

STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

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President's Message

By Beverly Graham

I hope everyone had a good July. Our mid-summer break is over and now it's time to get ready for the second half of our year. We'll start with in ice cream social and work our way to the real food later. Make sure you come early to the meeting in August and get your bowl. There will be gooey toppings and nuts—some edible and some not. ☺

During this second half we'll be trying to meet the needs of our Society and of each other. We need to think about new officers for next year. Who is willing to step up to the plate? I hope many of you will say yes and join in on the decision making. Wouldn't it be nice to have everyone racing to get their names on the Board Member Roster? What fun that would be! There are plenty of opportunities for everyone so don't be shy.

One more added bit from me and then I will let it rest. **Everyone** thinks they are too busy to have time for volunteer work. I can assure you, if you looked at my schedule you'd wonder how I get anything done at all, but the truth is Board service really doesn't take much time at all and I am positive that you will get back much, much more than you put into it. You'll learn a lot and have fun at the same time.

I spent the entire summer getting organized and filing each of my families into binders. Sheet protectors are a life saver! Of course, there is always more to do but at least everything is neatly organized. I now realize that I am a compulsive organizer. My kids have known that for years.

I know we have some wonderful new speakers joining us in the Fall (and more food), and a lot of exciting things are planned for those of you who need some additional research tips. And remember, there are only four more meetings left before the end of the year, so I hope to see each and every one of you at least once, if not more often, before the year is over.

August Program

August 18, 2009

7:00 p.m.

Our speaker for August will be Kathy Burrow. She will be speaking on church records. This presentation is a brief history of church records in America including what you might find in a church record and different ways to access those records. Kathy has thirty-five years experience in genealogical research. Her experience includes service as librarian and director of Family History Centers in Fresno and Oakhurst, courthouse and archive research, and she is an instructor in beginning and intermediate research for community adult classes.

The New Ten-Day 2010 GSSC Salt Lake City Research Trip

By Lisa Bruk

Because so many researchers on the trip this year asked us to expand the length of the trip, the 2010 GSSC Salt Lake City Research Trip will depart on

Friday, April 16, 2010

and return on

Sunday, April 25, 2010

This will give researchers an extra day in the library and time for a tour of the Salt Lake area. To make your reservation, start by sending your \$200 deposit to Bev Johnson, 1924 Red Oak Dr., Modesto, CA 95354 by October 1, 2009. More details will appear in next month's newsletter. We hope you will join us on this fun trip.

The GSSC Salt Lake City Research Trip Committee

Lisa Bruk, lbruk@sbcglobal.net
Bev Johnson jbevjohnson1@aol.com
Marie Lewerenz marie2thecabin@comcast.net
Diana Loomis dloomis6@pacbell.net
Wayne Black 1waynethepain@sbcglobal.net

Acquisition Committee Update

By Susan Park

New books have been ordered for the Special Collections Room, and are starting to come in now. Once all the books are placed on the shelves we will let you know in another newsletter article. If there are particular books that you think should be in the Special Collections Room please let the Acquisition Committee Chairperson, Janet Lancaster, know about it. Here is what's been ordered:

Female Index to the Genealogical Dictionary of the First Settlers of New England by James Savage
Index to Headright and Bounty Grants of Georgia, 1756-1909 by S. Emmett Lucas
Emigration to Other States from Southside Virginia by Katherine Blackwell Elliott
The Arkansas Gazette Obituaries Index, 1819-1879 by Stephen J. Chism
Missouri Taxpayers, 1819-1826 by Lois Stanley, George Francis Wilson, Maryhelen L. Wilson
Index to Volunteer Soldiers in Indian Wars and Disturbances, 1815-1858 by Virgil D. White
Index to Pension Applications for Indian Wars Service between 1817 and 1898 by Virgil D. White
The Third or 1820 Land Lottery of Georgia by S. Emmett Lucas

Books containing the 1790 reconstructed censuses for Kentucky, South Carolina, and Georgia, and another on the 1800 census for Kentucky have also been ordered.

Members Donate Books to the Special Collections Room

By Marilyn Belleville

Long-time member Dorothy DeMers and I have donated a few books from our collections to the Special Collections Room at the Stanislaus County Free Library. They are on the shelves now and we hope they'll be of as much use to our fellow researchers as they have been to us. Here is what was donated:

Superior Court of Law and Equity, Mero District of Tennessee 1803-1805 by Mary Sue Smith. The call number is SC 976.8 Smi.

Documents Relating to the Colonial History of the State of New Jersey edited by A. Van Doren Honeyman. This is a two volume work. The call number is SC 974.9 Hon.

Vermont 1771 Census by Jay Mack Holbrook. The call number is SC 974.3 Hol.

A history of Monmouth and Ocean Counties, embracing a genealogical record of earliest settlers in Monmouth and Ocean Counties and their descendant, the Indians, their language, manners and customs, important historical events.... By Edwin Salter. The call number is SC 974.946 Sal.

Early Virginia Marriages. With a new index by Anna M. Carlidge by William Armstrong Crozier. The library already has the earlier un-indexed version of this work. The call number is SC 975.5 Cro.

Families of Early Hartford, Connecticut by Lucius Barnes Barbour. The call number is SC 974.6 Bar.

Sutro Library Hours Change Again

By Susan Park

Laura Parker, Public Information Officer at the California State Library in Sacramento recently announced more changes to Sutro operating hours. The following is copied directly from her e-mail about those changes.

“Beginning August 1, 2009 and continuing until June 2010, the library will close the first, second, and third Fridays of each month. Regular service hours for Sutro are Monday through Friday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., excluding furlough Fridays and state holidays.”

Even though the library has reduced its hours of service it still, Ms. Parker goes on to say, “offers the most extensive genealogy collection west of Salt Lake City, along with a comprehensive local history collection; Adolph Sutro’s rare book and manuscript collections; genealogical, family and local history catalogs; and special indexes, guides, and bibliographies. Library materials can be accessed through the California State Library’s Main Catalog and Sutro staff is available to assist in-house customers. Items from the Sutro Library may be borrowed on interlibrary loan through local public libraries.”

Research for the Homebound

By Susan Park

As some of you know, I’m staying close to home these days with aging and ailing family members and getting outside the city limits is pretty impossible for me to do. Thank goodness for the internet! Yes, it’s true that only a tiny fraction of all the existing documents are digitized and available online, but for people like me, that’s still a huge improvement over what was online twenty years ago.

Did we even say “online” twenty years ago? At any rate, here is what I came across this summer in between doctor appointments, hospital visits, and out of town visitors:

The Newberry Library in Chicago has a wonderful county mapping program on its website. It’s called the *Atlas of Historical County Boundaries* and can be reached via this link: http://www.newberry.org/ahcbp/state_index.html. I have written about other commercial programs similar to this before, but for now this is my number one favorite. Not only does the program do all the usual comparisons of historical boundary changes, but it also includes the legislative history of those changes. There is an extensive section explaining how they created the maps, what sources they investigated in their research, and a lengthy bibliography of books on various county histories that a person could consult should they want to know more about a particular area. It’s the most comprehensive set of online maps I’ve seen, and to make it even better, it’s free.

Thinking about historical county maps naturally puts me in mind of Thorndale and Dollarhide’s classic *Map Guide to the US Federal Census*. I used to have a copy but gave it away when I became enamored of the online map programs. However, Bill Dollarhide also put out *The Census Book: a Genealogist’s Guide to Federal Census Facts, Schedules and Indexes*. This book, published in 1999, is out of print but can be found in many libraries. When I checked www.worldcat.org I saw that Stockton was the closest library that has it. A better solution is to view it online and download it to your own computer where you can look at it any time. You could even print it out on paper and read it in the traditional manner.

The Census Book tells you just about anything you’d ever want to know about every Federal census conducted between 1790 and 1930. The first section gives an interesting account of the history of our Federal census, including the fact that in 1790 the United States was the first country in the world to call for regularly held censuses. In this first section you’ll also find a discussion about the selection of census takers, how and why the Soundex system was created, and why mortality schedules were finally discontinued at the end of the 19th Century. The other sections include some material that isn’t so relevant today. When the book was written we still looked at such things as census indexes and even the Social Security Death Index on compact discs (CDs). It was considered pretty high tech then, and parts of this book contain charts describing the companies which produced these CDs. The final section of the book contains forms to record information from each census year. Even though most of us just print the page we want from Ancestry.com or HeritageQuest, there is still some value in using the paper forms. Using them is a great way to track a family through various census years. One of my favorites is the 1790-1840 worksheet which allows you to track the unnamed non-heads-of-households. Sometimes when we see data displayed in a new way, undetected patterns jump right off the page and provide us with new clues.

