

# THE FAMILY SNOOP

MERCED COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 30, No. 3

March 2012

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## March Program



## The Merced County Library Budget

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## Celebrating Women in Merced County History



Jacque Merriam, our County Librarian, will present a Powerpoint presentation on the state of the library budget – cuts are coming! Hear what Jacque has to say about the coming cuts, what they might mean for us, and what can be done. Since the library is where we meet each month and where we house our genealogy library, you won't want to miss this.

Following Jacque's presentation you are invited to cross over to the County Courthouse Museum to see the wonderful new exhibit on women worth celebrating in Merced County history. As usual, the exhibit is outstanding and worth seeing more than once.

12:00 Noon      Saturday  
17 March 2012  
Gracey Room, Merced County Library

MCGS meets every 3d Saturday, 12:00 noon, Gracey Room, Merced County Library, 2100 O St., Merced

## Message from the President:

Our February meeting with guest speaker, Charleen Renteria, was a positive and encouraging success. The small, personal workshops, grouped at tables, each labeled with one of a set of problems of research offered by the those present, was a great help to the 7 guests and 17 members present. This type of workshop is very helpful to the public, a great way to introduce guests to all we have to offer, and a great, ongoing, service project for the Merced Genealogical Society.

A great big thank-you and hug to those members, who, on the spur of the moment, volunteered their expertise to head each table of research.

Remember, teaching teaches the teacher. Looking forward to seeing more of you in March when we learn about the Merced Libraries budget and take a tour of the Merced County Museum's exhibit of "Women of Merced County."

Stephanie McLeod, President



February meeting: Long-time members grouped with beginners who needed to learn what steps to take next in their searches. Civil War records, sources to use before the census and other than the census for later time periods and a look at Legacy software were some of the topics covered to help with problems that beginners had.



## Reminder!

It's time to pay your dues – see the form at the end of this newsletter. Individuals are \$20.00; a family living at the same address is \$30.00 per calendar year. A monthly newsletter is sent to each address. You may choose to have it sent as an attachment in the PDF format by e-mail or by regular mail. Please note any corrections to name, address, email address or phone number and mail to MCGS, PO Box 3061, Merced, CA 95344. Membership dues are also accepted at the meeting.

## Mark your Calendars!

**Annual Southern California Genealogy Jamboree**, which will be held Thursday through Sunday, June 8 to 10, 2011, at the LA Marriott Burbank Airport Hotel in Burbank, California.

The theme for the 2012 Jamboree is "**Lights, Camera, ANCESTORS - Spotlight on Family History.**"

For more information:

<http://www.scsgenealogy.com/Jamboree/2012jam-home.htm>

## Genealogy Seminar Featuring George G. Morgan

Saturday, March 31, 2012

Fair Oaks Presbyterian Church

11427 Fair Oaks Blvd

Fair Oaks, California

9:00 a.m. - 3:45 p.m. (doors open at 8:30 a.m.)

## The California State Genealogical Alliance Joins the 1940 U.S. Census Community Project



CSGA has joined forces with genealogy societies and organizations around the country as part of the 1940 U.S. Census Community Project. The initiative aims to publish a free, online searchable name index of the 1940 U.S. Federal Census after images of the census are released to the public in April 2012. This online index will be free forever, offering family history researchers a rich genealogical data set for their ongoing use. Three leading genealogy organizations, Archives.com, FamilySearch International, and findmypast.com, launched the initiative at the end of last year, and the project is already engaging volunteers to help provide this invaluable resource to family historians around the world as soon as possible.

**more on the CSGA blog page:**

<http://www.csga.com/Blog/>

## Welcome to our new member:

Marlys [Harmon] Stinson of Delhi

## **The History of Merced's 'Gateways'**

by Sarah Lim

*Originally Published in the Merced Sun Star, July 10, 2010*

Many towns in the Central Valley were established either because of the railroads in the late 19th century or the highways in the early 20th century. They were often labeled as rail towns or motor towns by travelers.

Historically, Merced residents have used various signs or structures to distinguish Merced from other San Joaquin Valley towns. When the Central Pacific Railroad laid its tracks through Merced in 1872, the railroad company built the tallest hotel, the El Capitan Hotel, in Merced. It could be seen miles away on the plains. It was in this time period that Merced came to be known as the "Gateway to Yosemite."

