

STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

November 2008

Volume 30, Number 10

In this Issue

Message from President Bev Graham.....	1
Nominating Committee.....	2
Queries Report	2
Tinkham Now On-line	3
Sutro Library & National Archives Bus Trip.....	4
Cemetery Walk	5
California 1890 Great Register of Voters	5
Pancake Breakfast.....	6
Special Collections Room.....	6
The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy	6
Meet Your Board	7
Newsletter Mailing Option	8

Message From President Bev Graham

The Cemetery Walk was fun, as usual. Millie did a great job of organizing and researching the old pioneers of Modesto. Those who come and join in on the Walk learn so much history. Hearing the life stories of these pioneers is enlightening. If they had known a hundred years ago that people would be listening to their stories and admiring every mile they traveled, they would probably have been embarrassed at the thought. To them, it was just their daily life and the daily roads they traveled. I especially like the addition of Jeff Wells and his presentation of George Toombs. Maybe it was his southern charm that made everyone enjoy him so.

I've been reading some letters my grandmother wrote about Thanksgiving when she was a girl. Apparently, there was only pumpkin pie, not the several different kinds we have to choose from. They only had one turkey that took hours to cook--no rapid convection ovens in those days. As I read I thought about how easy it was then....until I got to the next paragraph. All that food was made from scratch! They had homemade cranberry sauce,

November Program

November 18, 2008 7:00 p.m.

This month's program is Ancestor Night. Members will share some of their family treasures. You might see old photos, maps, Bibles, furniture, books, or clothing. If you have something to share contact Vicky Wolff to reserve a slot in the evening's program.

Upcoming Events

Merced County Genealogical Society's next meeting features Sarah Lim, Director of the Merced County Courthouse Museum. She will give a PowerPoint presentation entitled "*The History of Merced County from the Native Americans to the Early 1900s.*" The meeting starts at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, November 15th. They meet at the Merced County Library in the Gracey Room at 2100 O Street in Merced.

Pancake Breakfast, Saturday, November 22, at Trinity United Presbyterian Church, 1600 Carver Road in Modesto, from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

homemade bread, homemade EVERYTHING. When I think of cooking Thanksgiving dinner it involves such things as opening cans of cranberry sauce and popping the brown-n-serve rolls into the oven at the last minute. I guess it really wasn't so easy in those days. Can you imagine churning the butter for those homemade rolls? Or scraping the pumpkins and making a real homemade pumpkin pie from scratch? Not just the crust, but the filling too. Thinking about all the work makes me so tired, maybe I'll just order our Thanksgiving dinner from Raley's this year!

I do hope to see all of you at the November meeting. We're going to elect officers and have our annual Ancestor Night. I'm always looking forward to hearing about the ancestors and seeing what people bring to share. Most of the items don't have much monetary value, but they are treasured just the same. Even a small teapot that's been handed down, generation after generation, becomes a cherished item and never fails to bring back memories. Come listen to our members as they remember their ancestors by telling you the significance of their family treasures. I want to see all of you there at our next meeting, ok? Let's make memories for everyone.

Nominating Committee

By Susan Park

The Nominating Committee met several times this fall to come up with a slate of candidates for the 2009 Board of Directors. These good people have agreed to serve in the positions indicated and will be presented for election at the October general meeting.

President	Beverly Graham
1st Vice President	Beverly Johnson
2nd Vice President	Janet Lancaster
Recording Secretary	Dorothy Winke
Treasurer	Cleda Lane
Director at Large, seat 1	Vicky Wolff
Director at Large, seat 2	Jeff Wells (already serving, not up for election)
Director at Large, seat 3	Joann Gabriel
Director at Large, seat 4	Susan Park (already serving, not up for election)
Director at Large, seat 5	V.J. Vogelzang

Queries Report

By Charlie Tieman

During August a request was received for information on George Washington Smith, said to have been born in Newman in 1879, his wife Mae Elizabeth Smith, and their three children. City directories and census records showed that the family didn't come to Newman until about 1915. Two of the children, Alonzo Charles Smith and George Hamilton Smith, are buried in Hills Ferry Cemetery in the same plot as Mae Elizabeth Merwin, their mother who had married Guy Willis Merwin. The fate of the father, George Washington Smith, remains a mystery.

