



STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

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Internet Researching

Claude Delphia brought live Internet to our General Meeting with the help of Bud, his expert friend from the PC Users Group. Claude showed and explained meta-search sites. He told that they had searched many sites, from Google to Ask Jeeves to Dogpile and others. But he admitted that Google was still his favorite. Claude showed some routes to follow to find information in a clear and orderly way. But he had his problems as the Wi-Fi setup cut off his internet access and so he had to teach the old fashioned way, verbally. He cautioned everyone to have patience and to persevere when your search did not work out or you had an equipment failure. Just keep on trying new ways and you would soon have success and be able to fill out those pedigree charts.

March Meeting

WHAT YOU ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE LIBRARY BUT WERE AFRAID TO ASK.

The March meeting will feature a panel from the Stanislaus County Library. What is more important to a researcher than knowing where and how to find information?

Well the Stanislaus County Library as do other libraries, hold many secrets and much data that will help us all in our pursuit of illusive ancestors.

Marilyn Belleville will head a panel of Library personnel who will share information about what and how and where to find items that will aid in your research and understanding of your ancestors and how they lived. Reference Department Head Patricia, John from Periodicals, Sarah from the all important Interlibrary loan, Teresa with Ancestry and others will tell us about what is in their domain. Marilyn Belleville will talk about the Special Collections Room and its materials. They will all be prepared to answer questions, so come with your questions and curiosity and learn a lot.

CALENDAR

March

Book Nook	
Board Meeting	March 13
General Meeting	March 21
Arkansas Study Group	March 13
Writing Group	March 16

April

Book Nook	
Board Meeting	April 10
General Meeting	April 18
Arkansas Study Group	April 10
Writing Group	April 20

Cook Books

Great happenings! The GSSC cook-books have been reduced to half of the original price. They are now \$5.00 each. Think of all of the times they can be given as gifts See Vicky Wolff at the General Meeting or give a call at 209 529-9430.

Genealogy Online Notes

By Claude Delphia

Internet searches with an emphasis on genealogy and Google:

Doing Internet searches seems to present difficulties to some. Certainly searching for ancestors isn't particularly easy especially considering the problems of names. Recorded written names were dependant on the person hearing it and writing it down, such as priests and census takers. This was particularly true of immigrants or those who were uneducated. Many had no idea how their own name was spelled, so phonetic versions ended up on official forms. Of course last names were more trouble than first names, and still are.

Another factor was the tendency to anglicize names when arriving in the US. Mine was anglicized from the French Canadian Delpia, one of several variations of the original French version, to Delphia.

So here are a few things I've learned about searching the Internet whether for family names or the many other subjects that pique my interest on a daily basis.

Boolean search and Google

At a recent presentation on the subject of searching, I was asked to deal with the question of Boolean searches. Basically this involves a series of code words that allow you to define and limit the search. If you look at this sample of Advanced Search from Google, you can see that there are actually Boolean terms working in the background. You could learn to use Boolean expressions, but in most cases it really isn't necessary.

Here is an example of Google's advanced search page:

Find results	with all of the words	<input type="text"/>	100 results
	with the exact phrase	<input type="text"/>	
	with at least one of the words	<input type="text"/>	
	without the words	<input type="text"/>	
Language	Return pages written in	English	
File Format	<input type="button" value="Only"/> return results of the file format	any format	
Date	Return web pages updated in the	anytime	
Occurrences	Return results where my terms occur	anywhere in the page	

In the first field, what ever you put there, one word or a dozen, will all be found regardless of where they are in the Webpage. This would be the equivalent of the Boolean AND (in caps) being typed between each word.

If you type something in the next field, you are only going to get something where the words you type are found together. This is the equivalent of "Claude Delphia" which only returns searches with that exact name in the Website. No other search results will show.

Most Web sites offer a form where you can search for the words you want without having to actually use the Boolean terms. I seldom use them except in special circumstances. I don't recommend learning them for the rare time you might use them. They are really more programmer's tools and are used in database work and spreadsheets. If you feel these might be of advantage to you, then go to one of the Websites where there are detailed examples to print out and learn.