Then, city founder Charles Henry Huffman felt that a fountain would be a refreshing welcome sign to travelers who had passed through the arid flat plains before reaching Merced. So Huffman built a fountain next to the El Capitan Hotel in 1888 and named it Laura Fountain in honor of his wife Laura.

It worked!

Merced for many years after that was nicknamed "Fountain City" by the train travelers who first saw the fountain as the train pulled into the Merced depot. It was said the water in the fountain was turned on only when the trains arrived in Merced.

The nickname "Fountain City" didn't last long. Soon Merced was once again known as the "Gateway to Yosemite" in the 1920s as the automobile became a more popular and convenient means of transportation. Highway 99 -- then known as the Golden State Highway -- was the main corridor of the Central Valley. Passing through 16th Street in Merced, it was a two-lane highway.

Local business leaders led by Dr. E. R. Fountain felt the need to distinguish Merced from the rest of the cities and towns in the Valley. To do that, they erected two identical wooden arches at the ends of the city on 16th Street. The Elks Club and additional cash donations from members of the business community sponsored the project. Yosemite Lumber Co. donated four cedar logs, Yosemite Portland Cement Co. donated 150 sacks of cement and John R. Graham donated a carload of sand and gravel.

When the construction was completed in December 1927, the arches were topped with electric signs that read "Merced, Gateway to Yosemite" to incoming motorists. There were two arches -- the one by Bear Creek Bridge was known as the North Arch; the one located by G Grade was known as the South Arch.

In 1940 when Highway 99 was widened into a four-lane highway, the North Arch was torn down and a new concrete arch similar to the wooden one but wider was built near V Street. The fate of the South Arch isn't very clear. It could have been destroyed during the highway widening, but no evidence supports or disproves that theory. Some said it was destroyed in the late 1950s because of its deteriorated condition. That story doesn't make sense since the highway by this time was a four-lane highway and the wooden arch was only wide enough for a two-lane highway. In any case, Merced highway arches became history when the North Arch by V Street was torn down in 1962.

Today, there is still a historic sign that distinguishes Merced from other Central Valley towns. The Merced Theatre, located at Main and Martin Luther King Jr. Way, features a 100-foot-high tower with an electric "MERCED" neon sign that's visible from Highway 99.

### **A Note From Your Editor...**



At our last meeting members brought up information about volunteering as indexers for the 1940 census. You can do this on your own or MCGS can volunteer as a society. Many genealogy groups in California have already volunteered. The indexing will begin in April when the new census images become available. During March there will be training sessions so that indexers can learn how to do the indexing. If there is someone who would like to spearhead a small group of indexers within MCGS, that would be a great opportunity for members to learn some new skills and to help out with this massive project. You don't have to be an expert, just be willing to take the time to organize small groups who can work together, maybe at home in pairs. If you think you might be interested in getting a group together, please email one of the Board members who can get the message out to our members. More details can be found at [www.the1940census.com/](http://www.the1940census.com/). Click on Societies and once there click on Societies and then "get started." If you want to work on your own at home, the volunteers at the Family History Center in Merced can get you started. See page 2 of this newsletter to see more information about the census.

**Reminder! The Finding Your Roots series, hosted by Henry Louis Gates Jr., starts on March 25<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 p.m. on PBS.**

## Books Recently Added to the Doris Cochran Room Collection – February 2012

### New books are on the display racks on the center table

#### Call Number - Title

284.5 NAT-The National Huguenot Society : membership directory 1997.

317.3 MIS-An index to fifth census of the United States, 1830 : population schedules, State of Missouri.

362.734 NIL-Adoption agencies, orphanages, and maternity homes : an historical directory /

417.7 MACL-Reading old handwriting /

433 BET-Cassell's German dictionary; German-English, English-German dictionary /

439.4 EPP-The story of Low German & Plautdietsch : tracing a language across the globe /

912 FAN-Fanning's illustrated gazetteer of the United States : giving the location, physical aspect, mountains, rivers, lakes, climate, productive and manufacturing resources, commerce, government, education, general history, etc., of the states, territories

