

# STANISLAUS RESEARCHER

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

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## President's Message

By Beverly Graham

Happy New Year 2009. Can you believe we are already in a new year and the calendar has flipped over a new page? Actually, I had to buy a new calendar, but I did have to flip the first page.

I hope everyone had great holidays. Celebrating the holidays is such a wonderful family-oriented tradition. Sometimes I wonder if families would get together at all if it weren't for the holidays coming around once a year. Everyone has such busy schedules and most are so hectic, we sometimes forget to keep connected with those who matter the most—our families. Strange, since most of us are so family oriented. I pray we are not trying so hard to connect with the past that we over-look the future.

This year has started out with a bang. New things are in store for us as we look forward to the goals of the Society. The Board has been busily working together, trying to keep one step ahead.

We have some exciting things coming up in the very near future. We're planning another Cemetery Walk and Nuts game. Hopefully we will continue our quest of serving the community, serving those we love, and last, but not least, serving ourselves. Come to think of it, I'll have another helping.

## February Program

February 17, 2009                      7:00 p.m.

Scott Atherton, General Manager of Turlock Memorial Park Cemetery and Mortuary, will speak to us in February about various aspects of funeral home and cemetery records.

The meeting will be preceded by our annual Souper Supper. Dinner will be served at 5:30 p.m. in the same room as the meeting. It's a great time to visit with your friends and make new ones as you dine on delicious home made soups. Organizer Vicky Wolff says, "we have scheduled some fun for everyone."

Dinner is provided by the Board members but the rest of the membership is asked to contribute to the dessert table. We need about six different desserts so if you'd like to help with that call Vicky at 529-9430 for more details.

## Upcoming Events

- |          |  |
|----------|--|
| March    | Our own Lowell Beachler will tell us about an interesting family reunion that took place in Germany.               |
| April    | Another of our members, Theresa Grieshaber, will talk to us about using library catalogs effectively.              |
| April 16 | Bus trip to Oakland FHC. Instruction and free time for research is included. More details in the March newsletter. |

Knowing those events are such fun, we are going to try to expand our suppers and our socializing. Potlucks and ice cream socials are now in the mix. Of course, you all **know** that anything having to do with food...I'm there!!! Now the question is, why is food so important? Well, back in time family time was food time. Remember having those family dinners around the table? Remember Grandma's recipes? That is what our society has become—a family. So it's only proper we should spend some of our time around the tables, and with food. Don't you just l-o-v-e my rationale?

Our meeting in January was SO informative about all those comfy, cozy quilts. Again, it brings to mind the family and being with those who make us feel comfy and cozy. Where else can we hang our hats and be with those who don't judge us, but accept us for who we are? Now, who would do that besides family?

Hope to see you in February where we will once again sit around the table and eat soup. We will talk with those who care about us and we will smile, because we really know what is in that soup....

### Queries Report

By Charlie Tieman

During December obituaries were supplied for Hal Stotts and his mother Ruth Mitchell, and for Nina Dickerson, all of Modesto. No obituary could be found for Charles W. Harmes, also of Modesto. The only other request was for some history and photos of Twenty-Six Mile House, near present Eugene, where the correspondent's grandparents, John McHugh and Mary Devine, were married in 1882 and are buried. Jack Brotherton's book, *Annals of Stanislaus County*, supplied the answers to this query.

### Question of the Month Column

By Susan Park

Member Evelyn Halbert presented us with our first Question of the Month. She asks where does one find patient records of the old Modesto State Hospital?

This is not as unusual a question as you may think. Many of us have ancestors who were at one time or another institutionalized at state mental health facilities. The California State Archives in Sacramento has some patient records. According to their website, they "may" have registers and case files dating from 1856 to 1972 for Stockton, DeWitt, Modesto, Mendocino, and Sonoma State Hospitals, with some indexes available.

