



# Sonoma County Genealogical Society Newsletter



September 2002

## Trod the Path of Your Ancestor: Insights from Local Searches

By Virginia Hershey

**T**rips “home” are always nostalgic. As we approach the city limits of our “home town,” visual and aromatic memories overpower us. The name of the game is to try and recall who lived where as you pass the various homes. With each passing year there are more gaps in the memory.

Now for the ritual! We mount the front steps with our baggage in hand. Mother greets us warmly by handing my husband his “fix-it” list of things she wants done; then yanks me back out the door saying, “Let’s go to the cemetery!”

On this particular visit to our kindred dead I was reminded of an important research principle. As the detective would say, “always return to the scene of the crime.” As a genealogical researcher would say, “don’t underestimate the value of an on-site visit to an ancestor’s hometown.”

After paying respects to our kin, I gazed about and my eye caught sight of a small but impressive family mausoleum in the rear of the cemetery. In fact, It was the only mausoleum in the cemetery. My hometown is a mining town that had more infamous citizens of legend, than prominent citizens. The reason I say this is, and pardon my diversion, but the only other substantial monument in the cemetery was that of an early prospector by the name of George Warren who owned a very large mining claim in Bisbee before it became a town. One day George bet his whole claim that he could outrun a man riding a pony, while he ran on foot. It was a short sprint and George was sure he had the advantage. Unfortunately, George lost, forfeiting a claim that one day

would become the fabulously rich Copper Queen Mine. George died a pauper.

Back to my story. As we approached the mausoleum, the name of one of the occupants caught my eye—*Marjorie Parrish!* She had been a teacher while I was a sophomore in high school, and married during the year that I took her typing class. Now my interest broadened to include the information regarding Majorie’s husband:

INGWALD ANDREAS  
ROSOK  
BORN JUNE 9, 1875  
HAROY NEAR MOLDE, NORWAY

**Continued on page 2**

### In this issue...

President’s Message .....	4
New FGS Strategy Publication .....	4
Now Online .....	5
Cemetery Vandalized .....	5
New at the Library .....	5
Letter to S. R.Press Democrat .....	5
Heritage Albums .....	5
Completed Projects .....	6
Interest Group Meetings .....	7
From Family Tree Magazine .....	7
Kudos, Jo! .....	7

Meeting  
Sept. 28<sup>th</sup>

Speaker:  
Anthony  
Hoskins, MA  
Archivist,  
Librarian

Topic  
*A Snapshot  
in time:  
Conducting  
A Total  
Ancestors  
Census*

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Continued from page 1

ARRIVED  
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
JUNE 10, 1891

ARRIVED  
BISBEE, ARIZONA  
SEPTEMBER 13, 1907

DIED MARCH 8, 1967  
TUCSON, ARIZONA

Wow, what a genealogical find! I wished at that moment that I was somehow related to the family of *Ingwald Andreas Rosok*, who obviously believed in the importance of family history. The question is, would I have been privy to all this information, if I had just relied on compiled cemetery publications? Maybe, maybe not. But wouldn't it be a shame to miss some of that information? From the inscription we discover that *Ingwald* traveled to America at the age of sixteen. Now that is a story to track down. How did someone from Norway



decide to go to a mining camp in the Arizona Territory. (Arizona became a state in 1912.) What did *Ingwald* do for sixteen years after he emigrated and before he arrived in Arizona? Additional facts about an individual, lead to other questions to be asked, and more revelations.

Now my mind as a detective/genealogist was moving from inertia to excitement. What other on-site resources could be explored on the local level?

### 1. Cemetery Searches

Glean all the information on the gravestone. Study the relationship of nearby graves. Epitaphs provide clues in symbolism and references to social and military experiences. The overall look and design of a cemetery and collective epitaphs provide a mental picture of the personality of the town as a whole, or that particular community.



