

THE LIVE OAK

EAST BAY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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July/August 2017

Oakland, California

JULY MEETING

Wednesday, July 12, 2017 at 10.a.m. - Oakland Family History Library meeting room

OAKLAND NEIGHBORHOODS

Speaker: Kathleen DiGiovanni of the Oakland Library

Kathleen is a marvelous and enthusiastic speaker and she has comprised a wonderful program concerning Oakland's various and ethnic neighborhoods.

This should be a most interesting program, especially if your ancestors were located in Oakland during the early years.

AUGUST MEETING

**EAST BAY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY
DOES NOT MEET IN AUGUST.**

**You are free to roam the county and gather interesting items
or write some of your own to
submit to this newsletter...**

and we certainly hope you will!

Looking Back at May: We wish more of our members could have made it to our annual luncheon. Pier 29 Restaurant has always been so accommodating, and so they were this year. It was a wonderful afternoon. Everyone there appeared to be enjoying the meal and the chance to visit casually with each other. There were some old scrapbooks of the Society in earlier days and it was great to look back on some of our history and see photos which recalled fond memories of members and friends, some that are no longer with us.

Looking Back at June: Ralph Severson from the Oakland FHL had lots of information to pass on to us regarding how to search FamilySearch website. He recommended using minimal information to begin with

and gradually add more into your search to bring the results to a workable number. He had a captive audience - and we hope to have him return early next year to cover WIKI searches more thoroughly.

EBGS NEWS:

Dues are delinquent July 1st. If you have not yet renewed your membership please do so. Help keep the society alive. Your dues pays for our speakers and your newsletter. Renewal form can be found on page 4.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

The Oakland FHC Library offers the following on-going classes/workshops. ALL classes at the FHC are free and open to everyone interested. Sometimes there might be a small charge for handouts. You can check their website to view information on these workshops and upcoming classes. They are not always mentioned in his newsletter as they do not coincide with the mailing date.

African-American Workshop: 4th Thursday of each month at 6 p.m.

MAC-GEN Genealogy meetings/workshops for Mac Users. Second Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. More info at www.macgen.org

Swedish Genealogy Research Workshop: Thursdays between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Need some help with your Swedish research? Join our experts on Thursdays for some individual assistance. No appointment necessary, and it is free!

Hispanic Research Workshop: Wednesday evenings, 6-8 p.m. Come join the group and learn more about researching your Hispanic ancestors.

Personal/Family History: Write Your History in Stories: 2nd Thursday each month, 1-2 p.m.

Instructor: Ken Miller, staff genealogist. Does writing your personal history sound intimidating? Does "I was born..." seem like a boring way to start? How about writing your memories one story at a time? Come once or come monthly or come when you can. Set aside the 2nd Thursday of each month and spend an afternoon jump starting your memory. Write one story each time you come and you could have quite a personal history recorded by the end of the year.

San Francisco Research: 10 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. on the **3rd Saturday** of each month at the California Genealogical Society - 2201 Broadway Ste LL2, at the corner of 22nd Street, Oakland, CA. This is an open forum meeting group to help each other looking for ancestors pre and post 1906 in San Francisco. Bring your questions and/or your experience and join the discussions. For more information email: SFSIG@CALIFORNIAANCESTORS.ORG.

The California Genealogical Society has several events on their calendar that may be of interest to you. Google them and check it out.

THE WAY IT WAS - As Told By Those Who Were There

A book review by Carolyn Storm

Collected stories and recollections of seniors gathered by the Retired Senior Volunteer Program in Palo Alto, CA and printed in 1979.

A delightful collection and an interesting read. Some of the seniors had tales to tell of growing up or living in Europe, some during the war years. Several told of living in sod huts, hard times during the depression

years, and many had tales to tell of living or growing up in Palo Alto during its early years. They almost all enjoyed the memories, but few missed "the good old days".

Finding Female Ancestors Has Created Many a Brick Wall For Genealogists Over the Years

Before 1922, immigrant women were not required to naturalize. If they were married, they were listed under their husband's surname on the census record. And before the 1850 census, they weren't even listed at all--they were just given a tally mark. Combine that with the fact that for many years women couldn't vote, own property, or enter into legal agreements, and you may find researching your female ancestors a bit of a challenge.

Below are some suggestions from Jana Lloyd previously noted on Ancestry.com May, 2009 and reprinted by the San Ramon Valley Genealogical Society in their June, 2009 newsletter. Follow these seven tips to help you find out more about your female ancestors--especially to locate their ever-elusive maiden names.

- 1) **Look for Mothers-in-Law in Census Records:** After their husbands died many women went to live with their children. You'll often find mothers-in-law (and other in-laws for that matter) listed in census records. Finding out Robert Jones's mother-in-law was Peggy Thompson can tip you off that his dear wife may have been a Thompson pre-wedding day. Be careful though, the mother-in-law may be on a second or third last name.
- 2) **Search the Vital Records of Other Family Members:** Don't know great grandmother's maiden name? Check grandma's birth certificate, marriage certificate, or death certificate. And if you don't find it listed there, check the vital records of other siblings and even half-siblings. Records changed from year to year and state to state, so information not included in one certificate might have been recorded on another.
- 3) **Search Local Newspapers Available at the Time:** Besides birth, wedding and death announcements, the personal columns of local newspapers can be very revealing. You might find that...Mr. and Mrs. X invited their daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Y, for Thanksgiving dinner.
- 4) **Conduct a Thorough Search of the Husband's Records:** For better or worse, you often find out about the women in your family tree by researching the men. The husband's and/or father's records usually offer the most information but you may want to also try those of brothers and other male relatives as well.