Of greater importance are Meta Searches. These are Websites that allow you to put in your search words and multiple search engines will be queried all at the same time. *Cont. page 8*

Annual Workshop

Our Annual Workshop is scheduled for March 4, 2006. There will be several NEW and EXCITING speakers. We are offering new classes that have not been offered before, such as: Headstone Interpretations, Lineage Societies, Scrapbooking, Books and Novels, Funeral Director Resources, Writing Your Family History, and Internet Searching. For most of us this will be new material and new information. The common ground for all of us: What to do with all the information you have? Do you want to write a book, create a scrapbook, help others gather their info, or join a society? Whatever you may want to do will be covered in these classes. It will be a great time for all. Remember, pre-paid registration is \$10.00 and at the door will be \$15.00. Can't wait to see you all there. Any questions just ask me. You can call or e-mail. Please send your registration to me ASAP. Some of the classes will be limited to only a few students, so please register soon to insure your seat in the classes.

Bev Graham...529-6467 or baglady@sbcglobal.net

Weaving and Linen

It isn't uncommon to find in a probate inventory that an ancestor owned several yards of lining. To understand this term, we first need to remind ourselves that our ancestors didn't care all that much about spelling and that they spoke with accents unlike our present-day American accents. Lining was the most common way of spelling linen. This even gives us a clue of how it was pronounced.

Linen yarn could create a variety of fabrics: from delicate underclothing and fine handkerchiefs to sturdy sheeting and practical outerwear. Linsey-woolsey was a common fabric woven from both linen and woolen yarn.

Linen was made from flax. Edwin Tunis in *Colonial Living* (see below) says of flax, "It took about twenty operations, all laborious, to reduce the plant to a state that would allow its fibers to be spun." Spinning added an additional set of operations before weaving could begin. Like preparation and spinning, weaving has many parts.

Looms

A loom was not a simple item. It occupies a significant floor space and has complicated parts. We see references in inventories to gears, slays or sleys, harness, tackle, and other weaving equipment. These could determine the specialty of a specific weaver. In Martha Ballard's diary (see below), we see that some of these pieces--and their installation and set up--were part of the borrow-and-barter economic system.

Warp refers to the sturdy threads that run the full length of a piece of fabric. The warp threads have to be mounted on the loom before weaving can begin. In effect, they go from a roller near the weaver to a roller at the far end of the loom. Periodically, as the warp within reach of the weaver is woven into cloth, warp is unrolled from the far roller (the warp beam) and rolled up on the near roller (the cloth beam). Setting the warp of a loom required both a significant amount of time and specialized skills.

The weft is the thread that alternately passes over and under the warp. The purpose of a loom is to create a mechanical way of alternately raising and lowering particular warp threads so that the weaver can use a shuttle to throw the weft thread from one side to another. Until the

invention in 1733 by John Kay of the fly shuttle, the shuttle was thrown by hand from one side of the loom and caught at the other. The fly shuttle automated this process to the pressing of a pedal. The mid-1700s also saw the invention of equipment to facilitate special weaves, such as the Jacquard machine.

Gender Roles

In Europe, weaving was a male occupation. It was learned by apprenticeship, and although a man could be described simply as a weaver or cloth-maker, often the type of material was described in the occupation. I have seen records in England, France, Germany, and Holland referring to linen weavers, woolen weavers, and say makers.

Both women and men were spinners, but weaving was exclusively male. It took several spinners to supply one weaver and his loom. So why do we envision the early American housewife seated at her loom?

With the collapse of the cloth-making industry in Europe, many weavers came to America for what they hoped would be economic opportunity. (I don't pretend to be familiar with the specifics of the changes, but one factor was increased cotton production, which caused a decline in the linen industry because cotton could be prepared and woven much more quickly.)

When emigrants arrived, if they were in a rural area and had been lucky enough obtain a farm, the focus had to be on survival, with the priority on accumulating food to make it through the winter. Although self-sufficiency was an ideal in New England, it was less so elsewhere, and New Englanders realized that it was wiser to buy cloth than to invest the time in creating it. Thus, much cloth was purchased. Some was imported from Europe. In American towns and cities, a weaver might still be able to support himself as farms became established and it became practical to raise flax and sheep for linen and wool yarn that could be taken to the weaver to turn into cloth.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich studied this shift in the gender of weavers in a 1998 article (see below). She concluded that weaving as a female occupation developed most fully on the margins of settlement, away from cities, after women were able to shift their attention from helping with tasks related to establishing the farm, crops, and livestock to household activities. Once a loom was properly set up, weaving was an activity that could be started and stopped without interference with other household activities--and a good way to keep teenage girls productively occupied.

I had the opportunity to ask Ulrich if the mechanical improvements such as the fly shuttle were a factor in this gender shift, but she told me that she thought it was entirely the result of economic- and social-environment factors.