Another correspondent was surprised to learn from an obituary that her relative, Cyrus Knight, had a second wife, L. Ellen Knight of Hughson. Turlock city directories showed that Cyrus was in a rest home at the time that he died in 1962 and no local records could be found for him earlier than that. No more could be learned to identify this second wife.

In response to a query about George Asquith, who died in Turlock in 1922, copies of some pages on him from Tinkham's *History of Stanislaus County* were sent out.

The most interesting request received in September asked for a change in one of our entries in the Modesto Citizens' Cemetery compilation. It seems that one of this correspondent's uncles was buried as a John Doe in the County Plot in 1948 and so entered in the cemetery records. However, he was later identified and this fact needed correcting. This poor fellow had been murdered and his body thrown into the Tuolumne River where it was found a day or two later by some boys. It was a front page story in the *Modesto Bee* for three days until he was buried. Meanwhile, an automobile sales slip found in his pocket led to contact with the fellow's father in Oregon and his identity was confirmed as Clifford Hughlen Turner. His car was found in Lodi and it was believed that a hitchhiker had killed him. Few of the graves in that section of the cemetery have headstones with names, most only being marked by concrete squares with location numbers. We sent photos of the grave site as it is now and in return were pleased to receive a couple of photographs taken when some of his relatives visited Modesto to see the burial site, probably in 1948. Such old photos can be a big help in trying to understand the history of the cemetery and untangle the confusing old records of burials.

We also sent copies of obituaries for Ephraim C. Wooley, Nancy Anne Wooley, Robert E. Wooley, Thomas Wooley, William Franklin Wooley, Laura Virginia Wooley, Sam G. Wooley, and Della Mae Lees. To answer another request, obits for Mamie Ermine Wilkinson, Roy J. Wilkinson, and George B. Wilkinson were provided. Another set of obits sent out included Edith Estell Kilpatrick, James Floyd Kilpatrick, Frank Scudder, Jimmie Ray Scudder, and Artie Scudder. We failed to find an obit for Leonard Louis Schneider who died here 7 March 2002. Anselmo William Berutich, who died in San Francisco in 1958, is said to have been buried in Modesto but no record of that could be found.

An unusual request asked about the history of Salter's Gulch, upstream from Waterford, near to Robert's Ferry. Some visitors had noticed the name while driving through here and wondered whether it was named for their great grandfather, Carl Ludwig Alexander Salter, who had been a miner at some time. We had to give them the bad news that the gulch refers to Calvin W. Salter who had a ferry there 1862 to 1869.

Tinkham Now On-line

By Susan Park

This is the coolest item ever—you can now access George Tinkham's *History of Stanislaus County California* at home, in your pajamas, on the internet! If you had ancestors in Stanislaus County during its founding years, you HAVE to have this book. This is one of the first books our researchers turn to when they answer queries at the Library. It has long been out of print, but the McHenry Museum had it reprinted a few years ago in a three-volume format. The books are in the Special Collections Room, but it's practically impossible to buy either the original or reprinted version anywhere.

Occasionally, one will show up on eBay, and I did finally succumb to the temptation recently and spent more than I should have to get my own copy of the original version. The day it arrived should have been a happy day, but the excitement was dimmed by the fact that the very day before it arrived I learned it could be accessed on-line! It was still a thrill to turn the pages and look at the pictures, but...

At any rate, please take a look at the book on-line. Not only can you download it as a PDF file (81 MB), but you can also view it in several other formats, including plain text. My favorite is the one called Flip Book (63 MB). When you view books in Flip Book format, the book appears as an open book on your screen, with both pages visible. As you click on the right page, it automatically flips over just as if you turned the page yourself. And, it's searchable! This link will take you to Tinkham's book on archive.org: www.archive.org/details/historyofstanis100tink.