To find out more about patient records for Modesto State Hospital I googled the term in quotes ("Modesto State Hospital") and the first item that came up gave all the contact information of the State Archives, along with a brief history of the Hospital, and this description of their holdings:

#### ***1. PATIENT CASE FILES. 1900-1972. 191ff. [Folder F3886:609-799]***

*Case files are the primary source of information on care and treatment of individuals at hospital. Files have been heavily sampled and reflect only a small percentage of total patients. Files ending in zero and fat files have been retained. Fat files are large because either the patient was institutionalized over a long period or was admitted repeatedly for a specific illness, frequently alcoholism. With each case, the records are organized in reverse chronological order, i. e., the most recent records appearing first. Common records for each file include commitment papers and related court documents, patient background information, nurses' admission reports, photographs, clinical conference reports, progress notes, social service reports, ward notes, hydrotherapy reports, electric shock treatment reports, intelligence tests reports, release summaries, death certificates, cumulative case summaries, discharge certificates, and correspondence. Little correspondence has been retained unless it was especially noteworthy or written by the patient. For access, see the reference archivist.*

#### ***Restricted Records***

Searching for this kind of record takes perseverance and a large amount of patience. A couple of years ago I was successful in obtaining records of an ancestor who was a patient at the Stockton State Hospital. The State Archives staff was very helpful and understanding. They provided me with what little information they had and suggested other places to write. After a lot of letter writing and almost a full year of waiting for someone to search off-site records, I was rewarded with a one-page summary of her stay with the state. While I received no medical information, much was contained on that summary card, including diagnosis, court case number, church affiliation, and the year in which the patient came to California.

If you have a question for our experts, send it to Millie Starr c/o [GSSC@att.net](mailto:GSSC@att.net) and we'll do our best to find an answer.

### **ARC Family Registry Reunites Families**

*By Susan Park*

Member Theresa Grieshaber has notified us of a unique website that might be of interest to some. I checked out the website and learned that "For decades, parents of children with disabilities were advised by professionals to institutionalize their child and in effect 'forget you ever had them....' Now, there is an opportunity for family members to reunite." Find out more at [www.findfamilyregistry.org](http://www.findfamilyregistry.org).

### **Malcolm H. Stern NARA Gift Fund**

*By Susan Park*

Our members are always offered an opportunity to donate to the Stern NARA Gift Fund when they renew their membership. I suspect that some of you may skip over that section of the renewal form simply because you don't know exactly what it is or what it does. The Winter 2008 issue of FORUM, published by Federation of Genealogical Societies (FGS), contains an informative article about the NARA Gift Fund and its purpose.

The Gift Fund, established in 1983 by the former Genealogical Coordinating Committee, is a nationally supported program, administered by FGS, to finance the creation of finding aids and the microfilming of valuable research materials now preserved in the National Archives and Records Administration in Washington, D.C. These microform copies, produced without government funding, are then distributed to the National Archives Regional Archives for use by researchers.

The Genealogical Coordinating Committee disbanded many years ago but its members were insistent that the Gift Fund continue. Today it is managed by FGS. While individual donations are always welcomed, FGS prefers that member societies (GSSC is a member) encourage their members to each donate just \$1.00 a year. Our society collected \$65 in donations last year that were earmarked for the NARA Gift Fund, and that amount will soon be on its way to the Fund.

Here is just a sampling of some of the projects that were completed, thanks to the help of the NARA Gift Fund:

- Galveston Passenger Arrival Records, 1896-1948. M1359: Passenger Lists of Vessels Arriving at Galveston, Texas, 1896-1948 (Record Group 85: Records of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, 1891-1957).
- T1224: 1920 Census Enumeration Districts, 1830-1950. The Gift Fund provided the rolls for the 1920 Census Enumeration Districts for placement in the 12 regional archives
- M2014: Burial Registers for Posts, Camps and Stations, 1768-1921. (Record Group 92: Records of the Quartermaster General).
- M1845: Card Records of Headstones Provided for Deceased Union Civil War Veterans, ca 1879-ca1903. (Record Group 92: Records of the Quartermaster General).

