

STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

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January Program

January 15, 2008 7:00 p.m.

Civil War Sites—Then and Now

Bev Graham and Millie Starr will present a program covering some Civil War battle sites and other locations important to the War. They will focus on the changes (or lack of) that have visited these places over the last 145 or so years.

Message From President Bev Graham

Happy New year to all of you!! It's a new bright year and we are looking forward to an exciting 2008. Hope your holidays were happy.

We have many exciting things that are going to be taking place; I hope you all will join us for each and every one. We have dinners, picnics, yard sales, parades, meetings, trips, cemetery walks, and genuine fun that will be happening. Don't miss out. We expect all members to have a great year to remember.

Hopefully, each meeting this year will be different, fun, and informational. We are looking forward to implementing many new ideas that are coming from your Board of Directors. We are at your mercy. Hopefully, we will accomplish all the expectations you have of us. The trust you have shown by electing us to represent you is humbling.

At each of our meetings this year I would like to have one of our members tell us about one of their ancestors. Interesting, funny, sad, or strange, it doesn't matter what the story is about as long as it is genuine. A **five minute** story about an ancestor, just before break, will give us something to talk about over our coffee and cookies!! Think about which one of your ancestors has an interesting story; one that you will be willing to share with our group.

Your input is always appreciated. If we all contribute, we will learn about each other and all our weird and interesting ancestors. What fun!! More than just boring ancestors locked away in those files, they're real people with real stories. It is always fun to find out something that is of interest to us and others. Dig deep and reveal all those brave ancestors of yours.

If anyone has anything they would like to contribute or share, please feel free to contact a board member. We are always looking for new ideas and new volunteers. Most of your board members are just waiting for an invitation to help, so if any of us can be of help to you, let us know.

I will be striving to be the President everyone is expecting. I realize I have some big shoes to fill. In the past, there have been wonderful Presidents, so I would never dare to be equal. However, with a little help from all of you I will give it my best. All of you members are the greatest individuals I have ever known. I look forward to representing you and this Society.

Let us have a happy year with fun and enjoyment. After all, isn't that why we're here? Let's party!!

DNA Testing and Genealogy

By Pansylea Howard Willburn

DNA testing is a great chance for genealogists who have hit a brick wall or who just want to confirm the conclusions they have drawn about their lines from their paper trails.

Some genealogists are not using this wonderful resource because they don't understand the science behind it. I can remember back to the times when I thought that the newly introduced Xerox machine, microfilm, and computers were each invented mainly to help me with my genealogical research! Just kidding! The point I am making is we didn't reject using any of these because we didn't (and probably still don't) know the science behind each of them. Don't let fear of the unknown keep you from using the wonderful resource that DNA testing offers. I can give a glowing testimonial of how, after 45 years of paper-trail research, using Y-dna testing has helped me with my brick walls.

Many companies offer DNA testing, but they aren't all equally equipped to help us. I investigated several of them and chose FamilyTreeDNA, a company located in Houston, TX with the tests run at the University of Arizona in Tucson. This company has the best organization, the largest data base, the best privacy protection and is set up to give US (not some data base) the results of the test we order and a chance to communicate with others who have matching results. They offer Y-DNA testing (father to son) and mt-DNA testing mother to daughter and son. The Y-DNA test is the most helpful to genealogists because the Y-DNA is passed from father to son, with an occasional mutation, and can take us all the way back into time. The female mt-DNA test is helpful if one wants to find out the ethnic origin of a mother, but it is not very helpful for genealogical research. A male's mt-DNA comes from his mother but is not passed on to his offspring. The Y-DNA of a living male with the surname in which you are interested can give up to a 99% probability that a relationship existed with others who have tested with that surname and have matching markers and a 100% accuracy if no relationship existed.

Many genealogists are female, and we, too can utilize the male Y-DNA test to help us. We can have male brothers, fathers, cousins, uncles, or males with the surname who connect way back in the 1700s, tested, as long as the person is a male who carries the surname in which we are interested and that we know descends from the same line that we do.