Sutro Library and National Archives Bus Trip

By Bev Johnson

On Tuesday, September 23rd, a group of twenty four genealogists from Stanislaus, Merced, and San Joaquin Counties enjoyed a leisurely ride on a Storer Bus to the National Archives in San Bruno and the Sutro Library in San Francisco. Although it was a gorgeous day in the Bay Area, most folks were too engrossed indoors with hopes of finding that “Eureka” moment to enjoy the weather.

If you’ve not been to either of these facilities and wonder why you should bother, read on. When asked to respond to the question, “What information did you find as a result of this trip?” our researchers were eager to share. Here is a sampling of their responses:

“Catholic churches in Boston. Found great-great uncle in the 1890 Solano County Great Register. Maybe an ancestor in the 1870 California census index.” (Shirley Taylor)

“I found a book with some of my Goodnight ancestors mentioned.” (Jackie Niemeyer)

“Got some ship lists and early births in San Andreas, Calaveras County.” (Bev Krieg)

“Confirmed some of the information I had found from other places that makes me 100% sure of what I have on one branch of my tree.” (Cyndy Bray)

“Land records for my 4th and 5th great grandfathers, and tithing records.” (Ellen Reesh)

“Great grandfather’s marriage dates with three wives, and will record numbers.” (Marilyn Rauzi)

“Two books on my Adams family line linking me to President John Quincy Adams.” (Vicky Wolff)

“Found cemetery records for some family members.” (Marilyn Belleville)

“I found two wills and some land records, plus one marriage bond. For \$5.00 I was able to purchase a book, *German Immigrants to Pennsylvania, 1710-1786.*” (Janet Lancaster)

“An article on navigation on the Erie Canal in the 1800s from Quebec to Michigan, a route probably taken by my Norwegian ancestors.” (Lisa Bruk)

“Information on a veteran buried in Indiana who may have served in a Georgia Regiment.” (Jeff Wells)

“New editions of books with information that confirmed some facts I already surmised.” (Mildred Lucas)

And finally, a really adventurous day was had by our own Cleda Lane. “I used this trip to visit both the Archives and the Golden Gate Cemetery. I did not have any luck at the Archives, however...I hopped, jumped, and skipped my way from the Archives to the Cemetery to inquire about my dad’s brother who died in 1945. The people in the office were nice enough to give me the exact location. It was almost directly across from the Archives. I had quite a little trek, but two gentlemen went ahead and found the site for me. I was able to take pictures and can send them back to my Texas cousin. It was a beautiful day for a stroll.”

Success speaks for itself and hopefully these gold nuggets will inspire others to join in on our next trip. Equally valuable were comments for future trips which included, “Use GPS,” “The coffee and

doughnuts were a nice way to start the day,” and “How about a trip to Sacramento?” All in all, it was a very worthwhile day.

Cemetery Walk

By Susan Park

A small group of about thirty five people braved the overcast skies and wet grass for our second Cemetery Walk on the afternoon of October 4th. Our presenters this time were Millie Starr, Sheri Jones, and Jeff Wells. All three appeared in period costumes.

The families we visited on this tour included the George Washington Toombs family. His father-in-law, John White, is buried in the family plot and holds the distinction of being one of the very few buried in Modesto Citizens' Cemetery who were born in the 18th Century. Mr. White was born in 1793 in Kentucky and died here in Modesto in 1879. The other families visited included James and Sarah Lester, Pleasant Ruffins Feagins and his wife Elizabeth Jones Feagins, and their next-door neighbors, the Stephen Rogers family.

At the conclusion of the tour we gathered at the GAR plot to hear Millie Starr present the stories of the three Navy veterans of the Civil War who are buried here. They are William Givens, Ira Harris, and James Dings.

California 1890 Great Register of Voters

By Everett Ireland, CG, President Pro-tem California State Genealogical Alliance

[This article is reprinted from the September-October 2008 CSGA Newsletter.]

We had a successful meeting with representatives of ProQuest at the FGS Conference in Philadelphia. ProQuest is the current publisher of the California 1890 Great Register of Voters.

