

THE FAMILY SNOOP

MERCED COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 32, No. 6

June 2014

June Meeting



Where There's a Will, There's a Probate

Using Probate records to help you
find those elusive ancestors

Speaker: Vi Parsons

Wills and probate records are among the best resources for proving relationships among family members. Sons and daughters are usually mentioned by name and married daughters with their married names. The widow or widower is often named (sometimes, though, it's just "my loving wife") and is sometimes an executor. Brothers and sisters might be named in a will and even grandchildren.

If you have never gotten ahold of will or probate records for your ancestors you need to come and hear Vi Parsons tell you how to find them, where to find them, what the process is when someone dies, what intestate and codicil mean, and much more. What is a probate packet and what might you find in it? How does a widow's dower figure in and why did they inventory estates?



Our speaker has been tracking down her ancestors since she was a teenager. She has a certificate in American Genealogy from the National Genealogical Society and is a member of the International Society of Family History Writers and Editors.

12:00 Noon Saturday

21 June 2014

Gracey Room, Merced County Library

Message from the President:

Dear Friends,



We are losing one and gaining another. Editors of *The Family Snoop* that is. The July *Snoop* will be the last one edited by Anne Field, who has been doing a wonderful job for the last 2 1/2 years. Anne, I commend you for all the work you have done to make the *Snoop* an entertaining and informative newsletter. We are truly grateful for your

volunteer spirit.

After July, Robyn Echols, who already is our Secretary, will step in to fill the hole. This stalwart member of the Merced County Genealogical Society already has much on her plate. In addition to other groups that she belongs to, she is a literary author and because her days are very full, we may have to make the *Snoop* a quarterly newsletter. We will discuss this at the next Board meeting on July 11th. If anyone has anything to say about this I encourage you to speak up about it at the next meeting or come to the Board meeting. Needless to say, we are really grateful Robyn has agreed to take over this position.

And we are wondering how we can best fill the needs of our readers? Because the newsletter doesn't stay in Merced. Just as we get several newsletters from other genealogical societies, they get ours. So, we want to make ours entertaining and appropriate to our surroundings, our county, our town. I'm sure there are people researching the city of Merced, historical features of Merced and the people who have lived in Merced. Do YOU want to see articles on the general history of Merced? Do YOU want to read about people who once lived in Merced or Merced County? Is there anyone interested in being a detective? We could use a general Research Historian. If anyone has a personal history with Merced, that would also be interesting to all our readers. This calling would be a great service to our society and would be fun, too.

Think about this and jot down your wishes. Bring your notes to the meeting, or e-mail or snail mail to us (e-mail address and snail address in the *Snoop*). Please.... we really want to hear from all of you.

In your service,
Stephanie McLeod, President, MCGS

Mark your Calendars!

5 June 2014

Protecting Yourself Online: Keeping Your Information Safe While Searching the Internet. Speaker: Vince Santos, an expert from Monterey Bay Computer Works. Monterey County Genealogy Society. 7 p.m.
<http://www.mocogenso.org/activities.htm>

6-8 June 2014

Southern California Genealogy Jamboree, Burbank
<http://genealogyjamboree.org/>

12 June 2014

Using the Subscription Newspaper Web Sites at FamilySearch Centers and Libraries. Presenter: Janice Sellers. General meeting starts at 6:15, program is from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. Root Cellar / Sacramento Genealogical Society. Christ Community Church, 5025 Manzanita Avenue, Carmichael.
<http://www.rootcellar.org/>

18 June 2014

Keeping Images and Stories Preserved for Future Generations. Speaker: Katherine Weedman-Cox from Cox Photo. Genealogical Assn. of Sacramento, monthly meeting. 12:30 pm to 2:45 pm, Belle Cooledge Library, 5600 South Land Park Dr. Sacramento.
<http://gensac.org/>

27 July – 4 August 2014

34th IAJGS International Conference on Jewish Genealogy, Salt Lake City, UT
<http://conference.iajgs.org/2014/>

12 August 2014

Comparison of genealogy software programs such as Family Tree Maker, Legacy and others. General meeting, Calaveras Genealogical Society, 10:00 a.m., Calaveras County Public Library in San Andreas. For more information:
http://calaverasgenealogy.com/Calendar_of_Upcoming_Events.php

Welcome to new MCGS Members:

Greg Entriiken, from Delhi, , searching Norris in Chowchilla, 1930s -1960s; Peterson in Fairmead, CA, 1920s-; and Banks in Merced, 1920s-.