Continued on page 3

## 2. Local Museums and Libraries

These local depositories collect oral histories, as well as historical artifacts of the local pioneers. Bless them! These records may not be on microfilm in any other library. Often times, the librarians keep a file cabinet of folders filled with scraps of family genealogy deposited there by the families, themselves. I have found these vertical files quite valuable. Picture collections can also be found there, especially at the museum.

## 3. Newspapers

Not all hometown newspapers can be found on microfilm. They can be difficult to locate at times; I have found them in the basement of a lawyer's office located near the courthouse; at the courthouse, (they were kept because of the published probate and legal notices); and in one little town in Texas, they were housed, or should I say abandoned, in an elevator of an unused building.

## 4. Business Directories

These records again can be located in a variety of places—the courthouse, the library, the museum, etc. These directories tell much about the history of an area, the make-up of the town, as well as the addresses, identification of neighbors, and the various occupations.

## 5. Local Courthouse

Not everything is on microfilm, such as most of the court records, logs, mining claims, voter's registrations, Board of Supervisor's minutes, naturalization petitions, etc. Some clerks are more helpful than others; don't get turned off by an UN-enthusiastic clerk.

## 6. County Public Health Office

Many states and counties kept birth and death statistics before the "State" Bureau of Vital Statistics was created. This is always worth exploring. It can be done by mail, but always more productive in person. Again, some

clerks are less enthusiastic than you are about the past.

## 7. Local Contacts

As you make the rounds to the mentioned depositories, always ask the question of everyone you contact, do you know the name of any one locally that knows a lot about the early local residents? People are always ready to volunteer someone else. They may even make a call for you to see if that person will consider an impromptu visit. I have sometimes gotten the name of these local historians at the gas station, mini-market, or soda fountain, (remember those.)

## 8. Take a Camera

Gravestones make wonderful illustrations for printed family histories. Pictures of the homestead and the paths they trod can be most insightful. As I looked out over the cemetery that day in my hometown of Bisbee, my eyes traveled over the epitaphs on the gravestones. I couldn't help but feel that the cemetery where the early residents of the town now resided, was the best place to feel the history of a locality.

## 9. Enjoy the Ambience of the Visit

The homesteads and the cemetery epitaphs evoke shadowy images of lives once lived, both happy and sad. My heart echoed the words penned by Walt Whitman in his poem, "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," in which he thought about the people on the ferry, and those who had gone before, ". . . if I had known you, I would have loved you. . ." My feelings exactly!

Happy Hunting!

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Speaker: 9/28

by Fawn Hill

If you haven't heard Tony Hoskins give a presentation before you are in for a real treat. If you have, then you'll know what I mean. The topic he has chosen for the September 28<sup>th</sup> SCGS meeting is what I would call timely or more to the point 'timeless' because it's about census research and managing the results. His deliveries are always done in a confident, relaxed way that will remind you of your favorite teacher. And Teacher he is, as well as Sonoma County Archivist and Annex Librarian. A former Newberry Librarian he is also a Lecturer, Author and Genealogist. At the September 28th SCGS Educational meeting he will share his direct line ancestral findings, out of England and New England, while illustrating how to conduct a "Total Ancestors Census" which he calls "A Snapshot in Time" and suggests 'any of us might be able to do the same.' I hope no one misses out on this excellent opportunity to advance research skills.

## President's Message

by Evelyn Ross

### Getting Your Money's Worth

OK, how many of us are paying for goods and services we're not using? The gym membership that shows up on credit card statements month after month while our good intentions keep piling up. I have two internet service providers, one I never use, all it would take is a phone call to cancel, and I intend to do that...one of these days.

Unless you're a lifetime member, most of us have just renewed our SCGS membership for the next year. Why not commit now to put that membership fee to good use.

According to a recent national survey in USA Today 74.4 percent of the people responding said they are extremely, or very interested in learning more about their family history. In her book *Family History Made Easy*, Loretto Dennis Szucs comments "A tremendous surge of interest in family history in recent years has dramatically improved the potential for



finding and using information about our ancestors."