929.1 AMB-Blood kin and "in-laws" : all relationships revealed, named, and explained /

929.1 BAL-Searching on location : planning a research trip /

929.1 BAX-Angus Baxter's do's and don'ts for ancestor-hunters.

929.1 GAL-Further undertakings of a dead relative collector /

929.1 SCH-Handbook of genealogical sources /

929.2 UMI-UMI guide to family and local histories : a microfiche program.

929.373 VIR-Immigrant ancestors; a list of 2,500 immigrants to America before 1750.

941 WEI-The Magna Charta sureties, 1215 : the barons named in the Magna Charta, 1215, and some of their descendants who settled in America, 1607-1650 /

941.5 DUR-A guide to Irish roots : collected from oral tradition and ancient records during visits to Ireland, other parts of Europe, and North America /

941.5 MACL-The surnames of Ireland /

942 FIT-Colchester Quakers.

943 JOH-How to read German church records without knowing much German /

943.43 BRO-Zweibruecken yesterday and today /

973 AME-The American territorial system; [papers]

973 BOL-Marriage notices 1785-1794 for the whole United States /

973 CAR-Searching American military records /

974 CLO-Dutch uncles and New England cousins : historical sketches of New York and New England during three hundred fifty years as illustrated by some of America's earliest families /

974 PEI-Peirce's colonial lists. Civil, military and professional lists of Plymouth and Rhode Island colonies, comprising colonial, county and town officers, clergymen, physicians and lawyers. With extracts from colonial laws defining their duties, 1621-1700

974 WEI-Ancestral roots of sixty colonists who came to New England between 1623 and 1650 : the lineage of Alfred the Great, Charlemagne, Malcolm of Scotland, Robert the Strong, and some of their descendants /

974.4 STR-Plymouth Colony, its history & people, 1620-1691 /

974.44 RIC-Vital records of Pepperell, Massachusetts, to the year 1850 /

974.45 DUM-A brief history of the Byfield Congregational Church and parish : from 1702 to 1888 /

974.45 MAS-Vital records of Salisbury, Massachusetts : to the end of the year 1849.

974.482 BOW-The Mayflower reader : a selection of articles from The Mayflower descendant /

974.497 MAS-Vital records of Nantucket, Massachusetts : to the year 1850.

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974.71 GEN-Genealogical data from the New York post-boy : 1743-1773 /

974.726 CLU-Old families of Staten Island /

975.488 SHU-Greenbrier County, (West) Virginia records /

975.5752 BAK-Bountiful and beautiful : a bicentennial history of Buchanan County, Virginia, 1776-1976 /

976.43 GRA-Travis County, Texas: the five schedules of the 1860 federal census ... & maps of Travis County;

976.7 BAK-Arkansas Township Atlas / a history of the Minor Civil Divisions in each ArkansasCounty.

976.727 CHR-Izard County marriage record book /

976.744 ELL-1870 Census of Scott Co., Arkansas /

976.745 HEL-Polk County, Arkansas, 1860 census /

976.856 LYN-Miscellaneous records, Williamson County, Tennessee /

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976.926 SKE-1850 census of Lawrence County, Kentucky /  
 977 LLO-Lloyd's steamboat directory : and disasters on the western waters /  
 977.266 BRU-Jericho Friend's Meeting and its community : Randolph County, Indiana, 1818 to 1958.  
 977.311 SIN-Guide to local and family history at the Newberry Library /  
 977.386 SHE-Madison County, Illinois, birth record index, 1850-1879, death record index, 1878-1881, with coroner's death records, 1870-1888 /  
 977.386 WAS-1855 census, Madison County, Illinois /  
 977.395 VAU-Hamilton County, Illinois, cemetery inscriptions,  
 977.3991 MACN-Early pioneer gravestones of Pope County, Illinois /  
 977.661 HAR-Harris Centennial : 1884-1984 /  
 977.769 RAT-Index to marriage records, 1860-1869, Scott County Court House, Davenport, Iowa /  
 977.8 MIS-Missouri pioneers : county and genealogical records.  
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 978.1813 STA-Stafford County, Kansas 1870-1990 /  
 978.2273 NIN-The 1974 atlas of Otoe County, Nebraska.  
 978.2273 OTO-Otoe County, Nebraska, 1983 : Otoe County history /  
 979.432 BUT-Butte County, California newspaper vitals, 1880-1899 /  
 979.432 BUT-Butte County, California register of delayed births, 1869-1991 /  
 979.445 MACR-Index to Tuolumne County marriages, 1875-1910 : brides and grooms /  
 979.446 GRE-The Great register of Mariposa County, California, 1890 : registered voters of Mariposa County.  
 979.447 LUC-From amber grain to fruited plain [i.e. fruited plain] : a history of Ceres, California and its surroundings, 1776-1976 /  
 979.455 SAN-San Joaquin County, California official plat book and directory.  
 979.457 CEM-Cemeteries of Stanislaus County, California.  
 979.457 TOW-Town of Ceres on line of San Joaquin Division of Central Pacific Rail Road, Stanislaus County, Cal. : a historical stroll.  
 979.458 MER-Merced County, California, delayed birth certificates /  
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 979.461 HAN-Who perished : a list of persons who died as a result of the great earthquake and fire in San Francisco on April 18, 1906 /  
 979.463 BEN-Antioch to the twenties  
 979.476 CLI-1890 great register of Monterey County, California : (sorted by last name) / project coordinator, Karen Clifford ; quality control editor, Bettyann Hedegard.  
 REF 977.3 LUN-Illinois State Genealogical Society surname index, 1981 /  
 REF 979.452 COW-Index to the 1890 great register of Solano County, California /

