

STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

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Message From President Bev Graham

What a great January meeting we had. It was good to see everyone survived the holidays. Except for a few that still had tinsel hooked around their ears, everyone seemed to be glad the holiday rush is over. I did hear a few say they needed to get their decorations put away. I wish I could be like that, but I am the one who is taking down the tree the day after Christmas. I only do this because there are other decorations to be put up. I have to decorate for Presidents Day, then Valentine's Day, then Mardi Gras' Fat Tuesday. Then on into March where everything turns green. A hundred years ago our ancestors didn't have to worry about all this decorating. They just burned the tree and ate the dried apples. Maybe life was harder but it sure was much simpler.

The month of February is our Fat Tuesday celebration. It includes our Souper Supper. This is free to all members and should prove to be an up and coming tradition. After all, who wants to give up eating and meeting in the same sentence when we can sample each soup and dunk our daily bread?

As President it is my goal to get everyone involved in something. Hopefully, we should have such a variety

February Program

February 19, 2008 7:00 p.m.

Finding Juanita Bojorques-The Search for One Grandmother that Led to Seven Generations of Californio Ancestors. Sheila Ruiz Harrell will present a case study of research in California's Hispanic Heritage.

Our Speaker for the evening is **Sheila Ruiz Harrell**, a practicing genealogist for well over thirty years, and professional for the past ten. Being a direct descendant of 25 of those who arrived in California by 1781 has led her to locate, read, and understand original mission records. In addition, she has followed the descendents of these first settlers throughout California. She is a member of Los Californianos, California Mission Studies Association, National Genealogical Society, Association of Professional Genealogists, and has been a member of Los Descendientes (descendants of the founders of the Santa Barbara Presidio), and Los Pobladores 200 (descendants of the founders of Los Angeles), in addition to several local genealogical and historical societies and organizations.

Sheila specializes in early California Hispanic research from 1769-1900 with a focus on pre-1850, including her own personal connections to Native American families in California. Identifying descendants of those who arrived with Gaspar de Portola, Juan Bautista de Anza, Fernando Javier Rivera y Moncada, Hajar-Padres, Workman-Rowland Party, and other early expeditions is done by researching, reading and interpreting the original mission registers, land grants, court documents, church records, census, and padrones.

of things to choose from there will be something for everyone. If anyone would like to participate in helping with anything just call a board member. We are looking for Tattle Tales, Mentors, Parade Divas, BBQ Chefs, Cemetery Walkers, and a whole lot more.

It is such fun to see every one of you each month. If I don't see you, believe me you are missed. I may not call each of you, but you are in my mind, filed under "Missed Member." One of these days when I have extra time, I may be calling. You never can tell what this old gal is up to, so be aware!!

Hope to see you all in February. Remember to bring your appetite, bring your interest, and bring yourself. We will see you then.

Program Report

By Vicky Wolff

We wish to thank Bev, Millie and Jeff for the great program in January, "The Civil War, Then and Now".

It was very interesting to see the historical sights, battlefield and forts during the Civil War and what those same sights, battlefields and forts look like today. Some have changed little, while some have changed a lot. The program gave us some insight into what the Civil War area looked like and some of the hardships that were endured. Thank you ladies and gentleman for this great program to start off our new year.

Mark your calendars! We will be having our annual Souper Supper and Mardi Gras celebration on February 19th. Those of you planning to attend need to come early (6:30 PM) to eat and then we will have our regular general meeting at 7:00. Don't forget to wear your beads and attire for Mardi Gras celebration.....This will be fun and the best part is that it is FREE.....Thank you all for being a member of GSSC. Oh, yeah, there will be birthday cake too.....FUN! FOOD! FELLOWSHIP!

Meet Your Board

Each month this year we will present a short biography of one member of the Board of Directors. This month features 1st Vice President Vicky Wolff.

Vicky (Chandler) Wolff was born in Vacaville, CA., during WWII. She is the eldest of four children. When the war was over she moved with her mother and father to Siletz, Oregon, where she spent the first eleven years of her life. She was a brownie, girl scout, and 4-H member. The family moved to Glide, Oregon in 1956, where she graduated from high school. While in high school she ran track, was on the pep squad, played the alto saxophone in the high school band, dance band, jazz band and concert band. She was 4th runner-up and Miss Congeniality in a preliminary Miss America pageant.

She attended Southern Oregon College in Ashland, Oregon for one year, moving to Vacaville, CA in 1964, where she met and married her first husband. They had several sail boats and raced them at the lakes all over California. From this union she had three children. Her first born son died when he was 2½ months old. The other two sons live right here in Modesto. Her eldest son is a Psychologist and her youngest son has his own handyman company.

She met and married David Wolff in 1977 here in Modesto at Geneva Presbyterian Church. David and Vicky were very active in boat racing. They were members of the American Powerboat Association for

over 25 years. David ran the rescue boat and Vicky was the chief scorer for the races that took place all over Northern California.

