



Sonoma County Genealogical Society Newsletter

SCGS

May 2004

President's Message

by Evelyn Ross

One of our recent General Meeting speakers was Dr. Donald MacRae. He's topic was the science and origin of names. Near the end of his presentation Dr. MacRae said that most of our surnames are at least eleven centuries old. In light of this statement, it's no surprise that the Family History Library in Salt Lake City has over 90,000 volumes of personal and family histories.



May 22nd
Meeting:

S.R.J.C.
Lark Hall
Room 2004

Last month John and I drove back to Utah, primarily to play with three sweet little boys. We did tear ourselves away long enough to spend a half-day at the Salt Lake Library. My research for the last few months has been focused on my great-grandmother's line and I wanted to go through the biographies that deal with her family lineage.

John is one of those spouses who has not yet caught the vision and fun of family history research. However, willing to accompany me, he brought along his paperback novel. While I was scouring four skinny little books dealing with the Beebe family in America trying to eek out every little tidbit of information possible, the "bored and restless" started wandering aimlessly through the rows of books and returned to the table with a large 782 page tome that traces the history of the Hoggatt/Hockett family from Scotland in the mid 1500's right down to his own mother!! If that's not enough, the title page informed us that the entire book has been microfilmed meaning that for the grand sum of \$1.50 we can have a microform copy of the book permanently housed at our local Family History Center. If John wasn't the wonderful grandfather of those adorable little boys...I could easily dislike him!

There is a message here, within the Society we have several people who have published their family histories and there's a small but

dedicated Special Interest Writer's Group that meets on a regular basis to encourage one another in the writing process. As you do research you may consider writing your own family's history; then contributing a copy of your work to the Family History Library to ensure that your surname survives the next eleven centuries.

Searcher and Newsletter Editors Sought

For the past six months we have been looking for someone to take on the responsibility of editing *The Sonoma Searcher* that's issued three times a year and is dedicated to stories and events in the lives of early Sonoma County residents.

We regret to announce that until a new editor is found it is necessary to suspend publication of *the Searcher*. Evelyn Ross

The June edition of the Society newsletter will be the last one that I will publish. Do to my husband's ill health, I have to cut down on my activities and tend to matters at home. I will be happy to work with the new editor for a couple of months until s/he feels comfortable with the job and to share my templates, photos and graphics.

If you think you might be interested and want more information, feel free to call me at 763-6317. Janet Mobley

Jim Kern:
Mare Island
and Vallejo
History:
The Naval
Museum's
Archives,
Research
Library and
Photo Collection

Visit Our Web Site at: <http://www.scgs.org>

The Sonoma County Genealogical Society is a Nonprofit Organization which Encourages Interest in Genealogy and Family History

Volume 14, Number 9

Mare Island and Vallejo History: The Naval Museum's Archives, Research Library and Photo Collection

by Fawn Hill

The speaker for May 22nd, 2004 educational program will be Jim Kern. He serves as the Executive Director of the museum, located at 724 Marin Street in Vallejo, and has since 1990. Prior to that, between 1988 and 1990 he was the curator there. The photo collection is extensive and the available resources include information for those of us tracing ancestors or writing family histories.



Noting that several excellent books have already been written, about the *History of Mare Island*, but very little about the *History of the city of Vallejo*, Jim is working on a project to fill that gap.

His professional background includes a BA from Ohio University and an MA in History and Museum Studies from Kent State University. His thesis dealt with the German-American community of Cleveland, Ohio (his home town) and the impact of anti-German sentiment on that community during WWI.

He and his wife Chris moved to California in the middle 1980's. Other professional organizations in which he is involved include the following – Solano County Historical Society, American Association for State and Local History and American Association of Museums. He will tell you that his primary interest is "immigration history" and that sounds like the title of yet another interesting lecture to add to the agenda for Sonoma County Genealogical Society's general education meetings. I look forward to a large turnout on May 22nd and please bring a friend. Guests are always welcome.

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May Issue Corrections

Apologies go out to Carmen Finley, author of the piece about the internationally prominent, April Seminar Speaker, Elizabeth Shown Mills. The by-line was incorrectly given to Fawn Hill.

Welcome New Members

Sally Staley of Chico, California
David Strange of Petaluma, California

Condolences

We have recently lost three members of the Society.

Our sympathies go out to the families of Anne Crossfield, Phyllis Ahls and Frances Murray.

With the passing of Fran, we have lost a valuable brain-trust. She served as Recording Secretary of the Society for a number of years and could always be counted on to know exactly what topics were covered in board meetings, and where those topics could be located in the minutes of those meetings. Her support will be sorely missed.

Special Interest Groups

British Group For further info. phone Susan Simons at 527-7191.

German Group Meets at 10am on the first Saturday of the odd-numbered months except for July. The next meeting will be at 10am on Saturday, 1 May 2004 at the home of Lorel Kapke, 17003 Park Ave., Agua Caliente, CA, phone 996-8880. We will be having a general help session and discussion on topics of interest to those present.