Upcoming Programs 2014	
July 19	Visiting the Azores – Roberta Saling and Anne Field
August	No meeting
September 20	Finding Branches of the Family Tree After the Holocaust - Irit Goldman
October 18	The 1820s Mountain Men - Scott Johnson
November 15	Best Internet Resources for East European Genealogy - Lisa Also webinar

Our May Meeting

We had 23 members and 14 guests turn out for our May meeting and program. Robyn Echols will take over as *The Family Snoop* editor after July – Thank you, Robyn! We are still in great need of someone to serve in the Membership position – please volunteer! We also need volunteers for the Doris Cochran Room to serve as back-up in case of illness or vacations and on the one Wednesday where there is only one volunteer signed up. See Shari Stetson or Stephanie McLeod for more details. Your help is greatly appreciated. A survey was available for members to fill out indicating what they would like to see in *The Family Snoop* as well as states that they are researching so that books might be purchased for the collection.



We had a wonderful presentation, **Calling In the Pros**, by Corey Oiessen and Janice M. Sellers, both members of APG – the Association of Professional Genealogists. These are the experts who are there to help us when we run into brick walls. Corey runs **Genealogy Heroes** and Janice runs **Ancestral Discoveries** – the names of their research companies. You can find them, and other researchers, at <https://www.apgen.org/>.

Both ladies were very knowledgeable and shared with us the work they might be called upon to do – such as forensic genealogy – research which has legal implications, searching for heirs, dealing with dead bodies and more. This is an area in which they must be extremely meticulous. They might scan and preserve family photos, documents and memorabilia and put them in book format for people. They

have done title searches for land owners' descendants involving oil exploration. Sometimes they work on adoption cases. Both took an 18-month course in order to become professional genealogists and both love what they do and it showed as they answered our many questions. We also left with a wonderful quote:

Genealogy Without Proof is Mythology!



How To Archive Family Keepsakes: Learn How to Preserve Family Photos, Memorabilia and Genealogy Records, by Denis May Levenick

Are you the one who inherited the family keepsakes, letters, birth certificates, military medals, and other heirlooms? Wondering how you should organize them, preserve them, protect them, display them, digitize them, donate them or toss them? Caring for the family artifacts and heritage might feel overwhelming, but here is a book that might help make this task a bit easier.

Connecting with Distant Cousins

My ancestor, Joshua Ashcroft, was a slater (roofer) in the city of Manchester, England, back in the late 1700s, early 1800s. He was married a second time after his first wife, Sarah Barber, and his daughter, Mary Sarah, both died and were buried. He had been married to Esther six years when he fell to his death from the roof of a warehouse he was working on near St. Anne's Square in the center of Manchester. Joshua left his wife, Esther, and two young sons to mourn his loss. The monumental (tombstone) inscription from St. James Church on George Street, where he was buried read:

Joshua Ashcroft July 17 1806 a 28 y. His death was occasioned by a fall from a Warehouse. An awfull warning to us of the uncertainty of human life. Take heed watch and pray for ye know not when the time is. Sarah W of Joshua Ashcroft April 5 1800 a 21 y. Mary Dau May 24 1800 a 9 weeks.

The church and burial grounds are long gone, there is an office building there now, but the inscription from the tombstone is recorded in *Owen's Manuscripts*, volume 24. I would never have found out about Joshua if not for another researcher who is descended from John Ashcroft, the youngest son of the slater who fell to his death. I descend from the older brother, William. Tony Ashcroft, the descendant and researcher, lives in England and has done a lot of research on this family. We connected because he found my web page on my Ashcroft ancestors. He also had a news item that appeared in a Manchester newspaper at the time:

On Thursday last a man accidentally fell from the roof of a very lofty warehouse in Crow Alley, St Anne's Square, and was so dreadfully maimed that he expired in less than half an hour.

You can imagine my great delight when I received an email from him, full of all kinds of information, including his sources. Sometimes we find out the details of our ancestors lives, break through a brick wall, or just connect with someone else in the world who will share our joy and enthusiasm when we find a baptismal record or a marriage record for one of the people in the family we share. Tony was not the only one who found my web page on the Ashcrofts. Another descendant, living in Australia, found me also. He descends from William's son Joshua who sailed with his wife and baby daughter to Australia in 1861, something else I did not know.

Whether you have a blog, a web page or a family tree on Ancestry.com, get your information out there so people can find you and contact you and share information with you. Use *Genforum* or other means to connect with others. When someone contacts you and shares some family history, you feel like you won the lottery. I would never have found out on my own all the family stories that these two men shared with me, much more than what I have written above, including Joshua's murder in Australia. Find a way to share and connect, whatever works best for you, but don't delay. One man who found me online, promised to send me photos and other information, but he died shortly after that and I never got the photos and family stories.