Vicky is an Interior Designer by profession and loves to do crafts of all types. She got into genealogy by hosting a family reunion, over 15 years ago and today, continues to host family reunions for both sides of her family.

Since her retirement in January of 2007, she has written a family history book on her Hilden family, which is almost complete. She continues to do lots of genealogy and be active in GSSC. As soon as David retires in a couple of years they plan to buy a fifth wheel and travel all over the United States and Canada seeing all the sites and doing their genealogy along the way, visiting all those ancestral homes, gravesites, battlefields and more.

Membership Renewal Time

It's membership renewal time again. At the end of 2007 we had 233 members. So far, we have 177 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	

E-Mail Reminder

If you get a new e-mail address please be sure to let Maybelle Allen, membership, know about it. You can send e-mail changes to gssc@att.net. In addition, if you are not a regular e-mail reader, you may find your mailbox gets a little full. From time to time we send e-mail messages to members reminding them of special programs and membership dues and if your mailbox is full or over its limit, our message can't be delivered. Now might be a good time to check yours and do a little e-mail clean up and organizing.

Queries For The Year 2007

By Charlie Tieman

To sum up last year's results, during 2007 we received queries from 83 persons, almost all by email. This compares with 96, 72, and 35 for the previous three years. It seems that more people are taking advantage of the free research offered by groups like ours. The Rootsweb forums for this area, CASTANIS and NORCAL, also are becoming more popular.

During the last three months of 2007 we answered questions about Paul Jennings Cross; Joseph Gaines; Gillard or Willard Conover; Annie Evartt; Madeline McDonald; Christine Hanway; and Cora and Horace

Lyle, once missionaries in China, all of Modesto. Additional queries concerned Marshall Nuckolls of Turlock; Ewart Woodruff of Denair and Turlock; Fanny L. Thomas of Riverbank, widow of Benjamin, and their family; and Charley Everett of Waterford. All of these were requests for obituaries. An exception was a request for a copy of the 1910 marriage of John D. Johnson and Dorothy M. Luker witnessed by Dorothy Grippenshaw, the person of interest.

A lengthy query asked about several members of one family: John E. Brown; Evelyn and John Palmer; and Reginald (Rex), Ludile, and Alvaneice Gailfus, all of Modesto.

Another long request was for information on Ura N. Thompson, his mother Sarah M. Thompson, his sister Mabel Edna, and son Ura N. Thompson, all living in Hilmar. Sometimes we receive questions about Hilmar people because the California Death Index lists them as dying in Stanislaus County, probably because they died in a Turlock hospital. With luck, an obituary may be found in the Turlock newspaper, but often all their records are in Merced County and not available to us. No additional information could be found for John Wakefield, a dentist living in La Grange for the 1860 census. However, a Stockton newspaper mentioned a Dr Wakefield of Bear Valley registering at Weber House in Stockton in 1861—a possible clue for his later residence in Mariposa County.

We had no success in finding information on Lulu B. Dickerson, widow of William Alexander Dickerson, buried in Acacia Cemetery; or for Natalie Sergeevna Young who died here in 1994.

Fire-Engine-Red Bells

By Pansylea Howard Willburn

In the last 45 years I have met many genealogists, most of whom I have grown to love for their enthusiasm and persistence. When I see these friends, I often hear of their progress. I hear more about their brick walls than I do of their successes. When friends tell me of their successes, I celebrate with them.

I'll share one short celebration with you. A genealogist friend was telling me in great detail about her family. Her soft, cheerful voice was like a lullaby, and my eyes glazed over, but I was very happy for her.

In the course of her monologue, I sat upright. Fire-engine-red bells began to ring in my head. "What did you just say?" I asked.

She repeated, "I took a subscription to Ancestry.com for the new computer my son gave me. I used their search engine for my William Smith, and, would you believe, I found his line all the way back to King George III!"

Now, it wasn't the question of how desirable King George III would be as an ancestor that caused those bells in my head to ring. Because my middle name is "Documentation," I asked her, "Were the sources given?"

"Oh, no," she answered, "sources don't need to be entered on Ancestry.com because they wouldn't accept lineages that no one has documented."

The bells were getting louder and louder. I was speechless. And then she pulled out her newly acquired records. True, there was her William Smith, the one she had so carefully documented with years of research. I looked to see his parents. The mother she had adopted for him from the internet would have

been 117 years old when her William was born, and the mother lived in England but he was born in Texas.

When I pointed these facts out, her face fell. She looked at me suspiciously and asked, “Well, can you prove that this is not my William’s family? Don’t be so negative. I have already entered my William Smith and his line on the internet to share with others.”

Sometimes the moral of a story does not need to be pointed out, but I will do it anyway. Much of the genealogy (I am tempted to say most) on the internet—or in print for that matter—was not documented but still is copied as though it had been, without question, by a multitude of others and passed along in perpetuity.