Contact Jim Cochran at: cougars@sonic.net

Computer Interest Group The May meeting of the Computer Interest group will be 2pm Saturday, May 15th at the Peterson Lane Family History Center. Spence Burton will share his experiences with running a website, including our SCGS site. If you would like to be notified of the CIG meetings, please e-mail Maggi at <mandr21020@aol.com>. If you are currently receiving e-mail notification, please confirm you would like to continue, as we are updating our list.

Italian Interest Group The Italian Interest Group will meet on the 15th of May at the home of Ines Williams. Please come join us. For more information e-mail me at: inesw@comcast.net

Family History Writing Group Will meet on May 1 at 1pm at the annex. Contact Evelyn at 539-0926 or eross930@aol.com

Genealogical Research with a Digital Camera

by Geoff Palmer, CGPG@bigpond.com, AUSOM News, Melbourne, Australia

The joys and satisfaction of family history research come through the discovery and recording of new information. This discovery might happen in a library, a government records office, a cemetery, a visit to a private house, or anywhere. But when we do make the discovery, our first concern is to make a record that we can take away with us. This is sometimes details scribbled on a piece of paper, or words spoken into a portable voice recorder for later transcription into a written record, - and sometimes we also take a photograph.

But now, with a system 10 Mac with its iPhoto software, plus a digital camera, the available means of recording data has suddenly greatly widened.

My digital camera is an Olympus MJU 300 digital camera. (But I am sure there are other brands just as good) It is small and easy to carry, and with it I can capture a visual record of information from any source. A clear copy of any paper record or photograph. A readable copy of information displayed on a microfilm or microfiche reader, and even internet data displayed on the computer screen. These images can be immediately seen on the camera screen, and if there is an error in focus or composition, etc, it can be deleted and another image taken.

Capturing images from a microfilm "reader" requires switching off the camera "flash" and holding the camera steady. The camera is usually only inches away from the reader screen and "macro" focus setting is also required. I have not found it necessary to use a tripod - just bracing elbows on a flat surface gives a sharp image, which, when later enlarged in iPhoto software, is often easier to read than the "original" image on the microfilm projector reader.

All this information is recorded at *no cost*. There is no film or developing costs and no paper or printing charges involved in collecting the information. The information collected will automatically download in the Mac as an iPhoto library image, where it can be enlarged and studied and edited, and wanted information extracted for more permanent preservation. Unwanted images can then be deleted from the Mac hard disk.

I sometimes find that I may copy with the digital camera upwards of, 30 or 40 pages of documents from a microfilm source for later study at home when I have more time, and access to other cross reference sources, etc. This procedure is quick, easy, and economical. If I later discard the images from the iphoto "library" there has been no cost involved at all. The expensive and time consuming procedure of arranging to obtain paper photo copies of microfilm documents no longer exists for me.

With every new procedure there are "pros" and "cons". The only limitations I have found are:

When capturing images of documents, it is necessary to keep the camera "square on" to the printed page, or the film reader screen. This makes it very much easier when later examining the data in the iphoto software. The information in a printed newspaper text page for example can then be enlarged and read by "scrolling" in the Mac down each individual newspaper column.

Camera images taken from internet pages often have distorting light patterns and wavy lines in the iphoto image, but the text information is still readable. This does not occur if the page, or pages, are printed out directly from the computer by an inkjet printer. But, if the document is many pages long, it is quicker and much cheaper to use the digital camera to photograph each page.

Many of the new digital cameras will perform these tasks, but, for research purposes, it will be necessary to purchase a larger capacity camera storage card than the usual 16mb card supplied as standard with most cameras.

(Although Mr. Palmer uses a Macintosh computer, much of what he writes can be applied to any computer. Ed.)

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Made with an iMac

Coming Events

NGS Annual Conference

Registration is now open for the NGS Annual Conference in the States. This year's conference will take place in Sacramento, California on 19-22 May 2004. You'll receive a substantial discount if you register before the "Early Bird" deadline on 22 March 2004. Check it out at <http://www.eshow2000.com/ngs/registration.cfm>

The Sacramento German Genealogy Society is inviting anyone with an interest in German research to a "German Family History" evening on Tuesday evening, May 18, in the Gardenia Room of the Sheraton Grand Hotel downtown, beginning with a social half-hour at 6:30 P.M., with a two-hour program beginning at 7pm. See the SGGS website for more information.

On May 8, a Silicon Valley Family History Seminar will be held, featuring Beth Uyehara, author of "The Zen of Genealogy", by the Silicon Valley PAF Users Group and the Santa Clara County Historical and Genealogical Society. See www.rootsweb.com/~caschgs/main/announcements.htm

National Archives Workshops

June 18, 9am to 1pm with Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogy Specialist

Military - Part 1, Revolutionary War to Civil War, July 16, 9am to 1pm with Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogy Specialist

Military - Part 2, Spanish American to Viet-Nam, August 20, with Rose Mary Kennedy, Genealogy Specialist

Sabine Schleichert will speak in Oakland-On June 12, The California Genealogical Society in Oakland is presenting a German Seminar with Sabine Schleichert of Munich, Germany. She will talk about record locations in Germany, and remote German research. More information at www.calgensoc.org, or Ph. 510-663-1358

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*May 22nd
Meeting:*

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Room 2004