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**A tip from Alma: Here's a great site for finding access to old newspapers.**  
**<http://news.google.com/newspapers#A>**

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***The Family Snoop*** is published on the first day of each month. It is sent in .pdf to members who receive it by email. Back copies can be emailed to members as attachments.  
**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 April 2012 issue is March 23, 2012.**

### ~~~~~ **Genealogy Software for the Mac**

Look for reviews of various software available at the two websites below:

<http://genealogy-software-review.toptenreviews.com/mac-genealogy-software/>

<http://www.gensoftreviews.com/?from=oldsite>

**MCGS meetings are now held at noon, not 1:00, on the 3d Saturday of the month. The library now closes at 3:00 p.m. on Saturday so our meeting time was changed. There is no meeting in August.**

**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.**

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

Family History Center [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org)

1080 E Yosemite Ave Merced. 722-1307

Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 10:00am to 4:00pm

Tuesday and Wednesday 7:00pm to 9:00pm

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 be ordered.

Merced County Library [www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=77](http://www.co.merced.ca.us/index.aspx?nid=77)

2100 O Street Merced 209-285-7642 Fax: 209-726-7912

Monday, Wednesday, Friday - 9:30am to 5:00pm

Tuesday and Thursday - 10:30am to 6:00pm.

Saturday - 9:30am to 3:00pm.

Merced County Courthouse Museum [www.mercedmuseum.org](http://www.mercedmuseum.org)

21st & N Streets Merced

Wednesday through Sunday - 1:00pm to 4:00pm. Admission is free.

Genealogical Society of Stanislaus County [www.cagenweb.com/lr/stanislaus/gssc.html](http://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.

President	Stephanie McLeod
1st Vice President	Lois Jimenez
2nd Vice President	Rosalie Heppner
Treasurer	Sharon Darby
Secretary	Robyn Echols
Past President	Shari Stetson
Membership	Open
Hospitality	Michle Burroughs
Publicity	Open
Programs	Michle Burroughs, Rosalie Heppner, Charleen Renteria & Shari Stetson
Editor, <i>The Family Snoop</i>	Anne Field mcgsmail AT annefield DOT net

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

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Monthly Financial Report: January 2012

Income:	455.12
Expenses:	193.07
Checking Total	<u>\$3,013.50</u>
Savings Account	3,860.02
CD-9 months; matures on 07/20/12	5,812.58
CD-12 months; matures on 5/19/12	5,622.79
<b><u>Total in Checking and Savings:</u></b>	<b><u>\$18,308.89</u></b>

# Merced County Genealogical Society

## Membership Form

Print page, fill in your information and mail to:

Merced County Genealogical Society  
PO Box 3061  
Merced, CA 95344-1061

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Maiden Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Area Code & Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

*The Family Snoop* Newsletter delivered by [check one]: Mail \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Annual Individual Dues: \$20.00

\_\_\_ Annual Joint\* Dues: \$30.00

\_\_\_ Lifetime Individual Dues: \$200.00

\_\_\_ Lifetime Joint\* Dues: \$300.00

Note! Joint\* members must reside at the same address.

**Make check or money order payable to Merced County Genealogical Society.**