Fawn Hill, our new program chairman, has put together an excellent series of speakers for this year's General Meetings. This series, combined with the Family History Fair in October and the Spring Seminar speaker, Sharon DeBartolo Carmack, will give you plenty of opportunities to learn of the new techniques in family history research. Along with all this we are so fortunate to have a number of active Special Interest Groups.

Put your membership to work, set a goal, and learn more about your incredible ancestors this year!

### Now Online

Index to Vital Data in Newspapers  
of Sonoma County, California

Volume IV: 1886-1890

You can find this here:

<http://rootsweb.com/~cascgs/news4.htm>

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## New FGS Strategy Publication Features SCGS Seminar Planning

The Federation of Genealogical Societies has added "Strategies for Program Chairpersons Perfecting the Art of Planning a Local Seminar" by Carmen J. Finley, Ph.D., CG to the series of papers offering suggestions and instructions for innovative and effective management for genealogical and historical societies. Citing the role of the planning committee, the importance of selecting a top-notch nationally known speaker, and learning through evaluation, Carmen outlines the process used by Sonoma County Genealogical Society to plan and conduct their very successful annual seminars.

Each FGS Society Strategies Series is a four page article offering suggestions and instructions for the management of genealogical societies, historical societies, and family associations. Description of the Series and order information is available online at <<http://www.fgs.org/>> or by writing to: Federation of Genealogical Societies, P.O. Box 200940, Austin, TX 7820-0904.

Set VI #7: Strategies for Program Chairpersons Perfecting the Art of Planning a Local Seminar by Carmen J. Finley, Ph.D., CG .  
Jo Russell

# Cemetery Vandalized

by Alan Phinney

On a wet February morning the dedicated volunteers who had worked since 1995 on restoring the Rural Cemetery in Santa Rosa reported for work. They immediately noticed that near the spot they had worked two days before, a new stone was lying on the ground. They soon spotted several others, obviously knocked over by vandals. Without much effort they were led along a path of destruction which began at a plot which was littered with broken glass, candle wax and many pieces of broken marble. Ignoring their immediate reaction of disgust, they called the Santa Rosa Police Department. Soon an evidence technician arrive who collected information and took pictures of the damages. In summary a total of 18 stones had been smashed or overturned. A professional estimate placed the cost at over \$12,000. Two detectives worked on the case and soon two of the three offenders were identified

# New at the Library

by Maggi Andrews

- 663.2 Images of America - Sonoma County Wineries; by Maxwell-Long
- 929.2 A Fitch Family History, English Ancestors of the Fitches of colonial CT by Fitch
- 929.2 Pocahontas' Descendants, A Revision .... Third Corrections and Additions; by Brown
- 929.3746 The Barbour Collection of CT Town Vital Records; vol. 37-49; Rocky Hill Westbrook
- 929.3747 New Netherland Roots; by Epperson
- 979.404 The Shirley Letters from the CA Mines 1851-1852; by Clappe
- 929.43 Germans to America, Lists of Passengers Arriving at U.S. Ports; Jan. 1850-Sept. 1876 (32 volumes)
- 929.7 The Plantagenet Roll of the Blood Royal... all the descendants now living of Edward III : The Anne of Exeter Volume; by Ruvigny
- 929.7 The Plantagenet Roll of the Blood Royal... all the descendants now living of Edward III : The Isabel of Essex Volume; by Ruvigny
- 929.7 The Plantagenet Roll of the Blood Royal... all the descendants now living of Edward III : The Clarence Volume; by Ruvigny

# Letter to Press Democrat

by Alan Phinney

Editor,

In mid-February there was extensive vandalism in the Rural Cemetery. Many readers followed the story with interest and a number contributed to a reward fund. Readers will be interested in the outcome.

Three individuals were involved: an adult male never identified, a 16-year-old girl, and a 15-year-old boy. Since the girl had actively tried to stop the vandalism, she was not charged. The case against the boy was presented by the District Attorney's Office. Judge Arnold Rosenfield decided that a program of *restorative justice* was appropriate to avoid incarceration for the youth. Under guidance of the firm Restorative Resources of Sebastopol, the boy and his family met with representatives of the Rural Cemetery Preservation Committee. The family then developed a six-month plan of restoration acceptable to the victims. This plan involves an apology, a financial payment, alcohol counseling, abstention from alcohol and drugs for the duration of the plan, community service, and non-association with the adult male.

