

# THE FAMILY SNOOP

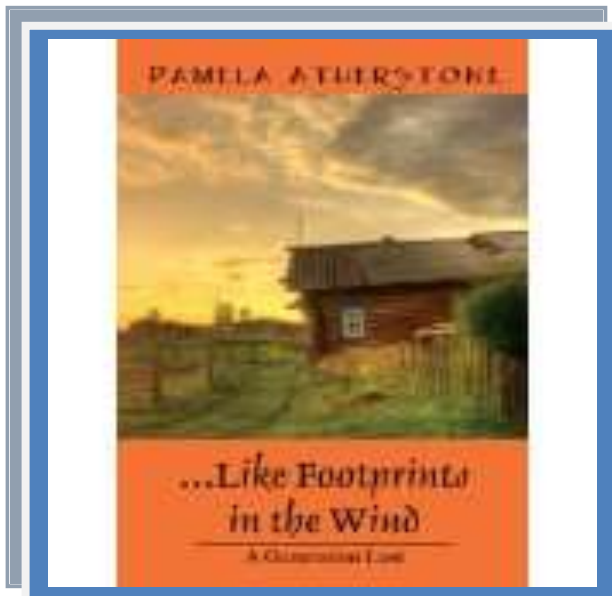
MERCED COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 33, No. 03

March 2015

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## March Meeting



### Germans from Russia Pre-WWII

by Pam  
Atherstone

Pamela Atherstone is the great-granddaughter of German-Russian immigrants and an amateur genealogist focusing on Russians of German heritage. Later in life she discovered a deep interest in the undocumented lives of her ancestors left behind in Russia following the Revolution of 1917. Research and study led to the writing of her first novel, *...Like Footprints in the Wind*. Come and welcome Pamela as she shares with us how she performed her research for her German ancestors who came from Russia.

1:00 p.m.    Saturday

March 21, 2015

Gracey Room, Merced County Library

## President's Message for March



Dear Friends and Fellow Members:

Anne, you're an inspiration! Thank you for a great, informative presentation on a subject that benefits us all. I took over two pages of notes myself.

As this concludes our beginner classes, I would like to point out, especially to the new members, that there's a vast pool of knowledgeable, dedicated people here, so if you have questions, don't hesitate to ask.

Our guest speaker for the March 21st meeting is Pam Atherstone on "Germans from Russia Pre WW2."

Hope to see you all then,

Sincerely,

Greg Entriiken, President



*Lois Jimenez being sworn in as Vice President by Susan Benes*

Welcome new members, Karen Morse who researching in Irwin City, and Deborah Samuelson who is researching in Belgium.

## Organizing Your Genealogy

Those who didn't make it to the February meeting



missed a real treat as well as a lot of good information on how to organize your genealogy. The following are a few of the editor's notes from the presentation given by Anne Field.

- Organize so you can find your information, you don't duplicate work, and so your information will make sense to someone else someday. It isn't an easy task. Just do your best. Start early, because it



can get out of control quickly

- Choose a method that works best for you.

- Files and folders
- Organize by color based on grandparent generation and localities
- Use tabs. If you save documents in plastic sheet protectors, use extra-wide tabbed dividers like pocket dividers or specialty tabbed dividers like Wilson Jones extra wide insertables.
- Hanging file folders. You can get a size to hold binders as well as file folders.
- Use colored dots on binders.
- Save your photos digitally using 600dpi in a tiff file for masters.
  - Put as much info in photo caption about pictures as you can
  - Some programs allow you to add a space for information about photo.
  - Keep your originals in a safe and make copies to display.
  - Always take and save the back of a photo if it has information. Back is called a "verso."
- A good book on saving information: ***Saving Stuff*** by Don Williams and Louisa Jaggar.
- Prepare family history information in formats your family will use: prepare a book of one or two generations with lots of pictures, a DVD slide show or something they can enjoy while learning about your common ancestors.



Upcoming Programs for 2015	
March 21	"Germans from Russia Pre-WWII" by Pam Atherstone
April 18	"English Research" by Vauna Kelly
May 16	TBA
June 20	"Finding Lost Cousins & Living Relatives" by Barbara Washburn
	Join us and invite others to join with us!

The next scheduled board meeting is April 13, 2015

## Dairy Business Growth in the San Joaquin Valley

By Bernadette Castaneda

### Historical view of Azores economy.

Despite Portugal being the crossroads for east/west trade, Portuguese economy is poor. Historically, Portuguese kings welcomed trading and took advantage of ideas and treasures. Unfortunately, unstable and corrupt monarchies and foreign traders hungry for riches took a severe toll on Portugal and their providences. Even when the monarchy was abolished and elected officials took office, the country has not done much better economically. Most of Portugal's land holdings have been lost. The Azores Islands, mostly settled by the Portuguese, have remained loyal although it has its own government. Due to its strategic location, the Portuguese and U.S. lease and maintain a military air base on Terceira.

### Climate, Weather and Livelihood.

The climate of the Azores is tropical. Off-shore breezes keep temperatures very pleasant most of the year. Natural grasses and flowers are prevalent. Pasture is natural but limited to the coastal area. Farms do not grow beyond a family's need. Life is simple but far from luxuriant. Raising livestock and the manufacture of milk products are the staple of the islands' economy. Milking is done by hand. Surplus milk is sold. The milk is poured from buckets into milk cans and collected by men driving horse drawn carts.



*Horse-drawn carts transport milk.*

The milk is taken to a creamery which also prepares the milk for cheese and butter making. In the townships, all stores and businesses have electricity, making life easier and somewhat modern. Some employment is available in the career fields of recreation and tourism, but most young people aspire to learn American English to apply for the lucrative jobs available at the government air field in Terceira. Government employment is the #1 income source for the islands.

### Migration Patterns.

A number of factors make Life very difficult on the islands: pasture land available for grazing cattle and building homes is limited to the coastal land. Accessibility of building materials is a problem. It is still customary to see rural homes built inside hills and fences made of volcanic rock. Few rural families own motor cars or modern appliances. The islands are considered isolated and importation of modern equipment and supplies is costly. The government air base in Terceira has assisted in increasing the economy and has made it possible for more and more of the rural homesteads to accept electricity into their lives. On my sister's and my visit to the

Terceira in 2006, we were quick to note that many of the hillside houses had TV antennas.

Volcanic activity is still measured and studied on the 9 volcanic islands. The Azores Group still experiences weak seismic activity, but there has not been any real danger from the “sleeping” volcanoes since the late 1800’s to early 1900’s. The islands experienced a great migration of families to the U.S. during this period, when Terceira and Faial were hit with both volcanic activity and ensuing high tidal damage. Family groups would leave the islands for the fishing industries of the U.S. East Coast or the golden farming valleys of California. It is interesting to note that many of the families settling in the east would, by the 1960’s, resettle in the San Joaquin Valley. California climate and life was most like “home”.

#### **San Joaquin Valley economic growth of milk/milk production.**

During the period of 1890-1930, U.S. dairy farming opportunities were abundant. Immigrating families found leasing small dairy farms relatively easy. Both my maternal and paternal grandparents came to the U.S. from Terceira in the early 1900’s. My grandparents knew each other although they had lived in different townships.

In the Azores, My father’s family raised livestock. Bullfighting is a popular sport in Spain, mainland Portugal as well as in the Azores. Careful breeding practices produce some of the world’s finest fighting bulls. Because there was no room to expand the business and the family could no longer support itself on their small Terceira farm, they applied for and were granted passage to America.

My father and his sister were young upon entering the U.S. My grandparents began working for a large cattle rancher in Crows Landing and my father and his sister attended school. My aunt, who was older than my father, married and had three children. When her marriage dissolved, she returned to live with her parents. My father left school after graduating from the 8<sup>th</sup> grade to provide more money for the family.

By the time my father was 24, he no longer lived his parents but worked in Novato in milk delivery. He had to leave the area and return to his family upon the untimely death of his father who died in an accident relating to care of fighting bulls. My father

took the place as Head of Household: his mother, sister and her 3 children. They lived on the Crows Landing Ranch where my grandfather died, working with the livestock.



*The author’s father in front of his new truck which replaced the horse-drawn carts for transporting milk.*

My mother’s parents settled in the Patterson area. At first leasing and then purchasing a 150 acre pasture ranch/dairy. My mother was the middle child and only girl of three children. Her brothers aspired to do more with their lives than be part of the family dairy business. Her older brother who is reported to have been a “play boy” in his single days soon married and leased a dairy in Hilmar.



*Author’s maternal uncle working the family dairy.*

My mother and her younger brother stayed on the family dairy. Her younger brother did not like milking cows or animal husbandry. After he married, he worked on his wife’s family dairy but within a short time, left the dairy, bought a home in Sunnyvale and went to work for Westinghouse.

My parents married in 1942. Because of his obligations to his family, my parents settled into the Patterson dairy and worked. They saved their money and by 1951, leased a dairy in Hilmar.





*Author's parents, grandparents and a neighbor.*

### **Demand for Products.**

During the early 50's, there was a growing need for milk and milk products in the U.S. At the time, all magazine and newspaper ads would read, "Milk: nature's most perfect food", and children were prodded to drink milk at each meal. New mothers were even deluded into believing that breast milk was not as healthy for baby as cows' milk. Even with the growing numbers, small dairy farms could not keep up with the market demand. Our Grade B dairy was to be out-dated soon after opening operation. My father purchased a mixed herd of about 20 cows.



*The family's mixed herd of milk cows.*

We milked our Guernsey and Holsteins by hand at first. Just as was tradition in the old country, the cows were milked, the milk was walked to the cool house, and poured from buckets into milk cans. After milking was over, the cans would be loaded onto a flatbed truck (# 8 shows my dad's flatbed truck and the co-deliverer ) and taken to a local creamery. As was also tradition, much of the work done on the dairy farm was not mechanized. My father planted, irrigated and brought in the hay

using a team of horses (pix#6 shows my father and his team on left and a neighbor's team on the right).

We, as with all small family dairies, could not keep up with the larger, more modernized dairies. With the introduction of the Surge and Delavalle milking machines, more cows could be milked more efficiently. Production could be increased.

However, expensive modifications had to be made to the dairy barns and refrigeration units had to replace the cool rooms. Local dairy associations would work with banks to provide the funding necessary to keep the family farms afloat. My Dad puzzled, along with other small dairymen over the benefits of milking machines. They discussed whether the money for the barn modifications and buying more cows could be repaid. When Grange pushed for Delavalle and set a higher standard for production, the smaller dairymen began to see an end to their Grade B livelihood.

My mother's oldest brother borrowed the Grange money to make the improvements to his barn, hired a helper, and increased his herd to close to 100 Holsteins. He eventually made a deal with the creamery association to transport his milk to the creamery in Hilmar exclusively. He quickly passed quality standards to move to Grade A, bringing in a much higher price for his milk.

Although we worked hard to improve the herd, we were slowly, but steadily falling behind. After payment were made to the banks, little would be left for the household.

### **A way of Life comes to an end.**

Each member of the family had his or her place.



*The author's sister in her barn clothes.*

Youngest to oldest, all would be an integral team member. I remember my day starting at 5AM. Since

kindergarten was not compulsory at the time, I began working at the age of 5.



*The author's first meeting with the herd shepherd dog, "Bob." She was three years old.*

Bob, the herd shepherd and I and I would walk out to the outside pasture, being careful to shut all gates behind us. We would gather the cows and bring them to the barn for milking. My parents would already be in the barn preparing for milking. My sister would feed the milk cows grain at the stations and carry in the empty buckets. My Mom would carry out the filled buckets to the milk house and pour the milk into cans. After milking was over, my Mom would wash the rig. Bob and I would return the cows to the pasture and finish helping my sister feed the calves. My father would load the milk cans onto the flatbed truck. He and another small dairy would cost share the transport to the creamery. Small farms rarely received offers to transport by creamery trucks. Often space to turn the truck around the dairy barns was an issue as well as the cost for transport versus the amount of milk to be picked up was not in balance. (Years later, my father would work for one of the last Grade B dairies in Los Banos. Before school would start, I would take the dairy flatbed truck to the association creamery and unload the canned milk to be processed.)

This was our work life twice a day, 7 days a week, and 52 weeks a year. While back-breaking and often dangerous, there was honor and pride in being a part of a dairying family.

## Hawaii -- or the Azores?

After our presentation described in the July issue of *The Family Snoop* and this article about the ancestors of Bernadette Castenada, the question that comes to mind is, why desire to return to Hawaii when another tropical wonderland like the Azores is available?

Unfortunately, when reporting back in July, there was a terrible editing error that was not caught before publication. Roberta Saling, after she related her fond memories of the Azores and visiting with her grandmother in her volcanic rock-constructed house, asked that we publish a bit more about her experience of visiting the Azores as an adult.

Roberta chose to go to the Azores because, although she had been to Portugal, she has had a long-time desire to go to the Azores Islands, the islands of her family. She wanted to not only see the sights on the islands, but more importantly, she wanted to visit and walk where her ancestors had lived, worked and died. She wanted to be able to search for her family history through church and local records. Roberta said she would go, she did, and she is now planning to go again.



*Angra do Heroísmo, the oldest continuously-settled town in the archipelago of the Azores.*

## RootsTech Classes

RootsTech 2015 is over, but twelve of their classes are still online. They can be found at [www.rootstech.org](http://www.rootstech.org). From the drop-down menu, click on **About**, then click on **See Videos**.

# >> 2015 Membership Dues Are Now Payable <<

## 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 Student Dues: \$10.00

\_\_\_ 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.**

Please print the surnames, locations, time periods, etc. you are researching so they may be included in an upcoming *The Family Snoop* Newsletter.

Surnames	Location	Times Period
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

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

**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 robynechols AT gmail DOT 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 April 2015 issue is March 25, 2015.**

**MC GS meetings** are held at **1:00p.m.** on the 3rd Saturday of the month unless it that is a holiday weekend. 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 Saturdays,  
**BUT WE NEED SUBSTITUTE VOLUNTEERS TO HELP KEEP IT OPEN!! Please Volunteer!**

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

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Editor, <i>The Family Snoop</i>	Robyn Echols robynechols AT gmail DOT com

### 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: January 2015

Income	892.40
Expenses	(196.29)
Checking Balance	\$5,167.06
Savings Account:	3,865.75
CD-9 months; matures on 10/8/14	5,841.50
CD-12 months; matures on 5/19/15	5,662.56
<b>Total in Checking and Savings:</b>	<b>\$20,536.87</b>

**MC GS Website: <http://www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs>**