The process is simple once you have chosen a person to be tested. Go on-line to the familytreedna.com site. First, read all of their information, including the primer in their question-and-answer page. Then check to see if the surname in which you are interested already has a family group. It costs less to enroll as part of a family group. You will have a choice in the Y-DNA of testing for 12, 25, 37, or 67 markers. The 12 and 25 markers, while cheaper, are not as helpful to me. I choose the 37 marker test. Check the prices, and if the test is too expensive for you to pay by yourself, enlist others researching your line to share the cost with you. It generally isn't too hard to find four or five others who are willing to do this. After you decide which test you want to order, you can register on-line but, because I put the test on my credit card, I prefer to call the office in Houston at 713-868-1438. This way, I can also register myself as the contact person to receive the results and correspond with matches. Most of the males I have found to be tested aren't interested in genealogy, but they are glad to take the test if they don't have to pay for it or be involved in e-mail contacts from matches!

After you have registered a male and paid for the test kit, the kit is sent directly to the male. The genetic test kit consists of two cheek scrapers and two collection tubes. Easy to read instructions are included on how to perform a painless cheek scraping, one in each cheek. The effect of using the scraper is about the same as brushing your cheek with a soft bristle toothbrush. The person taking the test completes the simple test and mails the two tubes, with the samples from each cheek, back to the office in Houston. From there, the sample is given a number but not identified by a name and goes to the University of Arizona. I have generally received the results in 5 to 7 weeks. It is quicker in the school year than it is in the summer when some of the scientists at the university are on vacation. Privacy is assured because the lab in Arizona does not have access to a name, only a number, and the office in Houston does not have access to the sample. The lab informs the office in Houston of your results, under your coded number, and of any matches between other coded numbers. The Houston office then mails a certificate with the marker results to the person who took the test and puts his results on his personal DNA website to which no one else has the password but the person who took the test and you, if you are the one monitoring the results. If the person who took the test signs a release form, the Houston office will forward, under his number but not his name, his test results to the Family Group under which you joined. If you don't want this done, don't register as part of a family group and don't sign the release form. I register as part of a group because it provides a community interested in the same families that I research. All of this is clearly explained on the familytreedna.com website.

The Arizona Research Labs keeps the sample in the lab for 25 years for exclusive use of the person who took the test. No one else can use the sample. It is possible, if you can only afford the 12 marker test, to take it and later extend the testing, by paying their published charges, to a 25 marker or 37 marker test. My advice is to try to order the 37 marker the first time because it will, by far, be the most helpful to you in your genealogical research.

Bon voyage!

The Writing Group

By Joann MacDonald

The writing group is part of the SCGS. It formed several years ago after Millie Starr and I attended a genealogy conference in Sacramento. We went to a workshop on how to write your family history in small segments. I decided I would host the group in my home monthly to encourage myself and others to write. We meet the third Thursday of the month at 10:00 a.m. at 412 Belfast Ave. We usually have between three and five people in attendance.

We ask that you write something and bring copies to share with the other members of the group. Each author reads his or her piece out loud and then we offer suggestions. This past year we helped one member do the final editing on a family history she was writing; another member needed help with what she was writing for a family reunion. Some of us just have a short sketch we are doing on a particular ancestor.

If you want more information please feel free to give me a call at 521-2140. I always send out an e-mail reminder. I like to know how many are coming so I can have enough chairs out. If you want some help in getting started, I invite you to come to our next meeting.

Arkansas Study Group

By Wilma Martin

The Arkansas Study Group meets on the 2nd Monday of each month (except for July) at 1:00 p.m. in various members' homes. The January 14th meeting location has yet to be decided. Please call Wilma Martin at 538-1425 for more details. Anyone interested in Arkansas research should attend. Bring your questions, problems, and success stories, if you have them.

Genealogical Events Around the State

Most genealogical societies manage to put on at least one seminar a year, and many times a celebrity speaker is featured. If you are able to manage a long day trip or maybe a short two or three day trip, you can learn new ideas from the masters and get your genealogical batteries recharged. Here is a sampling of what's available without a lot of travel:

- **San Luis Obispo County Gen Soc February 2, 2008 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**
Some of the speakers are Dick Eastman (of Eastman's Online Genealogy Newsletter fame), Geoff Rasmussen, Legacy Family Tree spokesperson, Max Blankfeld, representing FamilyTreeDNA, the company Pansy Wilburn wrote about in this issue.
- **San Mateo County Gen Soc March 29, 2008 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.**
Featured speaker is Stephen P. Morse, the "one step" search engine specialist. Check out his website at www.stevemorse.org.
- **Sonoma County Gen Soc April 26, 2008 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.**
Featured speaker is Rhonda McClure, nationally known genealogist.
- **Southern California Gen Soc 39th Annual Jamboree June 27—29, 2008**
Admittedly, this could take as much as a week of your time if you drove to Burbank and attended all of the educational sessions. The Jamboree is spectacular and keeps getting better every year.