One researcher looking through records of the Corps of Engineers in the 1890s was surprised to find a letter written to John Brown saying his sister had been turned down for a job. They had written to her brother--not her--to inform her that she had not been hired. A descendant would have only found this information by researching the brother's name--not the woman's name.

- 5) **Pay Attention to Witnesses, Neighbors and Friends:** Witnesses were often family members, so male witnesses on a record may have been brothers, fathers, uncles to any female mentioned. Neighbors on censuses, directories, and town maps are also potential in-laws. And, finally, women sometimes married brothers' friend.

So what if John and Pamela died too soon to apply for a military pension? writes Elizabeth Shown Mills, author of *Finding Wives, Mothers, and other Old Women with Suitcases*, in Ancestry Magazine, John's presence on a muster roll gives us a list of fellow soldiers who could have lived longer, could have applied,

and could have talked about John. "Me and John", one old veteran wrote in his pension affidavit, "me and John Pettypool dug those trenches together. Me and John were buddies, just like brothers. He married my sister".

6) **Locate Cemeteries:** Records may not mention women's last names, but headstones usually do. If you can locate a woman--either in person (on a tombstone), or on a list in cemetery records--buried beside her husband, you can often find out her unmarried name.

7) **Understand the Laws of the Time:** Get to know the culture and laws surrounding the area and time period when your female family member was living. Understanding what records she may or may not have left behind can help you know what to search for. Throughout most of the 19th century a single, divorced, or widowed woman, known as a *femme sole*, often produced more paperwork than a *femme covert*, a married woman. She could enter into contracts, sue her debtors, and create a will. However, she lost most of these rights when she married. Beginning as early as 1850, though, married women in many states did exercise ownership over any property they had previously inherited or been given. This meant she could create a will or deed for her own personal property, apart from her husband's.

My neighbor knocked on my door at 2:30 a.m. this morning!
 Can you believe that?...2:30 a.m.!
 Lucky for him I was still up playing my Bagpipes

EBGS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM

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Amt. Enclosed _____ \$18 Individual/\$7.50 Each Additional Family Member

May we hear from you by July 1, 2017 Thank you for your support.

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Connection to History

By Trisha Gorman

As a descendant of early settlers of the Massachusetts Bay Colony in the 1630-1640s, I was very excited recently to visit the New England Historic Genealogical Society building in Boston. For me, this was “the mother ship.”

I only discovered the Puritan connection about 10 years ago, when I buried my mother in a family plot in the El Carmelo Cemetery, Pacific Grove, Calif. With my mother having the maiden name of McMillan, and my own last name of Gorman, my lifelong ethnic identity—and that of everyone else in the family, as far as we knew—had been Irish and Scotch-Irish (from Scotland). When I saw the gravestone of my great-grandmother, Mary I. Griggs (b. 1853, Penn.; d. 1931, Pacific Grove, Calif.), I decided to research that family line, which took me back to New England, which came as a total shock.

I want to emphasize, before proceeding, that discovering my roots in Colonial America is not, for me, in any way, a matter of status or a basis for snobbery, but rather an incredible opening to my historical imagination. When I saw a drawing of stocks and pillories on a map showing family property in early Boston, suddenly Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* took on a new resonance. When I look at black and white woodcut depictions of Puritans, they aren't just people in funny-looking hats, but my mind puts me there among them: These really were flesh and blood people and not just perfunctory paragraphs in grade-school texts.

Regarding that hand-drawn map showing family property in early Boston, I discovered it in the Reference section when visiting NEHGS recently. I wanted to spend my valuable time in Boston in the stacks, since—as a NEHGS member—I can peruse the online database from home. I came across a book about the Reynolds family published in 1928, which contained the fold-out map showing the property of my 9th great-grandfather, a shoemaker named Robert Reynolds (b. abt. 1580, England; d. 1659, Boston).

I had discovered the Reynolds's connection when trying to sort out and verify three Robert Mason ancestors, which can be confusing, as many of us have discovered when we research ancestors whose names are repeated through multiple generations. I saw that my 8th great-grandfather, Robert Mason (b. by 1630, England; d. 1679, Boston) had a wife, Sarah Reynolds (b. abt. 1629; d. 1684-1706), whose father, Robert—according to the book—had been a friend of one of the founding figures of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Governor John Winthrop. The plot of land owned by Robert Reynolds was across the street from where the Old South Meeting House would eventually be built in 1729 (and where, much later, in 1773, the Boston Tea Party would be organized).

On the map of the plot was a small hand-drawn image of a wooden cabin marked “birthplace of Benjamin Franklin.” It turned out that my 8th great-grandmother Sarah Reynold's brother, Nathaniel (d. 1708, Boston), who owned the abutting parcel of land on their father's plot, had rented out his portion to Josiah Franklin, where Franklin was eventually born in 1706.

