



Sonoma County Genealogical Society Newsletter



October 2003

President's Message

by Evelyn Ross

An entry from my summer reading list is *The Diary of Mattie Spencer* by Sandra Dallas. The story begins with a young woman helping her elderly neighbor clean out her attic. Hidden in the lining of an old trunk, they discover a diary written by the grandmother. The neighbor is ready to toss it away, but it's rescued by the younger woman who takes it home and begins to read the story of a young bride's life from her marriage in Iowa to a sod house on the plains of the Colorado Territory.

Some of us are fortunate to have such diaries in our possession. Most of us are not! While there's not much we can do beyond genealogical and historical records to help us learn about our family's past, we can do something for our families in the future by consistently keeping a journal or diary.

I know, nobody would be interested in our uneventful lives. However the writing process, putting our thoughts, feelings, daily discoveries and memories in writing can be a valuable process for ourselves regardless of the possibility of someone reading our journal 25, 50, or 100 years from now. In a 1999 magazine article entitled "Why Write It?" author Brad Wilcox wrote "Like shooting baskets all alone in your driveway, writing does not require an audience beyond yourself to be worthwhile or enjoyable."

Write about the challenges you face, experiences you've had. I've always

thought it would be fun to include floor plan sketches of your childhood homes, maps showing your route to school, a friends house, or the grocery store where you bought bread for 9 cents a loaf. Which brings me to another thought, make sure events are accurate and not something that has been made-up in case your diary actually does get read. Also, just in case someone at some future time does read it, be positive...don't dwell on the negative. No one wants to be thought of as a crabby old goat!

I'm thinking more about this than usual because today my husband, John, and I helped a friend move her father into a memory care facility. It was an extremely difficult experience for both her and her mother. What a comfort it would be if the family had a journal of his thoughts and memories of happier times to read to each other tonight.



October
25th
Meeting:

Family
History
Fair

LDS
Family
History
Center

1725
Peterson
Lane
Santa
Rosa

9am to 4pm

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

Family History fair in October

by Evelyn Ross

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Back by Popular Demand

Our first Family History Fair last October received such a positive response we are going to host another one! Co-Sponsored with the Santa Rosa History Center, the Fair will be held from 9AM to 4PM on Saturday, October 25th.

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Co-Sponsored with the Santa Rosa History Center, the Fair will be held from 9AM to 4PM on Saturday, October 25th. In response to your requests, we've made a few changes. There will be 12 classes instead of 16 and each class will be 20 minutes longer than last year.

Special Interest Groups

British Group



For information, call Susan Simons, 527-7191 or e-mail to: suesimons@aol.com.

German Group



We meet at 10 am on the first Saturday of the odd-numbered months except for July.

Our next meeting will be held on Saturday, 1 Nov. 2003 at the home of Helen Strickley, Bodega Bay, CA, phone 875-2580. We will be having a general help session and discussion on topics of interest to those present. For Information contact Jim Cochran at cougars@sonic.net

Computer Group



For information, call Susan Simons, 527-7191 or e-mail to: suesimons@aol.com.

Italian Interest Group



Meet at the home of Ines Williams on Saturday, October 18th. For more information e-mail inesw@comcast.net. Come join us.

The location is still the same, the LDS Church at 1725 Peterson Lane, Santa Rosa. And the price of admission has remained the same...FREE! (But bring your own lunch.)

For complete details see the flyer enclosed with your newsletter. Additional schedules are available at the Annex and the Family History Center.

Important

If you have moved, changed your phone number or your email address, please inform 2nd Vice president in charge of membership, Annie Conley., anniec@sonic.net. You will get an email reminder of the meetings in your email inbox...that is, if we have your correct email address.

New Members

Trump, Norma and Michael of Cloverdale Researching George Harris who immigrated from England to Petaluma in the 1800s.

Clough, George F. of Healdsburg is researching Andrew Mattoon's parents from Albany, NY

Barnes, Barbara of Healdsburg is researching her Barnes ancestors in KY in late 1800s and Ingram in IL and OH in the late 1800s.

Rowley, Sally of Petaluma.

Welcome!



SCGS Projects Progress Report: September 2003

Carmen J. Finley

School Attendance Records

During the 1980s, SCGS member Harriet Foster visited schools in the county and copied early attendance records. The earliest records available were for the year 1858. Most lie in the range from 1858 into the 1920s and 1930s, although a few extend beyond this range. These records varied widely from school to school as to the information contained, but most of them listed at least the 1) name of the student, 2) school attended, 3) date of first record, 4) date of last record, and 5) the age and grade of student on entry and/or exit. A fair number of records also contain birth information and transfers to and from other locations. Camera-ready copy was sent to Heritage in July. The final report contains 476 pages of student data plus eleven pages of information about teachers who taught in the schools. This includes information on about 13,000 students and more than 400 teachers. The index was placed online on 24 July. Lois Nimmo did all the data entry on this project.

Indigent Records

A new project to transcribe information from a set of records titled "Petition to Be Place on the Indigent List,." is about to start. These records contain the name of the person applying for public assistance along with his or her place of residence, marital status, names and ages of children, place of birth of each child, reason for request, property owned, and habits of sobriety. Each person who applied had to obtain the signatures of at least ten taxpayers. The documents from which we copy have the original signatures of each taxpayer. One of the petitions contains the signature of Jack London and his wife, Charmain, just shortly before he died. Annie Conley will be coordinating this project with Joe Panaro doing the technical job of setting up the computer at the annex.

Chanate Cemetery

Jeremy Nichols is currently working on a project to clean up the Chanate Cemetery for indigents. He has gathered information on the individuals buried there with the assistance of Lois Nimmo. Those names are not posted online. The introduction, written by Jeremy is:

An indigent person is one who is dependent, wholly or partially, on public support. Such persons may be aged or ill, and usually do not have family to care for them. Often these people had come West to "make their fortune" or to start over and had no family in California. When they died, there was no one close who could arrange burial, so the duty fell on the county.

Indigents were usually buried in a special cemetery or cemetery section, known as a "paupers' cemetery," "indigents' cemetery," or "potter's field." (The term "potter's field" is of Biblical origin.) The two Sonoma County public cemeteries used for indigent burials are the old cemetery at the county hospital on Chanate Road (up until 1944) and the new plot behind Santa Rosa Rural Cemetery (after 1944).

Vital Data in Newspapers

We are nearing completion of entering and proofing volume V, 1891-1895. Abstracting and entering information for volume VI, 1896-1900 continues. The signed contract for volume IV has been received.



Sonoma County
Genealogical Society

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Coming Events

Family History Fair, October 25th

The annual Family History Fair, sponsored by the Society and the Family History Center is set for October 25th and will be held at the LDS Family History Center from 9am to 4pm. The FHC is located in the LDS Church at 1725 Peterson Lane in Santa Rosa. More next month

San Mateo Genealogical Society Fall Seminar

Saturday, November 1, 2003, 9:00 AM to 3:30 PM, First Presbyterian Church, San Mateo. Hank Jones, Genealogist, Author, and Renowned Lecturer. Space at this seminar will be limited to 120 persons. Please contact SMCGS, P. O Box 5083, San Mateo, CA 94402. for a form. Cost for the seminar is \$25.00 for members, \$30.00 for non-members and \$40.00 at the door.

Irish Research Trip, 2004

This is to announce our Irish Research Trip to Dublin in 2004. The dates are 28th March – 3rd April 2004. Nora Hickey, noted Irish historian and genealogist from Kinsale, will be the research director and personal consultant. Don-Em Travel Center of San Francisco (1-800-453-6636) are recommended by the organizers of this research week. There are many activities in and around Dublin for non-researching companions. Contact Sally Warren at 415- 435-1038 or www.saw33@msn.com for a brochure and registration form.



CALIFORNIA CONFERENCE

October 18, 2003

Crown Plaza

Foster City, CA

Workshops and Field Trips

Friday and Sunday

Vendors on Saturday

Raffles

http://users.lmi.net/catca/ca_conf

email: CA.Conference@aol.com

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P.O. Box 2273

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Dues:

\$20 per year individual or family (one household)

\$25 contributing (\$5 to book fund)

\$200 lifetime

Sonoma County
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Non-profit Mail

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