If any of these events pique your interest you can get more information by contacting the sponsoring societies.

Meet Your Board

Each month this year we will present a short biography of one member of the Board of Directors, starting with President Beverly Graham.

Bev was born in Stockton and moved to Modesto with her parents, a few days after high school graduation. Always on the lookout for some fun, she entered a costume contest during Modesto's Centennial Celebration and won. During college she studied piano and singing. Though her voice was of operatic quality, a musical career was not for her. Instead, she found herself joining the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department, first as a dispatcher, and then as an officer. She was the first and only female Deputy Sheriff in the state to patrol alone, and in 2001 she was unanimously awarded the Super Supervisor Award. After 30 years Bev retired from the Sheriff's Department and is now the owner of a scrapbooking business called Designing Memories. It was through her love of scrapbooking that Bev discovered the world of genealogy. She became curious about the people in those old pictures and the next thing you know, she was hooked.

Bev is married to husband Warren. They have two sons. The oldest is a Deputy Sheriff and the youngest is a former professional baseball player, now teaching PE in Livermore. She likes to write and submitted a sketch of one of her ancestors, which appears below.

Augusta Boyd, 1913—Present

By Beverly Graham

It was late one Sunday afternoon and the sun was starting to set. Augusta had been to the pond trying to catch tadpoles. She had caught a few and put them in a jar. When she found herself finally looking up from her play, she realized she was going to be late for supper. Not only was she going to be late eating, but she was going to be in trouble for not helping fix the biscuits.

It had always been her job to help fix the biscuits ever since she was old enough to climb on a chair and reach the wooden table. Being the oldest girl made her responsible for more than one chore around the house. Mixing biscuits, sweeping bare wooden floor, shaking rugs, and making beds were only some of the hard working chores that she had to do. Chores that Augusta hated.

When her mother was alive she hadn't minded spending the time helping because she was with her mother, but now, expecting to help her stepmother was something she didn't relish at all. Her step mother was mean and always wanted Augusta to do more and more, taking up the time that Augusta wanted to use playing outside and going down to the pond. When her father was out of town like he was today, Augusta had to do chores that her stepmother just couldn't wait to pass out to her. Refusal meant another whipping, so Augusta would always do the extra jobs.

When Augusta entered the back door into the kitchen, her stepmother glared at her. Then she pointed to the large bowl of flour. Augusta knew it was biscuit making time. If she didn't get a whipping for being late, she would feel her prayers had been answered. Augusta mixed the flour, slowly adding the milk. Her little sister had climbed on a chair to watch the mixing. She whispered to Augusta and asked if she could help. Augusta smiled and nodded. Anything would help the chore seem more fun. As she mixed, Augusta thought of the wild flowers she had seen and the smooth glass-like water of the pond. Slowly stirring, she was lost in thought.

Coming back to reality, Augusta looked up just in time to see her young sister pouring the tadpole water into the biscuit mix. Oh gosh! Augusta would definitely get a whipping for this one. She started to say something, but just at that moment something held her back. Augusta just stood looking at the bowl and watching the tadpoles hop around on top of the flour. Her sister stared at the bowl. Just as she pointed to the mix and started to say something, Augusta put her fingers to her lips to keep her sister quiet. No one would even notice. What were a few tadpoles? They wouldn't kill anyone. Besides, it was just the thing her stepmother needed. Live protein.

When the biscuits came out of the oven, Augusta told her five siblings to not eat the biscuits. They all looked at their older sister with a questioning frown, but none asked for an explanation and none was given. The meal went fine, except for Augusta's stepmother couldn't figure out why she was the only one eating the biscuits. She said they were good. Augusta hadn't gotten the whipping she had expected. Smiling, she almost felt guilty. Almost.

