earlier issues. This is particularly meaningful if some issues are missing from the microfilm or are unreadable.

Fourth, try to learn which township, suburb, or section of the community where your ancestor lived. Often the papers had columns devoted to those areas and the news as reported by a local resident. However, as I learned many of these areas overlap and information can be found in more than the one specific correspondent's report. So, learn the name of the area and which areas are immediately adjacent so that you can scan those columns as well.

Fifth, look at the late May/early June issues of newspapers for a listing of the graduation classes, which often included photos. Another good time to scan newspapers is right before and after holiday seasons. Often it is reported which relatives came for

visits and when they left.

Sixth, deaths of past residents and relatives of current residents living elsewhere were often reported. So, if you had an ancestor that moved, check the newspapers from his previous location. And check the papers before and after the event.

One caveat—do not be concerned how names were spelled (or rather misspelled) in newspapers. In a single article you can find the surname was spelled in three different ways. Also be creative in your thinking as to how your surname can be interpreted. Articles sent by various correspondents were often handwritten, thus were subject to the interpretation by the typesetter. Additionally, I wonder how many correspondents actually knew how to spell his neighbor's name correctly or how many had legible handwriting.

FREE WEB COURSES

Nobody needs to make excuses in the future for not knowing how to do genealogy. The Brigham Young University (BYU) Department of Independent Study has posted 26 non-credit, FREE, family history courses online. The courses cover how to get started, how to do American, French, German, Scandinavian, and Huguenot research. You do not even have to register for a course, but you need to keep working and learning on a regular schedule. Go to: <http://elearn.byu.edu> Click on "Free Web Courses" and check out your skills.

Genealogical Soc. Of Stanislaus Co., Jan. '04

NEWSLETTER TEAM

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 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.

"Dies Three Times"

Around 10 years ago, I attended a Mexican funeral at the famous old San Fernando Cathedral in San Antonio, Texas. The priest offered the following story:

"We have a tradition in Mexico that each person dies three times.

First, there is the moment in which the body stops functioning.

Second, there is the time that the remains are consigned to the grave.

Third, there is that moment, sometime in the future, in which the person's name is spoken for the last time. Then the person is really gone."

Several years later, I got into genealogy and realized that persons who preserve the memories of persons from their own familial past, are preventing that third death.

Ted Klein, Lake Travis, Texas

(tedklein@prodigy.com)

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LIBRARY HIGHLIGHT

Louise Ford, Library Trip Coordinator

A visit to the Pleasanton Public Library at 400 Bernal Ave. (intersection of Bernal & Old Bernal) made a productive and pleasant outing for me recently. The Livermore-Amador Genealogical Society maintains a collection of over 1000 books and 561 compact discs for family search. From their excellent CD collection I found the immigration record of an ancestor who entered the U.S. at the port of Philadelphia in 1830. I now know the exact date and the name of the ship on which he arrived. On Wednesdays a docent is scheduled to be on hand to Assist newcomers. Mr Frank Geasa of L-AGS was gracious and patient in helping me in the book section and with the computer. We, Marilynn Tanner and I, came away with the tip to look into Godfrey Memorial Library, Middletown, CT at: www.Godfrey.org.

'MAGNETIC' PHOTO ALBUMS.....THE HEAT IS ON

By Linda Boyea

This article is taken from the FGS Forum, P.O.Box 271
Western Springs, IL 60558-0271

Many years ago my mother, bless her soul wrote a comment on the back of most of the older, black and white photos that she had. Sometimes, it was only a year, as 1947, that she wrote, or simply a name, like Mary.

Then she proceeded to place these photos in the ever so popular 'magnetic' photo albums.

Now years have passed and Mom has died and of course, the pictures are sticking to the pages.

Well, we repair windows and screens at work. The way the glazer removes the broken glass is to heat up the putty. It softens and is then easily removed from the frame. Using the same principle of "heat-to-soften-glue," I experimented with a few photos. After trying several techniques, I developed a method that worked so well I removed all the black-and-white photos from Mom's albums with no damage to a single photo.

Supplies:

- * A wood breadboard to protect the tabletop.
- * A source of warmth. A microwave-able heat-Pack works well.
- * Two pieces of lightweight cardboard similar to The backing on a notebook.
- * Optional, books for weight.

Procedure:

1. Cut or tear out the pages from the album.
Open up each page and cut around the photos.
If possible leave at least 1/2 inch of backing around each picture.
2. Warm the heating pad. It should be warm, not hot to the touch.
3. Place warm heating pad on top of breadboard and top it with one of the lightweight pieces of cardboard.
4. Place a photo on the cardboard with the backing side down to the heat.
5. Place the second sheet of cardboard on top of

the picture and hold it down with your hands until you feel the warmth.

6. Starting at a corner, attempt to remove the backing from the picture. If it doesn't separate easily, place it back between the pieces of cardboard for a little more warmth.
7. If a picture does develop a curl anyway, place it immediately between a couple of books.

I removed over two hundred pictures this way last spring. I then separated them into various categories with the intention to re-mount them in archival-safe albums. (I even purchased the albums.) Then like many projects, this one was set aside. Recently, over six months later, I examined the photos. All are in excellent shape. Although they are stacked on top of one another, none are sticking together.

Of course, it is recommended that you practice this technique on pictures of lesser value. I have not tried it on the color photos, and I am not sure whether or not the heat will affect the color - if not immediately, then after time. Perhaps anyone who tries it on color photos will let us (SRVGS) know their results.

THE FUTURE?

A modern mother is explaining to her little girl about pictures in the family photo album. "This is the geneticist with your surrogate mother, and here's your sperm donor and your father's clone. This is me holding you when you were just a frozen embryo. The lady with the very troubled look on her face is your aunt...the family genealogist."

Contributed by Lucy Carter

From "Bluegrass Roots"
a Kentucky quarterly, Winter 2003.

Thought for the Month

Few will have the greatness to bend history itself, but each of us can work to change a small portion of events, and in the total of all those acts will be written the history of this generation.

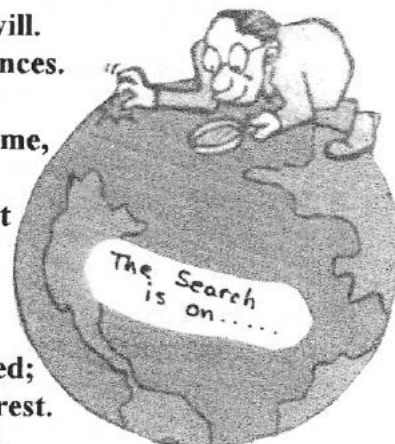
—Robert F. Kennedy



The Elusive Ancestor

by Merrell Kenworthy

I went searching for an ancestor, I cannot find him still.
He moved around from place to place and did not leave a will.
He married where a courthouse burned, he mended all his fences.
He avoided any man who came to take the U.S. Census.
He always kept his luggage packed, this man who had no fame,
And every 20 years or so, this rascal changed his name.
His parents came from Europe, they should be upon a list
Of passengers to USA, but somehow they got missed.
And no one else in this world is searching for this man;
So I play gene-soltaire to find him if I can.
I'm told he's buried in a plot, with tombstone he was blessed;
But the weather took engraving and some vandals took the rest.
He died before the county clerks decided to keep records.
No Family Bible has emerged in spite of all my efforts.
To top it off this ancestor, who cause me many groans,
Just to give me one more pain, betrothed a girl named Jones.



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