Anne Field

Old Genealogists never die - they just lose their census.

Winton Families & More – a local blog

<http://wintonfamiliesmore.blogspot.com/>

One of our own members, Lorraine Richards, has a blog called *Winton Families & More*. The More is there so you can read about cactus, geraniums, flea markets and other items that are not about Winton. Lorraine used to be our newsletter editor, but she moved on to other projects and this is one of them. Being a genealogist and an historian, Lorraine has blogged about Winton history and family genealogy as well.

Besides her blog, Lorraine also has a Flickr page with cemetery photos from Winton Cemetery:

https://www.flickr.com/photos/winton_historical_society/

The people buried here are not just from Winton. Atwater has no cemetery and so many Atwater people are buried here as well. She has done a nice job, the photos clear and legible, and there are now over 1800 photos. You can read about it on her blog page, posted Monday March 3, 2014.

Good job, Lorraine!



Gustine High School to Celebrate 100 Years

Gustine High School is celebrating its 100th year in 2013-2014. More than just a reunion for alumni, the centennial celebration is for everyone and will be held on July 5th this year with food, exhibits, a live band, a dinner dance, tours, displays and more.

The Obituary Index, Merced County, California

http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~obitsindex/obits_ca_merc_01.htm

This webpage, put up by José Rivera Nieves, is part of the Merced County GenWeb page. These are all recent obituaries and are all individuals who were born in Merced County. The obituaries all seem to be from about 2002 to 2005 so it would seem that the page is not being updated. Also, the name of the newspaper is not noted, you will need to email Mr. Nieves for that information, at no charge.

The Ohio Obituary Index

<http://index.rbhayes.org/hayes/index/display.asp?id=619&subj=index>

If you have Ohio ancestry, you will want to check out this webpage. The index was begun when staff and volunteers at the Rutherford B. Hayes Presidential Center Library began entering data into the index. Other Ohio libraries joined in and there are now many partner libraries entering data from old and current newspapers. There are more than 2.1 million obituaries. You can see the list of participating libraries and the list of the newspapers indexed. If you find an obituary that you want, you can order a copy of the actual obituary. There are some other records covered in the index, such as marriages, wills, and cemetery listings. You can access the database at Ancestry.com as well, but the original index at the website will remain free to all.

State Censuses and Substitutes

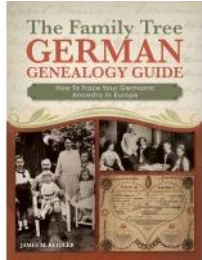
Census records are one of the main resources for genealogists. But wait! There's more than just the Federal Census. If you have not checked other resources that pertain to specific states, then you are missing out. Many states took their own censuses, usually not the same year as the Federal census. Florida took a state census in 1885, 1935 and 1945. There was a special census in 1864 for Jacksonville, Fernandina and St. Augustine which included name, height, color of eyes, complexion, age, where born or contraband [slave], last residence, where registered for draft or name of owner, date moved into the south, oath of allegiance, and remarks. This is in book format and can be used at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.

William Dollarhide wrote two volumes: *Census Substitutes & State Census Records*, one for Eastern States and one for Western States. You can find this at the public library in Fresno but not in the DCR. However, if you go to the back issues of *The Genealogical Helper* (sadly no longer being published), there is a thirty page article, by state, in the July/August 2006 issue, listing resources that can substitute somewhat for census records. These might be property indexes, voter lists, tax lists, military lists and so on and are listed by state. Check out the state and time period that you are searching and you might find something like the following:

- Kansas Territorial and States Censuses – there are many, including territorial censuses for 1855 until statehood in 1861. These are available at the Family History Library, some in book format, some on microfilm and some digitized and available to view
- *Vigil's Index* – a general index to all of the documents from the time of the Spanish and Mexican governments in New Mexico. The New Mexico Territory included Colorado until 1861 and Arizona until 1863. Available on microfilm at the Family History Library
- *Pre- 1914 Cemetery Inscription Card Index* - for North Carolina. The info includes county, name of cemetery, town, person, date of birth, death date, age, spouse or parents, location of grave, military information. These are

on 23 microfilm rolls, alphabetically by surname. There is a Post-1914 index as well on 5 microfilms. These are available from FamilySearch.org.

- *Residents of Texas, 1782-1836*, 3 vol. – Each volume is indexed and covers residents, wives, children and land and property. This also is available only in book format and can be found at the Family History Library in Salt Lake City.