For those of you who are new members of the Alliance, the 1890 Great Register was a project initiated by our then president, Wendy Elliott, with the efforts of Jan Cloud from Santa Barbara and many others belonging to member societies throughout the state. It was originally conceived to be a two-year project, but ended up as nearly a ten-year one. It was a statewide project to extract data from California's 1890 voter registration lists to supplement the missing federal census enumeration for that year. It was subsequently published as a CD-ROM and 3 volume hard-copy index to the original records which are still extant.

There were five CSGA board members at the meeting on 4 September in Philadelphia. The board members were president pro-tem Everett Ireland, president-elect Liz Myers, treasurer Cath Trindle, web manager Cat Nielsen, and newsletter editor Peggy Rossi. The ProQuest representatives were William Forsyth and Chris Cowan.

It was quickly established that ProQuest no longer considers the 1890 Great Register in publication, due in some part to the fact that it does not fit within their company's product line. They are primarily suppliers of large digital databases to institutions, libraries and corporations. They had originally acquired the publishing rights to 1890 Great Register from sales or mergers of AGLL, Heritage Quest, Sierra, *et al.* Our original contract in 1999 was with AGLL.

Consequently ProQuest would be willing to provide the digital database they have in MS Excel format. They also agreed to provide us their remaining inventory of the three volume hard-copy edition of the publication.

This verbal agreement will be documented by the execution of a non-exclusive publishing agreement between ProQuest and CSGA.

The board will next consider how we will make this data available once more to members of CSGA and the genealogy community at large as had been originally planned when the product was originally compiled. Our first step will probably be to make it available to members on the CSGA website at www.csga.com. Some measure of security may be necessary to protect our copyright of the data when it is posted on the Internet.

Pancake Breakfast

By Vicky Wolff

We will hold our annual Pancake Breakfast this year at Trinity United Presbyterian Church, in the Covell Hall, on November 22 from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. Members, guests, and the general public are invited to attend. For \$6.00 you'll be served a delicious, home-made breakfast consisting of pancakes, bacon, sausage, fruit, coffee, juice, tea, hot chocolate, and an array of jams, jellies, syrups, and other condiments. All proceeds go to the GSSC general fund. For tickets or more information call Vicky at 529-9430.

Special Collections Room

By Susan Park

Marilyn Belleville reported at the October Board of Directors Meeting that the Stanislaus County Library is re-cataloguing the books in the Special Collections Room. As you might imagine, this is a big job and will take some time. Marilyn said as a result of this project, some of the books will be soon be re-catalogued by state, rather than by subject.

The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy

By Susan Park

This book, by Val D. Greenwood, is a classic and should be in all our libraries. Earlier this year I gave away my copies of the first and second editions of *The Researcher's Guide to American Genealogy* at one of our general meetings. I was planning to purchase the newest third edition (published in 2000, reprinted in 2005) but I've recently discovered that the people who produce the Legacy Family Tree software are selling Mr. Greenwood's work as an e-book. They are selling it as a downloadable PDF file for \$19.95. I realize that for only about \$5.00 more you can buy the book in traditional form from Amazon, but sometimes an e-book can be a handy thing too. If you do a lot of traveling, it's one less book to drag along in your suitcase. If you stay at home, it's one less thing to store and dust. If you're interested in this book, or some of the other e-books Legacy sells, check them out at www.legacyfamilytreestore.com

Meet Your Board

Each month this year we will present a short biography of one member of the Board of Directors. This month features Editor and Director at Large, Susan Park.

I became hooked on genealogy when I was a very young teenager. My granddad's sister spent years compiling their family history and in the late 1950s or early 1960s she presented each of her siblings with a binder full of undocumented family history. As I look back now, I marvel at what was

produced with so few modern resources. Everything was typed on a typewriter. Aunt Nellie was born in 1879 and knew three of her four grandparents. She was able to record events back to 1811 simply through personal knowledge. I loved to read that book whenever we visited my grandparents and was thrilled to get my own copy when I was in my early twenties. I've spent many years documenting and expanding her work. I'm very thankful for the head start she gave me and honored to continue the search in her memory.