It was recently announced that the homestead records housed at the Homestead National Monument of America in Beatrice, Nebraska, will be digitized, indexed, and made available to researchers throughout the U.S. This project will be organized and coordinated by the National Park Service. The National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), keeper of the original records, is providing access to them. FGS, manager of the Stern NARA Gift Fund, is providing funding for two digital cameras. FamilySearch (formerly Genealogical Society of Utah) is doing the actual digitization. University of Nebraska will provide review and quality assurance, and finally, Footnote.com will do the indexing and host the digitized content on its website. The index and images will be available at no charge at the NARA branches and in Washington, D. C., as well as at local Family History Centers.

Future goals of the Stern NARA Gift Fund include raising \$1.25 million to microfilm two major collections of the National Archives: The War of 1812 pension and bounty-land warrant records, and the United States Colored Troops (USCT) compiled service records.

## Upcoming Events

*By Susan Park*

Here is a list of some of the speakers who will be appearing at our sister-societies throughout northern California this spring.

Merced County Genealogical Society is offering the following speakers at their regular meetings. They meet the 3rd Saturday of each month at 1:00 p.m. in the Gracey Room of the public library in Merced.

“English Research” with Vauna Kelly in February.

“Ramble America: North American Migration Routes” with Robyn Echols in March.

“Digitizing Your Genealogy” with Robert Givens in April.

“Searching for Original Records in the Court House” with Kathy Burrows in May.

“Taking Control of Your Computer Files and Folders” with Anne Field in June.

The Sacramento RootCellar group is presenting Geoff Rasmussen at their Spring Seminar on March 28, 2009. The seminar runs from 9:00 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. Geoff is “Mr. Legacy” for those of you who use the Legacy software program to record your research. Topics listed are:

“Mapping Your Ancestors: Using the Latest Software and the Internet”

“Sharing Genealogy Electronically: Publishing to CD/DVE, and the Internet”

“12 Step Checklist to Using your Genealogy Computer Program”

“Organizing, Planning and Sharing Using Legacy Family Tree”

RootCellar will raffle off very nice gift baskets throughout the day. Lunch can be ordered on the registration form. For more information see [www.rootcellar.org](http://www.rootcellar.org) or call Sammie Hudgens at 916-481-4930.

Up in San Andreas, the Calaveras Genealogical Society is presenting a spring seminar with Lisa B. Lee on April 4th from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at the Metropolitan. The cost is \$32.50 for non-members and includes a buffet lunch. Topics offered are:

“Do All of your US Census Work Online”

“Using Historical Newspapers in Your Research”

“Online Vital Records”

“Good Research Gone Bad”

Finally, on April 25 the Sonoma County Genealogical Society presents Lloyd deWitt Bockstruck in an all-day seminar in the Harry A. Merlo Theater at the Wells Fargo Center for the Arts in Santa Rosa. Mr. Bockstruck is the supervisor of the Dallas Public Library’s Genealogy Section, has published

numerous books and articles; has won more awards and honors than we can list here, and is a very popular speaker on the national circuit. He will be speaking on these topics:

- “Court Records for Genealogical Research”
- “Colonial and State Statutes: Overlooked Sources for Genealogical Research”
- “Bridging the Atlantic: Finding Your Ancestral Home”
- “Substitutes for Birth and Death Records”

## Newsletter Mailing Option

By Susan Park

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.
- Another 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](mailto: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.

## Financial News

By Susan Park

The budget for this year was approved at the Annual Meeting on January 20th, and is included for your review on the next page. Notice that we expect to spend a little more than we think we'll bring in. The difference (about \$600) will come from our general fund which currently has more than enough to cover such a shortage. Also notice that the interest income on the certificates of deposit is shown in italics. These amounts are not spendable and are shown only for informational purposes. They are not included in the total at the end of the column.

We also need to form an Audit Team to conduct our financial audits this year. Auditing is much like genealogical research. Auditors will be looking for documentary evidence, rather than myth and legend, that we are managing our finances in a responsible manner and they search for obscure and hard to find records to make their case. We have one volunteer so far, and need two more. If you would like to be a part of this endeavor please contact President Bev Graham.

### Anthony Valim

Oct 31, 1919 – Jan 4, 2009

Another of our dear friends has passed on to the next world. Tony Valim was a long time member of our Society and an excellent source of knowledge and help, especially for those doing Portuguese research. According to the obituary which appeared in the Modesto Bee on January 10, 2009, “after his retirement, he spent several years researching and publishing two family genealogy books which are now contained in the Library of Congress. He also published a book of poetry with his daughter, Patti...He had a big heart and a contagious laugh. He will be dearly missed by all who knew him.”

Adeus, Tony

## 2009 Budget

Gross Income		Planned	Expenses		Planned
Category	Sub-Category	Income	Category	Sub-Category	Expense
Bank Interest	BofA checking interest	6.00	Acquisition Committee		500.00
	<i>BofA cd #1 interest</i>	<i>100.00</i>	Administration Expenses		
	<i>BofA cd #2 interest</i>	<i>60.00</i>		Bank Fees (safe deposit box)	45.00
	<i>BofA cd #3 interest</i>	<i>200.00</i>		Board Training	0.00
Donations Received				Copies & Supplies	100.00
	NARA	50.00		Insurance	1400.00
	Special Collections	150.00		Internet	264.00
	Unrestricted	250.00		P.O. Box Rental	106.00
Dues		4000.00		Rent	660.00
Miscellaneous		100.00		Treasurer's Supplies	20.00
Research Trips			Donations Made		
	Salt Lake City	15000.00		NARA	50.00
	Sutro/Archives	750.00		Special Collections	150.00
Sales				Other Donations (El Vista)	100.00
	Books	25.00	Four Generation Charts		0.00
	Misc Merchandise	10.00	Historian		45.00
	Yard Sale	1000.00	Membership Committee		150.00
Seminar		1100.00	Memorial Day Committee		20.00
Social Events		0.00	Mentor Committee		0.00
Workshops		350.00	Newsletter		
Additional from General Fund		614.00		Printing	500.00
				Supplies	30.00
				Postage	900.00
Total		23405.00	Other Society Memberships		
				CA Alliance	25.00
				FGS	65.00
			Planning committee		0.00
			Programs		250.00
			Publicity Committee		0.00
			Queries		25.00
			Refreshments		
				General Meetings	150.00
				Other Events	100.00
				Paper Goods	50.00
			Registrar		0.00
			Research & Publication		200.00
			Research Trips		
				Salt Lake City	15000.00
				Sutro/Archives	1000.00
			Seminar		1100.00
			Special Collections Room		25.00
			Sunshine Committee		25.00
			Taxes & Filing Fees		
				Sales Tax	45.00
				State Filing Fees	55.00
			Workshop		250.00
				Total Expense	23405.00

## 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](mailto: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](mailto: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.

2009 Officers		2009 Standing Committee Chairs	
President	Bev Graham	Acquisitions	Janet Lancaster
1st Vice President	Jeff Wells	Audit	
2nd Vice President	Janet Lancaster	Budget	Susan Park
Secretary	Dorothy Winke	Four Generation Charts	Vicky Wolff
Treasurer	Susan Park	Historian	Theo Schock
Correspondence Secretary	Sheri Jones	Membership	Maybelle Allen
Director at Large	Vicky Wolff	Memorial Day	Vicky Wolff
Director at Large		Mentor	Joann MacDonald
Director at Large	Joann Gabriel	Newsletter	Susan Park
Director at Large		Planning	Beverly Graham
Director at Large		Program	Jeff Wells
Past President	Millie Starr	Publicity	Sheri Jones
		Queries	Charlie Tieman
		Refreshments	Jackie Niemeyer
		Registrar	Judith Welch
		Research & Publication	Millie Starr
		Research Trips: Sutro/Archives	
		Research Trips: Salt Lake City	Lisa Bruk
		Seminar & Workshop	Janet Lancaster
		Special Collections Room	Marilyn Belleville
		Sunshine	Judith Welch

**We have 215 members.**



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