The method of obtaining *The Census Book* is a little tricky, but not impossible. First find a computer with access to HeritageQuest. Then click on **Census Records**, then in the upper left corner click on **Help with Federal Census**. The book can be read online or saved to your computer for later viewing. There are also four pages of introductory material which you can see by clicking on **What you should know about the Census** in the same upper left corner.

On the topic of maps, the University of Iowa library has been busy digitizing its holdings and anyone can look at their material. I was interested in Benton County, Iowa and found eighty-five items, mostly township maps, but also a few other things. The link is <http://digital.lib.uiowa.edu>. The township maps were great fun to look at since I’ve never been there. But don’t overlook the other items. There is a section devoted to Civil War diaries and letters, another to pictures of rural life in the early 20th Century, and one with over 4,000 newspaper clippings regarding Iowa and WWII. You could easily lose a day or two just browsing through all the collections.

If you subscribe to *Ohio Genealogy News* this won't be news to you, but in the Summer 2009 issue, there were some great articles regarding county records online. While the article points out that only eight of the eighty-eight counties in Ohio have posted their county records online, at least it's a start.

Defiance County has indexes to vital statistics, cemetery records, naturalizations, coroner inquests and much more on a single public access computer in their offices. The other seven have gone totally modern and allow you to look at things from your computers at home. Butler County has posted the 1834 Property Reappraisals for certain townships. Lorain County has images of birth and death records from 1867 to 1908, and some tax records. In Madison County the Probate Court has posted an index of some of its records. Included are births, deaths, estates, marriages, and name changes. The Stark County Recorder's Office has digitized its oldest books, going back as far as 1809. In Summit County you can look at naturalization records from 1850 to 1991. Wood County has a Deed Index, Miscellaneous Index, Lease Index, and a Veterans Index online. I haven't personally checked any of these out but point them out to you as an example of what you can find with a little effort. A good place to start County searches is www.usgenweb.org. Happy hunting!

Did you know you can order an SS-5 (Application for Social Security Card) for a deceased person online now? Perhaps this has been around for awhile but I just learned about it this week. Instead of printing the form and mailing it to the Social Security Administration with a check, you can now fill out the form on the SSA's website and give them a credit card. I don't know that they'll process your request any faster, but at least they'll receive your request and payment sooner than using the more traditional method. The link is http://www.ssa.gov/foia/html/foia_guide.htm#FOIARequests.

And finally, the last online thing I did this summer was to order a book from Amazon.com. *Measuring America* by Andro Linklater is a great introduction to how we measure all things in America today. You think such things as perches, rods and chains are outmoded and old fashioned measurements no longer used? Think again! The twenty-two yard chain can be seen everywhere around us in the length of city blocks, the width of roads, and many other surprising places. In addition to learning more than you ever believed possible about measuring things, this book also contains a lot of early American history, as well as Western European history. Did you know that the metric system was born out of the French Revolution? Did you know there were very good reasons for keeping our non-metric system? Did you know that before we won our independence from Britain that practically every town had its own system of measurements? In those early days a bushel in one town was rarely the equal of a bushel in the next town. Overall, this is a great history of certain aspects of daily living—the kind of thing that all genealogists need in their libraries.

Genealogical Events Coming Up

By Susan Park

Many top notch genealogical speakers find their way to California and when they do, it behooves us to make every effort to attend the presentations. Even though it may involve driving for a couple of hours, that effort is well worth it. There is nothing like attending a great genealogy seminar and being surrounded by dozens, maybe even scores, of people who share and understand the crazy things we sometimes do in the name of tracking down our ancestors. There are two interesting events coming up in next six months. Neither is nearby, but both are worth the effort to get to them.