One of the reference librarians pulled up a picture online showing me a bust of Benjamin Franklin that currently rests in a niche on the second floor of a high-rise building on Milk Street, marking his birthplace. So, while there's nothing left from the time of my family's property, that bust shows me where the family land once existed.

Afterwards, my head spinning from this connection to history, I walked out onto the sunny streets of Boston. As I navigated the throngs on Newbury Street in town for the upcoming Patriot's Day and the Boston Marathon, passing people with cell phones in their hands, I had a jolt of time dislocation to bring myself back from the 17th century into the 21st.

It was quite a feeling for a California gal who had not known until recently that she had roots back to the Puritans in Boston.

Trisha Gorman is a member of the East Bay Genealogical Society, and recently took an online course through NEHGS on analytical genealogical methodology.

The New England Historic Genealogical Society is a great resource for early Colonial settlement, most notably the Great Migration Study Project, documenting the 20,000 settlers who came from England to New England on the Winthrop Fleet from 1620-1640. NEHGS also houses the Jewish Heritage Center. The organization has an online database for members to use from their homes—americanancestors.org/—and also offers online genealogy classes, books for purchase, and research tours (to Salt Lake City, Scotland, England, etc.).

Home: <https://www.americanancestors.org/index.aspx>

Jewish genealogy: <https://www.americanancestors.org/jhc>

Great Migration: www.greatmigration.org

Thanks to Trisha Gorman for sharing her discoveries and experiences with us!

ITEMS OF INTEREST:

New York Public Library Digital Collections - City Directories <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/new-york-city-directories#/?tab=about>: The New York Public Library has been digitizing 137 years of New York City directories. Currently the years 1849 to 1923 have been digitized and are available for free. The next group to be digitized will be 1786 onwards.

On the opening page will be a complete list of the books currently available. Select a year and click on that book. The book opens to a new screen. From here you have two options. You can step through page by page using the arrow on the lower right. Eight small pages are shown here. If you point your cursor at a page it will show the page number. These are large books with many hundreds of pages.

My preference was to click on *View as a Book* at the bottom of the screen. This allows you a couple of options to quickly get into the book. Click on the right page to go forward and on the left page to go back. There is also a bar at the bottom of the screen to slide quickly through the book. 100 pages at a time are loaded. Drag the scroll bar all the way to the right and load an additional 100 pages each time you do so. (Santa Clara County Historical & Genealogical Society newsletter, June, 2017)

Grandma's Recept for Washing Clothes



When life becomes tedious and hard to bear, consider this *recept* given to a young bride by her Kentucky mountain grandmother. It's printed here exactly as originally written.

1. Bild a fire in the back yard to heet kittle of rain water.
2. Set tubs so smoke won't blow in eyes if wind is pert.
3. Shave one hole cake lie soap in bilin water.
4. Sort things, make three piles, 1 pile white, 1 pile-cullard, 1 pile-work britches and rags.
5. Stur flour in cold water to smooth then thin down with bilin water.
6. Rub dirty spots on board, scrub hard, then bile. Rub cullard but don't bile, just rench and starch.
7. Take the white things out of the kittle with a broomstick handle, then rench, blew and starch.
8. Spread tee towels on grass.
9. Hang old rags on fence.
10. Pore rench water in flower bed.
11. Scrub porch with hot soapy water.
12. Turn tubs upside down.
13. Go put on cleen dress, smooth hair with side combs, brew cup of tee, set and rest and rock a spell and count blessins.

—Source Unknown

MEETINGS

2nd Wednesday each month – 10 am
Family History Center Library
4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland, CA

Visitors welcome! Typically a speaker discusses genealogical record sources, research techniques, research tips.

Occasionally, working meetings are held at sites of genealogical interest.

MEMBERSHIP

Membership is open to all...

Individual/Organization - \$18.00

Family - \$25.00

Foreign - \$20.00

Request an application by writing to: P. O. Box 1648, Alameda, CA 94501
or download from our website.

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May we hear from you by July 1, 2017 Thank you for your support.

Office use only: Date _____ Amt _____ Ch# _____

ANNUAL ANNIVERSARY LUNCHEON – MAY 10, 2017

Pier 29 Waterfront Restaurant, 1148 Ballena Blvd. Alameda, CA
Directions will be printed in May/June LIVE OAK. Time is NOON

Teriyaki Chicken _____ Shrimp Louie _____ Caesar Salad w/chicken _____

Salads served with a cup of clam chowder. Teriyaki Chicken served with choice of clam chowder or tossed green salad w/zesty Italian dressing, garlic mashed potatoes, fresh steamed vegetables. Meals include roll and butter, coffee or tea, and ice cream or sherbet for dessert.

Tax and tip are included. Cost: \$25.00 per person

Mail your check and this form to:
EBGS c/o Joyce Schleicher, 4345 Detroit Avenue, Oakland, CA 94619

Name _____ Amt. Enc _____ No. Persons _____

We look forward to seeing many of you there. Guests are certainly welcome!