Other Weaving Tasks

Yarn was usually sized before it was woven. This meant applying a starchy substance to the yarn to keep the threads from sticking out in all directions and hindering the shuttle. (If you remember the years before spray starch, you have a concept of what was involved.) In early times this was often done to the yarn before it was set on the loom, but sizing could be brushed onto the warp on the loom.

Fulling was an important process between weaving cloth and sewing it into clothing. It shrank the yarn, thereby tightening the weave, and softened the fabric. Fulling required first soaking the cloth and then beating it. Although fulling could be (and was) done manually by individuals, it was exceptionally tedious. Fulling mills quickly became popular as the preferred method for this step.

Other important steps in cloth preparation were bleaching or dying. Linen didn't take dye well. If appearance mattered, the cloth was bleached by sprinkling it and spreading it in the sunshine.

Dying could be done to the yarn after the spinning and before the weaving, or it could be done to the whole cloth after the weaving. If a decorative item such as a bed coverlet (usually to be seen in inventories as a coverlid) was desired, it was popular to dye the yarn to be used for the warp and the weft in contrasting colors.

A technique called overshot could be used to create a pattern from contrasting yarn. Basically, this means that instead of the shuttle going over-under repetitively across the width of the cloth, the pattern would vary. I have modern throw rugs in my house that have patterns of stripes, rectangles, and diamonds created by this technique.

Natural country dyes could be made by pounding and then boiling various plant parts such as bark, berries, flowers, leaves, and roots. Often women would trade such dyes amongst themselves, each making more quantities of one or two types than they would need. Dyes were also purchased at the local store. Polishing was used on nicer fabrics to give them a glossy finish.

RESOURCES:

Edwin Tunis's *Colonial Living* (New York: The World Publishing Company, 1957), 45-52 is illustrated with pen-and-ink drawings of the tools involved in cloth production, beginning to end.

Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary, 1785-1812* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), winner of the Pulitzer Prize in History. The Web site "Do History" provides examples from Martha's diary specifically related to weaving.

Patricia Law Hatcher, FASG Ancestry Daily News, 31 January 2006 ©

Is He Yours? Making Sure You Have the Right Guy

I've always been a bit of a rebel. Too smart for my britches, some might say. Even when someone else, (or one of those voices in my head) points out that I'm about to make a mistake, I tell them, "Good advice, but I have my own plan." (By "them" I mean other people. I don't usually answer the voices in my head . . . O.K., well, at least not very often.)

When my husband told me "Don't buy that [actual product name withheld so I don't look too stupid]. You always regret it when you get sucked in to those late night infomercials," of course I didn't listen.

But I knew this one was different. It was going to change my life! [That anonymous product] would work much better than the [similar unnamed product that I already own] that performs exactly the same task. My family and all the animals would sing my praises for investing in this wonder product and . . .

O.K., it didn't exactly work like that. The demonstration on television made it seem so amazing, but let's just say that I'm "underwhelmed" with its performance here at home. We will definitely be taking them up on that 30-day satisfaction guarantee.

It's a classic scenario. You have a problem. Suddenly a solution presents itself and it's easy to convince yourself that this is that perfect answer. But is it? We run across similar situations in our family history. After years of searching you finally find someone who is a close

fit with long lost Great-grandpa Joe Schmo. How do you make sure you have the right Joe Schmo? Let's take a look.

What's the Formula?

What does it take to establish that you have the right person? Is there a set number of records that you need to collect? Or maybe it's a particular mix? Unfortunately there's no secret formula that can give you a 100% positive answer. But with care, it's possible to build a case from which to draw sound conclusions.

Some Things to Beware

Clinging to a name, spelling, person or story. It's easy to get a particular theory or story stuck in your head, and sometimes very tough to entirely let it go. It may be that story Great-grandma Flo Schmo told about the three immigrant brothers who went their separate ways at Ellis Island, or a particular spelling of the name that you feel is the "correct" one. Or perhaps it's your pet theory about what happened to Uncle Bo Schmo. Unproven stories and theories can hinder your progress by causing you to overlook other research avenues.