If you don’t already have some, you may want to get some fire-engine-red bells; they are very useful and really don’t take up much space in your head!

Armchair Genealogy

By Susan Park

Here are some interesting on-line sites you might want to check out.

The Los Angeles Public Library has selected years of the *Los Angeles City Directories* and the *Los Angeles Street Address Directories* available for viewing on their website. The five city directories cover the years 1929, 1936, 1938, 1939, and 1942. The street address directories cover 1956, 1960-1969, 1973 and 1987. The library website can be found at www.lapl.org/resources/en/index.html.

Did you know that if you are a member of the California Genealogical Society (focusing primarily on SF and nearby Bay Area neighborhoods) you can access Heritage Quest from the CGS website?

The FamilySearch Indexing project is really coming along. They’ve recently announced that over 115,000 volunteers have signed up to help with indexing the records. Each document is indexed by two separate indexers. If there are any differences in the transcriptions that each creates, a third person, known as an arbitrator, compares the two and makes the final decision. Check out the results of this wonderful project at <http://labs.familysearch.org>, and remember, it is still a work in progress.

Stanislaus Cemeteries Now Available On-Line

By Charlie Tieman

Listings for all of our local cemeteries are now available on the Internet at <http://www.rootsweb.com/~cemetery/california/stanislaus.html>. We can give thanks to Peggy Hooper, administrator of this site, for providing a repository for the cemetery records of all California counties. Having said that, now comes the news that Peggy has just resigned that position because of new demands by "higher-ups" that submitters need to fill in more forms and that she not include links to other sites, one of those being a link to our listing of burials in Wood Colony Cemetery. She has moved over to a more friendly group at California Genealogy & History Archives at <http://www.calarchives4u.com/index.htm>. I assume that our cemetery records will also be posted at this second site, but that hasn't happened so far.

Most of the Stanislaus County compilations on this site were copied from the books that the society has published over the years, the results of the hard work of many GSSC volunteers. However, some of the information in our cemetery books aren't in the format desired for the Internet site, being too historical and biographical. Consequently, that text has been edited out. Also, the Denair cemetery compilation was

enlarged over that in the published book by addition of some earlier cemetery readings and some more recent burials.

We only have a partial listing of early graves in Lakewood Memorial Park, our largest cemetery with almost 39,000 burials. Attempts have been made to obtain a complete set of records from the cemetery management, but with no success so far.

National Genealogical Society

By Susan Park

Do you belong to the National Genealogical Society? If not, you are missing out on many wonderful opportunities. Members receive four issues of the *NGS Quarterly* and four issues of *NGS NewsMagazine*. Both of these publications are excellent. If you are hungry for more genealogical education, then you're in for a treat. NGS offers a Home Study Course that is much more difficult than it looks. Today the course material is provided via cd and there are some specialized courses that can be taken on-line. Many years ago I took the Home Study Course, thinking it would be a snap, and it wasn't. In order to complete the course I found myself visiting the County Clerk's office and looking at some very old naturalization records. I also visited the Trinity Presbyterian Church where we meet and looked at membership records from the old First Presbyterian Church that was downtown. My grandparents had been members and it was fun to see their names in the records. At any rate, even the most experienced amateur genealogist can use a refresher course now and then and NGS provides some of the best.

NGS also puts on a pretty spectacular conference every year. This year it will be in Kansas City, Missouri in May. It's a thrilling experience to attend one. Where else will you ever see, hear, and learn from so many professional genealogists in one place? Another benefit to NGS membership is the Member Ancestry Charts. Enter your ancestor's name and see if someone else has already submitted a chart. I tried it recently with my ancestor Samuel Pavey who lived in Indiana, as did nearly all of his descendents. When I downloaded the MAC I was surprised to see that the submitter's mother died in Merced County. Now I need to find out why she out here and not in Indiana with the rest of her family.

Eleanor Haack

July 31, 1910—January 5, 2008

In closing, we mark the passing of long-time member, Eleanor Brophy Haack. As mentioned in her Modesto Bee obituary, "Eleanor was a true renaissance woman." She was a member and past President of Modesto Institute of Continued Learning (MICL), a founding member of Modesto Camera Club, and a long time member of Stanislaus County Gem and Mineral Society. Of course, we remember her best for her presence within our Society—trips to the National Archives, Sutro Library, and Salt Lake City. She was a wonderful hostess for many of our Society's functions and we will all miss her.

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 e-mail: pebfarms@yahoo.com. by the 15th of each month.
- 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

- Elaine Sager, Lodi, CA
 George Britton, Modesto, CA
 Neva Forney, Modesto, CA
 Charles Lynds, Modesto, CA
 Carmen Pedrioli, Modesto, CA

2008 Officers	
President	Bev Graham
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2nd Vice President	Bev Johnson
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