This plan is now being pursued under the guidance of the Sonoma County Probation Department. A reward was paid for information leading directly to identification of two of the individuals involved. All the damaged stones have now been restored by dedicated volunteers.

Alan Y. Phinney

July 25, 2002

To Santa Rosa Press Democrat

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- 929.7 The Plantagenet Roll of the Blood Royal... all the descendants now living of Edward III : The Mortimer/Percy Volume; by Ruvigny
  - 929.729 Bermuda Settlers of the 17th Century; by Mercer

The Sonoma County Genealogical Society donated the funds necessary for purchase of the 12 new volumes added to the Barbour Collection — what a great resource now available at our Annex !

Heritage Albums  
Family Tree  
Magazine

With

"New Ideas for Crafting Heritage Albums," you'll never run out of fun and creative ways to preserve your family's history! Bev Kirschner Braun shows you the best products on the market--and how to use them--plus, the latest scrapbooking trends to help you preserve family photos and heirlooms. Order now for only \$24.99: <http://www.familytree.com/specialoffers.asp?FT627>

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\$20 per year individual or family (one household)  
\$25 contributing (\$5 to book fund)  
\$200 lifetime

# Completed Projects

by Carmen Finley

During the year 2001-2002 the publications group of the Sonoma County Genealogical Society completed three publications:

## 1. Index to Vital Data in Newspapers of Sonoma County, California, volume III: 1881-1885

Contains over 13,000 listings of persons found in all extant newspapers in Sonoma County and includes notices of births, marriages, deaths, divorces, and probate records.

## 2. Index to The Sonoma Searcher, Volume 16, No. 1 to Volume 28, No. 3, August 1988 to Spring 2001

Contains over 16,000 entries. The *Sonoma Searcher* has been the window on the world for the Sonoma County Genealogical Society (SCGS) since the Spring 1973 issue. Its distribution is well beyond the boundaries of Sonoma County. Originally a quarterly historical/genealogical publication, formerly limiting itself to articles and information occurring prior to 1920, recent changes now include current aids and ideas.

## 3. Militia Lists of Sonoma County, California, 1846 to 1900

Every able-bodied male inhabitant, with some exceptions, who was between the ages of 18 and 45, was subject to military service. Reproduced here is a combined alphabetical list for the years 1878, 1888, 1890, 1892, 1894, and 1900. More than 29,000 listings are included.

The first has been published by Heritage Books, Inc., Bowie, Maryland. The militia lists and the Searcher are currently in press with Heritage.

### Continuing Projects:

## Cemeteries of Sonoma County, California: A History and Guide

Jeremy Nichols, in July, completed his work that gives detailed information and road maps to Sonoma County Cemeteries and it has been submitted to

Heritage Books. He dedicates it to Charles Schulz and includes a photo of his grave marker. He ends with the grave marker of Robert Ripley. It is now in press with Heritage Books.

## Judgments in Sonoma County, California Courts

Placed online 18 July, these data give information about debtors who were taken to court to settle their debts. Early records remaining in the office of the Sonoma County Recorder for the period 1852 to 1917 are preserved in large leather-bound books, currently kept in a locked case. They are well-preserved and include an index titled, "Transcript of Judgments," and four volumes, P, Q, R, and S, of actual records titled, "Transcript, Judgment, Judgment Court," that contain the original hand-written record. The online index is a guide to those records.

## 1930 School Census

School census records taken in 1930 contain a host of excellent genealogical data including name of child in school, birth date, birthplace, race, school attending, grade, residence, who the child is living with and their relationship, birthplace of parents, citizenship of parents, whether parents are still living, and in some cases, the maiden name of the mother. Fifteen SCGS members are working on this project.

## Index to Vital Data in Newspapers of Sonoma County, California, Volume IV: 1886-1890

Final camera-ready copy is now being prepared and should be sent to Heritage Books soon.

## Index to Vital Data in Newspapers of Sonoma County, California, Volume V: 1891-1895

Work continues on the next volume of newspaper indexes. Thirteen SCGS member are working on this project.

## Special Interest Groups



### British Group

For information, call Susan Simons, 527-7191 or e-mail to: [suesimons@aol.com](mailto:suesimons@aol.com).



### German Group

Saturday, 7 Sept 2002, at 10 AM at the home of Darlene Dobrovlny, 5 Charro Drive, Santa Rosa, phone 527-1713. **Please RSVP for this meeting.** Subject: Sharing of genealogical trips and experiences over the Summer break (since May) as well as organizing the group (and topics) for the next year. Contact: Jim Cochran, phone 526-7331, or e-mail [cougars@sonic.net](mailto:cougars@sonic.net).



### Irish Group:

For information about the Irish Group call Myrtle Keefe at 539-0840.

### Jewish and Eastern European Group



No meetings in Sept. Contact Suzanne S. Waxman, phone 538-4378

### Computer Group



Susan Simons will host that group for the September meeting, at Santa Rosa Creek Commons meeting room, 883 Sonoma Ave. on Saturday, Sept. 21, 1:30 p.m. A short presentation on "How to evaluate a web site" will be followed by a general discussion based on members' experiences. We will also make plans for our meetings for the balance of the year. For information call Betty Young, 829-2388 or e-mail: [punkywhy@pacbell.net](mailto:punkywhy@pacbell.net)



### Italian Interest Group

The Italian Interest Group is meeting on the third Saturday of the month Sept. 21<sup>st</sup>. For more information E-mail [inesw@attbi.com](mailto:inesw@attbi.com)

## Family Tree Magazine

### Family Tree Editor

Sometimes we genealogists get so caught up in gathering our family history records and such that we forget about the very important next step: preserving those memories for future generations. If you need a little help figuring out what to do with those photos, papers, etc., check out Preserving Your Memories, the new special collector's issue from the editors of Family Tree Magazine.

You'll learn 12 easy ways to protect family photos, as well as 10 steps to identify mysterious old pictures, eight techniques for lasting scrapbooks, tips to save life stories and other archival techniques. This issue also features a 10-page directory of the best resources to preserve your memories. Preserving Your Memories isn't part of your regular Family Tree subscription, so be sure to get your copy from your local newsstand or at Family Tree Magazine.com. Preview this issue's contents at:

<http://www.familytreemagazine.com/memories02.asp>

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[http://www.familytreemagazine.com/subscribe\\_mag.html](http://www.familytreemagazine.com/subscribe_mag.html)

## Kudos, Jo!

Jo Russell was elected 2nd Vice-President of California State Genealogical Alliance.

The CSGA 2nd Vice-President acts as liaison between the Regional Directors and the Executive Board. Regional Directors are responsible for communication between the CSGA member organization in their region and the CSGA Board. Regional Directors are expected to attend the quarterly board meetings and/or submit a written report of the events in their region.

As Regional Director for the North Bay Region, Jo's job is to work with the CSGA member organizations in Sonoma, Napa, Lake, and Mendocino County. She has been able to provide SCGS with information about the events in our neighboring counties and provide them with information related to the projects and events of SCGS. This new position is an expansion of the things Jo has been doing.

## Family History Month in October

Senate Resolution(SCR 100) "Family History Month" sponsored by Wes Chesbro has passed through the State Senate and Assembly. You may log on to the CA State Senate Page <<http://www.sen.ca.gov/> to read content and the progress of this bill. Click on Legislation on the left side of the page, when the next page opens key in the bill number SCR 100, Family History Month, Chesbo and then click search. Analyses: provides the verbage.

## General Meeting

September 28<sup>th</sup>  
S.R.J.C  
Lark Hall, Room 2009  
1 P.M. - 3 P.M.

*There is now a \$2.00 parking fee at the college.*

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