Beware of assumptions. Have you checked your research and cleared out any unproven assumptions. For example, you find your ancestor in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census. He is listed with a woman, whose age is near his and there are children in the household. Should we assume this woman is his wife and all the children are his? What if his wife died and his unmarried sister came to live with him to help with the children while he was at work? Perhaps she brought a younger sibling along with her. These kinds of things happened. All available records should be consulted before we decide on their relationship. Another example, I found my second great-grandmother and her sister enumerated in an orphanage in the 1850 U.S. Federal Census. Both her parents must be dead, right? Wrong. Her father was still alive. In 1860, they are both enumerated with him and his second wife. Their mother had died in March 1850 and since there doesn't seem to be any other close family members in the area, the girls (ages three and five) were put in the orphanage, presumably because their father was working and couldn't care for them himself. Take a really close look at each fact you have and make sure there are no assumptions clouding your research. Getting lucky the first time. You've just done a search for your ancestor, John Smith (a cousin of the Schmos) and despite the common name, you have lucked out and found a match right from the start. Time to stop looking? Take into consideration that maybe John Smith's cousin John, descended from that same great line of Smiths, may have named his children similarly to your John Smith. Perhaps they both had a daughter named for Grandma, Mary Christine Smith. (Mary Chris Smith was very popular during the holidays) And maybe they both loved Grandpa Aloysius Caesar Smith so they both named a son for him. There goes the theory that, "There could only be one Aloysius Caesar Smith, so it must be him!" Even if only one Aloysius shows up in the census, consider that maybe one of the enumerators couldn't spell Aloysius and decided that Al C. Smith was close enough.

So How Do I Build My Case?

Use a variety of records from different sources. Gather all the resources you can get your hands on and compare them. Does all the information point to one conclusion? If there are discrepancies, can they be explained?

Compare various record groups. Are there more Joe Schmos in the city directory for 1860 than there are in the 1860 census index? If so, there may be a Joe you have yet to locate.

Investigating all of the close matches and ruling out those who aren't related can help build your case. In addition, you may establish relationships with the other Schmos.

Consider the sources of information. How far removed from the event are they? Were actual participants or witnesses to the event providing the information, or was it perhaps the new son-in-law giving the mother's date and place of birth for her death certificate?

Look at family structure and investigate all members of the family thoroughly. Records for siblings can confirm relationships and while you may find families with similar names, it is much less likely that you'll find identical families with the same ages, birthplaces, etc.

Use a combination of identifiers. Each identifier is a piece of the puzzle and the more pieces you have that fit together consistently, the more confident you can be of your conclusion.

Write Out Your Findings

To me, writing or typing out my findings is the most helpful tool in analyzing finds. Too often we rely on technology and miss out on some of the finds that we might otherwise be able to make. In addition to keeping copies of records I have gathered, I transcribe them, which makes me pay attention to details that I might otherwise overlook.

Groups of records are also arranged chronologically in timelines (see today's Fast Fact for more on timelines). This makes it easy to pick out inconsistencies. For example, if you have an ancestor having children years after his death, you may have a problem. A child being born before the presumed parents were married, could indicate a previous marriage -- or a research error.

Putting your theories on paper can also expose any gaps in your reasoning too. I know this from experience. There have been several times where I have thought to write about a particular finding, only to realize that more work needed to be done before I could draw a conclusion. Try writing your own article. It can later be incorporated into a written family history. Plus, it's helpful to have handy, when, a few years from now you are revisiting the case and trying to figure out what the heck you were thinking when you came to that conclusion.

In the End. . .

It's great when you find that long-lost relative, but if they aren't really yours, it may cost you down the road when you go off researching the wrong lines. As you progress down that wrong line, all those records you request for the wrong ancestors won't come with a money-back guarantee.

February Board Meeting Summary

The February 13, 2006 Board meeting covered the usual business, reports from committees and general discussion. The Board Minutes will be sent to all Board Members by e-mail. The Audit is to be scheduled for March. There was discussion about the scheduling of a bus trip for later this year. Ellen Reesh is working with the Merced Society to arrange a joint venture. The cost of fuel has skyrocketed. Our membership alone does not have enough people interested to support the ever growing expense. There was discussion about a possible fundraising large picnic celebrating the states. Vicky Wolff reported the plan was too complex for this year. The Yard Sale is scheduled for the first weekend in June. Please start saving all of your useful yard sale articles.

Type in the words Meta Search in Google, and you will be taken to a choice of these sites. Meta Searches can show you the results of all the sites it accesses. This means you don't have to go to Yahoo, MSN or AskJeeves to make separate searches on each one. In many cases, because of the way Google and all the others do searches of Websites, you may not actually get any different results, but if you are down to a problem name it may be your last resort.