New Editor Reports For Duty

By Susan Park

When Millie asked if I'd take on the newsletter editing job this year, there was only one answer possible—yes! I had been the editor for a couple of years, I think, way back in the late 1980s or early 1990s, so I had the experience. And since I no longer work I couldn't claim I had no time. Most importantly though, it was a chance to pay back the Society for the benefits I've received in the 20 years I've been a member. I've attended many wonderful seminars over the years and received loads of research assistance from other members. None of that would have been possible without a group of dedicated volunteers who always say yes! when asked if they would...(fill in the blank). I hope each of you will consider adding Genealogical Society volunteer work to your list of 2008 New Year's Resolutions. There is an opportunity for every personality and many involve little or no public speaking. We depend on and appreciate your help. Finally, I send a big thank you to David Wolff, former editor, for his help in getting me up to speed on newsletter production the modern way. Without his advice and encouragement this first issue would never have gotten off the ground.

December brought an overload of genealogical Christmas presents to our house. I hope some of you were equally lucky. The nicest present has to be my new association with the Parke Society. We have my husband's maternal line down pretty good, but he never really knew much about his father's side of the family. So we did the DNA test quite a few weeks ago and the results came just in time for Christmas. In ordering the test, we went through the Parke Society group at FamilyTreeDNA, and I have to say they are

wonderful. We came up with one 37 point match with one of the Parke Society Trustees, and apparently he can go back to Robert Parke who came to Massachusetts in 1630 on the *Winthrop*. Now, I realize there is quite a gap between my husband's grandfather, and this early, early settler, but the Parke Society folk have assured me via e-mail and telephone calls that they'll do everything they can to help me make the connection. They were so nice that I ended up joining the Parke Society.

The best present was a court document describing a suit filed by the minor children of Francis Conway Taliaferro against their parents and adult siblings. It centered around a deed of trust created in 1825 by Francis and amended a few years later. What made this document special for me was that it was the first one I've ever seen that provides evidence that my ancestor, McCarty Taliaferro and Francis Conway Taliaferro's son, Daniel McCarty Taliaferro are the same person. I've been looking for proof of McCarty's parents for a very long time and now I've got it. Francis' father is Col. Lawrence Taliaferro of Orange County, Virginia, and now I'm waiting for Lawrence's four page will to show up in my mailbox. With it I should have my first proven Revolutionary War ancestor.

New Year's Resolutions

In case you haven't had time to make a list of genealogical New Year's Resolutions, here are a few that you may want to consider.

- Cite your sources. If you use a genealogy database program, make sure you enter all of your sources using the source templates provided. If you prefer to record everything with paper and pencil, make sure you record your sources on each family group sheet. If there is no pre-defined space in which to record them, then use the back of each sheet.
- Attend a regional or national genealogy seminar this year.
- Interview your older relatives.
- Write your own history down so that future generations will know about you.
- Visit a the local library. On Mondays our society has volunteers to help you.
- Order documents. Don't rely completely on computerized indexes. Take the time to write for original vital records, wills, military records, social security card applications, and so forth.
- Visit an LDS library. If it's been a while since you've been to one you might be surprised at the changes made since your last visit.
- Start scanning those photos and use a photo organizing program to organize them.

Membership Renewal Time

It's membership renewal time again. At the end of 2007 we had 233 members. So far, we have 100 who have committed to another year with our Society.

Standing Rule Number 3 reads: "Annual dues will be \$20.00 single membership, \$27.50 family (living at same address), payable on or before January 31 of each year. Dues not received by February 15 are delinquent and the member will not receive the March newsletter." Check your mailing label. If it says "2007" it's time to renew.

326	2007
Jane Doe 1234 My Place Ave. Anytown, CA 95350-1234	

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
- Address changes: Send address, e-mail and phone number changes to Maybelle Allen. Use
any of the following communication methods:
US Mail: Maybelle Allen c/o GSSC, P.O. Box A, Modesto,
CA 95352-3660.
E-mail: 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.
- New members:

2008 Officers

President, Bev Graham
1st Vice President, Vicki Wolff
2nd Vice President, Bev Johnson
Secretary, Cleta Lane
Treasurer, Theo Schock
Director at Large, Jeff Wells
Director at Large, Wayne Black
Director at Large, Susan Park
Past President, Millie Starr

Acquisitions, Lisa Bruk
Greeters, Nancy Grant &
Nancy Robinson
Historian, Joyce Evans
Library, Marilyn Belleville
Membership, Maybelle Allen
Newsletter Editor, Susan Park
Publicity, Sheri Jones
Research, Charles Tieman
Sunshine, Nana Radel



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