As for a career, I spent thirty three years working in various capacities within Human Resources, or what we used to call Personnel. My specialty was employee benefits—health insurance, pension plans, workers' comp, disability, and life insurance. I worked for World Airways and for Kaiser Engineers, both in Oakland, and for Varco Pruden Buildings in Turlock. My last ten years at Varco Pruden was as the Human Resources Manager and I spent a lot of time on safety, quality, union contract negotiations, recruiting, and as a member of the management team. But I have to say, the best part of the job was the day I retired! I've been unemployed for three years now and am loving every minute of it.

I got my first computer in 1986, the same year I joined this Society. I've lost track of the exact number of machines I've owned over the years, but am currently using a three year old Toshiba Satellite laptop that does me quite well. I use Word and Excel on a regular basis to produce this newsletter and to record and analyze an awful lot of genealogical data. I also use the Legacy Family Tree program, and have tried many, many others in the past.

I am a very strong believer in education and have done what I could to become a better researcher. I have completed the National Genealogical Society's Home Study Course. I once spent a week at Samford University in Birmingham, Alabama attending the Institute of Genealogy and Historical Research. I am a member of the National Genealogical Society, California Genealogical Society, Southern California Genealogical Society, the California State Genealogical Alliance, and the Parke Society. I love to attend conferences and I subscribe to a variety of newsletters, periodicals, journals, and blogs in order to keep up with the exciting changes in the genealogical world.

My husband, Michael, and I have been married for almost twenty five years. I have a daughter who turned forty this year (she's still in shock), a son-in-law, and two grandchildren. They live in Southern California and lead very busy lives. Two other things you may not know about me: I am a vegetarian and I've ridden in the Goodyear Blimp twice.

Newsletter Mailing Option

Would you like to receive the *Stanislaus Researcher* as a PDF document on your computer at home? There are many good reasons for you to consider this idea. You'll get the newsletter at least a week earlier than you do now. If the print is too small for you in the paper version, you can magnify the electronic version to just the right size. If we print pictures they'll be much sharper and easier to see in the electronic version, and any e-mail addresses or links to websites should be clickable. A final advantage to readers is the disposal method. When you're finished, you can either save it or press the delete button and it's gone. No more wondering if you can just throw it in the trash or should it be shredded.

If you're interested just send your request to pebfarms@yahoo.com and your copy will be e-mailed with the next issue. A couple of things to keep in mind: The newsletter will be sent as a PDF file. It will be large enough that you'll probably need a DSL or cable connection. I don't know how long it would take a dial-up connection to download the file. If you don't already have Adobe Reader on your computer you can download it for free at the Adobe.com website.

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. Submit articles for publication to the editor via email: pebfarms@yahoo.com by the 15th of each month.
- Address changes: Send address, email and phone number changes to Maybelle Allen at:
 US Mail: Maybelle Allen c/o GSSC, P. O. Box A, Modesto, CA 95352-3660
 Email: 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.

2008 Officers		2008 Standing Committee Chairs	
President	Bev Graham	Acquisitions	Lisa Bruk
1st Vice President	Vicky Wolff	Audit	
2nd Vice President	Bev Johnson	Budget	
Secretary	Cleda Lane	Historian	Joyce Evans
Treasurer	Theo Schock	Membership	Maybelle Allen
Correspondence Secretary	Sheri Jones	Newsletter	Susan Park
Director at Large	Wayne Black	Planning	
Director at Large	Dick Freudenthal	Program	VickyWolff
Director at Large	Nancy Grant	Registrar	Nancy Grant
Director at Large	Susan Park	Research & Publication	Millie Starr
Director at Large	Jeff Wells	Seminar	Bev Johnson
Past President	Millie Starr	Workshops	Bev Johnson

2008 Special Committee Chairs	
Bylaws & Standing Rules	
Cemetery	
4 Generation Charts	Vicky Wolff
Memorial	
Mentor	Joann MacDonald
Newsletter Mailer	Wayne Black
Publicity	Sheri Jones
Published Sales	Carolyn Kerr
Queries	Charlie Tieman
Refreshments	Jackie Niemeyer
Research Bus Trips	Bev Johnson
Special Collections Room	Marilyn Belleville
Sunshine	Judith Welch

We have 215 members.



Genealogical Society of
Stanislaus County
P.O. Box A
Modesto, CA 95352-3660