Searching aids

When I start a serious search on a name or subject, I first open a blank word processing document, such as in MS Word or Corel Word Perfect. Word Pad will also work as will just about any place where you can save text. This idea seems to confuse people who want to know where I got the document. I didn't get the document, but am creating a blank document where I'm going to store my research and in particular links that I find.

Saving links

Most word processing documents have the ability to store text strings found in Web site addresses. Simplistically, the address or location of all Websites on the Internet are described in simple lines of text. Many are quite complicated with lots of characters and very little of the text actually makes sense. So when you are at a site that you want to find again, you copy the address found in the address bar at the top of your browser and then paste it into your word processing document. Just use your regular highlight, Copy and Paste tools.

The next time you want to go to that Internet location, you just click on the address in the document or paste it to go back to that site. Of course you could keep the address in your Favorites, but I find it easier to keep it in the document where I'm storing all information about that subject or person or thing.

Retrieval of Websites.

It's not a well understood fact, but all of the information in a Web site that you view is stored on most computers for a period of time.

Five years ago, I was able to use this knowledge to recover a Web site that had gone out of business. A month after I first visited the genealogy site that had a great many of my relatives on it, it was taken off the Internet. Fortunately my computer still had the files of that visit and I was able to recover over 30 Web pages of information with details of marriages and children. I've not had to do that again, but it is something you need to know just in case it happens to you. You will then know that someone, maybe not you, can recover that information for you. I have never seen the same information available on the Internet again after that time.

Of course, Google also has a Cache feature for some old Web sites. You will see it when Google takes you to a site that no longer exists. You will see the word Cache at the bottom of the list of choices. It will give you a view of that page address if it hasn't been too long gone. I use this feature when I want to see the information on site that someone has removed from the Web.

Quotations

The wise man must remember that while he is a descendant of the past, he is a parent of the future.

Herbert Spencer

WELCOME NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

We have 217 members—02/23/06

We wish to welcome all new members for the year 2005. We hope you have found our society helpful, knowledgeable, and resourceful.

We look forward to welcoming many new members in the year 2006.

NEW MEMBERS:

#944	Barbara Berg-Phillips	Riverbank
#945	Keith Schock	Modesto
#946	Jeffrey Wells	Modesto
#947	John Snelling	Modesto
#948	Herman Sanders	Modesto

RETURNING MEMBERS:

#543 Frances (Robinson) Kelly Modesto

If there are any corrections, changes in your telephone number, mailing address, or e-mail address please send information to Maybelle Allen: telephone (209) 523-0593; e-mail rmallen213@sbcglobal.net, or write to GSSC, PO Box A, Modesto, CA 95352-3660; Attn. Maybelle.

Membership dues:


\$20.00 single membership

\$27.50 Family membership

Newsletter subscription included with both memberships.

HAVE YOU CHANGED YOUR EMAIL ADDRESS? IN THE LAST 6 MONTHS? THE LAST YEAR? IF SO, PLEASE, EMAIL CHANGES TO

>gssc@worldnet.att.net <. On the subject line just put 'updating email address.' If your name is not included in your email address, **please, please, put it in the body of the email. If you'd do it the day you receive your newsletter, it'd be greatly appreciated. Thank You**



HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES? IF YOU ARE UNSURE, GIVE MAYBELLE A CALL AT 523-0593 OR EMAIL HER AT rmallen213@sbcglobal.net

GSSC Web Page:

<http://www.cagenweb.com/lr/stanislaus/gssc.html>

The General Meeting is at Geneva Presbyterian Church, 1229 E. Fairmont, Modesto, CA

7:00 PM on the 3rd Tuesday, except in July and December.

Was He Nice?

Over the years I have asked my aunt about her grandfather, my great-grandfather. Some things she remembered and some things she didn't. Recently I asked her if she thought he was a "nice Grandpa." She replied that he was, and then she proceeded to tell me all these delightful anecdotes about him.

So, my suggestion is in addition to asking relatives about facts, ask about feelings, such as:

1. Did you feel....?
2. Did you like (or dislike)....?
3. Were you happy (or unhappy) to see.....?

A discussion about feelings may open new genealogy avenues. Good luck! P. McHugh

Thought For Today

One of the advantages of being disorderly is that one is constantly making exciting discoveries. A. A. Milne



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Deadline for the STANISLAUS RESEARCHER is
the Society Board Meeting, second Monday of each month

**THE STANISLAUS RESEARCHER MAKES EVERY EFFORT;
TO PROVIDE ONLY VERIFIED INFORMATION, HOWEVER
WE ASSUME NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR ERRORS.**