First is a seminar sponsored by California Genealogical Society in Oakland. The date of the event is Friday, October 23, 2009 and it will be held at the Metrolinks Golf course, 10051 Doolittle Dr., in Oakland. Dinner and an after-dinner presentation is at the Holiday Inn, located at 77 Hegenberger Rd., in

Oakland. Both places are near the Oakland Airport. I refer you to the CGS website www.calgensoc.org for further details on cost, sign up dates and so forth. The seminar program is devoted to New England research and is billed as "NEHGS Visits CGS." Speakers are Michael J. Leclerc and Christopher Child. Mr. Leclerc is director of special projects at New England Historic Genealogical Society (NEHGS) and has written numerous articles on a variety of genealogical topics. Christopher Child is a researcher and editor of both Newbury Street press and NEHGS books. The seminar topics are:

- Researching Your New England Ancestors Online
- Western Massachusetts Families in 1790
- Migration Through Western Massachusetts
- Using DNA to Unravel Your Genealogy

The other event you might want to consider is way down in Whittier. Now I realize most of us probably don't think of Whittier as a destination vacation (just as Modesto probably isn't on anyone's 100 Places to Visit Before You Die list), but they ARE having Paula Stuart-Warren come to spend the day with them on Saturday, February 27, 2010.

Ms. Stuart-Warren has been a full time working genealogist since 1980. She's earned her national certification from the Board for Certification of Genealogists. She's served as an officer of the Association of Professional Genealogists; she's been a board member of the Minnesota Genealogical Society; she's been on the Program Committee for the National Genealogical Society, and is currently on the Federation of Genealogical Societies' board of directors. She really knows her stuff!

For more information about this seminar check out the Whittier website at <http://www.cagenweb.com/kr/wags>. Topics will be announced on their website sometime after September. This society produces a great newsletter which I have been printing and bringing to our general meetings, and they always have great speakers at their annual seminars. Earlier this year they had Curt Witcher from Allen County Public Library.

NUTS Were the Rage in June

By Bev Graham

The Modesto Nuts game was a hit. It was a wonderful night for a relaxing evening at the ballgame. We had the new party box which is located up by the press box. It is covered for shade and high enough in the air so the gentle breeze cooled us at dusk. The view is amazing and everything is convenient. The elevator took us to the top. There are restrooms just off the elevator so we didn't have to go down to the ground floor for anything. We dined on real tables and sat in real chairs. Dinner was served by white-coated waiters. They gave us tri-tip, pasta salad, hotdogs with all the trimmings, soda, water, and a lot of other great tasting food. Everyone could eat as much as they liked, so needless to say, we got our bellies full. Along the edge of the wooden deck, looking toward the field, is a long bar with stools where we could sit and get a bird's eye view of the game. Peanut and pecan came to visit and take pictures. That was fun. I hadn't had a picture taken with a nut for quite a while. We didn't have the large crowd we had hoped for but those who were there had a wonderful time and are looking forward to doing it again next year.

Membership Information

- Dues: Single membership, \$20.00 per year Family membership, \$27.50 per year
- Stanislaus Researcher Published 10 times per year by Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County, P. O. Box A, Modesto, CA 95352-3660. Submit articles for publication to the editor via email: pebfarms@yahoo.com by the 15th of each month.
- Address changes: Send address, email and phone number changes to Maybelle Allen at:
 US Mail: Maybelle Allen c/o GSSC, P. O. Box A, Modesto, CA 95352-3660
 Email: gssc@att.net
 Telephone: 209-523-0593 (Maybelle Allen)
- GSSC web page: <http://www.cagenweb.com/lr/stanislaus/gssc.html>.
 The newsletter is posted at this website, along with other interesting society-related items.
- General meeting: 7:00 p.m. on the 3rd Tuesday of each month, except July and December at the Trinity Presbyterian Church at 1600 Carver Rd., Modesto, CA.
- Board meeting: 7:00 p.m. on the 2nd Monday of each month at El Vista Chapel (LDS) at 731 El Vista Ave., Modesto, CA.

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We have 201 members.



Genealogical Society of
Stanislaus County
P.O. Box A
Modesto, CA 95352-3660