The Family Tree German Genealogy Guide: How To Trace Your Germanic Ancestry in Europe, by James Beidler

This useful guide just came out in March and will be up to date for researchers. If your ancestors came from any area in Europe that used to be considered German – Austria, Prussia, Saxony, etc. – you will find help in uncovering birth, marriage, death, church, court and other records, find help with deciphering German script, learn about German naming patterns and find out how these ancestors got from Europe to America.

Not All States Have Counties, and Not All Cities belong to a County

Most of us probably know that Louisiana does not have counties. They have parishes. Alaska is the only other state that does not have counties. They have boroughs. When we enter a place in our genealogy programs, we put in the city, the county and the state – and sometimes the country: Merced, Merced, California. We recognize this as the usual entry format for places.

There are exceptions of course. I came across one while inputting some data recently and was surprised to learn that Alexandria, Virginia, is an Independent City. It is not part of any county. And it is not the only one. Baltimore, St. Louis and Carson City are all Independent Cities.

Then there are the cities that take up the entire county such as New York City, San Francisco, New Orleans and Philadelphia. For these cities, we list them as usual: San Francisco, San Francisco, California.

Rhode Island is a state with only five counties and although it has counties there is no county government. Instead, Rhode Island is governed by eight cities and thirty-one towns. Connecticut has no county government either. Local government is through its towns and the counties remain for geographical purposes only. For these states, you list a county with the city when inputting the place name, but if you want to find a death record it might be at the state level or the town level. Most New England towns kept vital records for many years and are a wonderful source of information. One wonderful source that I have used for Massachusetts vital records:

<http://ma-vitalrecords.org/>.

Only a Genealogist regards a step backwards as Progress



Step Up to the Plate!

Our organization is still needing someone to serve as the Membership position. It doesn't matter if you are new to the group – in fact, it's a good way to get to know people and find out what's going on. Sharon Darby, our Treasurer, has been filling her position and the Membership position too and that's a lot to ask of anyone. It is not a difficult job but a very necessary one. Please contact one of the Board members or talk to Sharon about what the position entails. We need a volunteer!

The Family Snoop is published on the first day of each month except Aug and Dec. It is sent in .pdf to members who receive it by email. Back copies can be emailed to members as attachments. Send items, articles, stories, etc., to mcgsmail@annefield.net You can choose to receive the Family Snoop via email in a pdf format – get it sooner and in color. Contact Sharon Darby, our treasurer. **Deadline for the July 2014 issue is June 23, 2014.**

MCGS meetings are held at noon, on the 3d Saturday of the month. The library closes at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday. There is no meeting in August.

Dues are \$20 per year for an Individual or \$30 for a Family living at the same address.

The Doris Cochran Research Room is open 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 12:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays, **BUT WE NEED SUBSTITUTE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP KEEP IT OPEN!! Please Volunteer!**

MCGS Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs>

Merced County Genealogical Society
P.O. Box 3061
Merced, CA. 95344

President	Stephanie McLeod 383-1009
1st Vice President	Lois Jimenez 723-9019
2nd Vice President	Rosalie Heppner 358-5298
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Hospitality	Michle Burroughs 383-4112
Publicity	Open
Programs	Susan Benes, Michle Burroughs, Rosalie Heppner, Stephanie McLeod & Shari Stetson
Editor, <i>The Family Snoop</i>	Anne Field 357-8672 mcgsmail AT annefield DOT net

Family History Center

www.familysearch.org
 1080 E Yosemite Ave Merced. 722-1307
 Tuesday, Wednesday, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm,
 Thursday, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 Tuesday evening, 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm
 Free access on their computers to Ancestry and other programs. Take along your flash drive to save and download. Volunteers are there to help you and microfilms can now be ordered online.

Merced County Library

www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=77
 2100 O Street Merced 209-285-7642
 Fax: 209-726-7912
 Monday through Thursday – 10am to 6:00pm
 Friday & Saturday - 10:00am to 5:00pm

Merced County Courthouse Museum

www.mercedmuseum.org
 21st & N Streets Merced
 Wednesday through Sunday - 1:00pm to 4:00pm.
 Free admission.

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County

www.cagenweb.com/lr/stanislaus/gssc.html
 Click on their newsletter to read online or download.
 Information about bus trips and programs offered throughout the year that may interest you.

Monthly Financial Report April 2014

Income:	140.19
Expenses:	(233.55)
Checking Total	\$4,664.58
Savings Account	3,864.31
CD-9 months; matures on 10/8/14	5,834.89
CD-12 months; matures on 5/19/14	5,654.01
<u>Total in Checking and Savings:</u>	<u>\$20,017.79</u>

MCGS Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs>