

# THE FAMILY SNOOP

MERCED COUNTY GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY

Vol. 29, No. 11

November 2011

## Program for November 19, 2011



## Scotch Irish Research

Speaker:

Cath Madden Trindle

Cath Madden Trindle, a certified genealogist, earned a Certificate of British Research from BYU and a Certificate in Genealogical Studies-Librarianship from the National Institute of Genealogical Studies. She writes regular copyright and society strategy columns for the CSGA newsletter. As Publication Chair for SMCGR she has edited many record indexes, designed library finding aids and coauthored the SMCGR Tree Climbing Guides. Cath, a first generation Californian, has limited her client research to Northern California, however, personal research and speaking engagements also focus on the records of Ireland and Scotland, Canada, Minnesota and Michigan and on storytelling.

Saturday ~ November 19, 2011 ~ 12:00 p.m.

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

Upcoming programs:

Month	Program	Speaker(s)
December 17	Annual potluck	
January	Beginners Program	

**A Word from your President:**

Thanksgiving is the time of year when we traditionally count our blessings, but I'm starting a little early.

Jim North the editor of "The Family Snoop" for over two years has decided to step down, many thanks Jim. Anne Field has graciously agreed to take on that job, thanks Anne.

Sorry I missed our October meeting with David Davenport, who presented "Documenting the Service of Union Veterans". I understand he was interesting and well received. November's speaker will be Cath Madden Trindle, giving us insight on research in Ireland and Scotland.

Finally a crisis in my family seems to be under control and I'm very grateful to all our Board and Committee members who stepped up to help while I've been unavailable. MCGS membership is helpful when researching our ancestors but the friendships formed are a welcome bonus.

Shari Stetson

**Ancestry.com** is no longer available at our public library due to budget cuts.

**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.

**Random Acts of Genealogical Kindness:**

Our heart is saddened that we will be offline for quite awhile. Between computer problems (hard drive turning to toast) and the health of the administrator very questionable ... RAOGK, after 11 years, will cease to exist for awhile.

Bridgett Schneider  
RAOGK Administrator

**The U.S. Social Security Death Index is now available on FamilySearch.org**

The U.S. Social Security Death Index (SSDI) is now on FamilySearch.org. The data is current as of October 2010. The most current updates will be available soon.

To search it, you can either search all historical records, and matching records from the index will be included in your search results. You can also search only the Social Security Death Index.

For further details on searching the index, read the post submitted by VanWagenenL last April at <https://www.familysearch.org/node/1090>

**The November issue of Family Tree Magazine** has an excellent article on researching your English roots. Besides a wonderful map of English counties, helpful websites and a list of research organizations & archives are included.

## **Ragsdale boasts a vivid past**

by Sarah Lim

When the first official map of the Town of Merced was recorded on Feb. 10, 1872, Merced encompassed the area from 12th to 23rd streets and from H to R. By 1885, the official map extended Merced's eastern boundary to G Street. This boundary remained unchanged until 1946 when the city annexed the Ragsdale Addition.

By the time of the annexation, the Ragsdale Addition had been in existence for 23 years. Known as Lot 59 of the Bradley's Addition No. 1, this 52-acre parcel located just east of G Street and south of Bear Creek was purchased by James Ragsdale and his wife, Nannie, in 1920.

The year of 1920 marked the beginning of a decade-long building boom in Merced. Cheap local labor, readily available construction material and easily obtainable credit attracted many individuals to real estate.

James Ragsdale, a horse dealer turned real estate developer, was no exception. Ragsdale was born on a farm in Missouri in 1869 and took interest in his father's business of buying and selling mules and horses at the age of 18. After settling in Merced County with his family in 1902, he began to invest in livery stables in Merced. He bought out the Merced Livery Stables and renamed it Yosemite Stables. Ragsdale continued expanding his business until he had three of the largest livery stables in the county.

Ragsdale's livery stable business came to an end in 1914 with the coming of the automobile. He then turned a great deal of his attention to buying and selling mules and horses. During World War I, he was called upon by the U.S. government to inspect horses and mules for the war effort.

After the war, this nationally known horse dealer quit the stock business in 1920 and entered the real estate field with the purchase of the Bradley Tract. The area was surveyed and platted in 1923 and became known as the Ragsdale Subdivision on the official map. It is an area between G Street and Sixth Avenue and Bear Creek and Santa Fe Railroad. When Ragsdale placed the subdivision on the market, he found that the demand for homes was unprecedented.

Just outside of the northeastern corner of Merced, the Ragsdale Addition was considered suburban living for many early Merced residents. Ragsdale, himself, moved to the addition in 1921. Some of the early Ragsdale Addition residents listed in the 1928 Polk's Merced City Directory included Walter J. Chenoweth, James H. McCabe, S. P. McMurray, Elbert A. Baleme, Fred Symons, Hans Gilbertsen and Leslie P. Corcoran.

Today, this well-established neighborhood is graced with beautiful tree-lined streets and historic houses that capture the 1920s era of Merced.

*Sarah Lim is director of Merced County Courthouse Museum. She can be contacted at 723-2401 and [info@mercedmuseum.org](mailto:info@mercedmuseum.org)*

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We will no longer be publishing the August and December issues of The Family Snoop. We don't meet in August and have no December speaker. Everyone needs a break we are no exception.

Your contributions to the newsletter are very welcome – more than welcome in fact! Please consider writing up something about one of your ancestors, an exciting discovery, a web site that you love or an upcoming program or seminar. We would love to hear from you. You can email your editor at [mcgsmail@annefield.net](mailto:mcgsmail@annefield.net).

# Just published!

## **Merced County, California Delayed Birth Certificates**



### **Abstracts of applications, 1943-1997**

6 books in 4 volumes:

Book 1: 1943-1954

Book 2: 1955-1961

Books 3 & 4: 1962-1975

Books 5 & 6: 1975-1997

**Each volume indexed separately**

\$25 per volume, \$90 per set of 4  
tax included

This project was started in 1997 and finally finished in 2011!

**Merced County Genealogical Society**

**P.O. Box 3061, Merced, CA 95344**

for more information: 209-723-9019 (Lois)

to order: [Sto4us@aol.com](mailto:Sto4us@aol.com) (Alma)

Order form available on our web page  
<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~camcgs/>



Many thanks go to Jim North, our newsletter editor for the past two and a half years. We appreciate his volunteering to make the news available to our members every month. This is one of those jobs that requires a commitment every month. When you see Jim, say "thank you!" Your new editor is Anne Field.

### A Word From Your New Editor:

As you probably noticed, there was no October newsletter. Jim North graciously volunteered to edit the newsletter for the past two and a half years but had to end it suddenly. We appreciate all the work he put into keeping our group updated via the newsletter. I am your new editor as of this issue. No, I was not threatened, nor tortured. I volunteered my time and whatever talent I might have to keeping this important part of MCGS running smoothly. Yes, like you, I have lots of other irons in the fire and put out a newsletter for the Merced AAUW as well. Running an organization takes volunteers, lots of them – to organize our programs, serve delicious treats at our meetings, keep the Doris Cochran Room staffed with volunteers, run our webpage, set up the meeting room and run the meetings, serve as officers and many other tasks and duties that need doing. Those of you who have not volunteered to help in some capacity have missed out on a great opportunity to meet others, form new friendships and learn new things. A good way to become a volunteer for the first time would be to become a member of the Program Committee. This group meets a few times a year and decides what programs the members might find helpful, contacts the speakers and sets up dates. We still have need of a publicity person and the membership chairperson. We would like to see our members get more involved. Contact one of the Board members – see the list at the end of the newsletter.

Anne Field

The Doris Cochran Research Room is open 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. on Wednesdays and 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. on Saturdays.

### MCGS Potluck



Saturday  
December 17<sup>th</sup>  
Noon  
Gracey Room

**MCGS** has a website at

**[www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs](http://www.rootsweb.com/~camcgs)**

The website is maintained by Alma Stone.

Alma also runs a Merced County Genealogy website at **[www.mercedgenealogy.com](http://www.mercedgenealogy.com)**

Welcome to two new MCGS members:

Carol Brigaman of Merced and Susan Brower from Ballico.

At our October meeting, enjoying the talk on U.S. Veterans, we had 16 members and 1 guest.

## News from CSGA:

### Los Banos Funeral Cards

Looking for someone who died in the Los Banos area? The Los Banos Genealogical Society has been collecting funeral cards from local mortuaries for years and they are on file in their library along with obituaries and books of births and deaths for Merced County. Give them a call at (209) 826-0763 for more information.

**November 5** Ancestry Day in San Francisco, sponsored by Ancestry.com and the California Genealogical Society. 8 am to 4 pm at the Hyatt Regency San Francisco, 5 Embarcadero Center. \$42 early bird price (before Oct. 5). For more information go to <http://ancestry.com/ancestryday-sanfrancisco>.

**November 12** Seminar sponsored by the San Diego Genealogical Society and Ancestry.com. Speaker is Loretto Dennis Szucs. For info and flyer, go to [http://casdgs.org/upload/files/2011\\_SDGS\\_Ancestry\\_Registration.pdf](http://casdgs.org/upload/files/2011_SDGS_Ancestry_Registration.pdf).

### Jewish Family History Open House

The San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society has a special event coming up November 13, from 1 - 5 pm at the Oakland Family History Center, 4766 Lincoln Avenue, Oakland In celebration of International Jewish Genealogy Month (the Hebrew month of Cheshvan, which in 2011 runs from October 29 to November 26), the San Francisco Bay Area Jewish Genealogical Society will host a family history open house for beginners through advanced researchers in Jewish genealogy, using the resources at the Oakland Family History Center and the know-how of a panel of experienced researchers. Bring your materials (copies only, no originals, please) and questions. The goal is for each attendee to find the answer to at least one question about his or her family history. In addition, local researcher and author Ron Arons will present "Putting the Flesh on the Bones: Researching Why Our Ancestors Did What They Did." Ron's talk will be given twice during the open house so that all participants have a chance to attend. For more information, visit <http://www.sfbajgs.org/>.

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### Nebraska roots?

Genealogical Research in Nebraska, by Ruby Coleman. Family Roots Publishing Co., 2011. Settlement, court records, vital records, land records, cemeteries, orphan trains and more.

### For Legacy Users

A new book: **The Official Unofficial Guide to Using Legacy Family Tree**, by Geoff Rasmussen, is now available, book or CD format. For more information go to <http://www.legacyfamilytreestore.com/>, and click on the link on the left for software and books.

### Salt Lake Christmas Tour, December 4-10

The *Salt Lake Christmas Tour* is known for the quality of the professional genealogists that work with the attendees on a daily basis at the Family History Library. Stay at the Salt Lake Plaza Hotel next door. For more information: <https://sites.google.com/site/saltlakechristmastour/>

**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. Send items, articles, stories, etc., to mcgsmail@annefield.net

**Deadline for the January 2012 issue is December 16, 2011.**

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	Shari Stetson, 383-7719
1st Vice President	Lois Jiminez, 723-9019
2nd Vice President	Rosalie Heppner, 358-5298
Treasurer	Sharon Darby, 723-5374
Secretary	Robyn Echols, 358-2461
Past President	Roberta Saling, 723-4783
Membership	Open
Hospitality	Michle Burroughs, 383-4112
Publicity	Open
Programs	Michle Burroughs, Rosalie Heppner, Charleen Renteria & Shari Stetson
Editor, <i>The Family Snoop</i>	Anne Field, 357-8672 mcgsmail@annefield.net

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

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Monthly Financial Report: September 30, 2011

Income:	435.86
Expenses:	(176.78)
Checking Total	\$2,643.23
Savings Account	3,859.38
CD-9 months; matures on 10/24/11	5,807.15
CD-12 months; matures on 5/19/12	5,612.38
<b><u>Total in Checking and Savings:</u></b>	<b><u>\$17,922.14</u></b>

